

A MEMORIAL
OF THE
LOVING-KINDNESSES, TENDER MERCIES,
AND SOVEREIGN GRACE
OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL,
MANIFESTED, BOTH IN PROVIDENCE AND GRACE,
TOWARDS THE CHIEF OF SINNERS,
ARTHUR TRIGGS,
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“But where sin did abound, grace did much more abound” Rom. 5:20

“For the children being not yet born, neither having that any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. ” Rom 9:11

“The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded” Rom 11:7

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PREFACE.

COURTEOUS READER.

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned, ” Rom. v. 12. The Lord hath said, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, ” Rom. iii. 23. “All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field, ” Isa. xl. 6. “Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity, ” Ps. xxxix. 5. All that can be said of man, is clearly set forth by the Lord in his most holy word, wherein it is written, that men, in their fallen state, “walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, ” Eph. iv. 17—19.

As this is true of man as a sinner, I write not to fill the following pages with the acts or deeds of a creature which all end in death; but to state in truth a few of the dealings of my covenant God towards me, a rebellious sinner. I trust it is with an eye to the honour and glory of my gracious God, that I am thus induced to write of the good will of the dwellers in the bush (Deut. xxxiii. 16); for there is no subject so sweet and blessed to write of and to meditate upon, as the exceeding riches of Jehovah’s grace, in his kindness towards us, known and experienced in the heart, through Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 7).

It gives me pleasure to relate the mercies, rich and free, which were manifested from the Lord unto me, when I was ignorant of God and truth; because I do now rejoice in the belief, that they flowed to me from the free, unmerited love of the Lord, as I then stood in the blessedness of election, and secret grace union to and with my most glorious Christ, who

saith, “All that the Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,” John vi. 37.

There will not be found in this my simple narrative any enticing words of man’s wisdom, or excellency of speech, which please the learned, and gratify the natural mind; but being a plain man, I use great plainness of speech, and though my language be rude yet I trust such of my readers will understand it, who are, like myself, fools for Christ’s sake, that in oneness of heart we may rejoice in the Lord, and bless his name that he hath promised concerning us, “The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err,” Isa. xxxv. 8. Again, “I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye,” Ps. xxxii. 8.

I shall, **first**, relate the Lord’s goodness and mercy towards me, from my birth, through all the days of my unregeneracy, when I was dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1.

Secondly, the effectual calling of the Lord, who called me out of darkness into his marvellous light. 1 Peter ii. 9.

Thirdly, the Lord’s calling me to preach his holy gospel, with an account of the opposition I met with, the success the Lord gave me, and also of the Lord’s tender mercies manifested towards me and my family, in feeding me all my life long, preserving me from all evil, teaching me to trust in him for all things that pertain to life and godliness, and bringing us through the very depths of poverty; so that I can now look back with pleasure over the past, and bless the name of the Lord, and look forward in the blessed prospect of sleeping in Jesus; and that finally this vile body will be raised up, and fashioned like the glorious body of my precious Lord Jesus, who hath redeemed me with his precious blood, and will present me, with all the election of grace, faultless, before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory for ever. Amen.

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DEDICATION.

To the church of the everlasting God, chosen, sanctified, blessed, accepted, redeemed, regenerated, and made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his (God's) dear Son. Col. i. 12, 13.

Beloved of the Lord, all hail! grace, mercy, and peace be with you, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the renewings, power, and love of the eternal Spirit be abundantly experienced by you, in his blessed dwelling in you, so that your hearts may be directed into the love of God, and that you may be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus!

Brethren and sisters, heirs together of the grace of life, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; as I have obtained mercy from the Lord, and have by his good hand upon me been going in and out among you, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, —he is Lord of all (Acts x. 36)—I feel a desire thus to address you, and meet and greet you, in his dear name, and also to leave among you, and with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, both their Lord and ours, a brief statement, or feeble testimony of the Lord's gracious dealings, in tender mercy, with me, and to tell you what God hath done for my soul. Ps. lxxvi. 16.

It hath ever been the privilege of the one church of the Lord to speak of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power; to utter the memory of his great goodness, and to sing of his righteousness (Ps. cxlv. 7, 11); and I desire also, that the Lord our God may be honoured and glorified by this my plain statement, and the church encouraged and benefited thereby. The

Lord is witness, that I write not with any view of handing down my name to posterity, for I am but a cypher in the arithmetic of time and things, although I have been for years preaching salvation, full and free, by Jesus Christ (and I do bless the Lord that many have received the testimony from God); yet by this I am not justified, neither is it a source of comfort or consolation for me to rest in or on at any time; for Jesus Christ, his blood and righteousness, are my all in all. What Jesus is, hath wrought, suffered, obtained, and finished, is, and will be, my joy, comfort, and peace in the wilderness, my strength in death, and my portion for ever.

Soon, the hand that writes, and the tongue that hath spoken, will be still and silent in the grave; nevertheless Jesus liveth and reigneth, who keeps all his sheep in safety, and will bring them all to glory everlasting; then the church will enter glory as his train; and crown him Lord of all. Amen, Amen.

To the Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts (Isa vi. 3), the Three that bear record in heaven, Father, Word, and Holy Spirit: and these three are one (1 John v. 7); the Alehim, the Al, the Faithful (Deut. vii. 9), in covenant and eternal relation with his church, the election of grace, the travail of the soul, and the body of Christ.

It is my real desire to ascribe equal and undivided blessing, praise, honour and glory, to the eternal Trinity in Unity, in undivided essence Jehovah, and in distinct personality a Trinity of Persons, the Alehim, co-equal and co-eternal, in their distinct personal love acts, election by God the Father, redemption and salvation by God the Son, and regeneration by God the Holy Spirit.

Therefore to the eternal Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, the Holy and unchanging Jehovah, Alehim, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, my Lord and my God, be everlasting praise given. Amen.

Into his dear hands, and to the word of his grace, I commend you all, knowing he is the faithful God, and changes not: he saith of his sheep,

they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hands (John x. 28): to him be glory, honour, praise, power, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever. Amen.

So writes your brother in him, and willing servitor in the gospel,

A. TRIGGS.

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A MEMORIAL
OF THE
LOVING-KINDNESS OF THE LORD.

PART ONE

FROM BIRTH THROUGH ALL THE DAYS OF UNREGENERACY

It is written that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. xii. 34); and “in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established” (Matt. xviii. 16); therefore the Lord is witness to what I write, that it is the truth, and nothing but the truth; and “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. ix. 1).

In the year of our Lord 1787, on the 23rd day of April, in the village of Kingston, in the county of Devon, I was born of very poor parents; the house where my mother brought me forth, and where I was born to trouble as the sparks fly upward (Job. v. 7), was a thatched cottage, built mostly of mud: it stood at the end of the village, at the cross in the road leading to the farm-house, called Scobbiscombe. The cottage wherein I drew my first natural breath, has been since taken down, and now two cottages stand in its place. My father’s name was James Triggs, and my mother’s name was Mary: they had nine children; I was the eighth: they were both serge weavers. If I had not been under the particular providential care of my gracious God from my birth, I should have died when an infant, for the woman who had me to nurse, wanted skill, and treated me so

improperly, that my life was despaired of. But my Lord, who had set his love upon me, preserved my life, and restored me to health. I mention this fact to the glory of his name, who keeps us in our unguarded hours, and who watched over me, when my parents, as well as myself, were unconscious of it.

When three years old, I was greatly afflicted with the scarlet fever, of which I have some remembrance, having heard it spoken of by my mother: my life hung in doubt, the surgeon gave me over, and said I should die: my head and face were so swollen, that no trace of my features was left; to all appearance mortification had begun; I was turned black all over, and my poor mother expected to see me draw my last breath; but the gracious Lord, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph. i. 11), had purposed otherwise, and, I believe, impressed it on my mother's mind to act as follows:—she broiled on the coals a slice of pork, and when it was ready, laid it on my black tongue, that hung out of my mouth. I had been for three days previously without any nourishment, and to her astonishment my tongue began to move; I sucked the broiled pork until I had drawn out all the nourishment from it that I could get, and from that hour I began to mend. The Lord blessed the means, and I record it to his honour and glory; for there is nothing too hard for the Lord (Gen. xviii. 14); bless him, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (Ps. ciii. 1, 2).

It gives me great pleasure thus to relate the tender mercies and clear displays of the wisdom and goodness of my living and long-suffering Lord towards me, who preserved me amidst all the afflictions that children are the subjects of. I recollect, when I was not more than seven years old, that, as I was getting on a horse from a gate, the horse bit my leg, and nearly took off the flesh from the bone, which laid me up again for many weeks. After much painful suffering the Lord restored me. Shortly after this affliction I had the first sting of conscience, or conviction of sin: I had offended my mother, and she said the Almighty saw me and my wicked actions; I replied in my foolishness, that I would hide myself under the straw from the Lord: she said, I could not hide

myself from the Lord, for he always saw me, and knew me by name, and would punish me for my wickedness; I answered again, that I would be called by another name: she said it was no matter if I were called by another name, for the Lord saw me and knew me. These sayings shook me to the very centre; as the prophet saith, “My belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, ” (Hab. iii. 16): the impression they made remained with me for many days, and is fresh on my mind while I am writing, though forty years are now past. Another instance of reserving grace and delivering mercy took place, when I was about eight years old: I went with another boy to look after a crow’s nest; it was in an oak tree; I climbed the tree, and on my approaching near to the nest, the bough I stood on broke with my weight, and I fell to the ground, from a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and there I lay as dead. After a while life was manifested, and my companion helped me home. I have always, more or less, felt the effects of this fall, in my back, yet the Lord would not let me die in my sins. Bless him, O my soul!

Here I must mention one thing relative to the sovereign grace of my blessed Lord: namely, how that scripture hath been fulfilled, “One shall be taken and the other left” (Luke xviii. 34.): for although the Lord hath called me by his grace, my companion is still dead in sin, without the fear of God before his eyes, living in the world, without hope. The thought of the distinguishing mercy of my God towards me, humbles me and lays me low at his dear feet: O crown him Lord of all!

At another time, playing at football with other boys, as I was going to kick the ball, a boy much larger than myself met my ankle with his nailed shoe, and with such force, that he broke down my ankle; the effects of it I shall carry to my grave. My ever-blessed Lord preserved me from death, and followed me with his goodness, though I was born and lived like a wild ass’s colt. I find it blessed to look back over the tender mercies my dear Lord manifested towards me, and it melts down my soul in gratitude to him for his sovereign grace; for the poor fellow that did me this injury, is still living as he was born, whereas the Lord’s grace reigns in me, through righteousness unto eternal life (Rom. v. 21): for it is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, ” (Rom ix. 16).

I must now relate another conspicuous deliverance, from or by the Lord; praises to his dear name! I was returning to my Father’s house one summer’s evening, after playing with my companions, and was met in the road by a mad dog, which sprang at me, as I thought, to catch me by the throat; but went over my right shoulder, so that it only knocked my hat from my head, and left me (though much affrighted) unhurt. Surely that God who stopped the lions’ mouths from hurting Daniel (chap. vi. 22), stopped the mouth of this mad dog from biting me: and herein I see that scripture fulfilled, “The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil” (Ps. cxxi. 7): and the blessedness of another; for it is written, “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, ” &c. (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) I feel the mercy while I am writing, and say again, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Ps. ciii. 2): And how great is his goodness!” (Zech. ix. 17): “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. ” (Rom. xi. 33, 36.)

My father was what is called a very moral man: he was the clerk at the church, and was a very strong advocate for the Episcopal Church: the Thirty-nine Articles were no way congenial with his mind, yet he was very strict as to her formulas, and counted all that dissented from the church enemies to her and to God. I was strictly commanded by him never to swear, &c.; he said it was a very evil thing. He trained me up in the trammels of the church, and taught me that wonderful piece of logic, the catechism, so that I had the whole in my head, and could say every question and answer without a book. I thought myself a good child, and grew up a zealous advocate for the church; and the foolish impression on my mind was, that the parson and clerk would go to heaven, and that if ever I should attain to office of clerk, I should go there. I write this to show my ignorance and foolishness; and in this state I should have lived and died, had not the Lord quickened my poor soul.

The time arrived that it was my lot to be engaged in employment with other boys in farm-houses; and I soon drank into their habits, which were more like those of heathens, than of those born in a civilized country. I do not remember any checks of conscience, whilst I followed the solemn injunctions of my father not to swear; but God was not in my thoughts all the day long, neither was there any fear of God before my eyes. But bless his precious name, his thoughts were thoughts of peace towards me, even then, and not of evil (Jer. xxix. 11).

I am constrained to pass over many of my youthful follies, and my preservation from destruction; suffice it to say, that was capable of performing any vice, and an utter stranger to all virtue. I went to live with a farmer named Pearse, at a little farm called Torr-down, where I suffered many hardships. My master and mistress were professors of religion, and they endeavoured to make me so. Her father was a methodist preacher, called Brown; but their joint exertions, with my endeavours, could not wash the Ethiopian white, or change his skin (Jer. xiii. 23). All their religion ended where it began; and I have seen that word fully verified, for it happened unto them according to the true proverb, "The latter end was worse with them than the beginning" (2 Pet. ii. 20, 22.) By this I see plainly that all profession that begins in the flesh will surely end there. I continued with them for more than two years, and this was long enough to see an end to their reading the Bible, their pretended prayers, and singing hymns, which had been kept up for some time in the house. Ah! where should I have been, were it not for rich, free, sovereign grace.

After I left this place, I worked with any of the farmers that would employ me. At last I went to live with Mr. J. Gest, where there were four more boys of different ages: I was the youngest except one. Here, almost every species of wickedness was carried on, for there was no fear of God before our eyes; and I have thought and believe, that none in heathen countries can be more heathenish than they were then in these farm-houses. While in this house we had a sad disease; and by its long standing it took such deep root in us, that it was with much difficulty we were cured: in order to cleanse the bedding and our clothes, we boys had to

sleep six successive nights in the hay loft; this, together with the disorder, brought me into a state that I cannot forget. The bloody flux ensued, and reduced me to such a state of weakness, that my life was despaired of. But, blessed be the Lord, he preserved me, although my digestive powers had ceased, and the little food I could take passed through the bowels just in the state I had taken it. My restoration to health was a miracle of mercy, for all means and skill were baffled to effect a cure; but there is nothing too hard for the Lord. I remember full well, how I used many times to sit down on a dunghill and weep for very weakness, wishing to die; but the fear of hell would so arrest my mind, that I shrank from the thought of dying; yet I had no fear of God. After some months had passed in this hopeless case, the Lord in tender mercy healed my disease, and restored me to health, though I knew not then it was the Lord; now I look back with pleasure on the displays of his loving-kindness and compassion towards me, and can say from my heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" (Psalm ciii. 1)

Although I was thus preserved and delivered from Lord, yet neither the sickness nor the deliverance made any alteration in my life and actions. I only lived to rebel, and to manifest my hatred against God, his name, and his mercies; for there was no fear of God before my eyes, and God was not in all my thoughts. Ah! who can give a full development of man by nature, dead in trespasses and sins? I must say, and with pleasure, to the honour of my much abused Lord, that he was longsuffering towards me, and would not let me perish in my sins, having loved me with an everlasting love (Jer. xxxi. 3); he loved me when dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. ii. 4); and thus, according to his good pleasure, watched over me and preserved me; and this clearly proves, that the purpose of God according to election must stand (Rom. ix. 11). I can now see what I was then blind to, that the hand of the Lord was in all this; and that neither judgments nor mercies will ever bring the sinner to serve and fear the Lord, unless he be born again (John iii. 3, 5); and I now find it blessed, and it humbles me down in the dust before the Lord, in every renewed remembrance of the way he hath led and fed me, as he did the Israelites, for more than forty years in the wilderness, as recorded in Deut. viii. 2;

and I freely ascribe all to the praise of the glory of his grace, that made me accepted in the beloved (Eph. i. 6).

I must relate another wonderful deliverance, by the Lord, from death and hell. It was a custom for one of the younger boys, on the Monday morning, to arise with the maidens and washerwomen at an early hour, to keep the fire in for heating the water for washing. It was my turn one morning; we got up about three o'clock; had made the water boil, and was sitting on the top of the brick-work around the copper wherein the water was, and having no thought of danger, I caught hold of one of the maidens to have a little play with her: she unthinkingly pushed me backward, and I was plunged into the copper of boiling water, and my lower parts were immersed in the boiling water. I cried out for help, and they pulled me out, but not unhurt, for my right thigh was very much scalded, I may say boiled. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord," (Psalm cvii. 43). I was laid up for sixteen weeks, and was at times in great agony; my thigh-bone was laid open to view, and many times I lost my senses while the wound was dressing. I was now about sixteen years old: Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life" (Psalm xxiii. 6). I even know what it is to be brought naturally through fire and water, and my life to be preserved. These deliverances prove to me the faithfulness and love of my ever-blessed Lord, whose eye was over me for good (Jer. xxiv. 6); who watched over me when I despised him, and was Satan's willing servant, and when I had no will or desire to thank the Lord for such mercies, because I was dead in sin: the flesh can never rise higher than its source; and although this deliverance was so great, it did not change my heart, nor did it make me walk circumspectly. I have now the mark in my thigh, and shall carry it with me to the grave.

When I am led to reflect on these things, they give me fresh cause to thank, praise, and bless my gracious Lord, for his goodness and distinguishing mercy towards me, a poor lost and hell-deserving sinner in myself. "How great is his goodness" (Zech. ix. 17), "and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33). After I was restored to health and to my

former employment, I was as a wild ass that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure (Jer. ii. 24). I still went on sinning against the Lord, with a seeming determination to gratify the lusts of the flesh, taking pleasure in wickedness, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Eph. ii. 12). “Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm viii. 4).

In recording the tender mercies of my blessed Lord, I desire to bless his holy name that he preserved me amidst all evil, for I was capable of performing it with a greedy appetite; there was nothing before my eyes but scenes of wickedness, and every abomination, in which I felt a pleasure to join: and I wonder at the Lord’s long-suffering, when I think of what was practiced in that house. Indeed it is very marvellous in my eyes, for I never heard of the Lord’s sovereign mercy manifested towards any of them but myself, and the whole of us in the house were sixteen in number; some of them are dead, and the others are in the state they were born. Here I pause and say, “What hath God wrought!” (Num. xxiii. 23); and I rejoice before him, saying, “Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. ii. 13).

I shall now inform my reader how I was brought out of this house, It was in the year 1804, Lady-day, one Sunday, the volunteers being then embodied, I, contrary to my master’s commands, went to see them exercise in the forenoon, and neglected to clean my master’s shoes and boots, as was my usual custom. My master was offended, and I went home to my father, who was very angry with me for leaving my master, and used every entreaty for me to go back again; but I would not: and I now believe that it was my Lord’s will I should not go.

The Lord, according to his eternal purpose, opened a way for me to learn the business of a mason and slater. On April 23, being seventeen years old, I went with one John Lee, a mason, to serve him for four years: I was to receive of him four shillings a-week the first year, five the second, six the third, and eight the fourth; so that I had not a very great income to maintain myself; and my parents were very poor. It was during this time that convictions of conscience would frequently take place with me, on account of my vile course of living; and I resolved and promised

the Lord that I would amend my ways, and try to please him. Under these touches of conscience I used to read my Bible, sing hymns and psalms, go to church, and also to hear the Methodists preach. For a little season I seemed religious; but it soon wore off, and I launched out again deeper than ever in sinning and rebelling against my much abused Lord. Sometimes thoughts about hell and wrath to come would take place, and at night I feared I should awake in hell before the morning. I used to say the Lord's prayer, and a few scraps of the church prayers to calm conscience, and I promised the Lord if he would spare me until such a time I would do better, and break off my vile ways: but these things were all in the flesh, which is as weak as grass; I had no power of withstanding one allurements, and being of a light, trifling, and jesting mind, was easily caught by every bait of Satan, as a fly is in a spider's web. Let Arminians say what they will about the power of the creature to turn to the Lord, I find to this day that there never was such a thing in me, for I often tried, "but the flesh profiteth nothing" (John vi. 63), and "no flesh shall glory in the Lord's presence" (1 Cor. i. 29.)

As I was growing up towards manhood, I wanted to have my fill of sin and pleasure, and in full vigour pursued them. I found continually snares laid for me, and was delighted to have it so; nevertheless I had at times, in the midst of these things, such checks of conscience, that I was restrained from doing the things that I would; which things would have proved a trouble, burden, and disgrace to me as long as I lived. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved me, even when I was dead in sin" (Eph. ii. 4), shall have all the glory and honour, for he alone preserved me.

Being fond of music and singing, I soon took to lead the choir in the church. This exposed me to more snares and temptations: and I often think over the goodness and forbearance of the Lord towards me, in my attempting to take his sacred name upon my unhallowed tongue, and in ignorance saying, "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God," when God was not known, nor his glory thought of by me. I have in these singing-seats felt such a sensation arising in my mind, from some particular words

in some of the anthems, that I have been constrained to weep; and I think now that it was from the Lord. The words of Psalm xlii. 2. “My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?” would at all times produce tears in my eyes; and why, I could not tell, but so it was: but, blessed be my most gracious Lord, he hath since in much mercy caused me to feel my soul athirst for God, and also to have it satiated with the streams of that river that maketh glad the city of God (Psalm xlvi. 4); and I have known what it is to appear before him at the judgment-seat as a poor, lost, and condemned sinner, when I dared not to say, as they do in earthly courts of law, *Not guilty!* I speak it to the praise of my blessed Lord, that he hath also caused me to appear before him at the mercy-seat, so that I could join with all my heart with the prophet, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness” (Isa. lxi. 10); and I can rejoice in the sweet anticipation of appearing before him for ever, “when I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is” (1 John iii, 2).

A choir of singers, such as I associated with, is enough to corrupt the mind of any young person, and their meetings are as much calculated to produce evil as the ale-house or card table. I speak this from experience, and the Lord is witness to the truth of it: for had he not preserved me from the evils I was exposed to, I should have been involved in shame, disgrace and trouble all the days of my life. But the Lord in mercy watched over me, though I knew it not: all glory to his name! In this manner of life I went on, yet at times the Lord would give a stroke to my conscience, which would baffle all my resolutions, and make me weep by reflecting on my bad ways and doings; fleshly repentance would take place, but flesh, with the devil and the world, soon got the mastery of these feelings.

I was now much addicted to going to the public house of an evening, not for the sake of drinking, for I disliked drunkenness, but for the sake of singing songs, jesting, and romancing with the company, I was also a complete dupe to card players; and after playing whole nights, I have vowed that I would never play more, for I was sure if I continued I should

go to hell. Upon one occasion when I had been playing until morning, I had lost all my money, and left in debt. At the head of the village, on the cross, I made a vow to the Lord that I would never play more; and if I did, that he should send me to hell. Alas! what is man? I kept my vow for a few days, but as I had no power to resist the temptation, I soon broke it, and concluded that hell would be my portion, Ah! the Lord only knows the state of my mind when I was filled with slavish fear, and of being punished in hell for breaking my vows; how many a sleepless night have I had on account of these things, for I was afraid to shut my eyes lest I should awake in hell. I write not to encourage sinners to walk in the same steps, but to testify of the Lord's long-suffering and tender mercy towards me, one so rebellious and profligate, yea, the chief of sinners.

When I was about nineteen years old, I was standing on the brink of the quarry from whence we were taking stones; as I was looking into it, that word "Eternity" took hold on my mind, and made such an impression, that I began to tremble. My thoughts were immediately turned on the everlasting distinction between those who serve God and those who serve him not; the one would be in eternal glory with God, and the other suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. With these thoughts I became unnerved; my belly trembled, my lips quivered, my very heart-strings seemed to be giving way. I saw myself as about to be plunged into that horrible dungeon, and felt confident that an eternal hell would be my portion. I got out of the sight of my companions, and went amongst the furze and bushes that grew near, and kneeled down and wept, and cried to God for mercy and to keep me from hell; but the severe reflection of my past life was so very bitter to me, that I fully expected the lord was about to cut me off as a cumberer of the ground, and that the devil was standing to receive me. Such things are better felt than they can be expressed.

This circumstance induced me to make many promises of amendment of life, but I had no peace; for if I lived ever so uprightly for the future, I could not see how my past transgressions could be blotted out: this perplexed me! A reformation took place, I forsook my old companions, and endeavoured to keep up a round of duty in reading and praying; and

being acquainted with the church prayers, I used them, as lame people do crutches, to help them along, and became what is called, and as I thought, pious. Every opportunity had, I attended the methodist chapel, and was constant to my church.

At length I became as righteous in my own eyes as any pharisee. In this fleshly religion I stood for a few weeks: and then, if possible, broke out worse than ever in the ways of sin; for I went on, Gallio-like, “caring for none of those things” which belonged to my peace; but sinning with more greediness, and taking pleasure in making sport at everything that was sacred, my heart appeared to become hardened against the fear of God and hell. To satisfy my sinful desires was all I sought after; which shews my desperate state by nature, and that neither judgments nor mercies, without the power of God, will stop a sinner in his mad career, change his heart, or make him spiritually minded. Ah! who but a long-suffering God, who abideth faithful, could have borne with such a rebellious sinner? Bless his precious name! honours crown his brow! there is a set time to favour Zion (Ps. cii. 13) according to his eternal purpose (Eph. iii. 11), when God creates his people in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 10); and this once done, is done for ever: “For I am confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun the good work, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. i. 6).

When I arrived at the age of twenty-one years, my time of service being expired with my master, I sought work for myself. The Lord appeared for me (though I knew it not) for I had plenty of work, which drew forth the envy of many who were out of employ. And herein I see the Lord fulfilling the good pleasure of his goodness towards me, who am not worthy of the least of his mercies, and of all the truth which the Lord hath shewed unto me (Gen. xxxii. 10). Notwithstanding all his mercies, I still followed my sinful course, was full of levity, making sport of that blessed book, the Bible, more especially those parts of it which to natural men seem foolishness. The reader may wonder, for I do, how the Lord could show mercy to such an ungodly wretch. I can say with Paul, “I was a blasphemer and injurious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it

ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. i. 13, 14).

Whilst living in this awful state of sin and wickedness, I dreamed a dream, that the end of the world was come, and that all the inhabitants were gathered together; the heavens appeared all on fire; and that as I was standing on a stool behind all the multitude, looking over their heads, full of fear and dread, my past life and actions came up in view, and I *thought*, as it is said, that I had sinned away the day of grace. The anguish of my mind increased, as in my dream I saw the fiery canopy of the heavens open, and a person clothed with glory and terrible majesty appear seated on a burning throne, attended by thousands of spotless beings. Then the judgment was set, the books were opened, and I saw the person who sat on the throne come down and take one and leave another, which increased the terror of my mind to an unspeakable degree. There appeared a venerable old man (as I thought) standing before me, to whom I said, “How are the people judged, and why is one taken and another left?” He replied, “They are judged according to the things written in the book, and those are taken who have their names written in the book. ” I asked him again, if he knew how their names were written? whether alphabetically? He replied, he did not know. His answer left me in terrible suspense, waiting my doom, which I expected would be eternal damnation! But after many had been taken from the congregated multitude, I saw the glorious person set his eyes on me. The people then gave way on the right hand and on the left, and he came in all his glory and majesty towards me, whilst I stood trembling and afraid, and took me by the right hand, and said, “Thou must go with me, for thy name is written in the book. ” Language fails to describe the change in my feelings: I felt as one out of hell in heaven, and that I was going up through the air with the glories of heaven in my soul!

Upon this I awoke, and behold it was a dream. I leave the reader to judge of my feelings if he can. Had I been immersed in water, I could not have been more wet than I was, from the sweat produced by the terror of my mind from the former part of my dream.

What was manifested in this dream, hath been realized in my heart since, from the following truths, “Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou holdest me by my right hand” (Ps. lxxiii. 23). “But rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke x. 20). “And I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Rev. iii. 5). “There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. xxi. 27).

This dream made a very deep impression on my mind. I considered it as a warning from the Lord, to cease from my evil course of life and to live to his glory; that if I neglected this I should have no more offers of mercy, as they are called: and if I attended to this warning and lived accordingly, I concluded that I should certainly go to heaven. Such were my thoughts on the subject. I now set about the old work of reformation, and made some progress in it. I was very diligent, and in this way of working continued several weeks; but alas! after some time, the subject and importance of the dream, together with my feelings under the same wore off: I began to neglect my religious duties, and at last was so overcome by the remembrance of my former delights and sinful pleasures, that I launched out into the depths of them with a seeming determination to damn my soul. I again made sport of the Bible, and was fit company for any infidel. I eagerly pursued my former practice of card-playing, and could lie and cheat without any remorse of conscience: I speak this to my shame. What a long-suffering, wonder-working, loving Lord, the God of my mercies is, that he cut me not down as a cumberer of the ground! Bless and praise him O my soul! He only is worthy.

I write not these things to encourage any one in such diabolical practices, but to testify of the Lord’s boundless compassion, tender mercy and sovereign grace towards a rebellious sinful wretch, in bearing with my manners and open contempt of his word! Surely this doth prove, “that he is in one mind and none can turn him” (Job xxiii. 13); “and that the

purpose of God according to election must stand” (Rom. ix. 11). I now sing “Sovereign grace o’er sin abounding:” “God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace we are saved” (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

My fort, as I call it, consisted of music, singing, ringing, and card-playing; yet I always attended the church when it was open, and many times I have secretly wished I was as good as my father; for he seemed to have such a veneration for the sabbath and church, that I firmly believed he would go to heaven. But the set time to favour me was not yet come. Work was now very plentiful, I got good wages, saved money, and went on in that delusive happiness which must end in death and damnation, unless saved therefrom by grace.

Amidst all my mad career of sin, I can trace the Lord’s mercy towards me, and his watching over me for good; for I formed an acquaintance with a young woman, which I now see was a preventive to many evils I otherwise might have fallen into. I spent many of my leisure hours with her, which would have been otherwise spent in evil. I believe the Lord’s hand was in it, though it was not his will she should be my wife. When we parted there was no guilt contracted on our consciences.

There are many things prior to my marriage that I could relate which I pass over, lest I should swell my little narrative to too great a length; but this I must say, the Lord mercifully preserved me from many evils; therefore, to him be praise, honour and glory. Amen.

But to return. In the year of our Lord 1810, at Lady-day, Mr. J. Blackler came from the parish of Ermington, to live at the farm called Scobbiscombe belonging to T. Bulteel, Esq.; he had many sons and daughters, with whom I had no acquaintance; but, as the Lord had fixed the bounds of my habitation, so he had also the guiding of my affairs in life according to his purpose.

The family had to pass my little mud palace in going to and from church; and one Sunday after the service, I returned to my dwelling much sooner than usual, and having laid down my fiddle and books, I returned to the door, and when standing there, I saw Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Blackler, pass by: this was the first time I had ever seen her, and my mind was so fixed on her, that I thought if ever I was married she should be my wife, although there was much disparity in circumstances between a farmer's daughter and a poor mason. Yet I believe the hand of the Lord was in all this, for it was not from luck, chance, or fortune, which are the trinity of fools, but founded by the Lord in his own purpose and grace; for what God hath joined together no one shall put asunder: and I believe that all marriages in the Lord are made in heaven. I remember calling to my mother, as Mary Blackler passed by, to come to the door and see the object of my choice; and I may now say, the wife the Lord had chosen and ordained for me. My mother came to the door, and I said to her (pointing to my wife that now is), I ever I am married, that is the woman, or I will never be married. ” Whereupon my mother upbraided me, and said I was foolish to think of such a thing; but it was so rooted in my mind that nothing could remove it.

I devised many ways to obtain the object of my affections, but in vain. When there appeared no way open for me, the Lord accomplished the same in the following manner:—I was repairing the slating of a house at the north end of the village, when the steward of T. Bulteel, Esq. rode by; he was going to the public-house to see the man (who was a carpenter) that kept it, about the repairing of the house at Scobbiscombe. The steward inquired of him who I was, and sent for me. I went—and he said to me, “It is in my mind to let you have the mason's work at Scobbiscombe. ” I replied, that others were working there. He said, that was nothing to do with me: “Will you do the work? for it was impressed on my mind when I saw you, that I must give it to you to do. ” I thanked him, and said, I would undertake it. So he appointed a time to meet him at the house, which I attended to, and agreed to do the work. Will any say this was by chance? I say, Let God be true, and every man (that imputes it to chance) a liar” (Rom. iii. 4).

On June 4, 1810, I went to do the work, where I hoped to have an opportunity to declare my mind to one, who was more to me than a world. The 16th of July was the first opportunity that offered, when I disclosed to her my regard: and however strange it may appear, she has told me since, that her mind was fixed upon me the first time she saw me in the church, so that our minds were previously fixed upon each other: and I can attest the truth of Solomon's words, that "a prudent wife is from the Lord" (Prove xix. 14). Our attachment to each other soon became manifest, and every effort was made by her family to prevent it, but we were of one mind: nothing could prevent what God had determined should come to pass; all their strivings and sayings failed; whom God had joined together in purpose, nothing in time could separate. And therefore, it came to pass, according to the will of the Lord, that we were married in Kingston Church, Feb. 15, 1811. Since that time, the Lord hath in tender mercy given us to know and believe, what it is to be married to him that was raised from the dead" (Rom. vii. 4); for he that is our "maker is our husband: the Lord of Hosts is his name; and our Redeemer the Holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called" (Isa. liv. 5). My wife has brought forth ten children, and I never could say they were too many. Blessed be the Lord our God who doth all things well!

My first habitation was one room in a house at Walk's-pool, as suited to our then situation; from thence we removed, at Michaelmas, to a little cottage of two rooms, called the Kings-corner; and on November 24, 1811, my wife brought forth a son whom we called John. Things went on smoothly, for her parents seemed a little reconciled; and as a person who kept a shop in the village was dead, we were offered money on loan, that we might open a shop in the drapery and grocery line; for which purpose, a house was taken near the church; this house consisted of three rooms, to which we removed Lady-day, 1812. We began business; everything went on well, money turned in plentifully, the world smiled upon us, we had all that heart could wish; but we were living without God, and without Christ. The house we had taken was not calculated for the business, I therefore bought the leasehold interest of one in the village, about two doors from the methodist chapel. I concluded that riches and pleasure

would be our constant portion; but the Lord soon shewed me the uncertainty and emptiness of all earthly things. We went to our new habitation, Michaelmas 1813, it consisted of four rooms; my readers will see by this, I had, as it is called, got up in the world, from one room to four. But, two sabbath days before Michaelmas, the Lord was pleased to quicken my soul from death to life. About eleven o'clock in the morning, I was going to take the Bible to read, as was my usual custom, the lessons for the day, when on a sudden, I felt a distressing sensation pass through my soul, or heart, from being convinced most deeply of the awful state I was in before God as a sinner! The Lord brought to bear with such a weight on my mind, the nature of that particular sin I had been so fond of, namely, trifling with, and making sport of, *the Song of Solomon*, that fell to the ground (Acts ix. 40), and with similar feelings, as the jailor, cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30).

I felt and could say, as the Samaritan harlot did, "He told me all things that ever I did" (John iv. 29). A guilty conscience was soon manifested, condemnation took place within, death and hell presented themselves to my view, an angry God appeared, and his wrath from heaven was revealed against my iniquity and ungodliness (Rom. i. 18). By his wrath I was troubled, for the Lord had set my iniquities before him, and my secret sins in the light of his countenance (Ps. xc. 7, 8); his arrows soon dried up my moisture, so that it was turned into the drought of summer (Ps. xxxii. 4).

Thus far I have given a brief detail of the days of my unregeneracy, together with my diabolical, atheistical, sinful principles and practices; but above all, some of the tender mercies of the Lord towards me, in keeping and watching over me, "when, Satan's blind slave, I sported with death." Had it not been for the Lord's sovereign grace displayed, no one would have heard of my very black acts, as I always passed among the multitude for a good sort of a fellow. When I now look back and see the way the Lord kept me, preserved me, delivered me, and fed me, it makes sovereign mercy dear to me, and Jesus all in all. With Paul, I can say, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how

unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath own the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Rom. xi. 33–36).

Here I desire to pause, and in humility of mind before the Lord, to “acknowledge my unworthiness, ” as a sinner saved by grace. “What hath God wrought!” With all my heart and mind I can say to my ever blessed Lord, as Ruth said to Boaz, “Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?” (Ruth ii. 10). I ask the reader to say, whether it is of grace or of works, that I am what I am? I rejoice before the Lord that it is all of grace, and my precious Lord shall have all the glory, “who plucked me as a brand from the fire” (Zec. iii. 2). It is clear to a demonstration, that there was no inherent qualification in me, unless sin and sinfulness be the qualification. I was a blasphemer, and injurious, but the purpose of God according to election stood (Rom. ix. 11); and “where sin abounded there did grace much more abound” (Rom. v. 20); and the words of the Lord Jesus were fulfilled in me, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

Having thus given a brief statement of more than twenty-three years of my very rebellious way of living, and also of the tender mercies of the Lord, in the display of his loving-kindnesses towards me, in preserving me from hell; it rejoices my soul now, and endears the blessed Lord unto me, that he had not appointed me to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess, v. 9).

I would close this part of my narrative with the words of the prophet, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. vi. 3); and with Paul rejoice, that though “we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. ii. 13). Again, it is written, “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing” (Zeph. iii. 17). For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith

that he hateth putting away” (Mal. ii. 16); and, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are his” (2 Tim. ii. 19). Therefore, O my soul, for ever bless the Lord, and give him all the glory. Amen.

A MEMORIAL
OF THE
LOVING-KINDNESS OF THE LORD.

PART TWO

THE EFFECTUAL CALLING OF THE LORD, WHO CALLED ME OUT OF
DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELLOUS LIGHT. *1 Peter ii. 9.*

I now enter on the second part of my narrative, as was noticed in the preface.

We removed at Michaelmas from the house where the Lord had made my poor soul alive, “according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. iii. 11). We took up our abode in the house before alluded to; but changing from one house to another, did not change my feelings of the ministration of condemnation, the sentence of death which I had received; the spirituality of God’s holy law was too firmly fixed in me by the Lord, to be removed in any way but the Lord’s. My

inward feelings were very acute, wrath was revealed in a broken law against my ungodliness; the guilt of my sins lay heavy on my conscience; I felt, as it were, an earnest of damnation; all my secret gins were in the light of God's countenance; sin was exceeding sinfulness; the terrors of God upon me, and my heart meditated terror (Isa. xxxiii. 18); I felt and knew that it was a bitter thing to sin against God; all my past life and actions lay heavy on my mind, and many severe reflections arose there, on account of it. If I tried to pray, an angry God appeared: if I read the Bible, all was condemnation.

If I endeavoured to fly from the Lord, I found that I was in his strong hand; the inflexibility of justice stared me in the face; I found no refuge, and all my comeliness was turned in me into corruption; I retained no strength (Dan. x. 8); but said with David, "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore; there is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger, neither rest in my bones, because of my sin" (Ps. xxxviii. 2, 3); I felt confident, that hell would be my portion for ever; I could not say, that the Lord would be unjust in sending me there, for I had fully merited it; and as the fountain of my ungodliness was so opened to view, I saw plainly that God was a just God, and that I, an ungodly sinner, had no claim upon him for mercy; and I was assured of the truth of the following scripture—"I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers" (Mal. iii. 5). Thus I was cut up root and branch; never shall I find words to express the anguish of my poor soul. I felt the truth of another scripture, "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity" (Ps. xxxix. 11)! Instead of finding any comfort from a broken law, in striving to keep it, or walking according to that rule, I found guilt and condemnation; for I had offended in all, and the holiness and justice of God's law pierced through my very soul, and caused it to overflow with anguish. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Thus I found that the law worketh wrath" (Rom. iv. 15); that sin was the

transgression of the law (1 John iii. 4); consequently, I believed that I was under the law, and should to all eternity be under its curse. I concluded there was no hope for me, and that no mercy could be shown me, as I was such a sinner, estranged from God, and an enemy to him by wicked works. I thought God had set a mark upon me as he did upon Cain, that every one that saw me could read the curse of God marked on my forehead. Such were my thoughts; the Lord is my witness. Reader, if thou hast trodden this path, thou canst enter into my feelings, which are not to be described; I found no ground to stand on, no place of safety, no circumstance, or thing, from which I could draw comfort, and I really believed I was fast sinking into hell. If all the infidels in the world had assailed me, they could not have persuaded me, that there was no God, heaven, or hell, for I had the earnest of hell in my conscience: as for heaven, I knew there was such a place, and this added to my misery, because I was confident I should never go there. And I knew there was a God, for I had sinned against him, “and come short of his glory” (Rom. iii. 23).

There were other portions of God’s most holy word, which weighed heavy on my mind, rended my heart, made me tremble exceedingly, and filled me with terror, namely—“When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear: your hands are full of blood” (Isa. i. 15). And again, “But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruits of their own way, and be filled with their own devices” (Prov. i. 25—31). Cutting reflections arose in my mind, that if I had attended to the beforementioned warnings and calls from the Lord, he would have shown me mercy; but as I rejected them, and would none of his ways, I had sinned away, as some say, the day of grace, and was

beyond the reach of mercy. The unalterable purpose, the immutability, and faithfulness of God, that “he was in one mind, and none could turn him, and what his soul desireth, that he doeth” (Job. xxiii. 13), sunk me into despair. In this distress of soul, guilty before God, my conscience bearing witness to the truth of God’s word, Moses accusing me, the devil trying to drive me to self-destruction, a pining sickness commenced, my flesh wasted away, my strength declined, and I became a witness of the truth of the word, in which it is written, “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life unto the destroyers” (Job xxxiii. 19—22). This was my case; for I was so reduced and weak, that I could not attend to my work; I was a walking skeleton. In connexion with what is before related relative to the scriptures rending my heart, the following would also be sounded through the territories of my soul, “Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure” (Isa. v. 14); “Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming” (Isa. xiv. 9). These scriptures so affected me, that I have often walked backward, fearing the earth would open, and swallow me up, as it did Korah and his company: ah! my soul hath still these things in remembrance, they were really wormwood and gall.

In this state I was kept from self destruction, although my life hung in doubt, and I felt certain of damnation, through the terrors of God which were heavy upon me. My body was so weak, that “I staggered like a drunken man, and was at my wit’s end” (Ps. cvii. 27), Thus I went on, growing apparently worse and worse, walking in anguish and bitterness of soul, crying out at times, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke xviii. 13); but I thought God could *not* shew me mercy. I went sometimes to the methodist chapel, but they added affliction to my bonds; I received nothing from their ministry, but condemnation: I therefore concluded they were all safe, and I was lost; I envied them for their apparent happiness. I have stood and envied the beasts, because they had no soul to be saved:

I wished God had made me a beast, or anything but a man; I was cut down like the mown grass.

As I was brought up in the Church of England, I was still wedded to her walls; and as I concluded that death was fast approaching, so I thought it was my duty, and that the only way to get peace, was to receive the sacrament, and that unless I partook of it, there could be no going to heaven. Accordingly, when the time came, I went to the church, and the morning prayers being over (for there was no Sermon), I, with others, drew near to the communion table; they all appeared very quiet and easy, but I was as one on the brink of hell, and I felt what was said, namely, the remembrance of my sins was *grievous* to me, the burden of them was *intolerable*. I took the bread and wine, but could not do as the parson said, “Eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, ” neither could I say that Christ’s blood was shed for me. I had no sooner partaken of the emblems, than I thought my heart would burst, I felt as sinking through the pavement of the Church, from the power of these words, forcing themselves into my mind; “He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body: wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor. xi. 27, 29). I therefore concluded that I had eaten and drunk damnation to myself, and that my doom was sealed to all eternity. I leave the reader to describe my feelings if he can. I was as one desperate: I left the others who appeared so tranquil, and got up into the singing seats, and there laid down that no one might see me. There I cried and grieved like a bear bereaved of her whelps.

No one can describe the sorrows of my heart, when I felt as one that was given up to “blackness of darkness, ” and “the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 7, 13). Look to God in such a state I dared not; it was my own act of presumption by which I was undone. Nothing now remained but “a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation from the Lord” (Heb. x. 27). I concluded that hell now “was moved for me to meet me at my coming. ” It is in vain for me to attempt to describe the feelings of

my poor soul. I little thought then, that the hand of the Lord was in all this, and that he was answering me by “terrible things in righteousness” (Ps. lxxv. 5). I confess I was hereby taught, and always shall believe, that the sacrament is no passport or bridge to carry souls to heaven; that nothing but the atonement or blood of sprinkling will ever give the guilty conscience peace, or remove the guilt of sin, or purge it from dead works; for nothing short of the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7). O my soul, bless and praise thy ever precious Lord Jesus!

I have thought many times, in looking over the things which are passed, that the Lord was determined to break down my haughty mind, my proud rebellious spirit, and to cut me up root and branch; so that I should have nothing to rest in or on, but him and his great salvation, which is the only safe and sure foundation; for no flesh shall glory in his presence. After this terrible fearfulness and dread of hell, a new scene opened: my old companions began to visit me; they endeavoured to comfort me, to deliver me from what they called my religious melancholy. This was a great trial, for the devil pointed them out as happy; and that I, for the sake of being religious, was as one desperate. They detailed my former pleasures, and inquired, why I could not join with them in those innocent amusements as formerly, for they saw no harm in them; and besides, our forefathers all followed those things, went to church, and were considered good people; but I appeared to condemn them all, and thought they were all gone to hell. At this time I was afraid to go to church, lest the tower should fall on me, although it was strongly cemented together; they therefore rebuked me, and said I had done wrong in staying away from church, for the singing was gone back, and I ought to keep it on; and as my father was getting old, it was my duty to assist him and fill his situation after his death, which I had promised; and that acting in the way I did, I was disobeying my parents. All this, and much more that I could relate, afforded me no comfort, but aggravated my misery, for I felt “hell from beneath moved for me to meet me at my coming;” I was completely “bound with the yoke of my transgression” (Lam. i. 4), and I could not flee from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. i. 10). Thus passed days and nights in grief and desperate

sorrow: by the law I was condemned as a transgressor, and by the gospel as an unbeliever; so that read where I would, all was condemnation. I searched the Bible to see what sort of sinners the Lord saved, and I found that they were very great ones, such as Paul the blasphemer—the thief—David—Manasseh—the Jailor—Mary Magdalene and others; but their sins did not appear to me of that awful nature mine were, therefore I could not draw any comfort from them: they sinned ignorantly, and there was an atonement for their sins; I had sinned presumptuously, and there was no atonement for such. Thus everything appeared against me. One of my old companions (an infidel, and I believe he is so to this day) came to me many times and entreated me to read “Paine’s Age of Reason:” he said it would settle the matter, and I should soon be well and happy. I told him I would not, for the Bible was the only book that I could read, although when I read it, it always condemned me. Ah! when I look back over these things, I do bless my gracious God that he kept me in his strong hand, and would not let me join the multitude to do evil.

I now firmly believe, that all the powers in heaven and earth cannot hold up a sinner in such a state as I was in, from sinking into hell; that nothing short of the power of God can do it; for I was kept and preserved for months from destruction, when distracted in mind, and when my rationality appeared to be leaving me. The thought of being an inmate of a mad-house rent my heart, but this was not to be compared with the feelings I had from a sense of wrath to come. I sought out solitary places where I could be alone, to mourn over my hard fate (as I called it), and to try to cry unto God; but all was confusion, I knew not what I said, and the tempter harassed me, that I did not pray right, nor often enough, that I ought to be more diligent and strive more to use the means of grace (as they are called), and then I should get peace. So to work I went, and the thought was suggested, that if I could pray twenty times a day it would get me happiness, and fit me for the kingdom of heaven: “so foolish was I, and ignorant” (Ps. lxxiii. 22) of the plan of salvation. In the performance of these things, I seemed to get a little comfort, but was sharply tried because I could not attain to the number twenty. I thought one day that I was near the mark, as I considered I had prayed nineteen

times, yet there was one wanting. I expected to get the full amount the next day! Little did I then think that I had joined the enemies of the Lord in the plains of Shinar, and was despising the riches of his grace, in endeavouring to get to heaven by my prayers and works. When I thought I had nearly completed my Babel, the Lord in mercy razed all to the ground, and all my former terrors returned; Satan appeared to set on me again with double fury; and I became like one desperate. He tried to sink me in despair by telling me, if I were not elected I should be damned; and as I had always despised election, and trifled with it, all was over; that what I deserved was come upon me; that I had been praying long to the Lord, and as he had not answered me, therefore he never would. As this did not appear to be enough for his satanic majesty, he let fly another of his fiery darts, by tempting me to believe *there was no God*; but the old infernal foe to Christ and his Church did not prevail, for I was as sure there was a God, as I felt I was a sinner. I do not wonder at the enmity and craft of the devil; for as the Lord had translated me out of Satan's kingdom, the devil had lost a very useful and faithful servant, and therefore he did all a devil and his servants could do, to entrap me. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who held me and kept me amidst all these temptations; and now I desire to praise him with my whole heart for his goodness and mercy, "being confident of this one thing, that he that begun the good work, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6). But at that time I knew not that the Lord had made me alive, feeling as I did the sentence of death in me, and concluding that the Lord was about to banish me from his presence. As I was just on the borders of despair, labouring under a guilty conscience, I remember full well going to the methodist chapel to hear a woman preach. She read for her text, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" (Luke xiii. 7.) As soon as the words were spoken, I said to myself, God hath sent her to point me out; and as she went on with her discourse, she appeared to level all her artillery against me, whilst the thunders of Mount Sinai and the devouring flame made me feel as one sinking into hell with the curse of the law upon me! She did not leave one of the commandments in the back ground; but enforced personal and perpetual obedience to all of them, or the threatening in the text would be fulfilled, "Cut it down, why

cumbereth it the ground?” This drop of bitters I got, in trying to satisfy my soul with the dry breast of Hagar and her feigned humility. I left the place worse in mind than when I went in, and was tempted to curse the woman for tormenting me so, for not one of the commandments could I keep or fulfil. I thought I was lost to all eternity; that damnation was my portion, and I only lived to be cut down as a cumberer of the ground.

At this time I appeared to be in a deep decline, nothing did me good, and I concluded that I must die; but death was not so great a terror to my mind as *the day of judgment*. Now, also, the Lord’s hand was turned against me in providence; my business was going back, and my creditors’ demands could not be paid, so that I could say with Jacob, “All these things are against me” (Gen. xlii. 36); but the state of my poor soul was my trouble and sore grief. I could say with David (though since I have seen a greater than David there), “*Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps: thy wrath lieth hard upon me, thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves*” (Ps. lxxxviii. 6, 7). But, in this my distress and anguish of soul, I bless the Lord he held me up, and kept me by his power according to his own purpose and grace; and he is my witness to the truth I have written, and also to what follows, “for he delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling (into hell); when the sorrows of death compassed me about, the pains of hell gat hold upon me, and I found trouble and sorrow” (Ps. cxvi. 3, 8). The last night of my anguish I could not lie in bed, I walked the room without any clothes on, firmly believing, according to my feelings, from the intense burning heat I was in, that I was in hell. My poor wife wondered what was the matter with me; she importuned me to tell her: at last, in the bitterness of my poor soul, I said, If ever there was any one in hell, I am the man! And I now bless my ever dear and gracious Lord, there is no hell for me.

Between the hours of four and five in the morning of the fifteenth day of July, 1814, I got into bed; whether I fell asleep or not, I do not know, but before five o’clock I heard these words with such power in my soul, that I shall never forget them; “*All are yours, ye are Christ’s, and Christ*

is God's" (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23). I knew not from whence they came, neither did I recollect I had ever seen them in the Bible.

Before I enter on the blessedness that took place in my soul, the reader will recollect what I was brought through in about ten months of bondage, guilt, terror, death, and sorrow; the Lord having quickened my soul—shown me the spirituality of his law—erected his tribunal in my conscience—with a testimony of the wrath of God revealed from heaven in a fiery law against my ungodliness; my own conscience bearing witness against me, so that I ate no pleasant bread. As hell appeared open to receive me, I have wondered many times at the long suffering of the Lord, that I was out of it. I must here observe, that I do not write these things as a standard for the experience of the Lord's dear children, but to testify of the Lord's grace, mercy, and loving-kindness towards me; for the Lord deals with his children as to him is right, to bring them to a knowledge of himself and his great salvation. And I further say, if the reader hath had a little of these bitter feelings, he can in a measure enter into mine, But to proceed, I now believe the Lord was dealing with me thus in much mercy, to break down my light and trifling spirit, and to bring down my lofty looks and vain thoughts, that the Lord alone might be exalted, as it is written, "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa. ii. 17).

By these things I learned how low a sinner may sink under a sense of sin, death, hell, and wrath, and yet the Lord deliver him out of all, and raise him to a throne of glory. The experience of these things brought me into the love of the truth of that precious scripture spoken by the Lord Jesus, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils" (Luke xi. 21, 22). The strong man, I believe, meaneth the devil, that kept the house when I went on in peace with the world and self, and could sin without control; but when my blessed Lord dethroned him from my heart, and bound him, yea, turned him out, and spoiled his

furniture, namely, death, the dominion of sin and unbelief, then war began, and a roaring tempest took place, until I was filled with horror and confusion, —but my precious Lord Jesus not only bound the devil and turned him out, but kept him from enthroning himself in my heart again, though he hath tempted me sorely since, and endeavoured to get me back into his service again; and I speak it to my shame, that I felt sometimes an inclination to enlist again under his black banner, and turn traitor to my very best friend; but this was my infirmity. Nevertheless “grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. v. 21), for to this day I have been “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation” (1 Peter i. 5). Glory, honour, and praise to my precious Jesus!

I beg the reader to forgive me for this digression. I now return to tell him a little of the blessed effects wrought in my mind by that scripture which was spoken with power to my heart, when I was in blackness of darkness, and, as a guilty sinner according to my feelings, in hell; but language fails to describe the great change I felt. Guilt, misery, fear, dread, bondage, wrath, and hell, fled from me more quickly than the morning dew before the sun; for all were gone in a moment, while light, life, liberty, joy, and peace, sprang up in my soul. I got out of bed to see if any one was in the room who could have spoken the words; but I found no one there, so I began to consider the matter, and felt persuaded it was from the Lord. I sought for my old companions, namely, guilt, sin, &c. but they were all gone; I could not find one of them; whereby that scripture was verified, “In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve” (Jer. 1. 20). I began to sing of the mercies of the Lord who had done so great things for me, by loosing my bonds (Ps. cxvi. 16): my burden and misery were removed; I lost all pain of body and mind; “I had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1); “I rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3); “I had joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xiv. 17). I completely lost the remembrance of my sins and guilt; the terrors of God were removed: hell

was eternally locked against me; and I rejoiced on the account of grace abounding to the chief of sinners. I knew not where to find the words that were spoken to me; but I searched the Bible, and rested not until I found them; and I can now say with the prophet, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts” (Jer. xv. 16).

The health of my body began to return, and I was soon restored to my wonted strength; “all things were new, the old things were passed away” (2 Cor. v. 17). All my thoughts, desires, and affections now centered in my dearest Lord Jesus, and I was as one unfit for the world. Before this I had no rest upon my bed for the anguish of my soul; now I had no sleep, neither did I want it, for I had all I needed, and that was Christ; “bless his precious name, Christ was all and in all” to me (Col. iii. 11). Thus I went on in peace, my soul melted down, and in humbleness of mind I walked with the Lord, whilst gratitude and thankfulness flowed forth from my heart, to my ever blessed though much abused Lord. I lived as if the Lord and I were constantly talking together face to face. The tempest was over (Isa. liv. 11), all was a delightful calm; I have often since compared it to the two distinct scenes that took place in the wilderness, and the gospel dispensation as sweetly interpreted by the Holy Ghost, (Heb. xii. 18—24, see also Exod. xix. 18, 19; xxiv. 9—11):—“Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. ” This was now the state of my mind, all old things were passed away, and I saw the God of Israel, and believed that he was my God; the darkness was past, and the true light shined (1 John ii. 8). And the following scripture was sweetly realized in my heart, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. iv. 6). And the only way I can word my change or deliverance is simply this, *Out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of self into*

Christ, out of hell into heaven. After the Lord had delivered me from going down into the pit, having found a ransom (Job xxxiii. 24), I went on my way rejoicing in Jesus Christ. I read the Bible with the eyes of my understanding enlightened (Eph. i. 18). I saw beauties in the word that I never saw or thought of before: and I was enabled to receive them into my heart. I got a knowledge of their spiritual import; and in this state of blessedness I lived for several months; nothing moved me: as for the old man, or body of this death, it never disturbed me: my old adversary, the devil, was gone; so I fairly concluded that the whole were dead and buried, and never would rise again. I went from place to place to hear preaching, and wondered that neither church, methodist, nor baptist parsons, touched upon my case, or spoke of the blessedness of the word of God realized in the heart, Sometimes I said to myself, How is this, that I do not hear of the things the Lord hath revealed in me? I thought myself singular; and was convinced it was no delusion, for I had communion with the Lord, who was pleased to keep me to the point.

The manifestations of the love and mercy of my very dear Lord were preparing me for a trial, that I might take joyfully the spoiling of my goods, knowing that in heaven I had a better and an enduring substance (Heb. x. 34). I could say with Paul, "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14). I have before mentioned that my business, during my affection, was going back. My wife and myself were honest, we endeavoured to keep so in the sight of the world; and as the cause of God and truth was dear to me, so I feared to bring a reproach on the cause. But the Lord is too wise to err—if he shut, none can open—everything turned from prosperity to adversity. I often prayed to my good and gracious Lord to prevent it; but it was his will that I should sink into poverty. We had borrowed 300*l.* of my wife's father, he held a judgment-bond for it. I knew not the nature of such a thing when I signed it; but by this judgment being put in force, my other creditors were shut out until that was paid, and the expenses attending it. I have learned a little of the law and lawyers since that time. One of my creditors having threatened to arrest me, which was a severe trial to me, I made it known; and my wife's father put an execution into my house, seized all my goods and

furniture, and the next day I was arrested for debt, but was kept from going to prison by security being given to the officer for my appearance. In the meantime a composition was agreed to; and I paid my creditors. My house, which cost me 70*l.* was sold for 30*l.* My goods made not more than half their value; and I, my wife, and three children, had not a dish or a spoon to call our own. Our friends were gone—my work stopped—I was in much tribulation, but not without God or hope; for the consolations of God were neither few nor small with me (Job xv. 11). The Lord mercifully supported me under it, and carried me through the whole scene in a wonderful way, so that I did not grieve about it; I had his presence, and that was all I wanted. I had lost now what I before set a great value on, namely, my name and reputation. Professors and profane called me a rogue; and the saying, as usual, went forth, “Ah! this is their religion, to rob and cheat;” but the Lord knows my heart, and I can appeal to him, that it was my sincere desire to pay every one his honest due. Since that period, every debt contracted, whether great or small, the Lord in mercy hath enabled us to pay. And I speak it to the praise of my ever precious Lord, that now I am writing, I believe there is not one in Plymouth can accost me, saying “Pay me that thou owest.” When at Kingston I wanted bread to eat, the Lord took away my appetite, and fed my soul with the dear contents of his most precious word, and taught me the truth of the following scripture, “*That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God*” (Luke iv. 3).

I have known persons who hated the truths of God which were precious to my soul, come in and put a loaf on my table and walk out again, without speaking a word. O! how sweet to know the fulness of that blessed name, “Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide:” and I feel a sweet confidence in him who doth and hath done so much for me, that he doth, and will ever provide for his people. “I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor” (Ps. cxl. 12). “And will not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him; though he bear long with them? *he will avenge than speedily*” (Luke xviii. 7, 8). This also I have seen verified, inasmuch as the Lord hath beaten down my foes before my face. Bless him, O my soul!

Before I detail my after experience, I must record the tender mercy of the Lord towards me. I have before stated how fond I was of singing and card playing; but the work of the Lord was such in my heart, that although I could before this sing a great many songs, the whole of them, with the tunes, were completely swept out of my memory, and never returned again. The very sight of a card made me tremble. I remember once going into the parlour at my wife's father's, when they were playing cards; and I so trembled, that had there not been a chair by me, I should have fallen on the floor! Such was the goodness of the Lord to me, who indulged me with his dear presence, opened the sweet contents of his word to my soul, so that the following scripture was realized personally in my heart, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isa. lxvi. 9—13). This was my sweet mercy for a long time; but the word of the Lord must be fulfilled, for it is written, "*Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts*" (Isa. xxviii. 9). And verily this took place to my great sorrow; by it I learned the truth of the words of my precious Lord Jesus, who said, "Can the children of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days" Mark ii. 19, 20): and so it came to pass, for after my long feast with my dearest Lord, he was pleased to withdraw, and I had a long fast! But I now see all was well.

It gives me pleasure to record these things, hoping that they may be made a comfort to some poor exercised child of God. When the Lord withdrew his presence, the Bible was sealed up; and instead of reading with pleasure I fell asleep over it: my mind got confused, my will rebellious, and my thoughts wandering. There was an apparent resurrection of the old man in all his ways: unbelief appeared to dethrone faith, and the devil came in like a flood (Isa. lix. 19); he hurled his fiery darts (Eph. vi. 16) at me with all his fury, and brought thousands of accusations against me. A flood of doubts and fears so oppressed me, that I concluded I was a lost soul after all. I could get no access to the throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16); the heavens were brass and the earth iron (Deut. xxviii. 23). "My beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone; I called him, but he gave me no answer" (Song v. 6). Satan and unbelief worked with the engine of poverty. The loss of all my former friends became a heavy burden to my mind, and I foolishly thought that my former days of sin and prosperity in the world, were better than these days of distress and poverty. I looked for comfort on the right hand and on the left; and like Job, went forward and backward (Job xxiii. 8, 9), but I found with David that there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Ps. cxlii. 4): both professor and profane served me alike, they stood aloof from my sore" (Ps. xxxviii. 11). I had no rest, for my old master the devil was very busy, so that a scheme was laid to get me back again to the church. The vicar had heard that I had become a dissenter; and he wrote a letter to my father, pointing out the inconsistency of my conduct; and promised, if I would return to the church, to get me licensed for a clerk; and that it would be an advantage to me to have a vote for members of parliament. Others offered me money to come back and lead the singing. But blessed be my gracious Lord God! he kept me from complying with these temptations. Satan knew well how to bait his hook, or to spread his net, to catch a poor sinner; he knew I wanted money to pay my debts, and in his subtlety he suggested that it was my duty to comply, as it would tend to the benefit of myself, my wife and family. All his suggestions availed nothing. The chief thing I felt the need of was the presence of the Lord; the loss of this was more to me than all worldly things: and I thought if

I had that, I should be content to go into the poor-house; for the severest part of the trial was, that the Lord having withdrawn so long from me, I feared he would never return, and that my last state would be worse than the first (2 Peter ii. 20). This trial to me was a heart-rending one, for unbelief got the uppermost: I called in question all my former experience, and concluded that it was all fleshly. Satan suggested that as I had rejected all the kindness and counsel of my friends, I had sinned against God in so doing, and that he was angry with me and had cast me off for ever. By these suggestions, I became so distressed in spirit, that, according to my feelings, I was as one without God and hope in the world; I knew not where to look, nor what to do. I thought to agree to the proposals that had been made to me, and to offer my services: then it was suggested to my mind that it would be in vain; therefore, I knew not what to do, I thought I *had no* God to call upon, for if I called he would not hear nor answer me. Thus rebellion and stubbornness made themselves manifest, and my heart fretted against the Lord (Prov. xix. 3). I was in the situation described by Solomon, A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes: a fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul" (Provo xviii. 6, 7).

I was altogether ignorant of Satan's devices, who now charged me with having brought all this trouble upon myself, wife and family, for the sake of being religious; and it would be of no use to me to expect friendship from any one more: that as I had acted in such a presumptuous way against God and man, there was now no way of escape for me: this was the most acute part of the trial.

That sinner who knows something of being in Satan's sieve, will enter a little into my feelings when Satan added, "The only way you can take to show your love to your wife and children is to *hang yourself*, and then your wife's father and mother will take care of her and the children; for you will never have a favour from them while you live: and it is evident, from your own feelings, that your religion is only in the flesh: and as you are sure of going to hell at last, show your love to your family by doing this; and they will have everything they want." Ah! reader, this did rend

my heart; my wife and children were dear unto me. Whilst I am writing, the remembrance of this trial makes me rejoice with trembling (Ps. ii. 11). Who but my gracious God could have kept me in such a state of temptation, which for many weeks I laboured under? My flesh wasting away upon my bones, for I had no rest day nor night; I reasoned upon the subject, and the whole of it appeared to me to be truth. I felt a giving way to the temptation, and the place was pointed out where I should do it, namely, in a linnay where bullocks were kept in the winter, which was in a court opposite the house where I then lived. It was actually shown to me how I should fasten the rope round the beam, and tie the knot about my neck that it should not slip, but be done effectually. I could not say a word to any one about it; I tried to cry to the Lord, but my prayer seemed shut out (Lam. iii. 8); I concluded hell must be my portion. When the time came to perform the act, I took the rope from the cellar at the back of the house, and in passing through the passage took my last view of my wife and children, and (as I thought) my eternal farewell of them. The anguish of my soul I cannot describe; my bowels yearned over them, and I felt as if my heart-strings were breaking asunder. I entered the place and shut the door, and then stood to consider the matter; and when about to fasten the rope, my ever to be adored precious Lord spake home these words to my heart, "*Do thyself no harm.*" (Acts xvi. 28): they came with such power that I became motionless. The Lord spoke them again, "*Do thyself no harm,*" the snare was broken, and I was delivered (Ps. cxxiv. 7); the devil was defeated, the poor mason set free; the Lord was glorified, and my soul was melted down before him. I wept, I rejoiced, and with all my heart thanked the Lord, and felt such love to him for his goodness and tender mercy to me, that my cup ran over with joy and gratitude to him. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all ye that love him speak well of his name." I hid the rope under some reeds that were there, and I could not enter that place again for many months. I returned to my house as a hind let loose (Gen. xlix. 2]), with my soul blessing and praising God for his wonderful loving-kindnesses to me, and my dear wife and children. Such were my feelings, that I could not then have made known to any one what had passed for the world, Well might Hannah say of the Lord, He will keep the feet of his saints, and the

wicked shall be silent in darkness, for by strength shall no man prevail” (1 Sam. ii. 9). I record this conspicuous deliverance as a testimony of the Lord’s mercy towards me, and ascribe it to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. i. 6).

This was to me a very blessed proof of the Lord’s everlasting love, grace, mercy and faithfulness; and also a confirmation of my interest in the covenant blessedness of the everlasting covenant of my blessed Lord God, the sure mercies of David (Isa. lv. 3). I could now read my Bible again with pleasure: had sweet access to my God in prayer: joy and peace in believing sprung up in my heart, and I was brought to read, pray over, and meditate upon, the wonderful love, condescension and humiliation of my precious Lord Jesus, who was tempted in all points like unto us (Heb. iv. 15). I saw in his temptations that the devil did hurl his ifs at him; and found that he was tempted to self-destruction as I had been, for the devil said to him, If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down from hence” (Luke iv. 9). I also saw clearly how it was that I had such a long fast under this sore temptation, for it is said of Jesus, „And in those days he did eat nothing’ (ver. 2). But the devil was foiled by the Head of the church, and (bless his precious name!) He will deliver all his members, so that Satan will have nothing to boast of in the end.

Now I had solid peace in my mind, but not such a flowing of joy as when the Lord first delivered my soul: but I must observe, in pondering over this subject, that my former guilt of sin and the terrors of my mind were not brought back, nor did hell appear moved to meet me at my coming, ” neither hath it returned in the like manner unto this day.

At this time my poverty was great, yet I was happy. I speak it to the praise of my dearest Lord, that although my wife at this time knew nothing of the power of God or of his truth in her own soul, yet I never heard her murmur concerning our hard state of poverty, though she had always been used to a full table; but it is written, “When He (the Lord) giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?” (Job xxxiv. 29). I have found the truth of this many times, as well as the following part of the verse, “And when he hideth his face who can behold him? whether it be

done against a nation or against a man only. ” We used to cut the green herbs in the garden, and put them in the tea-pot and pour boiling water on them, which we drank without milk or sugar for our tea and breakfast; and our dinner and supper were fried potatoes, for the children needed the bread that could be got, and if there were none we fared all alike: a very little food sufficed me, for Jesus was very precious; and I can truly say, that these meals were some of the sweetest meals I have ever had in the wilderness; for so much of the love of my blessed Lord I enjoyed therein, that I could then thank and praise him for his mercies; although many times since, I speak it to my shame, when my table has been well filled, I have not had a feeling in my heart to thank him for his mercy and goodness towards me. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him?” In this way I was led in peace and quietness of soul; sometimes I had work, and sometimes none; but Satan had left me for a season.

I had now an acquaintance with a few of the children of God at Bigbury and Ringmore, who had left the Baptist church at Modbury, because they could not feed on a dry ministry of human compositions. They met at my brother’s house in Bigbury, and sometimes in a room at Ringmore. We had sometimes preaching, at other times singing, prayer and reading: the Lord was with us and refreshed our souls. By this time I was nearly dead to the Arminian preaching, and to the dry formality we had in the church; and my friends had given over their entreaties, for they considered me a fool and a fanatic.

But all my troubles were not ended; my poverty still lay heavy on me, and my peace was again disturbed. Satan was permitted to harass me by paying me another visit; he worked on my fleshly feelings, and set me to wage war against the sovereignty of my God, in the displays of his will and pleasure towards me, so that I concluded the Lord dealt very hardly with me. Ah! what an infernal devil is Beelzebub, and what a monster of iniquity is a fallen sinner! Satan began again to touch my fleshly feelings concerning my wife and children; he represented my conduct as the cause of their poverty and distress, and told me I certainly hated them instead of loving them: but the Lord knew my heart, for I grieved more

about them than I did concerning myself. But the devil still worked, and at last got the apparent mastery over the poor mason, and drove him from his stronghold and confidence in his blessed Lord. I must say, that I account the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation (2 Pet. iii. 15).

I was again walking without the dear presence of my precious Lord. Satan set me to work with all my reason and wits: he took every way he could to entrap me, and did not leave me until he got me to lie against my right (Job xxxiv. 6), and to call in question all the Lord had done for me. My bowels sounded with pity for my wife and children, and I strove to devise some plan to get them out of trouble. The only way I could see was, to go back to my old companions and to the church: but in all this he never told me to try the experiment of hanging myself. Surely he is a crafty devil: he knew how the Lord had foiled him in this; therefore he was quiet on this point, although he besieged me day and night, and would not let me rest, In this state [continued for many weeks; and even prayer was restrained before God (Job xv. 4).

I well remember, one Wednesday evening I set off to go to Bigbury to a prayer-meeting, when I was labouring hard under the weight of these things, and I was as if driven into the wilderness by the devil. As I was crossing some fields to get into the road, I thought that, for the sake of the family, I would give all religion up, go back into the world, and not mention the name of Christ more, neither would I walk any more with his people; I could be but damned after all. Poor sinner, dost thou know anything of such things as these? If thou dost, thou art better acquainted with my state of mind than I can describe it! As I was walking on, a thought arose in my mind, that when I got into the road, as I had a stick in my hand, I would stand it upright, and whichever way it would fall, I would go: this certainly will appear a very foolish way of acting, but what Will not a person do when driven to his wits' end. But it came to pass, as I was putting my intention into execution, my most gracious and much abused Lord settled the way I was to go, by bringing into my mind with power, these words, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven “ (Luke ix. 62). I thought

my heart would have burst. I saw plainly that to go back would be bold rebellion and daring presumption against the Lord; and to go forward was cutting work; as all was gloominess and darkness, so that I was in the place, according to my feelings, where two seas meet' (Acts xxvii. 41). This took place opposite a gate, which was the last on the left hand in the road from Kingston, before you come to Oakenbury-lane-end. This scripture brought no relief to my mind; and at this time I had no recollection of the following sweet scripture, which to me hath been precious since, namely, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. xi. 25, 26). I went unto the prayer meeting; but instead of getting comfort, the word of God that was read, the hymns that were sung, and the prayers of those who engaged, all appeared against me, and to cut me up root and branch; for to aggravate my misery, *they all seemed to know what I had been thinking of and doing*, so that I left the house in a worse state of mind than when I entered it, and Satan and unbelief made sad havoc with me. I have since thought that I was much like the man among the tombs, with the legion of devils (Mark v. 9); in this state I went on towards my home, like a deranged man, under the temptation to give all up, with a mind inclined to do so; yet, a certain something was continually saying "No." In this state, I walked on until I passed over, not the ford of Jabbok" (Gen. xxxii. 22), neither the brooks of Arnon" (Num. xxi. 14), but over the brook called Fair Oak, and from thence I was ascending the hill towards Kingston, when by a secret impulse I stood still; and on a sudden my mind was arrested, and led by the Lord to Calvary; Before my eyes Jesus Christ was set forth crucified (Gal. iii. 1), I saw him bearing my sins in his own body on the tree (1 Pet. ii. 24), and suffering, the just, for me, an unjust sinner, to bring me to God (1 Pet. iii. 18).

In this vision or revelation, I was as it were under his dear feet; and his precious blood flowed down over me, and into my very heart. I felt its dear efficacy, that it cleansed me from all sins (1 John i. 7). I could say with Paul, And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord

Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Rom. v. 11), for that scripture was sweetly fulfilled in my soul, They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and mourn” (Zec. xii. 10); and with Paul I must say, „whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth” (2 Cor. xii. 2); but this knew and felt, that all my sorrows, grief, trouble, anguish of mind, temptation, and the devil, were fled, and I had “ peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1). From having such views of my ever dear and most blessed Lord Jesus on the cross, he was precious to my soul (1 Pet. ii. 7), and when I came to myself, was weeping, singing, and rejoicing in God my Saviour” (Luke i. 47). My heart was light and glad; and I was like a bird delivered out of the snare of the fowler (Ps. cxxiv. 7). Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Ps. ciii. 2).

Ah! reader, no tongue can utter, nor words describe, the blessedness I felt at this time; it was joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Peter i. 8). I was so humbled before my much abused Lord. I was made willing in this day of his power (Ps. cx. 3) to be nothing, an Jesus Christ all, and in all (Col. iii. 11). I could sing from my heart, The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted” (Ps. xviii. 46): here I received Christ Jesus the Lord, and walked in him (Col. ii. 6); and, blessed be his precious name, I felt what it was to walk with God as Enoch did (Gen. v. 24), and that in peace and equity (Mal. ii. 6). Now Jesus was in my heart the hope of glory (Col. i. 27). I had fellowship with him in his sufferings, being made conformable to his death (Phil. iii. 10); and as the sufferings of Christ abounded in me, so my consolations also abounded by Christ (2 Cor. i. 5).

If the hedges and bushes had ears, they would have heard the voice of my rejoicing in Christ. From what I have thought of the subject since, I must have been three hours at this sacred spot in the road, with my spirit, mind, thoughts, and affections taken up in profound meditations of my ever precious Christ and him crucified. As it was after midnight when I got home to my house, I found my poor wife filled with anxiety about me, fearing I had been killed. When she saw me, she asked what was the

matter, as I appeared a very different man from what I was when I left. I do not wonder at the change that could be seen from such a deliverance, and from such a revelation of Christ crucified unto my soul, and from my enjoying the saving benefits of his great salvation; for I could sing day and night—

“Now free from sin, I walk at large,
This Breaker’s blood’s my soul’s discharge;
At his dear feet content I’ll lay,
A sinner sav’d, and homage pay. ”

I now felt my conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God. I believed as I now do, that Jesus had obtained eternal redemption for me (Heb. ix. 12, 14). My captivity was turned, my sackcloth was taken away, and I was girded with gladness. The Lord had turned my mourning into dancing (Ps. xxx. 11). A new song was put into my mouth, even praise unto my God (Ps. xl. 2). And Jesus to my soul was more excellent and glorious than the mountains of prey (Ps. lxxvi. 4). All my thoughts, affections, and desires centered in him, and I went on truly happy; the Bible again was opened in its blessedness; and the whole to me set forth my most glorious Christ, so that I could embrace him in my heart as my everlasting portion. My poverty was now no weight to me; I had not time to think of it; the Bible was my treasure, salvation was my song, and Jesus was all in all. O happy days! O precious Christ! O glorious grace! O blessed God! that shewed so much mercy to the chief of sinners.

Now prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, were my sweet employ; for I had such nearness to, and communion with my dearest Lord, that it was heaven upon earth. I went on as a man talking with his friend; and out of the abundance of my heart my mouth spake (Mat. xii. 34)); and with the heart I believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession was made unto salvation (Rom. x. 10). I now felt a pleasure in the company of the children of God, and in the ordinances of his house; and as my tongue was loosed, I began to talk freely in company how happy I felt, and how I had been indulged at the banquet of mercy, that my sins were

pardoned, and I had peace with God. I can truly say, my tongue moved in sweet concert with the feelings of my heart: some, whom I thought to be believers, stared at me; for I staggered them; and they began to caution me against presumption; whilst others that had trod in the footsteps of the flock (Song i. 8) in the good old way (Jer. vie 16) rejoiced when they saw the grace of God in me (Acts xi. 23).

I must not enlarge on other circumstances connected with the continuance of this dear mercy and blessed deliverance, but only add, that I went on for months in this sweet frame of mind, fully concluding and really believing I should never have any doubts or fears more, for I thought the bitterness of death was past (1 Sam. xv. 32). Jesus, having swallowed up death in victory (Isa. xxv. 8), had brought life and Immortality to light in my soul through the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10). I now thought I should go all my way home to heaven happy and unmolested. But I did here—as I have done many times since—make very wrong calculations of things; for after a while, the savour and blessedness of the subject began to wear away, and coldness in my affections and in prayer ensued, and a deadness in reading, hearing, and in everything that was good. This paved the way for another sore conflict. I had not as yet been concerned about the doctrine of election. I knew not whether it was a truth: I never liked it: for I went now and then to hear the methodists preach, and felt a love to them, as they appeared so very religious. But the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Rom. viii. 7). Well might the Lord say, The serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field (Gen. iii. 1). And as our poor fallen nature is so much like him by reason of sin, he knows how to work on that vulnerable body of death. Satan began to draw my mind and thoughts towards my wife and children, and then towards my relations, and put me to reason upon the subject of election. Only think, ” said he, “if election be true, is it not unjust of the Lord to take you, and to leave all of them?” By this means he completely caught me in his snare; I felt my mind begin to heave against the doctrine; my natural and inordinate affections were blown up to a height; my bowels sounded like an harp for Moab (Isa. xvi. 1). I began to cavil with the Lord’s sovereignty, and to

pity all around me. The Lord is witness that I have wept over them, and even over Cain, Esau, Judas, and the unconverted thief who was crucified, because they were lost; and I was even led to pity devils, and felt a determination never to believe in the doctrine of election. Thus, as Solomon saith, The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord” Prov. xix. 3). I was rebelling against him, for the displays of his sovereign will and pleasure in doing as he will with his own (Mat. xx. 15); and what appeared to arouse my rebellion was, that when I read my Bible I found the doctrine continually meeting my eye, so that my bowels boiled and rested not (Job xxx. 27). Upon this, Satan persuaded me not to read the Bible any more, that It was full of contradictions, and only written to puzzle and perplex people, and that those who were constantly reading it, were a set of gloomy beings, not fit for any company; that to think God chose one and left another, was unjust, and contrary to the nature of God, who is love (1 John iv. 8), and loving every man. Here I was set fast, fretting and rebelling; I had no outgoing of soul to God in prayer, no light upon the word; the company of the children of God became a burden to me, the ordinances of his house painful, and Satan was persuading me to give all up, and to walk no more in the ways of the Lord.

Thus I went on; and as it is written, my lips had spoken lies, and my tongue had muttered perverseness (Isa. lix. 3); so it shows plainly that I was very nearly related to those of whom Jesus saith, O faithless and perverse generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?” (Mat. xvii. 17). In this state of mind I was one day at my work, not mourning because my Lord had withdrawn himself, but grieved at his absolute will and sovereignty, when the Lord spoke home his word to my heart. I trembled before him, and wondered what had taken hold of me, but I soon found that I stood guilty before the Lord, and I believed as much so as ever I was in all my life. The words spoken were these, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Ps. xlvi. 10). Down fell the weapons of my rebellion, and I stood wondering how the Lord could bear with such a monster in iniquity: it seemed to me that I was only born to rebel against

him; yet I felt a desire arise in my heart to praise and bless the Lord for his long suffering; but I thought it would be presumptuous in me so to do: I therefore felt determined not to trouble myself any more about election, and I promised the Lord never more to rebel against him concerning it; but, my ever blessed Lord had not done with me on this point, although my old foe was driven from me by the words the Lord had spoken, namely, that he would be exalted whether in the salvation or damnation of sinners.

After this, it came to pass, as I was going to my work one morning, and had passed through the farm yard at Wonwell, and was walking down the road under the beach trees which then stood there, that the Lord brought in another part of his word with power, namely, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins” (Mat. i. 21). These words, “his people, ” were laid on my mind with greater power than the others, and they so entered into my heart in their plain import, that before I reached my work I saw plainly, and believed with all my heart, that election was an unalterable truth; and if I were not one of God’s chosen people, I was a lost sinner to all eternity. A peculiar feeling arose in my mind, a struggling between hope and fear. I felt a holy longing to go to my Lord. I wrestled with him by prayer, and cried to him with all my soul, to show me, and make it known to me, that I was one of his elect. This was a day much to be remembered by me, and it was well ordered that I had no one working with me; and blessed be my ever dear and indulgent Lord, that although I had been so very rebellious against him, yet “his compassions failed not” (Lam. iii. 22). He did not leave me with a naked belief of the doctrine, but sealed it upon my heart in its God-glorifying nature, and soul-humbling sweetness. I felt its blessedness, and embraced it by faith: the Holy Ghost opened it in all its bearings and I was enabled to rejoice in the Lord as one of his elect; and thus the Lord gave me a knowledge of my “election of God” (1 Thess. i. 4). And now my thoughts and affections were in their right place, even in the Lord my God, and Jesus was my and in all. My soul was melted down before the Lord for his tender mercy in bearing with such a perverse sinner, and I felt such love to him in my heart, that I loathed myself in my own sight

for all my abominations (Eze. xxxvi. 31 I intreated my ever blessed Lord never to let me rebel against him anymore, for as he had shewed me such great mercy, so I desired to serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of my life” (Luke i. 74, 75). This brought me to hate my own life, &c. (Luke xiv. 26), for I found from what had transpired, “that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing” (Rom. vii. 18).

Blessed be the Lord! the truth of election now reigned predominant in my mind; and I saw and believed that my election was an eternal love-act of God the Father, before the foundation of the world; that I was chosen in Christ to be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. i, 4); and I further saw and believed, that, inasmuch as I was saved by the Lord Jesus in himself “with an everlasting salvation” (Isa. xlv. 17), it was because I was elected; “for he laid down his life for none but the sheep: and those who lived and died in unbelief were not his sheep” (John x. 15, 26). I also saw and believed, that, as the Lord had quickened my soul, it was because I was elected; for “as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed” (Acts xiii. 48). From that day these words of Jesus have been precious to my soul, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

Thus the Lord graciously established me in the immutable foundations of Sion Ps. lxxxvii. 1); the unchangeableness of his love (Zep. ii 17); his eternal purpose (Eph. iii. 11); the unalterable nature of his oath (Heb. vi. 17, 18); the stability of the promises, being all Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us (2 Cor. i. 20); that the election obtained it, and the rest were blinded (Rom. xi. 7). My soul was solaced, my heart was fixed, and I sang and gave praise, even with my glory (Ps. cviii. 1). The sovereignty of Jehovah’s grace, the discriminating nature of his mercy were shown me, and “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. v, 20, 21). My soul did abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness (Ps. cxlv. 7); and I was enabled

to bless and praise my ever precious Lord, that he had not appointed me to wrath, “but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. v. 9); and truly I did, yea, and I will rejoice: “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Tim. ii. 19).

Thus I went on again with a settled peace in my heart. My soul was joyful in my God the Lord (Ps. xxxv. 9); and I could say with David, “My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever” (Ps. cxlv. 21). I now saw and believed my eternal safety and security, by the sovereign love-act of my God and Father in election, and that I was as safe on earth as the Church in heaven, for the Lord preserved me from all evil, yea, it is he that shall keep my soul; and I believed that “the Lord would preserve me in my going out and coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore” (Ps. cxxi. 7, 8). Now, the glorious Jehovah unfurled the banner of everlasting love, and waved it over my soul in its beauties and blessedness, and the whole appeared to me as dyed in the blood of Emanuel, God with us (Matt. i. 23). Now election by grace (Rom. xi. 5), salvation by grace (Eph. ii. 8), effectual calling by grace (1 Tim. i. 15), and being preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1), constituted my blessedness and the theme of my song; and no man shall stop me of this boasting (2 Cor. xi. 10), while I have the articulation of the tongue.

As this abundant mercy was shown me from the Lord, the fire was kindled in my heart, and I spake with my tongue (Ps. xxxix. 3). I began to blaze abroad the matter (Mark i. 45), and to tell what great things God had done for me (Luke viii. 39); and I will now tell my reader how these things operated on some. There was one of the Arminian class that I had walked with; and we had joined to speak evil of election. I met him one day, and said, that since he and I last met, the Lord had established my soul in the doctrine of election. I saw by his countenance what effect it had; and he replied quickly, “Then you and I shall never walk together again;” and so it came to pass, for we never have unto this day; and twenty

years have since passed, and he still remains in his Arminian God-dishonouring system. It was soon noised abroad in their community that I believed in election; and as I had been at times at their prayer-meetings, the governor of the band came one night to oppose me, and said, no such heresies should creep into their church. The poor mason was, in their eyes, a bad fellow ever afterwards; but none of these things moved me (Acts xx. 24), for I had the Lord's testimony in my heart that he had chosen me (John xv. 16, 19). Bless the Lord, O my soul, that he hath made thee to differ (1 Cor. iv. 7). The Lord shall have all the glory, for the purpose of God according to election will stand (Rom. ix. 11).

I little thought then, the Lord was preparing me by these sore conflicts, to speak forth from experience the words of truth and soberness (Acts xiii. 52), as I had felt them in my own heart, with the joy and consolations of the same. I now went on for some time, filled with joy in the Holy Ghost (Acts xxvi. 24), blessing and thanking God for his unspeakable gift (2 Cor. ix. 15).

These were precious days to me; all was well, all was right between the Lord and my soul, and the words of my ever dear Lord Jesus were very precious to me: "Upon this rock will I build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). I said with David, "Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong" (Ps. xxx. 7): and the Lord is my witness, that I firmly believed I never should be troubled and tried about soul-matters, for I thought my faith in the truth so firm and strong, that nothing could move me or make me doubt; but in this I was mistaken, for I had much to be tried about, which I then knew not.

My poverty was still great, although Satan had not made use of that in the preceding trial; and my enemies were lively, strong, and many; but my faith must be tried—my confidence be shaken—unbelief prevail awhile, and the devil loosed for a little season (Rev. xx. 3), that I might know my own weakness, also "the depths of Satan" (Rev. ii. 24), and the power and grace of God. For it came to pass, that a lethargic spirit came upon me; I now call it a sleepy devil, so that I could not read, pray, or

hear, without falling asleep; this was a sore trial unto me; I thought my prayers were cold and lifeless; and such a reluctance I felt towards everything that was good, that I was like a restive horse, whipped to everything; then, my poverty, wife, and children, so gained the ascendancy in my mind and affections, that I could think of nothing else. At last my heart began to fret against the Lord, and I, fool-like, thought he dealt hardly with me. Now was Satan's time to work with all his subtilty; he did not tempt me to deny the truth of election, which the Lord had made so precious to my soul; but he endeavoured to make me, what is called by some, an Antinomian, by making me presumptuous and careless, and to trifle with the mercies of my Lord. One day as I was at my work, thinking upon my state and circumstances, and envying "the prosperity of the wicked" (Ps. lxxiii. 3), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. ii. 2) paid me a visit. I was ignorant of his device, and consequently I did not think it was from him. He said, "You believe that you are elected?" I said, "Yes, I do. " "You have enjoyed much blessedness and comfort from it, and you believe that you are safe?" I said, "Yes. " "You believe that Jesus Christ hath redeemed you, and saved you?" I said, "Yes. " "You believe in effectual calling, and that the Lord hath quickened your soul?" I said, "Yes. " "You believe in the final perseverance of the saints?" I answered, "Yes. " "And you therefore believe that those that are elected, redeemed, and quickened, are safe and secure, and nothing can 'separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus'?" (Rom. viii. 39). I said, " I believe all this. " Then he said, "You see how poor you are, and for the sake of your religion you have brought it upon yourself, and as you believe all things are sure, you may now certainly go back, and enjoy your former pleasures, join with your old companions, and they will be your friends; you will then have bread to eat, and clothes to wear, and money in your pocket; and you will again appear respectable in the world, which is much better than walking about in rags as you now are; and as you confess that you are safe and secure, it is no matter what you do; election secures you, grace hath saved you, and you are made alive, and Jesus hath said they cannot die anymore (Luke xx. 36); therefore, you are sure to go to heaven, do what you will. " I was now like a dumb man, my spirit sunk within me, my mind was bewildered, my thoughts confused, and I was at my wit's end. To go back to my old friends I could not; the thoughts of indulging in the pleasures

of sin rent my heart; and yet, to be living in such a state of poverty was very trying to me. In this strait, I knew not what to do; I endeavoured to spread it before the Lord, but all was confusion; when I cried unto the Lord, my cry “returned to mine own bosom” (Ps. xxxv. 13). Thus I went on mourning in prayer, and vexed in spirit. I walked in darkness and had no shining (Isa. 1. 10). Satan was working with all his subtilty, persuading me it was the only way for me to get out of trouble, so that I had no rest day or night; my sleep forsook me, I forgot to eat my bread, and my strength began to fail. In this state I continued for several weeks, so that at last I was like one in “grief and desperate sorrow” (Isa. xvii. 11); and although the Lord had comforted my soul before, and delivered me out of my distresses, yet the present trouble shut them out of sight. But, to the praise of my ever blessed Lord, I have to record he knew the way that I took, and “when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold” (Job xxiii. 10). One day when I went home at the dinner hour, instead of sitting down to partake of the little we had, I went into the field opposite the house I lived in, and behind the linnay where I was tempted to hang myself: there stood some elm trees; under them I lay down in anguish of soul, and the struggle between flesh and spirit was strong; at last I felt my heart moving towards the Lord, and I prayed to him in the following words:—“Dear Lord, thou knowest how I am bowed down, and tried in my soul with the temptations of the devil; I cannot live under them, and none but thyself, O my God, can deliver me; therefore, O Lord, never let me rise from this place more, unless thou deliverest my soul; I cannot bear it, Lord; I cannot bear it, Lord.” As I uttered these words, the Lord answered me to the joy of my soul, by bringing into my heart the following words, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid, how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. vi. 1, 2). Blessed be the Lord my God, the devil was defeated and put to flight, the snare was broken, and my soul escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler (Ps. cxxiv. 7). I felt such melting of heart before the Lord, and such humbleness of mind, that I wept and sang for joy, and praised my ever precious Lord for his wonderful loving-kindness to one so very unworthy; yea, I rejoiced in the God of my salvation, and with all my heart I crowned him Lord of all; for however trying these things are, they are among the “all things that work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose” (Rom. viii. 28).

By these things he taught me my own weakness and nothingness; that I could not stand in my own strength against one temptation, whether great or small; “but his strength was made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. xii. 9); that he was “wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working” (Isa. xxviii. 29); which led me to adore my precious Lord, for his keeping and delivering power. Although “my feet had well-nigh slipped, and was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked” (Ps. lxxiii. 2, 3), “yet the Lord sustained me” (Ps. iii. 5) in this sore conflict; and I have found, and do still find, that every conflict, trial, and temptation which I have experienced, and may endure, will ultimately end in good, and for the Lord’s glory.

Now I could, and did rejoice with David, “I will love thee, O Lord my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies” (Ps. xviii. 1—3); and being thus delivered, I went on again in the strength of the Lord, with peace of mind, tranquility of soul, and “joy in the Holy Ghost” (Acts xiii. 52); the scriptures were again opened to my mind in their blessedness, and by their comfort I had hope, (Rom. xv. 4). I had the company and presence of my precious Lord Jesus, and was set upon my high places Hab. iii. 19); and I thought I could suffer anything for the sake of my blessed Lord, who had suffered and done so much for me.

And now, reader, let me advise thee a little; make sure work in thy own conscience, by laying it open to the plain truths of God; look well to thy ways; see to it, whether thou art in the way of life, and walking in the footsteps of the flock (Song i. 8); for know assuredly, that the show of religion will never do thee any good, nor the form of godliness, without the power (2 Tim. iii. 5); a lamp without oil” (Matt. xxv.) will gain thee no admittance into heaven; and what a disappointment it will be unto thee, though now walking in the fair show of religion in the flesh, then to hear that unalterable sentence, “Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire” (Matt. xxv. 41). The scripture testimony runs thus: “Examine yourselves,

whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates” (2 Cor. xiii. 5). Vital godliness is more than show, external works, or lip-service; it consists of the following mercies, —being born again (John iii. 5); a broken and contrite heart (Isa. lvii. ‘15); a conscience purged from dead works, by the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 14); the fear of the Lord put in the heart, and his law written therein (Jer. xxxi. 33); which is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death (Prove xiv. 27); and the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins (Luke i. 77); faith and hope in God (1 Pet. i. 21); and Christ in you the hope of glory (Col. i. 27). These things will enable a sinner to ponder well the paths of his feet (Prove iv. 26), and to walk circumspectly (Eph. v. 15), and to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things (Tit. ii. 10). He will walk by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor. v. 7); and to such Jesus will be precious (1 Pet. ii. 7); such and such only will have their hearts directed into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ (2 Thess. iii. 5); and to them Christ will be all and in (1 Col. iii. 11).

My exercises, trials, temptations, and deliverances, brought me experimentally to know the truth and blessedness of the words of my sweetest Lord Jesus: “In me ye shall have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John xv. 33); and again, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple: and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (Luke xiv. 26, 27). The religion of Jesus hath no new appendages; it is the same narrow way now as it ever hath been; whatever men have devised, or contrived to widen it, or to adorn it by new apparel, they have not destroyed or altered its simplicity, power, and blessedness. Christ Jesus, the way, &c. is the same rock of offence and defense now as ever. Men may strive and try to make things palatable to the world but in vain, for Jesus saith, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away” (Matt. xxiv. 35).

Through many a sore trial and temptation my blessed Lord hath supported me, and delivered me. To this day I have in remembrance the wormwood and the gall, but “the Lord is my portion saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him” (Lam. iii. 24). The sweetness and savour of the mercies of the Lord, were after a while withdrawn; and coldness, stupidity, and darkness again pervaded my mind. I believe in the seasons of sweet liberty I made more of my enjoyments than I did of the Lord who gave them; therefore, there was a needs be that I should be taught my fault in so doing, and be brought to live simply on the Lord, as my everlasting all. For some time, all my former joys and comforts fled, my confidence in God seemed broken up, and faith and hope in him appeared to cease; I again had no access to my God urn prayer; the Bible appeared to me a sealed book; and my mind was as barren as the mountains of Gilboa, where there is neither dew nor rain. And now Satan again besieged the poor mason, and as it is written, “he came in like a flood” (Isa. lix. 19), and stirred up all he could against me; he said, I had neglected to watch and pray, and leanness of soul had come upon me for so doing: and what was more, that I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, for which sin there was no forgiveness in this world, nor in that which is to come. This accusation swept away my peace, my heart sunk within me, my knees smote one against the other, I trembled and feared greatly, I could not call upon the Lord, and all his mercies seemed to be clean gone from me. This was a fiery trial (1 Pet. iv. 12); but it was a strange one to me: nothing now sounded in my mind but the awful sin against the Holy Ghost; it drove me to join with Job and Jeremiah, to curse the day, and say, “Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night it was said there is a man-child born” (Job iii. 1—3); “cursed be the day wherein I was born, let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed” (Jer. xx. 14). I was even driven back on the borders of despair, and tempted to give up all my religion; this was passing and walking through floods and flames (Isa. xliii. 2). I knew not that the Lord was with me, or that he supported me; but, bless his dear name, this sharp trial only lasted a fortnight, and then the matter was cleared up, and I was once more delivered from the jaws of the lion (Amos iii. 12), and from falling a prey to his teeth (Ps. cxxiv. 6).

To describe the feelings of my mind I cannot; but those who have trod this dreary path know something of them; it was to me as if my heart was rending asunder with the sound of the unpardonable sin, and yet I could not tell what that sin was. I was so sorely tried on the subject, that I spake of it to several, but none could tell me what it was; one said, she had a book of sermons, and there it was pointed out: I was eager to catch at any thing that would give me a clue to it. The first sermon in the book was on the subject; I read it with all the attention I could muster; and as I read, the more I was convinced that I had committed it; and in the story of Francis Spira, I thought I read my own character in legible lines of sinning and repenting, and that all mercy was at an end. The sweat began to flow, my hair raised on my head, and I, almost mad, roared aloud; for as by pouring oil into the fire the flame increases, so did the reading of that book increase my distress. I cursed the book and the author too, for writing such things to torment a poor sinner. The author's name was Russel.

But honour, praise, and glory be to my precious Lord! in a day or two after reading this sermon, he spake home his word with power to my heart, saying, "Because they said he hath an unclean spirit" (Mark iii. 30); I felt the temptation give way, my soul was melted down before the Lord, I wept aloud for joy, and I said, "Dear Lord, I never thought or said thou hadst an unclean spirit." Joy and peace sprang up again in my soul; my heart and affections returned again to their centre, and Jesus was abundantly precious unto me; I felt such love to him, that I wanted to be home in glory with him, to praise him as I ought! What a wonder-working God the God of Israel is, especially to me the chief of sinners: I desire to spend and be spent in his service, declaring his truth, and speaking well of his name, that he in all things may be glorified. I could now join in sweet harmony with David, making melody to the Lord in my heart (Eph. v. 19), saying, O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen" (Ps. xcvi. 1, 2). Bless the Lord, O my soul!

After many days and weeks of blessedness and comfort, walking in fellowship and communion with the Lord, all being right and straight between him and my soul, “the sun went down over the prophets” (Mic. iii. 6), the Bible was again sealed up, and darkness pervaded my mind, the old adversary returned again with his wiles (Eph. vi. 11), and my ever dear Jesus had withdrawn himself, and was gone. I called him, but he gave me no answer: I sought him, but I found him not (Song v. 6). I think, to a regenerated man, it is almost a hell to be living without the company of the Friend of sinners, the precious Lord Jesus; especially I had enjoyed so much of his tender mercy, and of communion with him.

Now was the devil’s time to work, as the “good man of the house was not at home, he was gone a long journey, and had taken the bag of money with him, but would come home at the day appointed” (Prov. vii. 19, 20). So Satan was permitted to take advantage of the mason once more, to make him believe a lie, and to lie against his right (Job xxxiv. 6); for it came to pass, that I believed I had sinned willfully, after having received the knowledge of the truth, and there remained no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation of the Lord. Here I was again stuck fast, and my feet were sinking in deep mire, where there was no standing. “I was in deep waters, where the floods overflowed me” (Ps. lxxix. 2): this again, as aforetime, carried all before it; my thoughts were all confusion, and my judgment like a floating wreck upon the waves, so that reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man” (Ps. cviii. 27). At last I concluded it must be true; I tried to call to remembrance former mercies, but they were all gone; refuge failed me; nothing but sinning willfully, a fearful judgment and fiery indignation now occupied my mind. I verily meditated terror; the anguish of my soul is past my describing. I entered fully into the feelings of the prophet, who said, “When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble” (Hab. iii. 16). This trial lasted many days, until my strength began to fail; yet I could at times cry unto the Lord in my trouble. I had to wait the set time to favour Sion (Ps. cii. 13); therefore the devil shall never finally prevail over one of the redeemed of the Lord.

Blessed be my ever gracious Lord, “He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation” (2 Pet. ii. 9); and so it came to pass, for I was at my work, building up the end of the barn at the vicarage, still pondering over, and suffering under the words “judgment and fiery indignation,” and groaning on account of it before the Lord, the Lord heard my groanings (Ps. cii. 20), and attended unto my cry (Ps. lxvi. 19), or my prayer, and brought the following words into my heart, which soon set all right again, namely, that the fire shall devour the adversaries (Heb. x. 26, 27). A sudden change took place in my mind; began to consider what was implied in the word “adversaries;” I found the devil was called an adversary, who, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. v, 8): that all his children were the Lord’s adversaries, who shall be broken (1 Sam. ii. 10): that the Lord will repay fury to his adversaries (Isa. lix. 18): *but the redeemed of the Lord were no adversaries*, being reconciled to God by the death of his Son (Col. i. 21, 22). I felt again, that I had redemption in the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sin (Eph. i. 7), and I said, Ever dear Lord, I am no adversary, for I desire to love thee, fear thee, and serve thee, yea, and to praise thee with joyful lips” (Ps. lxiii. 5). The temptation was over; life, light, and liberty, sprung up in my soul; the beasts of the forest were withdrawn into their dens, and the sun was risen upon my soul (Ps. civ. 22). All the anguish and pain of my body and mind were removed, and I was like Naphtali, a hind let loose (Gen. xlix. 21). I began to weep, and bless, and praise my ever gracious Lord for his goodness and mercy towards me, for he had again “brought me up from the horrible pit, and miry clay, had set my feet upon the rock, established my goings, and put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto my God” (Ps. xl. 2, 3). My dear Lord Jesus was returned, and strengthened me with his sweet cordials; his tender mercies rejoiced my heart; he kissed me with the kisses of his mouth, and I found his love better than wine (Song i). My soul was led forth in the dances of them that make merry (Jer. xxxi. 4); the Sun of righteousness shone blessedly into my soul, and the poor captive was delivered (Isa. xlix 24). Ah! wondrous grace, rich mercy, and precious, precious Lord Jesus; honours crown his brow, and let the God of my salvation be exalted! (Ps. xviii. 46).

By these things the Lord taught me the truth of the following words: Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee” (Job v. 17—19); and, blessed be the Lord, I find the truth of it unto this present day, for I never had a trouble or trial, great or small, with all manner of temptations, but my blessed Lord hath held me up and delivered me.

Reader, what sayest thou to these things? Art thou a living witness of the work of God in thy heart? Remember all things short of it will end in the flesh, and consequently in death and damnation. I don’t wish any poor soul to pass through the depth of the exercises here recorded, neither do I set them up as a standard for another to measure himself by; but we must come to Jesus’ testimony, namely, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John iii. 5, 7).

If thou hast had any such sore conflicts, trials, temptations, and deliverances from them by the Lord, thou wilt join with me to give all the honour, glory, and praise unto him, and ascribe all unto “the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. i. 6). The grace of God and the gift by grace is by one man, Jesus Christ; and the free gift is of many offences unto justification of life (Rom. v. 15, 16). These things, in the hands of my ever blessed Lord, cured me of that God-dishonouring doctrine of *ifs*, *buts*, and *maybes*; and thereby the Lord established me in his own unalterable truth; namely, eternal and absolute election by God the Father; eternal redemption and salvation by God the Son; and the eternal and unalterable work of regeneration by God the Spirit. The golden chain of blessed truths recorded in the Bible, the Lord enabled me to receive in the love of them, and to believe them with all my heart, so that I will rejoice, and say with the preacher, “I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever:

nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him” (Eccl. iii. 14).

By these things the Lord fitted me for ministering in his word and doctrine to the people; and although more than twenty years have expired since then, yet the subject is still increasingly precious to my soul; and I still continue, by the help of my God, playing upon the same harp of three strings, election, redemption, and regeneration; and my soul lives in, and rests on this immutable foundation, the church’s safety: “There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. ” Amen (1 John v. 7).

I would detain the reader a little longer before I enter on my call to the ministry, to relate another of the Lord’s dealings in tender mercy with me. It is clearly manifested in the preceding details, that the Lord wrought with me without means, as they are called, so that I can boldly say with Paul, “I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” (Gal. i. 12, 15, 16). The Lord was my teacher, and brought me to see and know, that there were no abstract truths or promises in the covenant of grace, but that the whole were in Jesus, and Jesus was the fulness of the whole. And if Jesus were not preached, all in all, it was another gospel, different to the glorious gospel of Christ (2 Cor. iv. 6). As the Lord was pleased to open his word to my mind, I plainly saw, that the whole blessedness of the Church stood firm in unbroken conjunction with their election-grace union in and with Christ, before the foundation of the world; and that every mercy manifested to them in time, and their glorification hereafter, was founded upon and flowed from, their eternal relationship to Jesus Christ in spirit by adoption, and in blood and love; and that even by their fall in Adam (whereby they became enemies in their minds by wicked works, and were a great way off, so that all communion was shut up on the ground of creature-innocence), the union was not broken, neither the purpose of God according to election altered; for it is written, “Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion” (Isa. li. 11). It is clear to a demonstration, that by the word

“*return,*” they were there before, for it is impossible to return to a place where we have not been before; and Jesus corroborates this dear truth, saying, “All that the Father hath given me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

Prior to the Lord’s opening this great and unspeakable mercy to me, although he had done such great things for me as I have recorded to his praise, yet there was something I wanted to rest on, namely, the knowledge of my eternal union to, and interest in him, amidst all chequered scenes, and tossings to and fro. When I was happy, I thought that all was right; and when I was unhappy, I considered all was wrong. But when my blessed Lord began to open the dear contents of the seventeenth chapter of John, I therein found what was most precious to my soul, to wit, that as there was an union in nature subsisting in the unity of the essence, Jehovah, between the persons in the Holy Trinity, and that the Father was in the Son, and the Son in the Father, &c., so the Church was in Christ, and Christ in the Church; and as the persons in the godhead, though distinct in person, were in unity of essence one Jehovah, so it was developed to my mind that Christ and his Church were one; and as the unity of the Holy Three never could be separated, so the Church never could be separated from Christ, who saith, “Because I live ye shall live also” (John xiv. 19); these things produced a solid peace in my soul.

And I take the liberty to say, that the greatest mercy the Church will ever have in time or to all eternity, if rightly understood, will clearly be seen in that all other mercies flow unto us on this ground, “because we belong to Christ” (Mark ix. 41). And that all we partake of, is as we are the body of Christ and members in particular (1 Cor. xii. 27). And from our eternal election-grace union with Christ before the world began, we trace out the blessedness of salvation, redemption, justification, pardon, deliverance from the curse of the law, effectual calling, living by faith, abounding in hope, final perseverance, and glorification. All arises, flows forth, and is completed, because we belong to Christ.

The predestination of the church by God the Father, was “unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will” (Eph. i. 5); and it is written, “The great God our Saviour Jesus Christ, gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from

all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus ii. 13, 14); and it is further said, “As Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish, ” (Eph. v. 25—27). Surely we see by this, that the person of Christ is greater than his work, and his person gave validity and efficacy to the whole. Our deliverance from sin, death, wrath, curse, and all condemnation, is by the personal work of Christ, and our completeness is in him (Col. ii. 10) who is Jehovah our righteousness! (Jer. xxiii. 6) and in him we are accepted (Eph. i. 6). It is on the ground of this union that the Lord saith, “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye” (Zec. ii. 8). I bless my ever gracious Lord for his tender mercies manifested to me, the chief of sinners, and that I am looking forward to something more than heaven and happiness; namely, to live and reign in eternal union with my most glorious Christ, of whom it is written, Jehovah “shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory” (Isa. lx. 19). The knowledge of these dear truths made me happy; and they are my comfort now, in the house of my pilgrimage; and as there is “no schism in the body” (1 Cor. xii. 25), “nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. viii. 35, 39).

A MEMORIAL
OF THE
LOVING-KINDNESS OF THE LORD.

PART THREE

THE CALL TO PREACH AND WHAT BEFELL ME

I am now come to the *third* part of my memoirs; namely, to declare the Lord's calling me to preach his word, and what befell me. I have said before, that a few of us met together for prayer, &c.: after a while, a dear brother in the Lord, William Gay, a blind man, began to speak to us. I was glad of this, as it set aside my reading sermons. We were ten in number, and, blessed be the Lord, we were many times indulged with his *manifest* presence; and some sweet refreshing seasons we had together. We had but one heart. After some time he laid our brother down on a bed of affliction for some months; but "the Lord is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind." As the Lord had done so much for me, I felt a secret desire in my heart to publish his precious truths to poor sinners, yet, at the same time, a fear would pervade my mind, that it would be presumption in me to do so; yet the word of the Lord would be opened, and turned over in my mind in such a blessed way, that I thought if I could, I would publish the name of the Lord. I hope the reader will not laugh at my folly, yet, to tell him the truth, I have stood up in my own house, when my wife and children have been out, for I have locked the door, and preached when there were nothing present but the table and stools. One Sunday afternoon, having no interruption from my deaf and dumb auditory, I proceeded in regular order, singing, reading, praying,

and then I rose and read my text, “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him” (Nah. i. 7). I began to make remarks on the sublime language preceding the text, and as there was not a murmur against what I said, I went on with my subject, and spoke of the Lord’s goodness as I had felt it; but when I came to the strong hold, I could compare it to nothing but a garrison with great guns and plenty of ammunition in it. Alas! such a fool was I: but while I was going on with this comparison, I fancied the room was full of people, and was constrained to sit down, full of confusion on account of my foolishness. I hid my face, and was ashamed to look up, believing that people were round me; and it was some time before I ventured to look up. This was a lesson to me, and by it I saw the foolishness of comparing spiritual things with natural things, by way of demonstrations, to set forth the truths of God. I concluded my preaching was at an end, for after being thus set down in shame and silence, what would it be to stand up before living people? After a time, I felt my mind moved towards the ministry, but never ventured again to preach before the table and stools, being fearful of a second defeat.

But my blessed Lord, who bore with my manners in the wilderness, was long-suffering to me in this, for he did not frown upon me for my folly, but he stirred up the minds of the friends to call upon me to preach, for they said, they thought I was able to preach. But at their first call I declined, for I had not forgot preaching before the table and stools; and I was not willing to be put down in confusion: neither did my old man ever like mortification. As we, therefore, went on in our usual way of singing, praying, and reading, they continued their entreaties for me to preach. As I thought over the subject, I was brought to this point in my mind, I certainly can tell them what God hath done for my soul (Ps. lxvi. 16), and I felt inclined so to do. One Lord’s day, after we had gone through our morning service at my brother’s house, and had taken our dinner, he and I took a walk together in his garden, when I said to him, “I shall preach this afternoon;” with which he was right glad, but no one knew anything of the matter, but Jonathan and David (1 Sam. xx. 39).

We began our service in the afternoon as usual; I arose and gave out the text, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (Rom. i. 16), and blessed be the Lord I have not been ashamed of it ever since, though I

have been ashamed of the people, and I have been afraid of what they would say to me; and of myself I have been ashamed times without number. It was on January 12, 1817, about three years and a quarter after my new birth, blessed be the Lord! The reader now knows what sort of an academy I came from; that I had not been trained up in the classics, neither was I sent out by man's ordination. I had not displayed my abilities before any congregation, so as to be patronized by them. As to my speech, it was very rude; my pronunciation was the provincial dialect of Devonshire. I knew nothing of English grammar; but I knew the distinction between death and life, darkness and light, sorrow and joy, bondage and liberty, an earnest of damnation and the sweets of salvation; yea, the curse of the law and the joyful sound of the gospel. And I was confident that no man should stop me of my boasting of what God had done for my soul.

I here desire the reader to pause with me, and look over these mercies so richly displayed to one so vile; and I trust he will freely say with me, "What hath God wrought!" (Num. xxiii. 23). Surely there is nothing "too hard for the Lord" (Gen. xviii. 14), when one so sinful, filthy, guilty, vain, profane, trifling, and presumptuous, should be loved, preserved, saved, and called to preach the *Christ of God* to poor sinners. Ah! the wonders of unmerited love, and rich free sovereign grace! At thy dear feet, O Lord, I bow, with thankfulness of heart, and crown thee Lord of all.

Allow me to observe, it is one thing to stand before the people with the word of the Lord in the mouth only, like Balaam (Num. xxiii. 5), and another thing to have the truth and blessedness of the word known, felt, and experienced in the heart, by the power of the Holy Ghost; for out of the abundance of the heart my mouth did and will speak (Matt. xii. 34). I speak not against learning when I say, that it is one thing for a man to be trained up for the ministry in the order of men, having a college education, and another thing for him to be called and taught of God, and by him to be sent forth to minister in his word and doctrine; the former will display his learning to recommend himself to the people; while the latter, whether learned or unlearned, desires that self, with all its attainments, may be kept in the back ground; lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect (1 Cor. i. 23). The Lord is my witness, that it hath ever been the simple desire of my soul, to preach Jesus, all in all, for "to him gave all

the prophets witness” (Acts x. 43). He was the constant theme of the Apostles; and it is the invariable work of the Spirit in all his ministry to glorify Jesus (John xvi. 14), to testify of Jesus (John xv. 26), and to take of the things of Christ, and to shew them unto sinners (John xvi. 15); and he, the Spirit of truth, guides into all truth (John xvi. 13), and Jesus is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John xiv. 6). The man that knows these things will always preach “peace by Jesus Christ, for he is Lord of all” (Acts x. 36). As the Lord had brought me through such exercises of soul, deep trials and temptations, and made his truth precious unto me, I could but speak of what he had done for me, and in me, and of what I had tasted, felt, handled, and my eyes had looked upon of the word of life (1 John i. 1).

Thus I was enabled to point out from the word of God, and from my own experience, the awful state of sinners, and the guilt of sin charged home upon the conscience, with feelings of wrath and bondage as I had felt it, and also the violent and distressing nature of the temptations a sinner was subject to, and to point out the blessedness of the covenant of the Lord, the sure mercies of David (Isa. lv. 3); namely, election, predestination, effectual calling, particular redemption, eternal salvation, final perseverance, the unalterable state of the church in Christ, being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world (Eph. i.), and the assurance given in the word of God, of their final glorification with Christ, that nothing in their time state could separate them from the love of Christ (Rom. viii. 35), neither pluck them out of his hands (John x. 28).

As these things had been sweetly experienced by me, I spoke of them very freely from the feelings of my heart. This doctrinal and experimental preaching made a stir among the dry bones. Some pitied me, others envied me, and some that loved the truth, thought I went too far on the subject, and was too bold; but none of these things moves me (Acts xx. 24). I received caution upon caution not to be so bold and positive: some said I was a decided antinomian, and that the doctrine I preached led to it; but the mason still went on in the good old way (Jer. vi. 16), and by the help of his God, with the hammer (Jer. xxiii. 29), kept knocking at the emptiness of all profession without possession, and insisting on the necessity of being born again (John iii. 5); that salvation was all of grace,

and Jesus all and in all; for I found this to be the truth, plainly laid down in the word of God, and the only subject that satisfied my soul! I was persuaded these things were the truths the prophets and the apostles spoke and wrote, and that nothing short of these dear truths experienced in the heart, by the power and demonstration of the Spirit, would ever do a sinner good, or make Jesus precious to his soul, so that he might live and die in peace with God, and be with God in glory.

The effect was soon made manifest; those who had trod the path, clave to me for the truth's sake; the nominate turned their backs, and, like some of their forefathers, spake evil of that way (Acts xix. 9): my name was soon defamed, and I was cast out as evil. In this I rejoiced. The people were warned to beware of me, as I was a dangerous man, and that the doctrine I preached was repugnant to the feelings of those who possessed candour and religious philanthropy. Some said I was an antinomian: some that I was a fine fellow to drive oxen, as my voice was loud; and others, that I should make an excellent huntsman.

Blessed be the Lord, that I have felt, and do still feel, what others are witnesses of, namely, the truth of the following words, Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them (see Mark i. 17); "And after I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" (Jer. xvi. 16). Here we have, first, the apostles as fishers, and, secondly, the hunters in succession; that is, the real ministers of the gospel unto the end of the world; therefore, the revilers of the truth did me no wrong, in styling me a huntsman.

Reader, if thou hast the fear of God in thy heart, in looking over the preceding statement, thou wilt draw a plain inference from the same, namely, that the word and truths of God, the complete salvation of the Church by Jesus, the unalterable nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, election by God the Father, the sanctification of the Church in Jesus, their being preserved unto his heavenly kingdom, and their final glorification, are the things which men of candour, who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, call dangerous; nevertheless, they are the truths revealed and taught by the Lord, as the only safe and sure way, and which in all ages have been known and experienced by the

Church, to give them on earth peace with God, through our Lord 88 Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1). There have been, and there are still, many railers against God's truth, who have set up their own traditions, creeds, professions of faith and rules, in opposition to divine revelation, to make the word of Goa without effect (Mark vii. 13); but, with one of old I will say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4). Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18): and he saith again, concerning the sheep, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands; my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands; I and my Father are one". (John x. 28—30). This promise is sure to all the seed (Rom. iv. 16).

I hope the foregoing remarks will not be unprofitable; that neither writer nor reader be terrified by those that oppose us in the good old way, knowing the Lord hath said, "The righteous shall hold on his way" (Job xvii. 9), "but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Dan. xii. 10). "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him" (Is. iii. 10).

I continued to preach to the people of Bigbury every Sunday, and on Tuesday night, until July (and many a refreshing season we had from the presence of the Most High, (Acts iii. 19); then our brother that had been ill, was restored, and spoke to us again, and then I gave out the hymns; and as he was blind, I read the word. In August, he was confined again; and then I spoke again to the people in the name of the Lord until September, when he was restored to us. After this, I spoke on a week night, and occasionally once on the Sabbath, at Bigbury.

Reader, the cross of Christ has not ceased; they who minister faithfully must suffer persecution from Satan, and be evil spoken of; and so I suffered relative to the ministry. I had great volubility of speech; for the Lord gave me a great flow of matter, so that every obstacle was taken out of the way when I was preaching; but I had no sooner left the house and people, than all the dew was exhaled from the branch, as the sun went down over the prophets (Micah iii. 6), and I had to grope for the wall like the blind (Isa. lix. 10). Satan then shot his fiery darts at me, (Eph. vi. 16),

he charged me with the accusation, that I had run unsest of the Lord, that I was nothing but a presumptuous wretch in what I had been doing. In this state I generally went to my house mourning, grieving and crying, and if the hedges and lanes had had ears to hear, they would have heard my sorrows, groanings, and sighs as I walked along: I used to beg and cry to the Lord to pardon me, and I told him in the simplicity of my heart, that I would never do so any more.

I believe every one sent of the Lord, hath as great a trial, and finds it as difficult to believe that he is called of the Lord to the work of the ministry, as he hath to make his calling and election sure (2 Peter i. 10). I do declare it was so with me; for I wanted proof upon proof. But to return: when the time came for me again to speak, the dear Lord removed away the darkness and sorrow from my mind, and all again was right and straight between him and my soul; for I had free access to the throne of grace, (Heb. iv. 16): the blessed Lord communed with me in his word, so that I was able to go in his strength, but I used to tell the Lord it should be the last time. I have felt such a fulness in the blessing of the gospel of peace (Rom. xv. 29), that I have gone singing, and returned weeping.

This *pro* and *con* work I kept from all my friends, and I appeared as cheerful as I could before them; but I expected every time they would tell me that I had run unsest, and that it was manifest to them; but the following words were frequently in my mind: “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” Get thee up into the high mountain; lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!” (Isa. xl. 1, 2, 9). I tried to get at the meaning of these words, but could not find that they implied anything about my call to the ministry. But, the Lord knew best how to deal with his very untoward child; for oftentimes when I have had such liberty to speak to the people, I have been so puffed up in my fleshly mind (Col. ii. 18), that I have felt as proud as the devil; and thought I should be the best parson in the world: yea, this is not all, for I had such an opinion of myself, in those times when puffed up, that I thought I should have a call over a large congregation, know nothing more of poverty, but live in ease and pleasure.

I must confess myself to be one of the greatest fools that ever lived, but my ever adored and precious Lord, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working (Isa. xxviii. 29), would not allow me to continue puffed up with vain thoughts, for he would withdraw, “and then hell with her legions came on.” I soon found what company I was in, when I felt the loss of the presence of my best Friend, and the word was shut up, from which I had enjoyed so much delight: I was then filled with sorrow; and bitter reflections would arise in my mind on account of my pride and foolishness; the old subject of running unsent of the Lord would return with all its weight and power, and the fine abilities of the poor mason would be dashed to pieces; he would be like a beacon upon a hill, or upon the top of the mountain (Isa. xxx. 17), or a sparrow alone upon the house-top (Psa. x. 2, 7), open to every shaft of the enemy, and left, as it were, to the emptiness of his own mind.

The long-suffering and tender mercy of the Lord in his forbearance with such a proud, rebellious sinner was wonderful. It had got noised abroad, that the mason was turned preacher; and a brother chip, who preached at Aveton Gifford, came up to Bigbury to hear what I had to say relative to the truth of God. After service was over, he gave me an invitation to go to his place to preach that day fortnight, which I readily accepted. As the invitation was so long beforehand, I felt a determination to shine off before the people, and to eclipse the glory of their parson; and Jehu-like, that they might see my zeal for the Lord (2 Kings x. 16). Self, pride, and the devil went to work to study the subject for the day, and to lay it out by rule and compass in heads and tails, in which I made some progress. When the day arrived, namely, January 25, 1818, the mason set off in the morning with his budget, his heap of untempered mortar, thinking about the wonderful display he should make of himself before the people upon the text for the morning, which was, “I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir,” (Isa. xiii. 12).

I arrived at my friend’s house, took some refreshment, and went to the chapel. I was as full of self and pride as an egg is full of meat: the service began, I read and engaged in prayer, as it is called, and felt no want of the help or teaching of the Lord. While they were singing the second hymn, my text and sermon were completely swept out of my mind; I could not

recollect one of my pretty ideas; all my fortnight's work was dashed to atoms; I was like Samson, shorn of all my strength (Judges xvi. 19); my mind was all confusion; my judgment was bewildered, my thoughts were scattered, I was driven to my wit's end; Satan began to accuse me, and my conscience signed the verdict; alas, what was to be done! A lie was suggested to me, that I had better say I was taken ill; but that would not do. I wished there had been a trap door in the bottom of the pulpit, that I might get away out of the sight of the people; I looked behind me to see if the window was open, that I might get out and run away; but that was shut; I trembled like a rush; I did not need a warm bath, for I sweat profusely. In this state I sat in the pulpit, "my belly trembled" and "my lips quivered," I tried to cry unto the Lord to help me this once, but I could only groan. Blessed be his dear name, he heard my groanings; the people being sat down, he gave me these words, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; the people he hath chosen for his own inheritance" (Psa. xxxiii. 12). By this humbling lesson, I learned that I was to speak what the Lord gave me, and not my own production; and this proved to me that the flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit that quickeneth, and the Spirit giveth life (John vi. 63). It cured me of troubling myself about studying a sermon, which is the weariness of the flesh (Eccl. xii. 12), and is not profitable to the people.

I have many times since, as well as then, blessed and praised my ever gracious Lord for this mercy manifested towards me, and also for the displays of his long-suffering to such a proud, vile, rebellious sinner. Let the God of my salvation be exalted (Psa. xviii. 37.) I was thus made to look after the honour of my dear Lord, and not after my own; for the Lord made this one of the all things that work together for good (Rom. viii. 28). Satan buffeted me greatly on account of my presumption in going to the above place in the way I did, and I walked for some time in the old path of darkness, with my heart sorely grieved, and full of sorrow: so, as David said, I felt how I do mourn in my prayers and am vexed, or, I mourn in my complaint (Psa. lv. 2.) "My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: Save me for thy mercies' sake" (Psa. vi. 3, 4.) 93

All my fears of running unsent of the Lord came upon me again, with bitter reflections on my baseness. I cried unto the Lord in my distress, and

intreated him to forgive me this time, and I never would act so anymore; for I fully believed that I was never sent to preach the gospel. I was again full of tossings to and fro, yet the Lord was continually bringing into my mind the words before alluded to, “Comfort ye my people, ” and “Get thee up into the high mountains;” and I generally found when I stood up to speak, that I had light on the word, and liberty in speaking, but always darkness and bondage after; so that I spent weeks in grief.

Reader, the Lord will do his own work, for no flesh shall glory in his presence (1 Cor. i. 29), and so it came to pass; for I preached at Bigbury on Tuesday evening, March 24, 1818, from 1 John v. 1; the Lord was with me in speaking, and the people in hearing: it was a time of refreshing to our souls. After service was over, the friends whose hearts the Lord had touched, said, it was plain to them that the Lord had set me apart for the work of the ministry. I hearkened to what they said, but I did not believe they told the truth; I wanted a greater testimony than theirs. As I was going home I sunk into my old state of distress, and determined never to speak any more to the people, for I felt confident, that it was only presumption in me so to do. As I was walking on, pouring out my complaint before the Lord, telling him in the simplicity of my heart, that I never would preach any more, the former words, “Comfort” &c., came with more power than ever into my mind, they sounded with a continual repetition, “Get thee up into the high mountain; lift up thy voice with strength” &c. I said “Not so Lord, not so Lord, I cannot, I will not:” but the Lord would have the last word; “Get thee up, ” &c. I was so fast bound by the word of the Lord, that I could not resist I stood in the road to consider the matter, the word of the Lord still sounding in my mind; so that the following petition flowed forth from my heart: I said, “My dear Lord, sooner send me to hell than let me run unsent of thee; and if it be thy will to send me to preach thy holy word, bear thy testimony, to thy own word spoken by me, in some poor sinner’s soul, and make him speak of it to thy poor dust; then, dear Lord, I shall believe that thou hast sent me: but never let me run unless commissioned by thee, my gracious God;” the former words were brought again with power into my mind, I felt a persuasion it was from the Lord; and I thought it might be, that the Lord had ordained me to run on his errands, to tell sinners of his love and great salvation. I felt such love to the Lord on account of these things,

that I was perfect willingness to do any thing he would have me to do; the keen edge of my trouble was taken off, and I went on my way home happy in mind. This passed at Oakenbury-lane-end, between the two places in the same road before mentioned, namely, where I was stopped from going back; and secondly, where I had the revelation to my soul of Jesus Christ and him crucified. These places are hallowed spots unto me, even to this day. They are memorials to me of what a gracious God the Lord God of Israel is, especially unto me. I can freely say with David, “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men! for he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness: such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron” (Psa. cvii. 8—10).

However unlikely the person may appear, and altogether ignorant and unfit in himself for the work of the ministry, yet the Lord can and doth send forth such to be his mouth to the people, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, for he is Lord of all (Acts x. 36). As I never learned any thing of English grammar, I was altogether ignorant of its rules; my provincial Devonshire dialect sounded so harsh in the ears of the critical hearer, that I was soon declared to be very unfit to preach the gospel. Some persons kindly entreated me to study English grammar before I presumed to stand up again to preach; others advised me to hear men of learning, and to notice particularly their pronounciation, as, they said, mine was so bad; but the mason, from some cause or other, did not attend to these advisers, but went on in his way telling poor sinners what God had done for his soul.

Although I am very far from being proud of my ignorance, yet I do bless my dear Lord that he never permitted me to submit myself to the wisdom of men, for I have seen the Lord confound the wisdom of the wise and bring the counsel of the heathen to nought (1 Cor. i. 27; Psa. xxxiii. 10), and by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe: “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence” (1 Cor. i. 21, 26—29). The

Lord can fulfil his purpose by rams' horns (Josh, vi), and by breaking pitchers, and by lamps (Judges vii). There is nothing too hard for the Lord (Gen. xviii. 14). "He spake and it was done: he commanded and it stood fast" (Psa. xxxiii. 9.)

But, to return to the subject of the Lord's gracious dealing with me: my mind was not agitated about preaching after I was led to look to the Lord, who I knew had heard my prayer, and I believed would make it openly manifest that he had called me to the work: and surely the Lord's ways are wonderful, for it came to pass, on Sunday, December 6, 1818, that I went to Bigbury as usual, and returned to my own house when the afternoon service was over; on my return it was told me that a man was going to preach that evening in the poor-house. The thought passed in my mind that I would go and hear him; I knew him (he was a carpenter), for I had worked where he had been employed; but he was a rank Arminian. Accordingly I went; he gave out his text, "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever" (Psa. xxxvii. 18). I soon found him to be an enemy to God and truth, for he waged open war against the sovereign pleasure of the Lord, which was declared in the text, which he read. As he knew nothing of the blessedness of the words, he could not speak of it, or of any thing consistent with them.

He set off at full speed, with 'Do, do; repent; come to Christ now; accept the offered mercy; it is time for you to be up and doing; it may be the last time you may have mercy offered you, ' &c. My soul was filled with holy indignation against such God-dishonouring statements. I could scarcely refrain from telling him to desist from speaking lies against the Lord. In this state of my mind, I had an impression to preach in my own house; under this impression I made it known, that I should preach there on the following Sunday evening, December 13. Accordingly, with the Lord's good pleasure, I stood up in his blessed name before the people: many came and no doubt some from curiosity; nevertheless I found the power and presence of my dear Lord with me. I read the following words for a text, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (1 Peter ii. 7); and the Lord met with one poor sinner, for he sent his word into his heart; blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever. Amen.

I continued to preach in my own house on Sunday nights, and occasionally Wednesday nights until Wednesday March 13, 1823, and the last text was, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1.) Thus ended my ministry in Kingston, for I never could open my mouth there for the Lord afterward; the work was done. But under my ministry at Kingston, a brother of the before mentioned one, was also called out of darkness into God's marvellous light (1 Peter ii. 9); and also a little girl called Sarah King, who died at the age of thirteen years and eight months. The dealings of the Lord with this dear child are interesting; they clearly set forth the distinguishing grace, discriminating mercy, and sovereign love of the Lord our God. I had never seen her at my house when I was preaching, neither did I know she had been there: but the purpose of God according to election must stand (Rom. ix. 2), the Lord quickened her soul and set her at liberty: afterwards she caught cold, and a rapid consumption took place. About a fortnight before her death she sent for me early in the morning. I arose from my bed and went to her; when I entered the room her parents and friends were standing round her bed, expecting her speedy departure. She desired them to leave the room, and told them to shut the door: she then said to me, "Help me up, and put the pillows behind me." I did so, and said to her, "Sally, why have you sent for me?" She answered, "To tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul;" I thought my heart would have burst. We sat and wept together: I said at last, "Well, my dear child, do let me hear, how, where, and when." She said, "You never saw me at your house when you were preaching." I said "No." "Why (said she), I used to come down and get behind the front door, and stand there, that no one should see me; and while I was there one night, and you were preaching, the Lord brought his word with power into my heart, and I felt what I never felt before, that I was a lost sinner! In this state, I went on for some time, full of sorrow and grief on account of my sin and my lost state; but I was always at my post behind the door whenever you preached; and once when you were speaking of the preciousness of the Lord Jesus, and what he had done for poor sinners in redeeming them from all iniquity, and saving them from all their sins, I felt the truth thereof with power and blessedness in my heart, and all my sin and misery were removed, and Jesus was precious to my soul." She added, "You gave out that dear hymn after the sermon, 'Thou dear

Redeemer, dying lamb,' &c. and I felt such love to my precious Christ, that I could sing aloud, 'He hath redeemed me.'" I never can forget the sensations of my soul, while I am in the wilderness, when I heard the dear child relate these things; I wept over her, and we rejoiced together, and praised the name of the Lord that had shown us so much mercy. Moreover she said "When I consider the mercy of the Lord manifested towards me in such a sovereign way, that he hath taken me, while my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and relations are all left as yet dead in sin, I am lost in wonder, love and praise." I really was astonished to hear the dear child talk in the way she did. She asked me to read some part of the word; I read the fourteenth chapter of John. She then asked me to engage in prayer, "but don't you," said she, "ask the dear Lord to give me health nor to keep me here; if you do, he will not answer you, for I shall soon be with him in glory." I prayed: it was a refreshing season indeed. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

I continued to visit her every morning and evening; we enjoyed much of the Lord's presence and the savour of his dear name. The sufferings of her body were great at times; but she would often say, "What are my sufferings, if compared with those of my dear Lord Jesus when he suffered for me?" She spoke at times of the darkness of her mind, and of the temptations of Satan; but said she, "I shall soon be beyond the whole of this, for nothing can rob me of my precious Jesus, who hath loved me and given himself for me." The last night I was with her, after we had been talking about our most glorious Christ, she paused for a while, and then said to me, "I do not want you to pray by me tonight." I said "Don't you my child, and why?" She answered, "I am above all prayer, it is all praise; I have nothing to ask, I have all I want;" she appeared to be in raptures of soul, and looking up, she said, "I see heaven opened and my precious Lord Jesus standing to receive me;" which she repeated several times! I was silent for a while, wondering at the displays of such tender mercy from the Lord. When about to leave her, I said, I will come again in the morning. She replied, "You may come, but I shall never see you more on earth, for before you come, I shall be with my precious Jesus:" and so it was, for before I arrived the next morning, her redeemed soul was fled to mansions of eternal glory.

This short narrative I relate with pleasure; many times have I blessed the Lord for his mercy to the dear child and to myself; for it was a confirmation to me, that the Lord had not let me run unscathed as I had often feared; and it greatly encouraged me in the work of the ministry. It humbled me before the Lord, so that I could thank and bless him with all the powers of my soul, that he had called such an ignorant, hell-deserving sinner to preach his word, and had borne his testimony to it in the hearts of poor sinners. This is marvellous in my eyes, but it is the Lord's doing (Psa. cxviii. 23). The sovereign will and pleasure of the Lord in the manifestations of the same mercy to others, often engage my mind in the contemplation thereof, and they prove that the Lord worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph. i. 11), and that nothing can alter his eternal purpose (Eph. iii. 11). When the Lord removed me to Plymouth, he also brought the two brothers, who were called under my ministry at Kingston, to live there; and we continue to this day living in the truth, with our hearts knit together in love, 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).

There was a woman named Wilton in Kingston, who had been a professor for years, and I believe quickened of God, but in bondage from hearing the Methodists. She became a member of the Baptist church at Modbury, where the preaching was not many shades from the Arminians. The Lord hath a set time to favour Zion, and he brought her down to Plymouth, where he set her soul at liberty one Sabbath morning, while I was preaching from these words; "Consider the lilies how they grow, they toil not, they spin not" (Luke xii. 27). She returned home in peace with God, and not very long afterwards was taken ill and died; her last words were, "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 57).

I must here state, for I cannot overlook the great mercy, that the Lord was pleased, whilst I was at Kingston, to quicken the soul of my wife, and bring her into liberty, so that we were companions in tribulation in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ (Rev. i. 9); and now a double union existed between us, to the praise of the glory of his grace, that hath made us accepted in the Beloved (Eph. i. 6): the reader will see by this, that there were six in number at Kingston, manifested to be the children

of God, two are now in heaven, and four alive unto this day, kept by the power of God (1 Pet. i. 5), and preserved unto his heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. iv. 18): thus grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. v. 21), to whom be glory for ever. Amen. I believe that now, and for years past, there is not any one in the village of Kingston that can speak of the Lord's dealings with them. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. xviii. 25). 101

I now return to state the goodness and mercy of the Lord towards me, in opening doors for me elsewhere to speak in his name! I never offered nor invited myself to preach at any place since the Lord opened my mouth. But it came to pass, that I went to a village called Ermington one Sunday morning, and heard a man preach from Psa. lv. 22. I thought he was very clear in the truth. I heard him again in the afternoon from Col. iii. 1: it was at the time the Catholic question was in agitation. He did not please me so well as in the morning; for he tried to make out that Christ was in union with politics. As I heard he was going to preach at Holbeton, another village, I thought I would give him another hearing; so I went on Sunday morning, June 13, 1819, for that purpose: but the Lord had purposed otherwise, for he did not come; and as some of the friends knew me, and had heard me preach, I was entreated so to do. This was a sore trial to me: I said I could not preach, but the friends said I must. I began to reflect on myself, wishing I had not come, and I thought that I would leave and go home; for which purpose, I put my hand to my hat to take it and go, but the Lord detained me, by bringing these words to my heart with power, "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 62). This was the second time, the Lord by this word kept me from gratifying my fleshly feelings, and brought me to a stand; and as I found it was the Lord's will, that I should preach, I stood up with much fear and trembling before the people, but the Lord sustained me. In the morning I preached from Prov. x. 30. "The righteous shall never be removed;" and in the afternoon from 1 Peter ii. 7. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." My ever blessed Lord gave me a door of utterance, and all my fears fled away.

This circumstance was a mean in the Lord's hand to open another door for me. As some of the friends were there from Ermington, and heard me with pleasure, they gave me an invitation to preach to them the next

Sabbath. Accordingly I went. And after a time I preached to them and the friends at Holbeton alternately. Some preachers from Plymouth used to minister unto them; among whom a little jealousy arose at the mason being invited; but the Lord will work by whom he pleases, whoever may oppose it.

I continued preaching in those villages for about the space of five years; and the Lord was very gracious unto us.

As it is thought that parsons get well paid, I will inform the reader how it was with me. My salary was not more than two shillings and sixpence a week during the time that I continued there: the people were poor, and the parson was poor; but some of us could rejoice in that dear Scripture, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Cor. viii. 9). The knowledge of this truth in the heart is more than silver and gold. I shall not forget the first money I received for preaching was five shillings; for I had been trudging about a long time before, and had received nothing. I carried the five shillings home to my wife, who began to think when she saw such fruit arising from having a parson for her husband, that our poverty would soon be at an end; but she was mistaken, for when this money was gone our poverty stuck fast by us still.

After a time, it pleased the Lord to open a way for me to preach in Plymouth. Mr. Denham, the minister of Rehoboth chapel, had been preaching in my neighbourhood, where he became acquainted with me; and he said, if I came to Plymouth, I should preach in his chapel. It had been long on my mind to go there, to hear that blessed man of God, Dr. Hawker; but my poverty had prevented me; but the Lord will work, and who shall let it? (Isa. xliii. 13); and so it came to pass, that on Whitsunday, May 21, 1822, I set off in the morning, and walked to Plymouth, and heard him preach in the morning from Acts ii. 33, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” It was to me a soul-refreshing time. And according to the request of Mr. Denham, I preached in his chapel on the Monday evening, May 22; the text was Acts xiii. 38, 39. I went into the pulpit with much fear and trembling; part of my fear arose from there being so many parsons

present, for there were no less than six; and as I did not know so much about them as I do now, I thought they were wonderful men, and breathed a different air from others; but, blessed be the Lord, he soon raised my mind above men and things; and enabled me to speak his word with boldness. It was a very novel thing to the town's folks, to hear such an unpolished creature from the pulpit, for my language was very harsh; and my Devonshire dialect, with my green coat, yellow buttons, coloured handkerchief, and yellow waistcoat, were altogether so new to the people, that they drew forth many remarks from some of them. But those who knew the blessing contained in the contents of the text, namely, forgiveness of sins, and justification from all things by Jesus Christ, understood my language, and received the message; and we rejoiced together in the truth. I hope for the reader's permission to observe, that as it is not a suit of black clothes that will make a man a minister of Jesus Christ; neither has a suit of black clothes ever produced liberty in my soul to preach the word since I have worn them. Many times have I stood in my own house preaching with life, light, and liberty in my soul, in my working clothes, excepting my coat, with my mason's apron twisted round me. It is to be feared, that much of the religious profession in our day consists more in outward adornings, in wearing apparel, and mock-modesty, than in the power of God in the heart. Allow me to add, I hate, and ever shall hate, the gown and bib in *dissenting chapels*. The next day, after preaching at Mr. Denham's chapel, I left Plymouth, and through the Lord's tender mercy, I arrived at home in safety. Thus the Lord laid the foundation openly, of what had been purposed in the secret counsels of eternity; namely, my settlement in Plymouth. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working" (Isa. xxxviii. 29). I continued for some time after this to go about in the villages, "preaching peace by Jesus Christ; for he is Lord of all" (Acts x. 36). And I feel a great pleasure to be enabled to speak positively of the Lord's goodness and mercy personally manifested unto me; and to render the following testimony to the praise and honour of my ever blessed Lord. As I was brought up in the church of England, I was a theoretical trinitarian; and as I had never been shaken in mind concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, the Lord, who performeth the things that are appointed for me (Job xxiii. 14), was pleased to permit me to be shaken and much exercised in my mind about it; so that he might settle me in the

blessedness of the same, in the dear experience of it in my own heart. Prior to this, a Mr. Baring and his colleague, who had seceded from the church of England, had been in Plymouth propagating their hellish doctrine of Sabellianism, denying in toto the personality of the eternal Spirit, and the divine person and godhead of our most glorious Christ. There were some who seemed to be pillars in the church (Gal. ii. 9) that caught the Sabellian contagion and strange fire (Lev. x. 1), and became followers of their pernicious ways (2 Pet. ii. 2), under the cloak of maliciousness (1 Pet. ii. 16), being filled with all unrighteousness, &c. (Rom. i. 29); and serpent-like, with all subtilty (2 Cor. xi. 3), they began to creep into the country, and publish these doctrines of devils (1 Tim. iv. 1), beguiling unstable souls (2 Pet. ii. 14); and they would, if it had been possible, have deceived the very elect (Matt. xxiv. 24). I heard two of these gentlemen preach, who walked in craftiness and handled the word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. iv. 2), and I withstood them to the face (Gal. ii. 11); and with the ability the Lord had given me, I contended with them earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3); for we are witnesses against all such characters, as well as witnesses for the truth in Jesus. By their preaching I was not moved from, but believed in, the doctrine of the Trinity as firmly as ever. I even thought that I could stand the torrent of all opposition against it; but when I was brought to hear their *subtile reasoning*, by which the mystery of faith was wholly set aside, Satan worked on my reasoning faculties until I was completely bewildered; the Sabellian argument appeared so *plausible*, and to me so reasonable. On the other hand, I heard those who argued against the foregoing system, by *natural comparisons*, such as that man was a trinity—body, soul, and spirit. But such a comparison would not do for me; this trinity would be separated by death; but I thought, if there were a trinity of persons in God, there must be also an unbroken unity. The sun was also used as an emblem, being a body of fire, light, and heat; then the three colours in the rainbow; and three candles burning and but one light. Whilst I thought of these things my mind was much agitated; and as by reasoning I knew not what to believe, I poured out my heart to the Lord, to keep me from every false way, and according to his promise, to guide me into all truth (John xvi. 13). I read my Bible with an ardent desire in my soul to the Lord, that he would settle the matter in my heart. I saw the doctrine clear enough in the word, as I thought, but I had no firm

satisfaction in my soul from it. But, as I was at Ermington one evening, a sharp contention took place between some persons on the subject; a great deal of *pro* and *con* was carried on, whilst I sat mute to hear what I could for my own satisfaction; but no decision took place, and I continued still in suspense about the matter. When I left the house the devil and my reason set to work in support of the Sabellian heresy. I thought that as they had been professors longer than I, and had studied the Bible more than I had, and had a greater experience of those things than I had, surely they must know better about them than I did, and therefore, they must be right and I must be wrong. Whilst I was thus walking on, tossed like the waves of the sea with a double mind (James i. 6), amidst all these conclusions, my heart would go out to God in prayer to settle the matter; and as I was going down by the river, over the meadows between Ermington and Saker's Bridge, I had not passed on far beyond the orchard that projects near to the river—my mind almost carried away by the sophistical reasonings of the enemies to the truth, so that I can say with the Psalmist, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Psa. lxxiii. 2)—when my ever blessed Lord, who was watching over me, spoke home his word with power to my heart, saying, "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30). Thus my precious Lord broke the Sabellian snare, and I was delivered from that damnable human pre-existerian heresy; for I saw and believed in the unity of the essence-existing Jehovah, and also in the distinct persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, and that these three are one (1 John v. 7). I was so led into communion with each person in their love to me, that I blessed the Father for choosing and blessing me in Christ (Eph. i. 3, 4), and the Son for loving me and giving himself for me (Gal. i. 20); and for the love of the Spirit (Rom. xv. 30) in quickening my soul (Eph. ii. 1), knowing that he that had begun the good work in me, and would perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6).

Thus I went on the road, blessing and praising my gracious God: and though the night was dark and the way dreary, yet I felt nothing of these things; for I had communion with my Lord in his trinity of persons; and by this I was so confirmed and established in the co-eternity, co-equality, and co-existence of the Holy Three in one, that Satan hath never since been able to make a breach in my mind concerning the truth of it; and,

blessed be my dear Lord, this experience of the truth and blessedness of the doctrine in my heart, hath set me above all reasonable creeds, systems, comparisons, and fleshly arguments; and I find now, as I did then, this doctrine in its fulness to be the only centre and rest of my soul. I not only saw it then in the Bible, but the streams of it sweetly flowed into my soul; so that I was a real trinitarian in heart, not in reason, or in a dry belief in theory. Here, reader, I would pause, and bless my gracious God for such tender mercy and loving-kindness to the chief of sinners, in strengthening me *to hold the mystery of faith and godliness*, in opposition to the *mystery of iniquity and human reason*.

I feel constrained to detain the reader a little longer on this subject, for it is of vast importance, and beg of him to ponder it well according to the word of the Lord, by comparing spiritual things in the word, with spiritual things in his own heart's experience (1 Cor. ii. 13), for if a man be not settled and grounded in the blessed doctrine of the Trinity as revealed in God's Bible, there is a possibility for him to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (Eph. iv. 14). And be it remembered, that *our* Bible is the revelation the Lord our God hath made of himself in his Trinity of persons in the Unity of the eternal existing Essence, and that it opens with this truth, for it is written, "In the beginning Alehim created" (Gen. i. 1); that is, according to the English language, the Holy Ones created. And relative to the creation of man, it is written, and in the Hebrew it simply reads thus, "And Alehim (the three) said, "We will make Adam" (man), who was accordingly made of the dust of the ground (Gen. i. 26). This is clear to a demonstration of the doctrine of the plurality of the persons in the Godhead, and sets forth in a clear light the truth recorded by John, namely, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one" (1 John v. 7). And it is blessed to see how this subject is carried out in detail relative to man thus created by the holy ones; "for the Alehim created Adam, in his own image, in the image of Alehim created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. i. 27); he called their name Adam in the day when they were created (Gen. v. 2). Thus we have the unity and plurality of the Holy Ones, and also see in Adam, all mankind, in the order of natural generation created, male and female, for

it is evident that Eve was now in Adam by creation. Again it is said, and Jehovah Alehim caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one from his side bones (namely a rib), and he closed up the flesh in the stead of it, and Jehovah Alehim builded or made the bone which he took from Adam for a woman, and brought her unto Adam, and he said, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. ii. 21—23). Here we see plainly the unity of the essence, and the plurality of persons, Jehovah Alehim taking the rib and building a woman; and we see also the plurality of persons in Adam, yet one in nature and personal existence, so that one did not exist in the abstract from the other, but the woman was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. This is a mystery believed in the heart by the election of grace.

We also find in the word, that there is an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure (2 Sam. xxiii. 5). Surely more than one make a covenant, therefore we find each person in the Godhead revealed in this: God the Father saith, “I have made a covenant with my chosen” or elect (Psa. lxxxix. 3); and thus the counsel of peace shall be between them both (Zech. vi. 13), namely, the Father and the Son, whereof the Holy Ghost also is unto us a witness (Heb. x. 15). This is plain to them that understand, to whom “the Son of God hath given an understanding to know him that is true” (1 John v. 20).

As to the incarnation of the Son of God, the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16), we find each of the Holy Ones in their personal acts concurring in the same, namely, the Father preparing the body (Heb. x. 5), the Holy Ghost coming upon the virgin, and begetting the human nature of the substance of the woman (Luke i. 35); and the Son of God, the brightness of glory, and the express image of the Father (Heb. i. 3), himself taking that nature, a part of the children’s flesh and blood, the seed of Abraham (Heb. ii. 14, 16); and thus we see plainly the doctrine of the Trinity set forth without a figure. And if we go to Jordan, and take our stand there, we behold the clear development of this glorious mystery; we there plainly see each of the Holy Ones blessedly manifested, the Father speaking from heaven, the Son coming up out of the water, and the eternal Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him (Matt. iii. 16, 17).

One word more: in the experience of the doctrine, and in a holy familiarity with the same, we have the love of God shed abroad in the heart (Rom. v. 5); the blood of Christ sprinkled in our hearts (Heb. x. 22); and the Holy Ghost bearing witness to our spirit that we are the children of God (Rom. viii. 16). Thus, reader, I have given thee a brief detail of the doctrine, and how the Lord settled and established me in its blessedness. In it I live in peace with God, and have communion with the Holy Ones, and it gives me pleasure in the anticipation of dying, that this will be my unalterable mercy, I shall be for ever with the Lord my God, Jehovah Alehim. And blessed be the Lord, that as I have been brought into contact, since the time here alluded to, with Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, Sabellians, human pre-existerians, despisers of the Christ of God, and open infidels, I have found the doctrine of the Trinity to be munitions of rocks (Isa. xxxiii. 16), and blessed bulwarks (Isa. xxvi. 1) against all these damnable heresies (2 Pet. ii. 1), which have been hatched in hell and propagated by men. And I believe the curse of God will rest upon all those that live and die in the denial of this unchanging mysterious doctrine. But according to the eternal purpose (Eph. iii. 11), the church are brought unto the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ (Col. ii. 2), therefore to the holy Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, be glory forever. Amen.

I must now return, to declare some more of the Lord's dealing with me, in going before me, and opening doors for me to preach his holy word. A Mr. Bowen, who had been a deacon of the presbyterian chapel, Batter Street, Plymouth, resided at Stover House, a little above Ivy Bridge. This gentleman occasionally came down to Ermington to hear me preach; he was very rich in this world's goods. After a while, he offered to build a chapel at Ivy Bridge, if I would preach in it; to which I agreed after some consideration. My salary was to be twenty pounds a year. The chapel was accordingly built, and was opened July 19, 1821. Mr. John Latchford preached in the morning, from Gen. xxviii. 16, 17; I preached in the afternoon, from 1 John v. 20; and Mr. Denham in the evening, from Amos iii. 3. The presence of the Lord was with us, and we had a good day.

To this time my poverty was like a dead weight; but this twenty pounds a year was a great help to me from the Lord. I have walked many times

from Kingston to Ivy Bridge, about seven miles, and preached three times, and walked home again at night. Sometimes I rode back part of the way; for when I could get the money, I hired a pony. Thus I went on with a healthy soul; many times in these solitary walks I have had secret communion with the Lord; but Ivy Bridge was not to be my rest, therefore, my stay there did not last long. The Lord had fixed the bounds of my habitation (Acts xvii. 26). Mr. Denham sent me an invitation to supply two Sabbaths at Plymouth. Accordingly I went, September 9 and 23. In the following year, I had another invitation, and went, July 7, and August 4, 1822. By these frequent opportunities, I was brought into an acquaintance with the children of God at Plymouth, and thus the Lord was paving the way for my settlement there, although I had not at that time a distant thought of going, nor had I a desire for any such thing.

I must now inform the reader of another especial display of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me in providence. I have told him before of my being arrested, and of the sale of all my worldly goods, &c. There was one person, whose name I will not disclose, of whom I had borrowed thirty pounds. I had paid him half of it, and at the time of my trouble, he told me, that he would never ask me for it; if ever I could pay him, I might, and if not, it was to rest, and therefore I concluded all was right; but the Lord would have me cease from man, and therefore I must have a sore trial about it, and deliverance from it, by my ever precious Lord. This debt, which had remained a secret, must be brought to light, and I was to know that the borrower is a servant to the lender (Prov. xxii. 7).

Before I proceed, allow me to observe, that whilst I continued to preach at Ivy Bridge, I became much perplexed in my mind by the conduct of the professors and the profane. The more I strove to walk circumspectly and uprightly before men, the more my name was cast out as evil. Many an hour of sorrow I had on account of it; many times I prayed to the Lord to stop their tongues, as he knew I was innocent of those things laid to my charge. But the Lord did not answer my prayer in the way I wanted, for their tongues appeared more loose than ever, until I was completely bowed down with grief. I well remember as I walked to Ivy Bridge one Sabbath morning, crying to my dear Lord, and using all the entreaties I could think of, for him to deliver and hide me from the scourge of the tongue (Job v. 21), just as I arrived at my journey's end,

the Lord spoke to me, and said, Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you” (Matt. v. 11, 12). These words drove away all my sorrow, and gave me peace. I saw these things were needful and right, that it was the lot of all the children of God; and I thanked my blessed Lord, and praised him for his mercy towards me, in that my name was evil spoken of, and that falsely too, for his sake. Those words recorded in Matt. v. 11, 12, are sweet to me unto this day, for it is nothing to me what men may say of me now, blessed be the Lord my God.

But to return. On January 5, 1823, I had been preaching from Col. ii. 6, 7, and was very happy, having enjoyed the presence of the Lord, and was riding on a pony towards home; it was a dark night, when a great darkness fell upon me, as though the Lord had withdrawn and forsaken me; I trembled, and was sore afraid, and was in such a confused and bewildered state of mind, that I did not know where I was. I groaned out my complaint before the Lord (Ps. cxlii. 2), and blessed be his dear name, he heard me and attended to the voice of my prayer (Ps. lxvi. 19), for as I was riding on he spoke his word in my heart, saying, “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness” (Isa. xli. 10). All my darkness and fear fled; a stream of peace and joy flowed into my soul, and I rode on praising and blessing my dear Lord that had done great things for me (Psa. cxxvi. 3). I felt such an increasing confidence in the Lord, and sweet reliance upon him, my mind was so blessedly stayed upon him, that I could trust him for all things, according to the word, “Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength” (Isa. xxvi. 3, 4). I said to the Lord as David did, “Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: I shall never be moved” (Ps. xxx. 6, 7). Through the mercy of the Lord I arrived at home, and I saw by the countenance of my wife that something had taken place, for she was looking very sad; I said to her, “What is the matter?” She answered, “Matter enough, and that you will say when you see it.” I said, “Nothing could hurt my mind, or give me any uneasiness,” for I was happy in the Lord. She then presented me a

letter from the Modbury post, but without a name, wherein I was called a rogue and a cheat—that I was nursing up my wife and children in pride. Alas! poor dears, they had but just clothes enough to cover them, and many times they had hungry bellies. The writer said he would go to Ivy bridge and make known how I had cheated ____ out of fifteen pounds, and I should be turned out of the chapel; that unless the money was forthcoming, legal proceedings would be taken to get it. Blessed be the Lord! he had so strengthened me by communion with me by the way, that these threats gave me no uneasiness, and I retired to rest quite happy; and when I awoke my sleep was sweet unto me.

I went to my work on Monday happy in the Lord, for his word was sweet to my soul. Although my wife was in grief, I was not able to weep with her; but on Tuesday evening, when my Lord had withdrawn his presence, all the dew that lay on the branch (Job xxix. 19) was gone, the comfort of the word to my soul remained not; trouble and grief began; my faith and confidence in my blessed Lord seemed shaken to pieces; and I could see no way of escape. In this state of mind I passed Wednesday. In the night my sleep left me, unbelief reared its head, and the devil taunted me with, “Where is now thy God?” (Psa. iv. 2, 3.) The cause of God and his truth were presented to my view; and it seemed evident, after all I had professed, that I should inevitably bring a reproach upon the same, and the name of God would be blasphemed by my means. This thought was like a fire in my bones, for I had been jealous for the honour of my blessed Lord and his cause; my heart appeared to be rending in pieces; I wept aloud before the Lord, and cried unto him, in the language of David, “My soul is sore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long?” (Psa. vi. 3.) The Lord gave me no answer! I can truly say, that the weight of the debt was nothing to me, compared to my sorrow for the cause of God and his truth.

I well remember, as I was going to my work on the Thursday morning, in very bitterness of soul and anguish of mind, that I stood still in the road with my heart meditating terror (Isa. xxxiii. 18). At last I laid down my tools, and went over the hedge into a field, and there I kneeled down and poured out my complaint and trouble before the Lord (Psa. cxlii. 2). I said unto him, “Dear Lord, thou knowest my trouble; I can see no way of deliverance, but there is nothing too hard for thee; defend thy own cause,

and keep the enemies from triumphing over me, for I am thy servant O Lord my God, attend unto my prayer, for thou hast delivered me in times past, and thou dost deliver, and I trust in thee that thou wilt yet deliver; hear me, O Lord, make haste to help me, O my God! Thou knowest thy cause and truth are near and dear to my heart; therefore, O Lord, still the tongue of the enemy and the avenger, and answer me for the sake and honour of thy holy and great name." I arose from my knees and proceeded to my work: the surges of my mind were a little calmed; but I had a very gloomy day, for Satan had not left me; he threw his fiery darts into my mind, to beget hard thoughts of the Lord; and he told me the Lord had forsaken me, that I should be put to open shame, and should go down to the grave in sorrow for having brought a reproach on the cause of God. He appeared at times to make great head-way against me, as the Lord did not give me any immediate answer by his word. When I returned home from my work in the evening, my wife said, "Here is a letter for you from Plymouth." I said, "What is it about?" She said, "You are wanted there to supply for Mr. Denham." I looked it over, and felt constrained to do as Hezekiah did; so I went into my bed-room, shut the door, and kneeled down and spread the letter before the Lord, and prayed him to direct me how to act, and to let me know whether I was to go or not. As I was looking to the Lord and praying, he was pleased to bring his word into my heart, saying, "That might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee" (Prov. xxii. 21). I thanked my blessed Lord for his goodness, and felt my mind comforted, and that I should go. I wrote a letter to say they might expect me. I walked to Plymouth on the Friday, and preached in the evening from Song iv. 1. I have heard since, that some persons were for pulling me out of the pulpit; that some of my remarks were repugnant to their feelings.

I preached again on Sunday, 19th January, 1823, morning and afternoon, from 1 Peter i. 3—5, and in the evening from Isa. xlvi. 12, 13. No one knew how I was situated, or what had transpired prior to my coming to Plymouth; but I cannot forget my feelings when that hymn of Newton's was given out in the morning, concerning Elijah being fed by ravens, and the words, —

"Sooner all nature shall change than one of God's promises fail,"

entered into my very heart, and made me weep before the Lord in the pulpit. I had the presence of the Lord with me, and while preaching I forgot my trouble; nevertheless, I saw no way of deliverance, nor had I mentioned my circumstances to any one. I tarried and preached on the Monday evening, from Ps. ix. 9, 10. After I had done, I went as usual into the vestry, when a female presented a note to me. I enquired if it wanted an answer? She said, "No." I opened it, and found therein a ten pound bank of England note, with these words on the envelope, "I have the honour to be the Lord's almoner to you." My poor soul was so overcome with the goodness of the Lord, that I wept aloud. A friend came in and said, "What is the matter?" I replied, "Look here at what I have received from the Lord." "Ah!" said he, "I am glad to my heart to see it, what will follow I know not, but the Lord hath not done yet." I blessed and praised my precious Lord for his tender mercy towards his poor dust, and my heart was filled with gratitude and love to him. I had no sleep that night, for I was so overcome by this mercy from the Lord, that I lay all night as a little child in his arms, talking to him and praising his name.

The next morning, as I was taking breakfast with Mr. R. Dwelley, the friend who came into the vestry the night before, and we were conversing together on the subject, that when the Lord's people have need, —

"His goodness will find out a way,"

I received a note, desiring me to call at No. 9, Orchard Place, which is now called Clarence Street, at eleven o'clock, as a lady wished to see me. I felt my mind exercised about it, as I had never been in such company before. I went trembling, and was introduced to the lady in the drawing-room. I used the best manners that such a rustic was in possession of, when to my great astonishment a chair was ordered for me, and placed by her side. This increased my trembling, I would rather have stood at a distance; but no, there I must sit. She began by saying, "she had heard me preach, and that her soul had been fed by the truths of God from my mouth." This encouraged me; I felt a little relieved from my embarrassment; but I was soon again overwhelmed, for she said, "I have sent for you, to know whether you are in debt, for my mind has been much exercised about you?" I desired to be excused from saying anything on the subject: but she said, "I must know the truth; do you owe twenty

pounds?” I was silent. She repeated the question and added, “I desire you to tell me the truth.” At last I said, “If your ladyship must have the truth, were I to say that I did not owe twenty pounds, it would be a falsehood.” “Then,” said she, “here is ten pounds for you.” I burst into a flood of tears, and after a little time said, “I received ten pounds last night, and have been comparing the writing of that note with the one of this morning, and I thought it was from your ladyship.” She replied, “I am not to let my left hand know what my right hand doeth.” I thanked her, and hoped she would overlook anything she saw amiss in my manners, for I was so overcome with the Lord’s great goodness towards me, that I knew nor what I did. She replied, “that it was all right and well.” And I knew that the Lord’s hand was in all this, and that he had answered my prayers.

I never before knew there was such a lady in the world; neither did I know anything about her hearing me preach prior to this time. Indeed, I had something else to do when in the Lord’s house, than to be looking at who was there: but as my times were “in the Lord’s hand, and all events are at his command,” it was so ordered that she should hear me, and be his almoner to me in the hour of need. The lady’s name was Horsley; she told me she had been living in London, that her mind had been made up to go to Italy; that all her trunks were packed for the journey, when suddenly it was impressed on her mind to come to Plymouth to hear Dr. Hawker preach; and then she ordered all her trunks to be directed to Plymouth. What a wonder-working God the God of Israel is, that he should bring one from afar to relieve his poor troubled child! “Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord” (Psa. cvii. 43). “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psa. ciii. 2).

I stopped the day (Tuesday) in Plymouth, and preached in the evening at Providence chapel, Stoke, from Rom. viii. 14, and returned home the next day; but I could not say as Naomi did, I went out full and returned empty (Ruth i. 21); for I went out empty, without purse or scrip, and returned with money in both pockets. When I got home, full of joy and gladness, I told my wife what had happened, and showed her the money, and we rejoiced together and praised the Lord. Without delay I called on my creditor—paid him with pleasure the fifteen pounds, and then the poor mason was delivered from that debt for ever. Thus the Lord once more

frustrated the tokens of liars, made diviners mad, and turned the wise backward, and made their knowledge foolishness (Isa. xlv. 25). The devil was defeated again, and all his devices rendered null and void; and my precious Lord kept his own cause inviolate.

The lady before named manifested a great regard for me for the truth's sake, and would at times ride up in her coach from Plymouth to Ivy Bridge to hear me preach; and when I was in Plymouth, she was very urgent with me to spend much of my time with her. But it was so much out of my element to associate with people of rank and title, that I did not feel at home in such company; but my ever blessed Lord had all the management of my affairs, both spiritual and temporal; and as he opened her heart to minister unto me in a time of need, he shall have all the glory and honour due unto his name. I was kept in a state of poverty for seven years; yet the Lord frequently blessed me with dear manifestations of his *great* love and mercy; so I spent many a happy day in the midst of poverty, and was kept from repining; and when I have been speaking in his dear name, I forgot all my troubles, and was as happy as I could wish. Ah! the presence of the Lord supplies all lack.

The rent of the house in which I then lived was in arrear, and I also owed my wife's father more than twenty pounds. This at times would lay heavy on my mind, and constrain me to cry to my blessed Lord for deliverance, which I believed he would give me, for the Lord enabled me to look to him, and rely upon him for all things; and blessed be his holy name! he heard my prayers and answered them according to his purpose, will, and pleasure, for he who brought this same lady to Plymouth, opened her heart to give me from first to last, seventy pounds; which sum paid my debts, put raiment on our backs, and enabled us to buy a little necessary furniture for the house. Thus the Lord kept me from prison, supported me in my poverty, delivered me from all my distresses whilst I lived in Kingston, so that when we removed to Plymouth we left it owing no one anything but love.

This same lady abounded for a season in kindness towards me; she offered to build me a chapel, and said she would patronize me; but this I would not accept. In the first place, I considered the Lord's patronage far greater and more durable than my lady's. And secondly, I told her, if I

acceded to her proposals, I might be the means of injuring Mr. Denham, as his friends were mine; and, in truth, I conscientiously declined her offer, but thanked her for it. She then told me, that I should yet preach the gospel in Plymouth stately, for she would befriend me, by giving me a document under her own hand, to assure me sixty pounds a year for three years, and thirty pounds a year during my life; which document was accordingly drawn up and signed, and given unto me; but I can truly say, that I held it very lightly: and it was well for me I did, for man or woman in their natural estate is vanity. Indeed, it became evident, after a while, that her guarantee was not in accordance with the will of my Father which is in heaven, for she subsequently began to find fault with my preaching, saying, I was too pointed with the word of God in levelling at a profession without the possession, at the form of godliness without the power of God in the heart; so that her love for the poor mason for the truth's sake soon declined, and a manifest hatred to him soon followed.

The last time I was in her company, she sent for me, and lectured me in a lady-like style; she charged me with base ingratitude to her, after all her great kindness to me, saying, I pointed her out as a hypocrite before all the people, and therefore she never would hear me anymore. As for the document she had given me, she insisted on my returning it to her again; for if I dared to retain it, and was to seek to get the money by law, she would resist it, and defeat any such proceedings. I sat mute until her bitterness seemed abated. I then asked permission to speak, which she granted me, when I said, that as the Lord had raised her up to be a great friend to me, as such I should always esteem her, and bless the Lord on her behalf. That I fully acknowledged there was a great disparity between us in our outward estate, and on that ground I would make any proper concession to her ladyship, for anything I had said that was wrong; but when we took our stand on the truths of God, I found the church were all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 28), and as such, I considered myself on a full equality in the church with her, and sooner than violate my conscience and give up those truths which were precious to my soul, I would freely sacrifice her friendship for ever, and with the greatest pleasure I would return her the document. Upon which, she said, "Well, I do like your honesty, after all; and I will remember you in my will." Her promise about remembering me in her will had no weight on my mind,

for I had found her words and writing were alike, both were as changeable as the weather. I sent her back the paper; which I have never regretted, as I was brought to believe by experience the truth of the following scripture, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Psa. xxiii. 1); and blessed be the Lord! I have found it fulfilled unto this day. Some of my friends wished me to retain the paper: the lawyers wanted to get hold of it—but I would not keep it And I am thankful I did not, for it might have brought me into bondage; and if I had kept it, it would have been a trouble unto me. The Lord had wrought a good work with her on my behalf, for I was out of debt, and by her the Lord had magnified his mercy towards me. This same lady died the day after Trinity Chapel was opened: and as I never heard anything about her will, I presume there was no mention in it of the poor mason, and that for two reasons:—1st. That her ladyship had no regard for him. 2nd. That the mason did not need it, or the Lord would have ordered it otherwise. “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (Ps. cvii. 8.) “I will praise the Lord while I have any being” (Ps. cxlvi. 2), for great is his mercy towards me.

Having wandered a little in my narrative, to record this testimony of the Lord’s tender mercy and great goodness towards me, I now return to inform the reader of the Lord’s dealings with me, relative to Ivy Bridge; for I was not turned out of the chapel, according to the threat in the letter I had received, but I continued to minister there until June 22, 1823, when I preached my farewell sermon, from Heb. xiii. 8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” The cause of my leaving Ivy Bridge was as follows:—At Lady-day 1823, when the gentleman who built the chapel paid me my quarter’s salary, he said, when the year expired my salary must be lessened, because the income it brought in did not pay him full interest for his money. I told him I understood his words as a warning for me to leave the chapel at Midsummer, and that I certainly should do so. Whereupon he said, “Where will you go?” I replied, “That was nothing to him, the Lord would direct my path.” I clearly saw he loved money more than the truths of God; and I leave the reader to judge whether I was not correct in my judgment; for this same gentleman could well sustain the loss, if any, because at his death, he left behind him in

land and money, nearly forty thousand pounds, and the chapel was shut up for above twelve years.

Being at liberty, I visited the villages and preached at various places. I received more frequent invitations to Plymouth, and supplied nine Sundays for Mr. Denham, whilst he was in London and Manchester; from whence he requested me, in his letter to his wife, to take the church from him; and if I would, he would not come back to Plymouth. This offer I declined, though I have been falsely charged with being the means of turning him out of the chapel, and driving him from Plymouth. Upon Mr. Denham's return, he requested to leave the people, saying, he felt assured his work was done there. He accordingly left at Michaelmas; but as the chapel was taken until Lady-day, I was chosen one to supply; and I was to preach once a fortnight until the time expired. In the meanwhile, a party-spirit began to work, and a very active man in the church, being determined to prevent the mason from having any standing there, offered his services, and to preach gratuitously. Moreover, he took no small pains to set the minds of the people against me, and to establish himself, but all in vain. Though "there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Prov. xix. 21). And as there were some among the people who could not feed on smooth things, they clave with one heart unto me. What with party-spirit, and Diotrephes loving the pre-eminence among them (3 John 9), the tide of opposition ran so high, that at a public meeting of the church a division took place, and there was a majority of only one for me. Whereupon the chapel was retaken of the owner, and I received a call to minister unto them; but the gentleman and his train left. The rent of the chapel was forty-five pounds per year, and my salary was to be one pound per week. We entered there on Sunday, March 28, 1824. The number of sitters was 114, but the chapel would contain above 700. Hundreds had left who could not endure sound doctrine, not having experienced the power of it in the heart; for as the Lord had made his word so precious to me, I could not but enforce the necessity of the work and power of God in the heart, which is always offensive to the chaffy professor. Some few, however, who had left with Diotrephes, returned.

Here I pause to take a view of my past mercies, and say, What hath God wrought? Blessed be his holy name! his goodness and mercy have

followed me all the days of my life, for amidst all trials and opposition the dear Lord supported me, and finally placed me to preach his word in Plymouth, according to his counsel, will and pleasure. And although the prospect before me was not very bright, yet the Lord kept his word on my mind, saying, “I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children” (Isa. xlix. 25). He enabled me to believe his word, and I went on happy in my mind as to the result; and, blessed be the Lord! I was not disappointed. What tongue or pen can describe the blessedness of being brought out of a death in sin into life in Christ; out of enmity, into an experience of reconciliation with God; to be in peace with him, living in friendship with him by faith, and hope, and love (1 Peter i. 21). In the language of the psalmist I say, “O taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man that trusteth in him! O fear the Lord, ye his saints: there is no want to them that fear him; the young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing (Psa. xxxiv. 8—10).

I used to walk from Kingston to Plymouth on Saturday afternoon, preach on Sunday, and Monday evening, and return on the Tuesday. After a little time, the friends lent me seven pounds, and I bought a pony to ride my journeys. At last the friends advised me to remove my family to Plymouth, for they thought it would be better for me, but said they could not give me more than the pound a week; therefore, if money had been my object I should not have left Kingston, for there I found work three days of the week to augment my little income; but as that Scripture was sweet unto me, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want” (Psa. xxxiii. 1), I laid the matter before the Lord my God, who had heard and answered me in the day of my distress. I begged him to direct me how to act, that I might not do any thing contrary to his revealed will, and that, unless his presence went with me, not to carry me up hence (Exod. xxxiii. 15.) Blessed be his holy name! he answered, and confirmed me relative to my removal from the place where I had been born naturally and spiritually, to settle in Plymouth. The words which came to me with power were, “Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall

reap your carnal things?” (1 Cor. ix. 9—11). This Scripture settled the matter, and I felt confident the Lord would take care of, and provide for me. The friends told me if there was an increase in the attendance at the chapel, that after the rent and other expenses were paid, all the overplus should be mine.

I, therefore, took a house in Gascoigne-street, the last on the right hand side going up; and according to the good will and pleasure of my ever kind and indulgent Lord, we were brought to Plymouth, on the 17th February, 1825: we were eight in number, myself, wife and six children. “O how great is his goodness (Zec. ix. 17), and blessings rest on his precious name! I have lived to prove in ten thousand things, that his eye is over the righteous, and his ears open to their cry, (Psa. xxxiv. 15). Reader, none ever trusted in him and were confounded, for he waiteth to be gracious (Isa. xxx. 18).

I sold my pony, and paid the money to those that lent it; many of my old friends thought I had taken a wrong step in removing from Kingston; and some of them expected I should come back again. Sometimes the devil would try to shake my confidence in my faithful God, by giving me a lecture on my great family, and telling me that a pound a week was but just as much as parish pay, namely *half-a-crown a week each*. This I knew as well as he could tell me; but he said the act was presumption, and that I should surely repent of it. At times his insinuations would grieve my heart, and make me mourn before the Lord, who was very merciful unto me.

There were a few debts owing at the chapel; these Satan would bring before me, suggesting “These must be paid before you will be able to get your promised pay;” and as things appeared rather gloomy, from the small number of the congregation, his suggestions were at times more than a match for my faith: but the Lord was faithful to his word; for, “when the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him” (Isa. fix. 19), for the congregation began to increase; and after a little time the debts were paid; thereby the Lord’s mercy was manifested, and Satan once more foiled.

The rent of the house I had taken was fifteen pounds a year, payable quarterly, and the taxes in addition, made it more than twenty pounds, so that our income was about twelve shillings a week for food, clothing, &c.; but the Lord was very gracious, and inclined the hearts of some friends to minister to our necessities. I well remember, that in June we were run to such a low ebb, the last morsel was to be put on the table for dinner. For some days previous I had been wrestling with the Lord in prayer for help, but got no answer; on the 10th day in the morning after breakfast, when the before mentioned last morsel was to be partaken of for dinner, I was sitting at the end of the garden in a little bower, with my bible in my hand, but I could not read it; for the things of this life were so predominant on my mind, that I wept before the Lord, and felt a liberty to show him all my trouble, and tell him “there was nothing too hard for him: he had delivered me, and could deliver me now, and I trusted that he would deliver me.” While I was thus pouring out my complaint before him, he very graciously spoke to me, saying, “If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small” (Prov. xxiv. 10). I felt his power accompanying the word; and an assurance arose in my heart, that it was all right: this enabled me to do as Paul did, “He thanked God and took courage” (Acts xxviii. 15): so I arose and went into the house, and told my wife, that deliverance was near, for I had the assurance thereof in my heart, and that it would come before sunset, whether she believed it or not.

Being confident the Lord would appear, I sat down with the family with a thankful heart; and we finished our stock of food, which consisted of a little pork and some potatoes. The house was now empty, but the Lord was faithful; after dinner was over, I took my then youngest daughter and walked up with her into Gibbon’s field; but I could not stay, for my mind was at home waiting for the Lord’s blessing to come, I therefore returned, that my body and mind might wait together; and when I came at the head of the street, I saw a friend coming up, whereupon I said in my heart, Dear Lord, deliverance is come!” I met him at the door of my house, and after the usual salutation, he said, I have not called on you since you came to Plymouth, therefore I am now come to see how you are. He walked in, and we talked together of the things concerning Jesus Christ and his great salvation; and when he departed, he put

something into my hand. I thanked him for his kindness, and went into the kitchen to my wife, and opened my treasure; to our astonishment it was a five-pound note! We sat and wept one against the other; not a word could we speak for some time, the mercy was so great. Reader, my God is the faithful God, and his name is Jehovah Jireh: is he thy God and dear provider? if so, thou wilt join with me saying, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name: bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psa. ciii. 1, 2).

Here I pause, and desire the reader to ponder over these things with me; if he be one of the Lord’s tried poor ones, and have received things from the Lord in the same way, he will enter into my feelings on the account of such manifest mercies, better than I can describe them, and we will join in heart and soul saying, it is all to the praise of the glory of his grace, that hath made us accepted in the beloved (Eph. i. 6).

If rich and graceless professors read, or hear of such things, they may deride me for recording such distinguishing mercies; and, with modern sceptics, may deny the particular providence of God, or set God’s providence aside altogether, and ascribe what they have to luck, chance, and fortune,—the trinity of fools; “but whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord” (Psa. cvii. 43). This, with many such like mercies, confirmed me, that as the Lord had called me to plough in hope, he who took care of oxen, did also take care of me; and though I was born as a wild ass’s colt (Job xi. 12), nevertheless, I thank my ever blessed Lord, I have lived to know, that The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib” (Isa. i. 3); and I will also thank my precious Lord Jesus and rejoice before him, for that he hath enabled me to say with Jacob, from the experience of the truth of it in my heart, “The Alehim hath fed me all my life long unto this day; the angel which redeemed me from all evil” (Gen. xlviii. 15, 16). Surely these things will cause thankfulness and praise to flow forth from the heart to the Lord, and will give a sinner encouragement to go with boldness to a throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16), and to carry all his hard cases unto the Lord, and cast his burden upon him, who will sustain him (Psa. iv. 22). Thus the poor and needy are brought to know the blessedness of that dear name, which Abraham called the Lord, after a particular providence, and conspicuous deliverance; namely, And Abraham called the name of the

place the *heva*, the Immutable one Jehovah *Jireh*, as it is said this day, *In the Mount Jehovah it shall be seen* (Gen. xxii. 14). Real necessity hath kept me many an hour on my watch-tower pleading with the Lord, for faith must be tried: and the Lord waiteth to be gracious, “Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel” (Ezek. xxxvi. 37).

Trials and deliverances make the Lord’s people familiar with God as hearing and answering prayer. They will keep a person from trifling with the mercies of the Lord. Yea, I have often rejoiced from the advice which our most glorious Christ gives his disciples in these words, “Therefore take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things; but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt, vi. 31—33).

However I was straitened in family affairs, the Lord was very gracious unto me in the pulpit, by granting me his presence, and enabling me to speak his holy word with boldness; and he blessed his word to the people. This was, and is now, more to me than my necessary food: yea, I well remember, that preceding the last mentioned mercy, which was on a Friday, I preached in the evening with light, life, and liberty from the words of the Lord to Job; “Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she” (Job xxxix. 27—30).

I have had such continual proofs of the Lord’s goodness and mercy, in sending me meat and money, that I could mention the names of many, whose hearts the Lord inclined towards me; but as they did it in secret, I will not proclaim their names openly without their permission. The Lord knows them, and loves them too. But I must acknowledge that dear saint of God, Dr. Hawker, who is now in glory, for he acted as a father unto me; and his ministry, name and memory, will be dear to me as long as I live.

On July 10, I had a sovereign sent me by a friend; on the 15th, a quarter sack of flour; on the 16th, a large piece of pork; on the 23rd, a like money from my friend who gave me the five pounds; September 5, from the same person, a shoulder of mutton and six bottles of wine; and from another friend two bottles; for my health appeared to be declining, probably from the change of situation, as I had removed from the open country to a close town. My digestive organs were very weak; but the Lord nourished me; and the reader will see how the Lord provided for me. On Monday September 12, I received a quarter of coals from a friend; on Saturday 17th, a leg of mutton; on Saturday 24th, another five pounds from my former friend, who is a minister of the gospel; October 4th, I received a goose, and also a letter from a friend in Exeter, with a sovereign in it. Thus, the Lord blessed me both in my basket and in my store (Deut. xxviii. 5), so that I must say with David, "I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever; every day will I bless thee, and praise thy name for ever and ever" (Psa. cxlv. 1, 2).

I must now relate another display of the Lord's tender mercy towards me. My children were very badly off and in want of clothes. By reason thereof, they had not been able to go into the chapel for many weeks. I had as usual spread my trouble and necessities before the Lord, and was looking for him to appear on my behalf; and I really believed he would, and so it came to pass; for a friend called at my house on Monday, October 11, and told my wife, that she wanted to see me! I called on her the next morning, when she asked how it was I did not call to see her: I told her that as I was poor and she was rich, I was afraid she would think I called on her for what I could get; but she replied, such would not be the case, and therefore told me to call on her often. She also said, "I want to see your children, and you must send them to my house." I thanked her, and after a while rose up to go, when she gave me something wrapped up in paper, at the same time saying, I have had that in my pocket for you this fortnight past, thinking I might meet you in the street, to give it to you! I again thanked her, and when I came home I found the parcel contained ten sovereigns. This was a manifold mercy from the Lord, and I must say, it was so great in my estimation, that language fails to describe the feelings of my mind on the subject; but this I can say, it was the Lord's doing and marvellous in my eyes (Psa. cxviii. 23). These things taught

me the truth of that precious Scripture, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. ciii. 13, 14).

The next morning I sent four of my children to this friend, and she fitted them out with frocks and other things which were wanting; she also sent me shirts and handkerchiefs, nor did she forget my wife. On the 28th of the same month she sent me a pair of blankets! Thus the Lord gave me fresh proofs of his lovingkindness and tender mercy, which served to increase my confidence in him, and enabled me to bless and praise his glorious name, who remembered me in my low estate; for his mercy endureth for ever (Psa. cxxxvi. 23). Yea, I did rejoice, saying, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want” (Psa. xxiii. 1). The reader will plainly see by this, that I did right to give up the document, I have mentioned, unto Lady Horsley, and that the Lord did not allow me to sustain any loss by the withdrawing of her friendship. “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put any confidence in princes,” (Psa. cxviii. 9). And surely, he that “giveth food to the beasts, and to the young ravens which cry” (Psa. cxlvii. 9), will “supply all our need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. iv. 19). He saith, “O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me” (Isa. xlv. 21) again it is written, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, if it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of Hosts” (Zech. viii. 6). “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.” If the things I here relate should appear strange to some who are not acquainted with the Lord and his dealings, both in providence and in grace, it is not in my power, by any arguments I can use, to convince such of the truth of what I have written, although there are now living witnesses to the truth of it; but I leave my simple narrative with the Lord, “whose I am, and whom I serve” (Acts xxvii. 23), who knoweth that, “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. ix. 1). But it may be asked, how it is, that I am so particular as to days and dates? I reply, that from the first of the Lord’s dealings with me, I thought it right to put particular things down on paper, although I had no thought of their being brought forth to public view; and when I began to speak in the name of the Lord, I always kept in a book, an account of the time, the place, and the text I preached from; and in this

my journal, I also rewrite those things which my memory might not have otherwise retained.

But to proceed: on December 6th, I received from my former friend *the minister*, thirty shillings; and on the 20th day of the same month, 1825, the Lord removed us to a cottage in John Street, the rent of which was seventeen pounds per year, taxes included; for as Gascoigne Street stood low, we thought this a better situation; for it was higher and open to the country. There the Lord followed us with his goodness, for my quarter's salary at Christmas from Michaelmas, amounted to 17*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* Thus the Lord "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. i. 11). On the 22d, I received from a friend a shoulder of mutton and a piece of beef. January 1, 1826, a half quarter of coals was sent me by a man, who was one of my play-fellows when a boy. On the 30th, two pounds from my friend the minister. March 7th, five pounds from the friend who clothed the children. This brought us to the end of the first year in Plymouth; but what a year of mercies! They were mercies unto one most unworthy of all God's creatures; by which I was enabled to defray all the expenses of my family, and get a little necessary furniture for the house, which, when we first came, was rather scanty.

This quarter, ending 25th March, my salary had increased to 18*l.* 17*s.*; so that I could go on mentioning many more mercies from the Lord; but as I have filled more space already than I intended when I began to write my narrative, I do not wish to add, lest the increase of its expense should put it out of the reach of the Lord's poor, who feel interested in reading such details of the Lord's providential dealings; and I do hope the Lord will make this record of his mercies useful and encouraging to his people, and he shall have all the glory.

The quarter ending Midsummer, my salary amounted to 23*l.* 14*s.* 8½*d.* therefore, the gifts from the people were less. The Lord went before me blessing his word, and he inclined the people to hear, until the chapel was crammed full. March 6, 1827, my former friend who clothed the children, sent me five pounds, and I received two pounds more from my friend, the minister. Thus the Lord continually shewed me his marvellous lovingkindness. Who can read these things, and not see the Lord's hands towards his servant? and who can receive such love tokens

from the Lord and not thank him, and bless him as the God of providence, and the God of all grace? “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. (Psa. lxxviii. 19.)

There is one thing I have overlooked; on the 12th day of December last, through the Lord’s tender mercy, my wife was delivered of the seventh child, a boy. The necessary things were scantily provided for the little stranger; there were just clothes enough to receive him; but no sooner did the Lord send him into the world, but additional clothes and money were sent in! I do feel great pleasure in recording the tender mercies of the Lord towards me in my every time of need. After the child was born, I began to think about a name for him, to commemorate the Lord’s mercies; and my thoughts began to turn upon what the Lord had done for me, and how different things appeared now to what they did in the depth of my poverty; and even when I first came to Plymouth. As I was pondering over these things, the following words were brought into my mind, “The beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power” (Gen. xlix. 3); therefore the seventh child was called Reuben; the first born in Plymouth.

After this period a very trying time followed; the children had the whooping cough; the youngest boy that we brought from Kingston was named Samuel, which name was given me for the child before ever I saw him, as I was riding home from Plymouth one night after preaching, June 28, 1824. This boy was subject to fits, and the cough took such hold of him, that it was thought he could not live; but as I had some impressions on my mind concerning the child before he was born, I was enabled to pray to the Lord concerning him, and he gave me an answer of peace, saying “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (John xi. 4). By this I was assured the child would not die, although he took nothing for thirty-one days but cold water and milk; every one that saw him said, it was impossible for him to live, but I constantly affirmed that he would not die—

“For he that whispers pardon’d sin.
Was never known to lie.”

And it came to pass that at the end of the above named days, on a Sunday morning as I laid him in the cradle to go to the prayer-meeting at seven o'clock, the child asked me in very low accents for a bit of bread and butter: I gave it to him, and he ate it; from which time he began to mend, and is alive to this day.

After a time the Lord in much mercy restored all the children to health; and this became another way-mark or token to me for good, and to set up (Jer. xxxi. 31) an Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped me" (1 Sam. vii. 12). I can say with pleasure, "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses" (Isa. lxiii. 7).

I cannot refrain from saying (though it may be thought unconnected with my little history, yet I hope the reader will bear with me), that in common with the church of God, I felt the stroke, when the Lord removed by death from amongst us that dear servant of the Lord, Dr. Hawker, April 6, 1827. My soul was never fed by the word from any man's ministry as by his; his darling theme was the doctrine of the Trinity, as revealed in God's Bible, and not as set forth by intellectual men. He ever insisted on a personal knowledge of the person of Christ, by the work and personal ministry of the eternal Spirit; and the Lord was with him, and continually blessed the word of truth and grace. He rests from his labours, but though he is dead yet he speaketh.

But to return; the chapel soon got filled, and the Lord was with us manifestly, by blessing his word. Thanks to his precious name! the income from the chapel was enough now to make us comfortable. Thus the Lord's hand was manifested towards his servant; but the prosperity of Sion, and the servants of the Lord have always been envied by those who do not love her stones, nor favour the dust thereof (Psa. cii. 14). The sequel will show this plainly, but it worked together for good (Rom. viii. 28). Towards the close of the month of August, the following Scripture was continually in my mind: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John xvi. 23). I did not at first understand why it was so impressed on my mind, for I

had food and raiment, and was contented; yet it continually followed me, "Ask what ye will." I well remember when I was on my knees one morning, in the room over the kitchen, praying to the Lord, the Scripture came with such power, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you," that I thought, surely the Lord hath something of an especial nature in it. As I was considering the matter, the state of the chapel was brought to my mind, that there was not room enough for the people that thronged there to hear the word; whereupon I said, "Dear and gracious Lord, if it be thy blessed will, make room for thy people to hear thy holy word, for there is nothing too hard for thee; and do thou give us a larger place to worship thee in." I had no sooner spoken these words to the Lord, than I felt an impression on my mind that the Lord would do it; that I should have a larger chapel where I should preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ." I then thanked my gracious God for his condescension and love to his poor worm, and desired that nothing might be done but for his honour and glory. I arose from my knees with the assurance that the thing was certain, and went down stairs and said to my wife, the Lord had assured me that I should have a new chapel; but she did not receive it with that confidence I had; for I was as well satisfied in my own mind about it, as if I was then preaching in it.

In due time the Lord accomplished his purpose, and fulfilled my petition (Psa. xx. 6). The chapel we occupied was rented of the Wesleyan trustees; and they hearing it was crowded, no doubt thought, they ought to make a pecuniary advantage of the prosperity of the mason; for it came to pass, that they sent us word, they must have 60*l.* per year in future, for the rent of it. This advance of 15*l.* a year in rent, took a large share of the proceeds; but as our time would be out at Lady-day, if we did not comply with their demand, we expected a legal notice would be sent us to quit. Their demand was considered so unjust, that many objected to it: and the notice to quit at Lady-day was accordingly given to us before Michaelmas; whereupon, a public meeting was held in the chapel, to consider the matter, on Tuesday evening, October 9, 1827. There was a full attendance of the hearers; and as the Lord enabled me, I opened the meeting by reading the 40th chapter of Isaiah, and engaged in prayer, for the Lord's direction and blessing. The first proposition made was, whether the 60*l.* a year should be given for the chapel: those that were for

it, were to hold up their hands; but only one hand was held up. Thus the first proposition was negatived by six or seven hundred persons. The next proposition was, whether a chapel should be built: this proposition was carried unanimously; and then the friends entered their names in favour of it, and many sums were subscribed at the meeting. As we were now engaged about money matters and building, a committee was chosen to take the management of it; and I was appointed the treasurer. At first, all the committee appeared to have but one heart, and I never thought they would disagree; but in time many hidden things are brought to light. Many of my friends gave liberally towards the building; but they expressly declared they gave it to me for my share and interest in the chapel. In the committee, there was a proposition made, that ten men should advance one hundred pounds each; that the chapel should be built, and vested in their names, for their security, &c. Upon which I thought it right to propose, that the money given to me should also be secured for my share and interest in the chapel. To this, they all disagreed; and they said, I should not have any interest in it. At the next meeting the subject was again brought on, when it was proposed, that they should build the chapel, and take the money from me which had been given to me, and that I should not have any voice in the proceedings; but when the chapel was finished, they would put me into it. Blessed be the Lord! I knew the blessedness of trusting in him, and he declared it was cursed to trust in men; I also knew that I had a deceitful heart of my own; and the Lord saith, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. xxviii. 26); and I thought I should be the greatest of fools to trust in theirs; so I stood firm, and would not put my trust in them. Upon which another proposition was made, that as Mr. Courtney was about to have a chapel built for him, it would be better to stay in the Wesleyan chapel for two years, to see how he got on; and in the meantime, put the money I had had given me at interest, to augment it: but I told them plainly, that I considered such proceedings an insult to my friends; that I could not agree to their proposals; but I would rather give back to my friends the money which had been given me; that I would have nothing to do with them nor their proposed chapel, but would leave them at Lady-day; that by the blessing of the Lord, my two hands should minister to my necessities, for I was not ashamed to take the hammer and trowel again; and as I came to Plymouth a free man, so I would never be brought into bondage by them.

This so offended them, that they said they would have nothing to do with me nor the chapel. Their determination appeared to me to be in answer to my prayers; for I had been asking the Lord to deliver me from them, as my confidence was in him: indeed, it was not in the least shaken by their proceedings; for I so assuredly believed I should have a chapel, that I told them I would take the whole burden and expense of building a chapel upon my own shoulders, for the Lord would bring me through it. The committee thought me very presumptuous; that it was impossible for me to get the money, and therefore they left me to work alone: although I had told them a friend had promised me 400*l.* for the purpose.

I can assure the reader, the falling out of friends by the way so distressed my feelings, that I had sleepless nights and restless days while this unpleasant business continued: nevertheless, the Lord supported me; and the old chapel was only taken for half a year longer at the advanced rent.

One of the difficulties in the way of building the chapel, was in procuring a proper place for the purpose. A spot of land had been partly agreed for at the west corner of Gibbon's field, but Mr. Courtney's committee, for building his chapel, wanted the spot, and finally obtained it by taking more land than we wanted; but my dear Lord had settled the matter in my mind before I knew the result, by bringing this scripture into my mind, "Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last" (Gen. xlix. 19); and, blessed be the Lord! he fulfilled it, for in the end we were brought to the spot destined by the Lord, where the chapel now stands.

The spot of land was agreed for—the money paid for it—plans were drawn—contracts entered into—and on January 1st, 1828, the foundation-stone was laid in the faith of the doctrine of the holy Trinity (Acts iv. 11, 12). A variety of reports were soon afloat: some said one thing, and some another; but the general cry was, where will he get the money to build and complete the chapel? These reports laid no weight on my mind, for I knew that the earth was the Lord's, and the fulness thereof (Psa. xxiv. 1); that the gold and silver were his (Hag. ii. 8); and the cattle upon a thousand hills (Psa. 1. 10). There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few (1 Sam. xiv. 6): and I will be bold to say, that no

building was ever carried on with more ease and quietness, for there were neither overseers nor rulers to perplex the men; and not a single thing took place to the injury of any one employed. Thus the Lord manifested his mercy towards us: and on the 22nd March, the walls were raised to take the roof.

I often look back over the loving-kindness of the Lord, how gracious he was unto me; for I had the money always ready to pay the installments as mentioned in the contract, and not once were either of the contractors disappointed. Thus the Lord maintained the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor (Psa. cxl. 12).

That the chapel should be the property of the mason, was by no means agreeable to some who love and strive for the mastery; they even prophesied that I should not be able to mortgage the chapel for the money I had borrowed to build it, unless it was invested in trust: but they were all mistaken, and none of these proceedings moved me: for as the Lord had enabled me to trust in him, so I was sure he would provide.

The chapel was finished, and, according to the Lord's good pleasure, it was opened for public worship on Sunday, October 5, 1828. We entered it in the name of the Lord, to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron. xvi. 29), at seven o'clock in the morning. It was opened by prayer, singing, and reading; and the Lord was there, in the manifestation of his love, grace, and mercy.

As I believe the name of the chapel had been given me by the Lord, so the Lord also gave me the following words for a text, which are full of the ever blessed doctrine of the Trinity; "That their hearts might be comforted, 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; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 2, 3). And this scripture has been the text every anniversary. As the Lord established me in the blessedness of the doctrine of the Holy Ones, Father, Son, and Spirit, so I believe I shall ever preach the same, in the full assurance of it, until I sleep in Jesus.

Trinity chapel has sittings for above 800 persons. The day we entered it every sitting was taken, and the Lord was present with us in blessing his word. In addition to the former liberality of the people, the collection that day amounted to 24*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* Thus the Lord's unworthy servant, together with the church, were fixed and settled according to the purpose of the Holy Three in eternity; so that amidst all the oppositions, devices, and contrivances of men, the word of the Lord was fulfilled, as it is written, "I will work, and who shall let it?" (Isa. xliii. 13.); and by this I plainly saw how another scripture was fulfilled, namely, "Your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isa lxvi. 5). Dear reader, I had nothing to do but to look to the Lord for all things, who appeared for my joy, and inclined the mind of one person to advance me 500*l.* on a mortgage, and the heart of another to lend me 200*l.* on my bond. The chapel cost above 1100*l.*; it afterwards cost 200*l.* in altering the gallery, steps, &c. and now there remains a debt of 500*l.* to be discharged: but all is well.

On the 25th of September, prior to the opening of the chapel, we removed from John Street to James Street, all in health; and in November following, my wife was safely delivered of the ninth child, a boy which we named Benjamin. Thus the Lord was continually blessing us and loading us with his benefits. Our stay in this house was short; for on the 6th of March, 1829, we removed to Cambridge Street, where we remained until November 24, 1830, and then we removed to No. 16, Morley Street, near to the chapel; and here we have dwelt for more than seven years. In this, as in all other things, I have been enabled to trace the Lord's hand, and the continual mercy of my God, every morning new, and great is his faithfulness (Lam. iii. 23). I must remark, that when we were married, we had but one room to live in, and now we live in a house containing nine rooms; for I cannot overlook those special mercies from the Lord my God, who hath ever provided for me, and who kept me in all my ways.

Through the Lord's tender mercies manifested, things went on smoothly at the chapel; and in those days of prosperity I was joyful (Eccl. vii. 14). Some people, who follow the employment of busy bodies in other men's matters (1 Tim. v. 13), were calculating the income of the mason;

they said, it was too much for him; it would make him proud, &c. Some, who never weep with those that weep, could not rejoice in the Lord's manifest goodness and mercy towards the mason. They called me stubborn, selfish, and lordly: but none of these things moved me, for the Lord had fixed me in a chapel, and had made me free indeed, so that no one could turn me out. As they had not given me a call to minister to them in this chapel, so they had no power to dismiss me: and as the Lord had committed the gospel to my trust, I could not live under a republican government; but would rather endure tribulation in the world, as needful for one in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. I can assure the reader, that I never felt guilt upon my conscience before the Lord for acting in the way I have done, though I have been called one of the covetous, whom the Lord hates (Psa. x. 3): and I must say, "If it had not been the Lord who was on my side, when men rose up against me, they would have swallowed me up quick, when their wrath was kindled against me" (Psa. cxxiv. 2, 3); but the Lord my God was my strength and salvation, and covered my head in the day of battle (Psa. cxl. 7). And I could and did thank and bless my precious Lord, and smile at the envy of the people; for I never heard that any one of them took into consideration the expenses of the chapel, the nonpayment of seat-rent, the sittings that were free to the Lord's poor, and that many only paid one shilling per quarter.

Neither were the expenses of my numerous family thought of, or it would not have been said that I was "laying up my hundreds," or "filling my coffers with gold." Nevertheless, amidst all this vain talk, and the scourge of tongues (Job v. 21), the Lord was very gracious unto me, and kept me "preaching peace by Jesus Christ, for he is Lord of all" (Acts x. 36). Here allow me to observe, that, had their reports been true—but, blessed be the Lord! they were false—nevertheless, it is an awful thing to take pleasure in publishing the infirmities of the people of God, or his servants. God hath spoken of such characters in a decided manner by the prophet (see Hosea iv. 8).

I have before observed that the debt on the chapel, when we entered it, was 700*l.*; and, through the Lord's mercy and goodness, I was enabled to pay back 100*l.* the first year; and the second year I paid another 100*l.*, which freed me from the bond. On January 4th, 1831, I paid off 100*l.* of

the mortgage: this reduced the debt to 400*l.*; but as in this year the chapel was altered, I borrowed 200*l.* to pay for it. On April 11th, 1835, I paid off 100*l.* of that sum; and up to this time I have paid the interest for the monies I borrowed; and, from the progress I had made in paying off the debt, my thoughts were, that the chapel would, in a few years, be quite free. “But my thoughts were not the Lord’s thoughts” (Isa. lv. 8), for on the 27th of April, 1831, my wife was taken very ill, and was not expected to live: and when such things as afflictions take place in the house, they generally bring poverty with them—and so I found it; for many times since I have not had a penny in the house. Well, I remember one Saturday morning, I had no money to go to market, to provide food for the Sabbath. I had been begging the Lord to appear for me, but all seemed shut up. As I was walking my room, thinking it over, I came to this conclusion—I know I can get credit, and so it must be; but Satan immediately appeared as an angel of light, and cited me to the bar of equity, with this text: “Owe no man any thing” (Rom. xiii. 8). He so belabored my mind with it, that I concluded, I and my family must be content to go without a Sunday’s portion of the meat that perisheth. While I was in this state of mind, there was a knock at the door, and a person called and paid his seat-rent, which was 1*l.* I thanked my dear Lord for this kindness: but I had many bitter reflections for mistrusting the Lord.

From the day that my wife was taken ill, up to the time I am now writing—which is seven years—we have had a continual series of afflictions in the house. Shortly after my wife was taken ill, my eldest son was also taken ill, and for more than two years was confined to the house. This has been a heavy affliction—it has given me much sorrow, and caused me many waking hours. The disease broke out in his left foot, after a sharp attack of the liver complaint. Some thought his leg must be amputated; but to this I could not consent; for I fully expected he would die; he was so very ill. One Sunday evening, previous to my going to the chapel, I thought it would be the last time I should see him alive. The anguish of my heart I cannot describe! I went into my room and shut the door, and cried to the Lord on account of it, and told him, unless he answered me, I could not preach. Then the Lord spoke these words unto my poor troubled heart: “Go thy way, thy son liveth.” And I believed the words that Jesus had spoken, and went my way (John iv. 50). My son’s

leg wasted to a skeleton; some bones worked out of his foot, and he was reduced to such a state of weakness, that for above six years he has not been able to do any thing. All this time there was not one of the children capable of earning a penny.

By this, the reader will see how the Lord kept the vessel of mercy in heavy ballast, so that he was neither upset with the vanity of his mind, nor permitted to hoard up money. And by these things the Lord taught me the truth of the following scriptures: “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. x. 23). “The Lord is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him” (Job xxiii. 13, 14). “And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies, &c.” (Luke xii. 22—32). And blessed be the Lord! he hath made me a witness of his faithfulness and truth both in providence and grace, that “many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all” (Ps. xxxiv. 19); and that all these things work together for good.

Moreover, the Lord did not stop here; for while my wife and son were ill, all the children were laid up in the spring of 1832! This exercised my little faith; for these things came in conjunction with a very sharp trial from a quarter I never expected, —so that “I was tossed to and fro very often in my mind, and was even at my wit’s end” (Ps. cvii. 27). Nevertheless the Lord was my stay, my refuge, and strength; “and by him I was holden up” (Ps. lxxi. 6). I was even brought to prove more of the Lord’s mercy and goodness, in being myself afflicted, —brought on by over exertion in preaching: for in five weeks I preached thirty-eight times. On Monday evening, April 2d, 1832, as I was preaching, a sudden shock appeared to pass through me, just as if my head was opened, all my body unnerved, yea, such a state of nervousness, that I could not stand without holding, nor walk in the streets without a staff and one of the children to lead me. It appeared to me as if I walked on a high precipice. I feared to eat my food, lest I should be strangled; and was constrained to hold the pulpit with both hands, lest I should fall over.

I am confident none but the Lord could enable me to preach in such a nervous state—but so it was; and, to the praise of my precious Lord Jesus I record it, “His grace was sufficient for me, and his strength was made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. xii. 9).

I must say a little more on this affliction. It may be, some poor child of God, travelling in the same path, in reading these things, will find that he is not alone: for I sank into such a state of mind, that I was afraid to see any one; and if I heard a knock at the door, my hair would rise upon my head—a trembling would seize me from head to foot; and if a coach passed my door, and I heard its rumbling, my impression was, that somebody was come to take me to the asylum: so that a horror would take hold of me, and I appeared to myself as if all my rationality was gone. When I have been in bed, it seemed to me many times, as if I was the greatest overgrown monster that ever existed. Sometimes I thought my head was as large as a mountain; and in a morning, when about to go down stairs, I would get slowly to the hand-rail, and lay hold of it, and then shut my eyes, so as not to look over the stairs, fearing I should fall over the balustrade. All manner of hideous figures would present themselves to my view with open mouths, to devour me. My little faith and hope seemed dashed out of countenance; the sweets of pardoning love and mercy appeared all gone; and “I could not remember the way the Lord my God had led me” (Deut. viii. 2). The dealings of my blessed Lord were all gone from my mind; I could not read my bible; I was afraid to bow the knee before the Lord in prayer, lest he should strike me dead; the devil appeared to be let loose upon me, and was continually taunting me with: “Where is now thy God?” (Ps. xlii. 10). Satan laid hard on my mind, what the fool saith in his heart: “That there is no God” (Ps. liii. 1). And I am confident, had not the Lord been my keeper, I should have blasphemed his holy name, and denied his being and existence. “Sovereign grace o’er sin abounding, ” will be my theme to all eternity. I must detain the reader a little longer in telling him a few things more, and the marvellous mercy of my blessed Lord manifested towards me in them. The doctors said I must be bled, or I should have an apoplectic seizure, and death would be the result. To this I would not agree; I asked them to give me a scripture to warrant their assertion, and to tell me who bled the Israelites in the wilderness. To this they could give me no answer;

whereupon I said, “My times are in the hand of the Lord” (Ps. xxxi. 15); nothing ever took place by chance. I have always felt an aversion to bleeding; and, although I have been told many times that it was needful for me, I have never submitted to it. I believe nothing will deprive me of my natural life, until the Lord who gave it shall take away my breath, and then I shall die (Ps. civ. 29); for the predictions of my medical advisers did not take place, and I have even outlived one of them: not that I reject their assistance; for I consider them very useful persons, and blessings from the Lord to their fellow creatures. I still grew worse and sank into a state of mind almost incredible; I even fancied myself dead and buried, and my poor wife and children to be sunk into the depths of poverty—that they had sold all the furniture they could part with, for bread; and I thought a man was come to take off the back window-blinds (where I now sit, writing this), to sell them to get a loaf. It is in vain for me to attempt to describe the then state or feelings of my mind, and the anguish of my heart. I felt no outgoing of soul to the Lord, neither had I a will so to do; but I was as David expresses it: “Thou holdest mine eyes waking; I am so troubled, that I cannot speak” (Ps. lxxvii. 4). And what is so marvellous in my eyes, is, that in this confused state of mind I went to the chapel and spoke to the people; and they did not consider there was any thing the matter with me. This is a positive evidence that spirituality, and not intellectuality, is true religion. As I was in the depths, so I spoke; and the Lord did not leave the people comfortless. At this trying time, I secretly wished that I was anything but a parson. I have envied the people while they have sat before me; for they appeared perfectly happy, while I was completely miserable. “And I fully believed that not one of them cared for my soul” (Ps. cxlii. 4).

Blessed be my ever dear Lord! “He knew my soul in adversities” (Ps. xxxi. 7); and in his own time delivered me from this peculiar state of mind, which nothing but misery occupied. As I was lying one day, pondering over what I was, and what a state I was in, and seeing no way of escape for me, the Lord brought his word with power into my heart: this was the scripture, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John iii. 8). I felt immediate relief in my mind and deliverance in my soul; I was completely lifted up out of the pit of misery and despondency, in which I

had been so long stuck fast. My confidence in the Lord returned; faith and hope centered in him; and my soul was “led forth in the dances of them that make merry” (Jer. xxxi. 4). This was another blessed deliverance from the Lord. I found—to his praise and honour, and for the peace of my soul—“that the eternal God was my refuge, and underneath are his everlasting arms” (Deut. xxxiii. 27). And blessed be the Lord, that he hath not left me to sink so low again in despondency; and I now rejoice that “Jesus is able to save them even to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. vii. 25).

It was a long time before my bodily health was restored: all the effects have not left me yet, for I often feel a giddiness, and a nervous trembling. I must notice one thing connected with the deliverance the Lord wrought, by his word, in my heart: for I well remember it was on a Thursday morning, and that in the evening of the same day, a woman called on me in great distress of mind, saying, she was nothing but a hypocrite—all her profession was in the flesh—all her former joys and consolations were nothing but delusions—the devil would not let her rest day nor night—she was afraid of what she should do to herself—and that she surely should blaspheme the Lord, and go to hell after all. As I had trodden this path, I felt for the poor creature, and told her how the Lord had kept and delivered me: but all I said availed her nothing—she said, she should surely go to hell: but I thought otherwise, for I believed she was one of the Lord’s, and would never go there. As the blessedness of my Lord’s words were still upon my mind, I said to her—Did you never read, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil?” Ah, no! said she, I never heard them before: where are they? I told her. Bless the Lord! she said; I feel their power and sweetness in my heart, the devil is fled, and I am delivered. Then she and I praised the Lord together; and she left my house praising and blessing the Lord. By this, the reader will see how wonderfully the Lord works to accomplish his own purposes; and that, after all my trouble, I had great cause for joy.

I must here relate another dear mercy from the Lord. This year, 1832, on the 15th day of June, the cholera began its ravages in Plymouth. By the beginning of September, it had swept off more than eight hundred persons. At the commencement of it, I felt a concern about my family,

and was enabled to spread their case before my heavenly Father, who answered me to the joy of my heart, saying, “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling” (Psa. xci. 10). The Lord, who spoke the word, enabled me to believe it. I told several persons, that it would not come into my house: whereupon, some said, I was presumptuous; but I believed the word, and the Lord fulfilled it. I even visited some of the worst cases, and was delivered from all fear, blessed be his holy name! There were many who died at the front and back of my house: but the Lord had fixed a boundary around me and my house, which nothing could break down. Thus the Lord preserved the whole family from the cholera: nevertheless, we were afterwards all laid down with the influenza; yet, all was well! I cannot pass over these mercies unnoticed, nor let them lie in forgetfulness; “I desire ever to ascribe all to the praise of the glory of his grace, that hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. i. 6).

I have often thought of the effects produced by the cholera; namely, the horror which appeared in the countenances of the ungodly, from the fear of death and judgment. This disease made a great many religious for a season; they ran to and fro, calling upon ministers to come and pray by the dying. I was led to houses I hated, namely, to brothels; and although I very reluctantly went, yet in one brothel I found a poor female, reading her Bible in bed; and from the statement she made, I verily believe, the Lord had quickened her soul! she pointed out to me several portions of God’s holy word, which were precious to her! I felt no reluctance in going to the house to visit her after my first visit; but the other poor wretched females never would come into the room, so that no one interrupted our conversation. After a while she recovered and left the town. The scenes of wretchedness she disclosed to me, which the Lord had brought her through, filled my mind with horror and my heart with anguish. Who can describe the misery, which pollution, sinfulness, and abomination has brought upon our poor fallen nature? what a humbling lesson to a child of God, is the misery visible in some of our fellow-creatures, in consequence of the fall: all are alike conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, all are born corrupt, and abominable, and in that state, “destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known, there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. iii. 16—18).

In the case of this poor harlot, as in every other, relative to the election of grace, it is equally the same: “Where sin abounded grace did much more abound” (Rom. v. 20), and hereby is openly manifested, “the exceeding riches of his (God’s) grace in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus, (Eph. ii. 7).

I must now state an instance of a different nature from the former, which I was also called to witness. I was sent for, and visited a man in dying circumstances; when I entered his room, several followed me. I knew the man; for he was one who had spoken many times against the truths of God. I asked him for what intent he had sent for me: he made no reply. I said to him, that as death was staring him in the face, he had sent for a man who could do nothing for him; that the Lord only could help him, or do any thing for him! I told him, it appeared to me, that he wanted a feeling sense of those truths in their blessedness, which he had so railed against. I went over a few things recorded in the word of the Lord, relative to his dying in the state he had lived; and what Jesus had said, and that it remained unalterable; “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John iii. 5). By this time I lost all my company, and was left alone by the man’s bed-side: I then asked him if any part of the word of God was precious to him: he replied, “No!” I said, “Have you any desire after the truth, or salvation; or is your heart going out after Jesus Christ?” he answered, “No, I have no desire after any of these things.” I stood amazed at the man so dead in sin, and just about to leave time for eternity: and my heart flowed down with gratitude to my ever dear Lord Jesus, that he had made me to differ. His wife now returned, and asked me to sit down, and read to her husband. I said, “It is of no use, for he has neither an ear to hear, nor a heart to receive.” I then bade her good morning and left the room, and within two or three hours after the man died. I was now represented by the wife, as the most unnatural, hardhearted wretch that ever lived; but in less than a week she died of the same disease.

Reader, pause over these things and ask thyself, how the case stands between God and thy soul; whether all is right Art thou ready to die? (Luke vii. 2) for vain is the help of man (Psa. lx. 11). The Lord must quicken the soul, and keep it alive when it is quickened, “for no flesh shall glory in his presence” (1 Cor i. 29): the Lord saith, “Let him that

glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord;" (Jer. ix. 24). In the instance of the poor harlot, we see the sovereign grace of the Lord, and his distinguishing mercy plainly manifested.

The Lord who kept us from the cholera, was constantly loading us with benefits, and following us with his goodness, although my son was in affliction, and we were all seized again in April, 1834, with the influenza, for my wife was very ill, and I was laid up for a fortnight, yet all was in mercy. On September 18, Sunday morning, the Lord added to us another child, this was the tenth, a daughter. As soon as I found all was well, I withdrew to consider the matter, and to thank and praise the Lord for his goodness towards us. After this, I began to think about a name for it, for I had been much exercised in my mind about its birth, my wife being so weak, and constantly saying, she could not survive it; which saying gave me an errand to the throne of grace many times, where I felt persuaded the Lord heard my prayers; and now I know he has answered them; and therefore I desired to set up a memorial of the Lord's goodness and mercy in the name of the child. As I was thinking these things over, the following words were brought to my mind; "And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda" (Acts xii. 13); whereupon, I thanked the Lord, because I believed the words came from him; and I returned to the room, and said she should be called Rhoda. "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (Psa. cvii. 43); and, blessed be the Lord! I find what begins in real prayer will surely end in praise. From this time, we were going on in peace and happiness at the chapel, though much envied and evil spoken of; which was no new thing.

In the year 1834, an anonymous pamphlet came out in zigzag verse, with very heavy charges against the mason and his hearers, in which we were styled a parcel of demons. This drew forth from me something in imitation of poetry. But I hope never to dirt my fingers again by noticing such a character as the writer who made this attack upon us; for he was "grieved and pricked in his reins" at the prosperity of the mason; for his own popularity was gone. By their fruit, saith our dear Lord, we shall know them; then what can we know of a man, who was so envious of the

prosperity of Zion, as to attempt to stain the name and character of Dr. Hawker? This man was once a Trinitarian in profession, but is now an Arian in principle! This man's attack upon us was overthrown by the Lord bringing the dear contents of Isa. xli. 10—14. to bear on my mind—"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. " It is surely good to wait and watch the Lord's hand; for although this man's anonymous pamphlet made an uproar in the town, yet it did not hinder the sun from rising day by day, neither did it retard the Lord in his work, nor stop the mason from his sweet employ of preaching peace by Jesus Christ, because Jesus is Lord of all (Acts x. 36). Instead of this assassin-like attack thinning the chapel, the Lord added to our number; so that all things do really work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose (Rom. viii. 28). The host against Jehosaphat and the children of God in days of old killed one another: the Church stood still until the battle was ended, and then they gathered up the spoils (2 Chron. xx.) When Jerusalem was besieged by the king of Assyria's army, Hezekiah spread the boaster's letter before the Lord, and the angel of the Lord fought for the people and smote the host, so that they were all dead corpses (Isa. xxxvii. 36). Surely, this God is our God for ever and ever, and will be our guide over death (Psa. xlviii. 14); for we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. viii. 37). According to the Lord's good pleasure we were kept in peace in the church, although the dogs barked, the wolves growled, the foxes snarled, and my name was cast out as evil. The Lord had spoken good concerning Israel, and also made his goodness pass before us (Exod. xxxiii. 19); and I was enabled to say, "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor" (Psa. cxl. 12); and no one sinner hath greater cause to bless, praise, and adore the Lord than the one who writes this; for I was still kept with

afflictions in the house, but abounding with mercies from the Lord, who indulged me with his dear presence, and his strength was made perfect in weakness.

For brevity's sake, I am constrained to pass by innumerable mercies manifested towards me by the Lord my God; of whom it is said, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim. ii. 13); "For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel" (Jer. li. 5). I live daily to be a witness to the truth of the words of my precious Lord Jesus, "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); who saith also, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt, xxviii. 20); these truths received in the love of them "being mixed with faith" (Heb. iv. 2), experienced in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power (1 Cor. ii. 4), produce happiness in the soul, submission to the will of God, patience in tribulation, and rejoicing in hope (Rom. xii. 12). "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God: and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 6, 7). I find it blessed to be coming up from the wilderness leaning on the beloved (Song viii. 5), for through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom (Acts xiv. 22).

I shall now relate another instance, how my dear and precious Lord supported me in great tribulation; but I cannot openly declare the circumstances: let it suffice to say, it hath been to me a source of very great sorrow, grief, and affliction.

At the close of October, 1836, when it was first known, I really thought my poor wife would not have survived the stroke; but there is nothing too hard for the Lord. I well remember the same morning—it being Wednesday—my blessed Lord had indulged me with peculiar freedom with him in prayer, and my soul was melted down at his dear feet, being sensible of my unworthiness, and of his great goodness and mercy towards me; and bless him! he opened such communion with my soul in his most holy word, that I felt strong in the Lord and the power of his

might (Eph. vi. 10); but when I considered the matter a little, I thought it was a presage to something, but little thought of the quarter from whence it would come, or of the consequences connected with it; but so it was, that the nearer the hand the heavier the blow. I felt its weight, for it swept from my mind all the sweetness of what I had enjoyed in the morning. It filled my heart with sorrow and anguish: all access to the Lord and communion with him seemed closed; the Bible was completely shut against me; and nothing but acute pain in my mind seemed to exist from the nature of the trouble. I had no more power to cast my burden upon the Lord than I had to create a world. Let professors say what they will about the actings of faith and laying hold of the promise, taking God at his word, and making use of it when they please, I have never learned those flesh-pleasing, God-dishonouring schemes; but I am a witness to the truth of the words of Jesus, who saith, “Without me ye can do nothing” (John xv. 5). If I could have delivered myself, the thing would not have been such a sore trouble unto me. I believe the Lord intended I should feel it as I did: for nothing of affliction, persecution, or tribulation, ever broke down my spirits like this. The remembrance of it, and the sight of it continually before my eyes, have produced, and still do produce, many a sigh from a heavy heart.

In this state of mind, in darkness and in the depths of grief, I went on with my spirit overwhelmed (Psa. lxxvii. 3): it was to me, as Job saith; my stroke was heavier than my groanings (Job xxiii. 2); I was shut up and could not come forth (Psa. lxxxviii. 8); the word of God was a sealed book (Isa. xxix. 11), and I had some parts of God’s word to learn by experience, while I was kept in this dark dispensation, namely, “Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me” (Psa. xli. 9); and this after twenty years of unbroken friendship.

It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither he that hated me that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him; but it was a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company, (Psa. lv. 12—14). This added to my affliction; and, I think, the feeling sense of this deep wound will never be erased while I live. Satan attempted to take an advantage of this my sorrow and

trouble, so as to make a separation in the church; for a few who had been friendly to me left; nevertheless, I lay nothing to their charge. My times are in the hands of the Lord; he will always avenge his own elect.

I believe the poor of the flock, and the real lovers and receivers of the truth, felt for me acutely: and I know that the Lord heard and answered their prayers on my behalf; for never was his mercy, grace, and strength more manifested towards me than at this time of sore trial. Reader, I could think of nothing but my affliction out of the pulpit; but the Lord made me forget it when I was there speaking in his name. I can say from experience, “Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the stormy wind and tempest” (Psa. lv. 5—8; but it was with me as it is written, “When I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer” (Lam. iii. 8), and my prayer returned to my own bosom (Psa. xxxv. 13); and thus I was kept for three weeks bowed down heavily in sorrow and anguish of soul. One Thursday morning, when I was in my room, weeping before the Lord, my soul humbled within me, I cried unto the Lord out of the depths that he would be gracious unto me, and give me some portion of his dear word to alleviate my grief, and ease me of my burden. I verily believe the Lord heard my cry; for when I took my Bible, it opened at the 51st chapter of Jeremiah: “Well, ” thought I, “there are some sweet things in this chapter, yet I do not think there is any thing in it applicable to my case, or calculated to give me relief; but as I have opened to it, I will read it, for who can tell but the Lord may give me an answer of peace, —there is nothing too hard for him!” I began and read on to these words (verse 36), “Therefore, thus saith the Lord; Behold will plead thy cause and take vengeance for thee. ” I could read no further; the words sank into my heart. I said, “It is enough, my dear Lord. Honour and glory be to thee, my ever blessed Lord, for thy goodness and mercy towards me. ”

Thus, reader, thou wilt see how the Lord supported me, kept me, answered me, and taught me in this sore affliction; for in all this “the eternal God was my refuge (and is now), and underneath are his everlasting arms” (Deut. xxxiii. 27); but there is another part of the lesson that I learned, which I must not omit, namely, prior to the Lord’s speaking to me by the before-mentioned scripture, I had been thinking, it was very

hard that I should suffer by and for the actions of others. It was, as I thought, contrary to what I deserved; and I felt a secret rebellion rising in my carnal mind against the Lord, because he had not prevented it, as he knew how I was hated for his truth's sake: and for this thing the enemies would blaspheme his truth and name more than ever! Thus self-pride and the devil were acting in concert; but, as this was going on in my mind, there seemed to me as if someone asked me the following question: "For whose acts did Jesus suffer?" I said, "Not his own." I was in a moment like a dumb man before the Lord; my soul was melted within me with love and gratitude to my most glorious Christ, to think what he suffered for me, when his soul was in an agony, and sweat great drops of blood running down to the ground (Luke xxii. 44).

This was precious soul-humbling, Christ-exalting and endearing. I wept at his dear feet, and was willing to be nothing, and to suffer any thing for his sake, who had suffered so much for me. I could now most freely crown him Lord of all. The base acts of others caused me sorrow; but the dealings of my ever dear and blessed Lord with me in my sorrow worked together for good, of which I had the real experience in my heart. I have often heard sin spoken of very lightly, saying, "O it is one of the all things that work together for good." I bless the Lord that it will not and cannot do me, nor any of the Church, a final injury; yet I believe it to be the source of all my afflictions, pains, griefs, and troubles; and I find enough of it to tease and vex me day by day; nevertheless, I rejoice that there is no sin to bring me into a state of condemnation before my God (Rom. viii. 1). The apostle groaned, being burdened with the body of this death, and cried, "O wretched man that I am!" and yet he thanked "God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. vii. 24, 25). Let who will speak lightly of sin, our God doth not! What message did he send to David; was it for sin or from sin, when he declared the sword should not depart from David's house?

Reader, it is no small mercy to be taught the distinction between the old man and the new, as the Lord Jesus saith, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6); and thus, in all the warfare through the wilderness, the believer will find "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and

peace: for the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. viii. 6, 7). These things are neither known nor felt by professors, who experience nothing of the plague of the heart, and the deceitfulness of it (1 Kings viii. 38; Jer. xvii. 9). They always appear at ease; but the Lord saith, “Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion” (Amos vi. 1); and of such it is said, “For there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men” (Psa. lxxiii. 4, 5); “because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God” (Psa. lv. 19): in this state many live and die, yet they profess a great zeal for God, his cause, and his truth: and in these things even appear to outstretch the child of God; but such glory only in appearance, and not in heart (2 Cor. v. 12).

But those that are born of God (John i. 13) feel and find the following words to be true: “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. v. 17). And so we live daily to prove; “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places, ” whereby we see the necessity of having on “the whole armour of God” (Eph. vi. 10—17): and we are taught how grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. v. 21); whose grace is sufficient for us (in every trial and conflict), whose strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor. xii. 9); so that we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. viii. 37). These things more or less are the experience of the children of God; and having myself trod this path for many years, I speak positively, that all religion short of these things is in the flesh, and will end in death and damnation.

Reader, if thou art not weary of my narrative, I will detain thee a little longer, and tell thee of a few more things which have been a sore trial to me in my pilgrimage since the Lord quickened my soul. I would refer thee to the time when God set my soul at liberty; when the old man with all his powers, affections, and desires, seemed dead and buried, and my mind, affections, and thoughts, were settled in heaven with my precious Lord Jesus, so that I knew nothing then of the warfare between flesh and spirit; but things were not to continue in this state long, for I was to know

what was in my heart (Deut. viii. 2), that out of it proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matt xv. 19), and that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually (Gen. vi. 5). When these things broke out, they exhaled all the dew that lay upon the branch (Job xxix. 19), my joys were all fled, my beloved had withdrawn himself (Song v. 6), and I was driven to my wit's end (Ps. cvii. 27).

One of the things which proceeded from the heart almost sunk me into despair, and the words of Jesus (Matt. v. 28) added to my sorrow: "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." Of this temptation I was afraid to say any thing to any one, as I thought no one could be the subject of it but myself. I bless my gracious God that he kept me by his power (1 Pet i. 5) amidst all temptations, redeemed me from all evil, and taught me by these things, in real experience, that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; for the good that I would do I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do: now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. vii. 18—20.)

Some may censure me for writing thus, but as I suffered so much from it, who can tell but some poor child of God may be tried in the same way, and comforted by hearing of one companion in this path of tribulation; and may he find, as I have, that sin shall not have dominion over him, as he is not under the law but under grace (Rom. vi. 14). This will enable him with me and others, who have trod the same path, to give the Lord the glory and honour due unto his ever blessed name.

I shall now give a brief sketch of a few more of the temptations which I have been sharply exercised with, namely, to disbelieve the being of a God, and that everything after death is a nonentity; times innumerable the devil has assailed me with, "There is no God" (Ps. liii. 1), and questioned me, saying, "Where did he come from?—how is it possible that he could exist eternally?—there must be a beginning to God, —how can he be self-existent?—it is contrary to all reason; many wise men have believed it to be impossible, and none but fools believe to the contrary." These suggestions have bewildered me many times, but, blessed be the Lord! he

kept me. I have been set to reason on the impossibility of the doctrine of the Trinity, that one could not be three, and that three could not be one; but I thank my dear Lord, he hath kept me to the acknowledgment of the mystery (Col. ii. 2), and hath not suffered me to be wrapt up in the damnable heresy of the Arian, the Socinian, the creature pre-existerian, or of the Unitarian: and I rejoice before the Lord that the Holy Ones, Father, Son, and Spirit, are three, and that these three are one (1 John v. 7); not in arithmetical progression, but one in the unity of the eternal essence, Jehovah coequal and coeternal, and not divided, yet three in distinct personality, the Alehim.

Many times hath the devil disputed with me about the truth and authenticity of the word of God, and endeavoured to persuade me it was all a fable, and full of inconsistencies; that it was no more given by inspiration than any other book; but the Lord suffered me not to fall a prey to his teeth, for he had made his word spirit and life to my soul (John vii. 63). At other times the devil hath sorely tried me, —that all my religion was in the flesh, and nothing but a delusion, arising from my own imagination, and that after all I should be disappointed when I came to die: but “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it that men shall fear before him” (Eccles, iii. 14). By these things I learned that “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James i. 12); and blessed be the Lord he hath given me the earnest of the inheritance (Eph. i. 13, 14); and I live in the anticipation of soon being in full possession of it, and of the crown of righteousness; believing nothing can separate me from the love of God (Rom. viii. 39): but I also believe that whilst I remain here in the body, I shall be the subject of trials, temptations, and afflictions; that my old man is no more renewed now, than it was when I was dead in sin; that it will be a corrupt, vile, sinful body, when it is put into the grave; but at the resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ will change this vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body (Phil. iii. 21); and Jehovah will be unto me an everlasting light, and my God my glory (Isa. lx. 19). “And God will be all in all” (1 Cor. xv. 28).

Here I pause to say, What hath God wrought! (Num. xxiii. 23); whilst writing the foregoing memorial, I have sometimes felt great pleasure in recording the mercies of the Lord; at other times I have been tempted to cut the narrative in pieces and burn it, thinking myself the greatest fool that ever lived, for attempting to write it; but having by the good hand of God upon me travelled thus far, I will not now be so unnatural as to destroy the offspring, but leave it with the Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve; and should it ever appear with a little coat on, may the Lord use it to his glory, and for the comfort, and edification of some poor tempest-tossed sinners, and all praise and thanksgiving must be the Lord's: for he only is worthy.

I desire to commit all into the hands of my ever-blessed God; and let him do what seemeth him good, with the writer and what is written, so that the Lord may have the honour due unto his name: and I do bless him with all my soul, that he hath brought me thus far on my journey, being fifty-one years old this day, April 23, 1838. Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth (Rev. xix. 6). Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Rev. iv. 8—11). And as the sun of my short time upon earth is going down in the western hemisphere, and I shall soon be where the wicked cease from troubling, so I desire to rejoice before the Lord, in the full assurance of faith in the eternal blessedness of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, Jehovah; and Unity in Trinity, Alehim; Father, Son, and Spirit, coequal, and coeternal; the Lord God that changeth not, who saith to his Church, I am their inheritance, I am their possession (Ezek. xlv. 28). Amen and Amen.

