

CHAPTER XII.

“His character was marked by great *caution* and *wisdom*. Some deemed him too hesitating and slow. Still they generally found that at last he was right, and that the steps he had taken were safe. He was a prudent, and admitting our individual and characteristic infirmities, a truly wise man. He never involved himself in difficulty, or plunged into danger through his imprudence. He always thought much before he decided, and when he moved he felt that his ground was firm. He was cautious in abstaining from everything violent. He was no mere party-man; he never committed himself by any political demonstration, and studiously avoided the arena of warm and angry debate, of violent, of clamorous controversy. He strictly confined himself to his duties as a minister of the Gospel, and assiduously discharged them. He never, like many, stepped beyond his own province. He knew what he had to do, and did it. He was characterised by his sageness, which increasingly developed as he advanced in years.”—*A Portraiture of William Jay*.
By REV. THOMAS WALLACE.

THIS chapter will be devoted to a review of the last fifteen years of John Hazelton's career, a period which was the least eventful, but in many respects the happiest and most useful of his life.

In 1873 many of our bravest standard-bearers had fallen, and not a few others had almost accomplished their warfare below. John Foreman and James Wells had fallen asleep; George Murrell had passed away after a long life of holy service: George Wright had finished his work, and was waiting for the open vision, while Philip Dickerson, William Palmer, and Samuel Milner were gathering their last few sheaves before being called to rest.

Our dear friend stood almost alone, and the sadness of isolation from that time seemed somewhat to overshadow his spirit. He manfully served the people he loved; he refused no help when needed. His ministerial brethren found in him an unwearied counsellor, whose advice was always to be trusted. He thus kept in touch with his time, and served his generation by the will of God; but his sympathies were, to a large extent, with the views and ways of the men of his earlier years. He made no new friends—in the deepest sense of that *great* word—and what we remarked of his career at Bungay was the case to the last—he was *at heart* a solitary man.

The honour of seniority he accepted very quietly, and neither sought nor evaded its responsibilities. He was accessible to the humblest of his brethren, and found time to listen sympathetically to all who sought his aid in sorrow.

His labours both in London and the provinces were extensive. He ordinarily preached four—occasionally five times a week—which, as he never repeated a sermon, involved no small amount of study.

His Monday evening expositions, which as a rule occupied half an hour, were most profitable, but not elaborately premeditated.

His services as an anniversary preacher were valued, not only for the benefit which his visit so often proved, but on account of the moral sanction which his name conferred. Unlike some of his brethren who appear so eager to address an audience—that care not *whom* they meet or *what cause* they advocate—he “liked to know where he was going,” and if what he had learned of a chapel was unsatisfactory, an invitation to cross its threshold for any purpose would be quietly declined.

Popular he never was, so far as the Christian world at large was concerned, but he was widely appreciated among those who loved the doctrines of sovereign and distinguishing grace. A

respectable and representative congregation could be relied on if he were announced to conduct a special service, and all who came were sure to hear a sermon that would not only stimulate thought, but awaken holy and spiritual feelings.

In his intercourse with his ministerial brethren, he was frank and affectionate, and evidently desired to turn the interviews he held with them to profitable account.

At first, he not unfrequently struck strangers as constrained and reserved. His manner was undemonstrative, and sometimes seemed to lack cordiality. In this he was a contrast to the beaming and gushing brethren (often the hollowest of men) whose effusiveness is, to some, so attractive. John Hazelton was *real*, as succeeding interviews invariably proved; and his kindness was as true as it was valuable.

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He was a member of the Pastoral Fraternity—a friendly union of London ministers which now assembles monthly at Little Alie-street Chapel—and attended its meetings when health and leisure permitted. His visits were welcomed, for he invariably started and stimulated some profitable train of thought, and gave his own opinions without reserve.

The difference between “the *work* of faith and the *labour* of love” is a fair specimen of the questions he was wont to start.

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His services on behalf of the body of Christians with which he was so closely allied were principally given to two organisations—the Metropolitan Association of Strict Baptist Churches, and the Strict Baptist Mission.

The Metropolitan Association of Strict Baptist Churches he regarded with great interest. At its institution, in 1871, it was feared that the unhappy terminations of some similar attempts would deter him from taking part in this. He,

however, warmly promoted the new scheme, attended its inaugural meetings, consented to become its second president, and did all he could to ensure its success. For a time its progress was gratifying, but in 1875 a collapse seemed to be impending. Its leading men were believed, whether rightly or wrongly, to be drifting away from our distinctive principles. Public interest flagged, the members of its committee declined to attend when convened, and at the fourth annual meeting of the Pastors and Delegates the dissolution of the Association seemed inevitable. The president vacated the chair, and not a word was said until some one suggested that brother John Hazelton should again be asked to be President. This was seconded, and again silence prevailed. At length a chorus of voices took up the request, and he consented, on condition that the writer should work with him as Secretary. This meeting with cordial acquiescence, he quietly took the chair, and order and harmony were restored. The eventful day terminated by his delivering his famous discourse on the Perpetuity of the Words of Christ, which, in its printed form, for grandeur of thought, and eloquence of language, is, in our judgment, by far the finest of his sermons that was ever published.

During the twelve months which followed, the Association was practically re-established on its present basis. The President spared no trouble in fulfilling his engagement. He revised his sermon for the press, assisted the secretary in the preparation of the statement appended to it, which was *nominally* in lieu of a report; but *actually* intended to re-assure the public as to the true character of the Association.

He attended every meeting of the committee. Under his wise direction, some simple and practical rules for the prompt utilization of its funds were formulated and adopted in place of others which had only hampered the committee, and the first two or three loans were granted. At the termination of his year of office, public confidence was fully restored; and the Secretary

had the pleasure of nominating John Box as his successor, the dear brother to whom so much of the prosperity of succeeding years is attributable. Humanly speaking, however, and giving all honour to those who have subsequently contributed to raise the Association to its present pitch of influence and usefulness, its existence would have terminated on the occasion referred to, had not our brother John Hazelton acted as he did, at this crisis of its history.

To the last he remained its firm and faithful friend, and served it to the utmost of his decreasing powers. He was chosen its President several times.

The Strict Baptist Mission also found in him an attached and unflinching adherent. Its early history was a chequered one. Peculiar difficulties arose from the fact that its distinguishing characteristic is, when possible, the employment of native teachers, and these too often proved unworthy of the confidence reposed in them. One and another, who at first promised well, resigned their posts for more lucrative engagements, or had to be dismissed for unsatisfactory conduct. Hence for some years the little society made but slow progress.

The first two presidents were Samuel Milner and James Woodard. On the death of the latter in 1882, a wise and devoted leader was earnestly desired, and each prominent Metropolitan minister was anxiously considered, and all wondered who was able and willing to fill the responsible position. Our friend's name was, of course, mentioned, but it was feared that his many engagements and delicate health would compel him to decline the invitation. He, however, accepted it, and threw his heart into the office. As a rule he attended each meeting of the committee, and entered into all deliberations with warm interest. His policy was a happy blending of caution and enterprise, and under his guidance the Mission began to progress as it had never done heretofore.

These varied calls upon his time and energy in no way interfered with his devotion to the people of his choice and charge. Unlike some pastors, who are accused of carrying their cream abroad and keeping their skim-milk for home consumption, he invariably reserved his best efforts for his own congregation. Excellent as were many of his anniversary sermons, his week-night lectures were of higher average excellence, richer in matter and illustration, and delivered with more inspiring energy.

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From his pulpit utterances,* it is clear that he attached great importance to the doctrine commonly called the Commercial view of the Atonement. This has, however, failed to commend itself to some students of the Bible, and in 1874 it was somewhat vigorously assailed by one of our Strict Baptist, ministerial brethren. In harmony with his principles, John Hazelton penned no word in defence of the truth he loved, but when a treatise on the subject was projected by his friend, Israel Atkinson, of Brighton, he felt the greatest pleasure, and introduced the work to the public by a graceful Preface—interesting as being one of the productions of his own pen that saw the light. It is to be regretted that so useful a book has, apparently, failed to obtain the attention it indisputably deserved.

As years rolled by, and another generation of hearers succeeded those who had first gathered round him, the love of his people grew almost reverential in its loyal and attached devotion.

Twice during this period the interior of the chapel was re-

* See John Hazelton's Sermons, Vol. i., No. 1; also the notice of "Gethsemane" on page 148 of this work; and portions of the Sermon on the "Love of the Spirit," page 176. The reader will find the subject discussed in the Author's "Manual of Faith and Practice," pages 47—49.

constructed. In 1872 an attempt was made to improve the ventilation—the hot and impure air having proved extremely detrimental to the pastor's health. The ceiling was accordingly removed, and the roof boarded inside; and thus a considerable improvement was effected. In 1884 it was re-pewed, and converted into a neat and commodious place of worship. It is to be regretted, however, that efforts were not made in bygone years to erect a new sanctuary, suited to the requirements of such a ministry. In justice to the Church and congregation, it should be said that the project would have been gladly entertained by them but for their pastor's inveterate objection to it.

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Few incidents in his life present the characteristics of *anecdotes*, so often supposed to be essential to the interest of a biography. The following, however, are worth preserving.

He entertained a deeply-rooted dislike to the use of musical instruments in the sanctuary, and resolutely opposed the introduction of a harmonium into his own chapel. This some of the members greatly desired, and it was arranged that the matter should be discussed at a Church meeting. In introducing it, the pastor observed that *he* had a remark to make. "If you have that thing down here, you must find another man to preach up there," pointing to the pulpit. It is needless to say that nothing further was said.

At the close of a Lord's-day a worthy brother observed: "Ah, my dear sir, how sweet it will be to reach that world where Sabbaths have no end." "Yes," was the reply, "but I am glad they do here. I want to get home and have my supper."

An uninteresting person, who imagined that he was called to preach the Gospel, was at one time accustomed to accost him on

his way home on Lord's-day evenings, and tire him with his tedious conversation. On one occasion he gave a long and prosy account of an extraordinary sermon that he had preached from the words, "He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken." John Hazelton at length could endure it no longer, and gruffly retorted, "I should think, my friend, that before you had done with it, *there was not a whole bone left in its body.*" This terminated an undesirable friendship.

An incident that illustrated his kindness of heart in a touching way occurred on October 7th, 1873.* The writer had gone with him to Guildford to assist at the recognition of our brother William Kern as minister of the old Baptist Chapel.

Our friend in the morning delivered the customary statement of the nature of a Gospel Church. In the afternoon he also gave the charge to the pastor, and it then fell to my lot to address a few words of counsel to the Church. It happened that I was unusually depressed and nervous. My dear mother had recently died under very melancholy circumstances, and my health was exceedingly bad. The brother who opened the service had prayed about everything "in the heavens above and in the earth beneath," and I had almost said, "in the waters under the earth," but had made no reference to my poor, nervous, trembling self. The address to the pastor had been so full and exhaustive that I was wondering how I could possibly interest the people. As I passed brother Hazelton at the foot of the pulpit stairs, he looked into my face, and perhaps read my fears there, for he took my right hand in his, and gave it a warm, earnest clasp. A heart full of affection was expressed in the action. It was an assurance of his interest, sympathy and prayerful solicitude for my success, and so strengthened me that my heart did not flutter or my voice falter, and many thanked me afterwards.

* See *Gospel Herald* for 1873, page 258.

A man's *dotage* (or the childishness of old age) it has been humorously said is often preceded by his *anecdotalage*. To this period our dear friend never attained, for his mind was vigorous and his powers unimpaired when he left us. He lived too much in the earnest present to maunder over memories of the past, and but rarely indulged in such stories as some old men never tire of telling.

The following scraps of conversation may, however, be read with interest:—

A Friend.—"Do you not observe that spirituality is at a very low ebb, and that much of the spirit of the world has crept into the Churches, which is sad?"

J. H.—"Yes, I do; I observe so much that I should come to the conclusion that religion was nothing but a fable, if I did not realise something in my own heart."

GEORGE MURRELL.

A friend enquired as to the nature of George Murrell's influence. His sermons are not striking to read.

J. H.—"It is difficult to say; but I think his power lay in the fact that he lived in such close fellowship with God. He had no comfort at home, and seemed to live in God's presence. He was on one occasion offering prayer, previously to preaching at a country anniversary, and so elevated and spiritual were his thoughts that a man (I think he was a worldly person) who was present nudged someone who was sitting next him, and asked, 'Where does that man live?' 'IN HEAVEN,' was the reply, and he was about right."

Friend.—It is said that Joseph Sedgwick's gift was the power of sanctified pathos. Would you say the same of Murrell?

J. H.—"Hardly; something higher than that. I remember hearing him preach on 'Behold, the Lamb of God.' After a few words of introduction, in his then curious voice, he

announced his divisions—1. The object, ‘The Lamb of God.’ 2. The act, ‘Taking away sin.’ 3. The direction, ‘Behold.’ Then he again named his first division, and added, ‘THE LAMB—bless His name—not the lion, but THE LAMB of God.’ This is nothing to tell, but there was something indescribable in his way of uttering these words, and the whole chapel full of people burst into tears.”

Friend.—Then there was the *force of spirituality* in Mr. Murrell?

J. H.—“Yes, you know we used often to interchange, and when he was at my house he always made little John stand by him at family prayers, and he would put his arm round him when he knelt down, and would pray for little John and give him a hug; and every separate petition was followed by another hug. The little fellow did not soon forget those prayers.”

JOHN FOREMAN.

“John was a good theologian. Divine truth assumed an orderly form in his mind, and he instinctively regarded it as an harmonious and beautiful whole. He often did not study his sermons, though. I remember being with him at a country anniversary, and he was smoking in the vestry at the time for the commencement of the service. ‘Time is up,’ some one said, but he requested that another minister would read and pray. At length, when the last verse of the last hymn before the sermon was being read, he laid down his pipe, ascended the pulpit, and read a text. I am sure he had not the slightest idea what to say, and he told us that he ‘felt like a man hunting rats in a barn. He rakes here, and out pops a rat and escapes. He pokes there, and another runs away.’ All this time he was beating his brains for a thought, and at last one came, and he worked it out grandly, and preached a really fine sermon.”

ACCEPTING A PASTORAL CALL.

Friend.—"Mr. Atkinson was telling me that he was once advised 'not to accept a pastorate against the wishes of a *respectable minority*.' What do you think?"

J. H.—"I should be sorry to advise any one to accept a pastorate against the wishes of a *minority* at all."

CHURCHES HAVE PECULIARITIES.

J. H.—"A well-made glove will not fit every hand, and a good minister will not suit every Church. There are *peculiarities* about all Churches that should be taken into account before pastoral invitations are accepted."

THE TOP OF THE LADDER.

J. H.—"S—— has been asking my advice about accepting the invitation to the pastorate at ——. I reminded him of what Samuel Milner said: 'It is a critical thing to begin at the top of a ladder, for every step must be a step downwards.'"

CAUTION DISPLAYED.

Friend (in reference to a Church who were fascinated by a wholly unworthy minister, and seemed likely to give him a call to the pastorate).—"If I were you, I should tell them what I know" (spoken excitedly).

J. H.—"If you were I, you would probably do as I mean to do—*say nothing*."

The event showed that he acted wisely.

TEMPERANCE IS A VIRTUE.

J. H.—"Some time ago I received a request to preach a teetotal sermon, and a form was enclosed for me to fill up and return. I simply wrote on it, 'And when Paul reasoned on *temperance*, righteousness, and judgment, Felix trembled,' and returned it in the envelope which had been enclosed."

SHEAVES OF GLORY.

Friend.—"In one of your sermons (vol. i., page 224), you state that 'the bodies of those saints who were raised from the dead when our Lord left the tomb, are in heaven'—when do you think that they left the earth in their whole persons, as they must have done if this view is correct?"

J. H.—"I imagine they went to Heaven with Christ. That is the view I have taken of this verse in the selection (finds hymn 53 in Denham, and reads)—

" 'Lift your immortal heads,
Your Lord's from conquest come;
On sin and death He treads,
Let Heaven prepare Him room.
A sheaf of glory's harvest ears,
The victor in His chariot bears.' "

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His ordinary platform addresses were, as has been stated, *sermonettes* rather than speeches, but the writer remembers that he once made some rather caustic remarks on the spurious conversions that he feared were too common in certain quarters. To exemplify his meaning, he related the case of a female who imagined that she had 'got religion' at a revival service. When pressed to describe her emotions at this solemn time, she replied, "*Oh, I felt just as if I had had a good glass of stout.*" This was related with the utmost gravity—a quiet twinkle of the eye alone showing that the speaker appreciated the somewhat grim humour of the story.

* WAYMAN OF KIMBOLTON.

More than once we have heard him relate that Lewis Wayman was in the company of the Duke of Manchester when some

* See page 148.

undergraduates from Cambridge University were on a visit to his son.

The Duke.—"This person is a blacksmith. He is also a dissenting minister, and he is so well acquainted with the Bible that I warrant he will answer any question relating to it you may like to put to him."

Undergraduates (after conferring together).—"Well, Mr. Wayman, tell us whether the golden calf that Aaron made was a heifer or a bull?"

Wayman (without a moment's hesitation).—"That, gentlemen, is soon answered, for we read in Psalm cvi. that 'They changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.'"

THE GOSPEL AND THE PREACHER.

J. H.—"I have preached so long to one congregation that the strain to bring them some fresh thoughts gets to be very great."

Friend.—"Oh, sir, you should not be afraid, you know that the Gospel is an inexhaustible subject."

J. H.—"I know that, my friend. The Gospel will never be exhausted, but the mind of the man who preaches it may be, and I often fear mine is."

One of the marked peculiarities of our friend as a conversationalist was that he liked to talk over sermons *that he had recently preached*. Many of his ministerial brethren will remember this *trait*, and recall how, with half-closed eyes, he would go over point by point, and often, after giving the gist of a full, original and striking discourse, such as he only could deliver it, would end by saying, "So I handled the text, you see, very simply, in its natural and obvious sense." How often have we wished that "the natural and obvious sense" would strike us

as it did him, and wondered that passages should suggest so much to him that never occurred to others.

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This period (1873—1887) was a solemn one on account of the removal of so many of his friends by death.

In May, 1873, William Palmer was called home, and on John Hazelton the duty devolved of preaching his funeral sermon, the sketch of which, in the *Gospel Herald* for July, 1873, proves that it must have been a masterly effort.

“Your late pastor,” he averred, “‘being dead yet speaketh.’ The results of his gifts and the fruits of his abilities will follow him. The books he wrote; the Churches to which he was united; the sinners and saints that have been blessed under his ministry—all these are works which will follow.

But when the workman himself came into the deep solemnities of death, he ignored his gifts, he put off his official robes, wrapped himself in the obedience of his Saviour by a living faith, and depended not for a moment on any of his sermons, but cast himself on the salvation of God.”

In March, 1875, Samuel Milner passed away in his sleep. “Look well to the foundations,” were his parting words to John Hazelton, who, not long after, was called upon to address the congregation assembled in Keppel-street Chapel, prior to the funeral.

His friend, he observed, was a good *man*, a good *minister*, and a good *pastor*. He could not be mean or deceitful, for had God in His sovereign grace done nothing for him, he would have been upright and honourable.

Mr. Mote, an honoured deacon of the Church, and Mr. Hodges, an esteemed member of the congregation, passed away in 1879; and Richard Minton, most sedulous and affectionate of deacons

departed this life in 1881, in the eighty-second year of his age. Others—beloved for the truth's sake—followed, and their pastor was called upon at sadly frequent intervals to utter the last farewell at the grave of one and another who had been dear to him.

In November, 1883, his good deacon, Robert Hoddy, was called away by death, and John Hazelton felt the stroke keenly.* He conducted the funeral with peculiar solemnity: delivered a sweet and pathetic sermon in connection with the mournful event; and for the second and last time in his life prepared an article for a religious magazine. His "Memoir of Mr. Robert Hoddy," appeared in the *Gospel Herald* for January, 1884. It largely consists of extracts, but one or two sentences are very characteristic of their thoughtful and spiritually-minded author:—

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. Their character is formed by God; their new and holy life is the result of union with Christ; God 'worketh in them to will and to do of His good pleasure;' crowns of righteousness are prepared for them on high, and shall be given them by the righteous Judge of all; and therefore they are for ever remembered in heaven."

"All labour in Christ's cause must be a labour of love to be pleasant to the labourer and profitable to others."

"His character was spiritual, his life was useful, his end was peace, and he is in everlasting remembrance at home."

Many of his attached hearers passed away about this time; others were removed, by Providence, from the locality; and George Burrell, for so many years the devoted Church Secretary had become the esteemed minister of Mount Zion Chapel, Watford.

Still, amid dying and departing friends, he was cheered with

* See Letter on page 211.

the smile of his ever living Lord—whose blessing continued to rest on his labours. Seats vacated by those who had passed away were again occupied—and his congregations did not diminish.

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With the following productions of his pen—all but one of which are letters—this chapter will be brought to a close:—

To a lady whose husband was seriously ill.

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD,—If sincere hopes and fervent prayer on the part of your friends would restore health to your dear husband he would soon be out again, but “none can stay God’s hand, nor say unto Him, what doest Thou?”

Now you both feel the importance and preciousness of faith, and above all the preciousness of your Lord Jesus. If He is, under ordinary circumstances, “precious to them that believe,” how precious He must be when one is in the furnace of affliction. Then without the Lord there is nothing, absolutely nothing, to rest upon, or afford solid comfort; but you know Him, and your suffering husband knows Him, and, although His dealings are mysterious, you know you are in His arms, and in His heart, and that His fulness cannot fail. God gives faith and He tries it also; and frequently in circumstances like yours faith is apt to faint, and let go its hold. I trust that while you are in the fire your faith in Him that sits by, may be strong. It may be hard to believe that it is as well with us in the depths as on the heights, but it is nevertheless an unalterable fact, for our Father says, “I will surely do thee good,” and “if we believe not yet He abideth faithful, and cannot stay Himself.” Being creatures, and viewing things as we do, we should not always, had we the control of circumstances, have things as they are; but if we saw all as our God sees it, we should do precisely as He does; and, therefore, if all things are considered, there is no ground for complaint, but, on the contrary, abundant reasons why we should leave ourselves in His wise hands, and trust in His great and gracious care and name. I am, dear Sister, yours truly in the Lord,

J. H.

May 6th, 1874.

To a Christian lady, acknowledging a New Year's gift of a box of cigars.

MY DEAR SISTER,—Many thanks for your kind present and note just received. Having some experience of the nature and qualities of the contents of the box, I have made up my mind to *burn them all*, and am neither afraid nor ashamed to tell you so; indeed I opine that you expected I should do so. Unless I burn them I cannot conceive what use to put them to; only I think they must be burnt on *high-days* and *holidays*; they are so pleasing to the eye, and doubtless will be so to the mouth and other organs. I thank you much for them.

A new year is come, and we are permitted to see its commencement; but who will see its end? If we are found in Him, our life and death will be right, and the duration of our existence here will not be of great moment. Since health, however, is a great blessing, I send you a few directions concerning it. *Cleanliness* being important, see that you bathe every day, or oftener, in the *blood* of the Lamb. *Good air* is essential; be on the mount of everlasting love as much as possible, and avoid low and dark places. *Your diet* must be good; the bread and water of eternal life, are at hand and cheap. Be particular as to *your clothing*, which must be the garments of salvation. With respect to your company, engage the presence of Christ very frequently. Let *your employment* be “the work of faith and labour of love,” and be sure you *rest much in the Lord*. “If you do these things you shall never fail.”

My cough is troublesome, but I am better. Mrs. H. and John, who are well, desire me to express their love to you. Accept expressions of Christian esteem from,

Yours very truly in the Lord,

J. H.

Jan. 1st, 1879.

To a Christian lady congratulating her on her husband's restoration to health.

DEAR SISTER,—I received yours on the 26th in due order, and regret I have not been able to acknowledge its receipt before. My

time is so fully engaged, and my bronchitis so trying, that I cannot do what I would. There are not many persons more truly thankful for your good husband's recovery than myself. I trust and pray the Lord will perfectly restore him to health and strength and to his dear wife and family.

Life, as it appears before the young, is very promising and rosy, but as it is gradually entered, the illusion disappears, and stern reality takes its place. Yet we who are going to Canaan have much to be thankful for, and even to induce us to sing in the night.

Your affliction and sorrow, though deep, might have been deeper, and like many you might have had no God to lean upon. Your good husband is in God's everlasting arms, and he knows and feels it, and at times rejoices in the pleasing fact. Afflictions are bitter blessings to believers, but perhaps they are as good, or even better, than those which are sweet. We have recently seen that terrible fogs envelop us when the weather is calm, and yet the stormy wind, though it clears the atmosphere, is far from agreeable. The Lord, your Saviour and Friend, ruleth over all. Into tribulation the Lord has led you, and out of it He will in due time bring you and yours, "and God, even our own God, will bless you."

Give my Christian love to Mr. G—; I will (D.V.), call some day. In much Christian esteem.

I am, dear Sister, yours very truly in the Lord,

J. H.

January 31st, 1882.

To Mrs. M—, expressing condolence at the death of her son.

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD,—Having learned that your beloved son is gone, I thought a line by my hand, and from my heart, would not be unacceptable to you: especially as my spiritual relation to you has been one of long standing, and a source of holy pleasure to us both. The bereaving hand which has left a gap in your family—a wound in your heart—and a young widow in a new and trying position—is the hand of your heavenly Father. Second causes exist and operate, but they are guided by our God, who will do all His pleasure. "Till He bids we cannot

die." The operations of Divine Providence, even the most dark and mysterious, fulfil God's wise and loving purposes. Having made provision for His people, and bound Himself to do them good, "His eternal thought moves on His undisturbed affairs."

One of my first thoughts respecting the loss you have sustained was this—how much there is in the affliction of Sister M—to alleviate her sorrow! You have Scriptural and abundant reasons to believe that your son was God's child—a purchased, polished, and heavenly jewel, and an heir of life and heaven. You gave birth to this now glorified one, and you nursed him for the Lord. He has met his holy and glorified Father, and you are expecting to join them both again; but what is best of all is the fact, that all shall "be for ever with the Lord," and like Him too. His pilgrimage was short; the city with foundations, to which he was bound, was soon seen, and reached, and entered; and the woes, the wants, and the toil of life are for ever left behind. He carried sin and a suffering body to the gates of glory, and then dropped the load, and began to live, as no one can live here. Sorrow you may and must feel, but your sorrow, unlike that of many, is mixed with solemn and grateful joy.

May our Lord draw near to you at this time, and fulfil His promise, and be to you all He has been in former bereavements; may He be now your consolation, your refuge, and your stay. As our reasons for desiring to remain on earth are decreasing in number and in force, so may our desire to depart and be with our glorious Lord become more and more intense, but in subjection to His will.

I trust the Lord will sanctify this loss to all concerned. May the widow and family be blessed, and also the two mothers, who are sisters in the flesh, and in the Lord; likewise all the branches of the numerous family. May all possess a meetness for heaven, and be finally gathered with others gone before, where all is life and rest.

With Christian love, I remain, my dear sister, yours affectionately in the Lord,

J. H.

February 8th, 1883.

Extract.

MY sufferings this winter have been great, and are so still. Occasionally I am unable to be in my place; but my people are affectionate and considerate; and my God is good and merciful. On ordinance days I take my dinner, &c., and stay all day in the vestry; thus I avoid much pain and coughing. But *who* and *what* am I, that I should have no suffering? "The Lord trieth the righteous"—they need it, at least I do, therefore, "let Him do as seemeth Him good."

I am grieved for my dear Brother Meeres and his wife, and I wish I could help his friends at the Chapel. At our meeting he was unusually animated, and his address, the last he delivered, was peculiarly sweet. May the Lord answer prayer on his behalf. I intended seeing him this morning, but my cough distresses me, and my wife, who is again ill, persuades me to remain indoors.

At Chadwell-street we suffered much last year by death, and our loss through the departure of dear Hoddy is great. I trust however the Lord is with us, for I received four good members into communion yesterday, and should have admitted eight, had I been able to baptise.

. . . Text yesterday: morning, Heb. xii. 23; evening, Psa. cxxii. 6.

January 17th, 1884.

To Mr. G. S—, one of his deacons, when staying at the seaside.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours in due course, and thank you for the brotherly feeling it expresses, and will let the brethren see it to-morrow evening, as they are mentioned in it.

I am sorry you felt as if you were in Egypt when you arrived at H—. To be in darkness, bondage, and exile, is bitter experience, though it may, through our Father's blessing, lead to good and profitable results. Bondage tends to endear liberty, and darkness may enable us the better to appreciate the sweet and unctuous light of heaven. It seems that your state of mind prepared you to receive God's word with avidity and delight, for you were not one of those full souls that loathe the honeycomb. Salvation,

in all its branches, is of God; and our sorrows, like our joys, are part of God's ways. "I am thy salvation," is the word we desire our God to repeat again and again. We read the words in the *Holy Book*, but want to receive them from God's own mouth; "let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth." *Say it again; Father, say it again.* Sweet words, to rise with in the morning, and to fall asleep with at night.

Last Lord's-day both our texts were taken out of Psalm cvii.—morning, verse 20; evening, verses 41, 42, and the results, as to the people, I must leave with God.

With Christian love to yourself, Mrs. S——, and all with you.

I remain, my dear brother, yours truly in the Lord,

J. H.

September 24th, 1884.

To the same, under similar circumstances.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was pleased to have a letter from you this morning, and was glad to learn you were better. I trust you may continue to gain strength and return quite well. Our good friends at Chadwell-street have been rather tried by the absence of so many of us at the same time. . . . On Sabbath morning at Chadwell-street our subject was in Jeremiah xxiii. 6; and in the evening Ezekiel xxxiv. 14. I did as well as I could; may the Lord bless His Word.

To-morrow I am off to Clapham in the afternoon.

What turmoil and bustle are in this world, and even religion is not without them. O for some quiet nook where one's soul might hold daily intercourse with the *God of peace*. Well, as it is, we must not complain. We live on the best bread and wine—we bathe in the best sea—a Saviour's blood, we wear the best clothes, the garments of salvation—we have the best relations, God and His people—and we have the best home just before us. Let us magnify the Lord together.

With Christian love, I am yours sincerely in the Lord,

J. H.

July 25th, 1885.

To a young lady, condoling with her on the death of her mother.

DEAR FRIEND,—Of course I had heard of the death of your dear mother before I received your letter this morning, but notwithstanding I was glad to have a line from you respecting her last hours.

The salvation, life, and pilgrimage of your beloved parent are full of instruction in Divine things to the thoughtful child of God. Her's was no ordinary experience, as appears from papers she wrote which Mr. S—— lent me to look over. I have read them through, and they suggest to me the glorious words "What hath God wrought!" God made her what she was as a saint, He led her about, and instructed her in a peculiar manner. He kept her as the apple of His eye; He gave her no common measure of light upon the mysteries of the Gospel; He kept her in the wilderness many years, He made her ripe and ready for heaven, and He has now taken her to Himself. Her life was the life of a well tried believer; her progress upward was gradual, her end was peace; her arrival at home was welcome, and her eternal rest with her Lord is joyful. Rejoice, my friend, for you know *what* your mother was, a "justified spirit made perfect," and you know *where* she is, "For ever with the Lord." "May we die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like his."

I thank you for taking my infirmity into consideration as to your mother's funeral. You have done me a favour by excusing me on the occasion. I shall, if the Lord will, refer to her departure next Lord's-day evening, and say something upon the text which has been given to me as the portion she loved so well and held so fast: "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," and may God bless the event and the service to us all.

With Christian regards and prayerful wishes to and for all concerned, that what has taken place may be sanctified to you and yours,

I remain, dear friend, yours truly in the Lord,

J. H.

September 29th, 1885.

To a Christian lady, once a worshipper at Chadwell-street.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD,—It is some days since I received your letter, but want of opportunity and my trying cough are the cause of its having remained unanswered until now.

Time flies apace, and carries all things with it. I should not have imagined that nine years had passed away since you became a member with us at Chadwell-street. It seems, however, it is a fact, and you appear to remember it well. What changes have taken place during these nine years—changes in the nation, in Churches, in families, and in ourselves, but not in our God. He sitteth King upon the floods, the rising and sinking, and the ebbing and flowing of which fulfil His unchanging purposes. How many miseries during that time we have been the subjects of, how many we have escaped, and how many mercies we have received! Nine years' supplies, nine years' protection, nine years' guidance, and nine years' perseverance, call for songs of loudest praise. Doubtless you owe much to our Lord, but I owe more than you. Are we thankful? "Who can give unto the Lord the glory which is *due* unto His name?" He bears with our manners in the wilderness like a God, for "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him?"

I am glad to learn that your heart is sometimes warm, and also that you obtain help in the sanctuary. It helps a minister to know the Word preached is blessed, and that his friends find it in their hearts to pray for him. Most of my life on earth is behind me, and if my hearers will help me with their supplications, perhaps I shall not be cast off in my declining years. We need more grace, *not in Christ, but from Him*, to enable us to lean on His arm, to hang our all on His Person, to hide in His name, and to triumph in His righteousness. May you grow in grace, live near to the Lord, and become increasingly like Him. So prays

Your affectionate Pastor,

J. H.

November 11th, 1885.

To a Christian sister, acknowledging an expression of kindness. The last letter penned by the writer.

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND,—Kindly accept our sincere thanks

for your kindness, and also our earnest and prayerful wishes that every needful temporal and spiritual blessing may be vouchsafed to you by our covenant God.

I trust you are well and benefiting by your residence in Wales, where I doubt not the air is far better than ours in foggy London. Of late London has been most trying, particularly to persons who, like myself, suffer from bronchitis.

Let us not, however, complain; there are worse places than London. One may have pure air and beautiful scenery, but no Gospel, no Christian friends, or even no God. You have a God, a great One; and you know Him for yourself. This, in addition to your temporal mercies, and the local advantages surrounding you, constitute you a debtor indeed to grace. Doubtless, however, you have taken sin, unbelief, doubts and fears with you into Wales, where most likely you sometimes meet the tempter. Hence, whether at home or abroad, the conflict goes on, and earth's best is far short of heaven.

Another year is gone, and we have entered upon a new one. What will the young year bring and reveal as it advances? What worms we are! How limited is our knowledge, and how feeble our arm! But "all our times are in God's hands," and underneath are His everlasting arms.

I trust you are favoured with nearness to Him every day, and that as new wants arise they are abundantly supplied by our loving God.

Mrs. H. unites with me in Christian love. May the Lord be ever with and bless you.

I am, dear Christian friend, yours sincerely in the Lord,

J. H.

January 2nd, 1888.

A PILGRIM.

(Written for an album, Nov. 29th, 1886.)

I am acquainted with a man who many years ago became a pilgrim, and started for the Holy Land. He was not naturally inclined to this life, for all his desires were earthly and sinful, and opposed to such a course. It was believed that after a time

he would prove a most agreeable companion of the wild and the wicked, and also achieve a position for himself in the world. The influences he was surrounded by, were not such as to lead any to expect that a change of heart and mind would take place, or that he would ever love and esteem persons bound for heaven. Sin was his element, Satan his lord and master, this world his home, and opposition and mischief to God's saints his delight. Being young when I first knew him, I am prepared to say that he promised himself much joy and pleasure in the future, and at the time there seemed some probability of his realising some of his expectations. His thoughts, however, were not God's thoughts, for strange to say, the Lord loved him even when he was "dead in trespasses and sins."

When he was quite young, he saw a great light, and heard a great voice, and felt a strong power upon his heart, which revealed what he had never seen before, and placed him where he had never before stood. God, whom he hated, placed him in His presence, and the young enemy trembled before Him. It was not God's purpose, however, to punish, but to pardon the transgressor, which, after many cries, tears, and fears, on the young man's part, He did, and set him free.

Having thus released him, God put a staff into his hand, a girdle round his loins, and shoes on his feet, and bade him follow Him. Thus, amid the jeers and gibes of his former companions, he started for the new Jerusalem, expecting to reach it soon.

He had not long been a pilgrim, when he found a band of persons whose hearts God had touched, and feeling a love to them he said, "I will go with you, for I perceive that God is with you," and they replied, "Come with us and we will do you good," which word they fulfilled. I know that these were happy days with this young traveller, and that he expected nothing but good company, good cheer, and an agreeable journey to the better land. He had not travelled far, however, before a wilderness came in sight, which he entered, and he has

journeyed in it ever since. Here his staff which, when necessary, becomes a sword, came into use, his girdle strengthened him, and his shoes were a blessing and a comfort. The whole desert is infested with enemies and dangers. When weary, he leans on his staff; when enemies approach, he tries to use his sword; when his mind becomes loose or careless he endeavours to gird it up, and having shoes of iron and brass he has had to "tread upon the lion and the adder, and the young lion and the dragon he has trampled under feet."

After a time this pilgrim became acquainted with many bands of travellers to Canaan, and found himself, at times, surrounded by many sojourners on earth listening to him while he endeavoured to speak well of God, and to comfort weary ones on earth. For many years he has been united to one of these companies, and he is often astonished at the Lord's patience and pity, and also at the kind-heartedness of his fellow-travellers, whom he is privileged to know. He is now considerably beyond the middle of the wilderness, in fact he is nearing its border, and has no desire to return into his former state; sometimes he sighs and sometimes he sings. I know him much better than I did at first, yet I must say he is a mystery and puzzles me. He declares that in him, in the flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and yet he often sings, "All things are mine." The last time I met him he was still in the way, and he said, "I am faint, yet pursuing."

J. H.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANALYTICAL.—THE PREACHER.

I would describe him simple, grave, sincere,
 In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
 And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gesture; much impressed
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge.
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too; affectionate in look,
 And tender in address, as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.—*Cowper.*

NOTHING was further from the character of John Hazelton than the common ambition to figure as “an all-round man.”

He had thoughts on politics, and deemed it right for a Christian to vote according to his convictions, but he attended no meetings that were not distinctly religious or philanthropical, and he was always silent in public on the questions of the day. He was well read: but he never delivered lectures or wrote articles on social or literary subjects. He possessed many of the qualifications of a commentator, but he penned no expositions, nor were any critical or exegetical notes found among his papers. Assured of his vocation, he made it the sole business of his life to preach the gospel to the utmost of his ability. “This one thing I do,” as his friend, William Houghton, of Ipswich, observed—was the characteristic motto of his entire life.

Considerable popular misapprehension as to the tenets of the Strict and Particular Baptists prevails. It may therefore be well to give some hints as to the doctrines which John Hazelton promulgated.

Substantially they were evangelical, corresponding (with some important divergences) with the teachings of the Assembly's Catechism and the majority of the Puritans—but no one term is current with which to describe them.

By unthinking outsiders he was styled a hyper-Calvinist, but the designation was as unhappy as it was incorrect. He indeed held the doctrines of grace to which such prominence is given in the writings of the great reformer—but if the word is employed to describe one who presses these principles beyond their logical and legitimate issues, it would be altogether misleading. Calvin, for example, broadly taught the doctrine of reprobation—yet at the same time enforced the sentiment that grace is offered to the ungodly—positions to which our friend was resolutely opposed. Moreover Calvin, while he insisted on the peerless value of the sacrifice of Christ, held that “God (first) becomes propitiated to men when they repose confidence in the blood of Christ,” and thus assigned to faith a function in relation to salvation which our friend with all energy denied it to sustain.

It is no reflection on the memory of one of the greatest of men that in an age so dark he erred on matters on which light has subsequently broken out from the Sacred Volume, and that a devout and diligent student of the Bible in the nineteenth century should be clear on points which are confused in his writings.

Moreover, an acerbity and harshness are popularly (but unjustly) attributed to Calvinism, from which our friend's divinity was entirely free.

Singular as it may seem, he held a creed to which theologians have given no name. “The author of the ensuing pages,” wrote John Stevens, “is neither a Calvinist, an Arminian, nor a

Baxterian, though he holds many things in common with each; while he claims the liberty of dissenting from them all, where in his apprehension they severally deviate from the straight line of inspired truth." Much the same may be advanced of our friend to whose memory these pages are dedicated.

We shall make no attempt to present his views *in extenso*;* but his convictions on one or two leading branches of truth may be considered with interest.

His ministry very eminently honoured the character and work of each person in the Sacred Three—though perhaps his *forte* was the presentation in a copious and wonderful variety of ways of the glory and the grace of Emmanuel and the perfection of His sacrifice and intercession.

Of God out of Christ he professed to know nothing, and often dwelt on the unprofitableness of attempting to meditate upon the abstract or unmediated Deity.

The doctrines of distinguishing grace he advanced with unflinching boldness—but presented each in its harmonious relation to the whole of revealed truth.

On the Justification of a sinner through sovereign mercy and redeeming blood he loved to expatiate; but his utterances on the correlative doctrine of Sanctification were equally emphatic.

On the points that distinguish our section of the Church from other denominations he was most emphatic. He did not hold that Christ died to augment the punishment of the lost; or that the preaching of the Gospel will increase the intensity of the hell of all who do not receive it. He denied that the act of a heaven-born faith adds validity to the Atonement, and gives an elect sinner an interest in Christ, which he did not possess by the determination of ancient grace. The term progressive Sancti-

* In the author's "Manual of Faith and Practice," Wileman, 34, Bouverie Street, London, will be found fifty-five quotations on the prominent doctrines of the gospel, selected from his sermons.

fication he eschewed, and very firmly opposed the view of the great subject ordinarily associated with the popular phrase. He accepted the holy law of God in the hands of the great Mediator as the Christian's rule of life—and somewhat energetically opposed the contrary view which the great William Huntington so warmly espoused. "I loathe Antinomianism, both practical and doctrinal," he once exclaimed with unwonted fire.

These and similar statements are easily verified by consulting his published sermons; but it is remarkable how seldom he referred to views to which he stood opposed. Negative testimony—the denunciation of error—heated and bitter remarks upon views that he reputed erroneous, he evidently deemed of little profit to sinner or to saint.

He was a most practical preacher, but he was careful to base all a Christian's obligation to exemplify his religion in a holy life, on the sacred and tender relationship which exists between him and his beloved Lord. "If the love of Christ," he once observed, "does not constrain men to do what is right; long and loud exhortations to duty will assuredly fail to do so.

He aimed to be instructive, and believed that no style of preaching was so useful as the full and faithful presentation of the truth of God. The phrase "dry doctrines" he much disliked. "All Scripture," he knew, "was given by inspiration of God," and every succinct presentation of its teachings, he was assured, must be profitable to heaven-born sinners. "The dryness," he contended, "is not in the doctrines of grace, but in the persons themselves who speak of them in this flippant and unbecoming manner."

Consciously guilty sinners; saints in soul trouble, tempted, harassed, perplexed, and almost ready to resign all hope, found in his sympathetic and Scriptural words the most valuable help. He did not shrink from allusions to himself, his conversion,

early spiritual happiness, and the subsequent vicissitudes of his spiritual life, but such references were always made deferentially and in good taste, and were often prefaced by the words, "You will forgive me for referring to myself." (See page 19).

The only specimen of his composition on a purely theological subject which has come to hand consists of a reply to the following letter:—

DEAR MR. HAZELTON,—You will remember our conversation on your sermon on Isa. xxxiii. 16, in which you introduced the exposition of "dwelling with everlasting burnings," which you said I should find in Owen. I have failed to turn up the passage. Can you kindly supply it? and also tell me if you think I have accurately reported the passage in which your remarks occur.

With ever grateful regards, etc.

EXTRACT from Sermon by Mr. Hazelton on Isa. xxxiii. 16—THE NATURE OF THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL:—

"It has been asserted that the punishment of hell will be material fire, and the idea has been supported by the words, 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with (not *in*) everlasting burnings?' This, however, arises from a mistaken view of the text. The Lord is not here speaking of 'sinners in Zion, and hypocrites,' but of His own people; and the 'fire and burnings' do not refer to future punishment, but to God Himself. He is 'a consuming fire.' His perfections will burn for ever, but such will be the perfection of our salvation through Christ that we shall be enabled to dwell in the awful presence of this majestically holy God. Pure gold can abide in the heart of the fiercest furnace uninjured; and the saints will dwell with the fire and burnings of the infinite holiness of God. Moreover, that hell-fire will not be literal and material, is evident from the circumstances of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. On that solemn occasion the moral government of God found its fullest exemplification and manifestation. Whatever the dread word 'damnation' may express and involve was endured by the forsaken and broken-hearted Saviour when He was made

a curse for us. Terrors, indeed, took hold of Him, but there were no literal flames blazing around the cross, neither will physical fire form the punishment of the lost hereafter."

This evoked the following thoughtful answer:—

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not found the passage in Owen* referred to, but I feel certain I have read it somewhere in his works. If you have Trapp or Pool, turn to them; you will find they do not much differ from the view of the "Everlasting burnings" in Isaiah.

I cannot recollect delivering the thoughts expressed in the extract you sent; but if you took them down from my lips, of course I did so, and, slightly corrected, I still adhere to the sentiments they express.

I hope you are not thinking of making any public use of them, as I much dislike controversy, and I am sure the publication of them would provoke it.

Trapp says, "So might we dwell with 'everlasting burnings,' that is, with the knowledge of God's terrible presence and sight of His great judgments, whereof the hypocrites of the world are afraid, because this fire melteth off their paint and threateneth to wash off their varnish with terrors of brimstone." Pool says, "The generality of the people were filled with horrors and expectation of utter destructions. How shall we be able to abide the presence, and endure or avoid the wrath of that God who is a consuming fire; who is now about to destroy us by the Assyrians? And who shall dwell *for* us, etc., *i.e.*, in our stead? Who shall interpose himself between God's anger and us?" He says that "This is the sense of this question may be gathered from the answer given to it in the following verse," etc.

Trusting you and yours are well.

I remain, yours fraternally,

J. H.

August 2nd, 1881.

P.S.—The post is a very convenient arrangement for friends *at a great distance* to communicate with each other.†

* It proved to be in the works of Thomas Goodwin, Nichols' Edition, vol. x., pages 504, 556.

† The point of the kindly sarcasm of this P.S. is explained by the fact that it was addressed to a friend who lived a few streets off.

Like all preachers of his persuasion, he was from time to time accused of not preaching the Gospel to the unconverted, but the charge was exceedingly baseless. He did not, indeed, believe that "the ministry of reconciliation" includes regeneration, which he regarded as a Divine operation effected by the Holy Ghost in the hearts of chosen and blood-bought sinners, apart from all instrumentality. The Gospel he therefore viewed as a gracious provision for divinely-infused life, and he aimed at ministerially meeting the needs of those who had been born anew. "Feed My sheep," he once observed, "defines our commission. We are neither to *form* them nor *find* them. These the Good Shepherd will do; but when they are brought within the range of our influence, our business is to endeavour to feed them."

It was said of John Foreman that he had a keen ear for the bleating of Christ's lambs. The same may be said of our friend. He directed his remarks to *character*, and applied the words of divine encouragement to those for whom they are evidently designed. He did not offer Christ to the unregenerate, or implore them to believe as the only condition of their salvation. He regarded natural men as *spiritually non-existent*, and all his references or remarks to them were consistent with this conviction. His view of Rev. iii. 20 prevented his entreating them to listen to the knocks of Jesus at the doors of their hearts, or beg them to admit Him before He abandoned His attempts to save them. In preaching faith he was careful to exhibit its glorious Object, as well as to delineate its important act.

He did not hold that moral accountability includes the obligation to be saved, and accordingly did not urge spiritual belief upon natural men. It was his conviction that the doctrine of duty-faith darkens and disfigures the whole scheme of the gospel. He, however, described the terrible condition and position of lost sinners with great solemnity, and

presented, in their simplest form, the consolations of the Gospel to the anxious inquirer.

It should be added that he was very successful in this department of his ministry, and that many traced the beginning of their hope and comfort to his holy and earnest words.

He gave great attention to the structure as well as to the substance of his sermons. Common-place or slovenly divisions he deemed detrimental to the value even of a thoughtful discourse; and when a text attracted him he spared no pains to put his ideas into a logical and attractive form. He also endeavoured to avoid monotony in method; and aimed at variety in his ways of preaching the Gospel. Far too attached to the old *road* to deviate from it, he endeavoured to avoid the old *ruts*; and sought to present the truth of God in a fresh and unconventional manner.

He thus cultivated the happy art of presenting well-worn texts in new and attractive lights.

He disliked the way of sermonising that close students of Dr. Gill's Commentary so frequently adopt* as mechanical and uninteresting.

Of the two chief methods of dividing a subject, the *textual* and the *topical*,† he inclined to the latter as giving greater scope for thought. Many of his discourses of this kind were exceedingly happy. The following is a specimen:—

* A good example of this is the following: "Ye are Christ's"—By the Father's donation; By the purchase of His blood; By the Spirit's operation and indwelling; By your own voluntary surrender. This demands Gratitude, Submission, Obedience, Service. Very sound this, but slightly somnoric.

† In *textual* divisions the text is analysed, and each portion made a head of the discourse. In *topical* divisions the truths expressed or implied in the text are reduced to propositions, each of which forms a distinct branch of the sermon.

If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father.
(1 John ii. 1).

I. This implies *the terrible character of sin*; inferred from the dignity of the Saviour's Person and the elaborate perfection of His work.

II. The text indicates *God's high estimate of His people*; inferred from the gift of His Son.

III. We learn *the individuality of Christ's intercession while in heaven*. "If any man."

IV. We gather *that godliness is intercourse with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ*.

V. We notice *the perpetuity of Christ's advocacy*.

VI. We infer that *the court of heaven is favourable to the sinner*. Christ has not to implore God to love us, or beg Him to establish a relationship between Him and us, but pleads that we may know His grace.*

His *textual* divisions were neat and comprehensive. The following embrace every thought advanced in the portion chosen.

Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? (James ii. 7).

The text presents the name of Jesus in three relations:—

I. To *Himself* it is "*that worthy name*."

II. To *His followers*: they are *called by it*."

III. To *His enemies*: "*they blaspheme it*."

He was wont to say that when younger he was fond of forced and fanciful expositions of Holy Writ. Martin Luther also confessed that in his early days he was in like manner addicted to allegorical interpretations. "Now," he adds, "I have shaken them off, and my best heart is to deliver the Scriptures in their simple sense; the same doeth the deed; therein is life, strength, and doctrine. In the other is nothing but foolishness, let it lustre and shine how it will." Thus was it with our friend.

* "Gospel Herald," 1875; page 169.

As his judgment matured, his pleasure in basing his discourses on thoughts which a fertile mind can deduce from the histories and figures of the Bible declined. Often in later years have we heard him remark from the pulpit, "I will not, as it is called, spiritualise this portion of the Word of God, but direct your attention to a few plain and obvious thoughts which have occurred to my mind."

It is related that when at Guyhern he once preached from the words, "And the child sneezed seven times" (2 Kings iv. 35). The lady he afterwards married was present and judiciously remarked "that while she had no exception to take to the sermon, she thought that he might have chosen a better text."

Great was the contrast that his later years presented. Samuel Milner was wont to observe that he disliked sermons in which all the stuff was carted to the text instead of dug out of it. It may be noticed that the portions of Scripture on which our friend's published sermons are based, are almost without exception, treated in their natural and evident sense, the whole of the matter being derived from the truths they manifestly embody or suggest.

He, nevertheless, excelled in the art of presenting from the figures of the Bible the thoughts that were couched in them. This he often did in a most instructive and suggestive manner. The following is an example:—

As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, etc. (Cant. ii. 3).

The Saviour is here set forth; and the words being inspired by the Holy Ghost, the figures are appropriate and significant.

I. THE ROOT being hidden from view, suggests the Deity of the Saviour, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."

II. THE VISIBLE STEM, growing forth from the root, denotes the incarnation and manifestation of the Son of God.

III. THE BRANCHES, arising from both root and stem, denote Christ's official relationships.

IV. THE FRUIT, the precious and delightful results of His mediation: pardon, peace, joy, assurance, anticipation of glory, &c.

This fruit is not *gathered* by our standing on tip-toe and reaching forth an arm. It comes to us independently of effort. The Heavenly Dove, who rests in the branches of this tree, lets the precious fruit fall into the laps of those who sit down under its shadow.

This sermon was preached soon after he came to the metropolis. We doubt whether the bold but graceful fancy of *the Dove* would have been introduced in his latter years.

In May, 1875, he dealt with a somewhat similar subject at Ebenezer Chapel, Hornsey-rise; his text being, *I am the true vine* (John xv. 1). This wonderful sermon was not reported, and a few thoughts only are remembered.

He likened the vine to Jesus, as the "Mediator of the new covenant."

The richness of the earth he compared to the "fulness of God."

The richness of the earth is the source of all human nourishment. Whatever the form of our food, it originates in the fertility of the soil.

So the fulness of God is the source of all spiritual blessings. Whether we contemplate it in the form of pardon, or peace, or assurance, all flow from the grace and greatness of God.

But no one can suck nourishment out of the earth itself. Its moisture is not adapted to the human palate, nor can its fatness feed us.

So no one can approach God in His absolute and unmediated glory, which is not adapted to solace and strengthen lost sinners.

The vine comes between the earth and human beings, and transmutes the moisture of the soil into luscious grapes, which cool, refresh, and delight thirsty lips.

So Jesus the Mediator comes between God and the sinner, and presents all the glory of the Divine majesty in a form that

assuages the poor trembler's fear, relieves his burning conscience, and fills him with joy.

The whole of God's character appears in salvation, but in a form that imparts peace and compels love to Him.*

One of his favourite methods of treating a text was to consider its leading truth *in relation to* the principle facts and truths of the Gospel.

Of this character were the divisions of a discourse preached in Islington Green Chapel in November, 1872.

Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is Thy hand, and high is Thy right hand (Psa. lxxxix. 13).

The subject indicated is the power of God. Consider it:—

I. In relation to the *atonement*. God's hand grasped "all the sins of all the elect."

II. In relation to the resurrection of Christ, "Him being by the right hand of God exalted."

III. In relation to the *gathering of redeemed sinners to Himself*. They are where He can grasp them; He is able to. Their conversion is not contingent on their willingness to accept Christ; His arm is as long as His heart is large.

IV. In relation to *the government of the world*. All occurs as He pleases; Satan restrained: all things work together for good.

V. In relation to *the progress of the Church*. He is not baffled, though we are often distressed.

VI. In relation to *the resurrection of the saints*. "All our rising bones shall say, Lord, who is like to Thee?"

VII. In relation to *the great final judgment*. He will then destroy all His enemies.

His manner in the pulpit was exceedingly quiet. He has been known to stand on a hassock during the delivery of a long sermon without apparent inconvenience. He used but little

* This was a wholly different discourse to one preached from the same text in 1887, and published in Vol. v., No. 20.

gesture, rarely elevating his hands, though at times, especially when describing a Scriptural scene, he would uplift or extend his right arm with really effective art. His attractiveness, however, lay rather in the excellence of his sermons than in his delivery, which, especially of late years, was marred by his increasing infirmities. He always began quietly, often in a constrained and hesitating manner, and generally, when from home, commenced by excuses for the poverty of the discourse which he was prepared to deliver, and apologetic references to his feeble health and many engagements. These, when they preceded a full and masterly sermon, created wonder in many minds. We are persuaded, however, that he assumed no diffidence that he did not really feel, and that he often endured agonies of anxiety in prospect of his pulpit engagements.

Sometimes, on returning to the vestry after preaching, he would say in a dejected manner, "Did you not hear my chains clanking?" "No," would his good deacon Burrell reply; "we have heard the music of the Gospel sounding."

When fairly under way, however, there was a dignity in his carriage, a grandeur in his steady flow of appropriate language, and a majesty in his thoughts that commanded close attention. At times his heart caught fire, and he rose to flights of eloquence of no common order. We never knew him embarrassed for want of a thought, or at a loss for the very word he required. He used no notes, but was wont to write a few words with his pencil on the margin of the page on which his text occurred. He, however, regretted having contracted this habit, and was wont to advise his younger brethren to have full confidence in their memories, which, he assured them, might safely be trusted.

Some things were very noticeable in all his sermons.

He never appealed to mere *human emotion*, or sought to excite sentimental feelings in the hearts of his hearers. Affrighted nature he well knew would never lead men to act graciously;

nor would terror* bring a sinner to Christ. It is not difficult to draw tears from the eyes of persons who have not the least true religion. He therefore rather sought by exhibiting the Saviour to draw out the affections of those who had felt the power of His grace.

He never closed his discourses with a *peroration*, or elaborate rhetorical conclusion—his closing observations being always simple and unaffected. The old-fashioned *application* he also eschewed—leaving it for the Holy Ghost to carry the message home to the hearts of all whom it was His sovereign purpose to bless.

We have remarked how tardily the Christian public awoke to the conviction that his sermons were worthy of preservation. Many of his best, we are assured, are thus altogether lost, while some that must have been unusually excellent survive only in the dim recollections of those that heard them.

Very remarkable must have been the discourse which he delivered one week-night at his own place from the words, "God requireth that which is past." This he did not understand to mean that the Lord will hereafter require of mankind an account of *their* past opportunities, privileges, sins, etc., but that *He needs* the past for the carrying out of His providential and saving plans. The ink with which the Bible is written has long been dry; its composition is a thing of the past; but He requires it every day for His saving acts. The cross of

* His view of 2 Cor. v. 11: "*Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,*" was not that the apostle meant that he was in the habit of persuading men to live, to believe, and to turn to the Lord, by urging on them the terrors of future punishment; but that "he persuaded men of his sincerity, of the fact that he preached the very word of God, and could not keep back any portion thereof." Sermons, vol. ii., page 249. The passage may be read, "Knowing the *fear* of the Lord."

Jesus is past, but God requires it as the foundation of every manifestation of His grace, etc.

Another, on "Which things the angels desire to look into," produced a great effect in Suffolk. Rather unusually for him, he personated the angels by stooping over the Bible and gazing intently at the open page.

The following is a sketch of a sermon which one who knew him well, considered to be among the best he was ever known to deliver:—

Text,—"The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (MARK xv. 38).

Introduction.—A short running comment on Canticles v. 9—16. *His mouth is most sweet*. Consider this in relation to His early words for His people before the foundation of the world—to what He says to them as their Intercessor in heaven—and to His seven utterances from His cross.

Divisions.—*Contemplate* the fact stated in the text; and make it the *basis* of some reflections.

I.—CONTEMPLATE THE FACT.

(1). The veil, its situation, size, etc., described. The officiating priest was standing at the golden altar—for it was the proper time for the evening sacrifice. This man must have been startled: for the rending of the veil was a wonder. The day of Christ's death more full of marvels than (will be) the day of judgment.

1. Fixing our thoughts on the fact that Jesus died at the time of evening sacrifice. This may signify:

(1). *The extensiveness of Christ's sacrifice*, reaching from the morning to the evening of the world's history. (*a*), He was offered in the morning of time in the purpose and promise of God. (*b*), In the divinely ordained typical sacrifices. (*c*), In the faith of His people, who from the first looked to God through Him alone for the remission of sins. He expired at the time of the *evening* sacrifice (2), at the termination of the Jewish Dispensation. "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared" (Heb. ix. 26).

(3). His sacrifice was final. "He hath obtained eternal

redemption for us." His blood hath continued efficacy to "cleanse from all sin." Levitical sacrifices had often to be repeated, but—

2. The general signification of this wonderful fact:

"The blood of Christ shall still remain
Sufficient and alone."

1. It indicated ABOLITION. The veil was not rolled or drawn up—or pulled aside—or removed and replaced, but rent. The Jewish high priest, when he annually entered the most holy place, held up the veil by a corner and passed it—dared not rend it. It was rent by an invisible hand—not from the bottom, as though devils had done it—but from top; by God Himself as He sat on His throne. This denoted the "end of that which was abolished"—that God was about to leave the House in which He had dwelt so long—was about to give up house-keeping with that Church.

The true knowledge of Himself had hitherto been confined to His national people; but the wall of partition was then broken down; the ceremonial law which distinguished and divided Jew from Gentile was thereby abolished; and the knowledge of the Lord was progressively to cover "the earth as the waters cover the sea." Thus all that distinctly appertained to that dispensation was abolished. Old things passed away; all became new. The ministry of priests of the race of Aaron will nevermore be needed, nor will such sacrifices as they offered be required.

"For Christ the Heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And richer blood than they."

2. It indicated REVELATION. The veil concealed the contents of the holy of holies—the ark of the covenant—the mercy seat—the cherubim—but these were now disclosed. So the death of Christ revealed many marvellous facts.

(1). It revealed God Himself. In the atonement we see the heart of God; the bosom of Deity; the loving mind of Jehovah. It afforded a revelation of *all His attributes*—and these are displayed in the most harmonious relations to each other. Mercy and truth, righteousness and love, appear in the work and wounds

of Incarnate God. What a revelation! "Here the whole Deity is writ." Such a revelation we have nowhere else.

Man cannot exhibit both justice and mercy in the same transaction. One must give way—but here we behold Mercy putting the blood of Christ into the hands of Justice—and these once conflicting attributes of God "kiss each other."

(2). The *mercy seat* was revealed—God's throne was disclosed when Christ died—and it is a throne of *grace* (Heb. iv. 16). The divine Monarch seated thereon holds no sword—but rather exclaims, "I will not be wroth with thee or rebuke thee." No barrier keeps the suppliants back.

(3). The *cherubim* were revealed—the fact was made known that they are ministering spirits for the King's children (Heb. i. 14).

(4). The interior of the holiest of all was revealed. Heaven was opened: and its glories made known to faith: (amplified by a reference to John i. 50: "Thou shalt see greater things than these.")

3.—*It indicated* COMMUNICATION. Through the rent veil of Christ's person, God comes out to meet His people and impart grace.

(1). He communicates life—a new life—that brings sinners into sympathy with Himself and prepares them for heaven.

(2). He communicates light—the light of His countenance—in which He first "sets our sins" (Psa. xc. 8); and we tremble as we view the enormity—and afterwards He gives us help from His sanctuary, by revealing His countenance in the glory of His pitying grace (Psa. xlii. 5—11: xliii. 5).

(3). Through the rent veil, *He dispenses pardon* to His people. The forgiveness of sin always emanates from the throne. It is not the act of a judge to forgive: nor does the Lord pardon in His judicial character. It is for the King to forgive—and as our royal Father, God says, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." (The *white stone* of Rev. ii. 17 was here used as an illustration).

(4). Through the rent veil *the promises are spoken*, and reach the hearts of God's people, etc.

(5). Through the rent veil, all spiritual blessings proceed. When Christ died, He opened the heart of God, and set them flowing, and they still, etc.

4.—*It indicated* ACCESS. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil—that is to say, His flesh.

There is a way into heaven for the praises and prayers of God's people now, as there will be for their persons hereafter. What varied companies draw nigh to God *now*, as (1) those who have recently been convinced of sin, and are crying, "God be merciful unto me," (2) tempted saints, weary and wounded with fiery darts, (3) perplexed, bewildered, and baffled ones, who exclaim, "Lord, I am oppressed, undertake Thou for me."

(4). All who come are received *inside*, for the living way is not *to* but *into* the holiest.

5.—*A peculiar* CONNECTION is indicated. The holy and the most holy places were severed and disconnected by the veil—at its rending they were one. Earth is connected with heaven by the atonement of Christ. Earth is the ground-floor of heaven—and a living way connects them together. Heaven will be sweet—but there are some delightful spots on the ground-floor, "This is the gate of Heaven" (Gen. xxviii. 17).

6.—*The PERFECT EQUALITY of all God's people is also indicated.* None but the high priest might pass the veil, and that but once in the circuit of each year.

Now, all Christians are priests—all may enter into the holiest who plead the blood of Christ; nor do their circumstances affect their official standing in grace. They may be needy, poor, cast-down, and tried—but each has a priest's right to approach the throne of grace.

7.—*The PERFECTION OF CHRIST'S WORK is intimated.* All that He had undertaken to do was accomplished; all types fulfilled; all covenant engagements met. The veil therefore was not simply *torn*, but *rent in twain*.

II.—THE SUBJECT SUGGESTS SOME REFLECTIONS.

1.—The marvellous power of the cross of Christ. "Oh, the sweet wonders of that cross," etc.

2.—When the power of the cross of Christ reaches the heart, it

will rend other veils—ignorance, prejudice, unbelief, hatred to God, and the love and tyranny of sin. Every obstacle will yield to the matchless power of the blood of Christ.

3.—The subject suggests that the death of Jesus has introduced a dispensation in which God is not to be approached by elaborate ceremonials, but in spirit and in truth. He supersedes all that is *material* and *carnally attractive* in worship.

4. The *true dwelling*-place of God's people is suggested.

They *live* in the world, but they dwell in the Church, where God is found. "One thing have I desired" (Psa. xxvii. 4.) What a man desires, he will seek after.

They *live* in the world, but they *dwell* in Christ.

Moses prayed, "Show me Thy glory;" I, too, want to see the glory of God in the gospel. "I will put thee in the cleft of the rock"—was God's gracious reply to Moses: and He puts the sinner in His Son. We dwell in that rock, and there see His glory.

They *live* in the world, but *dwell* in heaven; from whence also they look for Him the second time.

We begin to think more of Heaven than ever.

From this very fragmentary sketch we can form but a faint idea of a sermon which must have been no ordinary one. Many of the preacher's characteristics are, however, manifest. The expository introduction: the pictorial and realistic touches, such as the surprise of the high priest: the revolution of several ideas round one central and prominent fact: the tender allusions to the weak and weary of the Lord's people: the group of thoughts on the revelation of the glory of God at Christ's death (which were expressed, we are told, with extraordinary fire and energy): and the delicate fancy of Mercy's putting the blood of the Redeemer in the hands of Justice—admirably exemplify his method and style; while the ground covered, and the amount of truth advanced in the brief space of a single sermon are very noteworthy.

The following, which is extracted from a suburban journal, is also a good example of his peculiar way of handling a text.

It is thoroughly characteristic, and as no sermon in his published series so fully treats on the work of the Holy Spirit, it will doubtless (like that on page 173) be regarded with interest as embodying his views on this momentous subject.

“ I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.”—(John xiv. 16).

A knowledge of the Triune God of Israel is essential to salvation. One must know not only the Father's love but the love and the blood of the Son, and the saving and sanctifying power of the Spirit. The Three are one in essence, will, operation, and in the great affair of salvation ; and these three persons are indivisibly one in the experience of every saint of God.

It is not, perhaps, for me to make any sharp or severe remarks on any particular section of the professing Church; but I have never been able to learn where a conscientious Unitarian obtains his comfort; for he who denies the divinity of Christ and the personality and divinity of the Spirit of God, denies the eternal God Himself. For these three are essentially one; and if God had never made the world, He would have existed as the Triune God for ever. He did not become such because He made the world or because He saved sinners. He is essentially the Triune Being. There always was, and ever will be, three great and glorious Persons in the Godhead. God did not constitute Himself a Triune God by an act of His sovereignty or will. He is so essentially, necessarily, and eternally. These three great Persons in the adorable Godhead occupy various positions in the economy of grace and covenant of mercy. The Father occupies a position peculiar to Himself; the Son, as man and mediator; and the Spirit, working in connection with the salvation of the Church. It was not the Father's work to suffer, to assume human nature, to bleed and die, and rise again; that was the work of the second Person. It was the work of the Spirit, not to assume our nature, but to take the things of Christ and show them unto the beloved of the Father and the redeemed of the Son. Do not say I am severely doctrinal; for these doctrines, if I understand

the Scriptures at all, are some of the deep well-springs of salvation out of which God's people shall draw water with joy, through the power of the Spirit, who is called the Comforter.

Let us consider the Person and Operations of the Spirit of God :—

1. In relation to Himself: "The Comforter."
2. As to His Father: "He shall give you another Comforter."
3. As to the mediation and intercession of Christ: "I will pray the Father."
4. In relation to the poor sinner and the Church: "He shall abide with you for ever."

I. IN RELATION TO HIMSELF: "Another Comforter." He is a Guide; for He shall guide you into all truth; the unction, that rests upon the Church, the "unction from the Holy One;" and the Comforter. The phraseology of the text, "Another Comforter," seems to say, "You have had one Comforter, who has been with you three years; He is about to leave you, but He will not surrender His title or give up His right to comfort His dear people, but there is another whom ye have not fully received yet. He shall give you another Comforter." So that we have two Comforters; one a redeeming, the other a sanctifying Comforter; one a bleeding Comforter, the other comforting by applying the oil; one a suffering Comforter, Christ; the other bringing us into connection with the suffering of the first Comforter. The Father is the Father of all comfort, for it all comes from Him; Christ is the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost is the Comforter; so that the Father is the source of comfort, Christ is the matter of comfort, and the Holy Spirit is the great applier of comfort. Hence the words: "Another Comforter." We have first of all a Comforter under the law fulfilling it for us; and that is a comforting fact; we have a Comforter at the end of the law, for Jesus is "the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe;" we have a Comforter to travail under the broken law, comforting as He travails; and we have another Comforter on the throne, for the first Comforter ever liveth to make intercession, and we feel in our bosoms His influence, cheering us with the fact: "He shall abide with you for ever."

The comfort of God's people is a most momentous fact. "I will pray the Father, that He shall give you another Comforter." The comfort of the child of God is so much so, that one of the Persons of the Trinity came down from heaven to bring it, and it is the official business of another of the Persons of the Trinity to give such miserable wretches as we are, Divine and heavenly comfort.

This was important, else God would have sent two or three angels down from heaven, or Gabriel himself; but it was too important for this, and therefore the Father sent us a special Comforter. So important is this blessing that the Holy Ghost has assumed a special title expressive of His work and of the nature of His communication to the heart: "The Comforter." This was arranged infinite years before the heavens began to roll that it should be the personal and official work of the Spirit to communicate comfort from the heart of the Father and the wounds of the Son.

To whom is this comfort important? To Christ Himself. Methinks our dear Lord would be unhappy on His heavenly throne if comfort could not flow from His work of mediation. He procured it, He demands it, and He requires the Holy Spirit to communicate it to the hearts of His ransomed and redeemed people. It is also important to the believer. Some of you have much sorrow; you shed many tears in your pilgrimage; and comfort is most necessary to you. Grace breaks the heart and wounds the conscience; other trials attend the beloved of God; and comfort is the most important thing to you. Some preach as if sorrow and pain were absolutely essential to salvation. We do weep and are cast down at times; but there is a harp belonging to every saint, whether in his hand or on the willow tree; and there are times when he can take it up to the praise of God, when the Comforter comes with His rich comforts, and testifies that he is a child of God, and that the Spirit has fulfilled the great purpose for which He came. Comfort is important in relation to Satan:—

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

If he trembles when a saint prays, I am quite sure he is filled with rage and fury when the happy saint is singing before the throne. The devil hates to see the sinner's heart healed, his wounds bound up, and the tears wiped from his eyes.

The children of God have as much comfort on earth as they had when Christ's personal presence was here: "I will not leave you comfortless." Is this other Comforter less great than the first one? or less able to comfort us than Jesus Christ? It seems to me that we are just as well off as we should be with Christ's personal presence with us. Some good people say they would be happy if Christ lived here personally. Thus to talk is unscriptural; for is not the Spirit as great as the Son, and as capable of comforting? Did He bring comforts and blessings less important than those He brought Himself? We dim the glory of the Triune God by thus making Christ greater than the Spirit. It is best as it is: the Father on His throne; our Intercessor before that throne; and the Holy Ghost in our hearts, guiding, guarding, directing us day by day to our eternal rest.

How does the Spirit comfort? By *revelation*. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." He opens the eye of the mind; He gives light to the conscience, to the eye that is opened. An open eye and a clear daylight are great blessings. He who irradiates the mind with heavenly light, brings Christ before the eye of the sinner, who sees not only his own guilt, but the Saviour, as the Peace-maker, the Substitute, the Surety; and the sight affects the heart. Here is revelation. Having had the sufficiency of Christ revealed to him, he begins to look to the Crucified One, and this kindles a hope as to his eternal salvation. He is, as yet, unable to appropriate the blessing, and the intervention and operation of the Spirit are necessary to apply the blood of Christ to the guilty spirit. This is the first act of consolation. There is the balm, and there is the wounded sinner; and there is the Comforter between the two, who takes the wounded Christ and lays Him on the wounded heart, and thus makes the wounded whole, for "by His stripes are we healed."

Then He comforts by *application*. We take too limited a view of the blood of sprinkling. It is sprinkled on two objects, and there are two Sprinklers. Christ's blood was sprinkled on the

Father's throne by Christ Himself; He entered by His own blood into the holiest, having obtained redemption for us; and if the blood had not been sprinkled there, it would never have been sprinkled on the sinner's conscience. Then it is sprinkled by the Holy Spirit on the heart of the poor lost and ruined sinner; and it extracts guilt from his smarting conscience, and imparts peace, and heals its aching wounds.

Then the Spirit comforts by *the increase of grace*. Nothing can be stationary in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, except the foundation on which it is based. Everything is progressive. We have infinity before us. The Triune God in all His majesty is before us, and our knowledge of Him is to go on progressing for ever. What must it be to be in heaven? It is sweet to sit on heaven's threshold now, but what must it be to enter into the glory of the Lord, and be immersed in that glory for ever and ever? He giveth more grace to the young believer that he may see superlative beauty in the Saviour.

He comforts, too, by *suggestion*. The devil is a suggester to the mind; for he put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ. But the Holy Ghost is also a suggester. He can inject thoughts into the heart. Now, are His suggestions accidental matters? The Holy Spirit is the Lord of mind, and you are His temples; and He often comforts His people by suggesting spiritual ideas. I will now tell you a secret about text-finding. It is a difficult task; but those texts which occur to me in prayer are jotted down, and are most likely the next I take in the pulpit; and such texts as are thus suggested, I find, always work well. O, it is blessed to get our texts from God, to have them suggested by the Holy Ghost.

He comforts also by *witnessing*: "The Spirit witnesses that we are the children of God." He is the credible Witness, who gives corroborative evidence to our Divine sonship. Also by preparation. He imparts a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light; He places the title deeds in the Christian's hands; and enables him, like "Christian," in Bunyan, to "read his title clear to mansions in the skies."

II.—IN RELATION TO THE FATHER—"He shall give." This expresses love. The gift of the Spirit is an expression of God's

love. Nothing is thought too good, or great, or important for the objects of Christ's love. His arm is as strong as His heart, and He will ever fulfil the dictates of His affection. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter." The parental gifts of God are three. Blessed be God for the unspeakable gift of His dear Son, for that of the Holy Spirit, and for the sweet fact: "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." See what your riches are, and leave not this place, still moping in melancholy over your poverty. As a sinner you are poor, it is true; but when you come upon the ground of sonship and saintship, talk no more about poverty. A poor child of God! Never. For when once you have received the Holy Spirit, who is the Comforter, you are rich indeed.

III.—IN RELATION TO CHRIST, more particularly His intercession: "I will pray the Father." See the confidence with which He anticipated the accomplishment of His purposes by His death. He knew His resources. His work was before Him. His mediation was not an experiment; but He came to fulfil the Divine purpose.

IV.—IN RELATION TO THE SINNER AND THE CHURCH: "That He may abide with you for ever." "Personally I am going to leave you,—it is only for a time; but I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, who shall personally dwell with you." Is it not a marvellous thing that the Holy Ghost dwells in our breast? Our bodies are His temples. "That He may abide with you for ever." Surely the Holy Ghost is the Secretary of State. Bunyan represents Him in his "Holy War" as always remaining in the castle. He never leaves the fortress: "He shall abide with you for ever." When I am in the fire, He is there too. When I am in the water, "I am with thee, and it shall not overflow thee." If we are at the end of the earth, like David, we can feel that He goes with us thither. If Jonah is cast overboard and swallowed by a fish, the Holy Ghost is there, for Jonah prayed unto the Lord in the fish, and I do know there is no real prayer without the Spirit, and the Lord delivered him. John was carried to Patmos, but he carried the Holy Ghost with him, for he was in the Spirit there on the Lord's-

day. "He shall abide with you for ever." And by-and-bye death will come, with—

"Mortal pallor on thy cheek,
But glory in thy soul ;"

and then, in the marvellous hereafter that is to follow, "He shall abide with you for ever." Amen.

He was by no means insensible to the joy of success, and was always gratified when assured that his words had been made spiritually useful to any member of the family of God, Mere compliments he loathed, and would listen to them with a look of pain and distress.

He rarely expressed an opinion as to sermons preached by other ministers. "We do not always say *all* we think," was a wise remark which he often repeated.

He did not object to candid criticism on his own efforts, and would listen thoughtfully if exception was taken to what he had advanced. In his published sermon, "The Lord a Friend in Need," (vol. ii., No. 19), he advances the statement that David was the author of the One hundred and forty-sixth psalm. This is doubtless erroneous, and he received a conceited and impertinent letter from an obscure individual, pointing out the mistake. This he showed to us, asking what we thought he should do with it. Indignant at its spirit, we recommended him to allow it to pass unnoticed. "No," he replied "I think I shall acknowledge it. It is important to be accurate even in small matters, and I have learned something."

The series of his published sermons was commenced in 1874, and has been continued to the present time. From these, of course, the most complete idea of his capacities as a preacher can be obtained. The first seventy-seven are the most valuable, as they were all printed in a type which admitted of each discourse's being given *in extenso* ; whereas those that followed

had to be considerably abbreviated—nor were they, we venture to think, as a rule, equal to many of the earlier ones.

Taken as a whole, however, the collection is a monument of deep and sanctified thought—a body of divinity of the most comprehensive character—and the record of a ministry unequalled for breadth and variety. Readers will find the five volumes a mine of theological wealth: while seekers after the truth, and weary and despondent Christians will rarely seek direction and comfort in their pages in vain.

The incidental expositions are peculiarly suggestive and helpful, and the illustrations, which are none too frequent, invariably elucidate the question in connection with which they are advanced.

We repress with reluctance our half-formed intention to introduce some critical and analytical remarks upon certain of the most characteristic discourses, into our pages—but these would be read with interest only by those who have given attention to sermon-making *as an art*, and as we are writing for the information of our Christian brethren at large, we forbear.

We may, however, be permitted to commend John Hazelton's sermons to the attention of ministers. We indeed advise no one to follow the example of a good brother, who learned one by heart and presented it as his own, to a provincial congregation, but rather plead that they be read with more than common care—with pencil in hand for marginal annotations; that thoughts be indexed for future reference: and that the mechanism and sequence of thought have full consideration, as well as the truths advanced—and we promise that they will prove of the greatest service to those who have to think for others.

Many testimonies to the usefulness of these printed sermons reached our brother from persons in different parts of the world. Some traced their conversion to them; others found them the

means of quickening and renewal : whilst in a few instances they found their way into lonely places in which the truth had never been proclaimed ; and cheered and solaced brethren who were entirely isolated from the public means of grace.

During the progress of the first volume, the now sainted Mrs. Mortimer — author of the “Peep of Day,” and other useful and winning religious books for the young—whose husband, Dr. Thomas Mortimer, was formerly the vicar of St. Mark’s, Myddelton-square, into which Chadwell-street runs—wrote to our dear friend, acknowledging the comfort she had experienced from reading his sermons, and tenderly invoking Heaven’s smile on the preacher—whom she did not know in the flesh.

Thus, “he that so often watered others, was himself watered” —and blessings rested on the head and heart of this faithful servant of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIV.

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ; they shall prosper that love thee, peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.”—(Psa. cxxii. 6—9).

JOHN HAZELTON was as remote from the spurious catholicity which acknowledges and receives all professed Christians without inquiry into their faith and practice, as he was free from the bitter sectarianism which cannot acknowledge the existence of spiritual good without the pale of its own communion.

He nevertheless at all times manifested a *denominational spirit*. He loved his own section of the Church with profound affection, identified himself with it with unconcealed satisfaction, rejoiced in its prosperity, and sought its good in every possible way.

He frequently rendered important service by his valuable Addresses at Recognition Services. The following is a sketch of a singularly weighty one on—

THE NATURE AND CONSTITUTION OF A GOSPEL CHURCH.

BEFORE the foundation of the world it was the sovereign, gracious, and unchangeable resolve of our covenant God to have a people who should occupy the nearest possible position to Himself. These constitute the Church of Jesus Christ—the whole election of grace—and all the Divine operations in this world relate directly or indirectly to their welfare and glory.

Having loved them, and resolved to fill them with Himself, He originated time, created the world, spoke Adam into being, and commenced His providential government of all things.

The fall occurred, but His gracious determination remained unchanged. He accordingly stepped on to the premises, and gave the first revelation of the purpose of His love. His saving operations commenced. Further indications of His grace were progressively made; promises, types, and predictions were given; and finally, the incarnation of Christ followed, the cross was set up, and the Church was redeemed from the curse and shame.

By His sufferings and triumphs the Lord acquired a *right* to dispense all grace, and *authority* to make all arrangements which were necessary to fulfil God's eternal designs.

These are recorded in the New Testament, from which we assuredly gather, that it is His will that regenerated persons in different localities should unite together for their mutual welfare and His own glory.

It is thus His pleasure that His pilgrims should travel to heaven in companies; that His sheep should be gathered into folds; that His followers should be planted in gardens; that His children live together in the "House of God."

A Church is therefore a congregation of Christian men and women, voluntarily united on Gospel principles, and in accordance with the will of Christ.

A Church is the creature of God; the creature of His *providence*, which must gather its members together into one locality; the creature of His *grace*, by which its members must have been saved and spiritualised; the creature of His *truth* which must have been endeared to every heart, and which is the great bond of union and fellowship; and the creature of His preserving *care*, which must not only perpetuate the assembly in a given locality, but uphold each member in practical godliness and a creditable profession of religion.

Such Churches are Strict Communion Baptist Churches. These hold "the faith once delivered to the saints." No other organization, however great the personal godliness of those who compose it, is scripturally entitled to be called a Church of God.

We stand where the apostles stood. Others have left that ground.

Such a Church is spiritual in its nature, its members being spiritually living and holy persons. Others are out of place. Dead trees disfigure an orchard. A corpse if kept in a dwelling house injures a family; so dead sinners have no right to a position in a Church.

The order of Church fellowship is clearly defined. There must firstly be spiritual life: that life must, secondly, have manifested itself by trust in the Saviour: the living and believing person must, thirdly, be baptised on a profession of faith: and, fourthly, there must be harmony of conviction as to the leading doctrines of the Gospel, and it must be mutually and affectionately agreed between this person and the Church that he be received. None can enter without the voice of the Church, and the Church can force none to join its fellowship, unless they cordially desire to do so.

The form of a Gospel Church is neither national, provincial, nor parochial. Were it so, it would include all the inhabitants of a locality. Its order is congregational. Each assembly is, under Christ, independent of all others; and the right and power to act are vested in the members when duly convened and assembled for that purpose.

Its powers are not legislative but executive. It cannot make laws or alter any of the enactments of the Lord's statute book. It cannot modify, transpose, ignore, or dispense with anything that comes from Christ, but its business is to carry out His revealed will in every particular.

It is empowered to transact its own business; admit or withdraw from members; appoint its own officers; maintain the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, and publicly worship God, independently of the authority of any man, or company of men in the world.

These ordinances are two—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both have divine authority—and both should be observed in the strictest deference to His revealed will.

Baptism is by immersion. Its subjects are believers. Its

objects the setting forth of our union to Christ in His death and resurrection. It is the *ritual* way into the visible Church.

The Lord's Supper is a *Church* ordinance; and partaking of it is a privilege which should be exclusively confined to its members, and to transient communicants who are members of other Strict Communion Churches.

Christ's authority in revelation both to baptism and the Lord's Supper is before charity, conscience, infirmity, policy, or one's inability to see their importance, and they are binding to the end of time.*

Churches have two officers—pastors and deacons.

The pastor presides, preaches, supervises, and rules the spiritual flock who have voluntarily and affectionately invited him to do so. His temporal maintenance is provided by his people, not as an act of charity but of justice. He has a right—based on the will of Christ—to the proceeds of his ministry.

Deacons are voluntary and honorary servants of the Church. Their office is defined as “serving tables”—the table of the Lord; the table of the poor; and the table of their pastor, whose welfare they should consider, and specially endeavour that he may be free from pecuniary anxiety and embarrassment.

Deacons are stewards of all pecuniary contributions to the

*This address was delivered, with some few variations, twice—at Carlton and Guildford, in October, 1873. Our sketch is compiled from notes taken on both occasions. The above paragraph (copied from the *Earthen Vessel*, for November, 1873) is important, as it embodies John Hazelton's convictions on a point of delicacy and difficulty.

Persons have been received into Baptist Churches without baptism on various grounds; as that it was *uncharitable* to exclude them; that they were *wealthy and influential*, and would prove useful to the cause; that they were *delicate, diseased, or deformed*, and could not with safety be immersed in water; or that having searched the Scriptures *they could not see that it was incumbent on them* to be baptised. Each of these cases is severally referred to in the words before us, the obvious meaning of which is, that *under no circumstances whatever* should persons be admitted to Church membership without previously being baptised.

cause of God, which they are to apply with the utmost diligence to the purposes intended.

Though a Church is a *spiritual* community its affairs should be managed on the honourable and prudent principles which are universally admitted by upright and worthy men. The proceedings of every Church should be business-like.

The design of all this is the welfare of Zion. Church fellowship is the highest form of fellowship on earth, and ensures very holy ends. A well-ordered Church is a divinely constituted benefit society. By it the truth is maintained; the word of life held forth; good effected; and God glorified.

None of his many Charges to churches on such occasions were, that we know, published; one, however, is memorable, the address delivered in Soho Chapel, Oxford street, on Nov. 30th, 1875, at the settlement of our brother, John Box.

Selecting the words:—"Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40), as his motto-verse, he discoursed on the policy which tends to the peace and welfare of a Gospel Church.

He dwelt on the fact that the original meaning of the word "decent" is *becoming*; and urged the pursuance of such prayerful, prudent, and pacific conduct as is *becoming* to a spiritual, evangelical and heaven-bound assembly.

"Order," he continued, is essential to church prosperity. It "is heaven's first law." The order enjoined in the text is not the mechanical observance of human rules, or the repression of individuality among church members; but a prayerful, diligent and holy observance of the commands and principles of the New Testament which emanates from Him who is the "God of order" (See page 112).

His Charges to his ministerial brethren at their settlements were exceedingly characteristic. The following is a specimen:—

THE PASTOR ADMONISHED.

“*And there they preached the Gospel.*”—*Acts xiv. 7.*

THESE words refer to Paul and Barnabas, who after preaching Christ at Antioch, where they experienced much persecution, “shook off the dust of their feet, and came to Iconium.” There also considerable bitterness was manifested, and they fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and there *they preached the gospel*. Paul was a highly educated man, and, doubtless, a philosopher, and therefore, well able to deliver philosophical lectures. That, however was not his vocation: nor was he a political agitator, nor was Barnabas. They did not deliver addresses on such matters; neither did they deliver lectures on heathen mythology or poetry. This Paul could have done; but he was determined to know nothing wherever he went but “Christ and Him crucified.” They therefore preached the glorious gospel of God’s grace in Lystra.

As a preliminary enquiry, let us ask, “WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?”

It implies three or four very solemn facts. It implies, *firstly*, that man is a sinner; for if there were no sin in existence, and man had not become a sinner, we had never heard of the glorious gospel of God.

It implies, *secondly*, that the Lord our God is unchangeable. Had it been possible for Him, as the moral Governor of the universe, to repeal His law, or to change it in any respect, this, I think, would have been done, and the death of Christ would have been avoided; we should have had no precious blood to talk about, and no gospel to preach.

It implies, *thirdly*, that man is an immortal being, and I hope, my brother, that you will hold fast to this solemn and all-important fact. I trust that you will never get it into your head that the soul of man is mortal, and that immortality is consequent upon the mediatorial work and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Man lost everything that was morally good and excellent when he fell; but he did not lose the immortality of his soul. He lost the immortality of his body, for “The body is dead because of sins;” but the natural immortality of the soul man retains, and I cannot conceive why

God should have given a gospel to fallen man if his spirit had not been deathless.

In the fourth place, the gospel implies that there are certain important movements of sovereign grace on the throne of God.

Putting these four facts together, we find that they connect themselves with each other in a very important manner. Man is a sinner, and therefore needs (though he does not deserve) the gospel. The Lord God is unchangeable, and, therefore, if He will save sinners, He *must* make such holy arrangements as are unfolded in the good news of salvation. The human race is immortal, and God has resolved to save sinners. This resolution necessitated the acts of His grace and revelation of His will, and that revelation we call the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. *The Gospel is a divine relation of divine persons, things, and operations.* First of all, it is a divine revelation of the decrees, and thoughts, and gracious purposes of the great Jehovah. You are not, my brother, to limit your attention to His acts in time, or even to the cross of Jesus Christ. You will have much to say about the cross, and about the sufferings of Jesus Christ. You must, indeed, go to Calvary, and stand there, and have much to do with that solemn spot ; but you are to go beyond the cross, you are to go beyond the blood, and beyond the Saviour's work. You are to go into eternity and contemplate the sovereignty and holy and righteous will of Jehovah, as it is revealed in that gospel you have to preach.

Now God resolved before the world to save His people. You will not preach universal redemption and universal salvation based upon human or Divine chance, if there be such a thing as chance in connection with Divinity. No, you will preach a salvation based on the eternal purposes, decrees, and thoughts, and resolutions of the everlasting Jehovah ; and, having gone back into eternity, guided, as you will be, by the gospel, you will take your stand, so to speak, in eternity ; and, having contemplated these thoughts and purposes of God, you will proceed to notice how God embodied them all in a systematic manner. He thought, resolved, and decreed, and then arranged all His purposes, thoughts, and decrees ; and that Divine system is everywhere called **THE COVENANT OF GRACE.**

You will further contemplate God in His Trinity of Persons as the covenant God of a covenant people, and you will be very particular in pointing out the respective offices of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You will not confound the Father's work with that of the Son, nor that of the Son with that of the Spirit, nor that of the Spirit with that of the Father and the Son.

If you do this, however, you may expect to hear it whispered that you are *rather doctrinal*; but you will not be able to preach the gospel unless you preach the glorious doctrines of grace. You must talk about not only what it is to hunger for and to eat the bread, but you must describe the bread itself, and whence it came, and who made it. State fully that the bread you set forth, came from heaven, and when you have done this, and spread the gospel table with heavenly food, describe the experiences of hungry souls and freely invite them to come and partake. If there be hesitating ones—and there will be many—place the bread before them, and try to preach away their fears, their doubts, and their darkness. Attempt to encourage them as a minister of Jesus Christ, and whilst you are thus preaching the Holy Ghost will bless your act, and come down upon the people, and seal the word of Divine truth upon their hearts.

If you will take my advice, you will not talk much about the first, second and third Persons in the Trinity, although it is true there are three Persons in the great and glorious Godhead. They are equal in power, glory, grace and will—in every respect: and, therefore, you will find it necessary sometimes to place the third first, or the second first. However, you will set forth God in His Trinity of Persons as the covenant God of His Church and people. Point out the eternal love of the Father, the eternal love and merits and salvation of the Son, and the eternal Godhead and graciousness, and power, and glory of the Holy Spirit. Preach the saving operations of a Triune God. Let *purpose* be first, and the *covenant of grace* second, and then set forth the three-one God, executing His one great plan, and actualising and realising the purpose of His eternal grace.

To do this you will have to preach God on the cross, and in the law, and on the throne, and in the church, and in Providence. You will even have to preach God in hell, in a certain sense, for

His justice, His holiness, and truth are there. You will get behind the cross, and preach love above it, blood upon it, and power beneath it. You will preach redemption coming out of eternal love, and power coming out of redemption.

Love was before blood ; and, if you would take a scriptural view of salvation, you must bear this important fact in mind. Redemption is the outcome of dateless love, and the power by which sinners are saved is the outcome of redemption. In due course *life* follows love and blood, and those that were chosen in Christ, and redeemed by Him, are regenerated by the Spirit of God. This you will preach.

Whatever your theme may be, be careful to exhibit its relation to, and connection with, the mediation of Jesus Christ. Preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified ; preach Him in the covenant ; preach Him under the law, bearing "our sins in His own body on the tree." Preach Him as *the end of the law*—not its terminating, but its fulfilling end—"for righteousness to every one that believeth." Preach Him in the territories of death, in the confines of the grave, on the salvation side of the sea of wrath, and on the throne of His eternal glory. Preach His incarnation, His complexity, His humiliation, His coronation. Him first, Him last, Him all and in all.

The gospel is thus a Divine revelation of Divine things, God revealing His thoughts in the form of a Divine system—the covenant of grace—which is being accomplished, and when the objects of Divine love and purpose are gathered, there will be a most perfect and complete fulfilment of all the eternal purposes of our God. Preach, therefore, a four-square gospel, in which election, redemption, and regeneration, are co-extensive. Preach salvation by mercy, by merit, and by might ; by love, by blood, by power.

The *Father's* love the moving cause ; the *Saviour's* blood the meritorious cause ; and the *Spirit's* power the efficient cause, to the praise of the glory of free and sovereign grace.

2.—*The Gospel may be considered as a divine exposition of heavenly mysteries.* I put this thus because it is a rather more comprehensive term than "Divine revelation." God has explained, simplified, and expounded in His word the mystery of HIMSELF, and of things which are heavenly and eternal. Do you preach abstract

Deity? If you should, you will be a higher preacher than I or any of us here. I am free to confess, that I do not preach, and further, that I neither know nor serve *abstract Deity*. I neither know nor love God *out of Christ*; nor can I preach Him apart from the mediation of the dear Redeemer. "Our God is a consuming fire." It is too common to interpolate the words "out of Christ" into this text, and to press it to refer to God, abstractedly considered. This is not, however, its meaning, for God is not "*our God*" out of Christ at all. We stand in covenant *relationship* to Him, as we stand in covenant *union* to His dear Son.

Keep close to, and within the limits of mediation; nor let your thoughts go beyond them. God in Christ is the God of His people; and the God of the gospel is the God you are to preach.

You will never be able to fathom the mystery of the Trinity, and do not attempt it. Absolutely wicked things have been said by people when attempting to illustrate how one is three, and three are one. If you could get round God you might know; but you might as well attempt to get the ocean into a cup as to try and comprehend Him. It is the power of faith, and not of perfect knowledge that is to support you. Your faith goes far beyond your knowledge. If you believe only as much as you know, you will be an uncommonly little believer, because you do not know very much. I believe infinitely more than I know. My faith goes infinitely beyond my limited reason.

State, however, that God is a three-one God; assert the fact; contend for it; but never try to illustrate it, or to show how the Incomprehensible may be comprehended. God has rendered Himself APPREHENSIBLE, but not COMPREHENSIBLE. He has translated His thoughts into our speech, He has translated His great Word into human language. He has simplified this great mystery, a knowledge of which is essential to salvation.

Therefore, if you preach the one great and glorious and incomprehensible Jesus, you will preach a gospel to satisfy the man of mightiest mind, and sufficiently simple and easy to be understood by the babe in grace, who has only half-a-dozen thoughts about spiritual matters. The gospel, then, is a divine revelation of divine things.

3. *The gospel is the vehicle of God's grace.*

You will, of course, insist on the necessity of regeneration, and faithfully assure all that "they must be born again." I would not, however, advise you to make speculative or philosophical remarks on this mysterious subject. Rather content yourself with stating the solemn fact.

Regeneration, I certainly believe is performed suddenly—but though you believe so, too, you will neither discuss *how* or *when* God's people received spiritual life, but rather deal with the things which evince that the Holy Spirit has quickened their souls. It is by the gospel that a knowledge that he has passed from death unto life is conveyed to the immortal mind of the favoured sinner.

I am therefore anxious that you should grasp the importance of the gospel as the great appointed vehicle of God's grace. All religion that has not a vital connection with it, I regard with the gravest mistrust.

Some have much to say respecting ecstatic emotions, and convictions, and consolations, about which they can give little or no account. God's word, however, is the vehicle of all knowledge that is saving: and religious impressions that have not a very close connection with gospel truths are not to be trusted. God rides in His word: enters blood-bought hearts by His word: and ever uses it as the means by which He blesses His people. My dear brother, I believe your Master intended this work to be done by His word, or He would not have called you to preach it. When you were convinced of sin you sought Divine guidance, and at length the token came. Now, when the Lord convinces of sin, He applies the word, and the conviction is the result of that application. And when He pardons sin He applies the Word. And when a poor soul is in darkness of mind, and in time obtains comfort, the comfort is the invariable result of an application of the Word.

Sometimes, again, the Christian is dejected in the House of God; as the minister proceeds, the Word is blessed to the dejected one, and he is comforted. If you could preach philosophy, and lecture on heathen mythology, poetry, and historical matters, you might have a certain congregation to listen to you, but I do not hesitate to say that God would never pour His

saving grace and truth through such lectures into the hearts of sinful men. No, there is only one vehicle of grace, and this is the gospel which Paul and Barnabas preached, and which you are expected to preach all the days of your life.

This gospel—my brother, do not forget this—is, like its great Author, eternal and unchangeable. We are living in extraordinary times. The mind of man is working with great rapidity. The human intellect is making gigantic strides. Everybody runs now, trade and commerce are in a hurry—and we are told that it is necessary that the gospel should be so preached as to keep abreast of the age. Well, so believe I, and more than this, I believe that the Gospel will always be *in advance of the times*. The world will never be in advance of the words of Jesus Christ; the times will never be ahead of the gospel, the great outcome of the wisdom of the eternal God. He will never be behind His creatures. Man's future scientific discoveries may be a thousand times more astonishing than any we are now aware of. A thousand marvellous things may yet be added to the ample page of human knowledge. He who has made steam his servant, and discovered how to flash his thoughts across a continent in an hour, may achieve far more wonderful things yet, but whatever may be the future attainments and condition of mankind, they will always be fallen creatures, and always need a Saviour. The saints will always rejoice in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Sin is unchangeable in its nature, and the grace by which sin is removed and forgiven is unchangeable in its character.

Since, then, sin and grace are faithfully described in the Bible, the Gospel will always be in advance of the world, to whatever pitch of intellectual development it may attain. Never then, my brother, be ashamed of the Gospel of God, nor suffer anyone to lead you astray by suggestions as to its suitability for the times. The everlasting gospel is for all time. If you go before it, you must, if you are God's true child, stop, turn, retrace your steps and be content to be led by it. There is neither salvation nor safety in going in advance of it. Forget not then, my brother, in this fast age, that the Gospel is unchangeable. So much upon the *matter* of your preaching.

II. OUR SECOND ENQUIRY WILL BE, HOW ARE YOU TO PREACH THE GOSPEL ?

I would admonish you to make it your care to preach it comprehensively, clearly, discriminately, confidently, laboriously, pacifically, and universally.

1.—*Preach it comprehensively*, in all its branches, doctrinal, experimental, and practical. Preach all those great saving facts on which salvation is based. Preach from all parts of the Bible; preach the types, the prophecies, the psalms, the histories, the epistles, ever, as I said before, seeking to show the relation of your every subject to the God-man Mediator. Preach all the Persons in the Godhead. Preach all the offices sustained by Jesus Christ. Point to all the wells of salvation.

2.—*Preach clearly*. Endeavour not to mystify anything; and do not indulge in speculation. Do not envelop your subject with dark clouds. Put the lamp of Divine truth on the table, and suffer it to shine with its native glory. I do not say, *be little and puerile*. Far be it from me to dissuade you from trying to think deeply; rather would I say, *Study till your mind has grasped your subject*, and then simplify it as much as you can in presenting it to your people.

3.—*Endeavour to preach discriminately*; and this in relation (1) to Divine facts, and (2) to different classes of hearers.

1.—Let your preaching be discriminating in relation to Divine facts, and be careful to maintain those all-important distinctions which are set forth in the Word of God. Distinguish between *the Persons in the Godhead* and their several operations in relation to salvation. Distinguish between *law and gospel*. Do not attenuate the awful requirements of the law, as if God could allow the rights of His throne to be subverted, or magnify His mercy at the expense of His justice. Do not, on the other hand, preach the gospel in a legal way, so as to obscure its glory and lustre as a system in which grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

Be clear as to *the offices of Christ*. As a Prophet He teaches; as a Priest He atones and intercedes; as a King He rules without a rival over blood-bought hearts. Remember, however, that while His offices (like His natures) may be distin-

guished, they are never divided. Whom He bought by blood He saves by power. Whom He redeemed He savingly enlightens. Whom He suffered for on the cross He pleads for above.

Distinguish again between *justification* and *sanctification*, or, in other words, the Saviour's completed work FOR us, and the Spirit's progressive work WITHIN us. Justification is a finished and perfect work. Elect sinners will not be more justified in heaven than they are now. Sanctification is a continuous operation of the Spirit of God in the soul, and will not be consummated till the favoured sinner joins "the spirits of just men made perfect."

This distinction will afford a clue to many questions that arise in the minds of God's people. "I am polluted," says one; "in me," as I feel by painful experience, "that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." "Behold, I am vile!" "When I turn my eyes within, all is dark and vain and wild," and I am "filled with unbelief and sin;" "If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do." Yet I am told that as a believer I am perfect in Christ Jesus," "complete in Him," "justified from all things," and eternally saved. This and my experience clash, and I cannot reconcile the seeming contradiction. To this, my brother, you must reply, by drawing the distinction which I have named. Show the troubled believer that though "accepted in the Beloved," and "forgiven all trespasses," through the finished work of Christ, he is the subject of a work still unfinished, the nature of which you will be careful to describe; and you will not fail to point out the blessed fact that the period is coming when he will be *in himself* what he is now *in his Lord*, associated with, and assimilated unto his blessed Saviour.

2. Let your preaching be discriminating *in relation to different classes of hearers*, and seek to address each with Scriptural propriety. Avoid vulgar and indiscriminating preaching. Describe character accurately and faithfully, and then fearlessly deliver the divine message. Put the natural man and the spiritual man in their proper places; describe the premises they occupy, and their conditions in God's sight. Never administer spiritual comfort to an unregenerate man. Never say "Peace" where there is no peace—FOR GOD'S SAKE, NEVER DO SO.

Again, you will be called upon to address hypocrites ; men that have the form of godliness without the power; the garb without the grace of religion. No man can be a hypocrite without knowing it, nor without God's knowing it. To such you must speak very affectionately, but very plainly, insisting on the necessity of vital godliness, and stating, without hesitation, that—

“ A form of words though ne'er so sound,
Can never save the soul ;
The Holy Ghost must give the wound,
And make the wounded whole.”

In addressing God's children, do not forget that you are not to administer indiscriminate consolation even to regenerate persons. “ Preach the word,” wrote Paul to Timothy; “ *reprove, rebuke, exhort* with all long-suffering and doctrine.” Some of God's people are in refuges of lies from which you must endeavour to drive them. Others are ignorant of God's method of salvation, and cling to systems of theology which are dishonouring to the glory of His grace. These you must fearlessly instruct. Others are walking in disobedience to His solemn commands—believers, but unbaptised, belonging to the family of God, yet remaining without the precincts of the visible church. These are to be taught and warned. Thus, my brother, you will seek to suit your messages to every class of hearers you may be called to address.

4.—Further, preach the gospel, my brother, *confidently*. I am pained when ministers simply use such terms as “ per-adventure,” “ possibly,” or, “ it may perhaps be so ;” and I trust that your sermons will be of another character. Preach what you know. Avoid conjectures, and keep within the range of your own knowledge and experience, and confirm all your assertions by the word of God. It is my prayer that uncertainties may never form part of your addresses. May you be able to say, “ These are facts: I know and am persuaded of the matter,” “ The bread is good, heavenly, and Divine: I live upon it.” “ Christ is precious: I have proved Him so.” “ The refuge is safe: I myself, have taken shelter therein.” Preaching of this character will commend itself to the consciences of your spiritually-minded hearers ;

and even if they cannot accept all that you say, they will confess that you are an honest man, and you will be respected.

5.—Strive, again, to be a *laborious* minister of the gospel. Study the Bible closely and carefully; aye, and if you can, critically. Read good books diligently. Master them; make them your own. Eschew the counsel of men who advise you not to do this; and peruse anything and everything that will help you in your gospel work. Meditate prayerfully over what you read, then pray, then preach; then pray again, and God will bless you, I am sure. O that you may come dripping wet out of the presence of your Master into the presence of His people. Oh that you may come like Moses, whose face shone when he descended from the mount. May you come out lighted up from having been in communion with God.

6.—Preach the gospel *pacificaly*. Be not only a preacher of peace, but preach the gospel in a calm and placid, and pacific manner. Do not lose your temper; “The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” An angry man in the pulpit is a very pitiful sight. Do not make personal and private matters public. Leave the people if you feel that you cannot come before them without introducing such topics. You are to preach *the gospel*; and these matters are not the gospel.

7.—Lastly. Preach the gospel *universally*. Wherever the Lord opens a door to preach, your work lies before you—in all places, in all times, and in all situations. As the apostles went to Derbe and Lystra, so wherever the Lord sends you, go. Do not go anywhere, and say you do not know the people, and, therefore cannot preach. Never mind the congregation. Your work is simply to preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God; and may God bless you, for Christ’s sake. Amen!

CHAPTER XV.

How fine has the day been ! How bright was the sun !
 How lovely and joyous the course that he run !
 Though he rose in a mist when his race he begun,
 And there followed some droppings of rain ;
 But now the fair traveller comes to the west,
 His rays are all gold, and his beauties are best ;
 He paints the sky gay, as he sinks to his rest,
 And foretells a bright rising again.

Just such is the Christian. His course he begins
 Like the sun in a mist, while he mourns for his sins,
 And melts into tears ; then he breaks out and shines,
 And travels his heavenly way :
 But when he comes nearer to finish his race,
 Like a fine setting sun, he looks richer in grace,
 And gives a sure hope at the end of his days,
 Of rising in brighter array.

“ Jesus can make a dying bed
 As soft as downy pillows are.”

“ **T**O every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. . . . a time to be born, and a time to die.” The sovereign Ruler of the skies allots to all men the duration of their sojourn here ; and at His bidding the dust returns to the earth as it was ; and the spirit returns to the God who gave it.

This universal truth is often singularly impressive when considered in relation to ministers of the gospel. The sovereignty which determines the measure of their gifts, prescribes the period of their service. Some are called away young, while their lives

are still full of power and promise ; others are spared to labour long before they are summoned to their rest.

The manner, not less than the time of the termination of their periods of service, is also prescribed by His uncontrollable pleasure. Some are called to linger through many protracted weeks of silence after life's active business, waiting for the chariot to fetch them home: while others are summoned in the midst of pressing engagements—to lay all aside, and appear in the presence of “the great King.”

Mysterious as these matters often are, faith should check the murmurs of troubled hearts. The Lord makes no mistakes; and—though we see not yet how it can be—“all things work together for good to them that love God”—not only in the limited sphere of each little life, but in the grand and glorious progress of the undivided church of Jesus Christ. Though champions fall, and brave hearts cease to beat—though the voice that soothed or stimulated us yesterday, is *now* hushed for evermore, all is well.

It devolves on us, in these our last few pages, to tell how our dear friend's long and useful life was brought to its close. Never, as we have seen, robust, his frame for many years had partially succumbed to repeated attacks of indisposition and continuous and exhaustive labours.

Comparatively early he manifested a constitutional predisposition to asthma, from which he suffered considerably; and in the winter months was often unable to sleep in his bed, but was compelled to rise in the night and sit in his study.

At length a tendency to bronchitis likewise discovered itself; and unwonted severity of the weather—or the least attack of cold—would often induce the most serious symptoms.

For this reason he was reluctantly compelled to decline almost all invitations to public meetings for ten years before his decease.

These with other physical troubles often rendered life burden-

some, and would have excused a less sedulous attention to duty. His devotion to the work he loved was, however, such that little else than absolute impossibility to prosecute it was allowed to prevent it. Often we have known him to travel in inclement weather to conduct a service in fulfilment of a promise, when it was evident that exertion was extremely painful, and would inevitably be followed by wearisome prostration. During the last eighteen years of his life he was not unfrequently laid aside. His attacks gradually increased in severity, and left him less able to withstand the inroads that disease was making in his frame. Almost imperceptibly he began to look worn and shrunken, and complained that his work was growing too much for him.

One circumstance was fraught with joy. His beloved son, John E. Hazelton, while retaining his position as the esteemed Secretary of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, had felt constrained to respond to the suggestion that he should lay himself open to accept invitations to preach the Gospel, and not a few Churches were gladly receiving his testimony.

It is manifest from our friend's sermons that his own religion was at this time deepening. "My dear young hearers," he said, some while ago, "mine is a peculiar experience which you know little about. The longer I live the more solemn, wonderful, and mysterious death appears to me to be, and the longer I live the more solemn and wonderful even life appears to be, and oftentimes the question silently arises within, shall I overcome at last?"* Again, "the night is far spent and the day is at hand; a few years ago we who are now advanced in life were very young, and if we may speak for others, we did not think much about night. Our heads, however, have become grey or bald, and we are in all respects far different to what we then were."

He thus dwelt much on the necessity of experimental godli-

* Sermon 13, Vol. iv.

ness, and spoke with the earnestness of one who felt that the dark river was not very far in advance of him.

It was noticed that in the family worship he prayed often for sincerity of heart, and would refer to Watts' solemn lines :—

“Nothing but truth before God's throne
With honour can appear ;
The painted hypocrites are known
Through the disguise they wear.

Their lifted eyes salute the skies,
Their bended knees the ground,
But God abhors the sacrifice
Where not the heart is found.

Lord, search my thoughts and try my ways,
And make my soul sincere;
Then shall I stand before Thy face
And find acceptance there.”

It is remembered that often at this time he expressed his conviction that his career on earth would not last very much longer. “I shall not live to complete another volume of my sermons,” he once observed gravely, after completing his revision of the current discourse for the press.

Though far from well, he discharged the long series of services he had undertaken in April, 1887, preaching to his own people on the Thursday, visiting Mount Zion, Hill-street, and Camden Lecture Hall in the morning and afternoon of Good Friday, preaching again to his own people on the Sunday, and at Old Brentford on the Monday.

This in his weak state was too much for him, and a few weeks after he was laid aside with a sharp attack of bronchitis. From this, however, he recovered. In the early days of his convalescence he thus spoke to a friend: “I have been very ill, and I have been thinking that very possibly I was not far from my end. Convictions like these make a man solemn; I

have been stock-taking and looking within to see what my spiritual possessions really are."

He resumed his work, but was never quite the same man physically after. In 1887, it was noticed that he read hardly any other book than his Bible, and appeared to spend much of his time in meditation. His sermons were as rich and full as ever—the first after his recovery being a suggestive one on Christ the Vine (page 228).

The autumn of 1887 will long be memorable for the visit of our dear brother, H. F. Doll, the Madras agent of the Strict Baptist Mission. He arrived early in October, and shortly afterwards had an interview with the President, at which the writer was present. The meeting was almost historical in its interest. Our friend's grave courtesy contrasted curiously with the other's eager versatility; but a union of heart was rapidly established. They talked of many things connected with their common work, and earnest indeed were John Hazelton's words of tender blessing as they parted.

Shortly afterwards he was again prostrated, and his indisposition kept him from the Annual Meeting which was held at Chadwell-street Chapel not long after.

We were also present when our brother Doll called to pay his last respects to our friend previous to his return.

He looked extremely wan and worn, and for a time appeared indisposed to engage in conversation. At length he said, "Do you not think, friend S—, that our people expect too much fruit from our indispositions? They seem to think that every time we have been ill we ought to appear before them with new power and unction; now I cannot feel that this is always the case!"

On our brother Doll's referring to the words, "Afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness," he replied—"Yes,

afterwards—but that may *be a long time* you know. I cannot always feel what I have heard my brethren describe.”

The subject of the scripturalness of ministers’ being publicly ordained by the imposition of hands, having recently engaged our attention, our brother Doll described the way in which he had been ordained—and we asked our friend’s opinion. He however, said nothing, and was evidently disinclined to discuss any controversial point.

Presently he again broke the silence by saying, “ Ah, well, I have felt very solemnly the force of the verse—how does it run—‘ secure if mortal comforts flee ’?”

We repeated Dr. Doddridge’s immortal words, and he dwelt in a musing way on the last line: “ To find ten thousand worlds in Thee.” Ten thousand worlds without Him would be poverty indeed, and with Him, we can do without the ten thousand worlds—“ but,” he continued, “ we know what the poet meant.”

When the time for parting arrived he rose from his chair, and taking our friend by the hand, he said “ My brother, good-bye, I am sorry not to have seen more of you, but it could not be. I cannot say more than I did before, but I say that from my heart, ‘ God bless you.’ ”

The remaining weeks of the year passed on, and he somewhat recovered his strength, and was able, though at times with great effort, to reach the chapel. It is remembered that a quiet pathos characterised his ministry, which was fraught with savour and power. The sermon on the morning of the Lord’s day, December 18th, was printed in the series, and is rich not only in scriptural instruction, but in happy and telling illustrations.

His address at the Lord’s table on Sunday, January 1st, 1888, will long live in the memories of all who heard it. He dwelt on the words, “ Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb,” and expatiated on the suggestive figures of

heaven which they present—as the *rest-meal*. Supper is partaken of when toil is over, when interruptions have ceased, and the scattered family are reunited at the close of the day: so the Lord's people will be gathered to their Father's house on high, to partake of the marriage supper of the Lord they love.

He preached on the ensuing Thursday; the following being the notes he made in preparation of the service. They are clearly and firmly written on a half sheet of waste paper:—

“*But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine*”
—(Isa. xliii. 1).

1. THE CLAIM. 2. THE GROUND. 3. THE ENCOURAGEMENTS.

1 *The Claim*: “Thou art Mine.”

(a) My new creatures, or creation. Surpasses the old, as to cost. Nearness *in* Christ. Method of production. *Life. Glory. Duration.*

(b) My joy. God rejoices in the beauty of His Church, which is His work and gift. In her perfection, for she possesses *in* Christ all that He requires. He delights in her graces, fruits, services, prayer, and praise. His people serve Him as Adam and as angels never could.

(c) Christ's flesh and bones. His members; nature of each in the other. Theirs in Him and His in them.

(d) His fulness; not the world, but the Church: neither complete without the other, as Eve was the fulness of Adam. A family or body, not complete if one member is missing. There would be a void in Christ if one were lost. A perfect Church proves to the full Christ's worth and ability to save.

(e) They have the witness of this within. Thy heart, conscience, will, life, thoughts, and person are Mine.

(f) He will do what He pleases with His own—with us.

2. *The ground on which He bases His claim.*

(a) Redemption and calling.

(b) Price and power.

(c) Divine revelation is necessary to assure us thereof.

3. *The encouragement*: "Fear not."

(a) Saints are subject to fears. They arise from indwelling sin. There would be none, but for sin. Some, through fear, limit God as to time, place, circumstances, power, love, wisdom, and His acceptance of their souls.

(b) Fear, as to the reality of grace within. Want of temporals, Some future trouble, real or imaginary. Death and judgment.

(c) Fear not, for these reasons: Thou art Mine: I am with thee. What I have already done for thee. *I save for My own sake.*

(d) His words cannot be falsified. We may fear, but cannot induce God to change.

(e) The effects of this relationship. A special providence. Ministry of angels. Access to the throne. Intercession of Christ. The end, peace and glory for ever. Amen.

He was enabled to discharge the engagement to the manifest enjoyment of the congregation—no one remarking anything unusual in his delivery.

Towards the close of the week he appeared more than ordinarily unwell, but he did not abandon his intention of preaching on the Sunday, until the preceding evening, when, by his doctor's advice, he went to bed early. The day of rest passed calmly: none apprehending serious danger.

Part of the time he was heard by his beloved wife, talking to himself, and she recognised that he was repeating one of his favourite verses:—

"'Tis He adorned my naked soul
And made salvation mine:
Upon a poor polluted worm
He makes His glories shine."

She reminded him that the correct reading is "graces," but as he again whispered the long-loved lines, he made no alteration. It may be that he changed this one word intentionally—to indicate that the light of heaven itself was dawning upon his ransomed spirit.

Later on, he murmured some unintelligible words, and going softly to his side she enquired, "Dont you know me, dear?" Gathering up his strength to reply, he said quite clearly, "Yes, it's *Janey*," employing the endearing name with which he had been wont to address her, in the days of their first love.

Human affection and spiritual emotion seemed thus to be exerting a mingled sway over his mind, as he neared the confines of the eternal world.

He evidently knew his son, and shortly before he passed away kissed him tenderly, but "John, my boy," were all the words his dying lips could utter.

To a friend and deacon whose kindness and attention had been very great, he also tried to speak, "Thank you for coming," he was understood to say, and after a short interval he uttered his last audible words, "I am all right."

The inhabitants of the great city were commencing the work of the week: the faint beams of the wintry sun were struggling to pierce the mist that hung around; as his ransomed spirit left its tenement of clay, at about eleven o'clock in the morning.

Two days after we stood beside his coffined form, which lay in the quiet study he had so loved. Near at hand were the books that he had prized, but he had done with them for ever.

His countenance was calm and serene, betokening neither rapture nor surprise, but rather thoughtful solemnity; recalling the expression we had so often noticed on his face, while the closing strains of the hymn were being sung before the sermon, and he was taking an upward glance at his Master before rising to address a congregation. Verily, that placid

countenance was in itself a sermon, mutely appealing to all who beheld it, to "mark the perfect man and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

He left this earth for the "Homeland," on January 9th, 1888.

* * * * *

A large and representative congregation of Christian friends assembled on the morning of Friday, January 13th, 1888, in Chadwell Street Chapel, to pay their last tribute of respect to their "brother beloved."

Many also gathered afterwards at Finchley Cemetery to see the coffin lowered into its final resting-place, and to hear the solemn words of farewell.

His body awaits the morning of the Resurrection in grave No. 659, P., Section U., Block 2.

His affectionate flock have marked the spot by an appropriate monument, bearing the following words:—

In Loving Memory

OF

JOHN HAZELTON,

For 36 years the beloved Pastor of the Church of Christ,

WORSHIPPING AT

Mount Zion Baptist Chapel, Chadwell Street, Clerkenwell.

By the grace of God, for nearly 50 years,
He sought to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ,
And Him crucified.

BORN JUNE 6TH, 1822,

And departed to be with Christ, January 9th, 1888,

IN THE 66TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

"Blessed are they which are called unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb."—Rev. xix. 9.

This Monument is erected by the Church as a token of tender regard for the memory of "a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord."

To the back wall of the Chapel his friends have also caused a mural tablet to be fixed, the inscription on which testifies to his life-long devotion to his high calling. It runs thus:—

IN MEMORIAM.

In Loving Remembrance of

JOHN HAZELTON,

THE FIRST PASTOR OF THIS CHURCH,

*Who passed peacefully away into the presence of his Saviour,
January 9th, 1888, in the 66th year of his age.*

CALLED BY SOVEREIGN GRACE IN EARLY LIFE,
AND QUALIFIED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE WORK
OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY,

HE WAS ENABLED TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH
AS IT IS IN JESUS, IN ALL ITS FULNESS AND SUFFICIENCY;

BOLD IN THE

ADVOCACY OF THOSE DOCTRINES WHICH THE

HOLY SPIRIT HAD REVEALED TO HIM,

IT WAS HIS DELIGHT TO SET FORTH THE LOVE OF A

TRIUNE JEHOVAH IN THE

SALVATION OF HIS CHURCH;

THE CROSS OF CHRIST, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS,

WERE TO HIM A

GLORIOUS REALITY, AND "JESUS ONLY" WAS EVER THE

THEME OF HIS MINISTRY.

*To commemorate the 36th year of his faithful labour, this Tablet is erected
by his sorrowing Church and congregation.*

THE END.

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