

TRAVELS in the WILDERNESS

TO HIS

HEAVENLY HOME:

*A Memoir*

OF

MR. JOSEPH F. RUDMAN,

*Late Pastor of the Church of Christ assembling at Trinity Chapel, Plymouth.*

COMPILED CHIEFLY FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND DIARY,

By W. HAWKINS,

*Editor of "The Youth's Sacred Harmonica," etc., etc.*

"A true minister of Christ possesses his Master's grace, has received his Master's call, does his Master's work, bears his Master's yoke, aims at his Master's glory, and hereafter will receive his Master's reward."

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Mrs. Rudman, of whom also they may be had, at her Stationery and Tea Warehouse, Drake Street, Plymouth; and of the Editor, Bradford, Wilts.

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## PREFACE.

To bring before the church of the First-born, the dealings of God to a vessel of mercy afore-prepared unto glory, by which that recipient of mercy was made, used, and honored, as a minister of the gospel, and in doing so, to glorify God and profit his people, is the aim of the Compiler in this Memoir; with this further wish—to aid his mourning widow and fatherless child.

Having been seriously indisposed, he is fearful it will prove not to have been accomplished so well as he desired. Mr. Rudman wrote at some length his life and experience, intending to publish it, had he been spared longer on earth; and it is only right here to intimate, that the Compiler believes it would have been more to the advantage of this Memoir, could he have enlarged his collection of extracts, &c. while it would have decreased his anxious labour in this effort to embalm the memory of one he highly esteemed, in the bosoms of the friends within his Christian circle, and of others abroad in the One Church. It was the kind feeling of the Plymouth friends towards the many poor, whom they believed, would like to possess the account of their friend R., that its pages were not, at least, 300.

Thanks are due, and are here presented, to those who have aided this work, and for the liberal contribution of subscriber's names. Now may our God own this humble effort of love and truth, in exhibiting the every day life of a heaven-blest pastor.

“He is approved of God, and he alone,  
Who preaches what he feels; who *daily* lives  
Upon the truths his fervent lips proclaim.”

*Bradford, Wilts,*  
*May 29th, 1854.*

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# Travels in the Wilderness, &c.

## CHAPTER I.

### PARENTAGE AND YOUTH.

“And he had in his right hand seven stars—the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.” And such exalted characters are true Gospel ministers. Joseph F. Rudman, as a star, received light from the great morning Star and Sun of righteousness, as all divinely ordained preachers do—“For God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

True to the source of their light, such stars shine out in their life and ministry what has been shone into their hearts, and so the grand subject and object of both are—“Christ is all and in all.” *Our departed brother exalted the Lord alone.* It was eminently his delight to display his Person, work and glories. Ever, like the “star seen in the East,” he led all seeking eternal life to his adored Jesus, and ministerially “went before them, till he came and stood where the incarnate God was.” And truly may it be said of not a few—“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy and being by it, through the Spirit, led into the way of peace, would mourn, (if they dared) that at the age of twenty-seven years their beloved Rudman had been removed to shine where “they that be wise (or teachers, margin,) shall shine as the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” Being in the Lord’s right hand as stars of his churches, they, of course, must be by him placed, ordained and preserved, supplied and directed, removed or continued, as he sovereignly resolves. Let them all, then, be only anxious for his glory in all things. How his providential and gracious hand brings each into this world, educates, keeps, qualifies, uses, blesses, and calls up to the world above, it is very interesting to trace; and in the Lord’s dealings with our departed friend, we have displayed how the *Head of the Church* brought out of obscurity into

usefulness and honor in his kingdom, one who said and had every reason for so saying—"By the grace of God I am what I am." This his own pen states—he says,—

"I was born in Devizes, Wiltshire, of poor, yet respectable and industrious parents, who sought my welfare from the very first moment I drew the breath of nature; and who accordingly watched over me with all that affectionate regard of which a parent's heart is susceptible. My mercy in this respect was very great, and a debtor to the goodness of my God am I, who should so order and arrange this for *me*, while tens of thousands are cast upon the world from tender infancy, and with nothing but scenes of folly before them, grow up in vice, and all immorality.

Should the reader be one of the Lord's called ones, he knows the debtorship of grace, and hence will join with me in ascribing to God the glory of all his acts, that He who deserves may alone have the praise.

Among the earliest recollections of my infant days, was the death of my brother George, who died in his infancy, and is doubtless numbered among those who walk in white, being interested in *Him* who, as the Lord our righteousness, passed through every stage of infancy, childhood, youth, and age; and was *our* righteousness in each. It is upon the ground of salvation by sovereign grace, that infants are saved. It is not by sprinkling them with water; nor carrying them to carnal, no, nor to spiritual men, officiating in the Establishment nor out of it, that any soul will get to heaven. It so was however, that though *I* had been rhantized, and my brother William, George was *not*; and as both my grandparents had been parish clerks, and both my parents always brought up to *church*, yet such was the influence of superstition, and that sad was the state of my dear mother in reference to it, she supposed that it was *lost*; at any rate, that it was *not in heaven*. For it was commonly supposed, that though it would be going too far to say it was in hell, yet it was more than could be allowed of to suppose it was in heaven, as it had not been *regenerated*, and made a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven! by baptism. Under this impression my dear mother laboured, for some considerable period, until going into the Old Baptist Chapel, at the time when Mr. Hitchcock was pastor there, who came out of the Establishment, her mind was set free from the snare. It is only right here to say, that my dear mother was under great concern about her soul, and had been from eleven years of age, yet had no knowledge of God's way of saving sinners; but as she now began to go to

the meeting-house, light beamed upon her mind, and her soul began to taste the sweets of the joyful sound.

Another thing which stands connected with my childhood in Devizes, was, the providential goodness of God in preserving my life when in imminent danger. We were then living in Bridewell-street, near to the prison, and at the time of the *riots*, the Yeomanry cavalry were drawn up before our house. My mother being on the other side of the street, I attempted to cross over, beneath the horses, and narrowly escaped being trampled to death. This I have heard my mother speak of again and again. Until God gives the word, death cannot strike the blow.

Things had hitherto smiled upon my dear parents; trade was brisk, and the business in which they were engaged was prosperous: but through the dishonesty of him who was a partner in the trade, a sad reverse came; and concluding that it was of no service longer to continue in Devizes, and trade being good in Cheltenham; at the invitation of a brother, my parents resolved upon proceeding thither. A sale took place, wearing apparel, and other necessities were packed up, and in a stage waggon we took our departure for that town. I knew nothing of my parents' *trials*. To me they were my all. It mattered not to me, whether we were in one town or another, whether we were on a journey or at rest; my parents were with me, and I was content. This, my reader, will hold good in more senses than one. It will bear spiritually, as well as naturally. And thrice happy that soul who knows what it is to rest in God.

But little did my parents know that which *hinged* upon their removal to Cheltenham. They had much to learn, and this was the school, in which it was to be learned. They must leave old places and come into new scenes, that the purpose of God may be accomplished and fulfilled both by *them*, and *me*.

When we were at Cheltenham, we were domiciled at the house of my uncle; and here, I think the happiest part of my life was spent, and I know it was so with my dear parents. Trade was good naturally; and under the ministry of Mr. Smith, at Bethel Chapel, their souls were abundantly watered, and refreshed. It was the time of their first joy, they had gladness and singing, for their captivity was turned.

I knew nothing of the *secret* of their happiness, but I shared the *comfort* which flowed from it, in an outward sense. Nor shall I forget the peace

which reigned in our habitation, it was truly an exemplification of the message, “Peace on earth, good will amongst men.” My mother was a lively Christian. The hand of God had been very special in her case; and, being a woman of very strong mind, and having seen much of the Lord’s goodness, she was an exceedingly valuable parent, whose remembrance is still fresh, and her memory fragrant to my heart. Praying parents,—*who* can tell their worth, or who shall give an estimate of them? It would not be possible so to do. They watch for the soul, as well as over the body, and in many instances they are instruments for God, in the Lord’s hand.

I was early sent to school, and a school too where the *Bible* was made the basis of the instruction. I allude to the infant school, of which the Rev. F. Close, A.M. was visitor. Here much biblical information was gathered, and in this and the Sabbath school, I gained much of my acquaintance with the letter of God’s holy word. The Bible is the foundation book of all books. It is *to βιβλος* *the* book, here the best of conduct is calculated, the wisest sayings recorded, and the most interesting and ancient histories of men and things handed down.

The plan pursued often in reference to the word of God, was, for some scholar to repeat a text beginning with A as the initial letter, and then with B, and C, and D, until the alphabet was gone through. In this way I was familiarized with the sacred page, and although no saving effect was produced, yet, nevertheless, they were *checks upon my conscience*, and hence I can never remember the time when I had not convictions for sin, and some impressions in reference to an eternal state of things. All this I know was *legal*, and so was my morning and evening prayers, or saying of prayers; but nevertheless, it kept before me the great fact that *there is a God*, and, though, as I grew onwards in years I sometimes could not make it out where God *was*, and how it was he ever had an existence without beginning of days, and how ever it was he could have no end; yet there was an impression of his power, a dread of his anger, and a continuous feeling of alarm, when *sin* was committed and wrong done; which was further increased by the conversation of my dear mother, who, with appropriate texts of scripture, or some couplet of Watts’ seemed to have something for every occasion, which caused me often to feel strange sensations, and burden of mind.

I may here be permitted to say, that no fault was ever winked at: nor was a promise made that was not fulfilled; whether it was the rod for a fault, or some indulgence for good conduct, it was invariably fulfilled. By which

means my dear mother had such an *ascendancy*, as that we loved and yet feared her; she exacted implicit obedience to her commands, and hence, maintained an unlimited authority to the last.

But I have again to speak of the Lord's goodness towards me in *again* preserving my life in imminent danger, and in which, though severely hurt, yet mercifully spared. The occurrence was as follows. There being *swings* erected in the play-ground for the amusement of the children, some of the great boys took possession of a swing, and I, without thought, went too near the swing, the corner of which, *bound with iron*, struck me with considerable *force*, penetrating into my left temple. The doctor who attended to the wound at the hospital, spoke of it as a narrow escape. However, as God would have it, in whose hand is our breath, my life was not cut off, though the mark I shall carry to my grave. The effect it had upon me, made the application to myself of that verse, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." I knew nothing of the *meaning* of the text, further than after my own way of reasoning, it appeared to me that from my late accident and its effects, I was myself become like a bottle in the smoke.

To mark however the giddiness and waywardness of children, although I was cautioned not to go upon the swings, nor anywhere near them, I was scarcely got well, before I climbed to the top of the framework of one, a height of twelve feet, I should suppose, from the ground, and fell down head-long, laying my head open on the top. The wonder is that my neck was not broken, and instead of escaping with the wound I had, that I had not been hurried out of time into eternity. Is there not an appointed time for man upon the earth? Here my soul would pause and admire the goodness of our God.

We now removed from the house of my uncle, and took part of a house in the back of King-street, the other inhabitants of the house with us, being an old bed-ridden woman, and her son, a policeman, and a daughter, who was troubled with the St. Vitus' dance. To this old woman I used to read, and often hear her talk of the things of God and truth. I should hope she knew for herself what she spoke about, as she often repeated that hymn in Watts, and especially this verse of it:—

"In darkest shades if he appear,  
My dawning is begun;  
He is my soul's bright morning star,



And he my losing sun.”

It was while here, that the Lord laid his afflicting hand on myself, my dear father, and my brother William. We were all down in the Typhus fever, and all our lives were despaired of. I remember going home from school with the ear-ache, and being able to get up, and having lost all my hair, going to school again to see the skeleton of a large whale, with a white cap upon my head which I was always to wear until my hair grew again, but I lost all consciousness for a long time, so that my affliction is as a blank in my short history. The Lord, however, in mercy raised us up again, and he provided many friends, so that we lacked nothing though it was some time before my dear father was able to work again. When my brother William, and George were down with small pox I escaped, the Lord sparing me that visitation.

Being now removed from the infant school and sent to the National School, I was required to attend *Church* on the Lord’s day, and hence was removed from under the eye of my parents: which is an important thing. The school I did not like. There was harshness and severity in the master, and many of the elder boys were complete tyrants. I often got “served out,” as they term it, until I hated the very sound of the school, and used to make all manner of excuses in order to get away early; until at last I played truant altogether, and altered my mode, by wandering about the whole of Sunday; and for a fortnight spent my school-money in trash, and made stories at home to account for this and that, until at last a note from the master to my parents stopped it, and I was removed to a school kept by a *gentleman of colour*, and again entered into the Sabbath school. Mr. Smith having left Bethel Chapel, and my parents with him, I, together with my brother William, was entered into Salem Chapel Sunday-school.

Nor shall I ever be able to express what I owe to the care and kindness of the teachers there. Many of them are gone the way of all the earth; but their memory is dear to me, especially the memory of Mr. Charman. That man was to me in the school, as a father, and truly his instructions were those of a man of God, sincerely desirous of my soul’s good. He was a *valuable* man in the church and in the school. Others, too, I might name.

It was in the sabbath school that I first had a prayer fasten on me with a power I could never shake off. The schools were united together in a Union, and at stated times the several schools would meet; at one time in Highbury Chapel, another time in Cheltenham Chapel, in order to listen to

a sermon preached to children. If I mistake not, the text upon the occasion to which I refer was, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord," The preacher was a Mr. Wilson, the chapel where Mr. Brown, a good old servant of the Lord, was then preaching. The sermon abounded with anecdote, and was so far interesting. However, without subscribing to all he advanced, though at that time *free will* was as much to me as *free grace*; I knew not the difference; but he desired us to make use of one short prayer, "O Lord, convert my soul, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." He told us of the answers God had given to that prayer, and that petition henceforth became my prayer. Nor could I ever leave it off. It clave to me from that day forward, and it was used on my knees, as well as standing up, and no form of petition was ever considered complete, unless this was part of it.

We again moved house, and I was again changed as to my schoolmaster. Many thoughts also at this time began to take possession of my young mind; especially thoughts in reference to the ministry. It cannot for a moment be supposed that I knew its trials, responsibilities, or spirituality. But nevertheless my mind ran upon it, and I used to get the children together on a Sabbath evening, and while father and mother were at chapel, I used to give out a hymn, read a chapter, repeat a prayer, and do what I called, *preach*. On this I lay no stress. I only give the reader the facts as they occurred. [In a letter, lately written by the father of our departed brother, in which he tells me from a child his Joseph was kind and affectionate, "seeming as though he could not do enough for myself and his dear mother;" that he was particularly attached to his dear mother, and great was his grief when she was taken from this vale of tears; he also says, "He was always fond of learning, his book was his delight—not a meal time but you might see him with a book, and every leisure moment was devoted to study."—Being left at home in charge of the other children, (he was the elder,) as soon as his parents were gone to the public worship, he would call all into the house, and the neighbours would say when they came home, that, having listened at the door, they had heard a better sermon from Joseph than would be preached at some chapels.

This is strikingly similar to what is written of that blessed man of God, Mr. W. H. Hewitson, of Scotland, whom the Lord so marvelously honored among the poor Papist—degraded Portuguese; and then so mysteriously called to his home in early manhood too. "The form which the boy's earthliness took was ambition—love of praise. That fire which afterwards threatened to consume him, was even now, at the age of five or six, sending forth its scintillations. He used to say in his boyish simplicity, he would either be a minister or a king. At times he would mount a chair, and with one of his little sisters for precentor and the rest for audience, would strain his every effort and often not without success, to move to tears by his words. "I remember," he has often been heard to say long afterwards, "what a wicked little creature I was; I got Jane to

weep at what I said; I felt pleasure at seeing the effect of my eloquence.” In the midst of extraordinary usefulness his Elder Brother and Lord called him home.]

My circle of reading also became extended, and varied. I read with avidity all I came near. I got a romance, which chained and rivetted my attention amongst castles, and baronial halls, and lords and retainers, and all the rest of incidents which are thrown in to make three volumes octavo for a lending library. This was lent me by an acquaintance. I took it all for *truth*, and it gave my mind a bias which was not favourable at all for soberness of thought and view. I also read Robinson Crusoe, which certainly, as a work of fiction, ranked high. The Pilgrim’s progress also fell into my hand, and I read it as facts, feeling all the ardour for *Christian*, and all the opposition to his foes, which would be felt in a lad of sanguine temperament. An old book-stall was to me a market, and one at that time has taken many an hour of my time. I fear I am not quite cured of *books* and *old book-stalls* yet.

But while at my last school, I was not without some signal tokens of the Lord’s goodness and mercy to me. For I was by a mischievous boy thrown down a long flight of steps, which shook my frame very much; and I was scarcely recovered from it, before an abscess formed under my thigh, which gave my dear mother many serious thoughts. A lad also at another time struck me in the face with a stone, which so lacerated the veins of the nose, that I bled until I lost all consciousness. This was a sad affair, and might have been attended with very serious injury, yet the hand of my God was over me for good; and, apart from my pain and confinement in-doors, I received the blow without any disfigurement of my features.

I was also now, at times, the subject of amazing horror of mind, and perturbation of spirits. Often in the night have I awoke so affrighted as not to know where I was, from the dreams of hell, and the horrible sensation of Satan carrying me away bodily. Oh what I endured, night and day, for many weeks together, I shall never forget. And in addition to all, which John Wesley’s work of “News from the Invisible World,” relating numerous ghost stories, and apparitions, and terrible warnings, and so on, so wrought upon me, that I became afraid to go out, and grew timid, and fearful of the least sound, yea, of my own shadow. I believe that such a work breeds idle fancies, works upon weak minds, and by engendering stupid and silly notions, has a most injurious effect upon children, and weak-minded females. Children ought never to be frightened, and such stories of apparitions and dreams and tokens, however they may become materials for *novels* and *romances*, in addition to their *groundlessness*, pamper a

morbid taste, excite a love for the marvellous, and make men and women indulge in an absolute species of fatalism, apart from the dictates of reason and of common sense.

It would be well if parents more generally inquired into the nature of the books which their children read, as well also of the company which their children keep. All such trash as novels, romances, dream-books, and those of such a class as the before mentioned, “News from the Invisible World,” should be prohibited, and works of sound instruction, combining interest with information, be substituted. Who shall tell what effect such things have upon the mind. There is one publisher in London, the general class of whose productions are debasing and demoralizing; and yet they present a charm to the young mind, aye, and the older mind too, which is like a terrible spell. I will only say here they led *me* to the brink of ruin. But more of this anon.

My time now came to leave school, and it being determined on that I should go to the *bench* with my father, a new era opened before me, and I was now about to go into the wide world.

Thus for our brother’s account of his boyhood. In looking at the contents of this chapter, how verified is that scripture, “Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.” Such dangers, such hair-breadth escapes, many of us can record, but they are no less valuable for all that. It is profitable to trace them; and it often encourages the Lord’s people to trust Him for the future. Brother Rudman was in the Lord’s hand, and till He bids he cannot die.

How cheering also to discover instances of the influence of godly and affectionate attention to the young.

Well may it be asked by that master in his day, “Who is able to speak worthily of the fulness of childhood?” Christian mothers, be encouraged in your important charge. Joseph Rudman had a tender reverence for that mother who loved him dearly, governed firmly, and prayed earnestly for his best interests. Many similar instances we have of gospel ministers leaving behind them such testimonies. I might refer, amongst others, to the late Joseph Sedgwick, of Brighton, and his loving esteem of his mother’s counsel and prayers; to Joseph Irons, of Camberwell, and his lasting and fervent affection for his father, because of his daily wrestlings with God for him; and to, last, but not least, to our late highly esteemed brother, John Stevens,

of whom it is written, that “he ceased not to cherish, with the most affectionate veneration, the memory of his beloved grandmother, who had, at considerable sacrifice of personal comfort, conferred upon him such lasting benefits, and by the influence of whose instructions, were imparted and fostered those principles of moral greatness which laid the foundation for his future honorable course, and public usefulness.” Sunday-School teachers are here also encouraged to persevere. Every useful teacher is a God-honored servant, and will in no case lose his reward.

## CHAPTER II.

### ENTRANCE ON THE WORLD, AND CONVERSION.

As intimated in the previous chapter he now goes to work, and again let us hear him; he says— “This is an important time. It was not so dangerous to me as otherwise it might have been, because I was going out with my dear father, who would, and who did, watch over me in every particular; who would not allow me to associate with the men, nor listen to their conversation. But still, where many men, and those men ungodly men, are at work together, some filthy communication or other proceeds out of their mouths, and the carnal mind receives it, sin is conceived, and death is the fruit of it.

My inclination was not studied as it regarded the work of a joiner; but, however, I worked at it for some time, though a good deal of my time I was engaged in writing and keeping accounts, as my father had many men at that time working for him. Here again I had many narrow escapes, once by falling down a ladder; again, by the fall of a scaffold, and on another occasion, the ceiling-joist broke, and I was precipitated into the ‘well hole,’ over a large well, but as God would have it, a joist was projecting, and on it I fell, or, humanly speaking, I must have been hurried out of time into eternity! I have been indeed in deaths oft, yet the Lord hath yet spared my

life in being. *Why* He knew, and for *what* he knew. This fall again shook me very much, and I greatly question, whether these repeated falls from time to time had not an effect to weaken my frame, and laid the foundation for that weakness and pain which I have laboured under for so many years.

About this time teetotalism, as it is called, began to be very much talked of; and meetings were held, and much commotion began to be felt in the town of Cheltenham, in reference to it. We had lectures, and speeches, and advocates in every variety. It was going to *help forward the cause of truth*, become the *handmaid to religion*, and hasten the time when “the knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth as the waters covered the sea.” Ministers, not teetotalers, were to be left, *the wine discarded from the Ordinance*, moderate men denounced as *worse* than drunkards, and the great evil of all evils was going to be put down; and hence, itinerants were employed in the villages on the Lord’s-day, *not to preach Christ*, but *tee-totalism*; when all the old scenes of drunkenness were brought forward, and shouts of laughter elicited by the *whim* and *humour* of the *advocate*. Well, a Youths’ Temperance Society was formed, and I became a member.

Let it not be supposed that I am opposed to the *principle* of abstinence; no, by no means. But the carrying of it out, in the form, and to the ends of such advocacy I dare not lend my sanction. What! because a man turns from what he ought never to have been, and instead of being a drunkard becomes a sober man, is *merit* to be attached to that? Shame on the man or woman either, who so far forgets what is due to themselves, and their families, and society at large, as to become worse than beasts, and descend in the scale of humanity far beneath the ass or swine. Because I am a *man*, am I to take credit to myself for *acting* as a man? By no means: say, “After we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants; we have done only that which we ought to have done.” However, as I before said, I became a teetotaler, joined the youths’ society, and became its secretary, and, young as I was, began to *speechify* at their meetings, and endeavour to make proselytes to this party. Doubtless, strange assertions were made, and I doubt not ludicrous must have been the scene. But, *on I went*, and by this means I began to be pretty generally known, and receiving invitations to Gloucester, Lydney, Coleford, and other places, grew *extremely vain*.

This then operated in a *pernicious* way, and by mixing in the company of other youths, I began to imbibe a taste for those things which were *trifling* and *vain*. I had about this time became a junior teacher in the Sabbath-school, but the acquaintances I formed among *other* youths, led me

oftentimes to a *disregard* of the Sabbath-day, and the class I had to instruct, so that the *fields* were visited and *the house of God neglected*; a parent's admonitions slighted, and I was laying a foundation for *ruin* with a witness. These days, and these occupations I now look back upon with the greatest sorrow.

My taste for *novels* and *romances* became also greatly increased, and all my spare money was spent in *this trash*. This tended only to fill my mind with strange, and foolish notions. It was mental food of a most pernicious kind. It retarded all useful study, and put itself diametrically opposite to all wholesome instructions. They lie in the high road to destruction. Our sentimental young ladies, and our young men who play so much the fool, are made *that*, in some measure, by reading the trash and imbibing the notions of your novel and romance writers. Murderers are heroes, and adulterers and adulteresses are painted in glowing colours, and their vices are decked out in a way to palliate crime, and further the cause of iniquity. The worst passions become inflamed, ideas of the worst kind are engendered, the sober scenes of life are forgotten, and dissipation and ruin are the result. None can tell what amount of evils are engendered, year by year, by the reading of such books as these. Painfully do I look back upon the *misspent* time, the misspent money, and the sad effects upon my mind resulting from it. Appetites were called into existence, and wants created which for want of *money*, I could not satiate, and then, I became not over scrupulous as to the means itook to gain my end. Am I addressing such characters as this! You know the excitement, the charm, the passions awakened, the pent-up desire for gratification, the burnings and cravings after forbidden objects, and how unfitted you become for every active pursuit, through secret sin, and its paralyzing effects, both upon body and mind. Parents robbed to supply base wants, and masters robbed of precious time, and excuses to be made, and lies resorted to; and eternity, eternity, and but a step between you and death! Solemn as it is, it is but too true.

As may be *supposed*, from reading such works, a play-house would present scenes to me of an attractive nature, and hence, could I have done so, I should like to have been *an actor*. Perhaps here, there is but another step in the scene. From reading comes acting; but who can tell how near the real participation in crime, is the acting the part of the base traitor, or the accomplished villain.

I will now speak of other things. Trade in Cheltenham had become very dull, and my dear father had met with many losses. I did not like the

carpentry and joining, and had in consequence begun painting; and ultimately found my profit therein, as did also my dear parents. But we became, in this world, very much reduced, having had at times to go to bed without a supper, and not knowing where the morning meal was to come from. This is a trying spot to be in, and often tends to drive a man to his wits' end. This was a curb on me; I could not do the things that I would; I lacked the means to gratify my desires. Poverty stood sternly opposed to barons and knights, and halls, and good fare, tables groaning under venison, and beef, and so on, after a chase, or the occasion of some great event. Poverty was no friend to theatres, routs, or anything else of the like. In this respect *poverty was a mercy*, and was to me a real blessing from the Lord.

I used often to kick against my lot, and be very envious of my fellows, who were better off in this respect than myself, but all my kicking did not alter the case, and hence stern necessity was laid on me to endure.

Painting being a dead business in the winter time, I one winter set up dealing in wood, which answered pretty well, so that the whole of us got a morsel of bread; which was no small thing, the winter being very severe.

But changes took place in the *chapel* as well as in our private affairs. Mr. Smith left Salem Chapel for London; and in his place came Mr. Lewis. I was no judge of doctrine, but I used to hear *others* talk, especially when it took my place in the different country stations, where I was appointed to teach the younger children. Some said *one* thing, and some *another*, and so it was from time to time. My own position was strange, I sometimes taught, and sometimes did not; sometimes went to one chapel, sometimes to another; at one time would go into the country to teach, at another time wander about the whole of the afternoon, not going anywhere at all; and so I continued for some time.

But at times my mind went through an agony of remorse. I knew there was a God; I knew that he would punish sinners. I knew the judgment would come, and the throne would be set, and a sentence against sinners would be pronounced. The thought of having my sins and iniquities exposed, was, to *me*, tremendous. The thought of father and mother knowing all my proceedings, *for I was leading them on in the dark*, and holy angels and men, and to be *turned into hell*, was a thought so awful, that a flash of lightning has made me quiver and shake, and a chapter from the Revelations would almost make my hair stand erect upon my head. At such times as these my



resolutions would be made to *leave off every sin*, and certain ones in particular, and mend my ways. But alas!

“The more I strove against its power,  
I sinned and stumbled but the more.”

The spirit of discord, at the time of which I write, began to work in Salem Chapel. The teachers had a dispute in reference to the children’s anniversary. Mr. Lewis sided with one part against the other, and the dispute grew so warm as to occasion a separation, and I, siding with those who left, went with them to their new place of worship.

Thus was broken up my connection with Salem Chapel. My mind still has in remembrance days passed within the walls of that place, and in my labours in distant villages.

The party who left, took the *Tabernacle*; and invited the late David Denham to come as a supply. From the first I felt under his ministry what I had never felt under the ministry of any other man. It was not the striking *texts* which laid hold on my mind, so much as *his experimental matter* and solemn appeals. Convictions deepened, sin became a misery, and many efforts have I made to rid myself of its power and influence.

My distress of mind was great, and particularly in view of death and judgment: and solemn were my cries and petitions to the God of heaven for mercy and grace as connected with the pardon of my sins and the blotting out of my iniquities. My companions were forsaken, and my novels and romances were compelled to be given up; and I bless the Lord for an increasing dislike to everything which bears not the impress of rich and saving truths.

But there was none at that time to whom I could open my mind. I could not remain away from the house of the Lord, and again it took my place as a teacher in the Sabbath-school; and although my feelings at times were most acute, under a feeling of loneliness, as though I was alone, and no one cared for my soul, yet I was held on by an irresistible power, a power utterly beyond my control in any way whatever. I know that religion *is* power. I was compelled to seek the Lord, and wait upon him, and had earth and hell attempted to stop my cries, they had been unsuccessful.

Circumstances appearing to justify the step, we removed to a chapel in King-street: it was much larger, and in a more convenient part of the town.

The chapel repaired and beautified, we entered upon it, and some good degree of success appeared to crown the labour of our dear minister.

Mr. Denham soon baptized a goodly number. What my feelings were, as they went down into the water, and were severally immersed in the name and upon their profession of Jesus Christ, I cannot describe.

I was a singer in the choir, and it was our province to sing, "Praise ye the Lord, Hallelujah," as each successive candidate was immersed; I joined in the first, when the thought occurred to me, "*What!* singing praise to God for *them*, while *you* are excluded? *They* are joining' the church below, and *you* are shut out here: *they* also, will join the church above, and *you* will be excluded *there* too!"

This *stopped my singing*, and threw me into great distress of mind. It was a solemn state of things to me. itook no further interest in the service, but went home, and without making any stay at the supper table, went straight to my room for the night. This conduct caused no small amazement to my parents, for I had never opened my mouth to them on religious matters at all: I had rather shunned than invited anything of the sort. However on the Monday morning, I, for the first time, opened my mouth to my dear mother, relative to the deep and painful exercises of my mind. But I could find no relief. The Lord's time was not come, and though speaking to the saints of God may present, (as doubtless it does) a momentary relief, yet, no permanent relief comes, until the Lord speaks the word home, with saving, sovereign power.

I took my paint kettle and brushes, to go to work; but work I could not. I had no rest in my spirit. I walked to and fro; I envied the people of God, and full of sorrow seemed to be alone. Ah! reader, I did not here want a *will* to believe, no; nor a will to be *saved*. I *did* feel my need of salvation, and could the pavement, and the road side, and the secret corners, testify to my cries, my breathings and my pantings after salvation, they would be witnesses that it was no common load which pressed down my spirits. My health too, at the same time, began to decline, and my distress proportionably increased with it.

It was so, that a young man, a painter and glazier by trade, on the Monday morning before named, was working in an adjoining house to that I was at work in, and hence itook the liberty of going in and putting various *questions* to him, as to what *he* felt when God was at work with *his* soul; this

led me to speak to him of various things, and as we had been old school-fellows together, I was led to retrace my steps back to the school, and my old instructors, and the prayer which had fastened on my heart, and which I was using daily and hourly, to *him* who heard in secret, and who answered my petition. Such conversation was new to me personally, for I had never engaged in it, having kept all my sorrows to myself.

On the Thursday evening following, being our regular Chapel evening, I went down very distressed in soul to hear whether there may be a word for *me*. The first person I met was Mr. Denham. After the recognition, he said, “How are you?” “Miserable, Sir.” “How so?” “It seems *every one* is going to heaven but *me*; there seems hope for *all* but *me*.” “Indeed! How long have you felt *to so*?” “For some time, sir; but more particularly on Lord’s-day evening.” “Well, friend R., come into the vestry after service, and I will have some conversation with you.” His text that evening, was that appropriate one to my very soul’s feelings, “*He* will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them.” Psa. cxlv. 19. Much of this sermon seemed to be especially for me. The servant of God appeared evidently to know my case, and the word came home with healing power. After this, I was proposed to the church, and began to know something more of the chequered scenes of the wilderness.

The work of the ministry also began to exercise my mind at times not a little, and although I said but little to any, yet the good Lord was deepening his work, and carrying it on in my heart, in a sweet and blessed manner. My conscience was kept very tender,—reading and prayer was my secret delight; yea, often and often have my prayers ascended to God for light and teaching and instruction, and for *keeping*, with the Bible before me on my knees. The company of the saints I delighted in and many a time have I been a silent listener to their conversations about the best things. Now and then I have put in a word, though this was seldom; the most of my conversation being with those, who having known me from childhood, I might accompany or meet with after the services of the sanctuary.

My mind was again particularly refreshed at a visit to Compton Abdail, with our dear pastor, on one Anniversary occasion. My mind would revert to the work of the ministry; it was a work I coveted. O to tell poor sinners the unsearchable riches of Christ in the salvation of their never dying souls! Yet, these exercises, with the exception of once mentioning them to Mr. Denham (who, however, gave me no encouragement), I had mentioned to no one whatever. The Lord, however, knew my heart, and my desire, and

my prayers; it had again and again ascended into his ears. I met Mr. Denham in the interval between afternoon and evening preaching, who, directing my attention to the new moon, said, "I never see it without thinking of God's ancient people." He went on lost in meditation one way, and myself another: *his* thoughts occupied in reference to the work of the evening, and *my* thoughts not less engaged in reference to my own state of mind and soul. He preached in the evening from "God be merciful to me a sinner," and it was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord of hosts. Much of our time in going home was spent in singing, in which I could join heart and soul.

Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness. There is no such pleasure, under the heavens, as that enjoyed by the child of God, especially when the Lord has shone upon his soul, and visited him with the joys of God's salvation. Let the man of pleasure pursue his schemes of earthy pleasure; alas! alas! he has nothing else to amuse himself with, as he passes onwards to the gulf of ruin; but when death fastens upon him, and he shall have to part worlds, how solemn will be the consideration then!

My health at this time became sadly, and a young man, with whom I became, acquainted, at a distance, having invited me to visit him; I did so, and, it being proposed to stay a week or two when next I went, for the sake of a change, I consented so to do.

The preaching was of the mixed-medley sort, sometimes tolerable, sometimes otherwise. However, the first Lord's-day I was there, it was ordinance-day, and understanding any may sit down who pleased, I thought, feeling a little love to a dear Redeemer, that I might sit down too; this I did: I understood not then anything in reference to *strict* communion or *open* communion, but sat down out of love to Him, whom I did hope I could say I loved, and sought to serve.

However, in this I found I had given great offence, and wrong constructions were put upon it, which rather wounded my feelings.

My visit being ended, I returned home again, and here I could write a chapter headed "warning," but let a few observations serve. My beloved reader, if you are a fellow-traveler Zionward, "*beware of men.*" My lot was to fall in with a young man who professed *great* love to Christ, and very much of love to dying men; but who *rejected the great and glorious truths of the Gospel*, and advocated universal *redemption*, and other doctrines which

tend to *exalt the creature*, at the expense of the *sovereignty* and *good pleasure* of Jesus Jehovah. But his conduct was light and frothy, and he was, to me, a snare. I plainly see *now* he was in the flesh, and destitute of the reverential and filial love of God, but I was young in the ways of God *then*, and had but little experience. Let me say affectionately to *you* again, “*beware of men*;” if you cannot get for a companion a *sound* Christian, one whose speech is *seasoned with grace* as with salt, have nothing to do with *any*; *walk alone*, and keep close to your *closet* and your *God*. I had to work and sleep with him, which made my case the worse. Evil communications corrupt good manners, and none can more readily do it than a light, vain, and a frothy *professor*, who knows nothing of a daily plague, nor a sanctified cross.

I turn with pleasure from such a one to speak of *another*, with whom it took *sweet* counsel touching the things which made for our everlasting peace.

F. E. and myself had been fellow scholars in the Sabbath-school. He was a timid, shy, and backward young man: very diffident, and as simple as a child: yet to *him* the Lord was very gracious; and he was about, with myself, to join the church, having *at last* (fear and doubt having often kept him back) been *compelled* to come forward and declare in the gates of Zion what God had done for his soul. With *him* my soul felt *real* union, and that upon the ground of communion in the things of God and truth.

The last night he was in Cheltenham we occupied the same chamber, and leaving me the next morning for his native place, in the month of February, little thought that, though now in health and strength, he was so soon to go the way of all the earth.

G-----, his native place, was the place also where I had gone for a change, in the fall of the year previously, and, having friends there, I was at home whenever I chose to go.

Strange, however, were my sensations upon receiving a letter from thence on the Friday, (as my dear brother E. had left on the Tuesday,) to say he was seriously ill with putrid sore throat and fever, from which he was never expected to recover. I immediately went to see him, a distance of fourteen miles. I found him *resting simply*, and *trusting wholly* and *solely* to the *one offering* made for sin by Jesus on Calvary. Touching his eternal state I had no doubt; and although it was painful to my mind thus to see him, yet *in* it

was matter for heartfelt consolation. Others came in the commencement of the week following, who accompanied me homeward.

A few days afterwards the intelligence came that he was *no more*! The vital spark had fled, and he was numbered among those who *had* been, but who was now where the weary are at rest, and the wicked cease from troubling. At the desire of the teachers I went to the funeral, an almoner of their bounty to the afflicted mother, and as a token of respect to the memory of the departed.

It was with mingled emotions that I stood, and for the last time looked into the coffin, and gazed upon the countenance of my friend. My thoughts *surmounted the stage of time*, and connected the *glories* of that state in which his ransomed spirit was, with all that then was before me of mortality and death. The contrast was gain, 'twas *earth exchanged for heaven*. The bearers assembled, and the corpse was at length removed. The funeral left the house for the village burial-ground; and there his body was committed to the earth in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life. Never shall I forget the energy with which he uttered the answer to my question, "Is Jesus precious to you?" "YES, and his name," saith he,

"Fain would I sound it out so loud,  
That heaven and earth might hear."

Upon returning to the house, strong desires possessed my mind to say something to the assembled mourners and friends who filled the large apartment in which we were assembled. My prayer to God was, that, if it were His will, the door might be opened by himself, in which, if it so pleased him, I might be instrumental in saying *something* for good. itook up my Bible, and opening upon the 90th Psalm, mused to myself.

At length, the mother of my deceased friend said to me, "Perhaps, sir, you would like to say something to us relative to this event." There was the open door, and with simplicity and sincerity I was enabled to open my mouth in the name of our God, for the *first* time, in any direct exposition of the sacred oracles of God. This done I concluded in prayer, and left the place. Who can tell what may ultimately be seen to spring from such a service as this was?

I had to leave the same evening for Cheltenham, but often since then have I stood by the side of the tomb of my friend, in silent contemplation upon

events in our *short* history, and although allumn-leaves have fallen on his resting-place, and the *snows* of winter, together with many summer-suns have visited his silent grave, the spot is *still* present to *my* mind, and will have a place in my remembrance as long as memory shall hold her seat.

The evening of my return to Cheltenham was very unfavourable indeed, so that what with the wet and the fatigue of the following day in going to a village station to teach, itook a severe cold, and in the following week was myself under the care of a medical man. Thus God works, and carries out his great designs. The illness and death of my friend was not by chance, nor was there a peradventure connected with it; and, in reference to *my* illness, God had great and important designs to answer by it, and those things accomplished must be in every sense answerable to the *ends* which He had in covenant determined to be brought about thereby. His judgments are a great depth, and his ways are past

### CHAPTER III.

#### **BAPTISM, AND COMMENCEMENT OF MINISTRY.**

It is thought worthy of inspired record, that those who “were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb,—*followed the Lamb* whithersoever he goeth.” The secret of such conduct is beautifully expressed by a great man of God, now at home, —thus: “The pardon of my sin will put into the diadem of Jesus an ornament more brilliant than the sun at noon-day. His blood cleanseth us from all sin. Let us love him, let us serve him, let us follow him, let us wait till he come.” So Mr. Rudman, now enlightened, possessing eternal love from Christ, in his first love, according to divine truth, in the obedience of faith and in deference to the order and Bible-history of the churches, desires to keep the Ordinances as they were delivered unto us by the inspiration of God. And it is worthy the record of every man of God what is here before us. Our Brother’s account is as follows:—

In the month of March, I was desired by the church, after the testimony of the messengers who waited on me, to come before them, and give an account of the Lord's dealings with me. The thought of coming before them, gave me no small uneasiness and fear. It was as a mountain in my path, and caused me to agonize and wrestle with the Lord for his help and blessing.

When I got to the chapel, many more candidates were there besides myself, but I was sunk into a dark and very trying spot. I could seem to get at nothing at all, for everything was hidden from my eyes. I crept therefore up into the gallery, and there in a pew I knelt down and supplicated the God of infinite and abounding mercy, that he would succour me and be my help.

I was called in to the church meeting, and was enabled to say a few things, as to how God had helped me, and how he had brought me on thus far; but I had no sooner done, than it was suggested to me, that they would not receive my testimony, which again drove me upstairs into the pew, and to my knees for help from Him, who knew how to compassionate my case, and commiserate my condition. I proved, however, the suggestion to be false, and Satan to be a liar, as he has ever been from the very beginning. I was received, and stood a candidate for the ordinance of believer's baptism.

This divinely-instituted and solemn ordinance, I attended to in the month of April following, though extremely ill at the time. Nor did I suffer the least from so doing, though many thought it would have been more advisable for me not to have attended to it; but I was at a point in my own mind, and could not in any sense take *nay*. Nor did I ever know an instance whereby *any*, even the least harm ever attended the administration of the ordinance. Administered as it has been to persons in all circumstances, and at every time of life, and yet none ever suffered any inconvenience that I have heard of, in the least degree, while it has had its sealing testimony from God in numberless instances.

It will be right for me to say here, that in attending to this ordinance, I did not enjoy that which many speak of; but the *authority* of the ordinance, nor its rightness of attention to it, is affected in the least thereby. No more so than is preaching and praying, or administering the ordinance of the Lord's supper, affected by our darkness or deadness. The command of Christ is the *authority*, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every



creature; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” And with an ordinance sanctioned immediately by Christ, and positively instituted by him after his resurrection, we are not out of the right way in attending to it, even though darkness may be spread around our tent; so long as our motives are pure, and our aim single in the sight of our God. Our God is a sovereign, and he often hides himself, nor does he give any account of his matters unto men. I would say to you, keep closely to the points in the court of your own conscience; seek to have the witness and testimony of the Spirit within; and then you will have confidence before God, which is no small mercy, so that, not only can you come to him by way of request, but also by way of appeal.

It pleased the Lord still to keep his afflicting hand upon me, and still to keep my mind in a state of exercise in reference to the ministry of the word, which was further confirmed by our dear pastor on the first ordinance day in May, 1845. The good man, in receiving us into the church, dwelt a good deal upon the aboundings of error in the present day, and its wide spreadings in the land; in the midst of which he turned to me, and said in the form of an emphatic wish, “*Be thou a burning and shining light in thy day and generation.*” And never afterwards was a day passed without exercises relative to that work, and some strong and fervent petitions to God that he would condescend to make every matter plain and straight, by opening a door, and making my way clear to the ministry of his word among the sons and daughters of men.

These exercises I laid before our dear minister; and with a desire to be useful, I began to improve my mind in every way I well could. Not that this is salvation, no; nor that it is the *sine qua non* of a pulpit speaker; but such was my desire and my thirst for the work, that whatever may, or would, have proved an hindrance to my acceptable discharge of the ministry, I would endeavour to surmount in any and every way which was available. This I found to be hard work with a weak body; but fervent desires kept me pushing my way on.

I conceive now that it is an honour to belong to the class of hard-working men, and men of mind. No man but an ignorant man will decry knowledge. Let the mind be well stored with everything which is useful. If possible, let that man whose thoughts are upon the ministry, endeavour to master the originals, or so far as will enable them to use good lexicons of the languages in which they are written. There is a recompense for the labour. Good and gracious men have not been above the toil and fag of this. Look

at Fowler at Gower-street. I do not hold him up as a perfect paragon of beauty in the ministry; but hear what he says: "After the business of the day, I have devoted two or three hours to the study of the Greek language, in order to be able to read the New Testament in its original language; after which I intended to study the Hebrew also; and, indeed, I begun it. The Latin, also, I was obliged to attend to, as most of my books had the original words explained in that language. But never having received an education in my youth, and now having no tutor and a business to attend to, I found my progress was very slow in the knowledge of the dead languages. Indeed, it required more time than I could spare for the object mentioned. It required, I conceived, more than a common capacity to learn so many things together, and under such circumstances as I was in. It was not from an idea that I should ever excel as a scholar; nor did I suppose that there was any defect essentially in our translation; nor did I act from a principle of pride in order to shine before men; neither did I think the mind of the Holy Spirit could not be known without a knowledge of the original languages, that induced me to try to learn them. But it struck me that our faithful translators were but fallible men, and that our language, had been very much improved since our last translation; that by comparing the different parts of our translations with the original, some light may be cast upon the word. Nor do I once regret the attempt I made, for I found the benefit of it several ways; it brought me more into the habit of *close* thinking; it made me more familiar with the Scriptures, and many times I have had some sweet enjoyment in comparing our version with the Greek. That language I liked best; the very sound of the alphabet was to my ears like a fine tune played skillfully on that noble instrument the organ.

It is not the head apart from the heart, it is not intellectuality—no indeed: but when hand and heart, the stores of a cultivated intellect meet in one who is a willing subject at the feet of Jesus, I will say it is well. For if the substance of the people was to be consecrated as gain for the Lord of the whole earth, why not the stores of mind as well as the treasures of property? Look at Owen, and Goodwin, and Charnock, and Gurnall, and, last though not least, Gill. Are not these proofs and examples, among a host of others, of the truth and the justice of the remarks which I have here made?

Colleges are useful so far as science may be concerned, but religion is not learnt as are mathematics, as medicine, or as the branches of natural philosophy. Every man must know for himself the teachings and leadings of God the Holy Ghost into essential truth; and without any human system,

the Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. Education of itself is not enough. Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, Hume, and others, were men of education, but it aided them not in the weighty and momentous matter of salvation. But enough.

I heard our dear minister, at times very sweetly, particularly once from the words, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, even today do I declare I will render double unto you." This was a solemn time to me, and I doubt not to others also. But what surprised me often, was the fewness of the people. It did seem wondrously strange to me that so few people should have an ear to hear the solemn messages from time to time delivered by his honoured servant. In this, doubtless, divine purposes were to be accomplished, and ends answered which otherwise would not.

My health continuing but very sadly, and my doctors giving me up, by saying change of air would do me more good than anything else, I again went into the country to stay for a few weeks: but alas! where I was, there was no dear sound of gospel truth; and with a weakly body, I was where there was no food for the soul under the means of grace. It was *yea*, and *ay*; and hence was a Babel-building with a witness.

Yet it was here that the Lord gave me a full and complete deliverance from the bondage of mind into which I sunk, and the distress of soul in which I became involved. The morning to which I refer, I was more than usually depressed and cast down, both with things outward as well as things inward. I arose from my bed, took my Bible, and went forth from the habitation of man to muse, and pray, and weep.

The morning was delightful, the sun shone with a beauty peculiar to a June morning, but to me it had no charms. I went onwards until I came to a low wall which parted me from a field in which some sheep were grazing, and here I poured out my soul to God; I wrestled and agonized with him in prayer for health, naturally and spiritually, and that his presence and blessing might be with me in every way at all times; peculiar was the fervency with which I was enabled to call upon the name of the Lord, and solemn was the answer he was pleased to give me; for, rising from the attitude of prayer, I opened my Bible upon the 16th Psalm, and from that Psalm onwards I was enabled to read with that full consciousness of personal interest, in that way which I never was before. I felt unutterable joy, and peace, and gladness, in the Lord. My soul melted into nothingness at his feet, I felt cleansed from every sin, pollution, and stain. Jesus was inexpressibly

dear and precious: I felt he was my company-keeper, and in his company I enjoyed communion with him as my Saviour and Redeemer. The simplicity of my soul, and the condescension of my God in covenant, to indulge me in this manner, excited my gratitude and love. Had I ten thousand hearts I felt they were his, and had I ten thousand tongues they had willingly been devoted to his praise. The Bible afforded matter for fresh and for repeated gratitude, and backwards and forwards among the sheep I walked, feeling the satisfaction arising from the heart-felt persuasion of interest in the words following: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul,” &c., to the end of xxiii. Psalm.

After this sweet and blessed visitation, the desire of my soul for the work of the ministry grew stronger, and I felt that wherever the Lord should open a door, that I should enter in and preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified; and it did appear to me, that the first text I should preach from must be—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” It seemed to me that from such a text as that, I could say a little about the preciousness of Jesus Christ. In the warmth of my feelings I sat down, took pen and paper, and composed my first sermon, from the words above mentioned. My thoughts, feelings, and desires, I kept to myself: they were known, however, to the Lord.

It did not please the Lord to keep me on the mount of communion with him; I was like Abraham, when the Lord had left off communing with him he went back into his own place. There are lessons to be learnt even here. The Lord changes not. However we may be, He is the same, and His years are throughout all generations. Yea, though we ourselves may feel never so cold, and in never so low a state, His mercy runs an endless round. The good Lord left me not, neither forsook me; though I felt at times strangely cold, and wandering, and carnal.

Returning once more to Cheltenham, and the medical man considering that my last resource was to try my native Wiltshire air, it was determined on that I should go there should a door open. In the meantime, an afflicting and bereaving dispensation calling my allnt there,, she mentioned my state to an uncle, a farmer in the neighbourhood of Devizes, and he kindly sent an invitation to me at once to make his house my home, to see what the change may effect for me. This was determined on.

I pause here to observe, that I had attempted to go to Devizes twice before, but was frustrated in my attempts. It is evident the Lord's time was not come. Where-ever the Lord intends to teach a man anything, from that place he is not to remove until the Divine purpose is accomplished, and the whole brought to that issue the Lord designed.

Every saint is the child of a special Providence. It matters nothing to me what Onesimus may say in the pulpit, in his strictures on the late Mr. Huntington against it; no, nor the remarks of the late W. Jones, A. M., in his life of Adam Clarke, L.L.D., it remains the same; every hair is numbered, and every footstep is ordered. I will not subscribe to the assertions of any man, further than they are grounded in truth, nor am I going to hold up William Huntington as perfection; but this I say, that it is not for a moment to be tolerated that the doctrine of a special Providence is to be over-turned by any man, let his standing or talents in the world or church be what they may. The strictures of Onesimus in many instances are good, and the works of W. Jones will be a lasting monument of his talents and researches; but with neither of them can I agree when they touch a doctrine which to me is more precious than gold.

To return. Monday morning, July 6, 1845, found me on my way to Tinkfield Farm, near Devizes, Wiltshire, which place I safely reached in the evening of the day, and was most kindly received by my friends. To them, each and all, I owe a debt of gratitude, which will, I am sure, never be forgotten.

Their house being some two miles from town, and being in a weakly state, I made enquiries whether, in any village near, there was preaching on a Lord's day evening? I found that a place, not far distant, was occupied, in the village of Stert, by persons who came from the Devizes Itinerant Society. To this place I directed my steps, and heard a sermon in an experimental strain, from the words of the psalmist: "From the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee; when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." I determined, therefore, to go again. [The present pastor of the Baptist Church, in that beautifully situated and rising "Watering place," Weston Super Mare, was that Itinerant who preached in this "experimental strain." He is now the husband of one of those cousins, the whole of whom felt such kind interest in the invalid's welfare, and so refreshed Mr. Rudman in his travels, so critical at that time, and so gratefully noted by him. This brother, calling in while this paper was under my eye, knowing his connexion, I read it to him, and this day and its services were all fresh to his mind. He also relates how pleased they were to observe, as the truth of the Gospel influenced him, that he laid aside the gold ring from his finger, and other fopperies

which some young men, by divesting themselves of, like brother R., raise themselves in society.]

The week following this, was a severe week to me of soul conflict, in reference to the work of the ministry. Go where I would, the matter was much upon my mind. I read and prayed, and my mind was wholly occupied with it. This test was uppermost, and the other I was preaching to myself from Monday morning until Saturday night. I knew nothing of where a door may be opened for me, much less had I any thought of remaining in Wiltshire. But, whatever may be our thoughts, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. I had tasted the Lord was gracious, and I was anxious to tell others about a dear Redeemer. O to be made useful to souls; to be of service to poor and perishing sinners! I coveted so to be, and those who were so, were as angels in my estimation.

The following Lord's day evening I went to Stert again. I love cottage meetings, and I am a witness to the power with which truth was heard again and again in the cottages here and there.

When, however, I arrived there, I found a people, but no preacher. Expecting the regular supply shortly to arrive, I sat down, and we each waited until the time was somewhat passed. The person there who usually gave out the hymns asked me to conduct the service.

This I hesitated to do, desiring them to wait a little longer, when, as I supposed, the supply would reach them. Not making his appearance, and being pressed again, I deemed it to be advisable to begin singing a hymn, and then I read and engaged in prayer. The persons came who were engaged, while I was supplicating a throne of grace; but being come only to read a printed sermon, they would not consent for me to vacate the desk, and hence to a company of villagers I preached, what I may call my first regular sermon, from the scene touchingly recorded by Luke in the jail at Philippi, "Men and brethren what must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Hereupon, the Itinerant Society at Devizes, finding that I was going to remain in the neighbourhood for some little time wished me to confine myself to this little spot, and labour there on the evenings of the Lord's day. This, therefore, I did with all clear conscience, in the sight of God. The ministry was a work I loved, and very much delighted in; indeed my heart was set on it, and when I began woe was unto me if I did not preach the

gospel. To be helped to preach, to see sinners converted under the word, and God's dear people edified and built up, was my constant prayer unto God. It mattered not to me then, and I will say, it matters not to me now, where I may be called to preach the gospel. If it be an Unitarian or a Catholic chapel I am called upon to preach in, it would not necessarily follow that I am to deny the Godhead of Christ in one, and worship the Virgin Mary in the other. No: nor would it become me to call them hard names, nor to abuse them for what they may conscientiously believe: by no means. It is mine to preach the truth, and leave events with God.

I would observe, that one thing I began with, which I was soon showed the folly of, and that by a very poor, illiterate, yet honest soul, who worked in my uncle's barn. The point I allude to, was that of inviting dead sinners to come to Christ for life and salvation. He pointed out in a homely, yet effective way, the strangeness of the system, as connected with the doctrines of grace. I saw it most clearly, and ever afterwards renounced it. God's grace is given, not offered;—life is bestowed by God, not brought into existence by man; and hence it cometh to pass, that every child shall be taught of God; the love of God being its cause, and good fruits flow as the effect of this saving theme. Far be it from me, however, to say good men may not, and do not differ in these things. But the scriptural course is “preach the gospel to every creature,” not at them; and God himself, who has chosen out a people for his name, will cause that word to be effectual to their hearts, and bring them with weeping and supplication to his feet.

After preaching thus through August and September, I was invited by Mr. S. of Urchfort, and Rev. R. E. of Devizes, to go to Hilcot, a neighbouring village lying about eight or nine miles from Devizes, and preach on the Lord's day afternoon, returning to Stert in the evening. This was further urged upon me on a Tuesday evening, when called upon to preach very unexpectedly at Urchfort, where I went to visit my relatives who resided there.

This was undoubtedly a link in the chain of events which led to my ultimate settlement where I now labour in his vineyard. The workings of my mind on this day which led to my going to Urchfort were peculiar. I had no business which could call me there, and yet go to Urchfort I must. I went, and was hardly seated in my relatives' house, before Mr. S. came in, to say I must preach; looking on it as quite providential, inasmuch as he had written a note to invite me; but the boy being detained was not able to go to the

farm to me. All my attempts to get out of the engagement, would not be taken, and hence preach I must.

But the text! “Well,” said cousin, who was with me, “you need not trouble, couldn’t you preach from an *old* text, which you have preached from before?” This was to me quite impracticable, and, leaving the house, I sought the Lord in the garden and orchard for a text. Nothing bore upon my mind with any weight save this, “From the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee; when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock which is higher than I.” After the service was over, I was desired to go to Hilcot the next Lord’s day; which I consented to do; for strange to say, no sooner had I began preaching than my health was most decidedly better directly, and with the change of air too, I was getting on very nicely.

It was a most delightful morning in October that I left for Hilcot, to preach the glad tidings of salvation in the afternoon of the day. A sabbath school was held in the morning, and I was anxious to be engaged as formerly I had been, in the delightful employment of teaching the young and rising race.

The words which had occupied my attention were Isaiah lxiii, 9, “In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.” The chapel however, presented a most forlorn appearance, being capable of holding four hundred people at the least, and not so many people there as seats in the place, and I had to be clerk and singer, as well as preacher. I was much exercised through the service, and sat down very dark in my mind, thinking within myself that if this was Hilcot, I did not think of coming to Hilcot again. I was hurrying off after service quite cast down, concluding that my introduction to Hilcot would be my farewell, when an old saint addressed me as I passed her, in the language of encouragement, from whence I gathered that her soul had been spiritually refreshed under the word.

This was, of course, a ray of light in a dark place, and I felt constrained, upon the ground of one soul being blessed and encouraged, to go again and again, and, as I did so, the congregations increased.

A debt being upon the chapel, I was applied to, to try to remove it, by getting up a tea-meeting. Although my efforts as to a tea-meeting were without success, through another being about to be held at a neighbouring



village, yet it ended in my being enabled to arrange matters with a relative, so as from week to week to go to Hilcot on the Friday evening, and stay over the Lord's-day, by which means I was enabled to preach to them on the Friday evening, as well as the Sabbath evening. By these methods the congregation became crowded to excess, and a most encouraging sight it was to see them coming on a Lord's-day afternoon from all parts to hear the word of life. Many were the encouraging testimonies I received as to the effect of the preaching upon the hearts and consciences of those who heard it, some of whom are now in eternity. As it was, I was constrained to go on preaching, though I received nothing for my labours. The work was more to me by far than the reward; my reward was not a money one, my motives were not money ones, but I was willing to labour in, and leave the result with the Lord.

In order thus to serve Hilcot, I submitted to very many privations, and much drudgery and toil. I was removed from my uncle's at the farm, sickness having seized a cousin, and was now staying with my grand-parents; but where I sojourned at Hilcot, poverty stared me in the face, and my fare then was but poor. But "welcome" sweetened the crust, and the reward I had in preaching the gospel, was that which bore me cheerfully through, with godly contentment, and without a murmur.

The time of my journeyings to and from Hilcot was winter, and many a wet walk I had there, in all prayerfulness to spend and be spent for my master. I also established a week evening service at Stert, and one at Coate, so that my time was pretty much occupied; and I found also as I went on, that changes and war was upon me in my own soul. When I first began preaching, the sun shone, infinitely kind was my ever to be adored Master unto me, but I soon found as I became more incessantly engaged in the work, those peculiar exercises which served at times to fill my mind with much distress. Shuttings up when preaching, as well as meditation, and at times very much discouragement in reference to the way.

This was so, one evening in particular. I had left the house of my grand-parents, and was proceeding onwards in my journey to Hilcot. The afternoon was wet, and everything appeared to be against me; the thoughts suggested to my mind was "That I was foolish in thus expending health, strength, and time, travelling in all winds and weathers, and wearing and tearing myself out, for nothing at all." This seemed plausible to carnal reason, and my mind was falling pretty much into the train, when those words so forcibly arrested my mind that I was stopped short in every carnal

reckoning, and I went on blessing and praising the Lord. The words referred to were:—

“All *needful* grace will God bestow,  
And crown that grace with glory too.”

My usual habit had been to preach from *notes*, that is a small strip of paper, containing the principal heads and minor divisions of my discourse, but somehow or other they hampered and fettered me rather than helped me, and hence I left them off, nor have I had reason to regret doing so. Yet am I not going to cut off head and tail those who may still use them. I would rather preach without them, finding them rather a hindrance than a help; but God forbid I should say that man only is sent to preach who preaches without; no, every man in his own order: one has a gift for this, and another for that. I used also to write out my sermons pretty much in full, in private. In this I chose to follow the course which seemed to me to be most eligible. I copied after no man living. Every man appears best in his own native colours; a copyist is at best but a man with another's suit on. And I am exceedingly glad that I did so write it out. I had the time, it caused a fixedness of thought upon the sacred word, and while it implied no distrust of the sacred influence of the Spirit, it was helpful to me in many ways. I wrote not, to carry it into the pulpit, and though it might be repudiated by some, yet, *who are they?* What! a minister to be condemned for his study, his care, his forethought for the pulpit! surprising, yet so it is! But more of this anon.

I had resolved in my own mind that I would not stay in Wiltshire longer than Christmas; but the people were so importunate, and there did evidently appear to be a large door most effectually opened for the preaching of the gospel. I therefore continued with them and opened the new year, 1846, by a discourse in the afternoon of the first Lord's-day, from the words, “My times are in his hands.” Upon coming down from the pulpit, I was accosted by some persons from Upavon; from them I received an invitation to preach to them on the Tuesday week following. But strange to say, on the following Saturday, a note was awaiting me at my friend K., apprising me that it would not be convenient for me to go to Upavon as proposed! This of course excited my surprise, but upon enquiry I learnt that a certain preacher, who sat to his Last some part of the week at least, to make and mend those articles called boots and shoes, and who at certain times preached at Upavon, had declared that he should not preach there if I did. This was a new lesson to me, in priestcraft. I was duly ticketed by

this man for a “letter man,” and a “duty faith man,” and a “dead man and yet this kind and Christian minister had never given me a hearing—no, nor did I know him. His own people had given me an invitation to preach to them one Lord’s-day morning, which I did, but this was put a stop to. I have heard it affirmed that some ministers have declared they could smell Arminianism in the walls of a place, but whether they could or not, is no part of salvation. I am happy to say I am not in the possession of such acute olfactory nerves. To be quick or sharp of smell in the fear of the Lord is another matter, and that is enough for me. But, gentle reader, if I must be plain, I think I can fathom the reasons for all this man’s bitter rage against me, which was carried on by him for so long a time. Many of his hearers came to hear me; hence arose all the cry, that I was not experimental, but if experience be to trace the Spirit’s work in conviction for sin, and in leading the soul on in the knowledge of Christ, and showing the design of all his chequered pathways, I trust in this sense I am, have been, and still hope to be, experimental. Licentiousness, libertinism, fatalism, nationalism, formalism—yea, every ism which stood opposed to truth, I hated and abhorred; but duty and privilege is connected, and the precept of God’s word is as much an integral part of the New Testament as the promise; and hence I was a legalist among some, and an antinomian among others. The friends at Hilcot began now seriously to propose my settling there for good, and, among other things, as the majority of the people was poor, it was considered necessary for me to keep *a* school. This drove me again and again to the Lord, that he may make matters very straight and plain before my face; and before it was finally settled, I determined on visiting Cheltenham that I may once more see the friends I loved so dearly, and state personally to them my intentions.

This I accordingly did, and arriving in Cheltenham, was privileged again to hear Mr. Denham, and that too with very much sweetness and power. Many of his remarks have stuck to me like burrs, to use the phraseology of good old Bunyan.

I found him, however, upon the point of leaving, and in the midst of circumstances of a very trying character. This grieved me, but I could not help it; and he, poor man, removed to Oxford, then to London; and at last, at Yeovil, in Somersetshire, he was seized in the pulpit with death, and passed away, when far from home and the bosom of his family. His ways are in the deep, and his pathway is in the mighty water, and his footsteps are not known.

Returning again to Wiltshire, I wrote to the Rev. R. Elliott, to know whether, in the event of my receiving a call to the pastorate at Hilcot, the trustees would allow me peaceably to minister in the place. The original copy of the reply I have—it is as follows:— Dear Sir—I have received your note respecting Hilcot Chapel, and beg to say that Hilcot Chapel will be at your service for to-morrow evening (Friday) and next Lord's-day; when it is the wish and opinion of friends here, that your ministerial labours should then cease. Hoping you will be divinely directed in all your future movements, I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,

RICHARD ELLIOTT.

This blow to me was overwhelming; it was like the remorseless scythe which mows down even the flower of the grass; *or* rather like a ruthless hand plucking up a favourite plant by the root. It came unexpected by me. I thought they would have rejoiced in my success, and been glad that the word of God might have thus been dispensed among the villagers of a dark and benighted neighbourhood; to see instead, the fair hopes and cherished anticipations thus removed, was a sad, a painful matter to me. True, I was not leaving an income, nor driven out of what was my bread—no; but as I laboured not for money, either in hand or in prospect, I could not grieve for what I had not coveted; but to be thus severed from a congregation which I had been instrumental in raising, and the door closed behind me, with “*no entrance here*” written upon it, was very close work for me, and gave my enemies occasion to open their mouths within and without.

It fell also like a blow upon my Hilcot friends, and grief enough it occasioned them.

I had, the same morning I received the note, to go to Coate to see a young woman, who had accidentally been shot with a gun, through the carelessness of a lad in a wheat field, where he was engaged to keep off the birds; and the journey will be memorable to me, from the cogitations of my mind, and from the wrestling spirit of prayer which came upon my soul, as I was silently walking onwards. If ever I knew what it was to spread my case before the Lord, I did in my solitary walk that morning.

The whispers of Satan had been, “Did not I tell you that your course had been stopped; you run and were not sent, and this is a proof thereof.” O how often I had feared I should never hold out, but now the worst is come. I knew also many had their eyes upon me, and while watching for my

halting, when they saw this blow, said, *now we shall see*. But that soul, whose Father is in heaven, and upon whom he is divinely enabled to call, has every advantage in this battle. He goes to God Almighty, and he stands engaged to hear and to answer, in order that his name may have the glory. I had no earthly companion to speak to, but *God was my confident*. To him I whispered my tale of woe and grief; to him I opened my very heart, every motive and every fear, every foe, and every feeling, all was bare to him, nor did he frown upon me in so doing, for my heart melted and my very soul was enlarged. The promise of the word and the past deliverances of the Lord came sweetly to mind, and I did prove him in this sense to be a strong-hold in the time of trouble.

I left the people on the following Lord's day, by preaching to them from the words recorded in Isaiah, "To the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The congregation was much affected; and poor things, in hopes that their united wishes might have some effect, they, to the number of 200 persons, signed their hands to a requisition; but it was useless, the die was cast, it could not be acceded to; and why, gentle reader? They considered that I preached dangerous doctrines, and was an Antinomian! Yes, and added to all, I was a Baptist, and the chapel was built by Independents! Grave weighty charges, for which I was in this sense literally thrust out, aye, and I will not hesitate to say, and the truths of God too: and hence it came to pass, that for nearly three years the chapel was closed, and scarcely a sermon during that period preached in it. And where are the people, and what concern could there have been felt for immortal souls? Awful is the consideration that, rather than have the simple truths of the gospel preached in an otherwise dark and ignorant village, the preacher, the truth, the congregation, and all may go, and the chapel be shut up,—the sheep wandering without a shepherd to guide or instruct them.

The week following this, was a week of anxiety and perplexity indeed. Every door was shut. Not the least intimation as to what, or as to where. But my soul waited upon God. The Lord's-day following, I determined upon going to Hilcot to see my friends, and to worship at Bottlesford chapel, where a Mr. L. was that day going to preach. The opening hymn in the morning was very suitable:

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;

He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm," &c.

So wrote a man whose poetry will live as long as our language shall be spoken. He was no fireside traveler; he had to tread a painful path, and full of sorrow and care, drag out an existence, rather than to say he *lived* it. And its power and pathos I felt that morning in the little chapel at Bottlesford. It was sung, as you shall not hear anywhere again as you hear it in a country village. It was sung heartily, and I doubt not sung, in some instances at least, as to the Lord. At any rate there was harmony in my heart. It was a word in season. As for the heartiness of a country village in the matter of psalmody, not while memory holds her seat shall I forget the village band of Stoke coming to Hilcot to play; I am sure, to the praise and glory of Mr. R. in the singing gallery. The only thing left behind was the drum! Judge my surprise, therefore, when I saw such a set out, and heard such a crash of musical instruments in the house of God. To see men, with cheeks distended wide, blowing at clarinet, trombone, &c. However, they meant it well, though rather out of season. They were not of the nice calculating sort; you may be sure;—but this by the way.

The good \*man I heard with a good deal of pleasure; the matter was more than the manner. I could shut out the one with my eyes, but let a man's manner be never so good, if his matter be bad, you cannot shut your ears to that. Though this was a leisure day, under painful circumstances, yet it was a good day. Here, too, I learned the Upavon friends being destitute, were resolved to give me a call, and an invitation accordingly came.

\* This good man referred to is an aged, beloved member of mine, and, speaking to him of this day, he remembers it well; and says being in that part some months afterwards, Mr. Rudman asked him to preach for him in the morning at Upavon. And to show how evil reports marred his peace, the young pastor felt it necessary after the service to request the brotherhood of the members to stay, to whom he related, Mr. L. being present, what satisfied all their minds, making them sympathize with him under the false slanders of his envious neighbour referred to before. I hope that individual has, ere this, felt repentance, or the reading of this lead him to it! Alas! that, being the monuments of mercy, we should *ever* distress, or cease to help and rejoice in a brother's usefulness in this precious work!

## CHAPTER IV.

### PASTORAL LABOURS AT UPAVON.

Mr. Rudman is now to enter on that stated labour for which he had been held as in the right hand of the Lord; and which, notwithstanding much opposition, had for months been the most desirable object of his heart—since the pastor's wish for his being “a burning and a shining light”—the all-engrossing subject to his mind, and the constant plea of his prayers. It now becoming the main business of his life, by God's mercy to him, his very trials are made blessings. And he had not a few of them. That great man whom Toplady termed “the prince of preachers,” addressed his young friend, Mr. C. Winter, under similar trials, in words very suitable to our young pastor's case, and to many he has left behind him. “One would hope,” said that great man, “that the various humiliations you have met with, were intended as preparations for future exaltations. The greatest preferment under heaven, is to be an able, painful, faithful, successful, suffering, cast out minister of the New Testament. That this may be your happy lot is the hearty prayer of, dear Mr. Winter, yours, &c., G. Whitefield.”

That our dear brother was all this, we shall now see. His narrative proceeds to say:—

I was thankful for my invitation to Upavon; it appeared to be the Lord's open door, answering the objections of every suggestive fear inwardly and outwardly. Many, however, were the exercises of my mind, touching my going thither. I was under the necessity of carrying this matter again and again to the Lord, that the door thus open, might prove in every sense, to be what I could wish it to be, for his glory.

In the midst, therefore, of my anxieties, the good Lord was pleased to speak home that word in Joel: “Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit; the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.” This portion from the Lord was much upon my mind, and it served to encourage my hopes.

If the Lord would do great things for his land, he would do great things for me. And as the beasts must have reference to the Lord's flock, if the pastures were to spring, there was hope for me indeed. In this way I argued the matter, and on Lord's day, April 5, 1846, I bent my footsteps towards Upavon, and opened my commission in Cave Adullam Chapel, from the words of Paul to the Corinthians: "For I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." It was truly with fear and trembling that thus, for the first time, I stood up among this people; knowing that prejudice had been in many ways at work.

The afternoon and evening were occupied in discoursing from the words in Joel before referred to.

The chapel was very full; but this was, as I suppose, from hearing that a stranger was to preach there. Be this as it may, the feeling of the people generally was very strong towards me, and they were very desirous that I should take up my abode with them for good. True, they were poor, nevertheless there was a fair opening for a school; and for this I could have the chapel, and they would do what they could to help me on every hand. I went again and again, but not without many exercises and perplexities. Indeed, so plagued was I one Monday morning on my return from Upavon, that I made up my mind I would preach no more, but return to Cheltenham, and follow the opening of God in his providence another way. But, calling upon an old pilgrim, a valued friend, on my way, the conversation was so profitable, and the word of the Lord in Isaiah so sweet: "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring; and they shall grow up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses,"—that I went on my way rejoicing; my evidences were brightened, my prospect became so cheered, that I determined, by the help of the Lord, still to go on. "Where the word of a king is, there is power," and when pilgrims meet and the loving-kindness and mercy of the king is the theme, the heart becomes warm, and the discouragements by the way are often lost sight of. [What an illustration is here of what *Christian conversation* is, and is often honoured to accomplish! "Do you know," said a very spiritually minded and learned minister to his friend, "Do you know what the word *conversation* is derived from! It is from a term which signifies the going or turning together of the oxen in treading out the corn." So pilgrims walk in fellowship with Christ Jesus, as they thus tread out the 'finest of the wheat.' O that we had more of it, as ministers and the members of the Living One meet together!



Are not *these* conversations! While to the hungry spiritual travelers they are as threshing out the finest wheat, are they not also the precious entries of God's day book! Mal. iii 16.]

At last every preliminary was settled, the people at Hilcot helped me with a private subscription, and I became settled at Upavon. Union was felt among ourselves, and from May I became settled among the people; scholars flocked into my school, and the hand of our God appeared conspicuously with me for good. But well might Bunyan say:

“The Christian man is seldom long at ease,  
For when one trouble goes, another doth him seize.”

And it is good it should be so. God will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. If he is at work he will set his people by themselves, that they may the more conspicuously see his hand, and behold the puttings forth of his power. Hence, that God may show me to whom I was indebted for my rise and my progress, he ordered it so, not only that no minister should take me by the hand who could help me, but that, with very rare exceptions, every minister in the neighbourhood should more or less fight against, and manifest hostility to me. Yea, preachers who would occupy my pulpit would hardly notice me when they came out of it.

But the preacher aforesaid, Mr. F., was the man who tried the hardest and the longest to stop my career. This man, in every possible way, tried to blacken my character, and injure me all he could. This sadly tried my mind, while it furnished me with an errand again and again to a throne of grace. It served to cause me to keep close to the Lord and to wait upon him. it beat me off an arm of flesh, and made me look well to my footsteps, and keep my eye straight on. And the Lord was pleased most mercifully to appear for me and help me! I shall never forget the sweetness and power with which those words fastened upon my mind in opening my Bible upon it, “And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” And again from those words: “Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit.” By which I was enabled to see the blessedness of having God for my help. For what are men compared to God, and what is flesh compared to spirit. Brute force cannot hurt the children of God; and, if God indeed be for them, who can be against them! It is an unspeakable mercy to have God for our confident; to be enabled to tell him all our rising griefs, and every sorrow which

weighs us down. Little do the enemies of God's people know the Friend they have, nor the power of that Friend. Aye, and if one of God's dear people fight against another, upon wrong and unchristian grounds, God will not take his part against the right. The words also of God to Jeremiah were sweetly suited to my case, as recorded, Jer. i. 17—19. These things were my encouragement, and rich supports from the Lord my God, who visited my soul, privately and publicly, and blessed the messages to immortal souls.

This trial, then, was made of incalculable advantage to me; it served to show me the necessity for standing on my own legs, keeping to my own line of things, and depending alone upon God. It burnt deeply into me. Beware of men, and preachers too, and rest on nothing short of God's unchanging and unshaken faithfulness.

I mentioned some exceptions to the conduct of ministers, and that was in my aged brother Offer, the pastor of the church of Netheravon, who agreed to exchange pulpits with me every second Lord's-day in the month, and which arrangement was still continued in reference to my preaching to the congregation there, even when the dear old saint was incapacitated to preach, and hence I "*broke bread*" at the Lord's-supper the first Lord's-day in the month at Upavon, and the second Lord's-day at Netheravon.

This was heavy work, especially with a weakly body; but strength was according to the day, and time, which was ever on the wing, brought me to the termination of my first year's labours at Upavon. I had worn out the first three months, and then again the six months, and lastly the twelve months allowed me by my uncharitable prognosticator. For God had determined before, to drive wise men backwards, and make their wisdom foolishness; and hence, though afflicted, I was still permitted to hold on, and the people, with one exception, were in union and concord, walking in the fellowship of saints, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

In the summer of 1847, I was brought very low; so much so as to cause very serious apprehensions in the minds of my friends, and it was judged expedient to cease for a week or two from my labour, and take to rest.

Having received, in the fall of 1846, a letter from Mr. M. Sawyer, inviting me to preach for him at Great Cheverell, and which, at the time I received, I could not fulfil, another arrangement had been made for the summer of

1847, which, at the time I was so poorly, I designed to fulfil, and then go and spend a few days with my grand-parents.

At this time I was in very great darkness and distress of mind. “The Comforter which should relieve my soul was far from me I was in darkness and the depths, horribly tempted and very sorely distressed, fearing I was given up to a hard heart and a reprobate mind. The 102nd Psalm 1—11 verses, fully expressed my soul-state. I was helped through on Lord’s-day both with matter and strength, and a lasting union commenced between myself and Mr. Sawyer, which after circumstances only served the more fully to cement.

On the Tuesday evening, I heard Mr. D. Ferris, who was at that time just newly settled at Devizes, and it was here the good Lord was pleased to break through every cloud and manifest himself very sweetly to me, in his aboundings of grace, as he discoursed from the words of our God: “And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, and as in the day she came up out of the land of Egypt.” This was not the last time I was privileged to hear the word from his lips with much holy savour and power.

In Devizes I met my dear mother, who was come into Wiltshire for the change of air, it being considered the last thing which could be done for her towards a restoration of health, which had been long declining.

To her, my uncle was the same kind friend which he had been to me, and the change seemed certainly to do her good; at least, she had every appearance of improvement. She came to Upavon, and stayed sometime with me, and then returned home. But our hopes were doomed to disappointment. A few Lord’s-days afterwards, a letter reached me, to say that, unless I hastened homewards immediately upon the receipt of the letter conveying the tidings, I should in every probability see her no more. It is almost needless to say, I instantly proceeded on my way.

The meeting, as may well be supposed, was in sorrow, but our God was my support, and his word was made to me an especial blessing, so that,

“Thus far I proved his promise good,  
Which Jesus ratified with blood:  
Thus is he faithful wise and just,  
And still in him let Israel trust.”

She survived my arrival a few days, and down to the borders of the tomb she went, trusting in Jesus. The Lord to her was infinitely kind and gracious. Her pathway through life had been thorny, and many a storm had she to pass through. This will account for Hart's hymns being so sweet to her, as well as Huntington's works. Her end was eminently peaceful. She slept in Jesus. Death had lost its sting, and, on the bosom of love she breathed out her soul in the arms of faithfulness and mercy,—just heaving the sigh to join the song. On the following Saturday she was laid in the grave in the picturesque churchyard of Prestbury, in which parish my parents had been residing. In her case, the church service was truth, and became a form of sound words. But alas! in what ten thousand instances is it only a solemn mockery!

Death to her was gain, incomparable gain; to the family it was an irreparable loss. But God's way is in the sea, and his footsteps in the mighty water, and hence his paths who can find them out? Bad must be the mother whose loss, when gone, is not most severely felt.

My visit to Cheltenham opened the way to my acquaintance with the good people of Bethel Chapel, among whom many times since I have laboured in word and in doctrine, with much sweetness and blessedness, as it regarded the truth in Christ Jesus.

After an absence of three or four weeks, I returned again to Upavon, and became at that time more established in health.

But I found summer time but a poor season as it regards the school, which used to throw me, very considerably behind, there being no school of any account from Lady-day to Michaelmas, and hence I was obliged often to engage in my old occupation of painting, paper hanging, &c., still preaching on the Lord's-day.

My mind about this time took another turn. I was with some who decried study; and I heard ministers also, and read books which spoke against what may be called pulpit preparation. And hence I began to throw up that study which I used to delight in, and which is delightful, That text, "Take no thought how or what ye should speak," &c. is much spoken of, as a warrant for this: but the connection seems forgotten,—“when ye stand before kings and rulers,” as the persecuted ones: as also Paul's advice to Timothy, “Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them that thy profiting may appear unto all.” The ignorance of some men is their boast; yea, their

very seeming delight. They have taken no thought for the pulpit; no, not they; nor do they intend to, nor wish to, and those who do, are only fools for their pains, and letter men. But so let it be, we shall not fare worse than others even in this matter. In this I shall take the liberty of quoting an extract from old master Gurnal: "This was Paul's charge to Timothy, 'Give attendance to reading.' I Timothy. 4: 13. Follow thy book close, O Timothy! And why? "Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all that is, that thou mayest appear to be a growing preacher by those that hear thee. Study and pray, pray and study again. Think not your work is done for all the week when the Sabbath is past. Take a little breath and return to thy labour, as the seedsman that sits down at the land's end to rest awhile, and then rises up to follow the plough again. We are thieves to our people's souls when we do not husband it to the best advantage. 'All are yours,' 'whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas;' yours for the service of your faith."

Nor when I am here, can I forbear to extract again from the good man's writings, something touching the pulpit as well as the study:

"The word is to be dispensed free from error. Think it not enough that your text be scripture, but let your whole sermon be agreeable thereto. Thou art an ambassador, and as such bound by thy instructions. Take heed of giving thy own dreams and fancies in God's name. What is the chaff to the wheat? All is chaff but God's pure word, and why should it be blended with it? Such an one may fear that God from heaven may give him the lie while in the pulpit. Oh stamp not God's image on thy own coin! We live in high flown times; many people are not content with truths which lie plainly in the Scriptures; and some to please their wanton palates, have sublimated their notions so high, that they have flown out of the sight of the Scripture, and unawares run themselves with others into dangerous errors. Be well aware it is a truth before thou acquaintest thy people with it. If thou wilt play the mountebank, choose not the pulpit for thy stage. Make not experiments upon the souls of thy people by delivering what is doubtful, and hath not undergone the trial of this furnace. Better feed thy people with sound doctrine, though it be a plain meal, than that thou shouldest with an outlandish dish, light upon a wild gourd and bring death into their pot."

"Secondly, Pure from passion. The pulpit is an unseemly place to vent our discontents and passions in. Beware of this strange fire. The man of God must be gentle and meek, and his words with meekness of wisdom. The oil makes the nail drive without splitting the board. The word never enters the

heart more kindly than when it falls most gently. 'Ride thou prosperously, because of truth and meekness.' Be as rough to thy people's sins as thou canst, so thou be tender of their souls. Dost thou take the rod of reproof into thy hands I see that love, not wrath, gives the blow. I speak not against the preacher's zeal, so that it be from above, pure, and peaceable. Save all thy heat for God, spend it not in thy own cause. Most admirable was the meekness of Moses in this respect. A high affront he receives at the hands of Aaron and Miriam; he did not retort upon them, it was his own cause, and enough for him that God heard it; but when a sin was committed against God, the meek man could be all in a flame. He may take most liberty in reproofing his people's sins against God, who takes least liberty in his own cause."

"Thirdly, Pure from levity and vanity. The word of God is too sacred a thing, and preaching too solemn a work to be toyed and played with, as is the usage of some, who make a sermon of nothing but wit and fine oratory. Their sermon is like a child's doll, from which if you take off its dress, the rest is worth nothing: Unpin this story, take off this gaudy phrase, and nothing is left in the discourse. Satan moves not for a thousand such squibs and wit cracks. Draw, therefore, the sword out of its scabbard and smite with its naked edge. I do not here speak of those parts which God has given unto any: 'Because the preacher was wise he sought out acceptable words.' Not rude, loose, and undigested stuff, in a slovenly manner brought forth, and as pleasant, so upright, words of truth."

Another thing I fell into, was the hunting and raking after everything which could be denominated a feeling of blackness and baseness. I consider this as far removed from preaching Christ and the gospel by him as it well can be. Nor is it Christian experience. All the blackness of my heart does not constitute me a saint. Nor because I do not *now*, and shall not dwell on these things in my public ministrations, is it to be supposed that I say nothing of conflict, exercise, or temptation; but I saw those who wanted only the dark and black side chiefly preached, were no ornament to their profession, while they persecuted me.

Another thing I was much given to, was, a spirit of rashness in the pulpit, and of censuring and condemning every one who saw not with my eyes, spake not with my tongue, heard not with my ears, and measured not with my reed. Dead Calvinists, rotten Arminians, &c. were perpetually on my lips. I grieve for it in my thinking of it; for it was folly, and vanity. Yea, and I grieve for it when I see or hear it in others. What have I to do in

censuring and condemning, and cutting off others? Who authorized me to ascend the judgment seat, and call down fire on the heads of others. No one: and hence I have no right now, nor had I any right then to do so. These things, I bless the Lord, I am delivered from, and thankful am I that so it is. And I mention it here that others may escape from that snare.

The Lord, however, was pleased in mercy to own and bless the messages of his word through me his poor and unworthy servant, so that in the month of September, the sacred and heaven-appointed ordinance of believer's baptism was by us attended to, in the river Avon, whose peaceful stream flowed through our quiet village. That ordinance to me is dear, and has always been attended to by me with sacred feelings, and I deem it right here to record the fact, that one young man was brought through the attendance upon that ordinance to a saving knowledge of the truth. And could the records of the Baptist body be traced through the successive ages of time, since John first stood on the banks of the Jordan and preached it, and then went into the stream and practiced it, to mark how many have been called by grace, and brought into liberty, the number would be immense. A despised ordinance it is; but the frown of man is nothing to the smiles of God.

But shortly after this, my mind became most awfully harassed and tried, with infidel reasonings and atheistical suggestions. They were most severe upon every point, and my soul was as a chariot whose wheels were taken off, I dragged on heavily. I could not read the Bible with any delight, nor engage in any religious exercise with pleasure. What is religion, what is preaching, what is profession, but a force? it is all untrue, there is no reality in anything! It was suggested that priestcraft and design lay at the bottom of all things connected with it. And about the same time my soul was awfully beset with blasphemy, but, blessed be God, after many weeks of sorrow and distress, the Lord blessed me again with light and power, and sweetness in his holy ways, and my soul was as a hind let loose. I found then as I do now, that in the hour of temptation, helping and upholding grace comes immediately from the Lord: and when he shuts, there can be no opening, and contrariwise. But they were keen exercises to go through.

The spring of 1848 opened with a new scene of trial and conflict, in the circumstances which arose out of the sad, heart-rending conduct of a younger brother. This laid the foundation for very much that was painful, under the burden of which I lay for upwards of three years. Inasmuch as

the losses attendant upon his recklessness and folly involved me in considerable expense, which no after prudence or care could rectify.

This came upon me after a most sweet and blessed manifestation from the Lord in the early part of the year. For I had retired to my bed after preaching from Zechariah. 12: 10, with sad feelings, arising from the suggestions of Satan, that I for myself had never looked upon Him whom my sins had pierced, and mourned, according to the declaration of the text. This necessarily involved me in considerable trouble and anguish of mind, for then I had been preaching to others, of what I had not experimentally tasted and handled myself. With these feelings I arose in the morning, and was so conscious of my ill and hell-deservedness that I knew not how to contain myself. But God is a refuge in the hour of his people's sorrow and distress, and to him I was constrained to go with weeping, confession, and supplication, and he spoke peace to my heart, re-assured me of my covenant interest in him through his most precious blood, and gave me such a view of my suffering Jesus, as the channel through which mercy flows down to such sinners as myself, that in the feelings of my soul I exclaimed with the poet:

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed, And did my Saviour die?  
Would he devote his sacred head, For such a worm as I?”

And under the consciousness that it was so, my soul in all humility broke out and sung,

“O for such love let rocks and hills,  
Their lasting silence break;  
While all harmonious cheerful tongues,  
Their Master's praises speak.”

My troubles and conflicts, relative to my brother, came after this. It was an oasis in the wilderness. I look back now to Upavon, and my solitary room which I occupied: it was a consecrated spot to me, and though afterwards I sunk low, yet this was a high heap, and a Bethel visit from the Lord.

The circumstances I allude to, in reference to my brother, occasioned my breaking up my school at Upavon for a season, and going to C.; but I failed to reclaim my poor brother.

Perhaps it will be right here to say that I shortly after this commenced author. And much was my mind occupied with my little production. The



subject was “The Lamb that was slain.” My motive in writing, was sincere; and if souls were profited, this was enough for me. Christ and him crucified was my theme, both in the pulpit and from the press. Yea, my soul was rejoiced, and that greatly, in the spreading of his name abroad.

The summer of 1848 was a summer of mercies to me in many particulars, and perhaps not a more important month had ever been known in my history than the month of August in that year. Every subsequent matter, in connection with my history, stood connected with what took place therein.

It being harvest time, and nothing doing in my school, I at times followed up my old business of painting, paper-hanging, and writing; preferring to live by honest industry to eating the bread of idleness. I had been engaged upon a sign, at Netheravon in the early part of the week, and on the Thursday I determined upon going to Devizes, though I had never done so before, without having business which expressly called me there. Almost the first person I met in the town was my dear friend Mr. Sawyer, whom I had not seen since I had preached for him in the May of 1847.

He invited me to go to Cheverell with him, and stay over the Lord’s day, and preach. It immediately struck me that I would go, and I was enabled satisfactorily to arrange it in the following manner. A dear brother who had often supplied my lack of service at Upavon had made an engagement to preach at a neighbouring village on the coming Lord’s-day; but I was charged with a message from the deacon to cancel the engagement, seeing that it was made under a mistake. In cancelling the engagement for Manningford, I entered into one with him for Upavon, and hence was enabled to go to Cheverell.

It was on this visit, and in the bosom of the family of my dear friend that I found my dear partner. The hand of God was in it, without doubt; nor have I ever had cause for saying to the contrary. Many things are pronounced to be of the Lord at first, which do not wear so very well afterwards. It is well, therefore, to seek heavenly counsel, and divine wisdom; and in committing our way unto the Lord by trusting in him, possess our confidence in his strength and guidance alone.

I had not been at Cheverell many times, when Mr. Sawyer, asked me one morning, to exchange with the minister of Bethel Chapel, Trowbridge, for him to preach at Cheverell.

Before, however, my fulfilment of the engagement, or indeed the settlement of the time, for my doing so, my health began to sink, and my temporal prospects began to wear a very gloomy aspect on account of it. The day I was to go to Trowbridge being at last settled, on the 29th of October I went there; and though in much feebleness of body, I declared unto them God's truth. The sermon I preached on the Monday evening, I, at the urgent request of some, published.

Some hints were then given that if it were the Lord's will, I might settle down with them in Trowbridge. To this I could say nothing, the Lord himself being only able to settle this point at all satisfactorily. Besides, the state of my health was such as quite precluded my thoughts of anything; for upon my return to Upavon, my affliction very greatly increased: I sank down so low as that, from October 29 to December 10, I did not go through a day's service in the sanctuary. And my state and position was very perplexing and trying; every scheme became frustrated, and everything upon which I had set my heart was broken up. My school went, I was involved in deep difficulties, and the sorrows of my heart were enlarged. And at times, too, I suffered greatly from inward contraction and bondage; I could not feel nearness of access to God, nor was I privileged as I could wish, at a throne of grace with communion with Him, who is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.

But this was not always so. Let one especial time be glanced at, among others, to show the mercy of God towards me.

Being one morning sorely tried in my approaches to God, with my contraction in petitioning, the thought occurred to my mind—What! have I nothing to praise him for? Whereupon the Spirit, the Comforter, led me back to the time when he opened my blind eyes, stopped my wayward and wandering feet, made my heart to feel, and drew me with the cords of love to his feet: opened up to me his pardoning love and mercy in Christ, and gave me the sensible enjoyment of interest therein. There was given me, moreover, such a humbling view of his everlasting love, fixed on me from everlasting; and of the incarnation of Christ, his giving himself for me, to suffer all the agonies of Gethsemane, and all the solemn sufferings unto death on Calvary, as did so melt my soul, enlarge and inflame my heart, and loosen my tongue, as that I could do nought but crown him Lord of all, while tears of joy and gladness chased each other down my cheeks.

One other circumstance in this affliction I cannot forbear mentioning. It was on a Saturday evening, when I was at the weakest, when my fears were the strongest, when my difficulties were taken advantage of by Satan, to bring me down into sore trouble and distress, that my soul being in an agony of anguish and conflict, those words by our God were spoken into my heart: “Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether by many or by them that have no might.” It was a word in season to a feint, a weary, and a heavy laden and labouring soul. It strengthened my faith, sustained my hope, and inflamed my love. It put an end to all my misgivings; it removed all darkness, agitation, and distress; and it enabled me to lean upon a God of power, wisdom, faithfulness, and truth; and meanwhile to leave all my concerns in his hands, while casting my cares into the lap of his mercy, and pillowing my head upon the bosom of his love.

The Lord did great things for me by this affliction. In it my soul became more established in the truths of the everlasting gospel; my feet were set upon a rock, and my goings were established in his way. I felt safe for time and for eternity, and was enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

As my health began to get better, it became very necessary that I should come to some decision in reference to my future proceedings. I saw plainly that to continue a school, as well as preach the gospel, was more than I could by any means do: and hence the question resolved itself thus:—Must I keep a school and not preach, or must I preach and not keep a school? I desired to be wholly and unreservedly engaged in the service of God. In this my mind was fully exercised. I had felt, again and again, that, the Lord so willing it, I could spend and be spent in His service and work. After many anxious thoughts, and after much meditation and prayer, I came to the determination that I would cast myself entirely upon the Lord, and devote myself unreservedly to the work of the ministry, although I had no prospect beyond that subsistence which a very poor people could give me; and to be burdensome to them was a grief to my mind.

As soon as my school was given up, I had to encounter a great amount of ignorant opposition. In a village my school had been serviceable to many; and some, when they found themselves deprived of it, forgot all past benefit in present disappointment, and vented their spite in every possible way against me. This part of my narrative I leave. It is through good report as well as evil report; and through the evil as well as the good, that we must move on, leaving it to our God to bring us through.

I at times had great anxiety in reference to Trowbridge, but it drove me to the Lord; and I am certain that which brings me to his footstool is not productive of harm to us. In the midst of all, the Lord supported and upheld me, and at length was pleased to open a door of deliverance for me out of it all; the commencement of my relief being in receiving an invitation to supply in London a fortnight, then at Wantage, then Trowbridge and Bath,—making a six weeks' tour altogether, which helped me considerably.

While I was at Trowbridge, the 23rd Psalm was made so peculiarly sweet to me, as to form the substance of my ministrations the whole of the time I was there: and surely it was a word most suited unto my circumstances and conditions.

About this time, also, the Lord's hand lay very heavy upon my dear Miss Sawyer: so much so as to threaten, if not her life, it being a spinal affection, that she might never rise from her bed again. This necessarily was to me a sore trial, but as the Lord made his goodness and mercy known both to her and me therein; we were enabled to bless his name together, and take confidence in his arm of strength. It was an affliction deeply sanctified to my soul, and once in special I was remarkably favoured by the Lord in reference thereto. I quote from a letter I wrote immediately after the revelation of the Lord's mercy made to me therein.

“This affliction hath operated for good in many ways, more particularly now at this time, for—

1. It hath aroused me to confession. I have been brought to the footstool of mercy, to confess my unworthiness of the blessing and favour of the return of health, and that God would be just in removing from me the desire of my eyes, inasmuch as, peradventure, I have been making more of the creature than of the Creator.

2. He hath through this very affliction led me to repentance, contrition, and godly sorrow: and I do believe that he is pacified towards me, and I have a confident expectation that the Lord Jehovah is my God, my rock, and the horn of my salvation.

3. I have been led to supplication. Yes, with strong cries and many petitions have I supplicated heaven's sacred throne, for the Lord to sanctify it, to bless it, to sit by and watch over us in it, to grant patience in going through

it, and to bring out of it, as gold seven times purified; that, while painful, it may be blessed.

4. Faith hath been strengthened to believe that this illness is not unto death, but for the glory of God. In the showing forth of his power and skill, as a God of infinite wisdom, who bringeth down to the grave and lifteth up; who cuts deeply, but never cuts off, who tries greatly, but never beyond a given strength; who brings into deep waters but never leaves nor forsakes. And having this morning had the 65th of Isaiah rendered peculiarly sweet unto me, especially that verse, which I took as God's voice to me: "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." I can say to the Lord, 'Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' 'They shall not plant and another eat, they shall not build and another inhabit; for as the days of a tree (which in winter appears desolate, yet in spring buds forth again) so are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.' Now, although, doubtless, unbelief will try to pull my confidence down, yet I am now upon my watch-tower, and I am now waiting and watching the event,—my feeling being that, by God's blessing, your health will be restored."

Continued affliction was her portion for some time after this; but I am confident that where God gives faith to believe, and his word upon which to rest, there will be a fulfilment in due time.

After supplying the pulpit at Trowbridge for two Lord's-days in February, the minister, who was supplying them, abruptly gave in his resignation, and they were left destitute. In this dilemma they looked to me to supply them the month of March, which I engaged to do.

While here, I was seized with English cholera, and reduced very low, but my God visited me in my affliction with one of the sweetest manifestations of his mercy I had hitherto had. Sweet communion with the Friend of sinners was granted me, and a confirmation to my soul, from the words of the song: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?" From this portion God the Spirit preached me such a sermon as did my heart good, and set my soul at precious liberty in the Lord.

During my month's visit, the church began very seriously to deliberate upon my becoming settled among them, to take the oversight of them in the Lord; and at length an invitation, duly signed by the three deacons on

the part of the church, was given me; which invitation I refused immediately to answer: and as I was going to a distant place, to preach and baptize, I determined in the meantime to give it all that prayerful and deliberate consideration it demanded. And very many were my exercises of mind with regard to it. I knew I should have work, both in the church and out of it. By some I was too doctrinal, by others too practical, and by some too close upon the Spirit's work in the heart. And, to complete the perplexity, I had an invitation from three places, to come and preach to them; and in every instance with far more pleasing natural prospects than Trowbridge. Again and again did I lay the matter before the Lord, and seek his direction in this important movement, that I might not do wrong in leaving Upavon, nor be going where the cloud did not direct. Worldly aggrandizement was not my object. I would be where God would direct me, and where he would bless me; and when I came to consider the manner of my coming to Trowbridge, the circumstances which attended it, the presence of God felt by me, and I trust the enjoyment of the word among the people; I felt,—after many conflicts, much self-examination as to motives and designs, and many prayers to God,—that I should be doing quite right in negating every other invitation, and accepting that of Trowbridge. Upon this decision I acted, and made known the result accordingly.

It was a hard struggle and trial I had in leaving Upavon, and the very many friends I had in the neighbourhood; where, for three years I had in simplicity and in godly sincerity, preached the word of life. To them it was very painful, as well as to myself, but the consciousness that I was right, sustained me in the matter, and we parted in all good fellowship, which has continued until the present day, and will I doubt not unto the end.

The present honored deacons of Upavon inform the compiler, that at the time Mr. Rudman was invited to minister to them, they were at the lowest condition ever known; that a gracious revival was enjoyed by them under his labors, and the cause built up in every sense; and that some added to them under his pastorate are now useful to the church, while some had gone home before him to their Father's house in heaven. These brethren say also, a great moral good was effected by him as well,—many young men and women are now good scholars, solely by his instrumentality, and a blessing in their measure. They speak also of the wonderful way temporal support was sent them from time to time; and that by his exertions and example the debt of their chapel was paid off; and what serves to continue this grateful remembrance of him and his labors in pleasing freshness to

this day is this,—he was the means of their present minister ministering unto them in holy things; and the Lord highly favors both preacher and people. May the Lord long and abundantly bless them in the precious union!

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## CHAPTER V.

### MINISTRY AT TROWBRIDGE.

Mr. Rudman's account thus continues: Having bid farewell to Upavon, I commenced my pastoral labours at Trowbridge, May 6, 1849, taking on that occasion those important words of Paul. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

The exercises connected with this removal are very illustrative of our brother, and as at this time he commenced a diary which he continued, with but little intermissions up to his last illness; extracts from it will show us his inner man. And as they were written down at the time, they have a more life-freshness than is given by distant review.

This diary is commenced with his views for its being kept, saying—

*Saturday.*—It having been long upon my mind to set down, from day to day, the goodness, grace, and mercy of a covenant God towards me, and also what exercises of mind I am the subject of, I do now therefore commence it; sincerely desiring that the Lord would enable me from time to time to continue it, and make it profitable to my own soul in writing it.

I received this morning, two letters; the one pressing me to go to Wolverhampton for a month, but this I have been compelled to refuse; the other, from the church at Reading, inviting me there for a month. This I know not how to manage. The Lord in much mercy decide for me: but I find it very hard work to *stand still*. Lord, teach me and keep me: make me humble, watchful, prayerful, zealous, and spiritual; yea, bless me every how and

every way, that I, a poor creature, may or can need, for his great name's sake. Amen.

*Tuesday.*—Rose with a burden, and heavy in the extreme, pressed down in soul and enfeebled in spirits. Went to Southwick to bury Brother Eacott's wife. Found a vast concourse of people assembled together. Read the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. Spoke for a little time upon eternal realities. Addressed the Lord at a throne of grace, then spoke a word or two over the grave, concluded in prayer, and so dismissed the people. Lord grant, that the solemn remarks may not very speedily be forgotten! Returned to the tea meeting at Bethel Chapel, with a dreadful headache and a heavy heart, but we had a comfortable meeting. I got through as well as I could expect; and thus ended a very laborious day, with much mercy mixed with my misery. Bless the Lord therefore!

*Thursday.*—A day of very great exercise indeed. It was the day I appointed to give an answer to the church relative to my acceptance or *non-acceptance* of their invitation..... Wrote an answer to the church, but was very much exercised as to whether I should say *yes* or *no*. However, in looking at the circumstance altogether, I felt constrained to agree to their proposal. The Lord knows whether I have done right or wrong, and time alone must prove it. I cannot but hope that my eye was single therein, even directed to God and his honour and glory alone. The Lord grant that the union may be reciprocal and lasting. May I never have to regret it. Lord, make me a real blessing unto them, increase us with all the increase of God. Make it very manifest that thy hand was in it. Leave me not to flesh and sense. Enable me to lay myself out for thy glory, and the people's benefit. Give me, O give me a pastor's heart. Vouchsafe to me a meditative mind. Give me all those requisites which are necessary to the pastoral office and character; may I be enabled to adorn the doctrines of Christ Jesus in all things. Make me honest, faithful and persevering in every good word and work. The people evidently rejoiced at my decision, when made known to them after evening service. May they as the flock, and I as the under Shepherd, have much grace given to us, that we may know how to behave ourselves both towards one another, and towards them that are without. Crown it, Lord, with thy blessing, for Christ's sake.

*Friday.*—My poor soul still keeps very low and dark. Much shut up in secret before the Lord; very much contracted in the closet, groaning, sighing, and crying; but no real freedom. Indeed it seems nought but sore bondage; indwelling sin, and besetments of one sort and another sorely try me, and



cast me down, bringing me into the depths. Lord, deliver; all my help *must* come from thee. Did a little to drawing this morning, then wrote to Reading, declining their invitation. Very much exercised in reference to whether I had taken a *right* or a *wrong* step in saying *yea* to the invitation of the people. This was heightened and my feelings much cast down, when, upon calling upon an intimate friend of mine, whom I expected to join us, as he was likely to be of very great service unto us, I found him strangely altered in regard to the people; I was cut up in mind amazingly, and how to account for it I knew not. However, meeting a few friends afterwards to tea, who were members of the place, I felt very much at home with them, and altogether, was pretty comfortable. What a creature of changes I am, tossed up and down in feelings, removed to and fro like a shepherd's tent. Happy, happy soul, who is gone from this transitory changing world to his settled rest of peace, ease, joy, and endless happiness. Oftentimes it is the cry of my soul, "*Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; even so. Amen.*"

While thus exercised respecting Trowbridge, he preaches at Bath, and the day after, writes—

*Monday, 14th.*—The day after preaching at Providence Chapel, Bath. After some close conversation with Br.—and Br.—, I hurried to the boat, and arrived safely in Trowbridge at half-past one. The trees and the fields now look beautiful; I passed away the time by reading good old Bunyan's "Solomon's Temple spiritualized." Many of his remarks I could well fall in with. Truly he was a great man, whom God had raised up for an especial purpose. Bedford jail was religion's palace. I want to feel more of the solemn power of religion in my heart. God, of his mercy, grant it unto me. Was very unwell in the afternoon. I often feel that here I for long shall not be. O my soul, how is it with thee? solemn thought! death will soon be here, time will soon roll out, and an eternity of solemnities will soon roll in! Art thou on the Rock of Ages? Art thou solemnly looking to Jesus? Hast thou the eye of faith directed to him?

"Pause, my soul, and ask the question,  
Art thou ready to meet God?  
Am I made a real Christian,  
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood?  
Have I union,  
To the church's living Head?

Truly solemn and important questions; and I trust I can answer in the affirmative. Blessed be God, therefore, who hath showed me his marvellous loving-kindness in a strong city, even in Zion's city, the city of the living God. Went to our prayer-meeting, and expounded again the Pilgrim's Progress, and found it to be a very solemn and weighty time. A good concourse of people were out, and certainly the prospect looks well. But many have been my exercises of mind today relative to them. The Bath folks seemed to signify that they were a flighty, unsettled people, and my mind cannot but ask, is it so? Well, time will prove; in the meantime, God of his much mercy hold me up, and keep me on, the few days I am here in this desert land. It evidently appears that the Bath folks had their eye upon me; but I would ever wish to bear in mind what dear Mr. D—said to me the last time I saw him in the flesh: "Ah, friend R. saith he, you may go here and there, in this town and that, and after hearing you, they will say, This is the man! this is the man! and then, after you are there they would be as glad to get rid of you." I do not feel carried away by it, no, let it remain: time will unravel many things, and bring to light that which is now so dark. I will leave it, therefore, trusting Jehovah, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to bring me on, to keep me steady, weighty, simple, watchful and prayerful; with a single eye to his honour and glory; then, whether here or elsewhere, all will, and shall be well.

"Gracious and ever blessed God,  
I look to thee upon the road:  
O do thou be my shield and stay,  
In life's uncertain slippery wav:  
Guide me till death, then shall I rise,  
To endless glory in the skies."

With Trowbridge still uppermost on his mind, he visits Cheltenham, and amongst other entries, the following interview is penned:

Went to Mr. Bloomfield's, to see Mr. Kershaw, of Rochdale, and Mr. Gorton, of Oddington. With these I had some conversation relative to Trowbridge. Mr. K. said but little. One remark or two I transcribe: "Keep out of debt; look to your *pence*; give the management of your house to the wife; cautiousness is not covetousness. Get all the time for reading, meditation, and prayer you can; my only regret being that I have not more time for it." The dear man of God preached in the evening, from 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places, in Christ.' He confined himself to three

particular blessings with which the church was blessed in Christ:—a finished salvation, an eternal redemption, a justifying righteousness. When speaking about what we are in ourselves, he said, “But you may say, Ah, we get on better down here, than you do up in the North; well, then, I don’t want your betterness at all.” Again, said he, Some people will pull a long face, and tell us, with all seriousness, to save our souls, to give neither sleep to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, until we have done so; and this they push upon every company, go where they may. I remember coming from Bury with a fellow traveler through a village, and I saw a hearse standing. ‘There is a funeral,’ said my friend. I said, ‘There is.’ ‘It is a solemn thing to die,’ said he. ‘It is,’ I said. ‘We do not know how soon we may die—no, we do not.’ ‘Well then,’ said he, ‘you are middle-aged, and have you saved *your* soul, have you got *your soul* saved?’ ‘I have not,’ I said. ‘And now, since you have asked me a question, allow me to propound one to you, What did Jesus Christ come into the world to do?’ He said he could answer me instantly. ‘He came into the world to seek,’—and here he paused. Said I, ‘Why don’t you go on?’ Said he, ‘I was looking at the next word.’ ‘Well, now, let us have it all:’ He came into the world to seek and to *save*, that which was lost. Saith he, ‘I am confounded.’ ‘Well then it is *Christ* that saves the soul.’ It was indeed a good, weighty, gospel sermon. Went home, and soon retired to rest, seeking to Cod to bless me in every deed.

He returns to Cheltenham, and with his heart in his Master’s work, he jots down this:—

*Saturday.*—Was very ill and poorly, both in body and mind for many hours. I could not read or meditate, any more than I could make a world: this tried me amazingly. I cried, Lord, give me a meditative mind, grant me every mercy I need, in reference to the coming day, which is the day I enter upon my pastoral engagements at Bethel Chapel; may God help me and support me. My mind in the afternoon, blessed be God, grew better, so that I was enabled to meditate upon God’s word, in some degree profitably. Wrote to Upavon. Had some conversation with two of our deacons this evening, closing my evening with further meditation upon God’s word. I have reason to lament my lightness. Would I were more weighty. Lord make me what thou wouldst have me to be, I beg it for Christ’s sake. Amen.

*Lord’s-day, May 6, 1849.*—Arose early, and found some nearness to the Lord, before I went to early morning prayer-meeting. A goodly number there. Found it very solemn and savoury to be in the courts of the Lord’s

house. Had a precious, weighty time from, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross," &c. Went down to school in the afternoon to attend to their singing. A good time afterwards from, "That I may know Him," &c. Broke bread at the table. Did not feel so well as I could wish, yet would desire to be glad that, from time to time, I am enabled to meet with them. Preached in the evening from "The precious things put forth by the moon." A good time. We had good collections all through the day, and my first day among the people was truly a high day to my soul. Blessed be God therefore!

At this time he began reading regularly through the holy volume, and found it good and profitable. But still tried respecting his station, he pens another interview:

*Monday.*—Proceeded with my reading through Genesis. Felt far more lively in my soul, bless the Lord! Finally corrected and sent to the press the hymns for the Sabbath School Anniversary. Calling in at Mr. S., met with Mr. D., who had been preaching for Mr. W. yesterday. They all seem struck with surprise at my being in this town: just as though by declaring the truths of the gospel, I was opposing Mr. W., when, as the Lord knoweth it is no such thing. I do trust God himself will own and bless us, increasing us with all the increase of God, and enabling us to go forth in the great name of Jehovah, and, so to lift up our banners. In the afternoon, corrected some verses for a sister in the Lord; *ran* through some points relative to the times of Bunyan, in order to furnish my mind for the evening. Our weekly prayer meeting was full, quite crowded indeed. After singing, Br. D. engaged in prayer, I then read Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones; sang again, and Br. —engaged in prayer. I then took up one half hour in speaking of Bunyan's Pilgrim, up to his cry of 'What shall I do?' I found it *very* profitable to be so engaged before the Lord and his people May Jehovah the Spirit own and bless all our attempts to honour His holy name. Spent a comfortable evening, Brother P. engaging in prayer, I retired and closed the day with God's word, and Toplady's writings on the Faith of Devils.

*Tuesday, 15th.*—Was very unwell indeed when I arose this morning, so unwell as to make me think, my time here will not be long. This, however, is known to God; may my days here be spent to the honour and glory of God in his church below. May my messages be wet with the dew of heaven, may poor sinners be converted, and the saints of God edified and built up.

While to the hypocrite, the Pharisee, and worldling, I am a Boanerges, even the son of thunder; to the poor trembling, fearing, tempest-tossed child of God, may I, Barnabas like, be a son of consolation. To this end, O Lord, endue me with power from on high; and grant, while I am exercising myself in thy church, and for thy people, my eye may be single, then shall my whole body be full of light. I was engaged in writing the outline of my first sermon here, as the settled pastor of the church, for the "Vessel." May God own and bless all my endeavours for, and in the furtherance of God's cause and the truth in our midst, whether in the pulpit or from the press. Having received a very trying letter from home relative to my dear father's circumstances, I answered it, and would it had been in my power to have relieved him by a remittance, but it was not. The good Lord appear for him, and help him according to his own promise and word. Heard this morning from my dearest Rhoda, whom I found was able to walk about again. Glory be to God. Thou hast answered my many petitions upon that score, thou hast fulfilled in some blessed measure the purport of the promise given me many months ago. Wrote back to her in pencil while lying upon the sofa, for my back was in an agony, enclosing one of my sermons.

Our dear friend had scarcely settled down in hope that Trowbridge was, after all, the place his Lord would bless him in, than a commotion appeared amongst the Wesleyans of the town, promoted by one of their preachers, who afterwards tried in the same manner to *set his friends against* all Baptists. Though in after months, Mr. R., in reviewing his part in this contest, felt properly humbled, and recorded it, as appears anon. In the untempered zeal of the *young man*, his personal attacks, and cutting pungent epithets, were not the more excellent way: yet united with it was his ardent love to the divine cause of truth, with the belief that he was going to do wonders with his foes. As the great Milton expresses it:—

"Myself I thought born to promote all truth,  
All righteous things."

That his aim is worthy the man of God, here is proof. He says, Brother Eacott called to drink a cup of tea with me, during which, Brother P. came in with a tract; called. "Tracts for the Town, No. 1. A working man's opinions of Predestination and Sovereign Grace," evidently written against me and my sentiments. God has certainly sent me here to stir up the nest of the Arminians, who are in a terrible rage with me, and what they call my doctrines. Well, I am glad to find that what I preach is so little relished by them; glad at heart am I to find that what I preach is fought against by

professors: a good sign indeed it is that God's truth will create a fire, and be productive of a sword still in the earth. The Lord make me valiant for truth, and cause me still to proclaim, in its lengths and breadths, the glorious gospel of the grace of God. This evening went to singing meeting of the school for the anniversary.

*Saturday.*—Felt some drawings out in my soul to the Lord, that he would this day enable me to study his own word of sacred truth, which, blessed be his name, he hath enabled me to do with some good degree of enlargement and liberty. Yea, blessed be his name, he favoured me with such a ravishing view of heaven and heavenly realities, as enwrapped my soul as with a mantle of glory and ineffable joy. This is truly blessed, so to feel, and so to be led. It made me long, pant, and desire to get there. My poor body still continues very weak and shattered. Was obliged to lie down this afternoon. I hope the dear Lord will open my mouth on the coming day, filling us with those who come to hear, and may there be a crumb for their souls. The Lord cause that the arrow of conviction may pierce through the joints of the harness, which sin and Satan hath fastened round some poor sinner's conscience, then will there be power felt, and the sovereignty of saving grace asserted, and its speciality vindicated. The Lord hear me for his name's sake, Amen and Amen.

*Thursday* was engaged in the morning upon animadversions upon Tracts for the Town. Found that studying the word, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, is the right and proper method of getting a real acquaintance with the harmony of truth as revealed in the Scriptures of Divine truth. It appears certain to me, that a minister of the gospel cannot have his head and his heart too much in the sacred record of inspiration. Errors are abroad on the right hand and on the left, and as they are wresting the Scriptures, we would take the text and bring it out in its bearings, that they may ministerially be driven from their refuges of lies, deceit, and errors. Wrote to dearest Rhoda, &c. Was very much exercised about what I should preach from. Had two texts upon my mind but could not get at either of them. Went sighing and groaning in my soul before the Lord, and blessed be his name while that precious hymn was being sung,

“Ye that pass by behold the man!  
The man of griefs condemned for you!  
The Lamb of God for sinners slain,  
Weeping to Calvary pursue,” &c.

In some sweet measure my soul was led to that precious text, “He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied, by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.” And from this portion the Lord very blessedly led my soul to triumph in his great name, and a precious degree of liberty was given me in declaring the truth. I had a good time indeed, and many people were out to hear, far more than could have been expected.

Thus far a gracious God hath led me on,  
And made his matchless power and goodness known  
To one deserving endless death and hell,  
Yet hath a hope that I with him shall dwell—  
To see his face, and never, never sin,  
And from his love drink endless pleasures in.

*Lord’s-day, May 20.*—Arose with a cry and desire in my soul that God would of his much mercy enable me to go through the day with feeling and power. Went to early prayer meeting. Did not feel as I would have wished to feel, although it was a comfortable meeting. But this, I find, and have found it again and again, that none of these things are under my control, any more than is the shining of the sun or the rising of the moon. I had a good time in the morning, and although the day was very stormy, there were many hearers out, which was a very great comfort, inasmuch as it is encouraging to see that our doors are not open for *nothing*. I had indeed a precious opportunity, thanks to God for it; the afternoon was quite crowded, and it doth evidently appear that the truths which I preach are but little relished; for the -----are awfully stirred up against us. They come inside to sneer, and go outside to scoff. O if the Lord in mercy should meet with them, and bring down their stiff necks, what a mercy for their souls! Had conversation with two friends relative to their immortal souls, and had reason to hope they were of the right sort. The Lord make it more and more manifest. I was very weak and ill in the evening, yet had a good time from, “The good will of him that dwelt in the bush.” A full house, but, best of all, the Lord’s presence enjoyed. At the close of all can only say, the Lord’s name be praised.

*Friday.*—Revised my dialogue, which I headed, “Tekel, or Tracts for the Town weighed in the balances,” &c. It does evidently appear to me, that I am brought here for a special and particular work; may God enable me to go forwards wielding the sword of the Spirit against every error, both in the life and doctrine, on the right hand and on the left. The Lord give me

to feel his favour and his smile, that thus I may have encouragement. Called on our superintendent, whose wife is ill. What a mercy for those, who on beds of affliction know the Lord..... Returned to our church meeting, where, as we had not much business to attend to, I entered into some few things in reference to our cause, my exercises of mind in coming, my exercises after I came, and what oppositions I expected. I do hope God will give me grace, and much of his ever blessed Spirit to enable me to go on straightforward, not looking to the right hand nor to the left. May grace, mercy, and peace rest upon, and be with me from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, for his name's sake. Amen and amen.

In writing his life, Mr. Rudman says, in reference to this controversy, "One error I fell into when I first began to preach statedly in Trowbridge, and that was a spirit of raillery at the other sects. Truth can be declared and the gospel preached without this; and hence it will be much better to set forth God's truth, in the spirit of the gospel; and by preaching Christ, and living him, be a witness for God. I would say to every minister, that calling people names is not faithfulness, it advances not the gospel, it tends not to honour Jesus, but contrariwise, it opens a door for the evil passions of men to come out. Though it did not cure me, a taste of this I had, and time and further experience taught me better, and I bless the Lord it is some time since, I learned the spirit of that text, 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.' "

The entireness—the whole-heartedness, in which Mr. R. entered into his pastoral calling, is very evident in the daily jottings of his diary. The reader is presented with those of a few days in succession, including two Lord's days. These particular days are given, because they show, *at a sample only*, what was the inner man of our dear brother just at this time at T. The compiler has not observed any week's diary that indicates less ardent, laborious, and prayerful solicitude for the honour of the Great King, and the good of his kingdom.

*Saturday.*—Felt my soul drawn out very blessedly that the Lord would be with, and help me through the day, in studying upon his dear and sacred word. And glory be to his name he did. Found a drowsy heavy spirit creeping over me towards the middle of the day, so that my flesh wanted pretty much to be indulged; but knowing it to be such a robber, I had to cry to God to preserve me from a sleepy devil; for I solemnly believe that Satan does try to harass me on a Saturday more especially, through my desiring to study and meditate upon God's most holy word, to gather together for



the people, over whom God has placed me, and the Lord was graciously pleased to hear my cry, and preserve me. I found it very profitable to meditate upon the word of the Lord, more especially as I was reading my concordance, I lighted on God's trying the Israelites by water, before they went with Gideon to fight; and into it I do hope I was led to see some precious things, and may the Lord help me and enable me to speak it forth to the honour of his great name. *Make me indeed a burning and a shining light in my day and generation*, and then when I have served it by thy will, take me to thyself evermore to be with thee, then shall it indeed be well with me for evermore. Amen.

*Lord's-day, July 8.*—Through God's mercy was spared through the night, and enabled in gratitude and praise to lift up my heart to the Lord for the same, and to feel a spirit of supplication for all needed mercies through the day. Went to the morning prayer meeting, and a very comfortable time it was. Brethren Purnell, Norris, and Davis engaged in prayer. Heard from my dear Rose and Mr. B. Had a good time in the morning from "Let the wicked," &c., Is. lv. Afternoon. "Ho every one that thirsteth," &c. Evening, "Faint, yet pursuing." Helped very blessedly through the day, and brought on, so as to cause my poor soul to feel a measure of sacred joy. It was our collection day, and certainly the best I have had since being settled among them, which looks well and silenced my fears. I had been exercised with regard to it very much, and my cry was, Lord give me a crowning day; and bless his precious name, he did, to his honour be it spoken. I had been anticipating the evening service, and while I sat at tea with sister L. I was looking it over, when the thought struck my mind,—what if I should be shut up? This sent me to a throne of grace, to beg of the Lord to be with me, and to give me the opening of the mouth. Glory be unto his precious and adorable name he did, therefore to his name be the praise. One of sister L-----'s sons is a Mormonite. I gave him, therefore, a solemn warning: May God fasten it on his soul. One thing I had on my mind when there, was, in seeing the people flock together so, that I wanted a larger place. Would but the dear Lord make a way for us therein, I would desire then a heart to praise him. Thus another Lord's-day has been spent in his courts to the praise and glory of his great name. Hallelujah!

*Monday.*—Proceeded in my Latin and English grammar, through rising early. Visited Mr. S., made a purchase at the bookseller's and returned home. Was so tired and worn out as not to be able to stay up all the afternoon. Was sadly tried by the evils of a desperately wicked heart. O what a

sink of iniquity is here for a poor child of God to be tormented with in the wilderness. I can say, Lord in thy much mercy subdue and keep under its dreadful abominations. Wrote to brother Banks, and dotted out a few things in the margin of Bunyan's Pilgrim. Went to our evening prayer meeting, after which I proceeded with my lecture upon the Pilgrim, tracing him on through the slough of despond, and noticing the conversation between Bunyan and Help. I felt it not unprofitable to be with the saints of God, and felt softly I did in drawing near to a throne of grace. The Lord hear prayer, and answer the many desires of thy family in reference to our place and its prosperity. Humbly would I beg it for Christ's sake. Amen and amen.

*Tuesday.*—Received letters from Mr. Sawyer and Miss Guy. Answered those and likewise to Mr. S. and Mr. D. This took up my morning, and part of the afternoon. I then went to Mrs. Tranter's, and from thence to see Mrs. Marchant. Met the school this evening, having engaged to meet them once a week for writing, reading, &c. Meeting a friend, I engaged to drink a cup of tea with him. Have been terribly in the dark: sunk very low: knew not how to speak or what to think. I would desire to leave all my affairs in his hands who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

*Wednesday.*—Read Gill on the Name of the Lord, on the Constitution of a Church, Christian Pastor, &c. After breakfast I called on Mrs. H., and ---, and -----, and-----S. and T., whose daughter I saw. She was very ill, yet constrained to say, "The Lord is very good unto me." Drank tea at Mr. F's., who, after tea, took brother P. and me out for a drive, through Roode Aston, Lemington, &c. Had some sweet and very savoury conversation with him. Came back to supper: after reading and prayer returned home. I had some very weighty solemn moments with the Lord in prayer. Some strugglings and wrestlings with his blessed Majesty in reference to my dear Rhoda's health, our union, the church, &c. Lord let the sighing of the poor come up before thee, may it enter into thy ears, O God of Sabbaoth.

*Thursday, July 12, 1849.*—This day is my birthday, God having appeared for me and brought me very blessedly up to the present moment. Mercies I have had to a very great extent. Blessings have been showered down upon, and received by an unworthy sinful creature: so that here again I can raise my Ebenezer. I entered upon my birthday last year at Upavon, this year I am at Trowbridge: where I may enter upon it next year is a thing to me unknown. It has been truly an eventful year to me. In it I became acquainted with my dearest Rhoda, in it I have had many a scheme frustrated, many a plan crossed, many a design over-turned. In it I have been laid

down upon a bed of languishing and affliction, brought near the borders of the grave, laid by from my ministerial work, and nothing but death before my eyes. Yet have I proved God faithful to every promise, and everlasting praises to his great name, all his word hath in my soul's experience been made good. I would desire, therefore, to sing his praise all my life long. Nor would I wish to quit the blissful employment in death, but would wish and desire to sound out the high praises of my God, for ever and ever, in an upper and better world. And of this, O my soul, he hath graciously given thee earnest and tokens to a great degree. Also in the past year, I have been brought out from my school, compelled to leave Upavon, and after labouring here and there in a very extensive way in the great metropolis, in Berkshire and Somersetshire, have been brought and settled in Trowbridge. God has been good to try and afflict my poor soul by afflictions without and within. By troubles, and trials, and difficulties; yet to the glory of his name be it spoken, he hath brought me out, to the honour of his great name, to see that not one good thing hath foiled me of all the Lord had spoken in reference unto me. My soul feels therefore a great desire to be afresh dedicated unto his service and his work. To have the welfare of immortal souls lying very, very near my heart and soul. To be devoted unto him, to spend and be spent for him, not to count my own life dear unto myself so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of him among his church. To this end I feel a great and constant need of the teachings, leadings, and anointings of his ever blessed Spirit. O for a meditative mind! a mind richly fraught with evangelical truth! A mind fitted for the sacred study of God's most holy and blessed word. And may I have a pastor's heart given me, that I may watch for souls as one that must give an account to God and not to man. The Lord keep, uphold, and bless me therefore.

This day went to Cheverell, to have some little talk with Mr. Sawyer, in relation to the affair of Mr.-----: as also with regard to other matters. Found my dearest Rhoda nicely in health, and we came to an arrangement that, should the Lord see good, we would shortly come together. But this I must leave with a wise, gracious, and heavenly Father. Returned back in safety, and preached from David's recovery of all that the Amalekites had taken away or licked up. Had truly a good time, many people were out, and altogether it was a season to be remembered. Before mentioning a word to any one relative to our settlement, I was enabled to spread the matter before the Lord, and there leave it with him. The Lord in his much mercy undertake for me for his name's sake. Amen.

*Friday.*—Went to see a poor lad who was ill in a decline and the dropsy. Spoke some solemn truths to him in reference to his eternal state, but I fear poor fellow has been wrapped up by the -----, so that he is looking, resting, and trusting on something very far short of living realities. This, however, I solemnly spoke to him about, and having laid down things plainly I left him. I then went to Mr. S. H. and had some conversation with him in reference to the chapel. Went also to Mrs. B.'s, who promised me something towards the chapel, should we enlarge it. Called in the afternoon on Mrs. T., who had been greatly blessed the evening before under my ministry. Called also on Mrs. H., whom I found in a low key. Had a good deal of conversation with Mr. D., whom I found a man of judgment in divine things. Came to church meeting. In all these things may wisdom which is profitable to direct be given unto us, for his name sake alone. Amen.

*Saturday.*—Have been enabled to spend a quiet day in meditation upon God's sacred and most holy word of eternal truth. Had to cry out for help from the mighty against heaviness, found a blessed remedy in "All prayer," as dear old Bunyan speaks of. Received a letter from Upavon, and my proof sheet of "Tekel." Poor Mrs. P. has been very ill today. What poor mortals we are. I cannot but hope that we shall have a good day on the morrow. At least so is my cry, my fervent breathing, and my prayer. The Lord give me to see and to feel this realized, and then I shall be satisfied. O to see poor sinners flocking like doves to their windows. To hear one and another crying out, What must I do to be saved? This would be an encouragement in very deed. Well, the Lord grant it for his name's sake. Amen. Wrote four letters to friends, and one to Upavon. And thus closes another week's labour and toil. *Dei Laudare.*

*Lord's-day, July 15.*—Had a good precious and weighty day in very deed. Arose with my heart lifted up to God for his blessing, which he gave me. Went to morning prayer meeting. Brethren T,-----, D-----, N-----, and P-----prayed. Had a solemn degree of wrestling with the Lord relative to the day.

Was thinking over dear Toplady's diary of his experience, and it seemed to me how very low I live beneath what he and other saints of God did; and as I was thinking, so these words of the poet stole over my mind:—

"Not every one in like degree,  
The Spirit of God receives I"

And hereby I am led to see, and that clearly too, that God is in very deed a sovereign, disposing of all things as even it pleaseth him. Had three precious times in breaking the bread of life to the people, from Psalm lxxxiv., 5 and part of 6th verse. it was a good day all through, bless the Lord. Had some conversation with Miss M-----, who desires to join us. Held a church meeting after service. The Lord in his much mercy increase us with men as with a flock, and also in our own souls with all the increase of God. I do not know a time when my soul was more sweetly led out than it was to-night. O it is blessed to be enabled to set to our seal that God is true, being infinitely better to us than all our fears and all our misgivings. The Lord be pleased to fasten the word home that now has been spoken, may he be with me in all my untrodden steps, and land me safe in glory at last, there to sing for ever and ever, Worthy the Lamb. Amen, and amen.

It was in the summer of 1849 that the cholera began to rage most fearfully in England, especially in the great metropolis of our highly favoured land. It was the hand of God evidently, and physicians being on all hands baffled, and their skill useless, were compelled to acknowledge the blow as coming from an irresistible hand.

It was while the cholera was raging in London in all its fearful ravages, that I was called in the providence of God to London, to preach at Cave Adullam Chapel, Stepney; and on the Saturday, in looking up to God for a text, the words of Peter arrested my attention. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened to you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad with exceeding joy." I little thought that this text had any reference whatever to myself but so it was, that in the coming week I was seized with fever after dreadful cholera symptoms, and returned home to be under medical advice, and to be laid on one side.

A few extracts from the Diary during this journey should here be given.

Arrived once more in the busy metropolis—proceeded to Hephzibah Chapel, Mile-end, where, to a crowded congregation I preached from, "Thou saidst unto me I will surely do thee good." Had a good time, may the Lord make it a blessing. Was sadly harassed afterwards by sin and Satan, though not permitted to fall; so that my cry must be still, Lord help me, and deliver me. Often have I proved it that after I have got on well,

some heavy temptation crops the wings of pride. May I but hear the voice of the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

*Saturday.*—Visited by Mr. P. Called on Mr. B., and while there had a visit from a little pompous, would-be parson, whose talk was as empty as chaff is light. Alas! alas! London abounds with such. Lord's-day, at Cave Adullam, was kindly received by the friends. Had a good time from I Pet. iv. 12, 13. Went to Mr. B's., a comfortable gentleman, his lady also very kind to me. A full house in the evening. Much helped with Psa. lxxii. 1, 2. But O the awful scenes of profanity which afterward met my eyes! A fire brigade with engine dashed by; then a poor woman was taken ill on the pavement, and a stretcher sent for to carry her away; and then a riotous noise and fighting with the police.

*Monday.*—Called to see brother B., where Mr. C. of M. came. Heard some strange things of one of the -----ministers. Solemn is the consideration that those who drive on the loudest for high-sounding things, generally live the lowest and act the worst. But ah! what is it hath made the difference, if difference there be? Dear Lord, be thou more and more before my eye and on my mind. At Beulah Chapel, Shoreditch, had a very precious time while preaching from two verses in Ps. cvii. On going to my lodgings was seized with such awful shivering fits, as seemed to shake my heart from its place—reached them sadly tormented and harassed in mind.

*Tuesday.*—Preached this evening at Crosby-row, and truly it was a solemnly delightful time. A good attendance, and many appeared to be refreshed. The cholera is sweeping away household after household. Funerals pass without a single follower. Undertakers are busy night and day. It made me feel very solemn.

*Wednesday.*—Felt myself very unwell indeed, and in that state was called to see a woman in the pains of premature labour with a dead child, she, poor thing, having the cholera. She had been blessed under my preaching; hence desired to see me. Preached afterward at Cranmer-court Chapel, Clapham Rise, from Mark 10: 45; but suffered so with headache—returned worn out and broken down.

*Thursday, August 16.*—Very ill, exceedingly feverish, could do little but dose all the morning. Heard of Thomas Guy's death by cholera. He had spoken to me of his being so profited under my last Tuesday evening's sermon. Having to preach at Greenwich for "Poor Minister's Relief

Society,” got with difficulty to the railway station. Preached from—“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Got back to my lodging, but was light headed all night.

*Friday.*—Weak and exhausted, reached Trowbridge very ill.

For a few days our dear brother was laid by, I and others helped him all we could, and his own account continues.

But good and gracious was the Lord unto me, “I was brought low and he helped me.” His word was to my soul in my affliction sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. Never was his word more opened to me or blessed to me, than it was here, and he gave me most assured tokens of his love and grace to me. My bedroom was a Bethel, my bed a place of communion between God and my soul. Never did I feel more dead to the world, or more crucified to it with its affections and allurements. I felt my affections so spiritualized, and my whole soul so drawn heavenwards, that had the world and all the kingdoms and glory of it been offered me for the grain of dust at my feet, I felt that the labour of stooping and gathering it, would have been purchasing it at too dear a rate.

It should also here be said, that as the Lord had given me an intimation of my affliction, so also of my delivery. For so it was, that on a Saturday morning, whether sleeping or waking I know not, but a voice sounded twice in my hearing, “Thou shalt come forth and follow me through the fire.” As therefore the former part was true in reference to my recovery, so was the latter part true in reference to my conflict.

For as soon as my bodily health began to amend, I began to experience the severity and sharpness of Satan’s attacks. During my illness he was mercifully kept at a distance, but now he came with suggestions that all my religion was a delusion, that it began in the flesh, and that God was not the author of it; that fancy and imagination had the chief hand in the matter. Under this, a cloud being upon me, my soul sunk down very greatly, and confusion and sad dismay sat brooding over my mind. But as God would have it, he who bounded the waters of the sea with an hitherto, bounded Satan’s rage also, to the praise of his richest grace would I say it. For a ray of light came from that God who sitteth upon the mercy seat, and thus my soul began to reason:—“Well, suppose my soul has never in reality known what mercy is? is it not *now* FREE? May I now taste and see that the Lord

is gracious? Did any go and were disappointed? Does he not save to the uttermost? Is not the promise to the weary and the heavy laden?" This brought me to the prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and truly with David can I say, "Out of the depths cried I unto thee, O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul."

The great fort of a believer in every and all stages of his experience is mercy: and mercy thus delivered me, yea, it dispersed my fears and chased away my foes: and hence I would say to the poor tried and tempted believer, venture upon his mercy; venture wholly, and venture solely. There is nothing for you but mercy. Let it be your constant and your ceaseless plea; and you will find you have in it every advantage. It is ground Satan may attempt to drive you from, but this he shall never be able to do while Jehovah rules and reigns supreme.

These deliverances show us very sweetly what our God is, as the God of mercy, and enables us to sing with Burnham

"All glory to mercy we bring,  
The mercy that reigns evermore;  
The *infinite* mercy we sing,  
The mercy eternal adore.

The mercy *converting* we prize,  
In mercy *forgiving* delight;  
For *conquering* mercy we rise,  
We rise and triumphantly fight

And when we are wounded by sin,  
And scarce can a prayer repeat;  
The mercy that heals us again,  
Is mercy transportingly sweet.

What though in the furnace we fall,  
Free mercy the Saviour proclaims;  
For mercy to Jesus we call,  
And glorify God in the flames.

For mercy *upholding* we pray,  
For mercy *confirming* aspire;  
And mercy will bear us away,



To God and the glorified choir.”

Cholera raged also in other places, and though most mercifully kept from Trowbridge, so that but very few, if any cases, were known, yet it carried away in the house of my beloved friends at Cheverell, first a servant, and then a son, who within one short week were in their graves. These are solemn strokes, and most painful events: they tended to solemnize my mind, and, not knowing when the stroke may next fall, kept me a humble suppliant at the footstool of Divine mercy and love. While cholera was ravaging many places, a sort of fever swept through Trowbridge, and many persons fell a prey to the attacks of remorseless Death.

Amidst it all, however, I trust I was not left without some especial tokens for good among the people, and some thoughts began to be entertained in reference to enlarging the chapel. Our place of worship was dilapidated inside, and the flooring giving way in many places, so that it seemed requisite and necessary that something should be done, but still we saw not the way clearly as yet.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### MINISTRY AT TROWBRIDGE, CONTINUED.

His congregation greatly increased, and hints often being thrown out by warm friends, of their belief that if they had a nice chapel many persons would be induced to attend who would be of great use; Mr. R's. ardent mind fell into it, and he and his friends greatly desired an enlarged and improved house of prayer. By the following entry we also find he consulted other friends.

*Tuesday.*—Seemed very much indisposed for writing, therefore took a walk to brother P.'s garden. Went to see friend S., and talked over the matter of the enlargement of the chapel From a letter I received from dear Mr.

-----, I find his mind is, that I should not have the responsibility of it upon my shoulders. We certainly want a larger place, and a place far more convenient than what we now have. But if the Lord sees good it will be so: and we shall see his wonder-working hands going before us herein. I find by the letter I have received from Mr. B., that the Reading people still have their eye upon me. Why, I cannot say; it appears also that he had some idea of my settling in or near London to have been a co-editor of "The Vessel." Many were the cogitations respecting this chapel enlargement, often did he and his friends talk with me of it, but I did not see the propriety, for several reasons. Yet I do not wonder that *he* should think it desirable, as at this time, at least, the expectations of those on whom more especially the building would fall, were most extravagant by asserting to him and others, that there was scarcely such a man for many miles round; and it was during these chapel-enlarging anxieties that his marriage union with Miss Rhoda Sawyer, of Great Cheverell, Wilts, was in contemplation. Mr. Sawyer, her father, was well known for his kind heartedness and liberal hospitality to the Lord's people, especially his ministers. It will be seen from the following entry and letters, taken from many similar, to his affianced, that, as in all other relations, he blended the enlightened Christian, so he eclipses it not in the lover.

*Friday.*—Have been engaged in the evening in writing to my dearest Rose and to her father, relative to my intended marriage, for truly "it is not good for man to be alone." May the dear Lord guide me in this important thing, and enable me to pursue that, as well as all other matters, with a single eye to his glory and to his honour. I feel it to be deeply important to follow Christ in all things, and in all our ways to acknowledge him. This is what my desire is, so far as I know my own heart. Nor do I wish to move one step without him. May the dear Lord ever keep and preserve me so, both as a man, a Christian, and a minister. Deeply do all these things exercise my mind, and again and again is my soul up to the Lord for his gracious smile of approbation, and that I may have it and receive it, is my sincere cry. Amen.

*New Town, Trowbridge, July 14, 1849.*

Mt own dearest Rose,—There are two prominent C's in God's word which I have just been looking at:—*choosing* and *chastening*. "Blessed is the man whom thou *choosest*;" and "Blessed is the man whom thou *chastenest*. And it is as true as that God liveth, that it is impossible for us to have the kiss of the Lord, without having the frown of the arch-enemy of souls. But in

my right mind I can say, come on me what may, let but the Lord smile, and I am content. I feel at times, a holy contempt for the opinions of men, be they great or small, for or against, when the Lord smiles me into a blessed zeal for his honour and for his glory. And, methinks, I hear my Rose say, evermore so be it, Joseph. And to that I can add an hearty and fervent Amen.

But we say, choosing and chastening invariably go together. Hear what the Lord says, “I have refined thee, but not with silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” And yet in this very thing mark his love and mercy. It is not customary for men to choose a partner in affliction. It is quite so in health, in prosperity, and when all works well: but yet, notwithstanding, it is in adversity, in troubles, in trials, and in difficulties, that we need one to stand by, to assist, to be with, to stay and be a support. Truly so it is. And hence saith the Lord, “I will strengthen him on a bed of languishing, and make all his bed in his pain and affliction.” I have solemnly betrothed that poor, helpless, sinful, careworn, and troubled soul to myself: and I have done it in loving kindness and in much mercy. In very deed I have pledged my faithfulness, and hence no weapon formed against her shall prosper. Dearest Rhoda, how can it be, that you and I should sink into the jaws of a gaping hell when Christ our passover has been slain? The Lord help us to keep the feast,—the feast of joy on the hill of Zion, where the sacrifices of the Lord are a broken and a contrite spirit; yea, a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.

He upholdeth all that fall. Yes, when I said my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O God, held me up. More particularly, my dear Rose, I take it that those who fall here, are those who fall into the hands of covenant mercy as saith the poet,

“My soul into thy arms I cast,  
I trust I shall be sav’d at last”

God will uphold all such with the right hand of his righteousness: for, “All his saints are in thy hand.” To this also agree the words of Christ, when alluding to himself as the foundation, he saith, “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever *it* shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Not a poor sin-sick soul, who hath sought for special, blessed mercy, at the hands of a God of love and grace, being compelled to cast their souls upon his royal clemency, but what hath had the blessing in God’s own time and way. Of this, you and I, my own dear Rose, are living

witnesses. We have tasted that the Lord is gracious. We have been of necessity compelled to set to our seal that God is true. Hence we can say, "Nothing but goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life." True my love, we have had our sinkings, and our days of gloom, and our nights of darkness, and have been constrained to cry out, "O that it were with me as in months which were past!" yet still, to the glory of his name be it spoken, he hath in his much mercy, again revived us, and caused us to flourish as the vine, and to spread forth our roots as Lebanon. And all such visits and tokens as these, are earnestings that between God and our souls all is right, and that we are of those who shall be landed safe in heaven above, when we shall have done with the things of time and sense here below.

The bark at sea now speeds her way,  
The wind is fair the sky serene:  
There's scarce a cloud bedims the sky,  
But all is beauteous through the scene:

The sun is high and scarce a shade,  
Passes athwart from stem to stern:  
The pilot's at the helm, and all  
Bids fair the destined port to gain.

The sailors to a man are glad,  
The captain's face, too, beams with joy;  
Scarce could you picture more delight,  
Can there be ever ought to cloy!

Just so the soul whom God has bless'd,  
With joy and peace and happiness;  
The sun shines bright, his joys run high,  
And peace and comfort fills his breast.

It seems as though he'd always sail,  
On heavenly comforts to the sky.  
But is it so? O no, indeed,  
Black clouds arise, and storms come on;

The sky grows dark and as a shroud,  
'Tis all spread o'er, his comfort's gone.  
He's tempest-toss'd on seas of strife,  
His fears are high his courage fled;

He now mounts high, anon sinks low,  
Nor knows he how the case will sped:  
Just so the soul, till God appears,  
And puts to flight his doubts and fears.

Now I do sincerely trust my dearest Rose, that this will find you with your sails expanded, faith in exercise, hope vigorous, and your love strong. I preached on Thursday evening from David's recovering all that the Amalekites had taken away; and I had a solemn, weighty, blessed time of it. If I am spared to see you on Wednesday, my dearest, I may then tell you how I handled it. We had a great many people out. I see it is a most beautiful cushion they have got me, and every matter connected with us, blessed be God, is well. I should like to have scribbled a line to sister Sarah, but must defer it for a few days, through pressing business. Poor Mrs. Purnell is very ill again. Obligated to have some one in the house today. Glad shall I be, my own dear Rose, when we shall be united together. The Lord bless us both therein. But I must conclude. Give the enclosed to your dear father. And now may every blessing be thine from a God in covenant-love, and mercy. May thy health of body be established, and thy soul kept in blessed peace, with thy mind stayed upon the Lord Jehovah, whom, may he make to be thy song and thy stay in this the house of thy pilgrimage.

So prays, my ever dearly beloved Rose, your own faithful, loving, and  
affectionate

Joseph.

I have scribbled a line to Sarah, my love, for I had promised you, and I could not escape from it. Give it her with my respects, my love.

*New Town, Trowbridge, July 21, 1849.*

My dearest Rose,—Life is but a checquered scene of it, diversified as it is with hills and dales: some sunny spots, and some most gloomy shades. If we do for a few brief moments review the past, and if busy imagination brings upon the table of the memory, some few of the many things which have befallen us in the wilderness, much room there is for sorrow, yet room likewise is left for joy. We live and learn by experience. There are many

things which I have come through; but had I again to pass that way, doubtless my pathway had been different. But Rome was not built in a day, a house is not furnished in a moment, neither is the mind stored with information relative to men and things in a moment: and if in my short history I have learned one thing more than another, it has been this, that I have much to learn, and that at the furthest, my knowledge is very imperfect. But if any lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not. Blessed be His name, He regards His family under all afflictive circumstances, and, to the glory of His great name be it spoken, blesses them in deed and of a truth.

My mind is frequently looking back, over scenes which long since have passed onward, yet left the recollection of the past: and again in imagination I am passing through and acting over again some painful, some pleasing incidents. There is the well-known face of friends now in bliss; there is the old spot where I sat, and the old frequented road where the hymn of praise was on my lips, and joyful sensations in my heart: but my old minister is in the tomb, and those with whom I was once intimate, are now many of them, no more; so changes man, and man's estate is vanity at best. And why I am spared, is that which most of all does oftentimes surprise me; yet so it is: God having determined to use me as an instrument in his hands, for the effecting of his own purpose and grace towards the sons and daughters of men. For evident, my love, it is, that God is making use of me in the calling in of sinners, and in the building up and edification of his body the church. His name herein be alone glorified. May the Lord still go on to cause that his arrows may be sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, that so the people may fall down under him. I trust also that you may find it to be a Sabbath to your soul today. May the King's face be seen, and his love and blood rejoiced in.

At the present, my soul is in a low place, yet not so low but that I expect to have another visit from the King of Saints and see him in his mercy once again; but those lines of the poet have been much on my mind.

“Up to the fields where angels lie,  
And living waters gently roll,  
Fain would my thoughts leap out and fly,  
But sin hangs heavy on my soul.

Thy wondrous blood, dear dying Christ,  
Can make this world of guilt remove;  
And thou canst bear me where thou fliest,

On thy kind wings, celestial Dove.

O might I once mount up and see,  
The glories of the eternal skies,  
What little things these worlds would be,  
How despicable to my eyes.”

But it was the following which has been more particularly on my mind:

“Had I a glance of thee my God,  
*Kingdoms* and *men* would vanish soon;  
Vanish at though I saw them not,  
As a dim candle dies at noon.

Then they may fight, and rage, and rave,  
I should perceive their noise no more  
Than we can hear a shaking leaf,  
While rattling thunders round us roar.

Great all in All, eternal King!  
Let me but view thy lovely face,  
And all my powers shall bow and sing  
Thy endless grandeur and thy grace.”  
Dr. Watts.

I have been through, and had some very solemn exercises, since I saw you last Thursday, my Rose. Men and things have been viewed in somewhat their right light: and I cannot but hope that I am led to look to the right quarter, even to the Lord God of hosts. It is right that we should be led to see what man is, and to have our minds exercised upon the unchangeableness of the Lord Jehovah; after all, I find the most cause for grief in my own breast. Here it is I most suffer, and from this foe arises most of my conflicts. May every discovery of our sins, and every revelation of the desperate wickedness of our hearts, lead us to the fountain fulness of Christ, where we may wash and be clean from all our stains.

Poor Mrs. Purnell is very ill in bed, under Dr. Cary’s hands. Thus I have something here to put me in remembrance of the weakness and frailty of creatures. Should I lose her, I shall lose one who has cared for me like a mother. Mr. Hedges’ wife is dead and buried. Death does its work, and sickness and disease is on the right hand and on the left. God grant that we may be found on our watch tower, then when the Son of Man cometh, all will and shall be well.

I still find very much of my fall, but my general health through rich mercy is good. I want to feel more alive to God and his work. I have sent you a pamphlet, and will bring you more if spared to see you in the land of the living. I trust this will find you much better than what you were on Thursday, then methinks you may say, I am quite well.

Dearest Rose, believe me to remain, affectionately,  
and for ever yours,

Joseph.

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*New Town, Trowbridge, July 28, 1849.*

My own dearest Rose,—Grace and peace be thine from a Three One God.

My love, I received thy letter, as from one whom I believe was given me by God to be a solace to me in the house of my pilgrimage, and truly may I say as with the Apostle in one place, “I CEASE NOT to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,” the sum and substance of his desire for the Ephesians in chapters, i. and iii., being my cry increasingly to God for you, my dearest Rose. I may say, you live near my heart, nay *in* my heart; and I can assure thee, my love, the time will seem long until I have thee near my side at a home of my own. In this I desire to bow to my dear Lord and Master, not doubting but ere many more weeks have passed over my head that so it will be. But to pass this, for God only knows what, in nine or ten weeks yet to come, may transpire, I would desire to be thankful for the stability of that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure, for all our salvation and for all our desire. Blessed be God, all our times are in his hands, all our circumstances are under his control, all events are at his command, and I would pray ever to be kept from arraigning his wise decisions at the bar of our carnal reason. What, O what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou shouldest visit him! Dearest Rose, what an amazing stoop of infinite love was it, to fix on such earthworms as we two are, and bring us to a knowledge of himself! Oh, it is astonishing to think of it, for every breath of prayer, every uplifting of desire, every budding of hope, every exercise of precious faith, any enkindlings of sacred love, stamp us as his, as his own, as his choice, and his redeemed.



My ever dearly beloved Rose, Who hath despised the day of small things? Hath God done so? Shall the former pronounce the first breaking forth of the seed, and the peeping up of the little shoot of green blade as nothing, because he sees not blade, ear, and full corn in the ear at once? O no. The springing up of the blade, and the faintest appearance of the green shoot above the surface of the earth, is an earnest of the future harvest, another, and yet more distant day. The foundation is the commencement of the building. Vain would be that man who would expect to see the top-stone brought forthwith rejoicing immediately thereupon. The language of a man suits not the lips of a child, neither would it comport with the height or the strength of a babe, to set before him such work as befitted a youth in his prime. Can my dearest interpret it? The Lord enable us to prize highly, and esteem greatly every mark a gracious God has given us of Divine life in the soul. Can my dearest Rose in the time of sickness, faintness, and weariness, do that which she can when in health, and in vigour of body? Decidedly not. Yet shall I say that an invalid is a corpse, or that a man in a fainting condition is an individual bereft of life? No, no. So spiritually. Have I tenderness of conscience? do I feel sin to be a burden? do I hunger and thirst, long and pant after the living and true God? Well, my soul may not be on the mountain-top in enjoyment, but I may be at the footstool of mercy in prayer: I may not be singing the new song, but my mouth may be put in the dust, if so be there may be hope: I may not in the exercise of faith be enabled to say, "*My Lord and my God,*" but I may be saying, "Lord, I believe in thy power; help thou my unbelief in reference unto thy will." I may not be wrestling with God at a throne of grace, and pouring out my whole soul in holy freedom and liberty, but I may be sighing over my short comings, my misdoings, my backwardness, and my many wanderings, and the desire of my soul being,

"O make this heart rejoice or ache,  
Decide the doubt for me;  
And if it be not broken break,  
And heal it if it be."

Thus, my love, the poor soul is not without some token of life, and some evidences that *now* he is not what he *was*. I ask myself; can I sin with impunity? can I hear God's truths trampled on, his people insulted, his name blasphemed, without feeling some honest indignation in my heart against it, and some degree of holy cleaving to a gracious God in the midst of it? O my Rose, my Rose, canst thou not follow thy Joseph here? True, often tempted and extremely exercised, as to whether ever I prayed aright,

desired aright, was convinced aright, ever had my burden removed aright: As to whether mine is a right faith, a gospel hope, and a Divine feeling of love. Yet still I possess now what once I had not; different views, and, I can add, a different practice. Rose never fell as I did into sin, hence the broken bones I have had she has not. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." This, dearest Rose, I am bound to confess to, yet, I trust I may say, Jesus died for my sins, and rose again for my justification. Ah, my Rose, many a sifting season have I felt in my soul, yea, even to the causing me to cry out, "I am cut off for my part." Yet, glory be to the great name of a covenant God, again he has come and visited my poor soul with some fresh token for good, and then have I been enabled to say, "Though I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh on me," glory be to his great and blessed name therefore.

I have been led to look at this point pretty closely of late. You know, my dearest, there are few who preach more, many hundreds of men not so much as I do; and when I look at what I am, O how empty, and bare, and destitute does my poor soul seem of everything good, holy, or spiritual. And you know, when I am left for a few moments to look at this, and Satan sets in upon me with how holy, and good, and pure should a minister be; and I feel so the reverse, O how low I sink, and how my spirits droop, and how cast down I am! till I am led to look to Christ, and apply to him, and I am brought to consider his fulness and the boundless stock of grace he has to bestow upon the needy and the seeking soul, then do I lose myself in him, and my wants, be they many or few, are so richly supplied, that my cup runs over, and I possess all I need.

My own dear Rose says she needs my prayers. Dearest, thou hast them; or rather, God has them for thee. I may say, that petitions for thy welfare, both in body and in soul, are as my natural breathings. I cannot, I would not wish to live without it. May I say that this is reciprocal? Surely it is. Too closely by far are we united for my own dear Rose not to feel peculiarly upon this point. Would the 692 hymn do for you in Gadsby's Selection I So it does for me, just suit me it does. What a mercy to have any such desires, any such feelings! Dearest, none can have them, but a soul who is taught by Jehovah. "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, or the shadow of a turning." The Lord give us some of these precious gifts. Yet, methinks they are all summed up in the great Gift. For, you see, wisdom,

righteousness, sanctification and redemption, are all in Christ, and Christ is made all this unto us; therefore, the fool, the poor, the naked, and the needy, are all welcome here. Yes, and I have to tell my Rose, that there is room for her also, and a ring, a robe, some shoes of iron and brass, and the best of fare, free of all cost or price. Now if you are rich enough, stay away; but if poor and impoverished, "Come, for all things are now ready." You need do nothing; it is all completed.

It is very possible, my dearest Rose may say, this I knew years ago. Aye, and so did I, and thought I have, O what a rich and sovereign mercy that it is free of cost; and yet, would my love believe it, I want to go even now bedizened out in my own performances, not liking to come to God as a poor and needy sinner: For I find it to be very painful to be from time to time so stripped and so plunged into the ditch. Yet so it must be.

I dare not, I must not have room for any boasting: God will not give us allght without securing his glory with it. But I know that boasting suits the old man well, though very painful it is to the new man, for that says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." I must now break off my love. Sorry to find you have taken cold. I trust this will find you and your dear father and mother very much better. I shall be preaching in London, God willing, the 26th of August, when I hope to see Rebecca as you desire; but I shall see you ere then, if spared. Thankful to say, that my health is very nicely, through mercy. We shall have a tea party, Tuesday, August 7th; and be baptizing Lord's-day. September 2nd, (D.V.) I am going to Wantage and Reading, the Lord permitting. I suppose also, we shall be pulling our walls to pieces very soon. We had a special church prayer meeting last evening in reference to it. Bless the Lord, we are in peace and quietness. Had a comfortable day at Bradford, though Mr. Pearce was very unwell, and Mr. Hedges had a poor house,—wife died without hope! Were that my Rose, methinks it would kill me. His poor child was ill too, in dreadful convulsions, and had been in them five days and nights. How many are *our* mercies, notwithstanding all! My dearest, dearest Rose, I do, with every tender regard to thee, my love,

again subscribe myself, yours ever truly,

in sincere and affectionate regard, thine own

JOSEPH.

Let me know, in return how you all are, my love. You will see by the enclosed that Mr. R. is coming, August 5th. Had I but a supply, I would have been with you once today, but I am precluded. The Lord send prosperity,

and turn the captivity of Zoar like the streams of the south. It grieves my soul that so it should be. The Lord restore our dear father, and bless you all, is the prayer of a poor worm. Give the enclosed to him, my Rose. God bless thee in very deed!

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*Lord's-day, Dec. 9th.*—Arose with these words in my mind, from which I spoke twice, “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Truly I must say that it was a solemn and soul-refreshing opportunity. Bless the Lord, O my soul. But my bodily strength and health really seemed going fast away after the morning, yet after many fears about it, in the evening, I was like a giant refreshed with new wine. Our collections through the day were good: thus, both in providence and grace, our dear Lord does appear to be favouring us very blessedly. At the close of the day, to-morrow being my wedding day, I was enabled so to commend myself and all my concerns to the Lord, and to leave all and every of my matters with him, as is my desire.

*Monday, Dec. 10th, 1849.*—This day commences a new epoch in my life. Being permitted to take my dearest, Rose to wife at Market Lavington Chapel. O when I look back upon the past, do I stand astonished at the Lord's great goodness and abounding mercy to such a worm! Everything at one time appeared to conspire against it: yet now God has granted me my heart's desire. May he not send leanness into my soul! I can only say, nothing hitherto but goodness and mercy have followed me, and I desire to be increasingly devoted to his praise. We bade the dear friends at Cheverell farewell, and came down to Trowbridge, and to my dear people. I said a little from the man in the iron cage of despair. A solemn searching time of it was. May the Lord own and bless the remarks made, and cause that fruit to his glory may be the result of it.

We have just read of a minister's wedding-day. It, like the whole of the wedding week, was worthy the man and the woman of God. No service of the Lord's house was set aside, or work of the church neglected. The subject of the evening lecture was not appropriate by any means! Yet coming in its course, it was taken, “and gone on with.” The jottings of this week are here added:—

*Tuesday.*—This afternoon, those words entered my heart, “I am the child of mercy.” The sweet and soul-melting view I had of the Lord's abounding

mercies to one of the least of all saints was immense. Oh, my soul could say, “All is well.” Lord I leave all my concerns in thy hand for time and for eternity. The way God has led me, fed me, and brought me thus far, is truly soul humbling. Thousands have neither the advantages, nor the blessings I have.

Three things I was led to look at especially, with my dear wife:—

1. We might have been houseless wanderers, destitute of home, food and friends. Or,
2. We might have had every natural comfort, and been destitute of the grace of God. Or,
3. We might have been in hell!

“O to grace, how great a debtor,  
Daily I’m constrained to be!  
May that grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to thee.”

*Wednesday.*—Was much struck at the display of Christ’s Godhead, while reading tonight about the poor mad Gadarene, out of whom he cast a legion of devils. And more especially where Jesus told him to go and tell what great things God had done for him, he went and told what great things *Jesus* had done for him. Yes, bless his name Christ is *God*: God over all, blessed for evermore, Amen.

*Thursday.*—Still unwell, therefore went nowhere until the evening, when I went to chapel. Head too bad to read much, but it cleared away a little just before preaching time, so that I had a little time for meditation. And all things considered had a pretty good time in preaching God’s word.

*Friday.*—Through God’s rich mercy, very much better. Received a letter from friend Cook, of Bath: a solemn, savoury, mighty letter. Went to drink tea at brother Purnell’s; returning home, spent with my dear wife a very comfortable evening. Read some of Cowper’s poems. And at the family altar had a very precious sense of Jesus’ love. My cup ran over. My soul was full, and the much goodness and mercy of God led me to repentance indeed. Blessed be the Lord my rock, who preserves, upholds and blesses me from day to day: and blessed be his holy name for ever and ever: and

let all countries, kindreds, kingdoms, and people, say Amen, for ever and ever.

*Saturday.*—Had on the whole a good day in private meditation, for the Lord gave me on my knees a portion of his holy word, and light into it, so that I had a good day in meditation. Bless the Lord, therefore, for all his manifold and great mercies.

*Lords-day, December 16, 1849.*—Had a very solemn and precious day to-day, in the ministry of God's word. The Lord own it and bless it for his name's sake.

*Monday.*—Nothing of consequence engaged me today, though very painful tidings from Cheltenham. Had a good time tonight in the ministry, among the people, or rather in lecturing from the Pilgrim's Progress, still going on with the man in the iron cage.

*Tuesday.*—Read part of dear old Whitfield's life, and although in some things could not feel to go to the lengths he did, yet cannot but desire to catch something of his spirit, and to be more and more alive in the things of God and truth. Attending to my school in the evening, finished the labours of the day.

*Wednesday.*—Went on with Whitfield's life in the morning, and also visited two friends, one of whom seems very near her journey's end, but as to her state I must leave, seeing that it does appear to be a difficult matter to get at it. Rode to Bradford this afternoon with dear wife, to see brother Hawkins. With him we spent a very comfortable afternoon, and I was prevailed on by him to stop and preach in the evening. Upon his asking me, those words dropped into my mind with some good degree of softness, "But by the grace of God, I am what I am." From this I preached in the evening with some good degree of power. We seemed to know each other, and the Lord follow it with his blessing. Came home with my dear wife in safety afterwards.

Now observe how the pastor finishes this year and enters on the first year of his domestic "settlement in life."

*Lords-day, December 30, 1849.*—Another year has nearly rolled oat and still in the land of the living; I am spared, and through the aboundings of rich and sovereign mercy have been kept and upheld through many afflictions, distresses, trials and sorrows, but bless the Lord, all has been right,

and I can say, “Nothing but goodness and mercy hath followed us all the year round.” Not one Sabbath have I been out of the pulpit. Bless the Lord, I trust there has not been one Sabbath day’s labour lost. All that has occurred also, I trust has been for the furtherance of the gospel.

I had anticipated a good day today, nor, through God’s rich blessing, was I disappointed; for I found matters very sweetly opened up to my soul, and a door of anointed utterance was given unto me, so that into precious and heavenly things my soul was favoured to find an entrance, and trust it was a “Cardiphonia,” sounds from the heart in very deed. The people seemed to have a good hearing, and our congregations were certainly good, especially for this time of the year. We had no good reason to complain, the good Lord be praised for his mercies, vouchsafe to sinners vile, yet coming freely as an act of his sovereign favour.

The Lord now be pleased to crown the labours of the day and of the year with his good blessing, granting that, fruit to his honour, praise and glory may be the result of it, for his name’s sake, Amen and amen.

*New Years-day, 1850.*—Solemn, solemn thoughts. Twelve months have again rolled onwards into a boundless, endless eternity:—a period marked by great and important changes nationally,—in the church,—and individually. And I would desire to sum up the epitome of God’s mercy and kindness towards unworthy me, in the words of one of old, “He hath not dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquities.” And do so I trust I may say, that, as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he given me at times a most blessed experience of removing my iniquities and my transgressions from me.

Several things I here desire to notice as connected with the past year 1849:—

1. My gracious recovery from illness, and my more extensive ministerial labours in London and elsewhere; proving the Lord’s tender care over me in preserving, and his great concern for me in providing for my many wants and necessities.

2. The grievous trial that I had in the illness of my dear Rose, and the many exercises I was the subject of in reference thereto; and how, after one night in special having agonized, wrestled, and pleaded with God upon the matter, he was pleased to settle it by giving me a solemn persuasion that she

would again come forth and be wholly recovered; and how my faith was most blessedly strengthened by those solemn words in Isaiah, “And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear.”

3. My leaving of Upavon, and the mysterious providence connected with my settlement at Trowbridge. This truly solemn and important movement I have found hitherto to be of the Lord, for he has blessed me; evident marks there are that his good work is going on, may he graciously hasten it for his name’s sake. Already have eight individuals been added unto the church, and, I trust, still further cause for gratitude will be seen in another addition to our numbers. The Lord grant that humility and child-like felt simplicity may be granted unto us in a very merciful and gracious measure.

4. The Lord’s gracious care of me when in the English cholera, in supporting and blessing my soul, and in again bringing me up from that low spot to testify of the good Lord’s gracious dealings with a poor worm, for the strengthening of his dear saints. And again in the summer, when down in the fever, in blessing me abundantly in my soul, in keeping me calm, quiet and resigned in the midst of all, and, at length, according to his own good word, bringing me forth again.

5. And in being a thousand times better to me than my fears, in many ways, and in leading me along very graciously;—so that, never in any one year of my life have I had so much continuous enjoyment in preaching God’s word to the people. Hence, in many instances, the consolations of a covenant God has been neither few nor small with me.

And last, though not least; in God’s list of mercies, my comfortable settlement in life, and my marriage with my dearest Rose. This circumstance I look upon as being one of the greatest of all blessings vouchsafed to me, next to my personal salvation. The Lord graciously crown with his blessing our union, and may we live in peace, fellow helpers of each other. And now what is my motto for the year? Bless the Lord he gave me one, and may he give me the power by his grace so to do, it is, “*He that winneth souls is wise.*” The dear Lord give me this wisdom, make me wise unto salvation, and keep me unto his kingdom and glory, for his dear Son’s sake, Amen and amen.

*January 1.*—From the words which I above spoke of I preached with some precious and solemn degree of power, at Little Zoar this evening, having



been staying at the house of my dear father-in-law, Mr. Sawyer, at Cheverell. There were very many people present, and certainly I cannot help but think God was with us. May the Lord make me wise to win souls, and keep me humble and little before him. After preaching this evening, I threw out a public challenge to the “latter day saints,” as they call themselves, to prove their system of things to be from God, and that I would meet them anywhere to oppose them by the word of truth, that armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. Blessed be God for his precious word of grace, even as revealed in the Bible, but more especially for my solemn realization of it, in felt and personal experience. This, and this only is ground to go upon: for, if, in reality I have Christ in my heart, and his word dwelling richly in my soul, all is and shall be well for life or death.

*Wednesday.*—Found a spirit of solemn wrestling with the dear Lord for his blessing. Wrote an account of last year’s proceedings in our church book, and drew out bills for father Sawyer. Had a sad conflict between flesh and spirit this evening, and found the uprisings of the man of sin to a great degree; and such a view had I of myself as would, methinks, smother free-will notions. But, blessed be God, I was not left without some intimation of the Lord’s goodness. The New Year’s text for my people was, “My times are in thy hands.” In the midst of all my conflicts, I trust I can say, “Thy visitations preserve my spirit.” The anxiously wished-for encouragements of a heaven-appointed pastor, are the evidences of souls added to the Lord, saints edified and walking in the truth, under the influence of love. The compiler indulges the hope that these pages will open up to many of the members of our churches, how the whole life of the minister is spent for their best interests, and incline their hearts to feel for them, earnestly pray to God on their behalf, and in all things help them in their momentous and precious employ. Here follow some things which helped forward the subject of these memoirs.

*Lord’s-day, January 6th, 1850.*—Through the aboundings of mercy was privileged with a good day at the commencement of the year. The Samaritan woman’s memorable history, occupied the morning, and also the afternoon. It was such a season as I hope will not readily nor soon be forgotten. The Sabbath school children received their new year’s gift this afternoon, when I addressed them upon the various characters of Christ, as declared in the words of eternal truth and veracity. A full attendance at the ordinance, and not an altogether vain or unprofitable opportunity, bless the Lord.

In the evening I had a solemn time from the words “And I, if I be lifted up will draw all unto me.” O bless the name of the Lord, for help and strength afforded in speaking forth the name and the fame of a precious Lord Jesus. I do desire to bless him, that, from time to time, he is so gracious and merciful unto me, a poor sinful worm of the earth, as I am. This encourages me to press on again, and to look to him for all needed mercies. Our collection was fair, and certainly great encouragement have we to go on in the might of the dear Lord.

*Monday.*—Felt of yesterday’s exertions very considerably, but am better everyhow than what I deserve. Visited a friend of ours who had been ill. Drank tea at ----- with my dear wife, going from thence to prayer meeting, where I had a good time, and our school-room crowded; returned to ----- where we spent a very comfortable hour, bless the Lord. From all evil may we be preserved to his kingdom and glory, for his name’s sake.

*Wednesday.*—Was very ill all day. I know not when I have been more ill than I was today. O for sanctified affliction. Was agreeably surprised by a visit from two of the female friends of the congregation, who came to bring my dearest wife a present from Miss Smith, the sister of one of my visitants; they came to bring her a very handsome present of two splendid pin cushions in rosewood and maple, highly polished. This I took as very kind. Some good savoury conversation ensued, upon the evidences of grace in the heart. After they had left, I took up Joseph Irons’ sermon on “faith as a substance,” and was much profited by his remarks. Closed the day in solemn prayer.

*Thursday.*—Passed through a most severe and trying night with my poor head. Wanted feelingly to say with the poet,

“Good when he gives, supremely good,  
And good when he denies!  
E’en crosses in his sovereign hand,  
Are blessings in disguise.”

This evening, two candidates were brought to me, (one of them had been an independent, but was now brought out, and must have the truth.) She said it was upwards of seven years since God opened her eyes from this text of Scripture, in an address delivered to the Sabbath school by Mr. Mann, “Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: *but know thou, that for all these things,*

*God will bring thee into judgment.*” These words fastened upon her mind, and though she attempted to get better, she grew worse for two years. She had hope once from these words which she opened upon, “I have blotted out as a cloud, thy sins, and as a thick cloud thy transgressions, return unto me, for I have redeemed thee;” but still this did not bring her into the enjoyment of peace. About a fortnight afterwards, as she was in chapel, the Lord revealed to her soul Christ crucified, who said to her, “Thy sins are forgiven thee,” which brought peace and joy into her soul. Since which time God has been leading her about in the wilderness, and, at times, speaking comfortably to her soul, while, at other times, she has been cast down.

She came to hear me first of all occasionally, but finding food to her soul, she was obliged to continue constantly among us, and now desires to be found in Zion’s paths.

Mrs. O. could not say when she first became concerned about her soul, so as to date it to any particular time; and hence, though it is above 20 years since she first began to seek the Lord, yet the reality of it is often questioned, because she cannot speak of this or that passage of Scripture, which others can. This portion, however, was applied to her mind, “The wind bloweth where it listeth,” &c. which was a great relief to her. Yet, dear soul, she bore some most blessed marks of being under the teachings and leadings of the Holy Ghost, which, certainly, was very satisfactory. God has made my ministry useful to her, and hence these things serve to encourage me to go on in the good old way of preaching Christ Jesus ALL IN ALL.

Went on this afternoon, with the continuation of my life and experience up to now. The Lord in his mercy, enable me to carry it on to a close, and if ever it should be published, to make it greatly useful.

This evening I had a person brought to see me, who desires to join us as a church. Her first impressions were received while witnessing a baptizing at a chapel in London. This led her to wish herself to be a Christian, &c. but ultimately it wore off, until she came to Trowbridge, unto a place of service, when she attended the Bible class of a \*lady at Back-st. Chapel in this town, where convictions deepened, and her distress of mind became very great. In this state she went on, advised to read, pray, &c. The Lord enabled her to pour out her soul before him, and he whispered into her heart, “Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:” So was she often raised to hope, until these words, “I love

them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me,” were blest to her deliverance from all fear.

\* Several ladies at Trowbridge have their Bible class, having around them young persons whom they teach, and to whom the Lord often blesses them. Can well informed females be better employed, than on the Lord’s day afternoon, gathering about them for the noblest purposes, such as the person who visited Mr. R. The lady referred to here, not only supplies her class with useful books, but mine also, and other schools. Men of God, in different parts, are helped forward by her beneficence. May the Lord greatly bless her efforts to his name, and richly reward her by making her an abundant blessing. And all over the country, let ladies, tradesmen’s wives, and others, imitate her.

At this stage of her experience, she wanted something experimental. This led her to hear the venerable Mr. Warburton, and eventually myself, where she is now settled. The good Lord make it further manifest, that she is one of his; and make the ministry of a worm, increasingly useful to saints and to sinners, for his name and mercy’s sake.

*Wednesday, April 10th*—Was engaged all day with plans for the chapel, but whether they will be needed, or not, I cannot say. May we be enabled to do all things for God’s glory.

*Thursday, April 11th*.—Plans for chapel, and, Hervey’s works occupied the fore part of the day. In reading the latter, the words fastened on my mind for the evening, “Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth,” &c., but I know not whenever I felt more discouraged than I did this evening, the leading men did appear so backwards. The Lord only knows how the matter will terminate, or what his purpose is concerning me. I had no reason to complain in reference to the attendance of the people, nor had I a barren season in my own soul; but still my mind sunk down, and I was considerably oppressed in feelings. Truly the words of my text was applicable to my own soul, the circumstance everyhow saying, “Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for whereof is he to be accounted?”

*Wednesday, May 22*.—Visited a place or two with Mr. Hawkins, and purchased Parkhurst’s Greek Lexicon, a very valuable work for Biblical students. Church meeting this evening, Miss Drinkwater gave in her testimony. Her mind was first impressed with the reality of Divine things, by opening the Bible upon the words, “Hell hath enlarged herself, and is moved to meet thee at thy coming,” which, together with an illness in

which she fell, caused many painful and distressing anxieties. From this illness she in measure recovered, and was going to enter the factory, when she was relieved from her distress, in measure, by the application of these words, "I the Lord will do it in his time." She was the subject of many temptations in the factory; and many were her fears as to her standing, but that God who watcheth over his people, and had given her a tender conscience, appeared for her help, and her mind was very much stayed at times upon him. Particularly, "What shall harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?" and,

"Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,  
And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song."

At another time when very much depressed she was much comforted with the words, "It shall not be found there " meaning sin, temptation, sorrow, &c., shall not be found in heaven. But the full deliverance from the whole was as follows. The time drew on for the dismissal of the scholars in the school where she was a scholar, and being about publicly to be dismissed and receive a Bible, her pride was very much raised, when as she received it the words sounded in her ears, "what if this Bible should rise up against you?" her distress was much, but the whole was removed shortly afterwards by an application of these words: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." She then came to hear me—she had, in her distress, it seems, wandered to every chapel in the town, but was ultimately constrained to attend with us. For in the midst of the anxiety she was in as to where she should attend, these words abode with her, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy steps." And these words decided the matter, "This is the way, walk ye in it." The Lord it seems has made my ministry an especial blessing to her soul, and when those words were fastened on the mind, "If ye love me keep my commandments."

*Friday.*—Proceeded with my Greek grammar. In the evening, a young man came to me, who dates his first impressions, from the sermon I preached on the words, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." From this time, he was compelled to leave his companions and frivolities, and seek the God of his salvation. These impressions were further deepened by hearing me preach the funeral sermon for Eliza Francis,—“For whether we live we live unto the Lord, or whether we die we die unto the Lord; living or dying, therefore, we are the Lord’s.” He sank very low under this, until he was relieved by the special application of, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all

ye ends of the earth.” Great encouragement was also received, from the words, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will no more remember thy sins,” and so he has gone on, and evidently the work is of the Lord. Thus my labours have not been in vain in the Lord.

Such incidents as these continuing, with the frequent occurrences of persons being obliged on the Lord’s-day afternoon to go away for the want of a seat or place in the chapel, together with the sanguine prospective of elated friends, who had been used, before his time, to see their little place but poorly attended, brought out the determination to enlarge; and, as usual, when once determined on, his whole soul went into it, but not without an eye and heart up unto the Lord. That our dear brother was led by the Lord, as well as by his friends, and was not too anxious to lead the Lord in this undertaking, his beloved wife and some of us were not so confident. But as souls were converted, believers were added, and room seemed to be wanted, we hoped it was well, and helped them. It is interesting to trace his part in this, and so small portions of his diary are laid before the reader:—

*Wednesday.*—Was engaged the early part of the day in reading Cowper’s poems, and in getting ready for our tea meeting, by preparing the new collecting cards. Our meeting was a very comfortable one. The total of collecting cards was £25. Our brother Hawkins, of Bradford, was with us, and a most encouraging, animating address he made, taking for his subject the decoration of the school-room. A friend had got some ever-greens, and had some stars set off with oranges, round a letter H standing over the fireplace; the oranges were to be kept for the scholars, &c. So when brother Hawkins began, he said he had been admiring, &c., and thinking about the letter H, and would accordingly notice five H’s in characters of our best friend, and four characteristics of his. The characters were Head, Husband, Heir, Hope, and Helper. The characteristics—Holy, Harmless, Humble, High. In reference to these he showed how *they all* were blessedly for us. The stars reminded him of the Morning Star, but ministers were stars also. He believed I was an *ever-green*, and a fruitful one too; but then, said he, my fruit was exotic, like the orange, fruit from another country. May his remarks long be remembered! After an anthem, “Worthy the Lamb,” I followed upon “Enoch’s walk with God,” and the question, “How can two walk together except they be agreed?” showing what agreement there was between God and the soul. After alluding to past circumstances, closed

with the doxology; and the friends separated highly delighted with the meeting.

In the succeeding week-days after we have recorded his labours at the chapel plans, preparing estimates, and so forth, and at length—

*April 19th.*—Finished the drawings of the chapel alterations, which, may Jehovah of his unspeakable mercy direct us and bless us in..... Having finished my work I walked over to Bradford to see brother Hawkins, and Mr. J. A. Jones, of Jireh Meeting, London; whose remarks I received with all affection, as coming from a father in Christ. One observation I wish to treasure up, “Never, saith he, try to spiritualize the precepts of God’s word. Nothing tends more to beget a wrong and perverted feeling in the hearer’s mind.” May God ever keep me from that baneful practice!

His company was good, and his remarks useful; and may they be remembered. He gave me Atkinson’s Reply to J. Cox’s “Grave question;” Mr. Robert Hall’s charge at a Minister’s Ordination; and Strictus’s Remarks upon Silver’s pamphlet; all good and valuable works. His text at parting was this, “With one hand they held the sword, while the other hand held the trowel.” I desire to imitate this. Returned to the Building Committee, whose operations now are suspended, until the sealed estimates are received.

*Saturday, April 20th*—Have had, through infinite mercy, a comfortable day, so far as the word dwelling on my mind, an entrance given into it in some degree.

*Monday, April 22nd.*—My dear wife being returned, I, with her, went to Bradford to spend the day. Found Mr. J. A. Jones, and Mr. Hawkins well; and in their company, with other ministers, the day passed away pleasantly; conversations arising, relative to Eternal Sonship, the Law, and the use of the word Duty. Some of those things I hope to sketch off. Heard Mr. Jones preach a blessed sermon from “The glorious gospel of the ever blessed God, committed to my trust.” 1 Timothy. 1: 11. The remarks were very weighty, and much calculated, under God, to be of real use and service to his saints. Through mercy arrived home in safety and in peace.

*Lord’s-day, June 2.*—(The last Lord’s-day in the little chapel.)—Arose early, but felt in a very poor state of mind, as to the day; this I begged earnestly of the Lord to remove, and at the six o’clock prayer meeting I

felt very much at home. After breakfast in the vestry, my beloved brother Hawkins, myself and the candidates, six in number, with the friends, proceeded to the water-side, where brother H. gave a very solemn and important address, to upwards of one thousand spectators, and in the presence of this large assembly I immersed, with much sacred pleasure, the candidates: all passed off well, and the Lord I trust was with us. Our morning service was crowded, as indeed were the services of the day. I received the candidates into the church in the afternoon, and throughout the day the Lord was very good to us.

*Monday, June 5.*—(Our last service in Little Bethel.) In company with my dear wife, went to friend Purnell's to dine. From thence went to church tea-meeting, where many brethren and sisters in Jesus met together, and some conversation ensued in reference to the law as a rule of life, and other matters, in which the time slipped away until our special prayer meeting began; when we held a very solemn service indeed. I gave out the hymn, "Pilgrims we are to Canaan bound," &c., and then read the 14th chapter of John. Brother-----then engaged in prayer, then followed the hymn commencing

"O my soul, what means this sadness?"

Brother -----then engaged in prayer; we sung also that hymn of Newton's,

"Though trouble assail and danger affright,

Brother-----prayed. I then gave out that sweet hymn—

"Sweet the name of Christ must be,  
From and to eternity,  
For it pleased the Father well,  
Fulness all in Christ should dwell!"

I then offered up a few remarks in reference to our change, as illustrative of "This is not our rest." As I went on, I found my heart to warm and my soul to expand, and the things of his kingdom to be precious. We then joined in singing the doxology, and having myself engaged in prayer, the last service in *little* Bethel Chapel closed, until we again enter upon it *enlarged* if the Lord will. May he help us in all things to look to and rest on him; and in all our sorrows and distresses look for his helping hand and delivering mercies. May he go out before us, and may he bring up the rearward, and also encompass us with mercies on every hand, for his great name's sake. Amen and amen.



## THE RE-OPENING.

*Monday, September 23rd.*—A busy morning this, in anticipation of to-morrow, and the weather seems quite unfavourable; however, my heart was unto the Lord that he would in infinite mercy do us good, by granting us everything very favourable to our undertaking. In the afternoon, brethren Bloomfield and Foreman came, and a pleasant, happy afternoon we had together. Our beloved brother Foreman endeared himself very greatly unto us in a very short time. Some most valuable remarks he made in our hearing.

*Tuesday, September 24th.*—Arose early, and looking out, found the weather quite propitious, for which I felt glad. Went to early morning prayer meeting; (for as we went out of the house in prayer, we entered on it in prayer,) and had a very good time of it. I trust it was a re-opening indeed. Soon after breakfast, many people from Devizes and elsewhere, began coming in, so that in the morning very many persons were assembled to hear our dear brother Foreman preach; and after a most comprehensive and truly solemn prayer, he gave out for his text, “And in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert:” And truly a solemn time it was. The whole of the chapter was ransacked, and a good, precious gospel sermon preached. May it be as the rain and as the dew. In the afternoon, our brother Bloomfield took for his text, “Because I live, ye shall live also and some good weighty remarks were made. About two hundred sat down to tea, and as most of it was given, something considerable was realized. In the evening, an amazing number of persons were assembled to hear our brother Foreman, who preached an enlarged sermon from these words, “The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.” Many precious things in height and depth, sprang up from these words, and some of the richest ideas I ever heard. An anecdote about prejudice, Jacob’s ladder, the value of the figure 1, &c., served to keep us all awake. Through God’s mercy our collections were excellent. We retired to rest at a very late hour, satisfied with the Lord’s mercies.

*Wednesday, September 25th.*—A good deal of conversation today with brother Foreman and many friends. This evening had a full house, and brother Foreman was very full. His text, “We preach Christ crucified.” An amazing time to my soul. Collected enough this evening to pay for the expenses of ministers, without touching upon our Tuesday’s collection. I am sure we had reason to sing, “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

This we joined in singing in the table-pew with full hearts to the Lord.

*Thursday, September 25th.*—Our dear friends Bloomfield and Foreman left us this morning for their homes, and again we returned to our quiet moving on. A very poor day afterwards, for with the fatigue and one thing and another, I was totally unfitted for anything.

*Friday, September 27th.*—Purchased this morning “Rollin’s Ancient History,” a good standard work. Called also on one or two friends to see what they would give me for the chapel, and met with very great success. Met this evening, to put matters together for the chapel, and found we had ninety pounds towards it. The Lord graciously increase it so as that we may move on clear and free.

*Saturday, September 25th.*—A poor day today in my study. Heard of the death of -----, another saint safely housed in glory. So many things today of a conflicting, harassing nature as quite unsettled me for study. Some parts of the word have been on my mind but no access. My soul is up unto the Lord: Communicate unto me of thy fulness. Thou hast this week been very propitious; Lord go on to be gracious, for thy name, mercy, and merit’s sake. Amen and amen.

*Lord’s-day, September 29th.*—The first Lord’s-day in our new chapel. And it was a good day. I preached in the morning from—“In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” Afternoon from—“Father, glorify thy name.” Evening, “I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which called thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.” It was a solemn and good day throughout.

In after-day, Mr. Rudman wrote in his history of this work thus:—

In the year 1850, every matter began to be settled, and the enlargement of the chapel was begun. In the meantime, we met for worship in the room commonly known as the ware-room in which Mr. John Warburton laboured when he first came to the town.

There we had many good seasons, and the hand of the Lord was manifest in gathering the people together. And most remarkable, before we left the room, I preached a funeral sermon in it, occasioned by the death of my

highly esteemed brother Mr. Eacott, the Baptist minister of Southwick, who was one of the very first to take Mr. Warburton by the hand when he came, and who voluntarily contributed to the cause, of that abundance wherewith God had furnished him.

Through abounding mercy our chapel was enlarged, and no accident or casualty occurred to any during the whole time it was in progress. We went out of it with solemn prayer, and we re-entered it with the same. My highly esteemed brother Mr. Foreman preaching morning and evening, and Mr. Bloomfield, of Cheltenham, in the afternoon. The day was good, and mercies crowned the whole.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### Leaves Trowbridge for Plymouth.

After so noble a beginning with the new chapel, it was very mortifying to have to proceed, as our brother did in the very next line of his history. He writes:—But we had hardly got into our new chapel before there was defection manifested by an old deacon, and another old member of the church. The point of complaint being, that I did not preach experimentally. And although when I came to Trowbridge, I suppose they would have carried me to heaven; and they could not pray without publicly thanking God, at the top of their voices, for sending me there, yet they soon began to turn their tale, and would then ask God to bless, *if* I was a servant of God's. The deacon left, and peace was in some measure restored.

I began to find, that my home was not to be Trowbridge. The congregations varied very much, and I perceived that my ministry was not received in the way I should like to have seen it received. Any new man at Zion Chapel would have a very great effect upon the congregation; so that at times my mind was very much cast down on account of it. In this way, time rolled on; and while supplying for two Lord's-days at Reading in May, 1851, my first-born was given me, whom I called Joseph, with every desire that God indeed would bless him and increase him.

Our first Anniversary came round, and we again were privileged with the labours of Mr Foreman; and Mr. J. Wells, of the Surrey Tabernacle, now came also. For myself I gained much spiritual edification and comfort, and shall never cease to bless the Lord for such watchmen upon the walls.

The Anniversary, however, had hardly closed, before my health began to sink, and that very much so. I became unfitted for any and everything; and, despite all the medical man could do for me, I felt myself sinking very very fast. I laboured under the fear of sudden death, and was anxious for a change, so as to be quite free and clear of Trowbridge, a place in which I had scarcely known what a day's health was.

While wondering, therefore, where a change was to come from, and how I could have it, I was very much surprised on receiving, in September, an invitation from the friends at Trinity Chapel, Plymouth, to supply them during the month of October. The surprise to me was great, it came well-timed, and I could see nothing in it but the hand of a covenant God, working deliverance for me. Although my health was so sadly when I left home, as almost to raise a question of my wisdom in undertaking so long a journey; yet I was mercifully carried thither in safety, and opened my commissions from Rom. v., two last verses.

I was exceedingly low the first week. I scarcely knew how to keep up; but however, the Lord was with me, my health began to increase wonderfully, and the word appeared to be running among the people, and the house became very crowded, with hearers, anxious, apparently, to hear the word of life.

As I had in other places, so here, I presented among the people my begging case for the chapel debt, and it was responded to very nobly by them; and the first month's end found me well-nigh recovered in every sense from my serious attack of illness.

At the end of the month, many pressing invitations were given me to stay the month of November. After writing home and making arrangements, &c., I consented to stay.

At the month's end, I returned home laden with the kindness of friends, and amazed at the goodness of a covenant God.

Some hints had been dropped with regard to my coming amongst them; which I could in no sense of the word entertain, because they were open

communionists, and I being a scriptural or Strict Baptist. Added to which, I thought it might be only *that* which was the passing thought of the moment with them, arising from enthusiastic promptings as to what they would like; and which, like many other things, I had seen in the religious world, would soon go out, and take no permanent form.

And I would say to all ministers, young men especially, Be careful how you receive such intimations from a people. Mr. *New-man* always was, and will ever be, a great preacher; and there are a certain class who cry up the man they never heard before, as a prodigy, worthy of ranking with the first and greatest preacher of the day, and they as soon get offended, as they were at the first easy to be pleased. I am thankful for that share of wisdom which has, more especially of late years, prevented my being led away with these things!

However, I had not been long returned to Trowbridge, before an invitation came from them, desiring me to come to Plymouth for six months, on probation. To this, after much prayer for direction, I returned the following answer:—

*To the Committee and Deacons of Trinity Chapel, York Street, Plymouth.*

Grace, mercy, peace, and blessing be multiplied, through God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

Brethren, beloved of the Lord, in all affectionate regard, and with the utmost respect to you, yet also as in the sight and fear of the Lord, I sit down to write to you, after much thought and many, many prayers for direction, to give you an answer to your truly weighty and important invitation.

Movements connected with the cause and interests of Zion, are at all times solemn, and especially as relating to the important matters of pastor and people. Motives must be weighed, direction must be sought, and honest conscience must be arbiter, as to all.

You are aware, my beloved friends, that I am a *strict*, or what I prefer better, a *scriptural* Baptist. The preaching and practice of John; the conduct of Jesus and his disciples; the commissions He gave to them, and the after-practice of the apostles, as recorded in the Acts, and confirmed in the Epistles, are so plain that all who are conversant with the New Testament, must, I think, be at a point, that preaching the gospel went first, believing in Jesus followed next, then the exhortation “*be baptized every one of you,*” being

followed by obedience, they were added to the church; and so continued in the apostles' doctrine, and church-order, and communion, and other acts of worship which were meet.

The Word of God is the expressed will of God, both as to doctrine and ordinances, and these portions of his word decide the case with me, "Ye shall not *add* unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye *diminish*, aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God;" "Ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left." Deuteronomy. 4: 2; 5: 32. "Teaching them to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you." Matthew. 28:19, 20. "If ye love me, *keep* my commandments," "And his commandments are not grievous." 1 John. 5: 3. "If any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall *take away* from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book." Revelation. 22: 18,19. These authoritative and solemn words, spread an awe over my mind, and brings me to the obvious conclusion, "Every word of God is right," and to exclaim with the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Psalm. 119: 133.

I must take the Word of God for my rule, and the practice of the apostles for my guide, and then, grace enabling, I cannot go wrong.

I bless my God I am his *free* man; not without rule, but under law to Christ. No *prejudice* sways me, nothing *earthly* induces me, and nothing I trust ever will, to *be or to do* aught that God's word will not sanction. Hence, beloved friends, I must conscientiously remain what I am, a Baptist, of and belonging to the same school of Peter, as recorded Acts 2; 10: 44, 48.

I view the ordinances of the Lord's supper and baptism as equal. The latter an individual act of the saint as a believer, constituting him a church member; the former the *collective* act of the whole church, as a believing and baptized church, showing forth the death of the Lord until he come. This is the *apostolic* order; if not, if any will show me, from the Word of God, to the contrary, I will cordially thank him, or them, from my very heart, and reform my practice therein; believing as I do, that we can give no greater proof of our love to Him who died for us and rose again, than to do his commandments, and be conformed to his will: 1 John 5: 2, 3. And if it be objected, brethren, that baptism is not necessary to salvation, in this I

agree; nor is the Lord's-supper; he who commanded the one did also the other; and baptism being the profession of life possessed, the supper is an institution setting forth how that life is maintained. Life must precede eating and drinking, and baptism is requisite to communion at the table, because *both* are visible acts. Neither of them, nor both of them, are qualifications for heaven; but both, based on *positive law*, (which is in every case authoritative) become suitable mediums for expressing our love to a dear Redeemer.

Now, my dear brethren, would you have me give up that which I solemnly believe, as in the sight of God to be right? Would you have me sacrifice conscience to *expediency*? and bring my neck under the galling yoke of *time-serving*? I am sure you would not. Honesty with poverty,—a crust with Christ, a room in the poor-house with a conscience void of offence, are preferable to thousands of silver and gold without it.

Far be it from me to be a dictator to *you*. I have no end to answer but truth, and my desire is never to have anything but a single eye to the glory of God, in all my movements. O brethren, to creep to his feet, and hide under his garment, to be taught of him, and to hear the words of his mouth, is a solemn and sacred place to be in; may it be our happy lot there to be, and there to abide!

It is the expressed opinions of our greatest Divines, that where there is a church which is open in its communion, who wishes the settlement of a scriptural Baptist among them, their course is to constitute themselves a close communion church; not by the exclusion of any members, but simply saying—all who are *in*, let them *stay* in; but all who seek to join us *hereafter*, must be baptized.—The understanding being mutual, that the minister be allowed and upheld in his position as a Baptist, that all who see and wish for baptism, be immersed upon a profession of their faith in Jesus, repentance towards God, and love to the saints. That order and godly discipline among the members be maintained, and that the church be constituted according to the order of inspired apostles, and the churches of the New Testament.

Such was the course followed by the church at March, Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, when they gave a call to Mr. F.; of the church at Willingham when they gave a call to Mr. John Stevens, June.; and lately of the church at Oxford, when they gave a call to Mr. W.

You with the church, my brethren at Trinity Chapel, will have to consider whether you will from now, *alter the constitution of your church*; not by breaking up old associations, but by pursuing the scriptural plan. Consult the Word, confer not with flesh and blood, but wait on the Lord for counsel and aid in this matter, and let me know the result, as early as you well can. If my way be not plain to the pastorate, yet as a supply I would serve you to the extent of my ability, by the help of the Lord.

Permit me to make one more observation; I do not think six months to be sufficient, even should I come; but it will be, my beloved brethren, for you to consider the propriety of altering your church-constitution, and let me know the decision you come to, and then other matters will fall in their due order.

Commending you to God, my dear brethren, and the Word of his grace, I remain with love to you, and the church meeting with you, yours affectionately in Jesus,

JOSEPH FIDLER RUDMAN.

*Ashton Street, Trowbridge,  
January 1st, 1852.*

In the meantime, I had determined upon leaving Trowbridge; although I knew not where my habitation might ultimately be fixed. I met with such little encouragement, my ministry seemed to meet with so little response; things become very unpleasant, through the lack of confidence shown by the leading men, and my health again began rapidly to sink; so that it seemed as though, what with insufficient salary, what I received from the church not amounting to more than £50 per annum, reckoning all deductions, and every thing; Trowbridge was no longer the place for me.

Many marvelled at my decision; they seemed to think it strange that so soon after the enlargement, I should leave the place in debt. But I felt myself fully justified, and quite warranted in my determination: for, first, I had nothing to do with the £140 of the debt, seeing it was upon the *old* chapel: second, the old chapel was in such a state of positive dilapidation, that something considerable must have been laid out upon it to make it at all fit for constant worship; and hence all that the repairs and renovation of the old chapel must have come to, is again to be deducted from the debt of the new chapel, which would reduce it again very considerably. Third, by my instrumentality upwards of £150 of debt were removed from it; all



which sum, the church and congregation were the better for. Fourth, having superintended and carried through the whole work myself, as well also as collected that sum, free of any expense to them, they were the better for all my labour and toil. Added to this, they have now a chapel capable of holding five hundred people, a good school-room, and vestry; and when I left, I left all in their possession, doing them no wrong, but leaving for my successor a place capable of supporting him. The debt being paid also by instalments, I conceive to be a great help to them, it being had from a society who cannot call in their money; so that they are continually getting out of debt. Thus much, however, and now I pass on.

Having received many kindnesses from the Leicester friends, I was resolved to send them word in reference to the Plymouth affair, that they might do as they like in regard to giving me a call; for I had no thought about Plymouth as my *home*; especially as the open-communion question stood in the way. I saw the field was great, and surrounded by a population of 120,000 persons, there was an important sphere; but the more I looked at the question of ordinances, the more improbable did it seem that I should labour there. This was the more confirmed when I received their answer to my letter, and I forwarded the following which I subjoin.

MY DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN IN JESUS,—Being out from home all the week, I did not see your letter until my return; my answer, of course is through you, dear brother, to the deacons, committee, and church of Trinity chapel. I would say to you each then, most solemnly, that I never can become the pastor of any church who are not strict-communionists; so as, that *after* the door is closed, baptism be the only way to the table of the Lord.

Beloved friends, the Table is not mine: were it so, all might come. It is the Lord's table, and while I am a free man, I am not free to give up my allegiance to Him. It is not obstinacy with me; it is principle. I ask for no unbaptized member to be excluded from the church, but simply alter the constitution of your church, after a scriptural pattern. I mean, my dear friends, nothing but love and hearty good will to every one who may conscientiously differ from me. I am no bigot: I wish to put on no drag, nor force any ordinance upon any; but I am a steward, and must be faithful; I am but a servant, and consequently *under orders*, and my *Master* is one who admits of no eye-servants, nor men-pleasers in his vineyard.

I am not, my beloved friends, to follow private feelings, popular opinions, recorded events of illustrious persons, friendship, what any may see, or not see, nor motive, nor impulses of the mind, nor religious affections, nor the practice of any religious body of people. I am to study and follow the laws of Christ: He is our statute-maker, and he is our guide.

I view brethren, *both* ordinances as outward. If a man or woman attend both, and yet be destitute of the saving grace of God in Christ, such an one is lost, if he or she die so. They confer no grace, inasmuch as both of them are but signs.

Now, dear brethren, I am not contending for *party*, but for *principle*. I belong to no association. I am led and bound by no human fetters; my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. I am the friend of every man on the ground of truth, and no further; and with me, the claims of God's Word are paramount to every other consideration. I love many of you in the Lord; my soul was watered in your midst; and I cannot labour where my conscience may be fettered, for this would be to cramp my energies, and make me barren in my soul.

If you will prove to me that any apostolic church was an open-communion church, I shall not scruple; but until this be done, I must beg in all affectionate regard to say, I cannot become the pastor of any church, who do not see it imperative that additions should be made to the church by baptism, and by baptism only. I could not expect God's blessing upon my labours, unless principle and discipline be maintained. If you cannot agree, brethren, to alter the constitution of your church, not by the exclusion of any members therefrom, but by becoming close-unionists, the matter is settled; I cannot say anything to your invitation; this I may say in love and in all affection.

It is for *you* to decide, therefore, whether there are those marks attending my ministrations, which would warrant you to conclude, that in the increased prosperity of the cause, the union and love of the Spirit manifested, sinners being converted, and God's people edified, and peace and concord reigning around, the change may be effected. Let any wonder at the change; it would be a change upon principle, and a change for a blessing. If, I say, you reaped the benefit, man may laugh, wonder, or scoff; but God would have the glory.

Now, let me say, I am not anxious for anything but the honour of a Triune God, and the profit of his people. I am not seeking proselytes, nor a name, nor a party, nor wealth, nor fame; no, nor in this matter, health: I seek not yours, but you; and let God ever be our Judge. It is better to know the want of bread, than to have the frown of our Father: and a sick bed with a clear conscience, is better than all health with guilt. I leave it, my brethren; weigh it seriously, scripturally, and prayerfully; you tell me in your kind invitation, that you are the same as when I left; brethren, *I* am the same: I put nothing *on* when I was with you, I took nothing *off*,—any good man is welcome to my pulpit, irrespective of name; but in the church, the case is altered.

My personal love to you all; grace and peace be with you. Let me have as early an answer as you well can, as I have other causes to give an answer to. I remain, dear brethren, most affectionately yours,

JOSEPH F. RUDMAN.

This letter, I felt convinced, must close up the matter. In saying this, I said all I could say to them.

It seemed to me that even should I come to Plymouth, I should have much to endure, and my mind be considerably and heavily burdened; so that in some respects, I shrunk from it, and would have shunned it; and being engaged in Leicester for February, I felt a determination to let the letter work its own way, without any further interference, or concern of mine.

But, I had hardly posted the letter to Plymouth, before some strange workings began to agitate my mind, in reference to going to Plymouth; and at the church-meeting give them my views, answer any questions, and put myself into personal communication with the church. I thought, what if God has opened this door to establish his truth, and gospel-order in that place! Am I right in suffering letters to be misrepresented, when a personal intercourse with the people may tend to set the matter at rest, and more clearly indicate the dealings and leadings of God with you therein? Impressed with this view of the case, I immediately wrote a hurried line to Mr. Foot, to say, that, God willing, I would be with them on Tuesday evening. This was on Monday, January 12th, and on Tuesday evening, the 13th, I safely reached Plymouth, and addressed a goodly company from those impressive words, Eph. 1., two last verses.

On Wednesday evening, I met the church, and re-viewed the whole question of baptism and communion, in all its bearings; and at its close, stated

to them my determination not to take them upon any other basis; and at the same time saying, that if they consented even, I could not say whether I could accept their offer.

At the close of my address, I retired to the vestry; and it did seem to me as though I should not be sorry if they said, *No*. It seemed such a mountain, if I accepted it, and I deemed to be just getting into trouble.

Opening my Bible upon Habakkuk, chap, 3., I was much struck with the solemnity of the position of the watch-tower; when my reverie was broken in upon by the deacon, who came to say, I had been *unanimously chosen the pastor of the church*. I addressed a few words to them in conclusion, and thus ended that evening, one of the most eventful of my little history. I preached on the Friday evening again, from Hebrews. 13: 20, 21, and on the Saturday returned to spend the last Saturday evening in Trowbridge.

On the Lord's-day, I gave notice of resigning my pastorate, and the following week found me in Leicester.

As may be supposed, when it was understood that I was about to leave and go to Plymouth, various rumours were afloat, some saying one thing and some another. At length, it began to assume some distinct shape on the cover of a periodical, and this I replied to.

Another question was propounded, through the same channel, but I took no notice of it. I had certainly something else to do. While at Leicester, I administered the ordinance of believer's baptism to two very dear children of the Lord, and a solemn and very impressive time it was. God was in our midst, and I believe manifested himself to us. We surrounded the table in the afternoon, and found it good to be there.

I know it is an ordinance God honours, and has honoured, and one which I feel persuaded he will increasingly honour us in the attendance upon.

I parted with my friends at Leicester with deep emotions of heart, not knowing what my future footsteps might be in reference to them; for as yet my journey to Plymouth wore nothing of an enthusiastic front upon it. I trembled inwardly, when I thought upon it. It was my prayer, night and day, that my poor feet might be guided right in the matter. It seemed, at times, as though I could see the hand of God in my removal, and then again as though it was all wrong, and I was wrong; and I wished something or other would arise to prevent. My feelings were of the most conflicting

kind, and in this state I returned to Cheverel, to bid adieu to my wife's friends, and speak once more at Upavon, the scene of my early labours in the Lord's vineyard. And when I had packed up my things, and every thing on the eve of departure, no text seemed so truly appropriate to my case as that of Paul's: "And now behold I go bound in my spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Acts. 20: 22-24. On Thursday. March 4th, 1852, we left Trowbridge in a snow storm, for Plymouth; casting myself upon the God of my life, to begin life anew with a new people; and hoping to find my God with me, and to prove him everything to my immortal soul, both in the work of the ministry publicly, and in my own soul privately.

I entered upon my work with those words of Paul, "Brethren pray for us." And truly did I feel the necessity for the prayers of the people, and that God would in mercy give me a praying people, to whom I might minister the bread of life.

Much, however, had to be done in reference to the matter of the church; *articles* had to be written, and with necessary rules to pass by the church, that our assembly might have the consistency of church-order. This was ultimately done, and peace reigned around; and something like *order* stood in our midst; but whether as a cloud or a rock I could not definitely say. Hence I was determined that I would not baptize any until I had been there fully three months, nor would I accept of the *pastorate* until I had been there for six months; and then, if I found that I could not stand my ground, and if they found themselves dissatisfied with the ministry of the word, then, upon their saying so, I would immediately leave.

At the end of six months, by the unanimous vote of the church, I was chosen pastor upon strict-communion principles, and thus three times over, the principle of close communion, as it is called at Plymouth;—but better, it is Bible order—was sanctioned by a vote of the whole church.

On June, we attended to the ordinance of believer's baptism for the first time in connection with Trinity Chapel, at Stonehouse; Ebenezer Baptist Chapel being kindly lent for the occasion. The Lord was with us in the ordinance; and in August we attended to it again; and in September we

attended to it at Pembroke-street Chapel, Devonport; having baptized in all thirty persons.

My heart was set on two more things, the getting a *baptistery in our own place*; and the settlement of the affairs of the chapel, so that the chapel might be vested in trustees, for the benefit of the church and congregation meeting there for ever.

Upon mooting, however, the putting it in *trust for ever, upon close communion principles*, some little stir took place in the church by a mere handful of persons, in order to hinder the same being done; and there is no doubt whatever but that, could they have carried the day, I must have left the church, and went elsewhere. This tried me severely, and sent me with many an errand to the Lord, and blessed be his holy name, he heard my prayer, and gave me strength in my soul; and the church carried my motion by an overwhelming majority. Hence the needful deeds were ordered to be executed.

We have now also a baptistery; which I opened on Tuesday evening, February 1st, 1853, by a discourse upon Matthew. 5: 19. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." The Lord was with us, and deep solemnity reigned around.

Thus far, then, I have brought down my little, yet eventful history, and would close in the language of one of old, "What hath God wrought!"

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LAST YEAR OF HIS MORTAL LIFE.

Our dear brother, as will have been seen from the previous pages, had long been ailing; and from serious illness, anxiously sought a change when at Trowbridge. The change seems to have done him good in more ways than one, as well as largely tended to serve the cause of God. His bereaved

widow, in her communication for the continuation of these Memoirs, writes thus:—"My dear husband, for the last year of his life, scarcely knew a day he was not the subject of pain and debility to a greater or less degree. For months before the last illness, he was unable to dress and undress himself after any extra fatigue. I was an eye witness to much,—though he kept a great deal of pain and suffering even from me. I have often been astonished to hear him preach so loud and strong, after so much weakness as I have felt sure he had suffered through the day. The people could seldom tell what his feelings were, while he stood before them. He would sometimes say; It is not my aim or intention they should know. I do not wish them to be thinking about me, and forget what I am preaching about. I would much rather keep all to myself. The Lord knows I need much ballast to keep me in my right place; then why should I be always complaining, since it is all for my good? I can truly say in my very soul, I feel as though I have nothing to live for, save it be for the work of the gospel ministry. I am quite unfitted for everything beside. May I be as swift in doing my Master's bidding, as is an arrow from a bow; the wind may oppose it, and it may have much to contend with from the air and the elements, yet on it goes towards the mark it was shot at. Nothing suits me so well when in my right mind, as serving the church of God, whom he hath purchased with his own blood. What, O what can be a greater, greater honour, than to spend and be spent for Jesus? Shall I, one whom the Lord has been so gracious unto, count my life dear unto myself; shall I scruple to use all my powers, and the whole faculties of my soul in the spreading abroad of his dear name and fame? O no! would that I could serve him more, and in a for better way and manner than I can or do." Thus would he answer me; (when knowing how unequal he was to do much which he undertook to do) I begged him to spare himself a little, fearing the consequence. In a letter which I received from him about this time, he said, "If any poor soul hath reason to adore and magnify the free, and unlimited favour of Jehovah it hath been myself O! when I look back a few short years, and mark the unlimited goodness of God towards *me*, poor, vile, black, guilty, polluted *me*."

"Astonished at the view, I'm lost  
In wonder, love, and praise."

In the midst of mighty labours, under dread sufferings, his daily cry up to his God, with death and eternity immediately before him, God honoured him in private in his own soul, and publicly among his people. But he had

great opposition, and in a manner peculiarly adapted to Plymouth, to estrange many from him. Dr. Hawker and Toplady were highly prized by him, and from many of his earnest Plymouth friends, he had learned of the great and savoury treasure, the former had been to them and the neighbourhood, and this had increased his estimation of the doctor's memory. It was, therefore, an artful trick of the arch-enemy to *pervert* a passing pulpit allusion of Mr. R. to the above honoured names; an allusion meant both honourable and affectionate, into a weapon of evil and discord. The baptistery was opened on Feb. 1; and on April 2, our brother writes in his diary:—In going out this afternoon, I saw a new bill headed, “Shortly will be published, a second edition of an address upon water-baptism, by Mr. L., as preached by Mr. J. F. Rudman; to which will be appended the inquisition in Plymouth, or an account of the church-meeting held in Trinity Chapel, March 23, when the supposed author of the pamphlet was excommunicated by Mr. J. F. Rudman; in which the characters of the Rev. Dr. Hawker and Rev. Augustus Toplady are cleared from the libels cast on them. By a lover of truth.”

I feel myself honored by this public attack. I considered that for my name to be associated in any way with the great ordinance of baptism, so as to be identified as its champion, is enough to make me say, fight on; but you fight not at me, but at God. On my return, had some very pleasant conversation with Mrs. Westlake on the best things: truly my heart felt warm.

Have been engaged this evening in study for the morrow. May it be a *good day*. Dear fellow, he needed “*a good day*.” And a *good day* he had. His entry is—

*Lord's day, April 3rd.*—Had a good time in the morning, from “The old store” and also a good time in the evening, both in the pulpit and at the table of the Lord. Though the evening was wet, a considerable number were present. It looks well, when a few drops of rain are not permitted to keep the people from the house of the Lord.

*Monday, April 4th.*—Felt very much debilitated from my labours of yesterday. In the afternoon had a visit from my medical man, who advised me to a considerable degree of quietness, even to giving up, if necessary. I know not what the Lord may intend by the weakness of my throat, but I do hope that if it be his will, I may continue my labours among the people. It calls for great searching of heart as to my motives and designs, and to an exercise of patience under the dispensation. The thought of silence makes



me shrink greatly; but the Lord knows best. My fears upon the point are manifold. Enemies would say. Aha! so would we have it. O Lord disappoint them I pray thee! O for faith, to leave it in my Father's hand.

The next entry is of matters very affecting, considering his charge, his foes, and his illness.

*Tuesday.*—Received this morning a demand from the managers of the North W. Bank, Trowbridge, for £89 68. with interest, the balance of a bill I put my hand to, conjointly with Mr.—for the enlargement of Bethel Chapel. This tried me not a little. I wrote to them, also to the Bethel Church, to B. and to E. calling upon them to stop proceedings therein.

Some answers from these distressed him. But he laid them before his best friend. No further application was made from the Bank, and the friend has since paid it. But it long tried our departed brother. A few days on, he still writes of this:—

*Wednesday.*—Heard nothing this morning fro' Trowbridge. Went to Mr. Babbs, at whose chapel the Anniversary of the Society for the Relief of Poor Saints was held; a very comfortable meeting. Have been reading Burnet's history of his own times. Allowances must be made for his being a bishop of the church of England, in what he says relative to many things; yet, I have no doubt, but, that upon many points, he differed as much with the high church, as *no* church party. My doctor has been this evening, and laid strict orders on me for rest. This matter I leave with the Lord. My desire is health and usefulness; and health *for* usefulness. O to be of service in his church, to live to his glory, honour, and praise! I cannot feel in my heart to give up; the people flock to hear, and I am helped to preach, and they profess to be profited. In this, I would say, the will of the Lord be done. Amen.

He could not suffer himself to lie by; and indeed the Lord blessed him and his labours from time to time. At the end of this month we read again of believers professing their glorious God and Saviour in his own honoured, yet man-despised ordinance. In his diary we read:—

*Tuesday, April. 26th.*—Arose this morning with the text upon my mind for the evening, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." Had a wrestling time with the Lord, as touching the evening service. I needed his holy arm, his great and saving grace, and the rich displays of his

increasing mercy and goodness. Blessed be his name, he was with me. I felt his mighty power, and his presence broke my heart, and yet animated my spirits. The service passed off blessedly; I baptized seven, and I trust fruit will redound to the glory of our God.

After these baptized were added to the church, he was to have been with us at Bradford, &c., early in May, but duty and affection prevented him seeing us. He wrote me a note, a part of which says—And now my dear brother, I am sorry to say, I must defer my visit, until I return from Nottingham and Lincoln. The reason is this, my dear—nay *our* dear, for I know he is a dear friend of yours,—I mean Mr. Roan, has lost, since I wrote, his eldest son, a nice, affectionate, and steady young man, to whom the Lord was gracious, and who was much attached to me; and they have *begged*, me to defer my journey until Wednesday, to bury him. In their afflicted state, I could not say nay, especially after the repeated acts of great kindness shown me by them from time to time. Pray then, overlook my not coming under such circumstances, for it has been a sacrifice of personal feeling to pass Cheverell, Devizes, and Bradford, after I had reckoned on intercourse with very dear friends. I am sure you can sympathize with the parents. One son, a week or two since, who had given them trouble, is gone to America; and the *stay* removed by death, for he was a true and constant help to them. But he is now happy. His soul was hanging upon Christ. Our affectionate regards to you each, and we can only say, were we at home in May and settled in June, nothing should content us but an *immediate* visit. But we hope, God willing, that it may be accomplished the first week in July: the fact is, our present abode is sold over our heads, so we *must turn out*, but the gentleman will kindly let us into the other house early in June.

Yours, dear brother, very affectionately in the Lord Jesus,

J. F. R.

The journey was taken by our brother; and in a noble mansion in the suburbs of Nottingham, he records some very interesting incidents as they daily occurred. Some of them here follow: *Saturday, May 14th, 1853.*—Have this day mercifully and safely arrived at ----- . I would now, therefore, take a retrospect of the Lord's mercies to me. After writing to my dear wife, on Thursday afternoon I went and saw my dear friend Mrs. Gimson, and returned to Mr. Norman's. Then went to Ebenezer Chapel, where, blessed be God, I found my soul very much at home in the declaration of truth. Many old friends appeared to be very glad to see me, as I was also

them. Spent an hour after service, socially at Mr. N's., in company with Br. P-----, and retired to rest, desirous that gratitude might fill my heart, where mercy had been so conspicuously displayed. Yesterday morning, arose at an early hour, and found a few moments with the Lord. But I want more heart, more of a devotional spirit, and more earnest outgoings of soul to him. I want a *closet* religion, not all prayer *in public*; but nearness and intercourse with God *in private*..... Realized this morning to my mind most vividly, the scene as described by John, where Jesus on the Sabbath-day made clay, and by that means restored sight to a blind man. The division among the Jews, the contrariety of their expressions of opinion, formed a picture in my own mind such as I very seldom realize. They all stood confessed to my imagination, interest, and conflicting passions depicted on every countenance, that index of the mind! Assertions followed by contradictions, and the whole followed by a display of enmity against Him who is Life and Health, and Peace, by ex-communication. Read a sermon of Mr. G. Murrell's, upon the Trinity, preached before an association of Baptist ministers in 1832. Dined with Mr. Samuels, a converted Jew, who is now supplying the pulpit at Peter's-lane. Found them very anxious that he should be settled among them. Had some serious conversation with Mrs. Gimson (with whom I drank tea), upon the point, as also Mr. P. and Mr. N. His remarks at the supper table upon the Christian's conflict were very savoury, and I must say I felt some desire that he might remain here. In a book-shop, met with a man who heard me, but who was a stranger: he said he was once travelling in the plaited straw way, and had a parcel of plait behind his gig, on the journey, and that going along, he was singing,—

“It is the Lord enthron'd in light,  
Whose claims are all divine;  
That has an undisputed right  
To govern me and mine.”

And, upon looking back, he discovered his plait was gone. However, he recovered it; though the circumstance in connection with the verse he was singing, was somewhat remarkable. Bidding all good bye, with many thanks for all favours, I got into the omnibus, which duly conveyed me to the station. Through goodness and mercy, we were permitted to arrive in safety, the journey being exceedingly pleasant, and the country with its rich pasture, arable, woodlands, wind-mills, spires, towers, and water-courses, looked delightful. Oh, how truly privileged is that man who can indeed make the most of two worlds,—this, and that which is to come. I

never seemed to awaken so much to the beauties of nature, and the delight-someness of the seasons as I have this. My eyes have drank in the beauties of budding, blooming nature, in lane and field, and hill and dale, as a thirsty man has drank in water. My ears, even now, in the calmness of the evening, are regaled with the sound of birds warbling forth their song; while some oxen are quietly grazing in the meadow under my window, and I am enjoying it greatly. What capacities has the mind of man for pleasures, which in this sense, leave no sting of sad reflection.

The carriage was waiting for me at the station, and I arrived at----- . It does appear to be-----aim to render me happy and comfortable. The Lord bless them, and return a thousand fold into their bosom.

My mind has been agitated with thoughts relative to the morrow. Lord, mercifully appear! Read the memoirs of the late truly great John Stevens. The extracts from the journal he kept, shows how deeply God abased him, in order that his pride might be restrained. I would gather instruction from all I read, and so turn it to account.

*Lord's-day, May 15th.*—A good day. Arose in the morning very early and proceeded with the study of my morning discourse. Felt my mind drawn out to the Lord that he would most mercifully bless me and bless my message to others. Read at breakfast-table some of John Stevens's letters, and found them very precious, suited, and edifying. He was no *ordinary* thinker, and hence much matter is contained in a very small compass. Preached in the morning at Nottingham. A good congregation. A very striking difference in numbers compared with what I saw ten months ago. But I find that the devil and carnal men like the doctrines of grace as little at Nottingham as they do at Plymouth, for on the wall, in a thoroughfare leading to the chapel, I saw written up, "No Calvinism!" They might as well have written up "There is no God," as that. I was much helped this morning from 1 John 1: 9. I trust fruit may be found to the glory of God. Returned to -----, and after dinner, spent the afternoon in solitude. A chapel full of people in the evening, and some observations made upon 1 Corinthians. 15: 1, 2. The day seems upon the whole to have been a good day; I trust it will be further evidenced. I closed the day by reading a little in the life of Lady Huntingdon, whose first serious impressions appear to have been received when, nine years of age, by seeing a funeral. The Lord grant that as another Sabbath-day is now gone, his mercy may surround my steps in the coming week. Amen.

*Monday, May 16th.*—Arose this morning, early for Monday, and found myself quite as well as might be expected after the labours of yesterday. For this I would desire to be very thankful. O that my health may indeed be recruited, if thereby poor sinners may be blessed. This and this alone is truly worth living for. Reading at intervals, “The Life and Times of Lady H.,” an extraordinary woman, and so were the men and the times. Perhaps no part of our history has been less understood than that. The Lord, however, reigned then, and he reigns now. Felt a desire today that -----and --- -----might hear well. Why should I be more solicitous for them than others—than for the honour of my God? The Lord ever keep me from trying to please any, either in prayer or preaching. How sacred, O God, is thy honour, and thou art a jealous God. O what a heart is mine! Never perhaps, did I feel myself more an unprofitable servant than I have today. O that I could live to purpose indeed! Went for a walk into the greenhouses and gardens. All nature smiles. Is it not God smiling through nature? Who designed the blade of grass, the spreading tree, and running brook? Who gave form, and beauty, and order, and colouring to the myriads of flowers? It was God: his mind pervades the whole, and evidences a skill and a care, and a majesty and a dominion which is without a parallel; for it is Divine. Some conversation with------. In hearing an anecdote, its end flashed on my mind before it was half way through. Why? Here one may enter upon the vast and surprising properties of mind. But I am thankful for a mind. O that it were consecrated indeed, and that all my faculties might be spent to the honour and glory of God. *Such is my very inmost desire.* My soul longs, yea, even feints for this; and then the water, the oil, and the blood. Lord apply it, for thy much mercy’s sake. Amen and amen.

*Tuesday, May 17th.*—Wrote this morning to Mr. Dwelley and my good friend Greenslade; and then devoted some considerable time to my evening subject, 2 Corinthians. 4: 7. Was favoured by the Lord with some considerable help in meditation. Dined at the house, and then returned to my room, and began a letter to Mr. Grigg. In the evening, went to Nottingham, where I was much helped to preach the word of truth to the people. A large company of persons gathered together, and I trust some good was done through the name of Him who is great and lifted up. Returned home in safety and in peace. My cry now is, Lord, follow thy word with thy blessing. Heard from my dear wife. They were all well. Found by a letter from Mr. Foot, that they heard well on Lord’s-day. Glad to find it is so. The Lord be gracious unto them.

Wednesday, 18tA—Went on with “Life and Times of Lady H.” A most apostolic woman, who minded not the shame attendant upon a profession of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Wrote to my dearest Rose, and to Westlake, Grigg, and Roan, with Mr. Foot. Studied for the evening, and had some light into the words recorded, Ezekiel. 3: 12. Met this afternoon a large party at -----, when some good spiritual conversation came out. Some discussion upon the millennium. I opposed the *natural* view of things. I take it to be spiritual. I cannot reconcile, nor bring together in any way, the fleshly view which some take of it. I am for a *present* Christ, and for those things which bring honour to my redeeming Lord and Master, which I cannot see the other does. Discussed 1 Corinthians. 15: 2. Query, Would that not militate against the perseverance of the saints? No: for all Scripture is, and necessary must be, consistent with itself. All sciences proceed upon some *fixed* laws, certain principles which govern the whole; rules based upon fundamental principles: and so here. Unconditional salvation, in election, redemption, and calling; then my memory cannot be a *condition*. But if we notice that by a forgetfulness of what *was* gospel, they might, as the Galatian Church, imbibe error, then by minding what is gospel, they would be saved from errors, and the consequent sorrow and trouble connected therewith. Some reference was then had to the different covenants spoken of in the word of God,—moral, ceremonial, gospel; and how necessary to distinguish between thing and thing.

Question: Need any one bring anything to Jesus Christ; or is it necessary to be persuaded that we love him in order to come to him? I answer, *No*. Empty vessels are taken to the fountain; and a client, if he knows and can manage, has no necessity for asking advice; nor unless a man be sick will the advice and medicine of the doctor be acceptable. We carry nothing *to* God; we go for something *from* God.

Evening service very comfortable; good attendance. Some good savoury conversation afterwards upon judgment and justification. Mr.-----joined us afterwards; with him I had some conversation upon his state—full of quibbles and quirks. He seemed to carry the practice of the law into the premises of the gospel. Thus ended a day which I trust will have its bearings upon the eternal destiny of many.

And now it is my time for reflection. Have I not sought too much human applause? Have I been *too* forward? Have I been too much seen and heard? Self mingles with our best, and pollutes and stains it. Pride will mingle with our expressions of humility, until the very feelings arising are

loathsome to an infinite degree. Lord, cleanse my spotted, my polluted soul. Wash me in the Redeemer's blood, and make me and keep me with a single eye to thy glory alone. Blessed be God for a knowledge of Satan's devices! that he cannot befool and bewitch us with his flatteries and deceptions! O for more light and knowledge as connected with the cross and gospel of our redeeming Lord; and for such a close and practical walk with God, as, in every sense of the word, shall exhibit the reality of the religion professed, to the glory of that grace which made us to seek his name.

*Thursday, May 19th*—Wrote this morning to Pearce and Goddard, enclosed with a line to Mary. After conversation with-----, I went and took a walk by the side of the Trent. A grove of trees shades the walk for a considerable distance from -----towards Nottingham, which lay just before us, with its chimneys, mills, churches, and other buildings. The hills to the left, and the valley, with the river, made a landscape of surpassing beauty. If I mistake not, here it was Kirk White composed some of his poems. Received a letter from Pearce, saying he was comfortable, and so on. Wrote a letter to Miss Foot, for whom I entertain a most sincere regard. The Lord water my soul, and bless every attempt made to spread abroad a savour of the name of Christ. Amen.

*Friday, 20th.*—Began a pastoral letter to the church at Plymouth. Felt great necessity for the Lord to lead me into what I should say to them, that it may tend to their real comfort and consolation. Wrote to my dear wife, and enclosed to her the letter I wrote to Miss Foot. Received a most pressing invitation from Leicester to stay a night and preach, which I negatived. Studied for evening; subject, 2 Cor. iv. 1. Had an enlarged time. Broke off for dinner. A blessed walk this afternoon, for I walked in company with my redeeming Lord. O his precious name, his holy sacred person, his faithful word, his redeeming work how truly blessed! So I felt it, though I have been much exercised. I can only look to the rock from whence I was hewn, and the hole of the pit from which I was digged; and wonder amidst it all, that my state is as it is. At tea, ——read us some letters from a Mrs. B----, who, with her husband and children, attended by a nurse and nurse-maid, were travelling from Glasgow to Manchester; when within a very little distance of the latter place, an accident occurred which terminated in the death of two children, one of seven, and the other five, and of the nurse; with severe bruising and hurts to both Mrs. and Mr. B-----. What rendered it remarkable was, that in the house opposite where the accident happened, they used to reside. While there, one of their children, eight months

old, was being danced by the butler, when he let the child fall upon the stone floor, which hurt its head so sadly as to occasion its death. Upon which Mrs. B-----would return to Glasgow, and now before the *old* door, two more children and their nurse are killed. Fred, and George were singing the Psalm. 23<sup>rd</sup>, when the accident occurred. And O to hear how the Lord blessed her, how he supported her mind was astonishing indeed! His mercy was much more than a match for all; and his decrees and purposes, so greatly established her mind as that she was not permitted to look at second causes once. I felt indescribably under the letters. The dear children snatched away, and gone thus, was a stroke so painful, and the allusions to it so touching, as hardly to allow me to contain myself as a husband and a father.

The evening passed off comfortably. A dear woman, Miss C-----was obliged to tell me that she believed from her soul that the sermons of Wednesday evening and this evening, were entirely for her. The Lord be praised for his tenderness, mercy, and loving-kindness, which have been ever of old.

*Saturday, 21st.*—A close and severe morning's work upon 2 Cor. ii. 12: "Christ's gospel." At dinner table, met with a Church of England school-master, with whom I had a controversy in reference to the Establishment. But I increasingly dislike controversy; it has often a very pernicious tendency. Received a nice spiritual letter from brother Westlake. Went on with my studies.

And now, touching the coming day. Lord, I need thy powerful presence. O go with me, and make the message life and power. Communicate of thy goodness, and grant unto me thy grace. O hasten thy kingdom. O convert from the error of their ways many, many precious souls, and build up thy people on their most holy faith, to the glory of thy great and holy name.

Amen, and amen.

*Lord's-day, May 22nd.*—A good time in meditation before chapel, started for Nottingham, and was informed on the road that I might not expect so many people to hear, from the fact that a highly popular Church clergyman was going to preach in the town. However, the chapel was fuller today than last Sunday, and I had an enlarged time----quite carried away by my subject; and then felt accursed pride spring up. This I hated, and called myself a thousand fools for it before I left the pulpit. Rather dull afternoon: read



some of Berridge's letters, and should not have felt surprise at being shut up in the evening. However, the Lord was with me, and I should hope good had been done.

*Monday, May 23rd.*—Very low this morning. Had a letter from Br. Pearce, Mary, and Mr. Greenslade. It appears Trowbridge people are determined to make me pay some of their debt. Various conflicting emotions have taken possession of my breast. Good Lord, appear for me. Sent a letter to the church of which the following is a copy:—

To the church of Christ Jesus, meeting at Trinity Chapel, Plymouth, their willing servant, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD,—

Jehovah, is both rock and resting place to his people, for having loved them with an everlasting love, and having predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, he is sure, in due time, to bring them from every other thing to his footstool, and from every other creature unto himself.

Lines of infinite love are drawn, by which all Divine operations are guided, in reference to redemption, preservation, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glory. There is no work at random, nor any mistake, mischance, or uncertainty. Salvation is as sovereign as it is free; and as eternal as it is full and complete. it is based upon the oath of the Covenanters, those Holy Ones and Watchers. Jesus is salvation. He finished the work. He added the full perfection of accomplishment to the great plan of redeeming love to the praise of the glory of his grace. His condescension could never stoop lower, the displays of his power could never rise higher. Justice had its rights, while mercy secured its objects by blotting out every sin in blood; giving justice its satisfaction in suffering, blow for blow, stripe for stripe, burning for burning; setting Jesus in the sinner's place, and then bruising him, and putting him to shame, until the majesty of the eternal throne having been vindicated, God cries, "It is enough," as Jesus exclaims, "It is finished and here death dies, and root and fruit perish for ever. Christ thus becomes the living fountain of life by his death; of peace by his blood; of perfection by his righteousness; of holiness by his grace; of living water by his word and Spirit; and of a full, free, and eternal salvation, by his death and resurrection.

Those then, who are interested in so great salvation, are made alive to God, and are called unto the fellowship of saints. They are united together, first to him, and in him, and then to each other. The body mystical becomes the body visible. The subject of union would lead us to speak of eternal union, the union of Christ with his people from all eternity. This provided for their every need in time, and their entrance, at length, upon glory's full possession.

In this view, we are members of his body, and however weak and helpless of ourselves, yet we are connected with the fountain. For as surely as a branch derives life, and nourishment, and support from the root, so do we derive life, nourishment, and support from Christ. And as every member, though at the extremity of the body, is interested in, and receives benefit from the head; so every poor and needy sinner amidst all he may feel, or all he may fear, is personally and eternally interested in Christ Jesus; so that there is no condemnation, nor can there be any execution, for no life can be taken away, where no sentence but acquittal can be pronounced.

And what can the law have more, or say more, than it has had from, and said unto Christ our Redeemer? He is our propitiation and peace, and arrayed in his righteousness, we are just with God. Nor is he less our sanctification. Never expect to find in yourself what is only treasured up in him. Think of yourselves very meanly, but still trust in the Lord wholly. You will find your all in him, but it is an experimental findings and not a notional. Christ crucified is meat and medicine. To know him is our prayer, to live upon him is our life, and to glory in him is our joy.

As a church, my prayer to God for you is, that grace, mercy, and peace may be yours individually and collectively. Mercy flows from grace, and peace from both. And inward peace leads to outward peace. I mean in a church state. For when the conscience is purged, and the soul is cleansed and healed, by the blood of the Lamb, the saint is in a healthy, meek, and humbled state. Strife and contention are hateful, and he endeavours to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Pride is the root of bitterness, while true humility is real blessedness. The Lord, in tender mercy, make us and keep us humble, prayerful, and watchful.

It does appear to me that the whole scope of Bible doctrines, precepts, examples, and warnings, is to produce and conduce to the real unity of saints. *Practically so.* Having one heart and one way in serving God, so in love serving each other. The day is dark, our hearts are evil, our adversary is

busy, many watch for our halting, we cannot keep ourselves, power belongeth unto God, may his word be our directory, his good Spirit our guide, and his arm our support. Amen.

My love to you each in the Lord. My health is improving, and mercy is surrounding me on every hand. Pray for me, as the Lord shall help you, that he would bless me indeed.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory; to God only wise, be honour and power, both now and for ever, Amen. I remain, dear Brethren and Sisters, in the Lord, your very affectionate Pastor, and willing servant.

May 1853.

J. F. R.

After dinner visited the Emblem, a room fraught with instruction, and full of information to the spiritual mind. Tried the effect of steel upon the compass, and observed how much it was influenced thereby. Just so my heart, how frequently attracted hither and thither! but I bless God, that having been once touched, it cannot but return to its cardinal point, love.

Was very much exercised this evening about the matter of the bill at Trowbridge. I felt a strange medley of things, in which rebellion, and anger against the people were very prominent; *yet* did, and do still desire, submissively to cast every care upon my God, who has hitherto wonderfully and most mercifully succoured and saved me. It is nothing with him to help, and I know that power belongeth unto him.

Heard this evening from sister Sarah. My dearest partner and child I find are well. The Lord take me home to them in safety and peace. Found that the minister at Lincoln would not publish me at his chapel. The Lord make bare his arm there and grant that many may have reason to rejoice in his tender mercies, which have been ever of old.

Wrote this evening to Miss Body, Mrs. Gimson, and Mr. Foreman. Time is hastening, eternity is approaching, and what is my hope, or the ground of my expectancy, but the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen and amen.

*Tuesday, May 24th* —Wrote to Mr. Foot, Mr. Emery, and my dear wife. Finished the Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon. A most interesting work. Sat down then to the study of my evening discourse: Hebrews. 2: 3. “ So great salvation.” Had some enlargement in the study of it. It is great indeed.

The Lord communicate unto me much of his Spirit's divine teaching, and gracious help.

A good time to night at Nottingham. Very many persons present, and, I hope, some good done, through preaching "So great salvation." The Lord follow it with his blessing. It is an unspeakable mercy to know him who is true, and to be found in him who is true. This is the true God and eternal life.

Having had much enlargement to night, I feel the need for grace to keep me humble. "*The heart uplift,*" and yet I would not have it so. O no; I would be humbled at his footstool.

Returned with-----, and went over, by way of comment, part of Eph. i. and Eph. iii., in reference to Paul's prayer for the church. Closed the day by reading 1 Corinthians. 10., and the last days of Mr. A. Hervey, the author of the "Sherwood Gipsy," a most interesting work. He died in the house I am now in, and his sister waits upon me like a mother.

*Wednesday, May 25th.*—Have been reading D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation in England, a savoury and most interesting work. Have been engaged also in looking a little at my evening discourse from Num. x. 29. O that my gracious and heavenly Friend may be with me! Pondered upon the many changes of my life, and to think I should be called by grace, and put into the ministry! I had no one to send me out when I went, no one to encourage me, and yet my God stood by me, and he has never left me, no, not for a moment. His mercy has held me in life, and blessed me in being, and here I am a monument of sovereign and distinguishing grace and mercy. O that I could feel my debtorship more, and live daily upon my God! I long for his appearing. I long to have and hold communion with God. He knows my desires and prayers, and (O the mercy!) he can hear, help and save.

Have this evening finished my labours at -----, by speaking of the Christian's journey to a better land. The Lord in the bowels of his compassion cause that many who heard it may be spiritually refreshed by it. Oh! if souls are blessed! O if poor and needy sinners are brought to a knowledge of the truth, how very very great would be the mercy thereof. In looking forward to another journey, to go further in the vineyard, to see what may befall me, I am in his hands. Let me not be carried away by folly, nor let

my heart be lifted up in pride; but O may my soul live to thy glory. Amen and Amen.

*Thursday, May 26th*—Finished D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation in England, down to the time when Cromwell was rising into power and favour with the king, and just before his marriage with Anne Boleyn, when Cranmer was introduced to the king by Fox and Gardiner. It is a very beautiful composition. Burnett is more diffuse, and hard, and consequently dry. Though I doubt not but that it is of great use to any historian who may take the pains to write a history of the period.

That Henry was an ambitious, cruel man, no one can doubt, but that his advances to Anne were not respectful; and that she did not receive them honourably, and virtuously, no one but a catholic bishop, priest, or bigot could doubt.

*Monday, May 30th*.—A refreshing night: bless the Lord, O my soul. Morning very wet and gloomy. Packed up my things, and after a cordial farewell, came to the railway station, and was very soon on my way to London..... London, at last, is reached in safety, through the Lord's abounding mercy, and here I am in my dear friend Foreman's dining-room, nicely refreshed after my journey, and with a letter from my dearest Rose to say she is better. The Lord most mercifully preserve me, and grant unto me the teachings and leadings of his Spirit for his name's sake. Received a visit from my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Foot, found that home things were going on comfortably. Had a very comfortable evening with Mr. Foreman, especially on that text, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Particularly upon *taketh*, and upon east and west, not being measurable, there being no poles. There were many things which came up which had a most important bearing, upon salvation by grace.

During his short stay he records a walk in London, saying—

*Tuesday, May 30th*.—Mr. Foreman starting early to an anniversary, I arose with him. Afterwards went to Hyde Park, and saw the evolutions of the soldiers on parade. A pleasing sight in peace, but a fearful one in war. Observed among the pensioners one man who had six medals. He seems to have escaped unhurt. Who can tell what he must have gone through, the sights he must have seen, and the blood which must have been shed in connection with so many battles of which those medals were the trophies? Determined upon walking through Oxford-street, to where I was going.

Struck with the different styles of houses, and then with the difference in decorative art to captivate the eye in purchasing. Bought “Tooke’s Roman History,” 3 vols. quarto, having an eye to the time when my dear boy may grow up to read them. Struck with the hurry of every one I met, except certain lazy fellows, who with short pipe in mouth, the general sign of a sot, were marching about with their hands in their pockets, and their elbows out. This feature of business is seen particularly in Cheapside and in the Exchange. All are intent upon something. Some looked pleased, some angry, *but all earnest*. This is a remarkable feature in London life, and you hardly ever see any recognitions. London Bridge seemed all a stir. There a perpetual stream flows onwards to the City, and ebbs back again in a living tide into the Borough. Old St. Sepulchre Church, on this end, and the Monument the other end, are places fraught with great and lively interest. I go back to some who, in ancient times blew the gospel trump sweetly within those walls. And O, the times of the fire! Such times of persecution, of distress, and tribulation, may we never experience again! Visited Chambers, dined together.....Returned to Paddington Green. Conversation with Mr. Foreman relative to various parts of the Word of God. The three-score valiant men, as emblematical of gospel ministers, and his bed, not the *church’s* bed, but *his* bed, and the persons referred to in the preceding verse, viz. “Who is this coming up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke,” &c., to refer immediately to Christ, and not to the church. The observations of a man of weight and experience in the word and work of God, are a great value to a young man.

After this we find him at home. Yes, after an important journey, giving several precious visits, he returns with renewed strength, and the manner of his reception by his beloved friends at Plymouth, renews and strengthens his affection for them, their God and his work.

*Lord’s-day, June 5th.* —Another Lord’s-day has opened upon me in a gracious measure of health and of strength, and I have been permitted to stand up again before my people. They seemed glad to see me, and I felt a pleasure in again speaking to them of the things of God and truth. A most solemn time in the evening at the Ordinance, the Lord shone into my soul most graciously, I felt too full to speak another word. O that fruit may be found therefrom to the honour and glory of God..... it was cheering to see him better, and the instant in the elasticity of faith and love, rising in gratitude to the Giver of “health and strength;” but it is only for the day—the

day he penned it, the next, and the next, he complains of dullness, illness, weakness, &c.. On the third day after this coming *home*, he writes:

*Wednesday 8th.*—Another day is passed away to myself, very gloomy and unsatisfactory. So little life and energy felt in anything, or for anything. I want to live to purpose, and that purpose as connected with the honour and glory of God. Every day is to me a day lost when it stands unconnected with something done for souls, and as relating to the great objects of my ministry. I have felt such a reluctance of late to reading works of our old authors. I can scarcely account for it. I want my mind enriched and enlarged, and I know they are men of mind, yet I do not seem to sit down and digest their works. O to feel this sluggishness removed, which is so great a trial unto me. I have no thought of ministers sinking down into laziness, or supineness; I want my ministry to be thoughtful, intelligent, full, earnest, and informing. That I may not blunder on, nor pass quietly down the stream, but by constancy, and labour, and prayer, commend myself, by the blessing of my God, to his people. If I am maintained by a people, I am accountable for my time. I am theirs to serve in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and for his sake.....

*Thursday, 9th.*—Was visited by Mr. G—, who wished me to accompany him to the agricultural show; but which, from principle, I declined, as giving occasion for people to open their mouths in reference thereto. As far as the show itself is concerned, and the agricultural implements, produce, &c., I could go; but the many things with which it is connected would quite prohibit my being found among it. I would not do a thing which the world may have occasion to take exception to, much less a poor humble believer in His name. They may not have intelligence, but they have faith and grace; and I am more particularly desirable that nothing may arise, or occur, which may give any occasion for enemies to blaspheme. Hence I declined my dear friend's offer, with many thanks, for I do care what I may be thought of..... The dear wife, and self, went for a walk to the Hoe. It looking very beautiful, with its prospect of sea beyond; and certainly to a mind well-tuned, every thing may well afford him matter for praise.

*Friday, 10th.*—Pursued my reading through Samuel, and very blessed are many things contained in it. Marked off some portions, which I may take up as texts, the Lord enabling me. Felt some solid satisfaction in the thought that I was in the hand of my God. Had some enlargement in studying Ephesians. 2: 5, and would bless the Lord that salvation is indeed, by sovereign grace, from first to last.....

*Saturday, 11th.*—Engaged with much enlargement upon 1 Samuel. 15: 29. I trust the ideas may become permanently fixed, and in the labours of the morrow be of some service. Much exercised about Trowbridge affair. The Lord is my only hope: and O what a hope is the Lord, my God, unto me! My soul wait thou upon God, he is thy help and thy shield. The Lord keep me in a waiting and patient posture; keep me humble, and watchful, and prayerful, which I know I cannot be without him. My mind up to the Lord in reference to the dear people of my charge. O for a good day on the coming day; poor sinners quickened, and his saints edified, and built up in their most holy faith. May we live together in real peace and comfort of the Holy Ghost, and so be multiplied and abundantly blessed. Amen and Amen.

On the last Tuesday in June, our dear brother baptized again, when six more believers put on the Lord in that ordinance of Heaven's appointment. But he suffers greatly, and jots down thus:—

*Lord's-day, July 10th, 1853.*—"A day of pain and weakness in preaching, and I, although helped in it, closed the day discontented; for nothing seemed done to purpose. It is a mercy to be conscious of singleness of aim in the things of God..... His goodness endureth for ever, his tender mercies are over all his works. Praise ye Lord." The following day finds him in Wiltshire, where he sees his old doctor, who gave him encouragement, and medicinal preparations, and instructions which much benefited him. Our mutual friend, Mr. Pearce, Baptist minister, of Hilperton, Wilts., being at Ebrington Chapel, lodged with him, by his and Mrs. R.'s kind request, and his society, and the consequent relaxation from his studies, which it caused our afflicted brother, with his frequent walks with his friend in the air, all tended, under the Lord's goodness, to a little restoration. At this time, however, a sad stroke came upon them, which he thus records—

*Lord's-day, Aug. 7th.*—We were just preparing for chapel this morning, when news came of the death of our dear father. This very much tried us, but through abounding mercy we found our strength equal to our day. The subject this morning, embracing Job. v. was suited to our occasion of sorrow..... May the present stroke be sanctified for His great name's sake.

The following week over, he reviews his painful journey saying:—After a week of care, toil, and anxiety, I now sit down to note retrospectively the circumstances of it. *Monday* morning, started by train for Wilts, and the good hand of our God upon us—we were mercifully preserved to our



journey's end. It was a mournful meeting, and a sorrowful greeting; my heart was in my mouth.....*Tuesday* afternoon we followed the remains of dear father to the grave..... *Saturday*, returned home—the people uniformly kind—would raise my glad and grateful Ebenezer. But I have felt so worldly, so calculating, and so carnal. O for a closer walk! O for more heavenly mindedness! O for more grace in exercise! I bless my God for the fountain, and would rejoice in Him who is the resurrection and the life.

Deeply humbled in soul, the following day we read as follows:—"After a very restless night, arose thankful to the God of my salvation for every mercy bestowed upon me. I know I am most unworthy, and of myself insufficient for everything spiritual.....Feeling as I have to day, both outward and inward weakness, my mercy is to have God, the rock, under whose shadow my soul sweetly rests. Hearing my friend Greenslade talk today of his exercises, and conflict, and deliverances, I am confounded at myself. I seem to know nothing, and am nothing but a poor sinner. The work of the ministry, alas! is a mighty work. Daily I feel my insufficiency. O how often must I crave the indulgence of a *merciful God*..... I would be useful in my day and generation, and then lie down and part worlds. "And now, O Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee."

But he is afterwards favoured to stand, solemnly and satisfactorily, as upon that Divine and glorious 'Rock;' and in closing this, to him, very particular month, August, he says:—"My mind this morning has gone back over many years, especially to this time eight years, and this time six years, and again to this time five years. Eight years ago I began preaching in the name of the Lord the truths of God. How solemn the remembrance! How varied the emotions of my mind, in looking back upon the experience of those eight years! The memory become crowded with incidents; and while some are pleasing, many are painful to a great degree, and become blended together in a strange kind of melancholy. Six years ago, I buried my dear mother. She died in the faith and hope of the gospel. Her days were spent, many of them in grief and sorrow, but she is now for ever at rest. O could we penetrate the scene, and behold her casting her blood-bought crown at the feet of the Redeemer, how unspeakable would be the joy. One day I shall know even as I am known. Five years ago, I met the second time with Mr. Sawyer. Then I became acquainted with her who is now my dearest wife, and now in this very same month, that dear father is consigned to the tomb. This is indeed a month to be remembered, and sitting down in the

cool of the morning, and a Sabbath-day, with all its associations crowded on me, I seem like a bottle wanting vent.

So he seemed to number off, again and again, his days, weeks and months, which to him were indeed now to be very, very few. How did he prize the spending them in the fear and blessing of God. Does my reader?

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## CHAPTER IX.

### CONCLUSION OP THE LAST YEAR OF HIS MORTAL LIFE.

During portions of August and September, the compiler had intimate personal knowledge of our dear departed friend, and very much gratified he was. Directed by medical advice to seek a resting place on the sea-coast, a previous acquaintance inclined us to prefer the enlightened society of Plymouth, with the salubrious air of Devonshire. At the time of our arrival, his people were holding a church-meeting; but at the railway station there was brother R. waiting to conduct us to his pleasant abode. He was partially recovering from a severe attack of his disease, yet still had a cough and ulcerated throat; but he was exceedingly lively, and rejoiced at the cordial friendship of his people and others towards us. He was painfully affected at first, with the appearance which the nervous affection of the brain gave his visitor, as he told him afterward, when he saw it subdued. It would show the kind of position Mr. R. occupied, were it proper to give an account of friends who drew around us their several circles, and every day drew us forth to their superb scenery, to their magnificent sea, their break-water, and their affectionate homes. And with them, equally, did my beloved friends, the minister of Portland Villas Chapel and his lady, *daily* unite in enlightened Christian intercourse and hospitality, peculiarly adapted then to their fugitive seeker of health. And with these, the minister of Ebrington Chapel, noble by grace and blood too, and others by their intimacy and brotherly kindness, all conspired to edify and comfort us. So were we pleasantly assured that our brother's deportment in his life and ministry had continued the friendship of the great and honourable in the best sense of the words. Adhering to medical directions, I refused invitations to preach, and therefore had opportunity to observe. My malady

leading me to the most retired seat, I had the whole of the congregation before me, with our brother at the head of them. The first Lord's day was that, the record of which closed the last chapter. Scarcely was a sitting unoccupied. And though the chapel is not so large or handsome as some Baptist chapels in the neighbourhood Mr. R. had left, yet it is a very excellent and commodious one, and being full, under such a ministry, much affected me. When our late dear brother, rather tall, stood up, and with his fine, manly voice poured out his soul in the utmost fluency, without hurry, and dilated on, to use his own familiar expressions, the precious themes of the everlasting covenant, dateless purposes of love, the glorious person, work, triumphs, glories, reign, and grace gushing from the heart of Jesus, as developed by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit as Holy Comforter, and reflected in their fruits—it was indeed blessed. Most seemed to be rivetted in attention, and at times many tears were shed. I had once and again, through reports, feared his being led away by the effect of such popular applause, to the giving up the ancient order of God's house; and it was not until I saw the minutes on the church book, and the draft of the deed agreed to by the church, that I fully understood his position. I returned home, admiring the grace of God in him, and in the belief, that, if his Master spared his life and usefulness a few years longer, that it would be apparent to every one, how great things God had done by him, and that his hottest enemy would be obliged to see that it *was* the Lord's doing. With the hope of being so spared, weakly as he was, he invites our well beloved brother, Mr. John Foreman, of Mount Zion Chapel, Dorset-square, London, to engage in his Ordination; and intended from that date to take steps for an annuity for Mrs. R. The former was done just in time to die, the latter, we are sorry to say, he could not accomplish.

Having been engaged during the previous week at several harvest thanksgiving services, and preaching thereat to the admiration of many hearers at Kingskerswell, Aveton Giffard, Denbury; and in the same week of his ordination at Lustleigh, he returned home on Tuesday to baptize for the last time in his own baptistery. Of this important service he wrote—the Lord helped us through. Mercy was manifested, and room given for a fresh song. On Wednesday again, with friends he is off for Bigbury, to preach twice. Thursday he returns, and meets Mr. Foreman. Of the next day, it is written:—

*Friday.*—Very poorly to day. Heard our good brother very comfortably in the evening from, “Then called I upon the name of the Lord.” I was sunk

very low. My health did appear so sadly, and I felt so tried with it, that I knew not what to be at—felt rebellious, and uprisings in my heart. The Lord forgive my sin. The prayer and sermon were suited: a good attendance. On Saturday, still very poorly: the next entry is:----

*Lord's-day, 25th.*—Married a couple this morning at Trinity. Mr. Foreman preached this morning from, "Against such there is no law and in the evening from, "That your faith and hope might be in God." Two sterling sermons, full of gospel matter. I preached in the afternoon from Matthew. 11: 28. The Lord make the services of the day a glory and a lasting blessing. We were very full, and, I trust, above all else, God was there. Thus prepared for the important day, it is entered on, and the account of it is this:—

*Tuesday, 27 th.*—This day to me, was a very important day, through the engagements which in an especial way came upon me, in my Ordination over the people here in the Lord. I felt it a very solemn and important occasion, on many considerations. Mr. Foreman read in the Epistle of Paul to Titus, as containing his warrant for the services of the day. He then stated the nature of a gospel church, from the words, "The church which is in thy house;" remarking that the church was not a building, nor a national assembly; showing who they were, for what a church was intended, and the officers, and ordinances contained in it, and to be observed by it. The church is composed of spiritual persons, met for the worship of God, for prayer, for praise, and preaching; that sinners may be called, and saints edified. The ordinances are two, and the offices are two. He then asked me for my call by grace—then to the ministry—then as to my coming here, and the doctrines I hoped to maintain and defend. Which answered, the church was asked to show their hands as to unanimous call, and myself as to perfect acceptance; and the deacons gave me the right hand of fellowship, on the part of the church. And thus closed the morning service. In the afternoon, Mr. F. gave the charge from "For the work of the ministry;" showing what the ministry was, and what its ultimate design. He preached to the church in the evening, from 1 Thessalonians. 5: 28: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." The services of the day, were, I trust, eminently calculated for usefulness, and I pray God much fruit may redound to his honour and glory.

His Ordination over, weak as he is, on he goes, a workman intent on labour in the Lord's vineyard. Of the very next day it is written:—

*Sept. 28th.*—Brother Foreman and I hastened to the railway station, and each started for our respective destinations; he for Bradford in Wilts, to preach for brother Hawkins, and I for Laddeswell, where I had engaged to preach in the afternoon and evening. This I was enabled mercifully to accomplish, and trust that my feeble attempts were not in vain. We were exceedingly well attended, and much of the presence of the Lord seemed to be enjoyed.

The following day he rose early, as he was engaged to preach twice at Newton Abbot, where he says:—

Was helped to preach the word of truth, as with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The next day was Friday, on which night, as well as Tuesdays, he had a weekly lecture. Hence he writes:—

*Friday, 30th.*—Through His mercy, who is the sinner's only help, was permitted to reach home in safety, and found my dear wife poorly..... Two years ago to night, I stood for the first time in the pulpit at Trinity. Oh for more heart in my work! May my soul live in it, and the Lord extend my usefulness on every side. I should dread the ministry as a mere profession—a matter of mere pounds and pence. No, let my soul live it, and let my soul hang upon her God for every needed supply of covenant mercy and grace for it. I preached tonight from, “None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which God hath given me.” They just spoke what I felt, and what my soul really desired, as from the Lord. The congregation was exceedingly good, and I abundantly blessed. *His time is drawing near*, but he takes another long journey, and of it says:—

*Tuesday, Oct. 4.th.*—In company with Miss Bigwood, went to the railway station, but was much annoyed on my journey up, by two angry disputants upon the relative excellencies of free will and free grace. Poor things, I felt disgusted that the mysteries of our most holy religion should be thus cast down, before many who were quite laughing and making fun of the whole, especially as they were light and frivolous persons; at one time a grave debate, and then laughing as though it was all a joke.

On his arrival at Chippenham, the branch-train was gone, which should have taken them to Melksham, where Mr. Joseph Sawyer was to have met his brother-in-law, with a conveyance. But not coming by the train, no other way was expected. It was raining heavily; so, hiring a chaise for the

seven miles to Melksham, and then a fly the remaining nine miles, they arrived at their journey's end. He was to preach that night at Cheverel, but was only in time to see them leave the house of prayer. The next day, Wednesday, weather still unfavourable, he gets to Upavon Anniversary, at which he baptizes in the Avon. After this, the entry is:—

*Thursday, 6th.*—Began to feel very poorly today—a sad cold evidently upon me.

Friday finds him at Bradford, and sorry we were to see him so ill. Yet he bore up wonderfully. We all thought he could not remain in the body. On Saturday morning I put him in the train at Trowbridge, never expecting to see him again on earth. Of this day he records:—

*Saturday 8th.*—O what a day of pain and debility! I travelled home I hardly know how. The Lord sustained me however, blessed be his name, and brought me here in safety once more into the bosom of my family, and hence I would raise my Ebenezer to his praise.

*Lord's-day, 9th.*—Very ill, yet managed to preach twice, though more fit, by far, to be in bed. I did feel, in very deed, seriously ill, and how to continue the effort of preaching, I did not know. The Lord, however, helped me through; with what results, the day will declare it.

This was his *last labour* in the Lord's vineyard. Mrs. Rudman says:—

After preaching, he retired to bed, not to rest, for he passed a distressed night. On the following day, we sent for a physician, and the means used were in a measure blest, so that he partially recovered; but very soon he began to grow worse again, when the doctor advised a change of air. Acting on the advice of Doctor Morgan, he went into the neighbourhood of Torquay, and while there, saw another eminent physician; who told us, he must not expect to preach again for two years, if so soon as that. This was a severe trial to him, and many and painful were the exercises of his mind in reference to it; but he was in an especial manner, blest with patience and resignation to the Divine will. It is truly said, we must live with persons to know them, and this testimony from the beloved widow, will tell upon the foes of our departed brother, I hope, to their mercy. Who is there that considers the mysterious afflictions so heavily upon him, but feels toward Mr. Rudman, in accordance with the great reformer:—"Who am I?" exclaimed Luther, on witnessing the un murmuring patience of one of the worthies of

his day, under the endurance of intense physical agony—"who am I, a wordy preacher, in comparison of this great doer?" Although he was so ill, it was with reluctance he entirely laid by. "This only," said he, "with the hope the rest may conduce to my quicker recovery, that I listen to you, if I thought I should not recover, I would continue to preach till I died." Having laid by all one week, he entered on the first silent Lord's-day, the following memorandum. *And it is the last he entered in his diary.*

*Lord's-day Evening, October 16th, 1853.*—I would tonight take a retrospect of the week. I would look back and sing of mercy and of judgment:

*Monday.*—I was so exceedingly ill as greatly to fear the worst; and as to soul-concerns, while I had no bright shinings, I could anchor upon God's free mercy, and call upon his name according to his promise. That promise stayed my soul; and the consideration, that a soul who had religion enough to pray had religion enough for heaven; for cry sprang from life, and life from love according to that. "Also when I passed by thee, thy time was a time of *love*, and I said unto thee, *live*." I had also some profitable meditation upon, "Our Lord is one, and his name one and hence, in some humble measure, my mind was occupied with Divine things. Dr. Morgan is my medical adviser. I am now trying homoeopathy, and I must say its treatment and operation have commended itself very greatly to my understanding and judgment. And here, without noting every day, it may suffice to say that great and deep have been the searchings of heart in reference to myself, my motives, my doctrine, and my preaching. I would remark that I have been very much confirmed in the doctrine of the Trinity, by Paul's conversion and by Peter's vision. I never saw the Godhead of Christ, nor the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost plainer nor more distinct, as an absolute doctrine of revelation than I did then. I shall have to bless God for this affliction, doubtless. I have felt the sacred reality of the doctrines I preach to others. I shall have no cause to speak less of my God nor of them. He has mercifully attempered things for me. He has done everything right, though contrary to my will, and I pray for continual submission thereto. My friends have been uniformly kind: the Lord bless them indeed. Brother Turner preaches for me today; he is heard well, and the Lord be praised. The Lord soon restore his dust, and sanctify every stroke of the rod, to the glory of his name and my good. Amen, and amen.

Mr. Rudman felt his affliction as an *affliction*, as his inspired brother of old did, "not joyous but grievous;" and feeling for another dear one, he tried to comfort her. "He said to me," writes Mrs. R-----, "This is a painful

and trying situation for us; but our God is all sufficient. He can and does sustain in the hour of deepest strait. He knows what is best for us. If health was best for me, he would grant it. Then—

‘Why should I complain of want or distress,  
Temptation or pain, he told me no less;  
His way was much rougher and darker than mine,  
Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?’

“Our Jesus suffered,” he continued, from the hidings of his Father’s face, and we must know something of being baptized with the same baptism, and to drink of the same bitter cup of sorrow and woe, but, blessed be God, the sufferings came first—the *consolation* afterwards. The Lord gave me grace to bear patiently all his will concerning me. I am not yet arrived where I can live without God’s grace, or yet without begging. No, no, nor ever shall till I reach home to praise, honour, and adore his great and glorious name. And with me it may be soon. Life ebbs fast away, and this mortal body must soon be put off, and truly a blessed exchange it will be. My dear wife, you are still in the wilderness—expect to meet with hardness, but forget not the promise, “My strength is made perfect in weakness, my grace is sufficient for thee.”

The day before the last entry, as quoted above, was written, Mr. R. wrote to Mr. Foreman, of London, a valuable letter. So beautiful too is the handwriting, I should have been pleased to have it lithographed.. A copy of the contents of this letter will exhibit the nature of our brother’s mind, and its state, at this part of his illness. It is as follows:—

2, *Endsleigh Place, Plymouth, Oct. 14th, 1853.*

MY HONOURED AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Your letter containing news of hopeful import in relation to dear Mrs. F., was gladly received, and its news welcomed by us personally, and by many more beside; and I hope, ere now, under the blessing of our God upon the means, she is past the worst, and recovery fast progressing.

As for myself *I am a prisoner*. This is the first attempt at writing for a week. The fact is, I got wet through at Wiltshire last Tuesday, where I had to go on family concerns, and had to be in my wet clothes, boots, etc., some hours after, without a change. It brought on fever, and heightened the complaint in my throat, until it has assumed its most alarming form, chronic inflammation of the windpipe, with decay of the larynx. I am under a most



able and kind physician, not allowed any stimulant, nor conversation, nor preaching. Indeed you may judge of my debility when I tell you, I have only been able to get to my study for a few hours in the after part of the day, and with such weakness as to cause me to fear the worst as to time, and the employments associated with the sanctuary.

*Oct. 15th, 1853*—You will see, my dear brother, that I began this yesterday; but from sheer weakness was quite unable to proceed. I trust, however, that I am somewhat better today. I do not anticipate being able to preach at all for some little time to come. This is trying:—to me, very so; but the Lord will do all his pleasure. I have been enabled here to test motives and principles of action, and examine the grounds of things. I have viewed passed circumstances in the light of eternity, and formed my judgment, both of men and measures, as a dying man. I have been over my poor preaching, and the doctrines attempted to be preached, and I feel no disposition to give up an atom of what I have seen, heard, handled, and declared unto the people. There are no human systems, nor creeds, to which a man can subscribe his hand in those solemn circumstances in which I have been placed. A man cannot be brought into near proximity with death and eternity, without some sober exercises of mind; and I am at a point more than ever, that if the doctrines as preached and maintained, well, I will say by you, are not true, a sinner has no substantial hope for eternity. You have years and much experience of truth, and I have had many afflictions, and I have been brought to weigh-up things, and come to books; but I bless God, if I am spared to come out of this affliction, I shall have no occasion to speak less of my God, nor of the doctrines of his grace than heretofore. My mind is at a point, and that centres in Christ, as Alpha and Omega, as first and as last. He is to me a foundation and a fountain, a pillar and a spring. Light, life, and love, shall quicken, enlighten and sustain, till this mortal shall put on immortality. I do not feel it to be improbable that though you began years before me, your voice may proclaim Jesus long after mine is silent in the grave. My course has been a merciful one, its end will not be worse than its beginning. I have loved his work on earth, I shall not love it less in heaven. The service will be song, the subject Jesus still, and I shall see him as he is. I know my work is allotted, and my days are numbered, ‘all my appointed days will I wait till my change come.’ This has tried our dear friends, it has tried me, and not a little. But his sovereign goodness has disposed of all for good. Our tenderest regards to Mrs. Foreman, our love to you in the lord; While I remain, dear and beloved friend and brother, yours most affectionately in Christ,

J. F. R.

Ten days after the last entry in his diary, he wrote the following note to a friend he had visited the previous May, and stood engaged to preach again for in December. He now begins to feel he is to preach no more, while at other times he could not so believe.

MY DEAR MADAM,—A series of afflictions have fallen to my lot since last I wrote to you. I lost my dear father-in-law suddenly. Upon the back of that, my dear child was taken ill, and given up by two doctors, but God blessed the means made use of by the third, and he recovered. My dear wife was also ill, and now I am apparently, without a great change, on the borders of the tomb myself. I had been ailing ever since I left your-----in May; I took cold in London, and my throat has given me increasing uneasiness. But three weeks ago I took fresh cold, through getting wet, and ever since I have been under the doctor's hands, quite a prisoner, unable to engage in anything—a decayed larynx, and decided marks of consumption, and general decay. I am about to try the neighbourhood of Torquay for a change, but my excessive debility renders it an effort to take riding exercise, however gentle. This I regret to say will prevent my reaching you in December. I had looked forward to it with much pleasure, but without an alteration, I shall never preach again; the Lord can raise me up again I know, but from every symptom I have had but little hope of such an issue. I have proved Him faithful who has promised. When unable to exercise myself in any matter, I have not been without hope, and a measure of confidence in God. Pardon my saying more now, for it pains me to write. The Lord bless your-----, and dear-----, with every blessing, is the prayer of, dear madam, your affectionate servant in Christ,

J. F. R.

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It was when on the visit named in the foregoing letter, that he penned the succeeding one to a beloved intimate brother and friend, the corresponding deacon.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—I trust I may say that I am today somewhat mended in my general health, which I attribute to a milk diet. But I am sorry to say my throat shows no signs as yet of improvement. In this, however, the will of the Lord must rule. It is very afflictive and trying, but He knows for *what* and *how long*. My Christian love to every friend. Much I think of and at times, much I pray for them. If I am restored, God can

bless my labors; if I am removed, God can maintain his cause without me. God is not dependent on his creatures. He is under no obligation to me for serving him. Where so much needs pardon the obligation is on the side of the pardoned, and not on the pardoner. Hence grace, as a theme, will last for ever. I do hope you are all well. Our united love to Mrs. Foot, and S. and E.

I must leave you to determine about a supply for Lord's-day week. I have no thought that I shall be able to preach even once by that time. The Lord direct rightly, and cause every matter to subserve his own glory. Commending you to God, and the word of his grace; I remain, &c.

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My dear husband getting worse suddenly, we returned to Plymouth in all haste. Then the friends at Trinity, and myself, continues our bereaved sister, in her communication referred to before, "became anxious he should have further advice, and called in another physician, but all to no purpose: he rapidly grew worse." While conversing with a friend about this time, he said: "I cannot think my work is done in the Lord's vineyard, or I should not feel that strong desire still to preach the gospel. I feel as much delight in it as ever." A few weeks before his death, he said to a friend, who was then supplying his pulpit, on his return from the chapel on a Friday evening, "My good brother how did you get on this evening?" He replied, "Tolerable, through mercy." To this he said, "I had thought of telling you before you went, if you had no text, to go and tell my friends at Trinity, 'Grace be with you, and peace from God our Father.' The answer was, "These are the very words I have been attempting to speak from; and I told them, I believed it was your prayer for them, and theirs for yourself." On hearing which, he became greatly affected, and said, "Yes, yes."

Having found Mrs. Gimson, of Leicester, a valuable friend, a very mother, he addressed her as such, and here follows a note to her, descriptive yet further of his disease.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I am still a prisoner, not having been out of my house, but to a cab, since I wrote: My disease is Laryngitis, a most formidable disease of the throat; my throat has been as raw as beef, and full of ulcers; nor can we get them to heal, and this has been the case for weeks, and is now. My bed-room, and sitting-room is on the same landing, by doctor's orders, with fires in each to keep up even temperature. I am gone to a skeleton; all my bones stick out. I have such night sweats, that my dear

wife is obliged to have another bed in the same room. I am a prisoner for the winter, no doubt, God only knowing what the spring may bring forth. However, he reigns, and he loves, and he is my hope and confidence, and the lifter up of my head. All is right between God and my soul. The Christ of God is suited, and I trust the Holy Ghost has led me to know him as God. Now I cannot write more. Our love to you God, prosper Ebenezer, shine on your soul, and give you peace, prays yours affectionately,

J. F. R.

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His affection for the people of his charge was very great. They were much on his mind. He said, "I should have liked to have seen *all* that called to enquire after me, but as the doctor said it was of the greatest importance I should be kept quiet, I thought it best to try all possible means; but that proving of no avail, I am now too weak to see them any more below, but not too weak to bear them on my heart to the throne of God."

Mrs. R. seeing death so near, she suffered herself to say to him, "I fear, my dear, it is not the Lord's will to raise you up from this affliction: oh, how shall we be able to bear the separation?" He was moved to tears, and for a time quite overcome, hiding his face in his handkerchief. After a few moments silence, he looked up, and calmly, but faintly, said, the Lord gave me to you, and he has a right to take me from you. My dearest wife, I know it will be a heavy trial to you to be left behind in this world of sin and sorrow. Many trials, I fear, await you when my head is laid low, but I trust the Lord will be your friend. Repose your whole confidence in him. You know he has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow. With him I leave you, and my dear child. "May he grow up to be a comfort to you." He then gave some little directions about his funeral, &c..

At a subsequent day, his affectionate wife asked him if he still had that strong desire to be restored again, and to preach, which he had expressed to a friend a little time before? his reply was, "I have scarcely any desire in the matter. If any difference, I wish to live a little longer, but I seem to have no will of my own. I can truly say from soul feeling—'Father, thy will be done.' If he sees good to raise me up again, it will be well; and if I die it will be well."\*

After this, continues my information, he grew rapidly still; and being now too weak to rise, his mind was kept perfectly calm. To my enquiries as to

the state of his mind he would say, “Calm and peaceful, though I have many painful exercises,” yet I can truly say, “My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, trusting in God.” To his own mind *home scenes* had very touching power, and the compiler in this paragraph lays before his readers one of the most affecting and interesting he recollects. I see my dying friend and a young pastor, laid aside in the midst of usefulness, given by God, rejoiced in by the saved, envied by the captious, hated by the unprincipled, misrepresented by the ignorant—but laid on his dying bed, as is now evident. He, twenty-seven, and his wife a little under, with a son two years old, and another expected three months after the father is removed—he has not been able to settle the desire of his heart, the annuity for the wife of his youth, the mother of his offspring—and he is going to depart. But see this—what, but the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as enjoyed by God the Holy Spirit, ever realized this under light of eternity? See him on the bed, she at the bed side, and read, as his help-meet records it.

For some time before his death, I knelt beside his bed, morning after morning, while he besought the Lord on his own account, and the church’s, and also on mine. They were solemn seasons indeed to us both. His voice, once so fine and strong, now so broken and trembling, in fervent and earnest supplication before the Lord. One expression I well remember, it was this—“Gracious God! thou seest it right still to keep thy unworthy dust in the furnace: O do not leave him while there, but extend to him thy supporting arm, and watchful eye, and when thou seest thy own image reflected, O stay the fire.” On the Sunday morning before he died on the Thursday,

\* The only blessed indifference! very much like Philippians. 1: 21, 22. One of the most useful men known, who died also at twenty-seven, as referred to in the early pages of this work, while in consumption wrote:—“My health seems speedily declining. Sometimes my heart bounds with joy at the thought of being soon present with the Lord. Nevertheless, I should rather labour on earth amidst hardship and trial for a while longer, if only the Lord had any end to serve by me here still, and it is possible I may, &c..” He quickly after died. My dear departed friend R. went all his heart with all my heart when it heaves upwards, and with holy Rutherford says:—“Next to Christ, I have but one joy, the apple of the eye of my delight—to preach Christ my Lord.”

his voice gave way, and he could only *whisper* “Give us submission to thy will, O give submission!” He was often engaged in prayer and communion with the Lord, and many times have I seen him melted down in soul before him, as a little child, confessing his sinfulness. This verse he often repeated as expressive of his feeling and desire.—

“A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arms I fall;  
Be thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all.”

Before he finally departs, one more token of his gushing love for his flock issued. His weak body is held up in bed, while his soul dictates to his almost moveless fingers, while, with a pencil, he writes to his beloved. He could not finish it, but I copy it from his pencil marks, and call it—

*The dying, but loving Pastor's unfinished Charge.*

“DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD.—

Though laid aside by affliction, yet the love and affection which was felt toward you each in the Lord when in health, is not permitted to be quenched by waters of sorrow, nor drowned by floods of woe.

I greet you each in the name of our one Covenant God, and would pray that on entering a new year you may be divinely supported and helped, even as you have been helped through the last. For our God is a God of tender mercy and infinite power, hence can supply and sustain. How many of us had to bless the supplying and sustaining hand of our God through the past year!—very seasonable because always helpful, and sweet because always in time. We would raise again, then, our Ebenezer, and as it is by his help, so brethren we praise him and give him the glory.

It has been my constant prayer and desire for you, that the God of all grace may visit you with those peculiar blessings treasured up in Christ Jesus, to and for the election of grace. For as the blessings are peculiar in themselves, so are they peculiar to the people to whom they come, which occasions such anxious concern and thought in the minds of many as to whether they have any part or lot in so mighty a matter as God's great salvation.”

The illness may be perceived in the expressions and thoughts in this charge, but there is no defection in the love; the fact is, while he was conscious, he loved, and desired the profit of his people. Yea, again the living feature is strong in death, and that too when through pain and exhaustion of body the mind is astray. Mrs. Rudman continues her interesting account by saying:—

On the Monday night before his death, he was delirious, and even then his soul was with the people. I heard him say in the night watches, "I can and do solemnly appeal to you as before God, that I have kept back nothing from you, but have honestly and sincerely, though very imperfectly, declared unto you God's truth, as far as it has been declared unto me. I am clear of the blood of all men. I have warned the sinner, and have endeavoured, as far as the Lord enabled me, to comfort and build up the saint. I love you all in the Lord. Your peace and prosperity lies near my heart. May the Lord keep you as a church in all steadfastness, and humility, and Godly fear, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and the God of peace be with you!"

Ill and weak as he was all Tuesday, his sufferings increased until the night, when he became easier, and slept some hours. On Wednesday morning he became much worse, and most excruciating pain continued until a little before his happy spirit took its flight; yet not one murmur escaped him; he being enabled to bear it all with a firmness most surprising. He sometimes said, "How could I bear all this pain if I had no God to go to?" He supports my fainting soul, and bears my spirits up.

In the morning of the day in which he committed his soul into the bosom of his dear Redeemer, he said, "I should like to send a word to the church." I said, "I will get a pen and write down what you wish to say." He said, "No; I will send it by Mr. Foot, he will be here." Mr. F. did come, but was called away before he saw him, so he could not do as he intended. In the evening he said, "My dear wife, I love you very much, but my heart's affection does not centre in you: I love my precious Lord more than all beside." Later he was *very* desirous of being removed; yet he was too ill to bear it, and we were obliged to get him into bed again. His agonies were beyond description, and for a time he seemed lost to all around him. I had for a moment turned away,—the sight being more than I could bear. When he came a little to himself, calling my name, he asked where I was. I instantly went to him; he said, "Stay by me if you can." I did so, as long as he was at all conscious of my presence. I asked him how it was with him now he was in the swellings of Jordan? "All is well, *I have nothing to fear*," he said. These were the last words he spake in this world. The world afterwards was lost to him, and he to the world. He took no more notice of anything. His breathing became fainter and lower, until he quietly and sweetly breathed his soul away into the arms of Jesus, in the night of Thursday, January 5th, 1854.

Thus died my precious and beloved husband, deservedly loved by all who knew him. “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.”

His age was twenty-seven years: when, seeing God’s salvation, he realized, as the late Mr. Joseph Irons wrote, that—

“The saint meets death a messenger of peace,  
Receives his summons, and ascends to bliss.”

He began in mercy, he continued in faithfulness, he was directed in loving-kindness, was made useful in sovereignty, was blest in tribulation, and after all, was crowned in glory. But he left behind an affectionate and sorrowing widow *enciente*, and a son between two and three years old—his dear Joseph.

Our good friends, the Editors of the *Gospel Herald*, kindly published in their February number, a short account of Mr. R., in which is written—“His ministry had been greatly honoured by his Master to his people, and they nobly and doubly honoured him. Such a funeral too, perhaps, that favoured part of the kingdom has not witnessed since that of the late Dr. Hawker. The good brother who arranged the funeral procession writes me:—‘Numbers applied to me for the favour to carry the corpse a part of the way, and but for the heavy rains, I should have gladly stopped the hearse at the Cemetery gates, to gratify the desires of holy love. Besides mourning coaches, there were fourteen others, followed by hundreds of real mourners. Not many less than a thousand could have been there, it is believed, though it rained incessantly. What was said of a good prince of old, was true here,—‘And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death!’ “

Mr. Bulteel delivered an impressive address in the Cemetery Chapel; and Mr. Rowlands of Ebenezer Chapel, Stonehouse, a *short* oration at the grave, owing to the unfavourable weather. The procession then returned to Trinity Chapel, and in the pulpit, so lately our departed brother’s, brother Rowlands preached from Romans. 1: 16, to a large congregation of sorrowing friends.” In the Cemetery Chapel, of course where there was any, even standing room, it was crammed to the full. The first hymn sung was 106 of Kent’s. The whole is good—the closing verse told the blessed facts, that—



“Fearless he enter’d Jordan’s flood;  
At peace with heav’n he closed his eyes;  
His only trust was Jesus’ blood,  
In sure and certain hope to rise.”

Afterwards they sang that beautiful and appropriate one of Harts, “Sons of God by blest adoption.” A friend had copies printed, which were distributed. The second verse is touching, while it expresses their holy confidence in the man of God now departed, and their hallowed affection to his mortal remains in their midst, now covered with two coffins, presented by two other friends, who are among those that did not wait till his death to do him good. They mournfully sang—

“Earthly cavern, to thy keeping  
We commit our brother’s dust:  
Keep it safely, softly sleeping,  
Till our Lord demands thy trust

Sweetly sleep, dear saint, in Jesus;  
Thou with us shalt wake from death;  
Hold he cannot, though he seize us;  
We his power defy by faith.”

On the following Lord’s-day evening, Mr. Turner, of King’s Kerswell, preached the funeral sermon from Job 14: 10. I improved the solemn event, in my own pulpit, to a very interested throng; for they having seen and heard him there so recently, so ill and deathly, he was impressed on their minds. Our text was—“And the Lord said, who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his house-hold, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”

Several magazines gave their readers short accounts of his eventful career; and the *Plymouth Journal* published also a short history. This was reprinted in the March number of the *Gospel Herald*, closing with saying—

“We then—

Laid him down in death’s cold bed,  
As Jesus once did lay;  
In sure and certain hope that he  
Would rise again one day.  
He died the death of a righteous man,

His end was perfect peace;  
Oh I may, whenso'er I die,  
My last end be like his."

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## CHAPTER X.

### CHARACTERISTIC FRAGMENTS.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea. saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Though Mr. Rudman had not the faults some ministers have had, he was not faultless; and he would be thankful his works were not to *go before*, to merit the crown. They shall follow after to illustrate character to the honour of his own Lord, through whom he was saved, and his Christian acts performed. Even as they sung over him,

"'Twas through the strength of Israel's  
King He proved a conqueror when he fell;  
'Tis to the praise of grace we sing,  
Though of a dying saint we tell."

Need we say, our departed brother was a *labourer*? He preached much and often; but in his closet and study was his chief work. Those who so easily left him and traduced him, seem incapable of understanding his inward life and toil *for them*. Those of them who may read these pages, and others of like unfortunate spirits over the land, will, I hope, ponder over, and *feel* the propriety and solemn bearing of that Divine prohibition, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." I desire them everywhere fully to consider our motto in the title page, and if anywhere there are those who wound their pastor, who is a labourer of Zion's, as, according to Mr. R.'s account, some did him,—I earnestly hope such will seek grace and wisdom to honour the Lord, by esteeming his servant, as worthy of double honour. But at Upavon and Plymouth, Mr. Rudman was appreciated, and also elsewhere. So indeed he was at Trowbridge, for a while. At Upavon, they are doing well under another minister, and may the Lord continue to prosper them. May the King of Zion bless the church at Trinity with another pastor, with whom they may be, and have as much reason to be, as warm and

honourable in their esteem as they were, and continued to be unto his death, of the subject of this memoir. May the glory-cloud dwell on their assemblies, while the Triune God in Christ is held forth to their precious souls' true edification in the ministry, and felt glory ascend from them to the praise of the covenant Three-One in his appointed ordinances.

I had intended to have shown our departed friend in his *firmness, uprightness, and faithfulness*; also as social, *affectionate, brotherly, zealous, sanguine, cheerful, teachable, and humble*. And though I have marked portions of his diary, &c., for this purpose, the size of my book being so limited, forbids their use.

There is a brother with whom Mr. R. was on those terms of intimacy he was with the compiler, and his knowledge of men and things few will dispute as being wide, while many will appreciate his judgment: from this brother I received a note, which is now inserted, as it will save me space, while it testifies truly of the deceased. Mr. Foreman, to whom I allude, says to me:—

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I reply to yours of this morning.....With regard to your enquiry about the communications I may have received from the pen of our late so dearly esteemed brother Rudman, there was a considerable correspondence carried on between us, but it was of that *private* nature, and so mixed up, with business relating to his position as a minister, both in regard to Trowbridge and Plymouth, and more at large to the latter, that but very little could be given to the public eye..... Although our dear friend had a large and fine mind, and a quick and clear discernment, yet he wished always to act in concert with one older in years, and consequently consulted me on almost every step he took, and, therefore, such things are incorporated in almost all his communications, and which, of course, are private, and for his private use by my replies.

But I have one letter from him clear of the above affairs, bearing date October 14, 1853,\* which I set great store by. It is to me, from the love I shall

\* It is inserted in Chap. IX., page 183.

always bear to his dear embalmed memory, worth many, very many times its weight in gold. That I hereby enclose to you, begging you will take special care of it, that I might keep it by me while I live.

More, perhaps, I need not now say, as I wrote you yesterday, otherwise than my Christian love to you and yours, and earnest prayer for the good, comfort, and spiritual welfare of you all, and also that God will be mercifully pleased to bless the intended publication; that our dear brother Rudman being dead, may yet for a long while to come, speak for God to many a heart and conscience for good; and that God in his tender mercy to the fatherless and the widow, will abundantly and for ever bless the widow and offspring of our late beloved brother. I am, dearly beloved brother, affectionately yours in Christ Jesus,

J. FOREMAN.

Mr. R. often penned the outlines of a sermon that struck his mind. He has left many behind him. I think they would be highly prized by many close thinking friends of the Redeemer, and if a sufficient number requested; Mrs. Rudman would willingly publish a selection of them in a volume similar to this memoir.

A few *letters* can only be given. It is with regret that the compiler returned any of the interesting ones sent, and withholds a portion of some of his own. The following one is to Mrs. Sawyer, at an early stage of his acquaintance with the family. It characterizes his warm sympathy with the afflicted:—

*Upavon, Aug. 25, 1848.*

MY DEAR MRS. SAWYER,—“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou, O Jehovah, open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. Seeing his days upon the earth are appointed, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; turn from him, that he may rest, till he accomplish as an hireling his day.” (Job xiv. 1—6.)

These, and similar thoughts with them, my dear friend, have been passing through my mind since the news reached me that your dear brother was no more. It fell upon me like a ton of lead, and such an oppression of spirits, that it has not been from my mind since I heard it. Lord, what is man? O the fleeting swiftness of his days! O the rapidity which is every day shown us of the race of us poor mortals, from the womb to the tomb! Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

“Behold,” saith Jesus, “I come as a thief;” so sudden, so altogether unexpected does he make his appearance.

Yea, and according to human expectation, those who bid fairest for the longest life, are those who soonest fall by the shaft of death. How many a pliant reed has borne the tempest’s shock, when the towering ash, or the sturdy oak, have been torn up by the roots; yet so it is. Do you see a poor sickly mortal standing side by side with a strong and robust man—to the one you may say, I will give thee a lease for thy life; but, as for this poor invalid, The grave is already gaping for thee: yet, he who is healthy may be laid beneath the clods of the valley first. Oh! the solemn certainty of death, and of the judgment of Christ.

Lord, thought I, what solemn lessons art thou teaching my friend Sawyer! It was not long ago that she was called to the side of a dear sister, who was called out of time within a few fleeting hours: and now, the stay, the prop, the brother called likewise. Oh do thou in mercy support her mind, and strengthen her soul.

Ah, my sister, what I felt for you I cannot express. But what a blessing is a throne of grace: there I was enabled to pour out my whole soul for you, that God may bless you, and enable you to see “that *all things* shall work together for good to those who love God, and are the called according to his purpose.” But O, say you my unbelieving, fretful, rebellious heart!

“Oh, could I but believe,  
Then all would easy be;  
I would, but cannot; Lord, relieve,  
My help must come from thee.”

You are now called upon to pass through deep waters, waters of heavy affliction and trouble; but he has said, “When thou passest through the waters, *I will be with thee*; and through the rivers they *shall not overflow thee*.” Recollect, my sister, that he, Jehovah Jesus, has said, “I will bring the third part *through* the fire.” Blessed be his holy name, he will not leave thee to sink in it. No, thanks to his holy name, there are the everlasting arms of love and mercy, not above the reach; no, but *underneath*,—underneath are the *everlasting arms*,—arms which never tire, which never forget their office. For, hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? hast thou not considered? that the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not

at difficulties, neither is weary of his people nor their cases; for he giveth power to the faint, and to them which have no might he increaseth strength.

I feel, my dear Mrs. Sawyer, so broken down in my soul under a sight and sense of what a good, gracious, and heavenly Father, Brother, and Husband, we have in Jesus, that I can scarcely write for tears. O his mercy, his mercy, to such hell-deserving worms! God Almighty enable you to call upon him in this your day of trouble, for though your earthly brother is dead, your heavenly Brother still lives before his Father's throne; and he hates putting away, and resteth in his love; and saith, in six troubles he will be with you, and in seven no evil shall befall you. And though, my dear sister, you may not be able to see the why and the wherefore, yet he hath promised to bring the blind by a way they know not—to lead them in paths which they have not known, to make *darkness light*, and crooked things straight, and not to forsake them.

The Lord lead you experimentally to drink of the brook by the way, that thus with joy you may lift up your head. Musing upon the solemn dispensation which has befallen you. I retired to my room in a very solemn frame, and opening my Bible, my eyes lighted on Isaiah 32nd and 35th chapters; and having resolved upon writing, to you, the 3rd and 4th verses of the 35th, decided the point. And now, my dear sister, God Almighty bless thee, and make his face shine upon thee, favour thee with some sweet word of promise, and enable thee to lie passive in his hands, and to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth good."

So prays yours, with much tender solicitude for you in your present trial; with many petitions to God on your behalf, that it may be sanctified to you, and that he may support you in it, and bring you out of it as gold seven times purified, to reflect his praise. My regards to you, each and all.

J. R.

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The next letter to his endeared friend, Mr. Foot, is very descriptive of his mode of thought in the ministry of the word. It is from Trowbridge, however, early.

*Ashton-street, Trowbridge, Dec. 19, 1851.*

Very dear Friend and Brother in eternal bonds of high relationship, Grace unto you and peace.

The grace of Jesus was that theme which filled the souls, enlarged the hearts, and employed the tongues and pens of prophets and apostles. And as it is the same in its fountain, nature, and results, *now*, as then, there is nothing so sweet as this to a quickened sinner. The Bible is full of it; sweetly shining forth in the first promise in reference to the seed of the woman, given in the garden of Eden; carried on in figures, similitudes, and shadows, embodied in the ceremonial law of sacrifices, and other observances; written as with a sun-beam in living characters of truth, in the Psalms, and predictions of holy men of God from Isaiah to Malachi; embodied in the records of the evangelists, and commented on by the various writers in the Epistles, until the Revelation of John closes the inspired canon of sacred writ. And then comes the bringing in of that grace into a sinner's heart, where by the Father's eternal love, Jesus' redeeming blood, and the Holy Ghost's saving work, is effectually made known.

And wherein is the grace of Jesus seen? Beloved, in ancient, covenant settlements. Here he espoused the sinner's cause; here he engaged to be the Surety; here he was set up as the Mediator; here he undertook to *do all*, *suffer all*, and to be the GREAT SALVATION OF GOD, unto the very ends of the earth. Secondly; his grace was manifested in the clear displays he gave of himself under Old Testament times: so that in the pascal lamb; in the scape goat; in the red heifer; in the slain bird, and burnt sacrifice; in the tabernacle service and priesthood; in the ark of the covenant, and every feast; as well also as by such characters as Samuel, David, Solomon, and others, Christ set himself forth, the food of the faith of every quickened soul.

Thirdly. We come to his incarnation. Here, what wonders of unspeakably glorious grace! The God over all for ever blessed, to take our nature into union with his own! Be astonished, O heavens! stand amazed, ye cherubim and seraphim, ye angels and ye archangels, ye thrones, dominions, and powers! Jesus in his manhood becomes lower than you; and yet as God supreme, your existence, and bliss, your employment, and your blessedness, hangs dependent upon him. The babe of days! the Ancient of days! He who was before all time living in his own eternity; and that which was born in time, even that *holy thing*, united and joined, and for ever to remain one complex person, the Christ of God! Solemn thought! humbling and instructive scene! "To you, therefore, who believe, he is precious." Were it possible, beloved friends, to take this glorious fact from the Bible, what a blank! nothing could compensate, nothing could make up: that which

was lacking, could not be numbered. My salvation stands connected with his incarnation, for, “for this reason was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, and take away our sins.”

Fourthly. We see the grace which was manifested in his life; for, by his life we have a robe wrought out, which covers from wrath the happy and favoured individuals who are arrayed therein. We could have had no righteousness, but for his life. This is commonly called his *active* righteousness, in a way of holy conformity to the will of God, and the law of God. He was full of all love, goodness, grace, and truth. The life he lived must have been holy, by virtue of *necessity*, but the life he lived being *for us*, was a pure act of his *sovereign, unmerited* grace.

Fifthly. We come to his agony and death. We look at Gethsemane and Calvary, and exclaim, O, the grace! that for such sinners as we, he should endure the cross, despising the shame, is a *wonder* of grace! Had he cut us down, after sparing us for years, we might have stood amazed then at his long suffering; but not only to spare us, but bless us; not only keep us alive, but through dying in our room, to deliver us for ever from the pit;

“This was compassion like a God,—  
That when the Saviour knew  
The price of pardon was his blood,  
His pity ne’er withdrew.”

He went to the end of the law, *endured* all, and conquered all, and when he had vanquished all his foes, he gave up his spirit into the hands of his Father: no man taking it, but he himself giving it.

Sixthly. I pause over the grace of Jesus as manifested in his burial and resurrection. Every place must bear the marks of his love and condescension. What henceforth can be frightful in death and the grave? *Jesus has been there*. The Lord of life and glory took up, for a season, his abode there. Come, poor trembling one, “See the place where the Lord lay.” Was he the less Jesus when he lay *there*? No. *He was the same from the womb to the tomb, from the tomb to the throne, and for ever more*. But he rose again: the *same* body; yes, the very same. In it he appeared to his disciples; in it he ate with them; in it he blessed them: and now he is at the right hand of the Father. We see,—

Seventhly, the grace of Jesus as our intercessor with the Father, bearing our burdens, echoing our desires, presenting our petitions, and appearing



in the presence of God for us. Jesus' name then, is as ointment poured forth.

And now, my dear friends, how is it with you I Are you living on high? Is the Lord gracious to you? Does he give you a glimpse of his precious countenance through the lattice? Is he in very deed all *in all*? Well, if you cannot speak the language of *confidence*, can you the language of *desire*? Do you say, 'Tell me, O thou, whom my soul loveth, where *thou* feedest, where thou makest *thy* flock to rest at noon?' Say you, "Yes." Well, dear friends, "The desire of the righteous *shall* be granted."

My mind has often been with you since I left. I trust I may say, my prayers you have an interest in. Many, very many dear friends, pass before me in review. I begin with yourselves, and your dear children; I go to Oxford-street, and there is Mr. and Mrs. Mattick upstairs, and our dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Yeo, down stairs; I peep in on Mr. and Mrs. Martin; just say, how do you do? to Mr. and Mfrs. Shears; give a thought upon our friends Yeo at Stonehouse; I pop into the vestry, and then come my very dear friends, Dilling, Dane, and Goddard, not forgetting dear brother Dwelly the clerk, Mr. and Mrs. Short, Mrs. Williams, and her friend; in a word, brother, more than I can name, I think upon. I shall never forget Plymouth. There the Lord appeared, there he made himself known, and there his kindness was abundantly seen.

Some have thought, by my reception at Plymouth, I was about to throw up strict communion, and compromise my principles. Well, I say, if I was looking out for a place, and would turn my principles into money-considerations, I might catch at a bait. But Trinity people don't want such men; they want men whose eye is upon the mark, and who are kept single for the glory of God: and I have no hesitation in saying, that if I turned for filthy lucre, they would not accept my offer.

My opinion, dear friends, of the dear people at Trinity is, that they prefer *right* to *wrong*: that, whatever is laid down in God's word, they would prefer to have, than that which has not a "thus saith the Lord" for. Honesty and consistency is above all price, and it is only rightly known where the fear of God is before the eyes. To have the eye of our mind *singly* set upon the glory of the Lord; to have our conduct regulated by his sacred word; to have that precious anointing suppling the conscience, keeping it soft and tender; to be kept little in our own eyes, and at the footstool of mercy, dependents upon our God from day to day; to acknowledge him in all our

ways, that he may be the kind, the sacred, and all wise Director of our path, —this is moving on safe ground, and proceeding upon right premises. Such, I trust, I may say, have been the grounds upon which my proceedings have been regulated since a gracious God has put me in trust with the gospel. Many have been my deficiencies, but many, yea, very many, have been the Lord's mercies. Last and not least, has been my own felt place, but Jesus is to my soul Alpha and Omega, the all, and all in all. I love his person, his word, his work, his offices, his characters, his relations. My soul melts under a sense of love, my conscience is sweetly purged and cleansed with his blood, my sins and heart evils are subdued by his grace, my numerous foes are quelled by his omnipotent arm, grace is poured into his lips, mercy dwells in his heart, pity in his eyes, wisdom resides in his head, a fulness is in his hand, and as the Saviour and the Strong, he is God's beloved, and a saint's delight. I have found a refuge in his wounded side, healing balm has distilled from his many wounds, peace has flowed from his stripes, and salvation from all he sustained. To dwell upon him in the pulpit, has been heaven begun below; to hear of him in the pew has been sweet and solemn pleasure; to draw nigh to him in prayer, to pour out our complaints, yet to plead his agony and death, his love and righteousness, his blood and salvation has been sweet; but to see him as he is, and to gaze for ever upon the Lamb who was slain, will be the quintessence of soul enjoyment for ever and ever.

I must stay my pen. I was unavoidably detained by pressing matters, or you would have heard from me before. I began, as you may see, yesterday.

I purpose next week, writing to some others, God willing.

I trust you are moving on comfortably at Trinity, and that God is abundantly owning and blessing the labours of my dear brother Hawkins.

My health, I regret to say, is very indifferent. I have been suffering in my chest and head, since I have returned. Whether this indicates removal or not, I must leave with Him who has appointed the bounds of our habitation. My dear wife and child are tolerable.

I suppose June will be the likeliest month for me to reach you, dear friends, as I go to Leicester in February, and then Mr. Triggs reaches you in May. So that June, I think, must be the month, unless anything should turn up meanwhile.

My dear wife joins me in love to all, with yourself, wife, and dear children.  
Peace be with you.

So prays, affectionately yours in Jesus Christ,  
J. F. R.

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The succeeding are extracts from a letter to the editor, a few months after his residence at Plymouth; and show his anxieties and efforts in his Master's work among his people.

32, *Oxford-street, Plymouth, April 10th, 1852.*

My dear brother,—I have had the rules and articles of the church under hand, and what with one thing and the other, I have not been idle.

The articles are nearly *verbatim* those which you have, and our *rules* the same. *Close* communion, and henceforth *strict* baptism, the whole of which were passed *unanimously*. So far, well. We number over 220, many of whom have been baptized, and none are advocates for infant sprinkling, nor practicers of it.

Our congregations are as crowded as ever they were, and most of the sittings are let, upstairs and down. Peace reigns, not a dissentient inside gives disturbance. I am very much helped in private and in public, and the people hear with very much profit and delight. How long it may last is another thing: however, so far, all moves on well, and for the rest, my Master must see to that.....

How are you moving on at B.? I have many enquiring after you here, what must I say to them? That you are well? I do trust your dear partner is tolerable, as also your family. Our house is very comfortably situated, and certainly the friends, one and all, are very kind.

Mr. Bulteel and Mr. Babb are very kind. Mr. —has fired away pretty considerably, and has now formed a church, and on Friday morning last, opened his old place at S-----, for the administration of the ordinance of baptism, wherein he publicly thanked God that he had been kept consistent to his ordinances, &c.. He is but little regarded, however, which further chagrins him.

The sisters of mercy have been kicking up a row here, and Harry of Exeter has left them. And disclosures have come out, and quite a stir made, I assure you.

But I must give up my pen and take my walk. I began this on Saturday, but could not finish it until this morning (Monday.)

We join in kindest love to you each, remaining, affectionately yours,  
J. F. R.

P. S. —Please give our kindest regards to Mrs. Rodway, Mr. and Mrs. England, and every inquiring friend.

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The two next are to his maternal friend at Leicester, whom he very warmly loved, and, as noticed in last chapter, fondly addressed under that endearing term, Mother.

To Mrs. Gimson.  
32, *Oxford-street, Plymouth, May, 1852.*

Dear Mother,—I was wishful to wait for a short time, after having yours, that I might be enabled to report progress, and that you may know *exactly* how things stand with me. And I assure you, it has not been a quiet time with me inwardly, for I have had peculiar exercises of mind in private, and they have been accompanied with much fervent prayer, I believe, of the Spirit's inditing, that I may see God's hand, do God's work, be instrumental for good to God's people, and feel increasingly that I am the servant of God. My pulpit ministrations of late have been peculiar as it regards the weight, the power, and the discrimination of them. I have been led particularly to insist on the power and demonstration of truth. To separate also between character and character, and show what the Spirit's work in the heart is, and what the effects are in the life. I have searched and sifted, and gone with things to the bottom. This has caused a stir, a shaking, and a noise. My soul has trembled, and agonized inwardly. It is a new line of things, but God is working by it. We are crowded to overflowing. Our week evenings are exceedingly well attended; and I have been heart-broken to hear the testimonies for good which have reached me from one and another. Thus three months have passed away, and I feel a solemn persuasion that saint has been separated from sinner, and many who knew not where

they were, have been brought to the light, and are witnesses to the power of truth.

Last evening was our regular church-meeting, and I had six candidates to propose to the church. I was anxious to see what effect the regular announcement would have upon those to whom this was all strange. The matter was comfortably and most conveniently arranged, and no church-meeting could have been carried out more unanimously.

There are grumblers. They are of two kinds. Some two or three, *out of the church*, are for doctrine,—What have we to do with experience? For such, I am *too* experimental. There are two or three for whom I am *too practical*; they, too, are out of the church..... Those who are fed under the ministry of the word, will come and hear it, and such will bless God for the instrument. Those who cannot stand the probe, will move off, and then we shall get rid of them.

I am more than ever persuaded, that my lot is cast here. Though, should anything take place, I am free to leave at the six months' end. But there is nothing which would warrant me to suppose for a moment that such will be the case. I have examined the ground, and have been a good deal among the people, and I must say, I have found a goodly number of choice souls. Some I have seen in affliction, and in pain, yea, and in poverty. My course is to keep closely to my study every morning; and adopting your advice, not to study in the afternoon. I spend it in visiting, for instance, the sick, and those who have a claim upon me in courtesy,—having first called to see me. The evenings I again devote to study, or epistolary correspondence. But the labour is great. One thing which helps me here is, I have nothing to do with the secularities of the place. At Trowbridge, everything went through my hands; here, I have only to attend to pastoral work, and this I find quite enough. I must say, that uniform kindness has been experienced from the friends.....

We are through mercy in tolerable health, and trust you are the same. The good Lord lift upon you the light of his countenance, and grant you peace; so prays

Yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus,

J. F. R.

Several important ones, favored by this friend, are amongst those which remain for another work, in some future day, if the Lord's people wish it.

The only one that can be added to the foregoing, is on Calvary and Golgotha scenes.

To Mrs. Gimson, 32, *Oxford-street, Plymouth, July 5th, 1852.*

Dear Mother,—After much thought, as to how I could arrange matters, I have thought upon a plan by which I can reach you, the Lord willing, on Thursday evening, July 15th, on my way to ----- . I have felt great anxiety to see you, and commune with you. The Lord bring me in safety and in peace, once more under your roof, where, so often, I have found the presence and the blessing of Him whom to know, is life eternal. My heart is soft this morning, for my soul is at Gethsemane and Calvary. A bleeding Lamb is before my eyes, and I feel the solemnity of the scene. Nothing equals this, this side of seeing him as he is. To feel the conscience purged by his atoning blood, is blessed beyond degree. I love to follow him, like weeping Mary, and go without the camp, bearing his reproach. O the solemnity of a sorrowing, suffering Jesus, wounded for *my* transgressions, and bruised for *my* iniquities! Had he left me to sink beneath the waves of his holy displeasure, how just had he been! I see it, and feel it, until my heart seems fit to break, that he should spare *me* and smite *him*, frown on him and smile on me, make him imputatively sin, and constituted me righteous, is so wondrous, so strange a way, that did not God declare it, I could not credit it. Again and again, must I stay my hand to weep—company would be irksome: the name of Gethsemane where He endured and agonized, is a name dear, and Calvary—sacred spot! and Jesus' name! O it is as ointment poured forth! When will the sacred day arrive, when I shall see him as he is, polluted sinner as I feel myself as of myself, to be! To gaze upon his forehead still bearing marks of the thorns, and upon his hands, and feet, and side! O what a heaven of heavens to be with him, and no more intervening clouds! O what transitory things are all things here below! What a phantom! a bauble! a shadow! do not the men of this world appear to be chasing! And how empty to my soul appears a mere profession! Well, I rejoice in the fact, that the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. *And glory be to his holy name, he has shown it to me.*

I feel a sacred pleasure in thus writing to you, because I know you can understand me: which, perhaps, is more than could be said of some in a profession, for I very greatly fear, that Gethsemane and Calvary, is but little frequented, now-a-day.

My dear wife joins me in kindest love, as also to dear Miss W—while I remain, most affectionately yours in Christ Jesus,

J. F. B.

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It may be remembered a notice in the diary told of the letter below. It shows the amiable disposition of our young friend to win and profit youth.

*Nottingham, May 19th, 1853.*

MY DEAR MISS FOOT,—The season of the year, the charms of nature to those who have a mind for them, and the many opening scenes of beauty on every hand, serve to call forth the energies of a reflective mind, which I cannot but hope you are in possession of.

Nature, with all its diversity, speaks one great truth—*There it a God*. However numberless may be its productions on earth, in air, or in the sea, they all sprang from one source, and had their common original from Jehovah.

I like to classify things, in order to investigation, and to learn all I can learn from such and such things. As a grand whole, everything appears to harmonize and give a most pleasing sensation to the mind. The heavens, with the fleecy clouds, set off by the transparent blue; the hills, with the diversity of pasture land, where the flocks and the herds are feeding and lying down; the cultivated parts, with its green and fruitful appearance, promising plenty and consequent prosperity; then the woods, with their different tints, all mingling together in beauty; now the valleys, with the winding streams, intersecting hedge-rows, and beautiful flowers, wild, 'tis true, but not the less lovely because of that. This, I say, seems like nature as a whole; but come to classify things, to look at the sun and its influences, what a mighty energy there is in his light and in his heat, and just to think what the earth would do without him. This I would term reflection, and when we see how indebted we are to his light, heat, and influence, we may see how good the Lord was in giving, and how merciful he has been in continuing us the sun. Take the clouds, which pour down rain, and ask how would the earth be watered, how could vegetation be nourished, how could the fruit of the earth be matured without them? Also analyze the air, and behold how adapted as a medium sound, as a channel for light, and as suited for the purposes of inspiration and respiration, or breathing. In it the birds fly, and insects sport as in their natural element. And do we look at the ocean, what a valuable fountain, from whence every river flows, a great

and mighty reservoir, in fact, for the whole earth. How useful for commerce, and how productive of food and subsistence for man. And can God have made all this without wisdom, or power, or benevolence? O no. There is much mercy displayed in everything which comes from him.

Do we, my dear Miss Foot, look at a blade of grass, examine it, and view it again and again, and how much is there to excite wonder and astonishment! God gives it life, being, beauty, and order, and it nourishes cattle, which again in the milk and meat nourishes man.

Look at the flowers, into how many different classes they are divided, and yet amidst difference of form, of flower, of colour, of scent, and of use, they sprang from his creative word; and what must be the wisdom, the knowledge, the understanding, and the power of God in the section of kingdom which we call flowers.

I was much struck with this in looking at the beautiful arrangement of various kinds of flowers in the greenhouse. The surpassing beauty of the colours, and the effect of so many blended, was great indeed. Aye, and I have been as greatly struck in the hedgerow and the field. Look at the cowslip, the daisy, and the butter-cup. Look at the violet and the blue bell: are they not lovely? Who made them? Who placed them there? Who watches over them? The Lord.

Do we look at the shrubs and trees. How useful and how noble! The elm, the oak, the pine, the ash,—all have their uses, and each their place; so has the laurel, and the privet.

I would have you, my dear Miss Foot, reflect upon all you see, and seek enjoyments of an intellectual kind, and not be led away by those light and giddy things, which, I am sorry to say, seem to be what the young people of the present day so much delight in.

Shun novels, romances, and every book which would not inform the mind, and give you instruction. Let the frivolities and nonsenses of others, be to you a solid warning against such a line of conduct. Many people are apes, and hence become in a manner silly and ludicrous. Many are stuck up with fond conceits, and hence become affected poor creatures, who can neither walk, talk, dress, hold a book, or do anything as other sensible people do it. I believe you have an aversion to it. Learn by books, by reflection, and observation, and you will find you may not have many to think with you,



and your companions may be *few*, but if you have one or two judicious, sensible, well-informed persons as your associates, they will be ample.

You have a charge in dear Edward. Bear with his childish ways, attach him to you by affection and care, lure him to his books, take an interest in his little affairs, and you may so work upon him as to have an influence over him for good, if you should both be spared to survive your dear and honoured parents.

I am sure, my dear Miss Foot will forgive me all this scribble. But I wish you well. Your welfare lies near the heart of both myself and my dear Mrs. Rudman: and hence I write to you in the strain I have written. And what more can I say to you? O, you have a soul to be saved or lost! and without the heart be changed there is no hope of heaven or happiness. My dear Sarah, do you know you are a sinner? Have you been brought up to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Do you know the Saviour of sinners? That you *may*, is my sincere prayer.

I am in a beautiful neighbourhood. I walked this afternoon by the river Trent, under a grove of trees, which extends very far along its banks. On the left were hills, with a family mansion, and what appeared to be a castle peeping up among the trees. Before me was Nottingham, with its windmills and tall chimneys, church towers, and, here and there, in the landscape, a lofty spire. At my feet, and winding on for many a mile, was the river Trent. On its banks, many herds of cattle were feeding; here and there an angler fishing, now a party in a boat, and on the opposite bank a gipsy party under a tree; and some are singing to the notes of an accordion, which came very soft and melodious across the water. On my left is the straggling village, where her Ladyship's noble mansion stands, and where I am hospitably entertained. My health is better, thank God. My love to aunt and uncle Short, your dear grandmother, to dear Edward, and my love to you, and sincere regards, in which Mrs. R. cordially unites.

Remaining, dear Miss Foot, your sincere, attached, and affectionate friend,

J. F. R.

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The following is one on the sudden death of a good man, Mr. Rudman's father.

To Mr. Pearce.

*Cheverell Magna, Aug. 11th, 1853.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I trust you arrived home in safety, and found your dear partner and family well; and that you finished up your engagements in Plymouth with comfort and satisfaction.

We arrived here safe, but, as you may well suppose, we had a painful meeting, and a sorrowful greeting. Though on our dear father's account, there was no need to sorrow as those without hope. The trial, though severe, is in so many ways lessened as to enable us even now to say, "It is well"

That he did not taste of death is evident. More than ordinarily well in the day, and retiring to rest as usual, he seemed to bid fair to live many more days, and even years upon earth; but the summons came, and ere it could be said to come, he was gone hence, to take his place before the sapphire throne.

I think death to him, while it had lost its sting, yet had for him some terror in its prospect, but how merciful an ending!—without a struggle, or a groan, his happy spirit passed away as gently as a child would sleep upon its parent's arm.

There was no lingering and painful sickness confining him to bed, with all the distressing accompaniments of such a dissolution of the tabernacle; but the weary wheels of life stood still, and he was absent from the body, and then present with the Lord.

It seems, however, to me as a dream. I can scarcely realize the fact, that on Lord's-day I should be in the pulpit at Plymouth, and on Tuesday standing by the grave of a father.

“Who needs a teacher to admonish him  
That flesh is grass, that earthly things are mist?  
What are our joys but dreams? and what our hopes  
But goodly shadows in the summer cloud?  
There's not a wind that blows but bears with it  
Some rainbow promise: Not a moment flies  
But puts its sickle in the fields of life,  
And mows its thousands with their joys and cares.”

That he is now enjoying the vision of God and the Lamb, affords us every matter for consolation, and the thought of seeing that vision too, is an increased source of joy and satisfaction.

We join in love to you each, while I remain, my dear brother, most affectionately yours,

J. F. R.

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Though so very ill, he must write. See here a multitude in a little. What struggling! Dear fellow, what a blessed, blessed change was death to him. Was not he the *martyr*!

To Mr. Pearce.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I can just take a pen in my hand, with a pillow at my back to day, to give you a line. Since Miss Bright left, I have been much worse, and even now my ultimate recovery is a problem. I am brought down very, very low. Have never been so ill. Yet I doubt not, mercy intends something by it, either to fit me for further usefulness, or, to take me home. I have now been confined to my room a fortnight, and it has been a fortnight of such exercises of mind and soul, as have tried me to the quick. I have not strength, however, to tell you of them. It is a most mysterious and dark dispensation; I am no nearer pulpit services now than I was at first. Sovereignty alone resolves the knot, but I want to feel submission. My dear wife joins now in love to you, and your dear partner, while I remain, very affectionately yours in Christ Jesus.

J. F. R.

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Another letter from the sick chamber, to a very dear friend, to my knowledge.

To Mr. Greenslade.

2, *Endsleigh Place*, Nov. 18th, 1853.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD, OUR HOPE AND HELP,—Your letter reached me this morning, with its painful tidings, for I had not heard a sound, as I see no one scarcely, by the doctor's orders, inasmuch as it increases inflammatory action of the throat. We were much concerned, therefore, to hear it; and our prayer shall be, as helped by the God of grace, that you may soon recover all wonted strength; and in the meantime, that patience, and resignation, may be graciously given you.

In reference to myself, the Lord has put forth his healing hand, and I am now recovering. My throat began to experience ease on Lord's-day last, which has since continued: my whole system seems, in a word, renewed, and every hope may be entertained through goodness and mercy, of my being able, in a few weeks, to preach again. In the meantime I must keep myself perfectly still, and closely attend to every injunction of my medical man, to whom, under God, I stand very much indebted. The mercy of the Lord to me has been very great. I have had to thank him for my affliction, unexpected and very heavy though it has been.

There are no second causes apart from the first Great Cause. My getting wet through, and your fall into the hold of the ship, stood connected with heavenly purposes of mercy and of goodness. Nor has he intended us wrong, nor meant us hurt. He knows what he intended by it, and we cannot complain justly at any of his measures. Heart examination reveals many things, and sickness gives time for reflection; and we see things, and weigh things up, in a far different way when the scourging hand of God is upon us, than when we have no stroke. These things are intended to exercise us deeply; to bring us to whys and wherefores? and to humble us under the mighty hand of God, that we may be exalted in due time.

In these things, it is a mercy to see *the hand is God's*. God keep your anchor there, my brother. And he had a right to do it; for, according to desert, instead of falling 15 ft. it might have been into outer darkness! So here we are on mercy's premises, surrounded by salvation's wall, and garrisoned by Jehovah.

And now, my dear brother, if at all able to see me, *come over*. Talking does not hurt me as it did, and I have been wanting to see you. Our love in the Lord to you each; remaining, dear brother, most affectionately, yours in the Lord,

J. F. R.

You would have heard from me before, but writing hurts me as yet.

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We have next a friendly effusion, to one whom our brother very highly revered.—

DEAR MADAM,—Your kind note would have received an earlier answer; but the many calls upon my time quite prevented my doing what I would have wished in the matter, viz., an answer by return of post. However, the Lord being willing, I will reach your-----, at the time appointed, and I trust in him, a blessing will accompany my poor and feeble ministrations in his holy name. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God must give the increase. There is, in reference to the Lord's servants, a *wheresoever* of way, and *whatsoever* of message. They must go wheresoever he sends them, and with a whatsoever. They are not to be choosers either of way or word. "The words I give unto thee, *that* speak." It is a mercy when the soul is laid low at His Divine and sacred footstool, to wait on him for messages of mercy, and the word of grace; and to lean on his strength in the delivery of it; and then to be enabled to leave the result with Him who has graciously declared, "*My word shall not return unto me void.*" This removes all anxious thoughts as to consequences, when the way is committed to him, the message is received from him, and the success is left with him. This is giving him credit for what he has promised, and leaning on His faithfulness, who does indeed remember his covenant, is not slack concerning his promise, and watches upon his word to perform it. Yet what unbelieving creatures, at times we are! Alas! alas! that it should be so. And yet, shall our unbelief make the faithfulness of God of none effect? *God forbid!* "Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Oh though he is *omnipotent*, God Almighty, and God the strong, yet there are things which even He (with reverence be it spoken,) cannot do. *He cannot lie*; not simply he *will* not: such is the nature of Jehovah, *He cannot*; here our safety lies. it is not that *we* change not; it is not that we are this in strength, or that in duty, our God is in the heavens, and He is in one mind, and none can turn him. O Israel thou shall not be forgotten of me. Grace! grace! what a theme is grace! How high, how rich! how sovereign! and how free! Debtors we are to it from day to day: this brought us nigh when aliens and strangers; this reconciled us when we were enemies; this was power in salvation when we were without strength; this brought the light of life to us when we were darkness; this instructed us when ignorant; this raised us up when fallen; yea, from this we now receive our every supply in this the house of our pilgrimage. And brighter scenes await us anon. Grace is glory's bright and bursting bud, and *there* will be the full expansion of the flower, and the development of every beauteous leaf in yonder shore of light and love, blooming with immortality is that which the saint is begotten unto! Christ burst the barriers of the tomb, and ascended up on high, and he will come again and receive us unto himself,

that where He is, we may be also; and he that hath this hope, needs not the vanities of time to create pleasure, nor the vortex of carnal delights to whirl him round the few days yet remaining to him of his span-length of time, in all that is delusive and destructive! no, he chooses affliction with Moses; and, to be numbered with the humble and contrite followers of the Lamb, is to him joy, and gladness, and honour enough. Dying, empty scenes, encompass us here on every hand; the fashion of this world passeth away; and the child of God sees increasingly that this is not his rest; sin hath polluted the fairest places of an earthly pilgrimage; temptations present themselves to the mind through many an avenue; here distractions and vexations harass the spirits; fightings oft times are without, and many fears within; and while grace reigns, and shall, unto eternal life, seeing that it is not seemly for sin to be more than grace; and that which is comparative only, vanquish that which is superlative; yet when we think of worshipping God without distraction, and ever living to see him as he is, to gaze upon the throne, O this will be heaven!—this will be satisfaction to satiation, yet without anything to cloy the richness and sweetness to fall upon the sense. Beauties never fading, joys never ending, sweets uncloying, pleasures unchanging, or, if changing, something to excite and keep alive in the mind that ecstasy of bliss which will consist of knowing I am saved, and am with my Saviour, that I am enriched to all eternity, and am now for ever shut in with my Redeemer and Friend.

“I love to think of heaven, where I shall meet  
My fellow travelers; and where no more  
With grief or sin my mind shall be disturbed;  
Where holy saints, and holy angels dwell,  
In constant harmony and mutual love!  
But when my heart anticipates the sight  
Of God incarnate, wearing in his side,  
And hands, and feet, those marks of love divine  
Which he on Calvary for me endured!  
All heaven beside is swallowed up in this:  
And He who is my hope of heaven below,  
Appears the glory of my heaven above.”

Swain, *Walworth*.

Again commending your-----and dear-----to the grace of Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; I remain your, etc.

J. F. R.

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The remainder are from Father Jones who shall be heard for himself, and the very characteristic letters he has kindly furnished us.

At the request of my dear relative, Mr. Hawkins, I have selected and transcribed five letters (from several others,) which I received from my late dear and highly valued brother Rudman. The *originals* I shall preserve carefully as long as I live. The early removal of promising young ministers, whose loss must be deeply deplored, is, to *us*, short-sighted mortals, inexplicable. It *must* be *right*, for *the Lord has done it*. Dear Rudman was thirsting after *sterling truth*, and making rapid advances in its attainment. I *had* hoped to have left him behind *me* for many years, a faithful and most useful labourer in our Lord's vineyard; but, *his work was done*, almost before it appeared to *us* to have *begun*. "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in *Thy* sight." My pained *mind*, forbids the actings of my *pen*.

J. A. Jones.

*Victoria Buildings, Trowbridge, May 3rd, 1850.*

VERY DEAR SIR,—I embrace the first opportunity which has presented itself, to write you a few lines, and I hope that it may find you in health of body, and in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel in your soul. I shall have reason to remember my acquaintance with you as long as I live. It has been of very great advantage to me. The remarks you made to me, I have pondered deeply and prayerfully over; and, much light has broken in upon my mind. *Hitherto* I had been biased towards *certain things* received, accredited, and maintained, by the party among whom it was my lot to labour, who held with the views, opinions, and statements of the -----people. Who also in *their* turn held with the opinions of Mr. *So-and-so*, long since mouldered to dust. A venerable list you see, of so says *he*, and so say *they*. From which the good Lord deliver me.

It was my lot, in the early part of my ministry; (if one who has been employed only five years, may talk of an *early* part;) but, it was my lot to stand *quite alone*; without any friend to speak to, or one who was able or willing to direct me. At this time I was almost unacquainted with *religious controversy*. I had no book but the Bible; that is, upon *religious* matters. This book, blessed be God, I *knew* was able to make me wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. Its precious *truths* I had known from heart-felt experience; and hence it was dear to my soul, as containing the mind and will of God concerning us, and all things essential to us. It was my custom *then*, to write out my sermons; not to read them from the

pulpit; but as I had much spare time, simply as an exercise to my mind. And I am thankful that I did so, otherwise those *early* views I had of the gospel, in my *first* starting would have been lost. But having been turned out of *Hilcot Chapel* for the truth's sake, my lot was to light among the ----, &c. &c. who disclaim against study, and speak against all who *do* so, as men of the *letter*, and not of the *Spirit*; and, as a consequence, in some measure, I fell into that line, and *so* took up with one thing after another, *without much examination*. By hearing ministers at that time occasionally, it seemed to me as though all study, meditation, reading, and application, was not only needless, but presumptuous! as implying a relying upon *ourselves*, and the powers of the *mind*, or the ideas of *another*, rather than upon *Gods Spirit*. How wide *this* is of the mark, you yourself know right well. For a time this seemed to *suit*, but not always. Indeed, I am thankful to say *I was taught better*, and into my *subsequent* views, the people, many of them, entered. My mind became stored, my soul was refreshed, enlarged views of Divine truth were opened up to me, and private meditation became more precious. Is not the man as much dependent on the Lord for a *meditative mind*, and *light* into the sacred word in *private* as for a *door of utterance* afforded him in *public*? All *openings-up* of the sacred word are from the Lord, without whom we can *do nothing*. I can only say, that I am now ashamed of myself, for once letting such perverted views (which I have hinted at) enter my mind, or at all to influence me; and am truly thankful that matters are now otherwise.

My *study* is a pleasant place, *when my Lord is with me there*; though I dare not say that it is not a profitable place, even when the light of his countenance has been withdrawn. Useful lessons I have learned in *this* respect. Still I would rather be in *secret* before *Him*, pouring out my soul, and *waiting* for His word to enter into my heart, than be running hither and thither, as though bitten with a gad-fly. Truly, dear sir, it is one thing to *tear out* in the pulpit a few things; and, another thing to *wear well* as a minister, in word and doctrine showing *uncorruptness*; feeding the people with knowledge and understanding; such as is required in *one* who professes to be "*a pastor after Gods own heart*;" such as God has made him, and as God would have him to be. It has been the cry of *my* soul, that God would give me *a pastor's heart, a meditative mind, clear views of truth, singleness of eye to His glory, and make me useful in my day and generation*. This I trust, in some small measure, has been afforded me. The Lord be praised for His mercies!



Within this last two years, my circle of acquaintance has been extended; some to profit, and some otherwise. But I shall have reason to remember *you*, dear sir, perhaps years after *you* may be removed from the stage of time.\* Your valuable present of old Robert Hall's *Charge*, together with *your own*, I keep continually by me; and I hesitate not to say, that I have greatly profited by *both*. I cannot be sufficiently thankful for that Providence, which, directing all things rightly, led me to see *you* at Bradford. I feel grateful for any *hint*, and for any word of *caution* or *direction*, which may be given. I am but young; you are an eider in years, as well as by *office*. It is not to be expected that *I* should know what my seniors are acquainted with, in many things: though I would not give place to *a man of error*, though as old as Methuselah, no not for an hour. I felt your remarks relative to *spiritualizing the precepts* of God's word, fall into my very soul, *so as to abide*. In days past, *this* was, with me, a dangerous spot. Your caution here, was as a nail fastened in my heart. Your ideas also on the doctrine of "eternal generation" has not slipped my mind; nor has the solemn time I spent in God's house, in hearing you preach on Monday evening, from 1 Timothy. 1: 11. This I *can* say, that your visit to Bradford has been of more service to *me* than much silver or gold.

My position at Trowbridge is singular. I am a marked man, and in many instances cast out. The remarks, you mentioned to me, as made by Mr. S. E. Pierce, were most suitable, viz., "Let your ministry be *The glorious gospel of the ever blessed God*. This will be suited to all the woes, complicated sorrows, and heavy trials of the wilderness; and this *alone* will *God* own. Preaching the gospel is the setting forth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the way to God, as revealed by the blessed Spirit."

I am happy in the acquaintance and friendship of Mr. Hawkins. I find their house a home whenever I go there. But I must draw my long scrawl to a close. I shall be most happy to hear from you at any time. Do pray favour me with a few lines as soon as may be. Grace and peace be with you and yours.

\* Alas! our young brother is gone home *first*.

I remain, dear Sir, very truly yours in the Gospel,

J. F. R.

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Leicester, Feb. 20th, 1851.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—For your kind remembrance of me through Mr. Ensor, accept of my warmest thanks; also for the immortal Dr. Owen's sermon. There has been a good attendance at Ebenezer Chapel since I have been here, and I trust that the dear Lord has been making himself known. But I shall never be able to tell how indebted I am for the advice you gave me both *verbally*, and in those *Charges*, of Hall's and your own. I live to see more and more the necessity of the things there insisted on; and I trust my attention thereto has not been in vain. I feel that I need teaching, and the instructions of aged experience I reverence. Those who tell me, lovingly, of my *faults*, are my best friends. I am glad to find you are getting on with *Brine*, I shall take half-a-dozen copies. I read lately, the sermon of Mr. Stevens at the opening of Jireh Meeting. O how important are his remarks! I was very much struck with his view of *prayer-meetings* therein, where he says, "*Praying* people are going to heaven; but, there are many *hearing* people that never get there. There is not one *praying* person in hell, but the devil has got thousands that used to gallop about after *sermons*." On my way up from Trowbridge, I called at Worcester, and gave them a sermon. There is no sterling truth there, so that a sermon, all about Christ and him crucified, is a treat to those who love Him. I now say, my hearty love to *you*, and kind remembrance to your dear daughter and her little one; also to Mr. and Mrs. Pocock, and others your friends, who behaved so kindly to me. Grace and peace be yours in abundance; so prays, yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,

J. F. R.

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Ashton-street, Trowbridge, June 17th, 1851.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Your kind and welcome letter came safe to hand, for which I give you many thanks. Your valuable and fatherly advice has been, in many instances, of the greatest service to me. I hope still to have it as long as it shall please our covenant God to spare you in his vineyard. I know it is the *evening* of your day; it has been a *long* and *laborious* one; yea, and an *useful* one too. May the evening of your day be long, and honoured of our God in every important work to serve his church: and *then* you will receive your laid-up crown of righteousness, which *He* will give you in *that day*. I received the copies of "*Brine's Treatise*" quite safe. You

may well call him "*A Master in Israel.*" For *me* to praise his work is superfluous. It is like a sunbeam, penetrating into every nook and corner; discovering the *wrong*, and bringing to light the *right*. I have read it *through* carefully, and, *some* parts again and again. No Godfearing man could sit down to a sober perusal of it, without finding it both *searching* and *strengthening*. Also the *solemnity* of the matter stands so opposed to *flippancy*; and the purity of the sentiments with which it abounds, standing as it does in the sun-light of heaven's truth, wages war with the *muck* and *mire* of *paddle* and *dabble* men. In short, I view Brine's work as *a stream from the right side of the house, and from the sun-lit side of the altar; commencing at the beginning, and flowing onwards, "we find it in Communion with God."* I presume, my dear brother, that the *part* you especially refer *me* to, is that chapter on, "The declensions of Christians, owing to *an un-edifying ministry.*" A more solemn and truthful statement could not be made. I assure you it fell with weight upon *my* heart, and has been productive of most solemn *searchings*. *O* what should gospel ministers *be*! Who is sufficient for these things? I look to the *Master*, and remember *my* sufficiency is of *Him*. I have thought that I have been more a *let* and an *hindrance* to God's people, than a *help* to them: but God is judge of *motive* and *desire*. He knows what I *aim* at, however short I may be of hitting the mark. I can solemnly say, that the importance of the ministerial work is never from my mind; and I trust I can aver that *all* my efforts, in my poor feeble way, are directed to God's glory, and his people's welfare. My prayers, my reading, my study, and my preaching, *all* aim this way: with what *defects* God is witness; and I am compelled to say, that, if *He* was no better a *Master*, than I am a *servant*, I had long ago been discarded by him. I certainly aim to be *accurate* (in Robert Hall's way); that is to *distinguish* well, in order to *state* clearly; and thus firmly *defend* God's truth; but I hope I do not *this* at the expense of *spirituality* and experimental *savour*. I apprehend that Brine does not write for a man to become a sloven, or a *rambler*, but rather, that, as a minister, he should aim *lower* than their *heads*, even at their *hearts*: and *higher than them, all*, even the glory of a Triune God. *Gurnell* says, "The word of God is too sacred a thing; and, *preaching* is too solemn a work, to be *toyed*, and *played* with, as is the usage of *some*, who make the sermon a matter of *wit*, and *fine oratory*. Their sermons are like a child's *doll*, from which, if you take away its *dress*, the *rest* is worth nothing: unpin this *story*, take off that *gaudy phrase*, and little else is left in the discourse. Satan moves not for a thousand such *squibs* and *wit-cracks*. Draw, therefore, the sword *out* of thy scabbard, and strike with its *naked* edge; *this* you will find the only way to

pierce the people's consciences, and fetch *blood of their sins*. "Because the preacher was *wise*, he sought to find out *acceptable* words not rude, loose, and indigested, brought forth in a slovenly manner; lest the *sluttery* of the *cook* should turn the stomachs of the guests."

The more Christ is preached, in the love of his heart, the labour of his hands, his death on the cross, and his life before the throne; the more we may expect his people will *know* of him: the more they *know* the more they will *love*; and the more they *love* the more they will *obey*. This is as *you* say, in your letter to me, "*Free grace, and full duties*; and, the *freer* the grace the *fuller* the duty." This being done by the *gospel minister*, and that in a gospel way, viz., communion with God, studying the word, watching the flock, declaring all the counsel of God; and thus *occupying till the Lord come*, conscience is clear, and, *the result must be left*.

Pray excuse my writing more now. We are progressing as a cause. I hope to receive eleven or twelve into the church next Lord's-day. My Christian love to brethren Ensor, Pearson, Norman, and every enquiring friend. Remaining, my dear brother in the Lord, yours most affectionately."

J. F. R.

I was on a visit of love to the church at Leicester, when I received the above important letter; and I now earnestly request that *ministers* will read it with great care, joined with much thoughtfulness, and above all reduce to *practice* some solemn matters contained in it. *So will their flocks be profited*.

J. A. J.

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*Leicester, July 24th, 1851.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Glad was I to have a line from you. The Lord knows what to do with *me*; *I* am willing to spend and be spent for Him. He has been to me a good Master. He is blessing me here, at Leicester, where there are many sheep, and they cannot do with anything less than a *full gospel*. My heart has been enlarged greatly since I have been among them; and to have enlargement of heart is no small favour. I have been dark enough, at times, *out* of the pulpit; but the Lord has enlightened and enlivened my soul while *in* the work, and given his seal of testimony by blessing the word to the souls of his people. Last Lord's-day evening, we were immensely crowded, and I trust the Lord was with us. Some, perhaps, were present who came to spy out the land: but, I throw no *stones*; I am more

inclined to *set on bread*. The *former* only engenders strife; the *best* way is to preach Christ, and him crucified; and *this*, as you say in your Charge, “will fill head, heart, and hands.”

The *aged* servants in Christ I love. I see in them what *grace* does, and how God fulfils his word by maintaining his work alive in their souls. Perhaps you have never been more blessed at any time than *now*, both from the *pulpit* and the *press*: and is not that encouraging to *me* I You have had your losses, crosses, and bereavements; and yet, *there you stand*, and can *experimentally* adopt the language of the Apostle, as recorded in 2 Cor. i. 3—6; and, *so you will to the end*.

I clearly view my going to Trowbridge to have been of the Lord. *There* I learned what, perhaps, I never should have known elsewhere. Besides, had I not gone there, I might never have known dear brother Hawkins, nor yourself, nor Mr. Foreman, nor Mr. Wells. And then again, the things I know *now*, has given me that small acquaintance with God’s truth, which I trust I shall never forget. *I wish to be a learner*. Anything which tends to enlarge the *mind*, or correct the *judgment*, I would receive with joy. The ministry is of *vast* importance, and *age* sees what *youth* does not; and *this* gives weight to admonitions and counsels, which *youth* could not give. I would profit by every event, would turn everything to *some* account, and *then* endeavour to give to *others* the *result*. I would be all *eye* on the one hand, and all *heart* on the other: so that what I *see* I may lay it to *heart*, either for *reception* or *rejection*; that so what I can receive cordially, with all my heart, *that* to speak out boldly; but, what I *reject*, never to *recommend*. My lips, I hope, will never move without dispersing *knowledge* (Proverbs. 15: 7), and that knowledge to be of the *best*. What say you? Is it right so to move on? Your counsels will always be received by *me* with affectionate regard.

My *route* homewards is *via* Worcester and Cheltenham, at both which places I expect to preach. Did my way lie through London I would preach for *you* gladly; though a good sermon from *you* would be worth more than a golden sovereign to *me*. My hearty and kind love to you, dear brother; and in this many friends here join me, who love you for your work’s sake. I have had many enquiries after you. Grace and peace be yours! So prays

J. F. R.

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*Ashton-street, Trowbridge, December 22nd, 1851.*

DEAR BROTHER,—I am quite ashamed that I should have let your kind letter to me lay so long unanswered; but believe me, when I say, no lack of affection has been the cause, but rather multiplied hindrances and engagements. You are aware, dear brother, that my stay at *Plymouth* was *prolonged* until the end of November; my health being so much better, also the word of God having *free course* among the people. Great was the concourse which attended my feeble ministry; so that I trust both at Trinity Chapel, Portland Chapel, Ebenezer Chapel Stonehouse, (your old place, where *you* laboured more than thirty years ago) Brewer's Chapel, Lane's Chapel, &c., the word of God was not published in vain.

Your late ministrations at Trinity Chapel, were received, I found, with joyous pleasure and satisfaction: yea, and they are dwelt upon to this day. There were words spoken by you to the *faint* and the *weary*, which have enshrined you in their hearts: and truly a *niche* in the hearts of the *saints*, is better than one in Westminster Abbey, or St. Paul's.

And now, my dear brother, *to another matter*, which has given me no small anxiety of mind, and searchings of soul. Yesterday morning, I received a letter from Plymouth, containing an invitation to *Trinity Chapel*, for six months, with a view to the *Pastorate*! I am, of course, *a strict Baptist*; but your dear relative, Mr. Hawkins, writes me thus:—"I believe, so great is the feeling after your ministry, that, in *firmness* to the truth, with *affection*, you may have your own *scriptural* terms. Should it *be* so, (and I think it *will be*) for you to go there under *honourable* scriptural conditions, *then I* feel confident that *the Lord's hand, is in it*; and the rest of your days will be spent in honour and usefulness, in His church below." But the matter has sorely exercised me. If the Lord *should* make it plain for me to go to Plymouth, there is a vast field for usefulness, and a wide course. I must leave it, however, with *Him*, whose is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory. I must conclude. *My health is not very good*. I trust this will find *you* well. The tidings of your last letter gave me great joy. May all success attend you every hour, and every way, from *that* God who *has* fed you and kept you all your life long; and who has promised to bear and carry you even to the *end*. Yours most affectionately in Jesus,

J. F. R.

P. S. I shall always esteem a line from you, my dear brother, as a great favour. I bless my God that I have ever had your acquaintance, and weighty remarks. I shall have to speak of you with most affectionate regard, *long* after *your* head shall be laid low.

“Hark, my soul, *he’s* sweetly singing,  
Midst that wondrous happy throng,  
O what sounds of *Hallelujahs*  
Echo in their noble song!

Come, Lord Jesus, O come quickly!  
Let *me* to thy throne arise;  
Bear *my* part in that grand music,  
Join the chorus of the skies.”

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