Edward P. Walsworth,
Oakland,
Cal.

DOMESTIC PORTRAITURE

AND

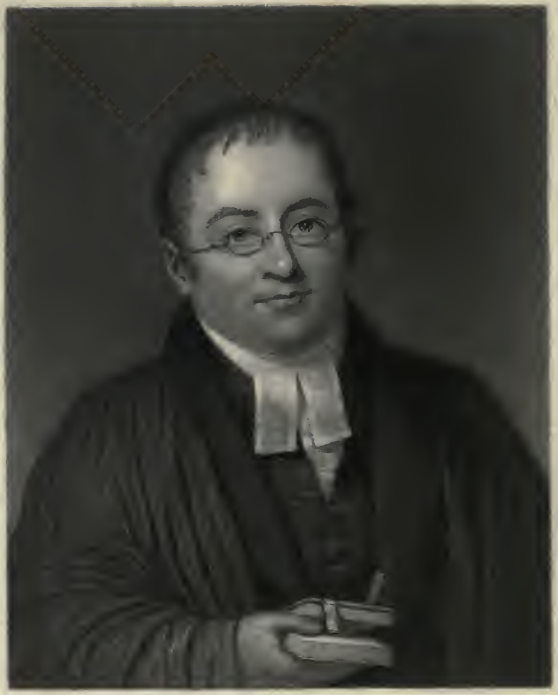
TRACTS.

REV. LEGH RICHMOND.

Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.—DEUT. vi. 8.

He blessed the habitation of the just.—PROV. iii. 33.

This we ought to be constantly intent upon, as the business of our lives—our daily work—to get our spirits so attempered and fitted to heaven, that if we be asked what design we drive at, what we are doing, we may be able to make a true answer. *We are dressing ourselves for eternity.*—HOWE.



Rev.d Legh Richmond.

DOMESTIC PORTRAITURE;

OR, THE SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION OF
RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE IN THE EDUCATION OF A FAMILY;

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE MEMOIRS

OF THREE OF THE DECEASED CHILDREN OF
THE REV. LEGH RICHMOND.

[1772-1827]

WITH INTRODUCTORY REMARKS,
BY THE REV. E. BICKERSTETH,
RECTOR OF WATTON, HERTS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE republication of the "DOMESTIC PORTRAITURE" has been considered a favourable opportunity for prefixing a few remarks on Christian education, a most impor tant part of every parent's duty, and the root of innumurable future blessings. In doing this, the writer hopes, in some measure, to concentrate within a short compass, the many truly valuable exhortations and pressing entreaties to his children, by his revered and beloved friend, Mr. Richmond, which this volume contains.

It is common to hear complaints, that the children of pious parents disappoint the expectations which are usually, and not unnaturally formed; and it is true that this is too often the case; and that in some instances children piously educated, will, when they break through the restraints of education and habit, become excessively wicked: and they may, even like Eli's and David's children, perish in their wickedness. In these extreme cases, there has probably been either some serious neglect of parental duty, or the formation of unhappy connexions with others: at least, every Christian parent is dumb before God under such awful dispensations, and is feelingly alive to the conviction of his own sinfulness.

But, after all, the mass of Christian piety in a country will be found to be in the generation of the pious; and though God shows his own sovereignty in sometimes raising up an eminent instrument of good from among

the most wicked, he also shows the riches and the faithfulness of his own promises: *The generation of the upright is blessed: Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

It may be used briefly to notice some causes of want of success, and also to touch upon the means of a successful Christian education.

In considering the causes of want of success, we must first notice the disregard of one of the most important religious principles, a due knowledge of which lies at the root of all success in this work—that all children are by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath; that they inherit from their parents *a carnal mind, which is enmity against God.* However pious the parent, his nature is corrupt, and descends to his children. From us they derive that nature, and all success in education must be owing to God's blessing our efforts, and giving them his grace, that they may gain dominion over their natural and inbred corruption. The Christian parent will ever be watchful to detect the workings of this corruption, even in those things which may appear to the eye of the world pleasing and delightful. That alone which is *the fruit of the Spirit*—that alone which is superior to nature, will satisfy him. Whilst he will forward and cultivate whatever is lovely and of good report, he will be, above all, anxious, that everything of this kind should proceed from Christian principle, and not from the mere love of human praise.

The indulgence of parents, proceeding from an idolatry of their children, is one of the most common sources of ill-success. This was the ruin of Eli's and of David's children, and it is a cause which is constantly operating in a vast variety of forms; such as indulgence in appetite, in dress, in pleasures, in yielding to any obviously improper requests, and in seeking rather to gratify their

present wishes, than to secure their future, their spiritual, and their highest good.

The inconsistencies of Christian parents in their conduct and conversation, have a most pernicious influence over their children. The spirit of the world, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, manifested by a parent, are eagerly and most naturally imbibed by children. They are creatures of imitation in all things; but they have a natural aptitude in imitating whatever is wrong. The bad tempers, the haughtiness, the self-will of the parents are very soon indeed copied by the child. Their admiration of riches, or rank, or talent, naturally engenders similar inordinate views and feeling in their children. Thus our sins punish us in our offspring.

Improper connexions which children are allowed to form with others, whether of a similar, or of a superior age, but especially of the latter,—often ruin the best laid plans for education. Children are so soon captivated by delusive and specious appearances of superior wisdom, leading them to despise others, and by the vain promises of liberty and pleasure; that one evening spent amidst the fascinations of worldly society, may unsettle and permanently injure their young and inexperienced minds.

Amid the common complaints of want of success in the bringing up of children, complaints which are often heard from Christian parents,—it is pleasant to contemplate those instances which sometimes occur, as in the families of Mr. Richmond, Mr. Scott, and others which might be named, where results more gratifying have been realized.

The inquiry is most interesting, and most important, whence arises this difference?

A customary resource for consolation, and almost for

justification, in cases of an unhappy description, is the doctrine of the sovereignty of God.

Often, however, this great and awful doctrine is brought in as a cover to parental neglect, when it would be just as reasonable to assign it as an excuse for exposing your child to a pestilence, or for leaving him, in sickness, without medical aid.

The cases above alluded to, and others quite numerous enough to form a rule, and not an exception, show that when certain *means* are used, the answering results may be expected to follow; and that the failure of the parent's hopes, may generally be traced to their own deficiency in conduct.

In speaking however of *means*,—a word perhaps inadequate,—it is desirable to use that word in its utmost extent: to look upon it not merely as comprehending a certain routine of duties, but as embracing the whole obligation of the parent to the child.

And the first and main obligation is *Love*. It is to be feared that the real root of the mischief of which we are speaking, little as it may be suspected, lies in a deficiency here.

Parents ascribe the loss of their children to God's not having willed otherwise; when, perhaps, it would be much nearer the truth to say, that they themselves have not willed otherwise.

They are wanting in a deep sense of the real worth and danger of their children's souls. They wish and hope that they may be serious, good and religious; but it is a sort of faint, ineffectual wish; not that ardent desire, that unceasing anxiety which filled Mr. Richmond's mind; not that love which made St. Paul exclaim, "My little children, of whom I *travail in birth again*, till Christ be formed in you."

From these feeble hopes and languid wishes, flow cold and formal prayers, offered as a duty,—not as the

inmost desire of the soul. There is no *wrestling* for the children, with the "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," of Augustine's mother. Nor are these the prayers of *faith;* nor can they be expected to bring down blessings: since the promise is, "Whatsoever ye shall ask, *believing*, ye shall receive." They are often offered up from a mere sense of duty, without any expectation, and almost without any sincere desire, that they should be answered. With such weak and faint impressions of heavenly concerns, we may expect to find a fast hold kept upon the world. Just in proportion as the one is undervalued, the other is sure to be overestimated. The interests of the present life are eagerly sought after, the affairs of eternity postponed: hence all manner of temptations creep in.

A Christian parent had once, led by prospects of worldly advancement, placed his son beyond the reach of the public means of grace, and in the midst of manifold temptations. The son was shortly after on a visit to his father; and the parent prayed, in his family worship, that the boy might be preserved, amidst the various perils of his situation. The youth reflected, What! does my father put me into the devil's mouth; and then pray to God that the devil may not be allowed to swallow me up? Surely to have occasioned such a reflection from a child, must have been very painful to the parent?

The result of this line of conduct, half-christian, half-worldly, is to bring up a race of young persons acquainted with the truths of religion, but without any effectual feeling of its power. They are thus in a worse situation than even the more ignorant: since the sound of the gospel can hardly reach the latter without some awakening of the conscience: whereas on the former everything that can be said falls as a mere repetition of

what had been fully known for years, but never deeply or effectually felt.

The spirit of Mr. Richmond, then,—his fervent love for his children's souls, his never-ceasing anxiety, his constant watchfulness, his daily and hourly prayers, not of *form* but of *faith*—furnish unitedly a model, to which the attention of Christian parents may be most advantageously directed.

Resting in the *form of godliness* without its life and power, is one of the great dangers to which the church is peculiarly exposed in this day of general profession; and parents had need be very watchful that they do not unawares foster the most dangerous self-deception in their children, by giving them credit for genuine regeneration and conversion, where there has been nothing more than excited natural feelings without any real spiritual change. When the young possess nothing more that what naturally amiable dispositions under religious culture may easily produce, they are soon overset in the rough sea of this world's trials and temptations. Let parents beware of too soon speaking peace and rest to an awakened mind, or a troubled conscience.

The nature of a successful Christian education is next to be noticed. And we would not here dwell on subjects which are generally acknowledged, such as prompt obedience and the honouring of parents, but would rather point out things which are too often neglected.

1. The first thing is rightly to know the TRUE FOUNDATION OF OUR HOPES of success. This is nothing less solid than the sure promises of God's word, many of which are very precious to a Christian parent's heart; such as Deut. vii. 9. Psalm xxxvii. 25, 26; c. 5; cii. 28; ciii. 17, 18; cxii. 2. Prov. xi. 21; xx. 7; xxii. 6. Isaiah xliv. 3—5; li. 8; lxv. 23. Luke i. 50. Acts ii. 38, 39. To know rightly this foundation, and humbly and simply to build upon it in the acting out of these

promises, which were sealed to our children in Christian baptism, through faith, and prayer, and consistent conduct, patiently waiting on God to fulfil them in his own time,—constitute an important first step to successful education.

2. We must join with this a clear view of the only governing cause of success; THE FREE AND RICH GRACE OF GOD OUR FATHER. All his children are born, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Here is the origin, here is the maintaining and continuing strength, here is the final triumph of all our efforts; and to cultivate a habit of constantly looking to, and habitually depending upon God, in daily prayer, in every instruction, and in every plan, formed for our children, is a main principle for obtaining their spiritual good. The faith and prayers of a parent are specially prevalent with our gracious Redeemer—Mark ix. 23, 24.

3. Another material point is, TO LET OUR EYE BE SINGLE IN SEEKING PRIMARILY THEIR SPIRITUAL WELFARE: an all-directing and controlling principle in education should be, *to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,* for our children. This should influence us, as to the place in which we fix them, the company to which we introduce them, the books we wish them to read, the situation we desire for them, and in short, as to everything we do concerning them.

4. THE DILIGENT AND RIGHT USE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE, is a most important help for children—such as daily reading the scriptures, prayer, habits of self-examination, regular attendance on public worship, and as they grow up; Confirmation and the Lord's supper. But besides all these means, the most important, perhaps, is that constant inculcation of divine truth, to which we are so plainly directed in the scriptures: *These words which I command thee this day shall be in*

thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up: and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house and on thy gates. Particular instruction of the children by themselves, and a mother's private and individual conversation with them, are also of great moment.

5. DISCIPLINE is a matter of constant necessity. A well-disciplined Christian child is the best gift which a parent can bestow on his country; whilst children left to themselves, and with no settled habits of patient and steady application, are likely to be sources of much trouble to their fellow-creatures. Discipline will seek constantly to restrain, check and subdue all that is wrong, or leading to wrong, and to animate and encourage all that is right. Every day brings fresh occasion for its exercise, with regard to appetite, pleasures, temper, coveting the things of others, neglecting duties, disorderly practices, and indeed all the varied events of life.

6. PUNISHMENT must not be withheld, but must be varied according to the degree of fault. It is important also that the scale by which we measure the degrees of wrong should be scriptural. Sins directly against God, and moral faults, such as falsehood, passion, and taking anything that does not belong to them, call for the severest punishment, and should never be passed by without chastisement: while accidents from carelessness, though they may occasion us a serious injury, yet should be visited with a lighter penalty, as not being intentional faults. On the mode of punishment, the reader will find valuable remarks in this volume.

7. FOSTER AND ENCOURAGE, BY WISE AND CHRISTIAN APPROBATION, everything that is lovely and excellent. Much may be done in forming the character, by due attention to this: all truth, openness, generosity, self-denial, and love to others; all diligence and application in good pursuits should have the parental smile of favour; as all those things which are opposite to these should be discouraged by marks of disapprobation.

8. EARNESTLY WATCH AGAINST SEEKING GREAT THINGS FOR YOUR CHILDREN. Oh! the inexpressible folly of aiming to gain for them high connexions, in classes of society above them; and for this end placing them in situations of danger, that they may form associations with their superiors! What havoc has this made among the children of pious parents! *Mind not high things*, should be our plain rule. *Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not.* God give us grace to attend to these clear directions of his word. If we trust him, his providence will call our children to those scenes in which they may safely and honourably serve others, and glorify his name; and we shall be preserved from the anguish of seeing them bring reproach on the gospel of Christ.

9. The last thing that I would notice is OUR OWN CONSISTENCY OF CONDUCT, as essential to the full effect of a Christian education. If Christian parents act inconsistently with their blessed principles,—if they are irritable, selfish, proud, disorderly, passionate, and covetous, what can be expected, but similarly evil tempers in their children. But if they are poor in spirit, meek, mourning for sin, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and possess and manifest the other graces of a Christian, it is an immense auxiliary to all their religious instruction. In fact, it is one just retribution of all evil ways, that our children soon manifest similar evil ways: while on the other hand, an exhibition

of holy conduct enforces every pious exhortation, and strengthens every solid principle, which we endeavour to communicate to them.

The Editor subjoins a little sketch of principles of education, by which he has desired and endeavoured that his own conduct should be governed.

POINTS TO BE KEPT IN VIEW, IN A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

I. Spiritual Prosperity.

1. Pray for them.
2. Ever instil Christian principles.
3. Act in the spirit of the gospel towards them.
4. Watch over their intercourse with others.
5. Teach them to govern their tempers.
6. See that they diligently attend the means of grace.

II. Health of Body.

1. Their minds not to be too much pressed.
2. Exercise to be regularly taken.
3. Watch against their ignorance and carelessness.
4. Temperance in diet to be observed.
5. Things injurious to health to be avoided.
6. Early in bed and early rising.
7. Remember the incessant activity and subtilty of Satan.

III. Mental Cultivation.

1. To be well grounded in what they learn.
2. Minds to be strengthened by solid works.
3. Habits of reflection to be formed and called forth.
4. See that they understand their lessons.
5. Habits of self-denial to be formed.
6. Things useful to be especially attended to.

IV. Manners.

1. Kindness to run through everything; their morals, school, play, walks, behaviour to each other, and all around, parents, and servants.

2. To show its true foundation in Christian principle. Rom. xii. 10; 1 Peter iii. 8.
3. It is a victory over our natural selfishness.
4. It promotes the happiness of all around us.

V. Accomplishments.

1. Are of a secondary value.
2. A means of relaxation.
3. They commend religion to others.
4. Be sure that they are innocent.
5. Guard against those which will lead them into the world.

VI. The Saviour all in all.

1. In every point show them Christ.
   He, the root of spiritual prosperity.
   He, the Physician of body and soul;
   He, the Giver of mental power;
   He, altogether lovely in all his ways;
   He, full of gifts and full of grace.
2. Let every thing turn the mind to him.
   In every walk, in every lesson, in every event, in every sin, in every mercy, speak of Christ,
3. Let him be the sun and the glory of every day.

VII. Means.

1. "My grace is sufficient for thee."
2. "He will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask."
3. "I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Edward Bickersteth.

Watton Rectory, February 12, 1834.

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TO THE READER.

If any apology be deemed needful in presenting to the public another volume connected with Mr. Richmond's name and memory, we might refer to the lively interest with which the productions of his pen have ever been received, and the frequent demand made for more of his correspondence. It must be remembered that the letters now published were not intended to be read by any one beyond the circle of his own family, and they are not introduced on the present occasion as specimens of extraordinary talent and composition, but with a view to exhibit the unwearied efforts of a Christian father in the education of his children, and to encourage those who are engaged in the same pursuit to hope to the end; while they diligently persevere in the use of means; since they may here contemplate another proof that God is faithful to his promise—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

It has not been the design of the Editor to censure others, who may adopt a mode of education somewhat different; or to claim for his friend or himself an exclusive right to dictate to the church of God. Mr. R. had,

in some respects, his peculiarities, and men must judge for themselves as to their imitation of them; but there can be no mistake in earnestly recommending to their regard and love—his devout and heavenly spirit—his consistent and firm preference of eternal to temporal advantages, and the evident blessing of God which crowned with success his method of instructing his family. May the same Divine Blessing accompany the present humble attempt to promote the glory of God, and the spiritual good of men.

NOTE BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

This volume may fall into the hands of two classes of persons, to whom a word of exhortation may not be out of place.

1. Those who may say as they read "This example is indeed admirable, my heart concurs in every line, but alas it is too high for me. Such results have been rare, and will continue to be rare." But have such results been less common than such TRAINING? So far from it, we believe that in the mercy of God they have been much MORE common. This unbelief, therefore, must touch the practicability of the the TRAINING, not the probability of the RESULTS. Such training has not indeed been hitherto common in Christian families; but let none give place to unbelief or discouragement on this ground. The time approaches when such instances shall no longer be rare, but common; and the very narrative (which has passed through so many editions) has doubtless induced many blessed experiments, the full results of which will not be known until the judgment day.

2. Those who may say to themselves "Would to God I could have seen this book at an earlier day, for never have I seen before so clearly both the practicability and the way of training a family for Christ; but now the time is past — my children are grown, or they are gone from me, or they are beyond my influence." But even such should not say, "my hope is lost" — for prayers and means may avail while life lasts; and this volume itself be sent where the parent's voice cannot go, and be his testimony.

DOMESTIC PORTRAITURE.

CHAPTER I.

Quoniam refert a quibus et quo quisque modo sit institutus.

QUINTILLIAN.*

THE importance of education has ever been acknowledged by all civilized communities. To the diffusion of knowledge, and its influence on the economy of life, may be traced the superiority of one age and country over another; and it is the neglect or the cultivation of their minds, which forms the only true distinction between man and his fellow.

The education of their youth was esteemed by some nations to be so intimately connected with the public weal, that they placed the children of the subject under the superintendence of teachers chosen by the state; a practice which, no doubt, inspired a political patriotism, but at the expense of many better feelings, and with the risk of enfeebling, if not dissolving, those parental ties, on which the conduct and happiness of life must greatly depend.

There have been many writers on this subject, and widely differing from each other in their respective theories. The opinions of some are so extravagant, and

* "It is of great moment by whom and in what manner every one is educated."

so opposed to all sound practical wisdom, as scarcely to deserve an allusion. Who could have supposed that a grave and intelligent author would recommend a parent to leave his child without instruction until nearly the age of manhood, under the pretence of not embarrassing freedom of thought? If such a strange conceit could be acted upon, it would soon reduce an enlightened people to the condition of barbarians. But the experiment is impracticable, for "the process in the formation of character, though rude and ruinous by neglect, will go on." From the cradle to the grave, a succession of hourly events, and influences of a thousand kinds, will gradually and ultimately establish habits, and give capacity for happiness or misery, on an entrance into the eternal world, according to their result. A bias of some kind or other will be received, and the only alternative for our choice is, whether that pre-disposition which arises from the inculcation of good principles, and a reliance on authority for a time, is not preferable to the impulse of corrupt inclination, and the influence of more corrupt communication.

There have been other writers who seem disposed to consider man as the mere creature of circumstances, and education as forming "the only ground of difference between the judge on the bench and the prisoner at the bar." These attach too great an importance to human effort and the force of habit, when they compare a rational agent to the plant of the field, and expect that he will of necessity take his form and shape from the hand of the cultivator. If they do not deny in plain terms the need of divine interposition, they make no appeal to it, and seem to regard it as superfluous to the purposes and ends of education. But whatever value we set on moral culture, its failure, in many instances,—a failure so great that corrupt nature seems as it were exasperated

to evil by the very means employed for its correction, —affords a mournful proof, that "*it is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself.*" Another equally affecting fact leads us to look higher than mere human agency: for have not many useful and virtuous characters sometimes appeared like lights in the midst of darkness; emerging from influences the least calculated to warrant such an expectation? It never must be concealed or forgotten by a teacher, that "God worketh both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." He gives to the mind its first impulse, and directs every step in its progress, wherever the culture of man is successful. Independence is no attribute of a creature; and to challenge success as the necessary result of our own efforts, is a presumption no less opposed to reason than denounced by revelation. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

There is a third error which has its advocates. While some attribute too much to human culture, others expect too little from it. There is a pride which inspires an undue confidence in the use of means; and there is an indolent reliance on divine aid, which vainly looks for an end without them, and disposes men to neglect or wholly disregard them. This perversion of a truth generates a reckless feeling, and has done great mischief in religious families. It is perhaps a chief cause of the melancholy spectacle not unfrequently exhibited, in the ruin of many children, whose parents have professed to respect and value Christian principles. They 'seem to overlook both the precept and the promise of the word of God'—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

But dismissing whatever is chimerical or mistaken in these theories, (for it is not to my purpose to carry the discussion to a greater length,) I would observe, that *to*

train and prepare the soul for its eternal destiny is the proper business and end of education. It must be admitted, that there are subordinate ends which may be desired, and means of the same character which may be employed for their attainment; that a competent provision; acquirements which will render us respectable in life; and all that is connected with the security and promotion of present happiness, are lawful objects of pursuit; and that it is folly to neglect or despise them. In many cases it would be a dereliction of duty; for we must not consider ourselves as insulated beings, and "go out of the world," but continue in it, as "the salt of the earth," to dispense a purifying influence. I am not the advocate of superstition or eccentricity; but I contend that the *chief* end of education is to train for eternity. There may be an awful consistency in the sentiments of those whose hopes and prospects are bounded by time, when they say, We and our children will eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. But, independently of revelation, and assuming only the belief of a future state, — a state to be determined by our conduct in the present world, it follows as a necessary consequence, that whatever we teach or do, ought to have a bearing on another condition of being, and be made subservient to its interests. Here I stand on the vantage-ground, and fear not to make my appeal to every thinking man; not only whether the welfare of a future life can be reasonably set aside, and children taught to despise and disregard it; but whether it be consistent with the expectation of another world, to give it less than the chief and foremost place in our thoughts and actions. It cannot be regarded as subordinate or secondary, without exciting a just suspicion that we do not admit its existence. Such an appeal may be made with still greater force to an avowed disciple of the Christian faith. The whole bearing of revelation goes

to this point, "Seek first the kingdom of God." Let it be observed, that the question is not here one of mere opinion. Few would venture to deny the principle, for this would be to deny the authority of the principle; but we must look to opinion as realized in practice, and insist on the propriety and necessity of interweaving religious principle as a golden thread in the whole texture of education; deriving from it the motives, the means, and the end; and so steadily keeping in view the final result, as to make a cheerful sacrifice of every thing which would be likely to impair or interfere with it.

I may be censured for rashly libelling the community in which we live; yet it must be apparent to an unprejudiced mind, that for the most part we *are a nation of Christians by profession, and of heathens in opinion and practice.* Christianity may have improved the moral sense, or at least driven into the shade the grosser abominations of ancient times; but it is a palpable fact, that the Bible is not our standard; nor a provision for the world to come, our main object and end. Are not our motives derived from reputation, interest, or gratification; and were not these the fulcrum employed by the Gentile world to move the youthful mind to exertion? What are the virtues which are prized and commended? We hear of a becoming pride—a conscious dignity—a noble ambition—a deserved scorn and contempt—a just revenge;—dispositions and impulses of corrupt nature which are totally condemned by the word of God. In what light are many acknowledged vices regarded by us! The Christian and the heathen moralist equally reprobate murder, impurity, and fraud; and legislators of every age have enacted laws to deter from their commission; but do we not in a multitude of instances endeavour to hide the enormity of these crimes, when we cannot alter their character, and talk of a proper

defence of honour, an affair of gallantry, and a fortunate stroke of policy?

"All these things the Gentiles did," and we, though professing to know God, by our imitation of their actions, dishonour him. Even when a stricter rule of morals is approved, the leading feature of heathen ages is still retained, and a boy is taught by the example of his teacher, and by the conduct of all around him, to regard religion as an affair of secondary importance—at best to be viewed with awe at a distance—not to be brought into contact with all his aims and ends; as a something he must submit to of necessity, rather than choose as a source of the purest enjoyment. The peculiarities of the gospel, in principle, disposition, and conduct, are so far from being applauded or enforced, that the very reference to them on any ordinary occasion, would expose him to suspicion, scorn, and reproach.

This is no idle declamation, but a simple statement of facts; and it is worth while to enquire the cause of so lamentable a departure from the character of true Christianity.

We will therefore examine the course of education pursued in this country, as it is conducted in public schools, or by private tuition, and which, if carried on, is usually completed at one of the universities.

A public school presents some advantages. These consist chiefly, perhaps, in the superior ability and attainments of the masters, who are generally selected from the ablest scholars of the age. The pleas often urged, of the value of connexions, and the knowledge of the world, (which to boys can neither be necessary nor useful,) seem to carry little weight; and if allowed to possess any, are more than counterbalanced by the evils arising out of numbers, bad companions, and the neglect of the Holy Scriptures, which lay a foundation for habits and conduct

in life beyond measure injurious. Many private schools abound with the same evils, and offer fewer advantages than the larger establishments. In both cases, it has been justly observed, *instruction* may be secured in the school-room, but *education* is carried on in the play-ground, or in the dormitory. There is seldom at such seasons any superintendence. Neither the eye nor the ear of the master is with his pupils, and they are, for the most part, left without controul or restraint, to follow the devices of their own minds. A few elder boys prescribe the standard of opinion and conduct, and whatever may be erroneous or corrupt in the leaders, finds a ready acquiescence from those below them. Painful are the details of a Tyro, who either boasts or laments the fruits of these evil communications.

The neglect of religion in public schools has often been asserted, and the charge repelled with indignation. Certain it is, however, that the greater number of pupils leave these establishments and enter into life, with an ignorance and indifference towards religion, or with an avowed contempt for it. They have no idea of viewing it as the end of their being,—the rule of their conduct, and to be carried by them as a governing principle into every event and transaction of life. It has evidently not been a prominent feature in their past studies. A form of prayer, a chapter in the Greek Testament on the Sunday, or an exercise for the memory from some elementary author, (and such I believe to be the amount of religious instruction,) are poor substitutes for a constant reference to the commands and promises, the motives and models of the Bible,—for a diligent cultivation of right habits and opinions. Can it be said, with any truth, that the word of God is read daily, or pains taken in its application to the heart and conscience? Although a decent respect may be inculcated for revelation, is a

boy instructed by his teacher to regard the world as a bauble, and the service of God as his glory? Are sinful tempers watched over and reproved? Are heavenly dispositions cultivated and encouraged with a close and intimate inspection of morals and the employment of leisure hours? *They* can best answer these questions who have been the victims of vices contracted in our public schools; or who, when awakened to real principles and piety in after years, have endured throughout life a kind of martyrdom, in conflicting with the sinful habits acquired in their youthful career.

The chief studies in our public seminaries are the classics. Science, till of late years, formed no part of them, nor has it even now more than a small share of the seven or eight years devoted to acquire an imperfect acquaintance with the authors of Greece and Rome.

The objection made to the use of heathen authors in Christian education are not always valid. Classical knowledge forms a good foundation for theological attainment, while it is considered as the handmaid of religion, and is made subservient to its purposes. An illiterate ministry is never a safe one; nor can a sound and accurate interpretation of the word of truth be expected without a knowledge of the original languages, and without that disposition to sober and patient investigation, which the habits and discipline of the mind, under proper culture, seldom fail to inspire.

The more valid objections apply rather to the manner of teaching the classics; to their being viewed as an end, not a means; and to the measure of time and attention bestowed on them, to the exclusion of more important subjects which would counteract the evils incident to them.

While discussing the merits of school education, I cannot refrain from adverting to a modern system, which discards the aid of religion in the hours of instruction.

I view this novel experiment with extreme alarm. The reduction of expense, and a plausible pretence to liberality of sentiment, has prevailed on men of real piety to give their sanction to it; and they have been seduced, in their simplicity, to approve a plan more worthy of the enemies of religion than of its friends. The classical tutor must take the Bible in his hand with every book of instruction, or the mind of his pupil will necessarily be exposed to the daily influence of many things which are false in principle and vicious in practice. He will insensibly be led to prefer knowledge to its right use and application, and to estimate talent above piety. He will despise, as unworthy the manly age, the principles confined to the nursery and the family, and which are never brought before him by those whom he is taught to regard with superior veneration and respect. We may boast of the march of intellect, and treat with supercilious contempt the example and usages of former ages, but the *diffusion of unsanctified knowledge* will prove a great evil to the community. The feeblest recognition of a Deity, and the admission only of the forms of religion—nay, even superstition itself, is preferable to the entire exclusion of all reference to a divine power.

"No institution," said my excellent friend, "can or ought to stand, in which Christ is not the foundation; and I wholly disapprove of all schemes which deliberately shut God out of their direction."

To schools, and particularly to the manner in which they are conducted, Mr. Richmond felt the strongest repugnance. The sentiments which I have laid before the reader, are, in fact, the substance of conversations with him on these subjects. He never spoke without emotion when he recollected the vices which his eldest son had contracted by a public education, and the sad influence of bad connexions formed under those cir-

cumstances; and which, counteracting the good effects of early instruction at home, caused the ruin, as he used to say, "of his poor wanderer." He resolved, in consequence, to adopt the plan of *home education*, with the assistance of a private tutor.

Private teaching has certainly some disadvantages, but they are few in comparison of the benefits secured. I grant that there is a danger of irregularity in the hours of study, arising from visitors and invitations—the severity of needful discipline may be softened into a mischievous relaxation by affection, ill-directed and unduly interfering with the teacher—and the stimulus of competition, the desire of distinction and the love of praise (very questionable motives, however) are lost. But these and every other defect of a private education may be remedied; while advantages of the utmost importance in the formation of character are secured. Regular habits may be established—interruptions of every kind prevented by a firm resistance to them—motives in unison with the scriptures will be found more than adequate to every occasion—the devotional exercises of the closet may be watched—hourly opportunities will be afforded for breaking off the shoots of evil as they spring up, an example of principle embodied in action may be presented to youthful observation, and affections of the best kind be cultivated between the members of the family—much useful general knowledge may be imparted, and a fair share of the learning of public schools be acquired. Numbers can only be restrained by force or fear, or excited by pride and interest. Choice, affection, principle, can seldom be employed. The discipline of a great school must be that of a man-of-war, and it is conducted in either case under much the same necessity. Two or three boys may be watched every hour—evil checked

as it arises—every occurrence improved—religion infused into every pursuit and instruction, without any necessity for recurring to stimuli which befit only the lowest condition of mortal existence, and are never found, in their application, to produce any other effect than to depress or exasperate generous natures.

There is an error which universally obtains in every plan of education, public and private, and which is perhaps a principal cause of the distaste of our young persons for grave and solid studies. *They are never taught to think.* Materials in abundance are set before them, but they know nothing of the use and end designed by working them; they are ignorant of the *rationale* of grammar, or the application of science. The memory is burdened as a drudge, while the understanding remains torpid and unexercised: and thus the interest which real knowledge inspires is lost in the mere acquisition of words. A boy can give a rule but not a reason. Pestalozzi has attempted, with some success, to improve former methods of imparting knowledge, but even his system falls short of *rational instruction;* in which the understanding and the heart should keep pace with the progress of the memory. The practice of enforcing by authority, instead of leading the mind to investigate, explain, and digest in the exercise of its own energies, disposes a youth to affirm rather than prove; and resting contented with a crude and superficial acquaintance with all subjects, to shrink from the labour of acquiring solid and accurate information. It would be a very salutary practice to withhold from young persons the use and enjoyment of every thing, however simple, whether an effort of art or nature, till they had prepared themselves to explain its history, origin, place, and means of production. Thus no moment would run to waste; and table-talk, which now consists of little more than barren

details, would become a vehicle of much interesting and useful communication.

If science ought not to precede language, they should walk together as friends from the commencement, and be associated throughout the progress of education.

But leaving the reader to form his own opinion on the comparative merits of public and private education, I shall lay before him, in the next chapter, the method resorted to by Mr. Richmond in his family arrangements.

CHAPTER II.

And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

SHAKSPEARE.

One great reason why so few people in the world are truly religious, and why among the truly religious so many are not happy in their religion, is this, that early religious habits are too commonly associated, not with cheerfulness, but with constraint and gloom. JEBB.

MR. RICHMOND'S first object was to make home the happiest place to his children; to render them independent of foreign alliances in their pursuits and friendships; and so to interest them in domestic enjoyments, as to preclude the feeling, too common in young people, of restlessness and longing to leave their own fire-sides, and wander abroad in search of pleasure and employment. In this attempt to satisfy his family, and engage their compliance with his wishes, he so completely succeeded, that every member of it left home with regret, even for an occasional visit, and returned to Turvey with fond anticipation,—as to the place of their treasures.

To his daughter F—— he writes—

..... "We are going on quietly at home. Little K—, by a sudden determination, is gone into Norfolk. My love and respect for your dear, most dear mother, has prevailed to gain my consent; otherwise I much prefer a mother's and elder sister's roof, for female education, to any school. But I leave this affair in God's hands, and hope he will overrule it for the best. I have long thought that though a good school is better than a bad home, a good home is the best of schools. Children

are for the most part educated in temper and habits of all kinds, not by governesses, but by companions, and here all is contingency. But so much of my own happiness consists in making your dear mamma happy, that I wave my objection to a temporary alienation from the parental roof, and pray God it may not injure K—'s spiritual welfare. Some may think I am too fond of seeing my children around me; if it be a weakness, I must plead guilty to it: from their infancy I have looked forward, as far as providental circumstances would permit, to find comfort, support, and companionship in my children. My middle, and if spared, my old age, may much require it; and if my life be short, can any wonder that I should like to see and know much of them while I remain in this world. It has ever been my heart's desire and prayer, to give them a useful, happy, exemplary home: were I to fail here, life would indeed become a blank to me. I would strive "to roll the troublous trial on God," but I should deeply mourn in secret. Sons must in due season go forth into a wanton and wicked world to seek their bread; but daughters, while unmarried, are better calculated to become comforters and companions to their parents, as they go down to the vale of years.....

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

A happy home greatly depends on the recreations and amusements which are provided for young people. It is no small difficulty to give a useful direction to their play-hours; little more has been contemplated in the gambols of youth than the health and activity of their bodies, and the refreshment of their spirits: it is well when these objects can be attained without the indulgence of sinful tempers; but youthful sports have often proved the nursery of pride, ambition, and contention. In public

schools these evils have been encouraged, or at least deemed unavoidable. The seed of revenge in manhood has been planted in *boyish* violence, and the unheeded acts of oppression by the elder boys towards their juniors, have trained them to tyranny in riper years. Private education affords greater facilities for checking these evils; but the want of the stimulus supplied by numbers is apt to render the pastime uninteresting, and home distasteful.

Mr. R. was alive to these inconveniences and endeavoured, by a succession and variety of recreations, to employ the leisure hours to advantage. He had recourse to what was beautiful in nature or ingenious in art or science: and when abroad he collected materials to gratify curiosity. He fitted up his museum, his auctarium and his library, with specimens of mineralogy, instruments for experimental philosophy, and interesting curiosities from every part of the world; he had his magic lantern to exhibit phantasmagoria, and teach natural history: to display picturesque beauty, and scenes and objects far-famed in different countries; his various microscopes for examining the minutiæ of plants and animals, his telescope for tracing planetary revolutions and appearances; his air-pump and other machines for illustrating and explaining the principles of pneumatics and electricity; authors of every country who treated on the improvements connected with modern science; whatever, in short, could store the mind with ideas, or interest and improve the heart. When he travelled he kept up a correspondence with his family, and narrated to them the persons, places, and adventures of his progress. On his return he enlivened many a leisure hour by larger details of all that he had observed to amuse and improve.

It was a sight truly gratifying to witness the affectionate parent in the professor's chair, with a mind richly stored, and a countenance beaming with kindness, fixing

the attention of his youthful auditors, on subjects abstruse in their character, but rendered interesting and intelligible to the happy group which surrounded him.

Music was another source of domestic amusement in which Mr. R. excelled, being both a good composer, and no mean performer. Many of his children played on some instrument, and occasionally joined their father in a "concert of sweet sounds." He wished to exclude what was frivolous or trifling in this noble art, and delighted in the grave full-toned harmony, as best calculated to inspire corresponding emotions.

He encouraged the use of the pencil, and was very anxious that his daughters should cultivate their taste for drawing.

'As I have journeyed along,' he writes to one of his children, 'I have often wished I had the pencil of a ready draughtsman, that I might bring home a bundle of sketches of landscapes, to revive recollections and render natural scenery permanent to the imagination. When I find that this cannot be, I next wish that one or more of my dear children might acquire a talent of this kind, and be a sort of right hand to fulfil my wishes in that way. Perhaps some day you will be that right hand to me. Loving landscape scenery as I do, my grand object to see God in it; to trace him in every part of his works: to acknowledge his goodness in them, and to collect arguments from them to endear the character of Christ, 'by whom,' the Scripture says, 'all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made.' To this end I wish drawing to be cultivated. I mourn over pride and vanity, and if accomplishments are only acquired to gratify these unholy affections, I should wish them banished. Nay, mere innocent pleasure is not a sufficient motive; the glory of God must be the end and aim of every attainment, or

else it is a waste of time, and an abuse of talent. Pencils, paint, Indian ink, and Indian-rubber, may be devoted to the honour of him who bestows the power of combining their respective properties, so as to produce the similitudes of his works. I am no less anxious about the cultivation of musical talents; there is, however, more danger of music being abused than drawing: the inundation of frivolity, and the sometimes unsuspected associations of a carnal and worldly nature, which mingle with musical compositions of a modern and fashionable cast, often distress and hurt me. The fascinations of the ball-room, the corruptions of the theatre and opera-house, too often creep into the quiet pianoforte corner of young people. Even instrumental music, with its appendages of waltzes, dances, and love-sick airs, has often a tendency to familiarize the young mind with subjects injurious to its welfare. The sober dignity of genuine instrumental music is nearly lost in the substitution of modern trick and blandishment: but if instrumental music be thus abused, how much more so vocal: here the art and science of music opens its richest stores of opportunity for gloryfying God and edifying man: here all the charms, and all the contrivances of this sublime faculty, present innumerable means of spiritualizing the heart, gratifying the ear, exalting the understanding, and improving the affections: but here, alas! the world, the flesh, and the devil have grasped the powers of the musical art in too many instances, and sacrificed them all to Dagan and Baal, to vice and folly, to levity and wantonness, to fascination and delusion. Love songs, drinking songs, vice-provoking songs, and many other sorts of songs, resound from house to house in public and private, and prove to demonstration the idols which men and even women serve, and consequently "whose they are." What a profanation of a holy art! what a degradation of a noble science! I am persuaded that

music is designed to prepare for heaven; to educate for the choral enjoyment of paradise; to form the mind to virtue and devotion, and to charm away evil, and sanctify the heart to God. A Christian musician is one who has a harp in his affections, which he daily tunes to the notes of the angelic host, and with which he makes melody in his heart to the Lord. Does he strike the chord with his hands? it is to 'bid lute and harp to awake to the glory of God.' The hand, the tongue, and the ear, form a kind of triple chord not to be broken. Bring music, my beloved F——, to this test, and your vocal hours will not be spent in vain. The instructions of your childhood will supply you through life with a fountain of pleasures, drawn from the true source of legitimate recreation. Sing the songs of Zion, and amidst the vibrations of the air may true prayer and praise ascend to heaven, and enter into the ears of the Lord God of your salvation; and then will the harmonious combination be complete. Pray for grace to guide you in all your duties, that you may comfort, assist, and strengthen your invaluable mother in all her cares and labours, by your dutiful, diligent, and affectionate regard to her precepts, example, and wishes. May your brothers in particular learn from you, and you from Christ, what Christian meekness, activity, and sobriety mean. Watch over them with a sister's heart and a sister's prayers, and they will be heard and answered. Go to school again and again. Whither? To what school, papa? To the school of Christ, where the Great Instructor waits to teach and bless you. Go thither, my child, and carry your sins, and your cares, and your weaknesses and your errors, and your affections and your hopes, and your fears and your resolutions, and your friends, and your brothers, and your sisters, and your mother, and

Your own true loving father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

It was a maxim with Mr. Richmond, that the mind needed not idleness or frivolity to restore its energies, or fit it for graver studies; but might always find a sufficient relaxation in variety: and his success in associating some useful pursuit with the recreations of his young people, proves the correctness of his judgment in this respect.

The principal characteristic, however, of his mode of education, was the piety infused into every employment or pleasure. Whether in the field or in the museum,—whether he examined what was beautiful to the eye, or indulged in what was harmonious to the ear,—whether he made an experiment or related an event,—everything was connected, in his own mind and in that of his children, with him who "giveth all things richly to enjoy;"—everything afforded him an illustration of some religious truth, or was employed to inspire some devout affection. The connection of religion with science was a favourite topic, on which he used to enlarge with great satisfaction. His happy manner, in combining instruction with amusement, appears from the two following specimens. The first of these is a meditation on the wonders of the kaleidescope, and which he presented to his daughter F——, with a view to engage her attention to this simple and elegant instrument. "See, my dear F——, what this new discovery, which has afforded us so much amusement, may do to improve our heads and heart.

"I took up my kaleidescope, and as I viewed with delight the extraordinary succession of beautiful images which it presented to my sight, I was struck,

"1. With the singular phenomenon of perfect order being invariably and constantly produced out of perfect disorder,—so that as, by magical influence, confusion, and irregularity seemed to become the prolific parents of symmetry and beauty.

"2. It occurred to me, that the universality of its adoption would imperceptibly lead to the cultivation of the principles of taste, elegance, and beauty, through the whole of the present and following generations; and that from the philosopher and artist, down to the poorest child in the community.

"3. I admired the effect produced by new and varied combinations of colours as well as forms. The analysis of this kind of arrangement is here attended with unprecedented facility and advantage. The artist, the philosopher, the admirer, both of the works of nature and of art, may here find a source of amusement almost peculiar to the use of this instrument.

"4. I saw a vast accession to the sources of invention, in its application to the elegant arts and manufactures, and the consequent growth of a more polished and highly-cultivated state of habits, manners, and refinement in both.

"5. I mused with delight on the powers and effects of geometrical arrangement and combination, so easily exhibited to the eye, and so characteristic of the optical principle on which the instrument is constructed.

"6. I was struck with the idea of infinite variety,—more strikingly demonstrated to the eye than by any former experiment. Here the sublime mingles with the beautiful.

"7. I perceived a kind of visible music. The combination of form and colour produced harmony, their succession melody; thus what an organ or piano-forte is to the ear, the kaleidescope is to the eye. I was delighted with this analogy between the senses, as exercised in this interesting experiment.

"8. I thought that God was very good to afford and permit so innocent and gratifying a source of recreation to all ranks of my fellow-countrymen; a recreation arising partly from the exhibition of so much loveliness to

that sense of sight which he has formed, and partly from the exercise of the mental faculties of reason and taste in meditating upon the beautiful vision.

"I laid my kaleidescope down, and thought of the adorable attributes of him from whom all blessings, earthly and heavenly, flow.

"I took up my kaleidescope again, and was led in the contemplation of its use and beauties, to think,

"1. Here I am to see, on the one hand, the ruin and disorder of human nature; and on the other, the marvellous influence of grace in producing out of these materials, order, beauty, and restoration.

"2. My instrument I compared to a telescope-glass, which faith and hope put into my hand;—I saw through one end of the tube, the world, and our life in it, a scene of confusion and tribulation; strange revolutions and mysterious complexities. Through the other, I beheld promised delights, heavenly realities, beauty for ashes, and the wilderness blooming like a rose. I took the hint, and saw reasons for resignation, contentment, and patient waiting for the glory that shall be revealed.

"3. I observed, as I gently turned my instrument round, how quickly the pleasures of sense vanished. The phantom which delighted me but a moment before was gone—for ever gone—irrecoverably lost! Let me not, then, said I, set my heart on that which so quickly taketh wing and fleeth away. Such is the world and its delights.

"4. But again as I looked, new beauties constantly succeeded those which had passed away. Now I thought, how does the Lord multiply his mercies in constant variety and succession. In the succession of beautiful configurations in my glass, is an emblem of the endless goodness of my God, whose tender mercies are over all his works.

"5. In this chaos of confusion, thus made to produce

beauty and order, I seem to see a representation of the primitive work of the Great Creator, who, when the earth was without form, and void, sent forth his Spirit, and therewith created an universe in all its original perfection.

"6. When I look at my little fragments of glass and stones, and observe how, from such apparently despicable materials, such beauty and symmetry arise, I learn not to despise the day of small things, and to count nothing unworthy of my notice. I learn how God has chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise, and base things of this world, and things which are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

"I concluded by reflecting, how the works of creation, the principles of natural philosophy, the discoveries of science, and the ingenuities of art, illustrate and demonstrate the attributes of the God of redemption. My kaleidescope shows me, in the harmony of its colours, the union of his excellences; in the symmetry of its forms, his wisdom; in the invariable efficacy of its principles, his faithfulness; in the endless diversity of its figures, his infinity; in the simplicity of its essential character, his unity; in its faculty of producing novelty, his power; in its ability to delight, his goodness; and in its affording me this opportunity of so seeing him in it, his love.

"I laid down my kaleidescope, that I might praise and adore the author of all my mercies."

The next article was composed by Mr. Richmond with the view of fixing the solar system in the memory; for which purpose he made use of verse: and as it may be a useful *technica memoria* to other children, it is here presented to them.

In this instance, also, it may be observed, how steadily he kept in view his ulterior design, of raising the mind from the visible heavens to the knowledge and love of Him whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, but whose eternal power and godhead, whose majesty, wisdom, and goodness, shine forth in the things that he has made.

He used frequently to repeat, "An undevout astronomer is mad." He would observe, "Astronomy fills the mind with the most elevated conceptions of the magnificence of the Deity; and sinks us down and humbles us to the dust, with a sense of our own utter insignificance; sensations mingled with others of a sweet and tender character in the survey of His benevolence.

"Creation was Adam's library; God bid him read the interesting volumes of his works, which were designed to make known the divine character. To gratify curiosity only, in the study of the creatures, is to lose sight of their end in relation to man. I would have my dear children see God in every thing. It is not merely a transitory emotion I wish to raise in their minds, but a habit of referring, in all they see, to their Maker with delight and reverence. I will never consent to shut God out of his own universe, or divorce science and religion, which he has joined together; and which ought to dwell with each other in unity and love.*

* In these remarks I perfectly concur. What, indeed, is religion but a knowledge of God, with an enjoyment of him in the affections of the heart? The Greeks use a term (*ευδεβεια*) to describe it, which signifies a becoming reverence. The Latins employ another word (*religo, a re et ligo*) still more descriptive of its character, which means a re-uniting of a part to its whole. Man has been torn as it were, from God by his apostasy,—a creature separate from the Creator. The business of religion, and of all religious education, is to bring man back to God, in his thoughts, affections, aims and pursuits; so that spiritually as well as naturally, he may live and move, and have his being in God. Science, when employed as the handmaid of religion, will be found a most useful auxiliary; and literature of every kind, especially such as is connected with the works or ways of the Deity, if pursued in the spirit of piety,

THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

As we looked at the skies, my dear children, last night,
And their beauties and wonders attracted our sight;
Of explaining their nature you set me the task,
So I'll try to afford the instruction you ask.

THE SUN.

In the midst of our system the Sun takes his place,
And brilliantly shines through the regions of space;
He illumines the planets, and by his attraction
Preserves all their motions in regular action.
He turns round his axis in twenty-five days,
While his light ne'er decreases, his heat ne'er decays:
His diameter viewed with the nicest attention,
Proves near nine hundred thousand miles in dimension;
Around this vast orb revolutions are seen,
Of the planets eleven, with their moons, just eighteen.

MERCURY.

First Mercury moves mid the bright solar rays,
Completing his orbit in eighty-eight days;
The breadth of his disk at three thousand is given,
The distance, of millions of miles, thirty-seven

VENUS.

Next Venus advances, with radiant smiles,
From the sun distant sixty-nine millions of miles;
She revolves round her centre in months about eight,
And compared with our earth she in size is as great:
In beauty resplendent she shines from afar,
And gladdens the eye as a morn or eve star.

THE EARTH.

Amidst this grand range of celestial pavilions,
Next comes at a distance of ninety-five millions,
The globe of the Earth, with its faithful attendant,

has a tendency to improve and sanctify the heart. With this view Mr. Richmond encouraged his children to study *diligently*, that they might love and serve God *fervently*.

Both alike on the sun's gravitation dependent,
Earth revolves, as enlightened by Sol's mighty blaze,
In three hundred and sixty and five of our days;
Round her axis impelled by omnipotent power,
She turns and returns by the twenty-fourth hour.
Near eight thousand miles is the breadth of her span,
And thus she was formed for the dwelling of man:
As the sun rules by day, so the moon rules by night,
Each affording in turn their magnificent light.

THE MOON.

The Moon's time in her path, as the earth she moves round,
Just twenty-nine days and a half will be found:
From the earth she is distant, although she seems near,
Twenty-four times ten thousand of miles it is clear.
By the light of the sun her fair face is adorned,
While she sometimes is gibbous and sometimes is horned,
When at full she's quite round, when new she's not seen,
But whenever she shines, is of night the gay queen:
Of high hills and deep vales she has plentiful store,
And her breadth of our miles is two thousand and more.
By his glass, the astronomer clearly discerns
In a month round her axis she statedly turns:
Thus the earth and the moon are impelled by a force,
Which preserves all their motions in annual course.

MARS.

Next revolving amidst the bright region of stars,
We behold in his orbit the ruddy-faced Mars.
He appears to move on without lunar assistance,
At a hundred and forty-four millions of distance.
While twenty-four hours, like our own, make his day,
Near two years will accomplish his annual way;
His diameter measures four thousand and two,
And his radiance is marked by his roseate hue.

THE ASTEROIDS.

Four Planets come next of diminutive size,
Too small, without aid, to be seen with our eyes:
But the telescope proves of what nature they are,
And discovers their motions as viewed from afar,

In order comes Vesta, then Juno, then Ceres,
Whose orbit to Pallas exceedingly near is;
But these Asteroids no more shall absorb
The attention now due unto Jupiter's orb.

JUPITER.

Enlightened by Sol with refulgence he smiles,
Though distant near five hundred millions of miles:
His splendour the heavens is ever adorning,
As the jewel of eve, or the herald of morning,
His diameter ninety-one thousand is found,
He in less than ten hours his own axis turns round:
His magnificent globe, as it plainly appears,
Revolves round the sun in near twelve of our years;
Cloudy belts cross his surface in parallel lines,
Yet through them the planet with brilliancy shines.
His constant companions, to cheer the dark night,
Four satellites lend him their regular light:
That they truly revolve, by our glasses is seen,
In their periods or months from two days to sixteen.

SATURN.

Now far beyond Jupiter on we advance,
And find a whole system of worlds at a glance.
Seven moons around Saturn transcendently shine,
Preserved in their orbit by impulse divine.
Nine hundred of millions from Sol he's removed,
So their nightly assistance is constantly proved.
When measured, the breadth of the planet is great,
In thousands of miles it is seventy and eight:
Twenty-nine and a half of our years must be run
Ere Saturn his journey performs round the sun:
In fourteen to twelve hours the astronomers say,
The planet's rotation completes his own day:
But that which most singular makes it appear,
Is two luminous rings which encompass his sphere;
It would seem that his splendour of radiance bound him
As detached from his orb they receive both around him.
Heaven does not present a more beautiful sight
Than this planet, his rings, and his moons, seen at night.

URANUS, HERSCHEL, OR GEORGIUM SIDUS.

But, as farther we penetrate heavenly regions,
When the stars are abounding in multiplied legions,
We meet with a planet of magnitude vast,
Which of those yet discovered is reckoned the last.
Call it Uranus, Herschel, or Georgium Sidus,
A sight of his disc without help is denied us.
But when brought by the aid of the telescope near
His surface is manifest, beauteous and clear.
Eighteen hundred millions removed from the sun,
It is eighty-four years ere its orbit is run,
Thirty-four thousand miles in his breadth 'tis maintained,
Of his motions diurnal no knowledge is gained.
Six bright beaming moons shed their rays o'er his night,
Like himself, from the sun, all deriving their light.

THE COMETS.

But still we pursue astronomical song,
As not planets alone to our system belong.
Many hundreds of comets, in orbits most strange,
By solar attraction obediently range,
With their fringes of air, their long fiery tails.
Whenever they're seen admiration prevails:
But their lengthened elliptical paths in the sky
The powers of astronomy seem to defy.
So short is their stay, they escape observation
On which we can ground a correct calculation.
They've so come and so gone, so appeared and so vanished,
That successful prediction they've hitherto banished.

CONCLUSION.

To the system named Solar, I call your attention,
Of the stars that are fixed I shall now wave the mention,
But while their instruction I've sought to impart,
I've wished to inspire the best thoughts in your heart.
With deep veneration, oh lift up your eyes,
And contemplate these works of the God of the skies:
He formed them, he governs, he guides every motion,
And by them he summons each soul to devotion.
The firmament sheweth the work of his hand,
Such wisdom and power adoration command.

Each planet revolves, and each comet appears,
To exalt the great God of our days and our years.
Not a star but its lustre shall loudly proclaim
The magnificent praise of his excellent name.
Join the chorus above, and let glory be given
To Him that directs both on earth and in heaven.

Many advantages were obtained by the introduction of popular science into my friend's family circle as an amusement; a dislike of low and vulgar pursuits was inspired; an occupation found for every moment; and materials procured for useful conversation in their private intercourse; full employment and improving pursuits are favourable to morality and religion; nor is it necessary to allow children, even in their pastimes, to be more childish than a childish age requires. The notion is injurious to them, that a waste of time is felicity, and its profitable employment an ungrateful necessity. Nor can eminence be expected in any thing in which the heart is not engaged. It should therefore be the constant effort of a teacher to interest while he instructs, and to bring the hour of recreation into unison with that of the school-room, making it subservient to it. It was my friend's anxious desire and sedulous endeavour to get the heart on the side of truth, to infuse an innocent prepossession in its favour, and make duty enjoyment. It was often said by the members of his family: "We love religion, because we see papa so lovely and happy under its influence!"

CHAPTER III.

'A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds, therefore let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other.'—BACON.

WITH so many resources of innocent and improving amusement, Mr. R's. young people felt no regret at the interdict which their father placed on all games of chance; on fishing, field-sports, dancing; the theatre, oratorios, and other sources of gratification, which he thought to be inconsistent with the spirit of religion; connected with much evil; and a preparation for it. I have heard him say, 'Even where there is no positive evil, I think it important to draw a strong line of demarcation between the church and the world. The mixed multitude set the Israelites a lusting after the flesh-pots of Egypt: and evil communications never fail to corrupt good manners. There may be no sin in dancing, but it is a preparation for appearing hereafter where I think there is scarcely anything else. Cards are a waste of time which may be much better employed; and they are too nearly allied to the gaming-table, which fills me with horror. To field-sports I have a still more decided objection: they are defended on the ground of promoting health; but whatever benefit the body may receive, it is at the expense of the soul. I know not on what principles a man can justify the taking away of life for his amusement. God allows him to kill animals for food, or to destroy them when they prove an annoyance to him; but I can find no authority in the Bible for deriving enjoyment from the infliction of a cruel death; it is right founded on might—a mere act of tyranny, and an abuse of power. The man who should whip a beast to

death, or cut him up alive like an Abyssinian savage, would be deemed a monster; yet the same man may hunt to death, and halloo, and exult with delight, while his dogs are tearing to pieces a defenceless animal, and yet be considered a gentleman and a Christian. Then there are the after events of the day!—and surely to spend five or six hours in the evening commending the bark of a cur, or discanting on the endeavours of a fox to elude his pursuers, is unworthy an intelligent being, even if there were no worse accompaniments.

I asked him if he thought shooting equally objectionable. He replied: shooting may not issue in all the results of hunting; but I should be miserable all the while my boys were scampering over the fields with a gun. Sad accidents are continually occurring from letting young people carry fire-arms; but my great objection to all these sports is the same; I cannot think it right to seek gratification in inflicting suffering and death. I know that God has given us the creatures for our sustenance, and it is lawful to use them to this end; but with my views and principles, I find it hard to conceive a right-minded man feeling pleasure while he inflicts pain. He would rather be disposed to say with an old writer, 'I can never eat my dinner when I remember that I am living by the death of a creature which my sin has destroyed.' As for exercise, we might surely find other pursuits for this purpose. There appears to me the same delusion in the argument which has sometimes been employed to defend shooting, as in that which is urged by card-players,—we must have a stake, however small, or we shall lose all interest in the game. Surely we might walk as far and as long as we pleased for exercise, without a gun. Pascal explains the whole matter, when he says, 'A man is not running after the game, but trying to run away from himself.' The race-ground presents such a scene of folly and

knavery, that it does not deserve a serious argument. The stage abounds with everything which is offensive to the mind of a Christian. What think you of a celebrated tragedian, who forbade her daughter to connect herself with the theatre? Surely this speaks volumes. Did it never strike you that an actor (ὑποκριτης) has given a name to the worst of vices.

"Fishing is generally deemed a harmless amusement, but I cannot allow it to be a fit recreation for a Christian. What are we to think of impaling a worm, and being highly delighted while the poor creature suffers exquisite torture for our sport. If we use an artificial bait, yet is time, the precious hours of life, so valueless that we can afford to throw away half or a whole day in this trifling?"

"What is your opinion of oratorios?" "My fondness," he replied, "for music may be supposed to make me a partial judge in this case. I see no objection to a concert, when the music is properly selected, yet I am jealous of this sort of amusement, and should think it necessary to be very cautious in encouraging a taste for public exhibition of any kind. We never attend oratorios in a church. I consider it a desecration of the house of God to use it for any other purpose but that of religion; it shocks me to hear clapping and noisy expression of pleasure, when a passage of Scripture and the name of God is made a vehicle for mere amusement. It is absurd to talk of devotional feelings on such occasions. As to all these things, I think that God has given us immortal souls to prepare for heaven. People may cry, What great harm in this or in that? They may have a plausible pretext for doing what I condemn; for there is nothing, however absurd or wicked, which will want an advocate or an argument to support it. I lay down this general rule for all occupations. Whatever has a tendency to fit my children for heaven, I approve;

but I must keep aloof from everything which is likely to be a snare or a temptation to them, or to indispose their minds to a serious and steady pursuit of this one great object.

'Did you ever hear of a Bishop on the race-ground or in a theatre? Would he not disgrace himself, even in the eyes of the world, by being present at such places? Why so? *Because it would be out of character.* The universal suffrage denounces these amusements as inconsistent with a heavenly mind, and with the sacred office of a spiritual guide. Surely this is the strongest censure on the amusements themselves: it is, in fact, saying, the more heavenly the man, the more unsuitable are such things to his character.

"I have often thought that a Christian by profession, who allowed himself in the indulgence of such things as have furnished the subject of our conversation, must be at a loss how to describe the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, which he has renounced at his baptism."

These remarks may excite a smile, as childish scrupulosities; or a sneer, as mere fanaticism; but hard names are bad substitutes for solid arguments. It will not be easy to satisfy a sober, reflecting mind, that Mr. Richmond's judgment was either weak or superstitious.

Before we leave the subject of amusement, I shall advert to another kind of recreation, which Mr. R. provided for his young people;—the celebration of birth-days. On his own birth-day he attended divine service, when he preached a sermon to his congregation, and endeavoured to improve the lapse of time by acts of prayer and praise. The summons was cheerfully obeyed, and the parish bells rang merrily. Great numbers attended church, to worship God, and congratulate their pastor on the occasion. In the course of the day he always wrote to his mother, while she was alive, and

affectionately reminded her and himself of their endeared connection. On the day following, he invited a party of his parishioners to dine at the rectory. This birth-day entertainment was looked forward to by them with great interest, and was made an occasion of courteous hospitality. The company was of a mixed character, and was received by Mr. R. with a kindness and attention to their innocent recreation, which never failed to gratify his guests. The evening was spent in music, and his family formed a little band of performers in full concert. The birth-days of his children were kept with no less reference to religion, though in a more private manner. He commended them to God for his blessing and favour. He wrote each of them a letter of congratulation, usually accompanied by a present of some useful kind. The day was spent in innocent festivity, and the evening was employed in the museum, where he gave a lecture on experimental philosophy. These seasons were anticipated by the children with much delight, and their recurrence contributed, in a great degree, to promote the harmony of the family, by a reciprocity of affectionate interest among its members.

I shall here transcribe a letter or two, as specimens of Mr. Richmond's birth-day correspondence. The birth-day was kept as usual, even when the child was absent: and whether absent or present, a letter of congratulation was written on the occasion.

"Let not my little loved K—— suppose that her father forgets her. Yaxham may seem a long distance from Turvey; Glasgow is a much greater, but in neither place can my heart forget my child. I remember you a little babe in my arms. I loved you then. I remember you lying in your little cot, and I swung you there, and loved you all the while.

"I recollect your first attempts to walk, and your many consequent little downfalls. I raised you up from your stumblings and your tumblings; I dried your tears, and loved you still more. I have not forgotten your endeavours to talk, nor your droll little prattlings; nor your first calling me papa, and dearly I loved you for it: and although these things have long since passed away, and time has added to your years, my love for my K—— is not diminished. I often see you in imagination, and draw fanciful pictures of your occupations in your new dwelling; but what is my love compared with that of your heavenly Father. What is the strongest earthly affection, when contrasted with that which said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Has my child's heart an earnestness, a real unfeigned earnestness, to share in the love of such a Father, and to come when so mercifully called to such a Saviour? By nature "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child:" nevertheless by grace a young child's heart may become the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the residence of God himself. Think of little Jane, the Young Cottager. May you resemble her in whatever she resembled Christ. She was a dear little girl, and I wish there were thousands more like her. Many have been made sensible of their sinful state while reading that story, and, through the blessing of God, have been brought to love the same Redeemer, and have lived and died rejoicing in their Saviour. I hope, my child, you pray not only with your lips, but with your heart. While you are actively and dutifully employed in acquiring useful knowledge, "be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." In a little time you will be in your teens, and the very sound of that word should awaken you not to the usual folly and vanity of this period of life, but to the responsibility of growing years and increasing privileges: to the cultiva-

tion of holy learning and Christian habits: to the love of Jesus; and communion with his Spirit, It is *my* prayer, let it be *your's*. And now, farewell, my dear K——. May you realize every fond hope, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, of

Your affectionate Father,
L. R."

The following letter was written the year after, and on a similar occasion:—

"Accept a birth-day blessing from your affectionate father, my dearest K——: a father who loves you with all his heart and soul. This day thirteen years brought you into a world of sins, sorrows, mercies, hopes, and fears: surely it is a day much to be remembered; not so much by feastings and twelfth-cakes, as by prayers and supplications to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you grace to put away the follies of childhood, and to enter upon what is commonly called your 'teens,' with a clean heart and a right spirit. May my dear child be a vessel of mercy, filled with all the blessings of the Spirit of God, and fitted for a happy eternity. May the love of Jesus warm your heart with every affection which can adorn the Christian name and character. May your early attainments, at this period of a diligent childhood, prepare you to be the comfort and prop of your parents in their advancing years, if life be spared to them. Be conscientious in all you do. Idleness and inattention to instruction always prove that something is very wrong in principle. Diligence in the improvement of your mind is a tribute of obedience both to God and your parents. I rejoice to hear from your kind governess that you improve in this respect. I trust, my dear child, we shall never receive any intimation of your failure in so important a matter. If you

love those at home, (and I am persuaded you do love them tenderly,) ever strive to make them happy and easy on your account. I need not tell you that every one round our fire-side unites with me in the congratulations of this day. There is but one heart amongst us. M—— and H—— mention your birth-day in their letters. Our Christian circle is reduced when three daughters are absent: but love, memory, and imagination often bring them all together, and half fill the vacant chairs which they used to occupy. Your brother Nugent has been mercifully preserved from an awful shipwreck in India; the vessel was totally lost, but all the lives saved, and he has got a station in another ship. 'They that go down to the sea in ships,—that do business in great waters,—these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.' (Psalm cvii. 23—31.) And now, my K——, with a repetition of every wish, prayer, and blessing, believe me,

Your affectionate Father,
L. R."

"Perhaps my dear little C—— thought she was too young to receive a letter; but you see I have not forgotten you, nor L—— either, for whom you may tear off the other half of this sheet, and if he cannot read it himself, some one will read it to him. I wish very much to know how you are behaving since I saw you: what character will your pen and your needle give of you when I ask them? and what will your book say? Your playthings, perhaps, will whisper that you have been very fond of *them;* well, a little fond of them you may be, but you must not think *only* of them, my little nursery queen. There are better things than playthings in the world,—there are mammas and mamma's commandments; and papas, and papa's wishes; and sisters, and sister's instructions; and there is the Bible, and the God

of the Bible, and Jesus Christ and his salvation. My little girl must think of these things, and be an example to her young brothers, in order, obedience, and good manners, &c.

"You are now at that age when Jesus 'increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.' Meditate on this. I am glad to think you are acquiring knowledge; but ever keep in mind, that all other knowledge is valuable or not, just as far as it is united to spiritual knowledge. The word of God and its blessings form the highest study of man. May my children grow in such knowledge. Farewell, my child; try in everything to please, your dear papa,

L. R."

"P. S.—I send a box of changeable ladies to amuse you, but I do not wish you to become one of the changeable ladies; yet my heart prays that you may prove a changed soul."

"I cannot let a parcel go to Yaxham without telling my dear C—— how much her father loves her. This is a day of grateful recollections, and hopeful anticipations. God bless my child. May she grow in grace with increasing years: may she be diligent in her studies, docile in disposition, devotionally fervent in spirit, and unwearied in well-doing!

"My anxieties have been great since I saw you. My heart has so clung to my dear boy, that every tender feeling and affection has been exercised in the separation from my beloved Wilberforce; but the loss has not diminished but increased my love to the endeared children whom God still spares to me. I cannot say one-thousandth part of what I would on this subject, but my heart prays that you may all grow in the knowledge of Him with whom *his* soul now lives in blessedness. I

hope much good has arisen to your brothers and sisters at home, from the sanctified effects of this heavy trial. May my C——feel it likewise, and so experience the power of real religion in her heart, that it may appear in her life and conversation. I am *very* anxious on this subject. A great work of gracious awakening has taken place in the village, in connexion with Wilberforce's happy end. Many careless souls are surprisingly changed. This is a mercy,—an unspeakable mercy to me as their minister. Oh! I want *all* my children to share abundantly in these views of heavenly grace. I earnestly covet for them these best gifts. Others will have told you by this parcel how much *they* love you. This letter can but very feebly say how dear you are, in the love of a Saviour

To your affectionate father,

L. R."

"MY MUCH-LOVED BOY,

"You expressed some disappointment at dinner, because you had not received your dear mamma's promised letter on your birth-day. What has been the cause of the failure I know not, but I will try to compensate for the disappointment by giving you a few lines. The return of a birth-day, when rightly viewed, is a subject for very serious meditation: I wish it may prove so to you. We have seen, in the death of your dear brother, how little health and strength are to be trusted. Childhood, and youth, and time, are swiftly passing onward, and our journey through this vale of tears, whether longer or shorter, will soon be over. Can you too early learn the value and importance of time? Will you not hear the counsel of a father, and meditate on those things which belong to your everlasting peace? You have an immortal soul, to be lost or saved for ever. You have an understanding, to distinguish between good and evil. You are therefore a responsible being, who must render

an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil. Childhood is the period when the character and habits of the future man are formed. Trifle not, therefore, with your childish days. Set a firm and valuable example to your younger brother: he will more or less imitate your ways and dispositions, be they better or worse. Remember! the eye of God is upon you in every place. Be where you will, you may always say, with Hagar in the wilderness, "Thou God seest me." I have of late known but little, too little, of your state of mind, and your views of things temporal and spiritual. I have had occasional uneasiness on this subject. You ought ever to be putting forth the energies of your mind in every proper and possible way. It is time that your attention should be drawn to your future station in life, whatever Providence may design it to be. Every day and every hour should bare witness to some progress and improvement in useful learning; and above all, in that knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation. You have on all subjects much to learn, and it will not be acquired without much labour, and firm determination of mind and talent to the acquirement. What may be the inclination of your own mind as to business, profession, or occupation, I know not: but I wish you most seriously to take this subject into deliberate consideration, and let me in due time know the result, that I may give you counsel and advice. In the mean time, a thirst for useful knowledge, and a laborious attention to its attainment, will best evidence your fitness for that state of life unto which it may please God to call you. But you can do nothing well without faith and prayer,—without much anxious reading of the Holy Scriptures. This reminds me of your dear brother Wilberforce. He left upon record amongst you all, his testimony to the value and necessity of reading the word of God; and it is my heart's desire and prayer that all my loved children may follow

his example and his dying exhortations. The season of the year is fast advancing which brings all the affections and solemnities of his latter end to view. Every day of the approaching fortnight brings to remembrance the various events of his last days. They are all indelibly fastened on my heart's memory; they live, glow, and burn there with a vividness of impression, of which none can be aware, and form a daily part of my very self. But I refer to them now for my dear Legh's sake. I have lost my two eldest boys, and I am deeply solicitous that those who remain to me should be devoted to God; and, if spared, become the prop and solace of my advancing years. It is indeed time, my Legh, that you should feel the importance of such considerations. You were named Serle, after one of the most holy and excellent men with whom I ever was acquainted. Mere Christian names can confer no grace; but I may be permitted to wish, and hope, and pray, that you may, by divine grace, resemble him, and follow him as he followed Christ. "The Christian Remembrancer," "The Horæ Solitariæ," "The Christian Parent," and many other admirable books, bear testimony of his piety and talents: "He being dead, yet speaketh." And now my child, may every blessing attend you, for this world and the next, for time and for eternity. May the return of this birth-day remind you of many an important duty and principle. Look into the real state of your heart, and never be afraid or ashamed to make me acquainted with it. "The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." The heart that now loves and watches over you on earth, may ere long, and must in time, become cold in the grave: but seek him who never dieth, and *his* love which never decayeth, and all shall be well with you, here and hereafter. So counsels and prays

Your affectionate Father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

I have mentioned Mr. R's correspondence with his mother on his own birth-day. After her decease he wrote the following letter to his eldest daughter, who was united to an excellent and valuable minister of the established church of Scotland :—

"MY VERY DEAR DAUGHTER,

"Through many a returning year I wrote to my dear and venerated mother on my birth-day. She is gone to her rest, and I can only communicate with her in grateful recollection and hopeful anticipation. To whom can I now address myself with more propriety and love on such an occasion, than to my absent, distant, but much-loved child.—My child, so mercifully restored to health, after so severe an illness and so much danger, my thoughts and prayers have been unceasing respecting you. I have endeavoured patiently to wait upon the Lord, and he hath heard my prayer. I have viewed this trying dispensation as sent of God for some great and good purpose to your own and to all our souls; and I trust we shall find it so. You will have to learn to glorify God in the fires,* and magnify the God of your salvation; to see the precarious tenure of human life, and to devote your restored powers of mind and body to him from whom you have received both. Oh, my dear M——, what a God he is, and what a redemption he has wrought for sinners! See, in your own recent trial an emblem of Christ's love;—yourself a brand plucked from the burning,—saved, yet so as by fire,—raised from weakness to strength, tempest-tossed and afflicted, yet preserved,—cast down, but not destroyed. It is the heart's desire and prayer to God of your father, on his birth-day, that all these things may work together for your good, temporal and spiritual. It is a day which I always contemplate with much tender

* Mrs. M. had been suffering from an accident by fire.

affection, and my thoughts are such as I cannot utte Life, death, and eternity, spread a vision before me, an I meditate with solemnity and deep humiliation. I have lived now more than half a century. On the past I look with much repentance for my sins, and much gratitude for my mercies. Of the future I know nothing, except that my times are in God's hand, and that is enough. But my responsibilities make me often tremble. They rise like mountains before me: but I lift up my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my health, and the mountains of difficulty become plains, and the rough places smooth. Amongst my mercies I feel peculiarly thankful for the union of my dear child with such a man and such a minister as Mr. M——. This doubly endears Scotland to my heart. I have formed many valuable friendships, and received many kind favours from its inhabitants. I have delighted in its scenery, and tasted many excellent fruits of its piety: but to have a daughter placed in the midst of Scotia's hills and plains renders the land peculiarly interesting to me.

May every day add to your strength and comfort. May you and I, not only as parent and child, but as fellow-pilgrims on the road to Zion, walk lovingly, congenially, and safely, to the end of our journey. I hope, if God spare me, to see you in the spring, but whether here or there, I am ever

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

From the amusement of leisure hours, and the returns of the birth-day memorials, I pass on to notice my friend's care and extreme anxiety to keep his young people from *dangerous associates.* To choose suitable companions is not less difficult to a Christian parent than to provide useful recreations for them. The peculiar talents of Mr. Richmond enabled him to supply abundant

materials for the employment of leisure hours; and his strong affection for his children rendered that a pleasure, which to many would have been an irksome duty. He made himself not only a profitable but a suitable and interesting companion to them. They felt no discontent at the strict exclusion of other intimacies; to which there was but one exception, in the son of a gentleman in his parish, who studied under the same tutor, and who was ever admitted with affectionate esteem and confidence into his family party. Probably Mr. R's. marked anxiety on this point may be traced, in part, to the unhappy career of his eldest son; on whom he had witnessed the effect of bad influence in a corrupt associate. So inflexibly did he adhere to his rule, that he allowed no intercourse whatever with other families, except under his own watchful eye and diligent superintendence. He even declined invitations from personal relatives whom he dearly loved, and with whom he himself kept up a friendly correspondence. It was his fixed resolve to sacrifice all considerations of interest, and even courtesy, although he might thereby expose himself to censure and misapprehension—rather than expose his children to an influence which he feared might be injurious to them. And even when some of them were nearly grown up, he exercised the same vigilance, and regarded with suspicion every circumstance from which he apprehended possible injury.

He used to say—"My dear friends and relations are amiable and highly respectable. I have great reason to be grateful for their kind intentions and good offices; but I cannot tell what my children may meet with in a style of life so different from mine. One fatal hour may undo years of instruction, and give me endless perplexity. I have suffered enough from sending a child from home."

His sentiments on this subject are expressed in the following letter to Mrs. R.; who had asked his advice

before she consented to allow one of his daughters to accompany a lady of great respectability and undoubted piety, into Devon, to spend the winter there. It was not improper that Mrs. R. should wish her children to see something of the world and be gradually accustomed to act for themselves; and the character of the protector and companion was a sufficient guarantee against evil contact. Our friend was at that time in Scotland, from whence he replied to the application:—

"MY DEAR LOVE,

"In common with my own parents I have ever had strong—very strong objections to allowing my children to visit any where without one of their parents; and through life I have seen and lamented endless evils arising from the want of superintendence, and the absence of those who are most concerned in guarding against the mischief of association with other families. As a general rule, therefore, I have always objected to it, from conscientious motives. Yet there may be exceptions, and I readily admit that the case in question may be one of them.....I wish to make home the grand centre of attraction, affection, and comfort. You know from this year's experience how ready I am to give our girls the advantage of seeing life: but I cannot think that the withdrawing the parent's eye would increase the advantages of a journey. Never is that eye and ear so necessary as at such an age. I would infinitely rather undertake the responsibility attached to those possible and contingent evils, which might occur under the vigilant and tender superintendence of parents, than of those which might arise from the connexions and habits formed when that restraint is withdrawn. I perfectly accord with you in wishing our dear children to gain advantages from associating with our various Christian friends, and am acting daily on your own ideas. But

I see more and more daily, how exceedingly desirable my own presence is, and that continually. But when the will of God is expressed in regard to health, &c. and the path of duty is thereby clearly pointed out to me, you must not suppose me to be either indifferent or positive. At the same time I see mountains of difficulty in deciding, amidst numerous requests,—which to accept, and which to refuse.

"I approve your plan for Wilberforce—I do not oppose your wishes for Mary—I only pause—but I much admire your sentiments, and taking both body and mind into consideration, hope it may be the will of God.

"Farewell, dear love. Cherish a comfortable spirit, —do not mistrust God,—let not your soul be disquieted within you,—look kindly on providences, and hopefully on events, and ever regard me as

Your faithful

LEGH."

Some of Mr. R.'s best friends have disapproved the degree of restraint which he judged it right to impose on his children. They have blamed him for interdicting the usual freedom of intercourse with families whose conduct and principles he approved. It is possible that his feelings were morbidly acute on occasions; and his extreme anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his family often proved injurious to himself; for he sometimes passed a sleepless night, in expectation of an ordinary visit on the morrow. Such was his vigilance, that if a friend introduced his son under circumstances of common courtesy, he appeared restless and uneasy if the young people were left together without superintendence, even for a few moments. Other persons might also have taken advantage of an extensive popularity to benefit their families, but he never could be prevailed on to use a fair

opportunity of bringing them forward to notice, to advance their temporal welfare.

"I cannot endure," he used to say, "even to seem to make my religious influence a stepping-stone to promotion for me or mine."

Whatever may be thought of my friend's judgment, it is impossible not to respect, admire, and love the holy integrity, the perfect simplicity and oneness of object in the man of God; and I cannot doubt that his purity of motive has been recorded in heaven, and will be owned on earth after many days. Whatever worldly advantages, supposed or real, may have been lost to his family from the steady application of religious principle, however pushed to an extreme, an abundant compensation will be made by that Being whose blessing invariably attends a faithful adherence to the dictates of conscience, and who hath promised, "Him that honoureth me I will honour."

"My dear M——

"We have had a very prosperous journey thus far. I am passing a few comfortable days with —— at this place. But, alas! this is a town in which, speaking of our own church, religion is little known. The inhabitants of all ranks think of nothing but folly, vanity, and dissipation: their evenings are spent in the unprofitable anxieties of the card-table, the ensnaring amusement of dancing, or the delusions and temptations of the playhouse; their mornings in idle gossippings and waste of time. When I see these things, I feel satisfied that I have kept my dear children from such scenes, and such companions. Oh! how lamentable to contemplate a great town full of inhabitants,—gentry, clergy, manufacturers, tradesmen, &c.—living almost without God in the world; error preached from the pulpits; no care for the souls of the people; no family prayer in the houses;

no zeal for religion, unless, perhaps it be now and then excited to abuse and ridicule all those who have any real love for God and their souls.

"May my dear child be preserved from the defilements of a vain, dangerous, and destroying world. You know not, and I wish you never may know, its snares and corruptions. I was greatly affected in conversing with a family at ——, upon the marriage of their daughter, under the following circumstances: The Father was an exemplary clergyman, the mother a most pious woman: they had brought up a family with strict attention to religious precepts and principles, and they were not without hope that their daughter had some piety.

"A young man of property, but of no decided religious principle, became acquainted with her. Inattentive to the affectionate duties which she owed to her excellent parents, their feelings, and their advice, she suffered her mind to be led away into an attachment towards this young man. The parents were aware that his general habits and views would be uncongenial to their wishes for a daughter's spiritual welfare, and therefore objected. However, the daughter so far obtained her wishes, that a very reluctant consent was given to the marriage. The daughter, gradually led away into worldly company and amusements, has given up even the outward profession of religion, and now lives as the world lives. Yet she is not happy; and her parents are very unhappy. The daughter cannot help remembering the example, the exhortations, the prayers, the solicitudes, and the tears of her parents; but it is only with remorse, which she strives to drown in worldly company and carnal amusements. They wept over the case with me, which presents a proof of the sad consequences of young people giving way to hasty impressions, and yielding to connexions not founded on a regard to the honour of God, gratitude to parents, and consistency with a religious

profession. How needful is it that Christian parents, and Christian children, should be firm and conscientious in the important duty of encouraging connexions for life *only* on Christian principles! What distress to families, and what decays of hopeful character have resulted from a deficiency on this point! Let me warn my dear M—— against that unbecoming levity, with which many young people treat these subjects. Evil communications corrupt good manners, very especially in this matter. The love of Christ is the only safe ground of all motives, and of all conduct. Where this is established, all is well. The life-blood of Christianity then circulates through every vein of the soul; and health, strength, and purity of mind is the happy result. Fall down upon your knees before God, my M——, praying that he would pour *that* love into your heart, till it become a constraining principle for the government of your thoughts and actions. This is the only remedy for all the diseases of the soul.

"Beware of pride and self-conceit; of fretful tempers and discontent. Learn to quell impatience and obstinacy. Let your first, your very first delight be, in serving God by serving your parents. Reckon not on youth, or long life. Devote yourself to active usefulness in the family, and in the parish. Show forth the principles in which you have been educated, by a practical exhibition of them in your conduct. But who is sufficient unto these things? *Christ!* Without him you can do nothing: no, not so much as think a good thought. But you can do all things through Christ strengthening you. He is the sufficiency of all his people. By faith in him you obtain power to perform duty. "By grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves; not of works, lest any one should boast." Could works save us, we might boast, and heaven would be full of boasters. But, no,

no, no; the song of the saints is, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

Your affectionate father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

We subjoin some parental admonitions, and a series of important remarks, for the regulation of female conduct.

"MY DEAR M——,

"I leave you, in much love, a few fatherly hints.

1. Be constant in private prayer.

2. Be wise in the choice of books; shun *everything* of the romance and novel kind! and even in poetry, keep to what is useful and instructive, as well as pleasant.

3. In company, show that the principles of your father's house and ministry are your rule of conduct, and your real delight. Be consistent;—cheerful, but not light; conversible, but not trifling.

4. Keep ever in view, that you are supporting my character and credit, as well as your own.

5. Show a marked preference to such conversation, remarks, persons, discussions, and occupations as may tend to essential good.

6. Always think before you speak; say and do neither hastily nor unadvisedly.

7. If any proposal is ever made to you, in which you hesitate how to act, first say to yourself,—How would God have me to act? Secondly,—What would my parents have me to do, if they were here to advise me?

8. Never lose sight of this: that the more public my name, character, and ministry are become, the more eyes and ears are turned to my children's conduct: they are expected, in knowledge and circumspection, in

religion and morals, in opinions and habits, to show where they have been educated; and to adorn, not only their own Christian profession, but their parent's principles.

9. In music, prefer serious to light compositions; and in vocal, keep close to sacred words.

10. Pray much for

Your affectionate father,
LEGH RICHMOND."

"P. S.—I send you the following application of a sermon, from Eph. v. 15, 16:—

On circumspection of walk; redemption of time: and general transparency of character.

1. Adhere most scrupulously to truth; and labour to preserve the strictest integrity, simplicity, and sincerity.

2. Engage in no pursuit in which you cannot look up unto God, and say, 'Bless me in this, O my Father!'

3. Strive to be as kind, forbearing, and forgiving as you can, both to friends and foes.

4. Never speak evil of any one, on any pretence whatever.

5. Strive to recommend religion by the courtesy, civility, and condescending character of your conduct.

6. Watch against irritation, positiveness, unkind speaking, and anger: study and promote love.

7. Mortify lusts;—sensuality and sloth.

8. Never allow others to speak well of you: nor especially yourself, to say or think anything of yourself, but as poorly done. Keep down *pride;* let it not be indulged for a moment, but watch against it.

9. Shut out evil imaginations and angry thoughts.

10. Let it be your *sole* business here to prepare for eternity. Consider every moment of time in that view.

11. Remember that you have to contend with a legion of devils; a heart full of deceit and iniquity; and a world at enmity with God.

12. Pray that you may ever rejoice in the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and the salvation of sinners; and labour in every way to promote these objects.

Prayer is the only weapon which can subdue your corruptions, and keep your evidences bright. Cultivate prayer.

We add another of these edifying testimonies of paternal solicitude and love.

"To my Daughters.

"With a heart full of affection, I sit down to express a few sentiments and intimations of my wishes, as connected with your conduct, in the course of any journey or absence from home. I wish each of you to preserve a copy of it, my dear children, and often look at it; take it with you when from home, and keep it safe when at home.

"Independently of my anxious wishes for your secret spiritual welfare, I have much to feel on my own account, in point of credit and character, as connected with your deportment, in every house and company into which I may introduce you. I have not a doubt of your general affectionate wish to speak and act rightly; but inexperience, youth, thoughtlessness, and want of more acquaintance with the world carnal, and the world religious, may easily occasion inconsistencies and errors, which might be injurious to your own, as well as to my comfort and credit. Accept, therefore, a father's blessings and prayers, with a father's chapter of admonitions and explanations.

"You are not unaware that my name and character have acquired much publicity;—that I avowedly be-

long to a class of Christian ministers who profess, for Christ's and their soul's sakes, to live separate from the world; to maintain purer and more distinct views of the scripture doctrine; and to be willing to spend and be spent in behalf of the truth, as it is in Jesus. I am, therefore, supposed not only to maintain a consistent separation from the follies and vices of the world, its pomps and vanities, but also to aim at so ruling and guiding my household, that my principles may shine forth in their conduct. Any want of correctness, consistency, faithfulness, and propriety in them, will always excite a mixture of censure, surprise, and concern, as it regards me. The friends of religion will grieve, and those who are otherwise will rejoice, if you could be drawn into compliances, and expressions of sentiment, at variance with your father's: always, therefore, keep in remembrance, whether you are in company with decidedly religious and consistent Christians, or with those who are only partially so, or with those who are unhappily not so at all,—that you have not only your own peace of conscience to maintain, but the estimation and honour of your parent also.*

"Many temptations will occur, to induce you to yield and conform to habits and principles, the very reverse of those which you hear me supporting, both in the pulpit and the parlour. Be not ashamed of firmly, though modestly, in such cases, resisting them. State what your principles and mine are, and heed not the momentary unpleasantness of appearing singular, when conscience and duty require it. You may easily say, 'My father does not approve of such and such things,

* Should any one think there is too prominent a regard expressed for his own reputation, in the advice and admonition he gives his children; let such an objector compare Mr. Richmond's feelings with those of the Apostle, in adverting to the conduct of his spiritual children;—"Lest when I come again, my God will *humble me* amongst you; and I should bewail many who have sinned already," &c.—2 Cor. xii. 21.

neither can I.' No person whose estimation is worth having, will think the worse of you, for such instances of mild, but decisive firmness; and without it, I should be disgraced.

"All descriptions of public amusements; novels; popular, amorous poems; plays, songs, vanities, and finery; and all the sad tribe of poisonous and dangerous pursuits should be regulated by this principle. And, oh! that your own simplicity and love to Christ may never give way to one sad influence of false sentiment; even amongst those whom, on other accounts, we may esteem and regard. The half-religious are often more dangerous than those who are less so; because we are more on our guard in the latter case than the former. The great number of instances in which I have seen the young people of religious families deeply injured in their spirits and habits, by much visiting with persons of different views and customs from those of their own household, has made me, I confess, from pure motives of conscience and prudence, very averse to much of that sort of visiting in my children's case, which I know to have been productive of bad consequences in others. And the difficulty of drawing the line has always appeared very great with my numerous friends and acquaintance. Still I wish to make you happy in every reasonable way; and I am glad when I can give you the advantage of new scenes and company, when they are of the right kind. But as, in my journeys, extensive intercourse takes place, a great variety of characters will fall in your way; and I wish, for all your sakes, that you may be provided with sober, discreet, and religious cautions; that the natural ardour of youth may not lead you into unbecoming or sinful compliances. I know many families, and you know a few, where, perhaps, the parents are religious, but their young people are very imperfectly, if at all so: in such cases you

may, from equality of age, be thrown much more into the light, frivolous, and objectionable conversation of the younger, than the more useful communication of the elders of the family. Here, often, there is danger: ever prefer and chose those, of whatever age, in whom you think you discover holy, serious, benevolent, consistent ways of acting and speaking.

"A young professor of religion has not in most instances, so difficult a task to sustain, when in conversation with those of a decidedly religious deportment, as with worldly persons, and those who can scarcely be ranked as consistently serious, although often to be met with in religious parties. If, however, your conscience be correct, you will see more and more the duty of acting and speaking aright; and you must ever pray for grace to direct and govern you. Difficulties and dangers of this kind greatly multiply, when those who, from relationship and family regard, stand very near to natural love and affection, are nevertheless, in a great measure, strangers to the power of true religion, and therefore mingled with the world wholly, pursuing its pleasures, and supporting its customs. I entreat you to be much on your guard in all such cases. Decays in religious feeling and conduct continually arise from this source: and endanger the temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare of many a hopeful family.

"I am frequently placed in situations myself, where I find it very difficult to satisfy my conscience that I am doing right; amongst people and families where real religion has little or no part in their ways and conversation. In trying to be kind, attentive, and too compliant, perhaps, to *their* habits, I feel that I am in great danger of strengthening them in evil, and always of injuring my own consistency as a Christian.

"I will now add some remarks, placed under select heads, which may make them more conspicuous, and

better remembered; and may God render them useful to you! Keep them constantly with you, and let them be read over, at least once a week.

AMUSEMENTS.

"Plays, balls, public concerts, cards, private dances, &c. &c.

"Serious, consistent Christians, must resist these things, because the dangerous spirit of the world and the flesh is in them all: they are the 'pomps and vanities of this wicked world,' so solemnly renounced at baptism. To be conformed to these seductive and more than frivolous scenes, is to be conformed to this world, and opposed to the character and precepts of Christ. They who see no harm in these things are spiritually blind; and they who will not hear admonition against them, are spiritually deaf. Shun, my dear girls, the pleasures of sin, and seek those which are at God's right hand for evermore. You *cannot* love *both*.

"Blessed be God, you have been kept far from those who make such recreations their idols, and suffer them to wean their hearts from God. Never, in any conversation, speak lightly or triflingly of these subjects, as if you had not imbibed proper sentiments concerning them. Ever preserve the consistency of your parental house and principles.

BOOKS.

"Characters are speedily discerned by their choice of books. Novels in prose I need not now forbid; ignorant as you are of their bad tendency by experience, you, I am persuaded, trust me on that head, and will never sacrifice time, affection, or attention to them. But beware of novels in *verse*. Poets are more dan-

gerous than prose writers, when their principles are bad. Were Lord Byron no better poet than he is a man, he might have done little harm; but when a bad man is a good poet, and makes his good poetry the vehicle of his bad sentiments, he does mischief by wholesale. Do not be ashamed of having never read the fashionable poems of the day. A Christian has no time, and should have no inclination for any reading that has no real tendency to improve the heart. The finest rule I ever met with, in regard to the choice of books, is this:—'Books are good or bad in their effects, as they make us relish the word of God, the *more* or the *less*, after we have read them.' There are too many valuable books on a variety of subjects, which ought to be read, to allow of time to be dedicated to unworthy and useless ones.

MUSIC.

"Shun all the wretched folly and corruption of light, silly, and amorous songs; on the same principle that you would shun books of the same nature. Sacred music is the true refuge of the Christian musician. I wish your ears, your hearts, and your tongues were often tuned to such melodies. The play-house, the opera, and the concert-room, have deluged the world with the abuses of the heavenly art of music. Music was designed to lead the soul to heaven, but the corruption of man has greatly prevented the merciful intention. Do not you belong to such perverters, nor seem to take pleasure in those who do.

DRESS.

"Aim in great neatness and simplicity. Shun finery and show.

"Be not in haste to follow new fashions.

"Remember, that with regard to dress, Christians ought to be decidedly plainer, and less showy than the people of the world. I wish it to be said of the females of my house.—'With what evident and becoming simplicity are the daughters of Simplex * attired.' I refer you to my last letter on that subject.

BEHAVIOUR IN COMPANY.

"Be cheerful, but not gigglers.

"Be serious, but not dull.

"Be communicative, but not forward.

"Be kind, but not servile.

"In every company support your own, and your father's principles, by cautious consistency.

"Beware of silly thoughtless speeches: although you may forget them, others will not.

"Remember! God's eye is in every place, and his ear in every company.

"Beware of levity and familiarity with young men; a modest reserve, without affectation, is the only safe path;—grace is needful here; ask for it; you know where.

JOURNEYINGS.

"Cultivate knowledge as you travel:—

"History, antiquities,—in cities, towns, churches, castles, ruins, &c.

"Natural history,—in plants, earth, stones, minerals, animals, &c.

"Picturesque taste,—in landscape-scenery, and all its boundless combinations.

* Mr. Richmond's signature in the Christian Guardian.

"Cultivate good-humoured contentment in all the little inconveniences incident to inns, roads, weather, &c.

"Cultivate a deep and grateful sense of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, in creation and providence, as successively, presented to your notice, from place to place

"Keep diaries and memoranda of daily events, places, persons, objects, conversations, sermons, public meetings, beauties, wonders, and mercies, as you travel. Be minute and faithful.

"Ask many questions of such as can afford useful information as to what you see.

"Write your diary daily; delays are very prejudicial. You owe a diary to yourself, to your friends left at home, and to your father, who gives you the pleasuro and profit of the journey.

PRAYER.

"Strive to preserve a praying mind through the day; not only at the usual and stated periods, but every where, and at all times, and in all companies. This is your best preservative against error, weakness and sin.

"Always remember that you are in the midst of temptations; and never more so than when most pleased with outward objects and intercourse.

"Pray and watch; for if the spirit be willing, yet the flesh is deplorably weak.

RELIGION.

"Keep ever in mind, that for your own sake and for my sake, you have a religious profession to sustain; and this both in serious and worldly company. Be firm and consistent in them both. Many eyes and ears are open to observe what my children say and do, and

will be, wherever we go. Pray to be preserved from errors, follies, and offences, which bring an evil name upon the ways of God. You may sometimes hear ridicule, prejudice, and censure assail the friends of true religion; — it ever was and will be so: but "blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Be not ashamed of Christ here, and he will not be ashamed of you hereafter.

"Court and encourage serious conversation with those who are truly serious and conversible; and do not get into valuable company, without endeavouring to improve by the intercourse permitted to you. Nothing is more unbecoming than that, while one part of a company is engaged in profitable and interesting conversation, another part should be trifling, giggling, and talking comparative nonsense to each other.

"Ever show the interest which you take in the subject of schools for the poor, the distribution of tracts, the Bible and Missionary Societies, and all those important topics which so deeply occupy the people of God: and when you can find a congenial friend, talk of heaven and eternity, and your soul and your Saviour. This will be as a shield to your head and your heart.

ESTIMATE OF CHARACTERS.

"Look first for grace. Do not disesteem good people on account of their foibles, or deficiencies in matters of little importance. Gold, even when unpolished, is far more valuable than the brightest brass. Never form unfavourable opinions of religious people hastily— "Charity hopeth all things." Prize those families where you find constant family prayer; and suspect evil and danger where it is avowedly unknown and unpractised. Always remember the astonishing difference

between the true followers of Jesus, and the yet unconverted world, and prize them accordingly, whatever be their rank in society.

"Gentility and piety form a happy union; but poverty and piety are quite as acceptable in the eyes of God; and so they ought to be in ours. Not only are the poor far more in actual number than the rich, but experience proves that the proportionate number of the truly serious amongst the poor is much greater than the corresponding proportion of numbers amongst the rich. Take 1000 poor and 100 rich; you will probably find ten of the latter serious; but 200 of the former shall be so at the same time.

"Beware of the critical hearing of sermons preached by good men. It is an awful thing to be occupied in balancing the merits of a preacher, instead of the demerits of yourself. Consider every opportunity of hearing as a message sent you from heaven. For all the sermons you have heard, you will have to render an account at the last day.

PARENTS.

"Seek to make them happy in *you*.

"If you perceive that anything in your ways makes them otherwise, you ought to have no peace until you have corrected it; and if you find yourself indifferent or insensible to their will and wishes, depend upon it yours is a carnal, disobedient, ungrateful heart. If you *love* them, keep their commandments; otherwise love is a mere word in the mouth, or a notion in the fancy, but not a ruling principle in the heart. They know much of the world, you very little: trust them, therefore, when they differ from you and refuse compliance with your desires;—they watch over you for God, and are entitled to great deference and cheerful obedience.

You may easily shorten the lives of affectionate and conscientious parents, by misconduct, bad tempers, and alienation from their injunctions. Let not this sin be laid to your charge.

"I shall add no more at present, than that I am

Your affectionate father,

L. RICHMOND."

It may be thought that a transition from seclusion to an active life, and from the habits of a retired village to the busy haunts of men, is more safe when gradual than when sudden; and that as young persons must sooner or later be connected with the world that lies in wickedness, it were better to accustom their minds by degrees to a contact which will be afterwards unavoidable. A Christian parent will, however, feel extremely jealous of the modern practice of exposing youth to a prurient knowledge of evil, of removing parental superintendence at too early an age, and of allowing an unrestrained freedom of association, which appears to me, as it did to Mr. R. to be attended with great danger. The effect of the present habits are but too obvious: premature and indiscriminate intercourse, and the relaxation of former discipline, has generated a race of Tyros whose chief distinction seems to be a contempt for authority, and a rash and arrogant pretension to superiority very unbecoming their years or station. It is far better to train up a child in the ways of God than in the maxims of the world—to be more intent on securing for him an entrance into eternal life, than, with a hope of present advantage, to put to hazard the salvation of his immortal soul. I would apologize (if apology be necessary), for dwelling on details which may appear too trifling for notice, but the Christian parent, who can duly estimate the 'potency of little things,' may collect

from them some useful hints for the regulation of his own family, and with this view I insert them.

Mr. Richmond was an early riser, and he endeavoured to inspire the same activity into the minds of his children. He used to read with them in his study, at as early an hour as six o'clock in the morning; and as occasions arose, prayed with them in succession: he was very attentive to their regularity, neatness, and good manners, and he endeavoured to make the conversation at table useful and improving. Sometimes he proposed a subject for discussion, and when he perceived youthful spirits rising to excess, he would throw in a remark to check the exuberance. No one aimed more constantly to restrain the evils of the tongue in his family; if ever an observation was made to the disadvantage of another, his uneasiness was apparent; slander in any shape was distasteful to him, and he was sure to say something in the way of allowance or excuse. Indeed Mr. R. particularly excelled in controversial powers: with a fund of good humour, he abounded in anecdote, and having a large acquaintance with science of every kind, he never failed to entertain; while with a soul ever intent on the glory of God, and the best interests of his fellow-creatures, he was under no temptation to sacrifice the useful to the amusing. Table talk is seldom regarded with a proper sense of its importance Servants are often on the watch to catch something for circulation, and to retail among themselves the opinions which their masters have expressed in their presence. the general strain of social intercourse ought therefore to be regulated with a view to their improvement. Children are apt to trifle, and relate all they have heard without discrimination, and they need an elder to guide and give a tone to their conversation; this my excellent friend accomplished in a manner the most felicitous: he allowed and even encouraged perfect freedom and ease; yet every

one felt that there was an eye and an ear over every thing

Innumerable mischiefs arise to children from too close an intimacy with domestics; a foundation is often laid, here, for opinions and habits difficult to be afterwards eradicated: not only are coarse and vulgar tastes imbibed, but vices of an appalling character are learnt, in the stable or the kitchen, where ready instruments are frequently found to concur in deceiving a parent, or gratifying some bad propensity in the minds of children. It was a point of importance in Mr. R.'s mind, that no wicked person should dwell beneath his roof; his domestics, as far as practicable, were selected from persons of good principles, and they became warmly attached to his family. Yet, even under these circumstances, he forbade all unnecessary intercourse: there are doubtless many faithful servants, worthy of our esteem and confidence, but as a general rule, intimacies of this kind are productive of evil, and no good can arise from too close a connection between our children and dependents. Mr. R. provided each child with a separate sleeping-room, thus securing a comfortable place of retirement and devotion. These little sanctuaries were always accessible to himself; he often visited them to leave a note on the table; for while at home, as well as when abroad, he kept up a correspondence with his family, which he used to call his *Home Mission;* and to these notes he requested a reply. I have heard him explain his reasons for so singular a method of instruction; he used to say, "I feel an insurmountable backwardness to close personal conversation with my children: when I begin they are silent, and it is not long before I also feel tongue-tied: yet I cannot be easy without ascertaining the effect of my instructions, and hence I have been driven to use my pen, because I could not open my lips." Mr. R. is not the only father who has felt and yielded to

this repugnance, without adopting his ingenious remedy for a weakness not uncommon, yet not the less to be lamented. I am, however, disposed to estimate this home-correspondence more highly than a direct personal appeal. Conversation, (if it be not a contradiction so to speak,) is apt to be all on one side; but a communication by letter admits of freedom and reflection, and if a reply be expected, obliges an interchange of sentiments. It also teaches young people to think and compose.

When circumstances required a longer epistle, as when a fault needed correction, or a removal from the family was about to take place,—when preparation for a religious ordinance was required, or the choice of a profession to be made,—on such occasions Mr. R. was diffuse, earnest, particular; at other times his little notes contained only an affectionate suggestion of a text for meditation, or an hint to improve some event. He seemed anxious that his children should have a subject, to use his own phrase, "on the stocks," and a habit of always employing their minds and making the best use of the hours which usually run to waste,—the moments and interstices of time. He used to say, "an idle moment is Satan's opportunity."

The reader may expect a specimen or two of those short notes, which, as I have already observed, were conveyed by himself and left on the table in his children's rooms, with a request for a reply within a limited time. These replies formed the subjects of his prayers on their behalf.

"Dear H.

"Your text to-day shall be, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." No sin is too great to be pardoned; but then the soul must seek, believe, and experience this mercy. There is infinite value in the blood of Christ, but the believer alone enjoys the privi-

lege. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is the way, and the truth, and the life. My dear child, what could we lost sinners do, if it were not for this atoning merit? Seek and you shall find. Lose no time; Christ waits to be gracious, carry your heart and all its feelings to him in prayer; and when you have told him all your wants, pray for your affectionate Father,

L. RICHMOND."

"MY DEAREST F.

"As I trust that it is your own and my wish, that your mind should be seriously and affectionately directed towards the greatest of all external privileges, the Lord's Supper, I wish you to answer me in writing, these two questions:—What are your views of the nature, design, and privilege, of this sacrament? and what are the real feelings of your heart at this time respecting it? This communication is, and shall be, quite confidential between you and your affectionate Father.

"P. S.—I trust the first Sunday in October may unite us at the feast of love."

"MY DEAR L.

"I leave these few lines with you, in the hope that you will reply to them while I am at Cambridge. You must write, therefore, not later than by Tuesday's post. I do from my heart desire to know whether you do or do not, feel an anxiety about your soul's salvation. Has the affecting thought, 'I must live for ever in heaven or hell,' suitably impressed your mind? This black border may remind you of your dear departed brother,—but does his memory live in your heart for good? It is time you seriously reflected on eternity, and the value of your soul. You are a sinner, and without a gracious

Saviour, you must perish. Do you pray, in Christ's name, and that earnestly, for the pardon of your sins? May I hope that you are a penitent? Do you think of Willy's last words to you, and of all that he so earnestly recommended to your serious attention? Have you written down his dying words, as I desired you? Be not afraid to open your mind to me. Let us have an unreserved intercourse with each other. Put away childish things,—imitate your brother's love of learning, but especially his love of the Bible, and his constancy in the exercises of devotion. Oh! comfort your father's heart, by truly turning to God, and seeking his salvation; and may God bless you for ever and ever, which is the fervent prayer of your affectionate parent,

L. R."

"My dear Child,

"I am pleased, much pleased with your letter, the more so as it contains some expressions, which inspire a hope that you are beginning to think and feel seriously about your soul's salvation. While I cannot but be most tenderly affected by the loss of my two elder sons, endeared to me by a thousand recollections, I become the more anxious for the welfare of those children whom God spares to me. For the last year I have gone through great trials, and my health has suffered more than any are aware of; but in the midst of all my sorrows, the inexpressible goodness of God has been most manifest, and I trust my afflictions have been blest to many. Many a rose has sprung up around the cold grave of my dear Willy, and they still blossom, and I trust will continue to blossom, till they be transplanted from the spiritual garden of Turvey, into the paradise of God. But can I be otherwise than anxious that my dear K —— should add a flower to my domestic and parochial shrubbery? Are you to reach your sixteenth year, and

not internally, as well as externally, prove yourself a partaker of the grace of God? I trust not;—but religion is not a matter of mere circumstantials, or even of morals. It is the spiritual application of divine truth to the heart, producing that devotedness to God, which distinguishes the true from the nominal Christian. But when, how, and where does this begin? Not until you have deep, humbling, sincere, and anxious thoughts about yourself, and the favour of God; not until, by a kind of holy violence, you feel constrained to flee to Christ, as the only refuge from the wrath to come; not until prayer becomes importunate, and the study of God's word a delight; not until every other consideration yields to that infinitely important inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" Not until the light, trifling, and thoughtless child of man be converted, through grace, into the serious, conscientious, and believing state of the real child of God. Is this the case with you? I speak as a Christian father and minister. What are your views on these important subjects? I wish my child to be deeply in earnest; life flies apace, the period of the tomb advances. I have four children in eternity: it is true that eight more still continue with me on earth, but how long will they be here? Which of them may next be taken from me? I think on these things with deep solemnity. You tremble at the thought of a school-examination,—but what is this to the examination before the judgment-seat of God? Go, then, as a sinner to Christ. He sends none empty away. In him and him alone, there is a rich provision for all who come to him. But let this coming include a surrender of all you are, and all you have, to the Lord of grace and glory. Be contented with nothing short of reality in religion.

"Whence come I?—memory cannot say;
What am I?—knowledge will not show;—
Bound whither?—ah! away—away—

Far as eternity can go;
Thy love to win, thy wrath to flee,
Oh God! thyself my helper be."

Farewell, dear child, and believe me,
Your truly loving Father,
L. R."

Discipline is a subject of no small moment in the education of a family. Offences must needs come, and the foolishness which is bound up in the heart of a child will discover itself in acts of disobedience both to God and a parent. How this is to be met, controlled, and subdued, has occasioned a difference of opinion between wise and good men. It is agreed that authority must be maintained, and that all which is sinful and injurious to a child's welfare, must be firmly resisted. But it is not easy to avoid the two extremes of harshness, and a weak fondness;—*to be firm, yet kind;* to do nothing from temper, from partiality or caprice; to preserve composure under circumstances of provocation.

I cannot undertake to decide whether corporal chastisement is to be inflicted or dispensed with. The scripture warns us equally against severity and undue tenderness; "not to provoke to wrath, nor honour our children above God;" on this point men must determine according to the dictates of their own consciences. So far I am satisfied, that there are few occasions when the rod is indispensably necessary, and none which will justify its use under the ruffllings of temper: nor will the effect be salutary, if a child does not at the time feel it to be a reluctant severity, giving more pain to the offended than to the offender. Force may be the easier way of settling a difference, and is probably often resorted to from a wish to escape the trouble and labour

of more reasonable methods of eradicating evil: but it seldom fails to excite sinful exasperation, and induce a brutish character; and the example on the part of the parent, is often found unfavourable to right dispositions in the other members of the family towards each other. Yet I am bound to admit, (as the result of my own observation,) that even severity is a less evil in its consequences, than a weak connivance at a child's misconduct. The parent who "never displeases his child at any time," must expect to reap the fruits of his own folly in the ruin of his offspring. Excessive indulgence seldom fails to bring a rebuke along with it. Mr. Richmond's method of discipline was peculiar to himself; partly the effect of his own unbounded tenderness and affection, but, in a great measure, of his deep and extraordinary piety. He could never be justly accused of a weak connivance at evil, for here he was resolute, firm and inflexible; yet he was never known to employ corporal chastisement. Whatever may be thought of his treatment of offences, it was felt by every member of his family, that nothing could make him yield, or shake his resolution,—no, not for a moment. He was alive to all that was wrong in principle or conduct, and he never ceased to remonstrate, or to employ means to reduce his child to obedience, and awaken in him a sense of error. But the chief way in which he marked his displeasure, was by those signs of extreme distress, which penetrated the heart of the delinquent, and softened rebellion into regret. From the misconduct of his child, he seemed to reflect on himself, as the author of a corrupt being. He humbled himself before God, and in prayer sought help from above: while he kept the offender at a distance, or separated him from the society of his family, as one unworthy to share in their privileges and affections. No one of his children could long endure this exclusion, or bear with sullen indifference a

countenance which silently expressed the deepest anguish. Perhaps there never was a family where the reign of love suffered less interruption. The reader must form his own opinion of Mr. R's. mode of regulating his family. He must determine for himself, how far a discipline of this kind is worthy of imitation, or is suitable to his own circumstances. Where there exists the same consistency and unity of purpose, an equal desire to glorify God in all things, and a similar diligence in the education of a family, I feel confident that the divine blessing will crown with success the exercise of this or any other discipline of a Christian parent.

Two or three other letters to his children, touching both on lively and on serious topics, will appropriately close this chapter.

"*Sea Bank, Ayrshire.*

"MY MUCH LOVED F——

"As you hear all the good news from Glasgow, I need not repeat it. Now take a Scotch map, and you shall see where I am. Look on the sea-coast of Ayrshire, and you see a place between Ayr and Largs, called Salt Coasts. Close to this is a lovely cottage, called Sea Bank, the residence of my friend Mr. ——. In the front is a magnificent view of the sea, as far as Ireland—The Firth of Clyde with its beauteous islands—Arran, whose Craggy picturesque mountains tower to the sky, in the wildest, highest style of romantic grandeur and beauty—Bute, smaller, but very lovely—The Cumbraies—The long peninsula of Cantyre, and over it the high pyramidical mountains of Jura—The coast of Ayrshire, farther than the eye can reach, and the surprising rock called the Craig of Ailsa, rising up in the midst of the ocean, far away from all land, and sustaining solitary majesty, the almost unmolested haunt of wild birds, goats, and rabbits. Yesterday there was a great storm,

and the sea raged horribly. I saw many a vessel tossed about in all directions. I went down to the shore, and stood astounded amidst roaring waves, screaming sea-fowls, and whistling winds. To-day all is calm, gentle, and inviting. Yesterday I saw the sublime; to-day the beautiful. I am writing at a window which commands the whole view. Somehow or other I am much amused with the appearance and conduct of a large flock of poultry, just now parading about on the lawn beneath me. There are five pea-fowls, six turkeys, twenty cocks and hens, and a solitary goose from Botany Bay. They walk and talk with much diversified gait and air. The sober gravity of their pace, occssionally interrupted by a gobble, a jump, and a snap; the proud loftiness of the peacock, sometimes expressed in solemn silence, and sometimes by a very unmusical squall. The ruffling vibrations of the turkey-cock's feathers, with now and then a brisk advance towards his rival of the green; the social grouping of the cocks and hens, contrasted with the unsocial condition and march of the poor unpartnered goose, who grunts dismally, and sometimes turns up a doubtful sort of a side-look at me, as I sit at the window, as much as to say, "Who are you?" Sometimes a continued silence for a space, and then a sudden and universal cackling, as if they were all at once tickled or frightened, or in some way excited to garrulity. All this amuses me not a little. There are also two noble watch-dogs; I wish they had been at the house when the robbers came. I feel much when at a distance from home,—even minor sources of trouble harass and disturb me, when I am so far from you. Let us pray for faith and confidence in God alone. I think of going to Iona: it is sacred and classic ground. May every blessing attend my children!

So prays their affectionate father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

"*Glasgow.*

"MY OWN DEAR CHILD,

"On my return home, I found your letter, and hasten to give you a few lines in reply. I thought you long in writing, and welcomed your hand with much delight. Indeed, my F——, you and I are not sufficiently intimate in religious intercourse and correspondence; we must become more so, and may God enable us. Let us walk and talk, and sit and talk more on these subjects than we have done. Time flies, events are uncertain, providences, health, and life are transient and mutable. I hope the ensuing winter will unite us closer than ever. Winter is my domestic dependence; your heart is with me in this feeling. I much regret that circumstances have prevented your travelling with me this year, but I hope next summer will be more propitious. When I return, we will read and talk over together such scenes as we mutually love, and you shall hear of my interesting journey to Staffa and Iona. Nature, grace, history, antiquity, compassion, taste, and twenty more subjects and affections all meet there. I will match the festival which I gave to the poor children of Icolumbkill on St. Columba's day, with the gala of Mr. ——. Moreover, I wrote a right noble copy of verses for the children to sing. Mr. M. is a truly valuable man. He grows daily in my estimation. I feel much pleased at the prospect of my dear ——'s union; her tender heart is fixed, although her affections are strongly bound to her family. Encourage and elevate her spirits when you write, for her nerves are delicate. It is a great question, and God, I trust, is settling it for her. * * * * * * Mr. M. is a man of God, and makes religion and conscience the ground of all he says and does.

"Read the life of Mrs. Isabella Graham of New York, Mr. M's. aunt. It will show you the sort of

piety of Mr M. and his family, all of whom are valuable characters.

"What a terrible storm you had! The Lord rides in the storm. 'He can create, and he destroy.' I hope you do not forget him in the midst of agreeable society. The care of a soul, its natural departures from God, its proneness to make idols of the creature, and the extreme narrowness of the strait gate, are subjects for our deep meditation. Alas! how many among our respectable and decent friends and acquaintances are still in an unconverted state, strangers to the real experience of the heart, and unacquainted with the love of Christ! Carelessness and comparative insensibility ruin more souls than deliberate acts of resolute iniquity. You have need to be jealous over your own soul, and to watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. *Real* piety is a very different thing from mere decent profession, educational propriety, and orderly conduct; yet without it none can enter the kingdom of God. Where a deep sense of guilt and depravity does not exist, all else is but a mere name; and it is much easier to admit this as a doctrine, than to feel and act upon it as a truth. I want my children to be living commentaries on my sermons and principles. I long to see them *adorning* the gospel of Christ in all things, and that from the inner man of the heart. I have no objection to Mr. ——'s being liberal and hospitable I only lament that among the lower classes, dancing and debauchery are nearly synonymous, and therefore I must absent myself from such fêtes. So poor dear S. W.* is dead. To what trials are the best Christians for a time given up. Frequently, during delirium, the most holy have appeared the most wicked in thought and action. But of *her* Christianity I cannot have a doubt, * * * * I saw —— last week. * * Oh! how time flies,

* One of his poor parishioners.

generation succeeds generation, like waves on the sea; but whither shall *we* float at last? Much, much, very much goes to secure a safe entrance into the eternal harbour of peace and safety. All other subjects sink into insignificance when compared with this. How foolish, how wicked are we in this matter! Farewell, my beloved F——, much of my domestic comfort depends on you; love your father, for indeed he loves you. When and while you can, be a prop to his feelings and spirits. The period is now arrived when I look for the harvest of filial intercourse, of which I sowed the seeds with such anxiety in your infancy and childhood. May every blessing be with you, in time and eternity. Seven times a day I pray, and say, 'God bless my dear wife—God bless my dear children—God bless my dear parishioners—and God bless my own immortal soul.'

This comes from the heart of your loving Father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

Extract of a letter to his daughter F.

"I saw A—— M—— last week; she is like no one else; it is a little Paradise to be where she is; simplicity, fluency, devotedness, natural talent, and gracious acquirements at eighty-four, concentrate a kind of glory, playing around her head and heart. Mr. —— has left ——, there are great lamentations, but I think I see the hand of God in it; there is always danger when the minister, rather than the Master, is the object of delight; for such religion will soon decay and dissipate. One thing, my F——, is most certain, that a great deal more than commonly manifests itself amongst the generality of rich and genteel professors, is necessary to adorn, if not constitute, real, vital, saving religion. The manners, the opinions, the luxuries, the indolence, the trifling, the waste of time and talents, the low standard, the fastidi-

ousness, the pride, and many more etceteras, stand awfully in the way of religious attainment and progress; hence it is that in so many instances, the religion of the cottage so much outstrips that of the mansion; and that we derive so much more benefit from intercourse with the really sincere Christians amongst the poor, than amongst the too refined, showy, luxurious, and dubious professors of the higher classes. Thank God, however, there are some, though few, yet delightful, specimens amongst the rich; the 'gate' is not too strait for some of the 'camels.' * * * And now allow me, with a heart full of love and esteem for my dearly loved F——, to ask whether you have considered the subject of my last letter; do you not see, on mature examination of your own heart, that religion has not done all that it ought to have done in this respect for my dearest child; has not something of discontent been mingled with the lawful exercise of affection; has not Christ been in some degree robbed of his love and duty in your heart of late? I entreat my dear child to take this frank, but affectionate reproof in good part. I love you so dearly, that I want to see you holy, happy, and heavenly. True, deep, and unfeigned piety will alone induce a right frame; not the fretful, weariedness of this world, but the mind reconciled to all the dealings of the Lord, because they are *His*, and that for both worlds. I gave a historical, antiquarian, ecclesiastical, picturesque, mineralogical aud religious lecture on Iona and Staffa, to about one hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen, in the school-room at Olney last Wednesday. I spoke for two hours and a half. I produced fifty illustrative pictures, and all my pebbles and other specimens. I did the same at Emberton. All expressed satisfaction.

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

"*Turvey, Dec.* 1824.

"I think, dearest F——, that the plan which I suggested will be best for your return home. Give me a letter to precede you. 'Hic sumus,' quiet, comfortable, and uniform in our daily course, without many striking events to diversify it by day or by night; unless it be that the younger bairns are rather noisy by day, and the cats in the garden outrageously so by night. Mamma is detained at Bath, by the lingering and precarious state of Mrs. C——. Willy is not materially different. My dear, my much-loved boy! No one will ever know what I have inwardly undergone on his account since May last. I have no reason to doubt that his mind is in a good state, but I think its exercises are somewhat too dependant on the fluctuations of his body. I entreat you, when restored to his companionship, to second every wish of my heart in promoting serious, devotional, and determinate piety and occupation of heart. I sometimes fear that his mind is too playful, too comparatively careless, in the midst of carefulness. He is an invalid of too precarious a class to trifle, or to be trifled with. Watch over his besetting infirmities, and aim, without appearing to intend it, to correct them.

"Many persons, God be praised, appear at this time to be under serious impressions, and the Lord's work in this parish is evidently advancing. I earnestly wish to see it so under my own roof, as well as in my neighbours' cottages. Yes, my F——, my own loved child, I wish to witness more positive, decided, unequivocal demonstrations of it in your own heart. Beware of substituting mere sentimentalism for vital experience; and any, however subtle, species of idolatry for the simple, sincere, unsophisticated love of Jesus; — Jesus, the sinner's refuge! — Jesus the sinner's friend! — Jesus, the sinner's companion. Beware of the fascinating but

dangerous tribe of poets, fictionists, story-tellers, and dramatists, whose writings steal away the heart from God, secretly poison the spring of devotion, create false standards of judgment and rob God of his honour. Never let the ignis fatuus of genius beguile you into the swamps and puddles of immorality, much less of infidelity: 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?' Ten thousand thieves and robbers within are continually defrauding God of our best affections; they assume imposing attitudes, array themselves in false attire, speak flattering words, 'prophecy smooth things,' delude the imagination and darken the soul. 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Always keep a searching experimental book in private reading, to accompany the study and daily reading of the word of God. Beware of trifling and mere gossiping conversation, even with religious friends: the afore-named thieves and robbers are never more active than under the plausible guise of a pleasant but unprofitable intercourse with those whom, on good grounds, we esteem.

"'The time is short,' should be written on every one, and everything we see. Dear Charlotte Buchanan is now gone to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Do you not now feel, that had you anticipated so speedy a bereavement, many a thought would have been cherished, many a word uttered, many a conversation held, more congenial with the idea of her early flight from time to eternity, from the visible to the invisible world? But you know not who may go next. If, then, while health may still bloom on the cheek, so much consideration is due, how much more so, when sickness and anticipated decay warn us, that those we love may not long be with us. I deeply feel that our general standard of social and domestic religion is too low. It does not sufficiently partake of the more simple

and pure vitality of the poor man's piety. The cottage outstrips the drawing-room, in the genuine characteristics of the gospel efficacy. The religion of the one is more like wine,—that of the other, wine and water in various degrees of mixture. There is not only to be found in the religious world, a solid, substantial, consistent, and devoted character, but there is also what may be termed a pretty genteel sort of evangelism, which too well combines with the luxurious ease and partial acquiescence of the world, and the flesh, not to say of the devil also. But such kind of religion will not prepare the soul for sickness, death, and eternity, or will, at best, leave it a prey to the most fearful doubts, or, still more to be feared, the delusions of false peace. The way that leads to eternal life is much more narrow than many of our modern professors are aware of: the gate is too straight to allow all their trifling, and self-will, and fastidiousness, and carnal-mindedness, to press through it. The gospel is a system of self-denial; its dictates teach us to strip ourselves, that we may clothe others; they leave us hungry, that we may have wherewith to feed others; and send us barefooted among the thorns of the world, rather than silvershod, with mincing steps to walk at our ease amongst its snares. When our Lord was asked, 'Are there few that shall be saved?' he answered neither yes nor no; but said, '*Strive* to enter in at the straight gate,' and this word 'strive,' might be translated 'agonize.' Beware of belonging to that class, which Mrs. More ingeniously calls 'the borderers.' Choose whom you will serve, and take care not to prefer Baal. Ask yourself every night, what portion of the past day have I given to God, to Christ, to devotion, to improvement, to benevolent exertion, to effectual growth in grace? Weep for the deficiencies you therein discover, and pray for pardon and brighter progress. We intend next Thurs-

day to give a little feast to a great company of the poor children of Turvey. Dear Willy will not be able this year to explain the magic lantern, and talk to them about 'Lions and Whittingtons,' so we must try to be optical without. H—— will act behind the scenes, but make no speeches. * * * * I hope to hear a better account of Mrs. W——, to whom present my very affectionate regards. From my heart I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year when it comes. St. James explains 'merry.' (James v. 13,) so does our Lord, (Luke xv. 24.) May such merry-makings be ours. Our love to all. Tell Mr. M—— to write to Wilberforce. I want correspondents who will do him good, and not trifle. I am to preach two missionary sermons at Cambridge on the thirteenth. Farewell, my beloved F——; come quickly here, and be assured how truly I am,

Your faithful loving father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

January 6, 1825.

"MY DEAR F——,

"Your communication is just such as I wish you often and often again to repeat. Let your heart be confidential, and you will ever find mine responsive to it. * * * * * * May no trifles ever wean your affections from the unspeakably important subjects of eternity. Idols are bewitching, dangerous things, and steal away the heart from God. The most lawful things may become idols, by fixing an unlawful degree of affection upon them. One reason of the difficulties with which you meet on the subject of prayer may be, the not sufficiently looking by faith unto Christ. Essential as prayer is, both as a privilege, an evidence, an instrument of good, and a source of every blessing; yet it is only the intercessory prayer of

Christ that can render our prayers acceptable and efficacious, and it is only by lively faith in the great Intercessor that we can obtain a heart to pray. Thus faith and prayer act in a kind of circle in our minds, and each produces, (experimentally) and is produced, by the aid of the other. I am glad you like Mr. Bickersteth's little book on prayer,—all his publications are good. There are many books, as well as general conversations, *about* religious matters, which, after all, do not bring home true religion to the heart. Religious gossiping is a deceitful thing, and deceives many. How many professors of religion will utter twenty flippant remarks, pro or con. upon a preacher, where one will lay his remarks to heart. How many look more to the vessel than to the excellency of the treasure contained in it. Some people cannot relish their tea or coffee, unless served in a delicate cup, with a pretty pattern and a gilt edge. Let poor dear Charlotte Buchanan's sudden call from time to eternity, warn us how needful it is to 'die daily;' not to trifle with our souls, when eternity may be so near; nor to boast of the morrow, when we know not what a day may bring forth. Willy is anxious for your return; he droops at present, and wishes to have his dearest friends near him. * * * I rejoice to find your recent meditations have opened to your conscience besetting infirmities. Press forward my child; let them not gain an ascendency. Beware of mere sentimentalism, of satire, of fastidiousness, towards persons and things. Beware of bigotry and prejudice, of procrastination, of the love of fictions, of dangerous though fascinating poets, &c. * * * * * I wish you, my love, to attach yourself to visiting the sick, and conversing usefully with the poor; to the instruction of poor children; to *religious* correspondence and conversation, with a *few* sincere friends; and partic-

ularly strive to commence and continue spiritual conversation with our dear Willy.

"I lately watched the young moon declining in the western sky—it shone sweetly. Sometimes a cloud shot across the disk—sometimes a floating mist partially obscured it, alternately it was bright again; it sometimes silvered the edge of the very cloud that hid it from sight. At length the lower horn touched the horizon, then the upper horn, and then it wholly disappeared. Venus remained to cheer the gloom. I said to myself, '*There* is the decline of my loved boy, and *there* is the star of hope.'

Your affectionate father,

L. RICHMOND."

"*London, June* 25, 1825.

"DEAR F. AND DEAR H.,

"Between the evening and morning services of this day, I have a leisure hour, in which I feel as if I should like to sit down and talk with you two. I miss our early morning exercises much, and this for the present must be the substitute on my part. I have nothing very particular to recount, only that I have been to a few places, where I was last summer with my beloved Wilberforce, and I have indulged the silent tear, as I retraced incidents never again to recur. At some places, where my friends remember his visits and conversations, I am asked, 'How he is?' with interest in their manner; and I have to tell how he has taken his flight to another and better world; and it affects me greatly so to do. I know not how it is with me, in regard to that dear boy's loss, but I talk less, and think more than ever about him. The fortnight preceding, and the one succeeding his death, are indelibly graven on my heart's recollections, and sometimes overpower me, in a way of which none of you have any real idea. Sometimes

my mind is strengthened, but at others weakened by these reflections. I am sometimes comforted, at others terrified by these exercises of mind. With what liveliness do the scenes of our northern tour press upon my mind: the lovely isle of Bute with all its magnificent scenery, the incomparable beauties of Loch Lomond and Loch Long, with their hospitable friendships; the wild loveliness of Inverary, and Loch Awe: the fine views on the Firth of Clyde, with the moral and intellectual characteristics of many a kind friend; the steam-boats, the carts, the cars, the mountains, all associate with *him*, and are endeared to me beyond expression. I linger over all the spots we visited together, from Loch Awe to Glasgow, Carlisle, Keswick, Woodhouse, Matlock, &c. to Turvey. I love to think of our private reading in my little bed-room at Rothsay; his first Communion at Greenock, and then to connect all with his closing days. It is my weakness, my fault, my misfortune, that I cannot express more of my mind and feelings to you both. Dear, dear H——! you are now become the prop and stay of my declining years, think much of the station in which God has placed you. My first-born is a distant wanderer, and God knows when or whether I shall see him again on earth. My second boy is taken from me, you are my third, but now my first. Be such to your two younger brothers, particularly to L——; he needs your constant superintending care: watch over him; do not leave him to seek unprofitable associates; cherish the little germ of hope which God has planted in my bosom concerning him; let your example influence, and your kind attentions encourage him in every good way; and think much of your own soul. Beware of declensions—remember the last words of dear Wilberforce—live up to his advice. How my heart yearns over you and all your prospects; What

are you? What are you to be, my loved child? Write to me freely.

"And my F—— also; are you as much alive to spiritual things, as when you hastened to the dying bed of dear Willy,—as when you wept over his coffin? My child, dread *all* decays, and may the flame of spiritual piety never grow dim amidst the mists of unworthier speculations. Visit the cottages,—forsake not the poor, for your Father's sake.

"I have been this morning where you might least have expected to find me; but I went not from curiosity, but from a conscientious wish to know and judge for myself, viz, to the Roman Catholic Chapel in Moorfield, to hear high mass. I was astonished at the decorations, and the gorgeous dresses of the bishop and priests; charmed with the exquisite beauty of the music; disgusted at the ceremonial mummery of the service; and unconvinced by the bishop's eloquent sermon in defence of transubstantiation. It was all illusion, delusion, and collusion. The service lasted near four hours. I bless God more than ever for true Protestantism. I shall hear the Messiah performed tomorrow. Such music I love; it lifts my soul to heaven. I am sick and disgusted with common light modern songs,—they, are unfit for Christians. Oh! what music is my Willy enjoying in heaven. Shall we all enjoy it with him? The question often sinks me in the dust. My dear, my most dear children! press forward to the prize of the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus. There is an immense gulf to be passed. Who is sufficient for these things?

"Say many kind and pastoral things for me to my dear people at Turvey. Truly I have them in my heart. —My children all, I kiss you from a distance; believe how much and how entirely I love you.

* * * * * *

"P. S.—*Monday.*—I am just returned from hearing the Messiah. In the two grand chorusses, I thought I could hear my Willy's voice, and it quite overcame me. Past, present, and future, mingled in strange and affecting combination. These feelings are sometimes too much for your poor father."

CHAPTER IV.

'A man that is young in years, may be old in hours, if he have lost no time.'—BACON.

IT may easily be conceived with what anxiety Mr. R. would contemplate the removal of his boys from the paternal roof, when their age would render it unavoidable. The difficulty of placing young persons in suitable situations is greatly increased in the present day, by the numbers who are pressing into every trade and profession, and by the modern practice of excluding youths from the master's family; a practice which may conduce to the comfort and convenience of the latter, but which necessarily exposes the clerk and the apprentice to the worst temptations. Mr. R. knew perhaps less than many other parents how to place out his children to advantage. He was not wise for this world, and though few had fairer opportunities, or friends more able to advise and help him, he shrunk from availing himself of these advantages, to a degree which we cannot approve, while we respect his delicacy and paramount regard to the honour of religion. He was not the ablest counsellor under such circumstances, except indeed on one point, that the welfare of the soul should be the governing principle in the selection of a profession. He gave an unbounded liberty of choice to his children, with one exception, an exception which it is difficult to imagine would not equally be made by every Christian parent. The profession of arms, if not in itself unlawful, is so irreconcileable with the spirit of a peaceable religion; and a life of comparative idleness, or of activity amidst the horrors of destruction, is

so repugnant to the principles and feelings of a disciple, whose master came not to destroy, but to save men's lives, that a right-minded man can scarcely be supposed to admit a preference for it. Persons of undoubted piety have been discovered in camps, as well as in the peaceful fields, but it has generally been found that their knowledge of God was subsequent to their choice of their profession. The Christian under an actual engagement in a service, may decide "to abide in the calling wherein he is called," and honour God in his vocation; but this is a widely different determination from a choice made with the knowledge of peace and love in Christ Jesus.

One of those events which often inspire a preference for a soldier's life, I mean the show of military parade, excited this inclination in Mr. Richmond's younger son. To this choice Mr. R. expressed his dissent in the strongest terms. "Any thing but this," said he, "any thing but this—the very mention of a military life fills me with horror; I cannot bear to think of a child of mine engaging in scenes of bloodshed and destruction. No consideration on earth could extort my consent. It would make me really miserable."

The following letter to his daughter F—— is the best transcript of his thoughts and feelings on this subject.

"I grant, dearest F——, you may charge me with the same thing in which you have often been culpable; I have no very good reason to assign for delay, and therefore will rather take my share of blame, than furnish you with a bad argument, or a bad example, as to the duty of letter-writing. . . . . I rejoice in your account of Turvey, a spot that is always in my mind's eye, when not in my sight. Dear loved parochial and domestic village! Thou art endeared to me by a thou-

sand considerations, both as it respects the living and the dead. 'When I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning.' No succession of time or circumstance has weaned, or ever can wean, my heart from the chancel-vault. There is a young triumvirate increasingly endeared to me, one in heaven and two on earth, and their names shall be recorded together,—Wilberforce, Henry, and C——. Dear boys! born in the same village, companions in the same school, partners in the same recreations, partakers of the same eucharistic table, friends in every social pursuit, and dare I say, heirs of the same glory? United by the ties of the same grace on earth, may they share the same felicity in heaven. I am glad that your meditations have been, of late, deep and important. Pray that they may continue so. Life is short; eternity is at hand; banish, therefore, all needless reserve, banish levity, banish dulness, be much with Christ in prayer, and, I had well nigh added, much with your father in his study. Cultivate an interior acquaintance with H——, and do all you can with L—— and T——. There is something wanting amongst us, whether in family duet or chorus, as to really improving and spiritual conversation: too much worldly bustle, too much regard to passing events, too much consequent alienation from the one, the only thing needful. Without inquiring who is the most in fault, let each of us strive to resist the evil and cleave to the good.....When I think of my boys and C——, I bless God for village seclusion, and greatly rejoice that they have been kept at a comparative distance from the evil communications which corrupt good manners. The world, even in its apparently harmless form, is a terrible snare to the young and uninformed mind.....I before gave you my opinion on Sunday evening walks, I have often earnestly denounced them to the people, and need not add a word to you on

this head.....There is a subject which often hangs heavily on my spirits, I mean my poor dear T——'s inclination for a military life. Hating war as I do from my very heart; convinced as I am of the inconsistency of it with real Christianity; and looking on the profession of arms as irreconcileable with the principles of the gospel, I should mourn greatly if one of my boys chose so cruel, and, generally speaking, so profligate a line of life. I could never consent to it on conscientious grounds, and therefore wish this bias for the profession of arms to be discouraged. I dislike and oppose it with my whole heart. May God, the *God of peace*, bless you, my much loved F——: Give a Christian message of pastoral love to my dear flock; I often think and pray for them. Love to the boys. You know well how truly and sincerely I am,

Your affectionate father,
LEGH RICHMOND."

The strongest desire Mr. R. ever expressed with respect to his children was, that they might devote themselves to the service of the sanctuary. "I have no concern," he used to say, "about their temporal provision; God will take care of that; but I should rejoice to see every one of my boys actively and usefully engaged in the church of God." His son H—— chose the sacred profession, to which his father consented; but the necessity of his removal to the university haunted him like a spectre. He passed many anxious days and sleepless nights in anticipation of the event; and at times he seemed to be in the deepest trouble: he talked and wrote continually about the possible consequences of it. The subject seemed to absorb his thoughts and depress his spirits: "What if my boy should fall a victim to associations which have blasted the fairest hopes of many a Christian parent. He may

do without learning, but he is ruined body and soul if he be not wise unto salvation." Such acute distress may appear to some a sort of extravagance. It is true, feelings of this order require control: but allowance should be made for the overflowings of parental anxiety, and the dread of a transition and revolution of habits not without danger, and affording just grounds of apprehension. There are occasions in which it is difficult to preserve the mind in due balance; and when not to feel deeply, implies a culpable indifference to the interests of eternity, or at least a very low estimate of their paramount importance

Mr. Richmond, as will appear from subsequent events, was standing on the verge of eternity; his health and spirits had been greatly shattered by the severe family trials through which he had lately been made to pass; and his feelings on all subjects connected with religion were wrought up to a pitch of acuteness, which rendered unnecessary contact with the world almost insupportable. There need seldom, however, be any dread of a glow of feeling that "would consume us;" it is much more to be deplored, that men can contemplate the "exceeding weight of things which are eternal," with so little emotion, and waste their chief energies on those which endure only for a season, and then flee away for ever.

With respect to our Universities, I am not disposed to join in the unmeasured and ignorant objurgation with which they have been assailed by their enemies, and even by those who owe much of their eminence in society to the advantages derived from them. It is easy to blame, but difficult to improve: plausible theories may be suggested, and the rude hand of revolution, under the specious name of reform, may proceed to experiments, which are often mischievous, and always uncertain in their issue. The question is not what is

desirable, but what is practicable: how little is to be expected from attempting too much, is observable in the strictness of statutes, which descend even to absurd minutiæ, compared with the feeble discipline, which corrupt beings will allow to be enforced. It is indeed devoutly to be wished, that a more vigilant superintendence were exercised over the private habits of the young men as to the facility of contracting debts, and of admission into college after the closing of the gates; that something more of the spirit of religion were infused into its forms; that less were left to the discretion of "the mad age;" and that the authority and duty of the tutor should not be confined to the hours of lecture. Desirable as are such improvements in college discipline, I am not prepared to show how they can be made, unless the minds of men were more deeply impressed with the true end of education, the training a soul for eternity; and I shall not indulge in idle declamation against evils which I may lament, but cannot cure. The dangers incident to inexperienced youth at the university, are confessedly great, but they attach to all situations of their early career, and are not peculiar to their residence amid these noble monuments of ancient piety and munificence. Yet a Christian parent, in matriculating his son at college, will feel increasing responsibility to commend him to the Spirit of God for protection and guidance; and to use every precaution against the evil influence to which he may be exposed from the corrupt examples of contemporaries, or the too great liberty allowed to himself. I would suggest the inestimable advantages to be obtained from the help and superintendence of a private tutor, of an age to be a companion, and of talents and piety sufficient to make him a useful guide. Such a one, intrusted with authority to direct his pupil's conduct and studies, would

secure every thing within human means, which an anxious parent could desire.

The last production of Mr. R's pen was a paper of warnings and instructions for his son. This paper was found on his table after his death, and was evidently the result of his dying meditations. I deeply regret that it has been lost, and that I cannot gratify the reader by the valuable hints which it might have suggested. The subject, however, is too important to be passed over in silence, and I will venture to supply the defect by a letter of my own, written under circumstances not much dissimilar.

To a young friend on going to College.

"My dear young Friend,

"You request my advice on a subject which will probably give a direction to your whole life. I give it you with the more satisfaction, because I believe you are not one of those who ask counsel with a previous determination to follow their own judgment, and who set no value on experience for which they have not paid the price in their own mistakes: but are anxiously looking out for a guide, and ready to follow him. After twelve years' residence in one of our Universities, I may fairly be supposed to know something both of their dangers and advantages. I am aware of the temptations to which you will be exposed in your new situation; yet with respect to myself, I may assert, that they were by no means so great as others have represented them,—fewer, and less dangerous than the after-trials of manhood, or even those of my boyish days at school.

"The opportunity you now have of acquiring solid learning, and of laying the foundation of all that will be useful to you in life, is incalculably valuable, and it should be your chief concern to embrace the golden

moment with firm and steady grasp. Accept, then, with my best wishes and prayers for your welfare, the result of past observation at Alma Mater.

"1. Wherever you are, in or out of the University, much will depend on the *regulation of yourself.* We are apt to lay the blame of our indiscretions and failures on our circumstances, and to suppose that we should act differently under other influences; but this is a great mistake; for circumstances, though I admit they have a powerful influence on our conduct, do not so much form, as discover our character. Be 'lord of your own mind,' and you will rise above outward trials. Try, then, to understand *yourself*—your strong and your weak points.

"Begin and end the day with prayer; but content not yourself with an indolent or hurried exercise of devotion, without heart or meaning, and a cursory or irregular glancing at a passage of Scripture, under an idea of satisfying conscience, or 'doing your duty.' Consider seriously the chief end of the appointment, as the prescribed channel of intercourse with God. Your strength, success, and preservation from evil, all depend on communion with him. Every thing will go well or ill with you, in proportion as you are brought into contact with the divine Spirit. In reading the Bible (I am now speaking of religion and its practical application to your heart and conscience, and not of theology as a science and profession,) take a few verses, and meditate and pray over them till you get the spirit and meaning of them wrought into your own soul. If you do not understand a passage, you may apply to a commentator for explanation; otherwise be your own expositor; preach to your own heart, and feed on the word of God amidst the aspirations of prayer and praise, and heavenly thoughts, and affections. Examine yourself by it, to obtain conviction of sin and to discover your defects and besetments,—to judge of

your progress, and pray for uprightness and deep seriousness. Look forward to the probable events of the day, and seek grace and support, to meet trial, and improve opportunity. Consider that you are entering society with a body of sin and death, ever liable to impart or receive injury, and while you carefully guard against the approaches of evil, you should aim, like your master, to 'go about doing good.' I think an hour may be well employed in this holy exercise. At night, a shorter time may suffice; for the spirits will flag, and the body be wearied. The efficacy of prayer does not depend on the length of time employed in acts of devotion: God thinks of mercy, and not sacrifice, and so must you. Such remarks are applicable to all persons and situations; but are more especially important to one in your circumstances. You are now deprived of your father's conversation, and the devotional exercises of the family, and you have need to redouble your diligence in private devotion. Remember, then, that your first and greatest trial will be in your closet; and that if you fail here, all will go wrong with you throughout the day. If you rob God, to turn to Euclid or Euripides, or hurry away to chapel without private prayer, because you have given way to sloth—other motives may stimulate you to be diligent in business; but you will not long continue 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord:' and if his Holy Spirit forsake you,—and he *will* forsake you if you grieve him by neglect of the means of grace,—you will fall into many inconsistencies, and in the end lose all love for religion and concern for your soul, and perhaps by your conduct discredit yourself even in the eyes of the world.

"It is a good habit to keep some subject in mind for *occasional* employment,—a promise,—a precept—an attribute of God, on which to meditate in every vacant moment. There are intervals in the course of your

college duties, when you cannot sit down to serious studies. *An idle moment furnishes at all times a nidus for a temptation.*

"2. Be very cautious in the formation of friendships. Your religious and general improvement will be closely connected with the character of your associates.

"You will find me correct in dividing the young men into two classes; of which one affects to despise, and the other professes to honour religion. The former class comprises *three* sets or parties, all agreeing to live without God in the world, but differing in their manners and pursuits. The first of the three are the men of family and fortune, who spend their time in amusement, attending as little as possible to the studies of the place. For the most part they are men of profligate habits, though not all equally vicious. These call themselves *the gentlemen.* There is another set of young men who pass by the name of *the scamps,* who are not better disposed than the former; but who have not the same means of doing mischief to themselves or others: they are, however, quite as ignorant, idle, and thoughtless, with the addition of coarseness and vulgarity of manners. To neither of these classes must you approximate, but (to speak academically,) you must *cut them* all. I am under no apprehension of your familiarizing yourself with low company; but a silk gown, or a gold tuft,—a wish to form a high connexion, may tempt you to tolerate what ought to be intolerable to you. At first you may feel disgust at profane and vicious language and manners. Insensibly they will excite less horror. After a time you will think it enough to be personally exempt from these offences—then you may begin to excuse and palliate; till at length you break bounds, and assume a conduct, and avow a creed, repugnant to your judgment, and which your heart secretly condemns. You will have no difficulty in

avoiding such associates; for, unless you seek an introduction, they will not notice you. The third party which pretends to no religion, are those who are called the *reading men* at Cambridge, and the *quizzes* at Oxford. Their diligent application to study, and desire of distinction in the university, are worthy of your imitation: for you are sent to College, not merely to get a degree, and barely escape rejection at last, but to obtain a creditable testimony that you have profited by the studies of the place: yet, while I commend the industry of the characters alluded to, and their generally correct conduct, I do not hesitate to say, that their motives and objects are not such as I could enforce upon you.

"It is possible that my advice to you may be different from that of some who nevertheless agree with me in principle. I remember it was said to you by—— 'Don't look at every man not strictly religious as a wild bear, and a dangerous companion.' Certainly it is not a duty to cherish morose feelings, but rather to cultivate a sweetness of temper, and a courteous behaviour towards all: and an occasional interchange of visits, with those who will converse profitably on literary pursuits, cannot be objected to. Yet I wish to be more explicit as to the proper degree of intercourse with those who do not fear God, however creditable and desirable the acquaintance may be in other respects. If you were of long standing in religion, you might venture on many things which you cannot now attempt with safety. They might even become a duty. The firemen must scale the burning roof, while the spectator of the flames had better keep at a distance. You must not try how much poison your constitution will bear, or risk your soul's health for the sake of any temporal advantage. The *world*—by which I mean those who are ignorant of religion, or whose hearts are not in it,—

must ever be to the true Christian, either a cross, or a snare: and when it ceases to be the one, it will invariably become the other. I cannot approve of whole evenings passed in company where it is understood that God is never to be referred to, and where the least observation connected with eternity, creates a silence, if it does not provoke a sneer, an opposition of sentiment, or a feeling of distaste. To be much in society of this kind, beyond the demands of duty or necessity, which you can seldom plead, is surely no better than constructive treason against our Lord and Saviour. If you make the experiment, mark the effect on your own mind. If the tone of religious feeling be impaired, if you grow dull and heartless in devotion, be assured that something is wrong in your motives, pursuits, and associations. So long as you agree to live and converse as if the world were every thing, and God nothing, you may be tolerated, though your professed attachment to religion be known; or you may even be respected for qualities that are amiable and estimable, and your society may afford satisfaction to literary young men, who would keep you at a distance if you acted consistently with your profession of a purer faith, and stricter conversation The old rule 'noscitur a sociis,' is a very wise and safe one. Compare the conversation of your new associates, if you form such, with the discussions you have heard under the paternal roof; where, though the subjects were not always strictly religious, yet the spirit in which they were treated had a tendency not only to improve the mind, but in some way or other to sanctify the heart. Perhaps I feel the more strongly on this subject, partly from having seen many a hopeful young person entirely ruined by a friendship formed on merely literary grounds, and partly because I perceive a gradual breaking down of old-fashioned distinctions, to the serious injury of true religion.

"Your father has, I find, earnestly entreated you to cast in your lot with those who, by way of reproach are termed, *the saints.* I know more of this class than he does, who must be in a degree unacquainted with university habits and students; and I would recommend you not to identify yourself with a sect or party of any kind, without careful discrimination. The religion of the Bible is often a different thing from that of its professed advocates; and if our hearts be right with God, there will be occasions when we must stand alone. I do not mean to reflect on the religious body; for whatever holiness or truth there is in the world, will be found chiefly among them; but false brethren have ever crept unawares into the church of God, and have done great injury to sincere and honest members of it; and there is always reason to fear that when credit and interest are promoted by a profession of religion, some will consent to wear our badge, who are strangers to our principles. In this class you will also find the sons of truly good men, introduced and noticed on the score of their parents' piety. These are acquainted with the theory of religion, but their hearts are far from being influenced by it; and former restraints being removed, they are apt to yield to corrupt inclination; and if they even keep within the bounds of decency, (which is not always the case) they gradually adopt the manners and habits of the world. Some of higher pretensions to piety, affect to despise both the studies and honours of the university, and become mere idlers and gossips. They are ready for disputation, and arrogant in maintaining some peculiar view of their own, to the neglect of the plain, simple, practical truths of religion. You need not incur a quarrel in shunning their society. Hold up the torch of real, spiritual, heart religion, and these birds of the night will flee away and leave you. You will also meet with a few religionists of a squeam-

ish, fastidious spirit, who cannot tolerate the defects of less polished, but truly honest and sincere young men. Their idol is talent; which seems to men of this order to compensate for the want of piety, if it does not excuse much that is wrong in principle and practice. They seldom discover any vigour, or meaning, or spirituality in their religious profession; but dwell much on *gentlemanly* behaviour, and a *proper* compliance with the world. Leaving all these, you must seek your companions amongst those who have evidently thrown heart and soul into the service of their Master; and who prefer a honest man with his blunders and disadvantages, to those who sparkle with the splendour of superior talent, but whose morbid sensibilities chill the glow of real piety.

"3. I particularly recommend you to decline breakfast-parties: for even when the conversation may be interesting and generally improving, there is a temptation to prolong it unreasonably, and thus to infringe upon the regular hours and habits of study.

"4. When at college, I had a great dread of loungers. My room being near the tutor's, I was liable to be pestered with triflers who came to pass away half an hour in just doing nothing. To bid them leave me would have been an act of incivility; to have looked sour or appeared fidgetty, would have seemed not less so; yet repeated interruptions became at last insupportable, and I had recourse to a stratagem which I thought innocent, and which was certainly very successful. I entertained the man of taste with the discord of my violoncello, and the man of no taste with a passage from a classic. After yawning a response or two he soon left me, voted me a bore, and sought more congenial society. If you are hard pushed, you may make the experiment, and I can promise a similar result. Security from morning interruptions must be obtained at any expense.

Idleness is very contagious, and gossipping of all kinds a sad waste of time.

"5. Remember, (for it is an invaluable maxim) that *method is the soul of business,* and that steady perseverance is necessary to your successful cultivation of knowledge. Let your time be duly portioned out, and every thing done in its season. Let each hour have its allotted employment. Rise early. Keep good hours—your health and success both depend on it. Sitting up late is a very bad habit. Guard against inequality and irregularity; if you read hard for a week, and then idle away whole days in boating and riding, you will make less progress than persons inferior to yourself in ability, but who are steady and regular in their application. Nothing is done well that is done by fits and starts.

'6. You ought not to think of degrading into the class called the *non-reading men,* and content yourself with a *Pol degree,* under an idle pretence of gaining more general knowledge: aim at some academical distinction. I dare not hold out to you as a motive, the love of reputation or the gratification of pride: but study night and day to honour God and religion. It is worth-while to labour hard to have something valuable in the eyes of the world, to lay at the foot of the cross. I have always admired Selden's reply, when asked how a man of his attainments could lower himself by superstition, (for such his piety was miscalled)—'You may despise religion, but whatever be my attainments in human learning, I do count them all but dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord.' Many men will value the truth in proportion to their respect for those who profess it. You may find persons who cloak their indolence or their dulness under a misapplication of some text of scripture; but be assured, the most spiritual and really useful men, if not always possessed of the great-

est talent, are those who have made the most of their opportunities. No one's name slumbers in the Tripos; it follows him through life, and what he has been at college, will help to determine his influence in many a country village. When a young clergyman excites attention by a serious application to his duties, it is a common inquiry amongst persons who might be supposed not to trouble themselves about such matters, What degree did he take? Was he distinguished at college? and he will rise or sink in their estimation accordingly. There may be prejudice or mistake in this, but it carries no small weight to be able to say, Are they philosophers, mathematicians, or linguists? so am I. Besides, the habit of application to subjects not immediately connected with religion, is a good discipline of the mind, and will accustom it to correct and deep thinking on religion itself. The studies of the university are not, as some suppose, a mere literary trial of skill, and of no further use than to fill up a space in human life, or fit a man for scientific pursuits alone. If you find the lectures dry, or your Latin irksome, think of working for God's glory, and Christ's honour, and it will infuse a vigour and a sweetness into them. I have heard some good young men complain of the loss of spirituality and taste for the Bible, and ascribe this mischief to the absorbing influence of their studies; but their studies are not to blame,—it is the spirit, design and end, with which they are undertaken. A man may hold communion with God through any medium, or in any occupation, if his heart and aim be right: he may become carnal in the midst of theological pursuits, and may preserve the utmost spirituality while wading through the rubbish of the schools. Remember that it is not your *work*, but your *motive*, which will injure or keep alive your piety

"You will be required to go to the college-chapel

morning and evening, with the exception of seven or eight times a week, when you may exercise your own discretion as to attendance. I would advise you to be *always* present. The example even of the religious young men may fail you; many of whom regard this regular attendance as a waste of time. They complain of the rapid and slovenly way in which the service is performed, and that there is no devotion in chants and anthems. But you have nothing to do with the offences of others, or with *modes* of worship. It is God's house, God's service. Honour both, and you shall not have to bewail the unprofitableness of prayer under any circumstances or defects. I enjoy cathedral-service,—it is to me truly devotional. Men who dislike music may find it less in unison with their feelings; but before it is denounced as a relic of popery, it should be remembered that the temple-service was still more musical, and *our Lord was there.* He would not have sanctioned, by his presence, a mode of worship which contained in it any thing injurious to devotion, or inconsistent with a right frame of spirit in a true worshipper. Go also to chapel in proper time: I know the colleges allow their young men to come in when a third of the service is over, without a mark of absence; a practice which (with all due submission to masters and deans) gives me a painful feeling, for it looks as if chapel attendance was considered as a mere roll-call; and it is not surprising that the juniors should hurry to chapel from their beds, in a disgraceful dishabille under cover of the gown or the surplice. At first your motives may be suspected, but consistency in this and all other things will ultimately procure respect.

"*Never think any time mis-spent which is employed in the service and presence of God.* Your attendance at St. Mary's, though expected, is not exacted. I have been sorry to hear some young men of high pretensions

to religion speak very contemptuously of University sermons, and excuse their neglect of attending them on the ground of unprofitableness. Many admirable discourses for head and heart are delivered at that church, and it is a want of sense to compare a University pulpit with that of a parish. Sermons are much improved in doctrine and application since my day, yet even then, I seldom heard a discourse from which I could not gain something useful, either in the elucidation of the text, or by inference and use of the preacher's material. But whatever be the defect of a sermon, recollect who has set you the example of honouring the appointments of lawful authority in church and state, and "fulfilling all righteousness." I would have you affiliate yourself to the habits, usages, studies, and worship of a university-man, and to cultivate a spirit of modesty, regularity, order, humility, and submission: as the prime duty and greatest ornament of a young man in *statu pupillari*, whose province it is to learn, and not to teach.

"8. You wish me to sketch out a plan of study, and an orderly arrangement of your time. Much depends on college-appointments; but leaving you to improve or alter in reference to them, I will comply with your request; at the same time observing, that it is more easy for me to dictate, than for you to execute. You have need to pray for firmness and resolution; since any relaxation or breach on your part, except in cases of imperious necessity, will leave you resolving and resolving, but never attaining to any eminence. I suppose the chapel-service at eight in the morning and six in the evening, hall at four, lecture at ten, with some other college exercise which you must arrange as you can, the amount of time will be the same. Be always at your private devotions at six in the morning. I need not repeat what I have already said on this subject, except it be again to urge you, on no account to proceed

to business, till you have sought help from God. If you be not inflexibly steady and regular on this point, you will lose the spirit of religion, and retain only the dregs of form; amidst gods and goddesses, cubes, and squares and triangles, and all the multitudinous ideas which are poured into your mind. Devote the next hour to theology; I will give you the first year to get an acquaintance with the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament, till you can read both with as much ease as the English version. You will need no other helps than Buxtorff's small lexicon, and Schleusner's two volumes for the Testament. You are tolerably ready with the grammar of each language, or I should have added Simon's grammar for the Hebrew. The very few chapters in Chaldee will be easily mastered with Buxtorff's larger grammar and lexicon. Use and observation will supply a more critical knowledge of these languages without any other assistance. Employ the second year with Scott, for a further acquaintance with the Scriptures. I might point out more able expositors on detached portions, but you will find in him a good compilation from more extensive works. You need not perplex yourself with too many expositors. It would be a very heavy *imposition* to wade through all the trash and prosings which have been appended to divinity. Difficulties may sometimes be cleared up by chronology, geography, and parallelisms; but in most cases the Bible is its own and best interpreter. For the same hour in the third year, read Hartwell Horne. This is an invaluable book for a young man, and you must not lay him aside till you have fully digested his admirable compilations, to guide you in more discursive reading hereafter. College preparations will sufficiently embrace the subject of evidences. Let me seriously caution you against a spirit of curious metaphysical inquiry into those parts of theology, which are more fit for age

and experience, if indeed they are ever safe, or profitable, or intelligible. The arrogant dogmatism of some religionists is intolerable, their presumption full of danger, and their spirit and temper most unchristian. On many points it is best to say with Leighton, "Here I choose rather to stand on the shore, and in the survey of God's judgments exclaim, 'Oh the depths,' than venture out upon the fathomless abyss, from which I might never return." The present is a childish dispensation, in which we must be content to know little, and strive to do much. During the remaining half year of your academical residence, spend an hour each day in pulpit composition. I hope you do not intend to be a copyist, or one of Dr. Trusler's disciples. Enrich your sermons to the utmost with the ideas of others, wrought into your own mind: but never transcribe. I am not instructing you how to preach, but how to prepare materials, or I should say many things in relation to the ministry. Get a Bible interleaved, and note down all you hear or read relating to the more important texts. I began to do this at an early age, and my preaching Bible now contains a mass of references to authors, treatises, commentators, and single sermons, on most important questions, so that half my work is done before I begin to compose. My tools are at hand, and I have no need to hunt for them. You will find some useful hints in Claude's Essays on the Framework of a Sermon, and in the 'Horæ Homileticæ,' the production of the best skeleton-maker in the world. Yet remember an old piece of advice,—'Nullius addictus in verba magistri.' Imitate no one, but be yourself. Your own clothes will fit you best. Imitators are apt to copy defects as well as beauties, and thus make themselves ridiculous: use your own manner and style, that you may be sincere and natural. If you are industrious you will not hereafter have to learn when you are required to teach. Out

of the remainder of the day, take six hours for your college exercises; and try to be steady, neat, accurate, and eminent in everything. You will now have spent eight hours in close application; never exceed them. You may turn to music, which is a great refreshment of the spirits,—to conversation or letter-writing, or whatever requires no effort of mind. Never be out of your room after ten at night, and spend half an hour in devotional exercises before you retire to bed. I shall not repeat what I have said on the subject of prayer, but let me add one caution. You will sometimes have to lament great failures; do not on such occasions take refuge in loose antinomian notions, nor yet give way to reckless ness and despondency; if God knows you are honest, and striving in all things to glorify him, though you fall seven times a day he will raise you up again. Never resolve to do nothing because you have not done everything; nor indeed resolve at all, but cast your troubles on Christ, and set to work again with more diligence, caution, and dependence.

"I have said nothing of modern literature; you are already pretty well acquainted with it, and if you can find an hour for lighter reading, which does not fatigue you, it may be well to enlarge your present stock: but not to the neglect of other things; because in vacations you may profitably spend some time upon the historians and English poets. I would have you attend, in turn, the public lectures on anatomy, Chemistry, &c.;—you will not be able to read in private on these subjects, but you may thus acquire a general knowledge of them, which will both improve and amuse you. The divinity lecture I advise you to postpone, till you have finished the course of reading on that subject which I have marked out for you. There is one part of my sketch on which I have not been sufficiently explicit; I mean the exercise which is indispensably necessary to health.

I have scarcely ever had a pupil to whom in this respect I did not seem to be another Cassandra, whose predictions no one one would believe. I hope you will be an exception. To read yourself blind, deaf, stupid, and nervous, is really a great folly, and a kind of suicide. There have been many sad examples of complete failure amongst students, through neglect of exercise, rather than from over-mental exertion. Always take exercise in the best part of the day, and at three periods,—two half-hours by yourself, and two hours with some agreeable companion, with whom the conversation may be interesting; kindred pursuits will furnish you with abundant materials.

"9. Avoid all wine-parties, or if circumstances seem to make an occasional visit in this way necessary, firmly adhere to some rule as to quantity. I never took more than two glasses, and this determination saved me much trouble and temptation.* Acquaintances formed at these parties are transitory, and companions will soon be dispersed to be heard of no more. A few endeared intimacies are likely to be more durable and valuable.

"10. The university which brings together so great a variety of persons, is a good school for the study of character; avail yourself of it; by the defects of others learn to correct your own, and by their virtues improve yourself. You will seldom find a person who does not excel you in something; lead him to talk on his favourite subject, that you may profit by his superiority.

"11. With respect to your vacations, I shall only now throw out one hint; which is, that these must be equally busy periods, if you aspire to academical honours. You will, indeed, be expected to relax occasionally in family parties; still you must unceasingly

* It is hardly necessary to add that a very great revolution has taken place in the public mind since the above was written, touching the use at all of intoxicating liquors.—Am. Ed.

pursue your object, and attend to little else. Get up your college-subjects for the next term: you cannot otherwise keep pace with the lectures.

"12. Whatever you read, always keep in mind the great truths of the Bible; fact and observation will strengthen and confirm them.

"13. Never converse about religion, but in the spirit of religion: be earnest, spiritual, and serious; jokes and tales, and absurd associations, produce levity of mind, and even hypocrisy; be cheerful, but not light.

"14. You may start at the amount of what I have stated, but I know from experience that I have proposed nothing which may not be achieved by steady perseverance. Throw your whole soul, my dear ——, into a preparation for a useful, honourable, and serviceable life, in the most glorious of all employments, the office and work of the ministry. That God may give you grace, and health, and strength, to become a workman that needeth not be ashamed, is the earnest prayer of

Your affectionate and faithful friend."

I must apologise to the reader for detaining him so long from the more immediate subject of the Family Portraiture. My excuse must be the hope that this letter of my own may fall into the hands of some student of the university, and furnish him with useful hints to regulate his conduct and studies. I am satisfied that my sentiments would be found in unison with my friend's, had he lived to complete his own valuable directions to his son Henry.

In surveying the variety of circumstances and details connected with Mr. R.'s plan of education, it seems to me that two points may be added with advantage.

It has often been lamented that children and young people receive so little benefit from public instruction.

Mr. Richmond did indeed teach his children to pray and read the scriptures; and he wrote a form of prayer for the use of each of them, until they were able to approach a mercy-seat with the expression of their own thoughts and desires. They had the benefit of his family exercises and conversations, and he kept his eye on their behaviour at church: but this is not all that is needful; they should be frequently examined as to what they hear, and be required to give an account of every sermon; receiving reproof or commendation as they appear to have been negligent or attentive.

It is important also to accustom children to separate a part of their pocket-money for charitable purposes, and to act in their sympathy with the necessitous, on plan and system. Mr. R. was himself hospitable and benevolent; he contributed largely from his slender means, to the wants of his poor parishioners, and he inculcated on his family the duty of unremitting attention to distress of every kind. But children should be trained to *seek out* proper objects, and learn to relieve them from their own means, and by the sacrifice of their own gratifications. What portion of our goods ought to be separated for the poor is not determined in the scriptures; the only definite rule there laid down, is, "According as God hath prospered him, so let every man give as he is disposed in his heart." Children, as well as grown people, should be allowed opportunity to exercise discretion, and evidence the sincerity of principle: we cannot prescribe any fixed amount, which must vary according to the circumstances of different persons; still, however, this labour of love ought to be regulated by some definite principle.

From the foregoing detail of Mr. R.'s laborious and conscientious care of his family, it is natural to ask what was the result. Delicacy and propriety forbid me to speak of the living, though I might there appeal to

facts which confirm the truth of that gracious promise, "Train up a child in the way in which he should go, and when he is old he shall not depart from it."

I shall, however, now endeavour to fulfil Mr. R.'s own intentions, by recording the deaths of his children, who died in the faith, and are gone to their rest and peace in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER V.

The storm that wrecks the wintry sky
No more disturbs their deep repose,
Than summer's evening's latest sigh
That shuts the rose.

MONTGOMERY.

SAMUEL NUGENT LEGH, the eldest son of Mr. Richmond, was born at Brading, in the Isle of Wight, June 18, 1798.

From his birth to the hour of his death he was the child of many prayers to God, for life and salvation through a crucified Redeemer.

"My responsibilities," said Mr. R. "are greatly increased by the birth of a son, and I have need of wisdom to preserve this loan of the Lord, and to train up an immortal soul for heaven.

The views of a Christian parent concerning his offspring are not bounded by time, nor his hopes and wishes limited to a present provision. Our heavenly Father knoweth our wants. We must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be supplied as far as is needful to our welfare.

The first paper found amongst Mr. R.'s memoranda relating to his son Nugent, is a letter addressed to the sponsors on the occasion of his infant's reception into the company of believers by the sacrament of baptism. The selection of these parties is often a delicate and a difficult duty to religious parents. The usages of society direct our view towards kinsfolk and intimate friends, and the practice is natural and proper when

such can be found possessing a deep sense of the responsibilities of their engagement. But to be swayed principally by relationship or interest in this appointment, is inconsistent with Christian integrity, and is, in fact, "honouring man more than God." The church supposes sponsors to be persons of real piety, a company of the faithful, who agree "as touching what they shall ask of God in Christ's name" on behalf of the infant. They are provided as spiritual trustees, to take care that the child be virtuous brought up, and they engage for the fulfilment of conditions, without which, baptism, like the Lord's supper is not available for any benefit. The grace of baptism is not promised to unbelievers, and there are many who are *such as to this act,* though the term may not, in general, be applicable to them. The right is regarded by some merely as a compliance with the forms of religion, and by others as conferring a title to covenant-privileges, rather than as communicating any actual benefit. But the Church of England, and, I may add, all the reformed churches, define this sacrament to be an "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; ordained by Christ himself, as a *means* whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof."

To maintain that the right administration, independent of the right reception of an ordinance, is effectual, would be to sanction the errors of Popery; and it would be extravagant to assert that all baptized persons are regenerate, since the fact is palpably against such an assumption. Whether we say with Arminius, that the grace of baptism has been lost, or with Calvin, that it has been *nullified,* by the non-fulfilment of engagements:—whether by the terms regeneration, renovation, or conversion be meant: the return, the confirmation, or the original impartation of a divine influence, (the phrase matters not,) it is most evident that those who

do not bring forth the fruits of the Spirit are not "partakers of an inward and spiritual grace;" and it becomes the ministers of religion to exhort such persons to pray, and to seek for that change of nature, without which no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven. This view of the subject secures every practical and useful purpose, and it would be more advantageous to men's souls to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, than to strive about words to no profit.

Christian parents and sponsors would do well to consider whether their own ignorance and unbelief as it respects this solemn ordinance, may not have provoked God to withhold the blessing promised "to us and to our children." We know that under the law the child was cut off who "had broken the covenant," only by the contempt or neglect of circumcision on the part of his sinful parents; and why may not the hypocrisy of sponsors in the performance of a Christian rite, be the cause of its almost general inefficacy?

It is an argument of no little weight in favour in sponsorship, that this appendage to Christian baptism has been sanctioned by high antiquity. It is not a novelty of modern times. It universally obtained in the Jewish church, and was continued in the church of Christ to the sixteenth century: its rejection, together with that of the baptism of infants, originated with the enthusiasts of Munster. I repeat the remark, sponsorship was asssociated with baptism in the Jewish church, and unless in the application of a rite long practised to a new dispensation, the concomitants of that rite, "the answer of a good conscience," by and for others, were repealed,—(and we have no proof nor reason to suppose they were repealed,) the disciples, as Jews, could not interpret their commission, but in connexion with their

early associations and the constant practice of their nation.

If this argument does not so firmly establish the use of sponsorship as to invalidate baptism without it, (which neither we nor the foreign churches maintain,) it is surely sufficient to rescue the custom from the ignorant contempt with which it is too often treated.

It will be seen by the following letter, that Mr. R's. sentiments were in unison with what has just been stated, on this interesting appendage to Christian baptism.

"To the worthy Godfather and Godmother of Samuel Nugent Legh Richmond.

"Suffer the anxious feelings of a father to plead an apology for addressing, petitioning, and admonishing you on a subject so near, so dear to his heart, as the future welfare of an infant child. I need not remind you, that the institution of sponsors at the baptism of every young child, is a pious precaution of the church, intended to provide for, and ensure the religious education of its members. With regard to the natural parents of the child, they are considered as already engaged under such strict bonds, both by nature and religion, to take care of his spiritual welfare, that the church does not suppose that she can lay them under any greater; but she still makes a provision, that if, notwithstanding these obligations, the parents should be negligent, or if it should please God to take them to himself during the infancy of their children, there may yet be others who stand solemnly pledged before God and his church, to see that such infants are not without instruction, in consequence of such carelessness or untimely death of their parents. Hence it follows, that a charge of the most serious and important nature is

undertaken by the spiritual parents or sponsors, who are therefore called, fathers and mothers in God; and in all matters which concern the godly instruction, Christian principles, and progress in piety of their god-children, they do most assuredly and unequivocally become answerable for their faith and practice, so far as human vigilance and endeavours are concerned. True it is, if they have the satisfaction of observing that the natural parents zealously, piously, and unremittingly superintend the Christian education of their infant charge, much of their own attentions are rendered unnecessary; — still, however, their own responsibility remains unaltered by any circumstance, from the hour of baptism to the years of discretion and understanding; and it is incumbent on them to see and know that all things are provided, and nothing omitted, which is conductive to the soul's health of their children in God.

'Having thus stated my ideas of the indispensable duties of god-fathers and god-mothers in general, I am naturally led to make the immediate application to the present case. I hope and trust that myself and my dear Mary are too deeply impressed with a sense of our duty, (exclusive of parental affection) to omit anything which may tend to the Christian instruction of our young ones. If, therefore, it should please the Almighty to grant us life and health, I shall look forward with increasing pleasure to the prospect of our child's being so educated, that even those who stand solemnly pledged on the subject, shall have little else to do than to observe, examine, and approve. At least I pray, that under God's blessing on our endeavours, it may be so; but, should our infant be deprived of parental solicitude, and attention, through death or debility of mind or body, on you, my dear and much-respected friends, it will rest to provide all that in your name has been vowed, promised, and

professed for him. In such an event, I entreat that no pains may be spared to train up my little infant in the love and fear of God, in the faith of the Redeemer, and grateful love to him, and with a firm reliance on the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Let the Scriptures, and not the common-place morality of the times, be made the ground-work of his conduct, his principles, and his future hopes; teach him that true charity is the offspring of Christian faith, and that heavenly hope can alone spring from their united dominion over his heart. With such a foundation he will learn to be thankful and contented in every condition of life, and under every dispensation of Providence. Let him be so fortified with the true armour of the Christian, that the shaft of that horrid and specious monster, infidelity, may ever be repelled with humble confidence and just indignation.

"Teach him to know, that although the gospel gives no encouragement, no, not even the least hope, to morality without faith, yet that faith without works is dead:

"That, notwithstanding our most careful obedience to the commandments of the law, we are still unprofitable servants; (the merits of the Saviour, not our own merits, rendering us acceptable to God,) yet that the fruits of the Spirit are to be seen in practical activity in promoting the good of others, as well as in the purification of ourselves. Let this, and every other Christian principle, be engrafted on his heart, gradually and in due progress, with the advancement of his understanding; so shall your weighty duties be fulfilled, and my heart be at ease.

"Should the boy's life and my own be spared, it will be my delight to endeavour to make him what I consider the first of characters—a real Christian.

"With respect to all other parts of education, it is

foreign to the purpose of this address: which is solely directed to the subject of the baptismal vow, accompanied by a fond father's comments, explanations, and wishes. My present fears are not lest he should be poor and unlearned in what the world calls wisdom and accomplishment; all must prosper in the end, if he be but rich in good works, and wise unto salvation. I conclude, therefore, with a blessing upon you all; and if this epistle be of a more serious (and to you I will not add tedious) description than you are accustomed to receive, the best apology to be made for it is that it comes from a parish priest, an affectionate father, and

Your faithful brother-in-law and nephew,

L. R."

It was Mr. R.'s earnest desire, that his first-born child should be a minister of the Lord, and a servant of the sanctuary; and his son's course of education was conducted with this view, both while he continued at Brading, and on his subsequent removal to Turvey.

There was nothing censurable in Mr. R.'s wishes for his son's introduction into the ministry; but considering the peculiar character and requirements of a minister of the gospel, it may be doubted whether it would not be more consistent that the designation of a young person to that sacred profession should follow, rather than precede, a discovery of fitness for it. I am not here speaking of the awful profanation of making a boy a clergyman because he shows an incapacity for other situations, or with a view to some worldly advancement, or for the sake of literary respectability and enjoyment; such motives and practices cannot be too strongly deprecated: is it not to bring the lame and the blind into the temple, and to offer money for the gift of God? In such, God can have no pleasure, neither will he accept

an offering at their hand. (Mal. i. 2, 12.) But I am adverting to an error, not uncommon even among religious parents, of selecting the future occupation of the ministry for their children, on the general grounds of correct conduct and amiable dispositions. God has taken into his own hands the work of the sanctuary; when He calls and separates by his Spirit, we may co-operate with his purposes, and supply materials and tools for his workmen; but it is seldom desirable to anticipate the divine will on this head, or to forget that there must be, not only a real conversion of heart to God, but a peculiar aptness for the work, to justify an entrance into the sacred calling.

Such was Mr. R's. judgment in after-life: and his tender mind sometimes reverted to his disappointment in poor Nugent's delinquencies, as a rebuke for his presumption.

It appears that Mr. R. early adopted the practice of corresponding with his family: and I present to the reader a letter to Nugent, as a pleasing specimen of his happy manner of addressing his children.

'MY DEAR LITTLE BOY,

"You cannot think how glad I was to see your letter; so glad that it made me weep: if you knew how dearly I love you, I am sure you would dearly love me; and if you knew how dearly God loves you, you would love him also. Never forget God, for he is always thinking about you: do you not see how good he is to you, in giving you a papa and mamma, and sisters, and friends, and a house to live in, and food, and so many other good things.

"I preached a sermon last Sunday to some hundreds of little children, and you can hardly think how well they behaved, and how silently and closely they attended to what they heard. Many of them when they returned

home, wrote down what they heard from me at church: when will you do so, my dear Nugent? I hope you get your lesson well for Mr. D ——; how kind he is to teach you! I hope you pray for me every day; I often pray for you, and God will hear both you and me, if we pray with our whole hearts. When you have read this letter, you must go and kiss M. and F. and H., and tell them I bid you do so for me, because I am far away, and cannot give them myself a proof of my affection for them.

My Nugent, you are the eldest; if you are a good child, they may follow your example; and if you are a bad boy, it will teach them to be sinful; and that will make God very angry and me very unhappy. You are now every day growing older, and you ought to grow wiser and better, and then you will be a comfort to us all, and I shall rejoice and praise. I wish you to-morrow morning to read the tenth chapter of St. Mark, and you will see how Jesus Christ loved little children, and how he took them up in his arms, and blessed them. I hope he will bless you, and then you will go to heaven when you die; but without a blessing from Christ, you never can go there. I trust I shall see you again soon. You must pray to God to bring me back in health and safety. I have written to you as long a letter as perhaps you will like to read; one thing only I will add, that

I am your truly loving Papa,

L. R."

For some years Nugent was educated at home; being seldom absent from his father's eye. Companions he had none, for Mr. R. was afraid of bringing his son in contact with any associations out of his own family. It may be doubted how far it was wise to confine a boy to his own resources for amusement; for at this time Mr. R. had not provided the philosophical apparatus, by

which he afterwards supplied his children with full employment in their leisure hours: certainly the subsequent transition, from these restraints to the almost unbounded freedom of association at school, proved injurious to Nugent.

As Mr. R.'s public engagements increasedd, he found it necessary to place his son under other superintendance; and he committed him to the care of ——; in this situation Nugent attached himself to a companion of bad principles and incorrect conduct, who in the end succeeded in perverting the victim of his confidence. It became necessary to remove the bad example from the family, and at last, though with great reluctance, and bitter disappointment, Mr. R. consented to the advice of his friends, and placed his son in a merchant-vessel, All hopes of the ministry were abandoned; and Nugent, now a wanderer in the wide world, had to make his own way in life. Many affecting circumstances relating to this exile from his father's house, have been already detailed in Mr. R.'s own memoirs, and I am obliged to forego their introduction in the present narrative.

The repetition of such details is not, however, essential to my purpose; which is not so much to gratify curiosity, as to show the great advantage of a religious education, amidst the most discouraging and distressing disappointments; and that the promises of eventual success, under all the oppositions of a fallen nature, and the worst temptations to evil, will ultimately reward the faithful and conscientious discharge of our duty towards our children.

Mr. R. gave his son, on his departure from this country, a Bible, and a paper of admonitions and instructions for his conduct. Amidst all his irregularities, Nugent discovered a grateful and affectionate temper. His errors were evidently those of a thoughtless and yielding disposition, rather than of a deep-rooted and

vicious propensity; he sincerely loved his father, and he preserved, with a kind of religious veneration, these testimonies of his regard; never losing them, though twice shipwrecked, and though all the other little property that he had realized was then swept away.

He was evidently deeply impressed by his parents' bright example, and he kept up a regular correspondence with them. Mr. R.'s letters are lost; but some extracts from those of his son will serve strongly to illustrate the good effects of past instructions. It never should be forgotten that there is a moral influence in Christian principles, which keeps evil within certain bounds, even when those principles have not penetrated the heart; and bad as unconverted persons often appear, amidst all the pains taken with them, they would probably be much worse without the unseen restraint which thus operates within them.

A lodgment of truth once made in the mind, cannot afterwards be wholly eradicated. Conviction often returns, and at last, as in the present instance, produces a saving change of heart and life. Nugent was not long on the mighty deep before he acknowledged the propriety of his removal from home, and began deeply to repent of the follies which rendered it necessary.

"My dear Father and Mother,

"I am now, as it may be said, at the other end of the world, but still I often think of you and Turvey. I often reflect on my past conduct, and bitterly bewail my folly; if I had not done what I ought not to have done, I might now be resting comfortably under your roof, instead of having to bear very great hardships by night and by day; but I will not complain of my chastisement, and have indeed far greater comforts than I deserve.

"Papa, I am far away, but I often think of you and

of my dear mother, to whom I have occasioned bitter sorrows. Alas! I fear my offences can never be forgiven.

"I am satisfied you acted wisely in sending me from home, sweet home! The maxims and rules you gave me, I cherish and keep by me.

"Oh! how I look back on the hopes and fears, alarms and anxieties of my dear parents. If God permits me ever to see them again, I hope it will be under different circumstances and feelings. May He preserve me amidst the winds and waves.

I am still your affectionate son,

N. R."

There was something so ingenuous and relenting in this his first letter, that Mr. R. anticipated the return of his son from the voyage with all that strength of affection which issued from his loving tender heart on all occasions. He longed to embrace the poor wanderer, and mingle his tears with those of his child, saying, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found:" but these fond hopes were disappointed. Nugent left the vessel in which he sailed, in opposition to the remonstrances of the captain; to whom he had been entrusted, with directions to bring him back to England. Mr. R. had only intended to try the effect of absence and employment, in reclaiming his son, and not to fix him for ever in the perilous occupation of a seafaring life. The Arniston proceeded on her voyage without him, and he had soon reason to regret his own indiscretion (for such it was, though God meant it for good), when he found himself cast on the world without means of livelihood, without friends, or even an acquaintance who could advise and serve him; a youth of only seventeen years of age, and separated from all

who felt any interest in his welfare. In this desolate and almost hopeless state, he addressed the following letter to the senior chaplain of Ceylon.

"REVEREND SIR,

"There are many occasions in life when it is easier to write than to speak, particularly when we are obliged to speak of ourselves. Your know condescension and kindness encourages me to hope you will pardon my present intrusion.

"It is proper I should acknowledge that my own thoughtlessness and inconsiderate conduct, and neglect of the instructions of an excellent father, have been the cause of my present misfortunes. I ran away from school, and spent my time in dissipation with the young farmers of my neighbourhood; which gave my poor father great uneasiness and many a miserable hour; and finding me unwilling to settle to any useful employment, he sent me to sea, as a last resource, in hopes that time and reflection, and experience of the world, might change my habits, and lead me to a proper sense of my errors. With the reluctant consent of both parents, I came out in the Arniston, under the charge of Captain Simpson, whose uniform kindness to me I gratefully remember. He refused to give me permission to stay in India, and I withdrew from his ship, with a view to profit by the opportunity, and to see Calcutta, and other parts and places, before I returned to England. In this expectation I have been disappointed, and knowing the dislike of my parents to my present occupation, I have abandoned further thoughts of continuing in it; at least till I can learn their pleasure as to my future destiny. I humbly throw myself on your kindness, and entreat you to take me under your protection and guidance: for which I hope to testify the gratitude of my heart, by conducting myself with

diligence and propriety. I have the honour to remain with the greatest respect,

Your obedient servant,

N. R."

Self-will is a principal source of mischief to young people; submission and deference to age and experience, a chief virtue to be cultivated by them. To follow his own inclination and leave the Arniston, was a culpable thoughtlessness; nor can it be justified or excused, though the consequences were advantageous. There is, however, much to approve in Nugent's frank and open avowal of his errors; he might have concealed them; a more subtle mind would have been tempted to do so; but simplicity is always the best policy; it disarms hostility, and disposes men to overlook the past, by the security which seems to be given of future good conduct it relieves the parties from a train of evils and embarrassments, and temptations to new offences, which will meet them at every step. To an honourable mind it is ever painful to appear in false colours; the fear of disclosure, and of the consequent loss, perhaps of our friends, will always fill us with restlessness and apprehension. An offender had better trust God with his case, than turn for deliverance to the wretched expedients which his own pride and folly might suggest. This appeal to a stranger, "I have been an offending wanderer; therefore take me under your protection," may seem to some to be little consistent with prudence: but Nugent could not have acted more wisely, if his letter had been written under the influence of selfish calculation, instead of having been, as it appears to me, the result of integrity.

It is also evident, from the last two letters, that Mr. Richmond's care and instructions were not, even now, without their use; there was clearly an influence in operation, and a turning to right principles and feelings

on the part of Nugent; which, if too weak to stem the torrent of natural corruption, was doing much to control evil, and prepare his mind for its subjugation. Indeed, the full effect of religious education is seldom seen, until a young person has had an opportunity of making an experiment on the principles which he has been taught: however pleasing the piety of children, it can never be relied on: it must first stand the test of solitary exposure to adverse circumstances. The family is a kind of nursery of tender plants, of whose growth and fruit we can determine nothing till they are transplanted into other soils; but in all cases a conscientious and diligent cultivation of a child's mind, accompanied by a consistent example,—without which, instruction too often injures rather than improves,—will be like the seed sown, which may not appear for a season, but will in the end spring up and reward our labour.

I have already remarked, that Mr. R. constantly corresponded with his son; he did more,—Nugent was in his daily thoughts, and he earnestly and continually carried him to a throne of grace; and I cannot but ascribe to the faith and prayer of the affectionate parent, the remarkable escape of the child. The Arniston having sailed without him, was wrecked near Cape Lagullas, with the loss of the whole crew. Three hundred and fifty persons perished, and thus Nugent's error was overruled by a gracious God to the preservation of his life. But, his return being expected by this vessel, the account of its loss threw his parents and family into the deepest afflicion. The whole family went into mourning; and the father sorrowed for his lost child with a grief unmitigated by the communication of any cheering circumstance as to the state of his mind, on his fitness for so sudden a change.

In the following winter, a letter was delivered to Mr. Richmond, in the hand-writing of the very son whom he

mourned as dead; announcing that he was alive,— that circumstances had prevented his setting sail in the Arniston, of whose fate he seemed to be unconscious; and communicating details of his present engagements and future prospects. The transition of feeling to which the receipt of this letter gave rise, produced an effect almost as overwhelming as that which the report of his death had occasioned. The family-mourning was laid aside, and Mr. Richmond trusted he might recognize in this singular interposition of Divine Providence, a ground for hope that his child's present deliverance was a pledge of that spiritual recovery, which was now alone wanting to fill up the measure of his gratitude and praise.

Such interposition of Providence may be treated with indifference and contempt by men of the world; but Mr. R. bowed the knee, and thankfully praised God: "I have prayed to Thee, O Father, in secret, and Thou hast rewarded me openly."

Soon after Nugent left the Arniston, he obtained the situation of third officer in the brig Kandian. Of this appointment he informed his father, adding,

"And now my dear parents, while you are living quietly at home, I am tossed about the stormy ocean in all weathers, and never knowing that I am safe a moment. I hope Wilberforce will take warning from my sad wanderings, or he will never be happy; receive my kind love, dear father and mother; the same to my brothers and sisters; I hope God will take care of me, forgive and convert me; he is the best friend; do not cease to pray for me, and remember me still, for I am

Your affectionate Son,

N. R."

From some unknown cause, the letters from England,

though sent at regular periods, did not reach their destination; and Nugent suffered much anxiety at not hearing from his family: he writes—

"EVER DEAR AND AFFECTIONATE PARENTS,

"* * * It is now two years since I left England, and I have neither heard from nor of you, except once from a missionary, who told me he had seen you in Yorkshire a few months after I sailed, and that you were quite well. He is a very good man, and I have been to hear him several times. I have also attended Mr.——, another missionary, and a valuable servant of God; indeed they all appear to be of one heart and one spirit. Would to God I were like them! Mr.—— has been very kind to me; but he is a bad man, and altogether unfit to be a clergyman. I shall not mention his faults, for it seems ungrateful to dwell on a benefactor's misconduct, or indeed on the misconduct of any one. I have been greatly distressed at hearing nothing of my poor mother, who has shed so many tears on my account; nor of my dear brothers and sisters, though I have written so many letters to them.

"So the Arniston was lost! Oh! merciful escape.

"I am sorry to say, my new captain is a wild, extravagant, and dissipated man, always giving balls and routs on board, or on shore. * * * * Dancing and singing to a late hour is a sad way of spending Saturday night. It shocks me to say, my dear father, I have only been to church about twelve times since I left England: indeed, sailors scarcely know what church is, except on board men of war, where there is a chaplain; nevertheless, if we cannot go to church, we seldom work on a Sunday as on a week-day; so that I have time to read the Bible and pray. You gave me a Bible when I left you, and I have it still, and hope

always to have it. Oh that I knew how to make a right use of it. Be assured, my dear father, I neither dance nor gamble; although there is much of both here, and I should please more if I did as others; I thank God I know not how to do either, and I am sure I have no wish to be wise in such things. I have encountered many unpleasant remarks on this account. Pray for me, pray for your poor Nugent; think, when you are in bed, and by your fire-side, I am toiling by day and watching by night, tossed about in gales of wind, scared by storms of thunder, lightning, and rain, ignorant of my fate for a single hour. Oh! a sailor's life is wicked, miserable, and deplorable; but this is all the fruit of my sin, and I justly deserve my chastisement. Farewell—that you may long live, and my mother, and my sisters, and my brothers, to enjoy every blessing, temporal and eternal, is the ardent wish

Of your affectionate son,

N. R."

A few months after, he wrote again to his mother:—

"MY DEAREST AND MOST AFFECTIONATE MOTHER,

"I have just heard that the ship Alexander is arrived at Columbo, by which I hope to receive letters from home. I am on the other side of Ceylon, and I fear it may be a fortnight or three weeks before I can get them here, and we expect to sail before that time. I am all uneasiness; and still more anxious when I think what will be said in them. Sometimes I am pleased, then I am grieved and fear: uncertain of their contents, still I long to read them. Thanks to an all-merciful God, I have succeeded well in India, especially when I consider I had no friend to guide me: but my success gives me little satisfaction, while I reflect on the wounded feelings of an affectionate mother. I now indeed, see

and feel my folly; if I had taken your advice, I should never have suffered so many hardships; but this is not my greatest trial, my sins will all rise up against me in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment. Oh! that I could feel this consideration as I ought; my insensibility distresses me. May the Lord help me.

"Nov. 2. No letter. I am full of uneasiness and anxiety. This is Sunday, and the vessel is under my command. My superior officers are gone on shore, I fear for no good, they think very little of worship,—officers or men. The men are great gamblers. I went among them this evening, and found them at hazard: I threw the dice overboard, though probably my life is in danger for what I have done, for the dice belonged to a Spaniard, who thinks nothing of using his stiletto: but I have done what I considered my duty, and I must trust God with the consequences. The Portuguese sailors, when provoked, are as revengeful as the Spaniards: the other night I nearly lost my life from a party of them; there had been a quarrel between some Portuguese and English sailors; I was walking alone on shore, and fifteen of the former came up and asked me to what nation I belonged; and on my replying, "To the English," they lifted up their cudgels to level me with the ground. I raised my arms to defend my head, when they discovered my uniform and buttons, and cried out, 'Don't strike him!' for they perceived I was not a common sailor, or I certainly should have been killed on the spot. This was another wonderful escape. God is very good to me, and I long to make a suitable return to him.

"Nov. 4. This day my letters are arrived, but they are a series of sorrows to me. When I read the first, how I felt? I could scarcely hold it in my hand: I sobbed and wept. Oh! my poor mother; I have occasioned your illness, and endangered your life. I do

not know how to go on writing; I cannot put two words comfortably together. I know, my dear mother, you prayed for me in that trying hour.....

"Mr. B——, who is returning to Europe, has behaved very kindly to me ever since I first knew him, which is now more than a year; he will tell you all about me. I am conscious of not being what you would wish me to be, but I hope, by God's grace, to be made altogether such as you desire. I know you pray for me continually, and I trust that God will change my heart before I die. Farewell, my dear mother; I shall write whenever opportunity serves; do you write constantly to me. Remember me most kindly to my father, brothers, and sisters. That they may live long in the enjoyment of every blessing, is the earnest prayer for them all, of

Your affectionate

N."

I have ever remarked that no case is hopeless where there is strong affection. An unimpassioned soul is seldom touched by any thing beyond the range of its own selfish gratifications, and usually presents a stubborn resistance to considerations which affect only, or chiefly, the welfare of others; but an affectionate temper, amidst many sinful wanderings, is still capable of impressions.

The letters of Nugent discover a very feeling and grateful spirit, a sense of obligation, and a self-condemnation for past misconduct. They display a conflict between duty and irregular inclination, and, in some instances, a firmness of principle far above mere nature. They could not fail to inspire a pleasing expectation, that though an enemy had sown tares in the field, the wheat would ultimately overtop them and grow to maturity. Mr. Richmond's heart was full of hope, and his

faith leaned on the promises of God with firmer dependence; he was encouraged to more vigorous perseverance in interceding for his much-loved child; he had carried his sorrows to God, and he now praised him for his faithfulness in alleviating them. About this time the following letter was received from a missionary at Columbo, which bears an honourable testimony to Nugent's improved conduct. It will be read with interest by those who can sympathize with a father's sufferings, or understand the joy which welcomes a returning penitent.

"Dear and Reverend Sir,

"I have no doubt you will excuse the liberty a stranger takes, who knows you only by name, in writing to you a few lines, which cannot fail to interest both you and your family. I have a father's heart, and know well the feelings with which you will receive the information I send you respecting Mr. Nugent Richmond, your once disobedient son. It would be most pleasing to me to say that he is a humble penitent, seeking life and salvation through the boundless merits of a crucified Redeemer; but though I fear to go thus far, I am warranted to bear testimony to a real change in him in many respects. He is become quite steady in his conduct, and is very attentive to the duties of his profession, and you have not the least cause for anxiety with regard to his temporal welfare; nor is he by any means careless and unconcerned about the things which make for his eternal peace. He is much more anxious than he used to be for religious society, and often attends our evening meetings. This morning he breakfasted with us, and I endeavoured to supply your place in my poor way, by interrogating him in the most serious manner, respecting the state of his soul; and when I found him unprepared to answer me in the way I wished, I urged his still closer attention to religion, by motives addressed to his hopes

and fears. I read to him the fifty-first Psalm, and he listened with deep interest, and seemed to feel every word. I prayed for him in my family worship, and enjoyed a more than usual freedom in spreading his case before the Lord. When we rose from our knees, I believe there were few dry eyes. On the whole, I think we have reason to hope the best respecting your son: I advised him to read some passage in the Bible every day with special application to his own case, and to turn it into prayer for himself. I have heard many acknowledge that they have received great benefit from praying in God's own words. May poor Nugent be another instance. I cannot close this hasty letter, without informing you of the good effect of the Dairyman's Daughter in Ceylon. A person of whose conversion I do not doubt, and who has joined our little church, ascribes his change of heart to God and you.

"Begging you will read with candor what I have written with difficulty;

"I am, with respectful and affectionate regard,

Yours,

J. C."

The caution with which this correspondent speaks of conversion, renders his testimony the more valuable; yet it appears to me very evident, that Nugent was making progress towards a complete surrender of his heart to God, and that his mind was at this time under the influence of real principle. He might be less acquainted than others with experimental religion, and have much to learn as to the cause of all his wanderings, and the entire corruption of his heart: defects of this kind he laments himself, and in all his letters describes his case rather as that of one who seeks and longs to be a true convert, than of one who has attained a saving change: still, in a long series of correspondence

before me, I remark in him a gradual, and very real approximation to all that is correct in opinion and conduct; he never reflects on any one but himself; he labours to guard his brothers against sin, by the knowledge of its effects and consequences in his own history; he bears an affectionate testimony to the conscientious consistency of his parents; he wishes for an opportunity to make some suitable returns for their kindness; he connects every event with the disposition of Divine Providence; he secures the respect and countenance of every one by his steady and correct conduct; he courts the society of good people; he firmly resists evil, though attended with danger to himself; and on all occasions expresses himself with so much affection and veneration for true religion, as on the whole satisfies my own mind, that if even he had now been removed from the world, his family would have had no reason to have sorrowed as those without hope. There is not, however in these letters such a degree of interest to persons unacquainted with him, as to warrant their introduction. A sufficient number relating to this period are already before the reader, to show the value of early instruction under every circumstance.

The young sailor quitted the Kenyon, which was sold by the government, and went on board the Oracabessa, from which vessel he wrote to his father the following affecting account of the state of slavery at the Mauritius; —a letter full of correct feeling, and still more satisfactory evidence of right conduct.

'MY DEAR FATHER,

"We are on the point of sailing for the Mauritius * * * I know that you will be pleased to hear that I am taking out some Bibles, Testaments, and tracts, in different languages, which were sent to me by my friend Lieutenant B——, to distribute and try what good I

could do there. How is it there are no missionaries at the Mauritius? an island containing thirty thousand souls; ten thousand whites, and twenty thousand men of colour. I can safely assure you, there is no part of the world where the British flag is flying, which is half so ignorant, or in such a dreadful state of darkness: there is, indeed, scarcely any religion at all there; what there is, is Roman Catholic; it is true there is an English church, and perhaps from twenty to thirty persons in it once a day, and the clergyman * * * * but the island, from one end to the other, exhibits every species of vice, without control or check of any kind, Slavery, as you know, is the cause of everything that is bad: never were its frightful effects more clearly shown than in this place; they are far worse than even in our West India plantations. I have been an eye-witness to scenes altogether shocking to humanity: the heaviest punishments are inflicted for faults, which in England would receive a trifling fine, or a short imprisonment. Masters have chopped off the ears of their slaves, and in some instances, have literally starved them to death. Neither is the slave-trade extinct in this part of the world, but is still carried on to great extent. There may be a stricter watch against the slave-vessels, but nevertheless they are here every month, and I have known the slaves to have been taken into harbour in empty water-casks to elude detection.

"Now, my father, take your Atlas and look at the position of Mauritius, Bambour, and Madagascar, with the African main. Slaves are to be procured at either of the last places for about thirty dollars a-head. If taken to Bourbon, or the Mauritius, they fetch from three to four hundred dollars. Is not this an irresistible temptation to a slave-trader, when he is sure of his price if he can escape the vigilance of the naval officers? If you look at the position of these places, you may

judge of the ease of carrying on this traffic, when I tell you that there is only one man of war in the harbour of Port Louis to search vessels which come in; and not one cruising about this coast, though it is well known that there are five Spanish ships, two Portuguese, and one English, employed in the trade. One of these vessels was lately wrecked there: of the crew, one sailor only was saved, who is now on board our ship; he has frequently conversed with me, and I am persuaded his information is correct.

"Now can nothing be done to restrain the cruel treatment of these poor creatures? On landing at Port Louis, you would see one of them in irons, and as you advanced, another flogged most unmercifully, without distinction of sex; and in general no clothing allowed; some kind-hearted masters give a dollar a-year for clothes. There is, I believe, a code of laws, but they are never enforced. I have myself seen slaves unable to stand, from the severity of their punishment; thirty in a row, on whose backs *gashes*, not lashes, might be observed, pieces fairly cut out, and in some instances an eye forced out, and there is no redress: nor are they fed properly. I had forty-five of them working under me, for whom their owner received a dollar a day per head; they worked from sun-rise to sun-set: and what was their food? For breakfast a cake, made of a kind of potatoe, weighing three ounces; for dinner half a pound of boiled rice, with one spoonful of assinge, or an equal quantity of horse-beans; for supper, the same as at breakfast, with a little water to drink.

"I will tell you an instance which I know to be true, amidst many others, which I have heard from men of veracity. A woman flogged her own sister, who was unfortunately her slave also, till she fainted. She then twisted her arms till the poor creature nearly expired. She then let her recover, and singed her flesh with a hot

iron; * * * * * the sufferer never complained; indeed if she had, it would have been worse for her in the end; the truth is, there is a combination among the people of the whole island to resist the law, and support each other in their acts of oppression. My object in mentioning these things to you, is, that you should first make inquiry to satisfy yourself of the truth of the facts, and then try to get something done for these wretched beings. If such cruelties be passed by with indifference in the harbour, what unobserved abominations may be expected in the interior of the island.

"It is said that the climate requires no clothing, but this is false: the nights are very cold and the season sometimes severe. I have even slept under several blankets and been cold. How many poor souls have not one! * * * Kindest love to all, and

Believe me, my dear Father,

Your affectionate Son,

N. R."

From the Bay of All-saints, he touches again on this horrid traffic;—"I have made many observations on the country and people here, and particularly on the slave-trade; all of which will confirm what I have already told you respecting it. This port is full of slave-ships, and I am lying close to one which has just landed seven hundred, men, women and children. What a pity this nation should persist in this infamous traffic; I admit the slaves are better used than in some other places, but still they are exposed to the caprices and unrestrained passions of corrupt nature.

"I have been distributing tracts and Bibles, which some have rejected with scorn, and others received with thanks. I assure you I have spent more time in this way, than in attending to my worldly interest, and so I ought; for I am indebted to Him for all my mercies,

in whose cause I am so labouring? and if only one Bible finds its way to the heart, what shall I think of my task in eternity. Wherever I go, I will labour faithfully in this good work, to the utmost of my power, and particularly in the Isle of France, for that island is grievously neglected as to all spiritual instruction.

"I have conversed with two catholic priests, they appear to me to be pious men, though they refuse to sanction the distribution of the Scriptures among the laity. I confess I am not able to argue with them."

Upon the chief subjects of these letters, we may again remark the happy recollections of his early years. From his excellent father he had imbibed an aversion to this iniquitous traffic, and a sense of its wretched effects on the well-being, both of the oppressor and the oppressed; from him he had learnt also to value the Holy Scriptures as God's best gift to a ruined world, and had received associations of sentiment and affection which no subsequent wanderings of sinful inclination, no exposure to the temptations of scenes full of danger, and abounding with iniquity, could ever obliterate. The principles of his education restrained him in his worst moments, and they obtained a permanent ascendancy with the return of those better feelings which were produced by the salutary correction of his misfortunes. In his case, the experiment of a voyage was successful, though it may be doubted whether, in general, any other result can reasonably be expected from it than a confirmation of a young man's evil propensities. It seemed good to a wise and gracious God to exercise this misguided, but affectionate youth, with a succession of disappointments, mingled with merciful preservations, and to train him in the school of adversity, to show the good effect of a pious father's instructions, and the rich value of his blessings and prayers.

His shipwrecks—his loses—and the severe trial in

the death of an amiable young woman to whom he was engaged in marriage, have been detailed by another hand; and I have only to add a few extracts from numerous letters in my possession, illustrative of his progress in unfeigned piety.

"The happiest day I could see in this world, would be that on which I might mingle myself once more with you all. Oh! with what joy should I return to you, my dear father, and my dear mother, to receive your forgiveness, and welcome home again. God only knows whether we shall ever meet on this side eternity; there seems to be more difficulties and obstacles in my way every year.

"The next happy day would be when the Lord, who has been ever kind and merciful to me, should entirely wean me from this wicked world and its temptations; then should I be as happy as I wish to be.

"My Bible, which is everything, is the only means of grace I have; by reading it, with some other good books, tracts, and sermons, I hope to keep close to the fear of God.

"There are two clergymen here, but, alas! — I must say no evil, when I can say no good of them. I wish some missionaries, truly pious men, were sent out to us; I assure you we have great need of spiritual instructors. A good man preached in a brig close to us yesterday; and I hope next Sunday to hoist the flag of Zion at our main-mast head.

"My dear father, you have now four sons, will you spare me one of them? it will be a great charge, but not the first of the kind. I have had a youngster three years under my care, and it will be some security to you for my proper conduct, when I tell you that Lieutenant B —— is going to put his younger son under my management. He is a pious man, and his confidence in me may

serve to show that I am not altogether undeserving of yours.

"I have never kept my birth-day but once since I left England. I sat and felt so melancholy, instead of being joyful; and with good reason, when I look back on years that are past.

"We sail for the Mauritius to-morrow, and I have humbly besought the Lord, who has ever been merciful to me, to protect and preserve us all."

"Oh, my good father, no one can imagine the horrors of a shipwreck, but those who have experienced it. Many, many heartfelt thanks to that Providence which has again rescued me from a watery grave. I had made a little fortune, and was returning home with presents for my family, and with three beautiful shawls for my dear mother; but all is lost, except one trunk, in which was my Bible and the Dairyman's Daughter. Thus all my hopes and expectations have been frustrated. Yet I believe these things are for my good. I must begin the world afresh, and I hope to do so in more senses than one. Tell my dear mother not to grieve for my misfortunes, God knows what is best for us.

"While the ship was driving, and it blew a perfect hurricane, I went down to my cabin to pray to the Lord for his assistance and protection in this trying hour. In the midst of prayer, and while the tears were in my eyes, the ship struck on the sand, with a shock that brought many to the ground; I staggered a little, though on my knees, and my little L. B—was thrown off a chest on which he lay close to me. Every thing was now confusion. In the mean time I again went below and prayed with heart and soul to Almighty God to save us:—and my prayers were answered, * * * for a certain something—a kind of comfortable thought seemed to rise within me and say, 'Thy life shall be spared.' Not all the shocks, seas, or winds

could afterwards make me fear or think the contrary. Surely there never was a greater proof than this, that the Lord is always with us. It animated and comforted me, and made me work and exert myself with redoubled vigour, though a great part of the night it rained hard accompained with thunder and lightning.

"Oh! how thankful I ought to be to Almighty God for his many mercies repeatedly shown to me; indeed, I trust I know that suitable returns are expected from me. * * * * * When I look back on the last twenty-five years, I am lost in wonder and astonishment. My dear father, do not forget the eighteenth of July.

"One thing grieved me in the shipwreck more than all—the loss of some valuable presents for my family; but this is God's will; it is the Lord's doing, and all is for the best.

"I am returning home for the re-establishment of my health, which has suffered severely from exposure to hardships by night and day: but the happiness of seeing you all once more, will not a little contribute to my restoration. My heart beats, and my head turns giddy at the thought of this meeting; it will be both a pleasing and a painful one to me.

"Do not expect me before the end of July or the beginning of August. I shall, of course, write to my father on my arrival, that I may not take you by surprise. And oh! my dear mother, pray for a safe voyage for me, and a happy meeting to us all. I have had many trials, afflictions, and crosses for the last ten months, but I feel the loss of her to whom I was engaged, most of all, perhaps too much. Still in all these things there is one great consolation; they are sent by him who careth for me. I believe they are all ordered in wisdom and mercy, though you and I may not be able to interpret their meaning. If we could see

the end, as we shall do by and by, I am quite satisfied we should gratefully acknowledge that they were intended for good; and this comfortable assurance, through him who loveth us better than we love ourselves, will, I trust, be my support, and inspire me with cheerful resignation and renewed confidence in God. I have many thoughts about eternity; though alas! the Wicked One strives to banish them from my mind.

"Your truly valuable letters, my dear mother, discover so much affection and kindness towards me, that I know not how to express my joy and thankfulness; they often draw tears from my eyes, and are the dearer to me the more I read them. I have a great deal to say, to propose, and to request, and hardly know whether to begin now, or wait till I have the joy of seeing my dearest parents. What a meeting will this be! I seem to dread it, though it will be a grief inexpressible were it not to take place. * * * * * Pray for an unfortunate wanderer, and may God answer your prayers, to my present and eternal good."

The expected return of Nugent was an event which warmed every heart in Turvey Rectory with the most anxious and affectionate sympathy. The whole family was eager, either to welcome a relative whom they scarcely knew but by report, or to renew an affection which time and distance had not effaced, but rather strengthened.

Mrs. Richmond fitted up, partly with her own hand, a room for her son's reception, and arranged everything to testify her regard for the returning child, and banish every painful recollection from his mind; but after the lapse of a few months, his death, instead of his arrival, was announced.

His constitution had been greatly impaired by un-

healthy climates, and the succession of hardships to which he had been exposed, and both his health and spirits finally sunk under the last and greatest trial, the death of Miss ——. After this event he resolved on returning immediately to England.

Previous to the voyage he had an attack of fever, and embarked in very weak health. The ship met with a heavy gale, which induced him to exert himself beyond his strength; he had a relapse of fever, became very ill, and was occasionally delirious. Immediate danger was not apprehended: but one night he went to bed about twelve o'clock, and was found dead in his cabin the next morning, to the surprise and grief of all on board, by whom he was universally beloved and respected.

Alone in the hour of his departure from sin and sorrow, yet not alone, for *his* God, and the God of *his father* was with him, and gave him rest from the days of adversity.

An ivory box containing a few jewels and gold-chains, which he had intended as presents for his brothers and sisters, was discovered in his pocket after his decease. On the inside of the cover, the following lines were written in his own hand in pencil, apparently a short time before his death.

Where vice has held his empire long,
'Twill not endure the least control:
None but a power divinely strong,
Can turn the current of the soul.
Great God! I own the power divine,
That works to change this heart of mine;
I would be formed anew, and bless
The wonders of redeeming grace.

While little was known of his dying moments, the most satisfactory accounts of his living hours were received by Mr. Richmond from many persons who,

for some years, had observed Nugent's exemplary conduct.*

In the letter to his daughter at Glasgow, Mr. R. thus adverted to them:—

"The circumstances attendant upon our dear Nugent's end are few and simple. You are aware what a long series of favourable accounts of his general behaviour we have had from a variety of quarters. You should know, that from at least five religious friends I have received highly satisfactory testimonies of his religious feelings and principles, although he was modest and reserved in speaking of himself. I had much information while I was visiting his most intimate friend, Mr. Bailey, in the Isle of Wight, (late of Gibraltar), whose little babe was christened Mercy Nugent Richmond. The time of his shipwreck seemed to have been one of special prayer and impression.

"His affections for his relatives were very strong. His principles of honourable conduct, integrity, pecuniary accuracy, official diligence, kind manners, and moral deportment, were exemplary. He lived in much esteem, and died much beloved. Dear boy! He was snatched from our embraces at the hour of his returning to them. He is buried in the depths of the ocean. But the sea shall give up her dead, and I trust he shall then appear a living soul."

A melancholy feeling steals over the spirits, as we

* The chief part of his property was lost with the Oracabessa; but he left, out of the scanty store reserved from three shipwrecks, a hundred rupees to general charitable purposes: 50*l.* to the Bible Society, 50*l.* to the Church Missionary Society, 50*l.* to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and 50*l.* to the Religious Tract Society. The selection of these charitable institutions was probably designed to express affection and respect for his father's preferences, as well as regard on his own part for the truths of religion.

follow this first-born son of an excellent man through each succeeding calamity of his life, to a solitary death.

We must adore in silence, confidently resting on the wisdom and goodness of Him whom clouds and darkness surround, while 'righteousness and truth are the habitations of his seat.'

The history before us exhibits in the clearest light (and this is my chief purpose in writing it) the inestimable blessing of a pious parent, and the value of religious education under all possible contingencies. 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.' (Eccles. xi. 6.)

CHAPTER VI.

"And therefore wert thou bread to virtuous knowledge,
And wisdom early planted in thy soul."

ROWE.

WILBERFORCE was the second son of his father, and was born in Turvey Rectory, Aug. 20, 1807.

Mr. R. intended to have added another tract to the annals of pious young people. He had prepared materials for this purpose, and had even chosen that title for his narrative, which I have adopted for the present tribute of affection to his memory. It is deeply to be regretted that he did not live to execute his design. His talent for religious biography was peculiar, perhaps unequalled. He drew his sketches from real life, with a scrupulous attention to truth, and never failed to touch the heart. But such was the poignancy of his feelings in the recollection of past scenes, that he was often compelled to lay aside the attempt, and wait for a season of greater composure. Meanwhile his own increasing infirmities, and his final removal from earthly scenes and earthly sorrows, deprived the Christian world of a most instructive memoir, which, though complete in the outline, and comprising all he meant to say of his son, from the cradle to the grave, is so imperfect in its detail, that no further use can be made of his materials, than to guide me in my feeble delineation of the character of this interesting boy.

Soon after his birth he was received into the Christian church by the rite of baptism, when his father called him Wilberforce, connecting with that name the most

important event in his own life, his conversion to God by the perusal of the 'Practical View of Christianity.'*

While an infant he was taken by his parents on a visit to ——. Certain associations impart an interest to circumstances apparently trivial, while they are fondly regarded as presages of future eminence, and often stimulate to the diligent employment of means for its attainment. Of this character is the following anecdote:—

"I cannot forget a circumstance which occurred in his infancy; his mother and myself were on a visit at a friend's house. A large family were assembled at morning prayers, and amongst them was our little boy in his nurse's arms. An aged and venerable minister was conducting the family-worship. In the midst of his prayer the child began to cry. The good man paused, and beckoned the servant to give him the infant. He took him in his arms, and held him for several minutes, during which he offered up most affecting petitions on his behalf, praying earnestly, and in a manner that touched all our hearts, that it might please God to bless him for time and eternity; that if his life were spared, he might be a blessing to his parents and the church of God, and finally have an inheritance with the saints in light. He then returned the child, now pacified, to the nurse's arms, and resumed the general subject of his prayer, which had been thus interrupted. There was an affecting singularity in the transaction, which much interested us at the time, and now that I am engaged in the retrospective view of what passed, from the cradle to the grave of my beloved son, it recurs to my recollection with peculiar emotions of heart. The venerable man of God is long since gone to his rest, but his prayer was recorded in heaven, and the Lord in mercy has given it a gracious answer."

* See Memoir of Mr. Richmond. p. 28.

When little more than two years old, he fell from a window on the pavement; and, though he recoverd from the accident, he was lame ever afterwards, and the natural delicacy of his constitution was probably increased by the injury he received at that time. This circumstance would scarcely have deserved a serious mention, if it did not seem to be a link in the chain of events which contributed towards the formation of his character, by rendering him unfit for boyish sports, and compelling him to seek amusements in higher occupations.*

His resource was the Museum, and the experiments made by his father's philosophical apparatus. In these he took a principal share, and resorted to them when his other studies did not require his attention. Electricity, pneumatics, mineralogy, chemistry, and music, in which he was no mean proficient, occupied his leisure hours. He delighted in science of every kind, but especially in mathematics. The indubitable verity of a demonstration suited his turn of mind, and had God spared his life, he would probably have distinguished himself at the university. Such was the opinion of his tutor, who in a letter of condolence to his father after his death, speaks of him as a boy of no common intelligence and attainment.

"I marked the superior endowments of his mind in the first hours of our intercourse, and was confirmed in my opinion by each succeeding year. He caught an idea quickly: seemed never to forget it; for his memory, was remarkably strong and retentive, and he made more rapid and solid attainments than any other boy placed under my care. At a very early period he read

* To treat little things with contempt is no mark of superior intelligence. Their potency is acknowledged by all thoughtful observers of the course of events, whether in the sparrow that falls, or the single hair which is numbered.

Euclid, and surprised me by his acute and sensible observations on the character of pure mathematics. He appeared delighted to master a difficult problem, and before he was twelve years of age, had exceeded the advance of many men of two years standing at the university.

"I observed an equal neatness and success in his classical exercises and translations. But I was still more astonished at his discrimination and knowledge of character. This must have arisen from his seeking the conversation of his superiors. He had a thinking mind, and a habit of going to the bottom of a subject. He was not without his prejudices, and sometimes expressed a contempt for authority, and assumed an air of confidence in his own opinion, which needed checking; though I never found him obstinate, or averse to re-consider his decisions, and but seldom in any material error.

"He had a playful temper, and with great good humor would join his brothers in a gambol; but when alone, he was more like a little man than a child,—he was, in short, an amusing and rational companion."

The writer of the above extract left Turvey when his pupil was about twelve years of age. Wilberforce expressed great regret at his removal, and addressed his tutor in a letter equally creditable to both parties. I lay it before the reader to show the affectionate and grateful temper of the one, and to bear an honourable testimony to the conscientious and valuable services of the other

"My dear Sir,

"I hope you will not suppose that I am insensible to the value of your kind and affectionate care of me. I know that nothing wounds more deeply than neglect and ingratitude, and I hope I have never, amidst many

other errors, fallen into this offence. If I have appeared ungrateful, I sincerely ask pardon. I fear I have often behaved disrespectfully, and "done many things which I ought not to have done." But I assure you, I never gave offence without pain to myself, and the reproof of my own conscience, and a resolution to amend. I am certain all these things will be forgotten, but I thought I might not have a better opportunity of telling you how deeply I regret them. I shall ever entertain the liveliest emotions of gratitude for the care and pains you have taken in superintending and directing my studies; and though distance may separate us, I trust love will unite us. I am persuaded you will never forget me, and I beg you will receive this book as a tribute of affection, and a memorial of lasting friendship. My obligations to you are many, and I wish you to possess something as a token of my sense of them. Perchance, when you take up the volume, you will recur to former scenes and associations, and think of Turvey—"sed Tempora mutantur." I hope my letter will not displease you: if I have not "the pen of a ready writer," I can safely say, I am sincere in all I have said. Be assured of this, that however far distant you may be, or whatever clime you may dwell in—long indeed must the time be before I can forget so good a master as you have been to me. I cannot bid you farewell, until I have wished you health and happiness wherever you may be. I shall highly value and prize your correspondence.

Ever yours, gratefully and affectionately

WILBERFORCE."

I perceive by Mr. R.'s memoranda, that he took his little boy on a visit to London, with a view to amuse and instruct him by the curiosities of that magnificent metropolis.

I have no doubt the conversation with his child on this occasion was intended for insertion, and would probably have afforded an illustration of his own constant aim at improvement, no less than of the character and progress of his companion. A letter to Wilberforce, on a subsequent visit to town by himself, may in a small degree supply the defect.

"My dear Master Wilberforce,

"As you asked me to describe to you some of the sights which have met my eye in this sightly and sightful city, I will obey you.

"The Hobby, or Accelerator, or Adjutor. The neatness of its motions, the swiftness of its speed, the elegance of its management and the simplicity of its construction, are very remarkable. I have not had a quiet opportunity of trying it, nor do I think the lame can manage it so well as others. On Tuesday next, a new one for ladies only is to be exhibited. All the town is wild this year after hobbies, as they were last year for kaleidescopes. Old men and children, young men and maidens, will soon be whirling and twirling like tetotums. Twelve places of exhibition already exist. I have been much amused with the sight.

"II. The Automaton Chess-player. Nothing ever surprised or perplexed me so much as this. It is a masterpiece of mechanical invention, and how it acts, is as yet past discovery. It has been shown throughout Europe, but no one has approached to detection. It had so singular an effect on my nerves, that I wished for permission to give one immense laugh, and another immense cry, in order to give vent to my exuberant spirits. The whole company sat in motionless wonder for an hour, during which one of them played against the Automaton Turk, and was beaten, though a first-rate player; which vexed him not a little, and he

pinched his nose, and bit his fingers with vexation. Our silence was then broken by a man of wood, dressed as a trumpeter, and who played like a trumpeter, and full well he trumpeted, for he accompanied, with great precision, his master and maker, who played a piece on the piano-forte.

"III. The Gothic Hall of ancient armoury. This is very magnificent — cost three thousand pounds, and, alas! is going to be sold by auction, like Bullock's museum, part of the dissolution of which, I have witnessed in the auction-room. I saw an antique piece of sculpture put up; one pound, said a gentleman; two, said another; three — four — five — one hundred, said the next; two hundred and fifty, said an old lady; five hundred, said another — and down it went.

"IV, The Sostenente Piano-forte. Lovely, sweet, chaste, bewitching tones. Very handsome in appearance — price from one hundred and ten, to three hundred guineas.

"V. Doctor Thornton's lecture on the human frame. A fresh subject discussed every time. About thirty ladies and forty gentlemen present; very useful and instructive. Fine transparent paintings of the different parts of the system illustrated; a grand collection of human bones, and of all kinds of animals; he exhibited the laughing gas, and it made us all laugh wonderfully; none could conceive the effect without seeing it; several of the company tried and exhibited the experiment. He produced, by another gas, a globe of fire, quite, indeed, quite as bright as the sun at noonday. He also made, as H — would say, 'an enormous bang,' with soap-suds and hydrogen gas. The ladies screamed with fright, but no harm was done, and the laughing gas banished all alarms.

"VI. The Panorama of Spitzbergen, novel and satisfactory. Icebergs, ice-mountains, snow, seas, ships,

seals, sea-horses, laruses, white bears, Arctic dogs, &c. in abundance; skies terrific—the whole admirably executed, and affording a complete lecture on the natural history of the Polar districts.

"VII. The Dandies. Very numerous and vastly abominable. I will not describe them, for verily my soul loatheth them. The dandizettes, the more sightly objects of the two; but, alas! vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

"VIII. The Southwark Bridge, which you and I saw casting at Rotherham. It strides most nobly across the Thames, and is a grand ornament to the river.

"IX. The Persian Ambassador. A fine figure in full costume, and quite answers one's idea of an oriental Mahometan grandee.

"X. The Fair Circassian. As nobody sees her, of course I do not, so I cannot describe her.

"I have gone through my arduous day, and have been gratified by a long and interesting conversation with L—W. I have received no letters from home, and have, therefore, no answer to send.

With great love to you all,

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

This playful and amusing journal of London curiosities, contains no allusion to the subject which lay nearest to his heart. But Mr. Richmond seldom wrote on any occasion, to his children, without reminding them of some religious truth, or connecting whatever was curious in art, or beautiful and grand in nature, with some remark calculated to inspire in their minds sentiments of solid and scriptural piety. The following letters to Wilberforce are fair specimens of his usual manner. The first of these was written when he was yet a little boy.

"DEAREST LITTLE BOY,

"As I was journeying near York last Saturday, where should I suddenly find myself but in a little village called *Wilberforce*, as my driver, and the way-post informed me. 'Dear me,' said I to my fellow-traveller, 'how a certain little lad of my acquaintance would be surprised and pleased, had he been in the chaise this moment.' So I got out and walked up and down in Wilberforce, thinking and talking about that said little lad. It is a pretty little place. As I loved the name, both for your sake, and for the sake of Henrietta's god-father, I amused myself with asking different people the name of the place, and everybody's answer was the same. I asked an old man, 'What is this village called!' '*Wilberforce*, an' please your reverence,' said he, and so said all the rest; and thus I pleased myself with making a great many people speak your name, till one of them said, 'I canna think wot's the matter wi' the mon; he made us aw say the same thing. Mayhop the man's a foo.' Now all that was the matter with me, was, that I loved you, and it quite pleased me to hear your name when I so little expected it.

"On Thursday last I saw a gentleman and a lady mount up in a balloon, a mile high into the air, and after sailing there near an hour, they came down again quite safe. On Saturday I went to see the finest church in all England. It is more beautiful than all the churches I ever saw put together. To-day I have visited the wonderful dropping-well of Knaresborough, which petrifies, after a time, whatever it touches. To-morrow I am going to see one of the finest ruins in the kingdom, Fountains Abbey. Look at your map, it is near Ripon in Yorkshire. This day I received a most beautiful letter from the Russian Princess, Sophia Metcshersky, of St. Petersburgh. I think I never had so pretty a letter.

What makes it so pretty? It is because it is about Jesus Christ. *Nothing is good, or right, or pretty without him. He only is altogether lovely.*

"I hope both your leg and your lesson go on well. If they do, you must thank Mr. C—— for the one, and Mr. G—— (to whom give my love,) for the other, and God for both.

"Last night, at ten o'clock, I saw the Aurora Borealis, like a white rainbow stretching all over the sky. On Monday I went to see the iron-founders make cannon. They melted the iron in a huge hot furnace; it ran out along the ground like a little river of liquid fire — very terrific!

"I have picked up many curious stones for the museum. God bless you, my little boy, and God bless Henry. Tell him I love him, and I hope he loves me. Kiss all your brothers and sisters for me, and tell them all to be very good. Behave well to dear mamma and Mr. G——, and so good bye,

From your loving papa,

L. RICHMOND."

The following letter is of later date:—

"*London.*

" * * * —— Your dear mamma has evidently improved in health by her visit to town, which I therefore feel it right to lengthen, that by freedom for a time from domestic labours and hourly anxieties, she may, if God pleases, be the better enabled to continue her numerous attentions to you and her other children at home. You know her great value to us all, and the day to which you allude will stand as a lasting memorial to us of the loving-kindness of God.

"On Tuesday last I went to Carlton Palace, with four hundred graduates of the University of Cambridge,

to present an address of congratulation to the Prince Regent on the marriage of his daughter. It was a fine sight, and the splendour of the rooms surprised me. We walked through St. James's street and Pall Mall, two and two, in very long procession, all dressed in the various university robes. The Duke of Gloucester, one archbishop, and nine bishops, went first, all the rest in scarlet, blue and gold, blue and silver, black and gold, black gowns, &c, An immense collection of carriages, and people on foot, filled the streets to see the procession, which occupied three quarters of the length of Pall Mall. We passed through seven grand and princely chambers, till at length we reached the last, in which the Regent, seated on his throne, received us. The Duke of Gloucester delivered the address, to which the Prince made a handsome reply. We all successively made our obeisances, and after remaining a short time to inspect the beauty and grandeur of the different state apartments, we returned, as we came, to a cold collation provided for the members of the university. The Prince was surrounded by all the great officers of state, and the whole effect was imposing and superb. But fine and entertaining as was this scene of earthly grandeur, what is a palace compared to a cottage, if the grace of God is in one and not in the other? Earthly greatness is but dust, and will return to dust. Grace alone will outlive it; and then what a place will heaven be to those who are made kings and priests for ever.

"I have been to see the great panorama of Waterloo. It is finely painted, but a very terrible exhibition. I think nothing on earth so dreadful as the murder, fury, confusion, pain, and suffering of a battle. Even the picture fills me with sadness and horror.

"I have also seen a panorama of Jerusalem, very inferior as a painting, but very interesting to my mind, as pourtraying the place where Jesus Christ taught and

sometimes lived in the days of his flesh. I stood upon the mount of Olives, and looked around me on Mount Zion, Gethsemane, Calvary, Bethany, the valley of Jehoshaphat, the brook Kedron, the pool of Bethesda, the wilderness, &c. &c. The ideas which arose in my mind affected me deeply. I was moved to tenderness and tears, as I looked back in thought upon years that are past, and events with which is associated all that is most dear to the Christian. And would they not, my dear boy, have touched your heart?

'I am requested to preach an electrical sermon — that is, a sermon in behalf of a charitable institution, called the Electrical Dispensary, for administering medical electricity to the poor. Some of the patients appear to be in a very wretched condition. Out of 7800 persons, 3000 have been cured, 4000 greatly benefitted, and 800 discharged without receiving any advantage from this kind of treatment. I have been thinking that this will be a very suitable text, "GOD IS LIGHT." Our greatest gratification has been derived from attending the public meetings of the religious and benevolent institutions. One, and sometimes two, are held in a day. It is an unspeakable delight to see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, what God is so manifestly and so mercifully bringing to pass, by the exertions of so many valuable societies

"Tell G—— to take care that all the usual and necessary preparations be made for the club anniversary on Whit-Friday. We hope to be in our places that day. Et jam vale, charissimie puer; memor esto Dei omnipresentis, et patris nunc absentis, et matris tuæ tenerrimæ pretiosissimæ, delectissimæ. Te ipsum cum fratribus sororibusque in votus habemus. Ora pro nobis, ora. Iterum iterumque vale.

Your affectionate father,

L. RICHMOND."

Wilberforce inherited his father's taste for the beauties of nature. In Mr. R.'s memoranda I find a list of more than thirty places of natural magnificence, which he visited with his son, and reference made to conversations and mutual delight, in a survey of the works of God. I regret that my guide has only left me traces of his footsteps in the following notes:—

"His first visit to Matlock, at four years old, his ecstacy and remarks, even then, on natural scenery.

"Visited &c. &c. &c.; his admiration and delight while he stood lost in thought, and mused over this exquisite scenery.

"Minerals of the Bible—his acquaintance with their character—his affectionate disposition—his conduct and feelings on the report of Nugent's death."

In the same paper he notes:

"His strict and honourable conduct—exempt from many of the vices common to his age—his confidential faithfulness—disposition to fastidiousness—mourned over in his last illness," &c.

The following letter to a companion is the only one of this character I shall offer the reader, It will appear how completely Mr. R. had succeeded in transfusing his own spirit and principle into the mind of his beloved Wilberforce.

'Dear ——

'I know nothing which I remember with more pleasure than the hours we have spent together in domestic music. I shall never regret the time I have given to music, when I consider its tendency to attach us to our delightful homes. We have indeed passed many happy hours together, none happier than those under your own roof. * * * I have been delighted with the scenery of Scotland. I have never seen any thing which has given me such an idea of the wisdom

and power of the Creator. I do indeed admire the rugged grandeur of the mountains, and the wild beauty of the heath, but I still admire our own fertile plains; * * * * and after all, no country can be so pleasant to us as that to which we have been endeared from our earliest infancy. Most anxiously, then, do I wish once more to enjoy with you the sight of our native village, with the river wandering peacefully through the green meadows, and to revisit the scenes of our boyish recollections. * * * * I was greatly pleased with my visit to London. The greatest treat was the British Museum. The minerals are so exquisite, so beyond conception beautiful and interesting. There is a very fine Museum in Glasgow, and some beautiful specimens of minerals in it. It has just received the addition of a live rattle-snake, which uses its tail in tremendous style, and when disturbed is ready to revenge an affront. * * I shall probably astonish the Scotchmen soon with the peculiarity and beauty of my visage, for the hair-dresser, ('who cuts and curls my hair in the last Parisian fashion') assures me that in a very short time, I must have my head shaved, and exchange a few straggling locks for a *wig*. My pate will look like a lump of coxcomb iron pyrites."

I would not weary my readers by dwelling on the early character of Wilberforce, or detain him from details of higher interest: the particulars I have mentioned serve to show, that true piety is perfectly compatible with all that is innocent and rational in our pursuits and recreations: that it cannot fairly be ascribed to mere dulness or morbid sensibility, and that it is not necessary to denounce a devout and heavenly spirit, in order to establish a claim to a superiority of sense or refinement.

I will now pursue the memoir into narrations more

immediately connected with my purpose; the illustration of Mr. R.'s peculiar method in the religious education of his children, and the success which attended his unremitted and conscientious discharge of the duties of a Christian parent.

When Wilberforce was a little child, his father, aware of the vast importance of early associations, accustomed him to habits of religion, even before he had a capacity to understand or value them. He consecrated to God his *whole* family in daily prayers: the infant in arms was present as a worshipper: it might at first disturb the order of the family devotion, but it soon learned silence, and seemed pleased with the group before it. So long as it could not speak, he spoke for it; he would hold it in his arms, saying, "God be gracious to thee, my son." When Wilberforce could scarcely lisp in accents of prayer or praise, Mr. R. composed the following little piece, to be committed to memory, and repeated to his mamma every evening. In these simple lines, nothing more was aimed at than a suitable vehicle of instruction to an infant mind. It breathes the same devout, tender, and affectionate spirit which pervades Mr. R.'s other productions.

WILBERFORCE'S EVENING ADDRESS TO MAMMA.

MAMMA, 'tis Jesus loves my soul,
And makes the wounded sinner whole;
My nature is by sin defiled.
Yet Jesus loves a little child.

I know my temper is not right,
I'm often fretful, scold, and fight:
I would like him be meek and mild,
For Jesus loves a little child.

How kind is Jesus! oh, how good!
For my poor soul he shed his blood;
For children's sake he was reviled,
Yet Jesus loves a little child.

When I offend you by my tongue,
And say and do what 's very wrong,
Oh! pray mamma, be reconciled,
For Jesus loves your little child.

He teaches me to shed a tear,
Whene'er I grieve a friend so dear:
But though I am so thoughtless, wild,
Yet Jesus loves the little child.

To me may Jesus now impart,
Although so young, a gracious heart;
Alas; I 'm oft by sin defiled,
Yet Jesus loves the little child.

And I love him, for he loves me,
And hope his faithful child to be;
The Sinner's friend he 's justly styled,
And Jesus loves your little child.

The following letter to his little boy on his birth-day is of the same character.

It was early this morn, as I waked from my rest,
An unusual emotion sprung up in my breast,
The occasion of this do you wish to be told?
'Tis my little boy's birth-day — he 's just four years old.

Foolish father! cries one, is this all you can say,
Is this to disturb all your feelings to-day?
Yes — and were you a father, you would not feel cold,
On your little boy's birth-day, when just four years old.

Old maidens and bach'lors who no children have,
Your patience I ask, for your pardon I crave,
While this child to my heart I so warmly enfold,
On the little boy's birth-day, who 's just four years old.

Ye mothers, who clasp your dear babes in your arms,
And watch o'er their youth with a thousand alarms,
Set yours down for one instant, my child to behold,
'Tis the little boy 's birth-day, he 's just four years old.

Ye that doat on your own lads can feel for another's,
And bear with the fondness of fathers and mothers,
I invite your attendance, so deem it not bold,
'Tis the little boy's birth-day, he 's just four years old.

He can prattle and talk, with a sweet little smile,
Which my heaviest moments will often beguile;
So I value him more than ten millions twice told:
'Tis my little boy's birth-day, he 's just four years old.

Dear wife, on whose breast the dear babe hung so long,
Shall my muse on this day forget thee in her song?
Come and kiss the poor lad, and rejoice to be told,
'Tis your little boy's birth-day, he 's just four years old.

My sweet boy! I 've been writing these verses for you,
They show more of the father than poet, 'tis true!
Yet in spite of the critics papa will be bold,
Little boy 'tis your birth-day, you 're just four years old.

May the blessing of God, in abundance poured down,
Give thee grace while on earth, and in glory a crown;
As thou growest in years, may thy virtues unfold,
'Tis my prayer on thy birth-day, when just four years old.

The incidents of childhood are seldom interesting beyond the family circle, neither can much reliance be placed on early appearances of piety, untried by temptation. It may be well to cherish every holy emotion in our children; to water and cultivate the tender plant committed to our care; but until influence and impression is succeeded by principle and the choice of the mind, we may rejoice in the buddings of divine life, but we must not indulge in too sanguine expectations. The sceptical tendencies of Wilberforce's mind in childhood, are by no means of rare occurrence at that age; for infidelity, notwithstanding its arrogant pretensions to superiority, is the vulgar weed that grows in every soil, and withers before the sunshine of clearer information; a little knowledge may help to an objec-

tion, when diligent and serious inquiry will discover its futility.

There is one note in Mr. Richmond's papers, which refers to Wilberforce's conduct and feelings on receiving the report of his brother's death. It is probable that he shared his father's anguish in that mournful event — uncertain as they both were of Nugent's spiritual welfare, and fearing the worst from all that was then known of his past conduct. They had heard nothing of those satisfactory testimonies to his conversion, which afterwards cheered and relieved their minds. A concern for the everlasting welfare of another, is no small evidence of our own sincerity in the pursuit of eternal life; and I have no doubt that Wilberforce had, at that time, made a progress in true religion, greater than his extreme reserve warranted his friends to conclude. His respect for piety, the deep attention with which he listened to instruction, the satisfaction which he displayed in communicating to others what he seemed to understand himself, and his uniform good conduct and general conformity to the habits of a religious family, induced his father to hope "all was well with him;" though he was too deeply impressed with the infinite value and necessity of a deep and real conversion to God, to rest satisfied with any thing short of a full and explicit declaration on the part of his child.

Wilberforce had ever expressed a decided preference for the ministry, which rendered it, in Mr. R.'s judgment, the more necessary that he should possess a piety the most decided and unequivocal. To become by profession an ambassador for God to a guilty world, *without credentials,* was justly regarded by him as a profane intrusion into an office of immense responsibility; and he has been heard to say, that 'he would rather follow

his son to the grave, than see him in the church without being fitted for such a sacred office.'*

The sentiments of both will be best expressed in the following correspondence. The first letter was written from Stockport, in Lancashire, when Wilberforce was eleven years old.

"DEAR WILLY,

"Are you indeed a good boy during my absence? Shall I have no cause for heart-ache on my return, when I ask how my child has behaved? How he has obeyed his mamma? How he has attended to his lessons? How he has submitted to his sister's instructions? How he has conducted himself towards Mr. G——? How he has adhered to truth in his words? How he has set H—— a good example? Shall I be comforted with the glad tidings, that your heart, and your conscience, and your ways, all seem to partake of a happy influence? that you throw away all indolence of mind or body? that you actively pursue learning and gain it? that your brother improves every day through the effect of your good behaviour? that you seldom or ever quarrel, snap, or snarl at him? that you pray to God to forgive your sins and hourly offences? Shall I be told that you have prepared a happy return home for papa, by his hearing all this good of you, when he comes back? Do the four walls of your little chamber bear witness to your prayers and supplications for yourself and me? Do the sun's rays, as they early penetrate your window in the morning, find you active

* The expression of Mr. Richmond is a strong one, though in perfect unison with the sentiments and feelings of the Editor. Mr. R. must not, however, be mistaken, as if he connected his child's death with eternal consequences. There cannot be a doubt that he intended to say, he should feel the death of his child a less afflicting dispensation than his profaning a holy ordinance, and, by ignorance or neglect, involving immortal souls in everlasting destruction.

to rise, to read, to labour, and to grow in grace? * * * * * * * * I have seen some beautiful counties since I left you. Staffordshire is full of beauty. Lichfield cathedral too, which, though much smaller than York Minster, is a very fine building; I attended divine service there, the organ notes rolled sublimely along the vaulted arches, pillars, and roof. The exquisitely-painted windows assimilated to the sounds, and rendered the effect most enchanting. The spires are beautiful, and large sums have been laid out in repairing and restoring them.

"One evening I travelled with a friend in a gig for three hours, amidst the never-ceasing distant lightning. The whole western hemisphere was in a constant blaze. The flashes alternated from one point of the horizon to another, distant about forty-five degrees from each other; sometimes the flashes were silvery, sometimes yellow, then orange colour; one while sheet-like, and again so vivid, that we seemed to have a peep into more distant regions of space: then more faint; now and then we heard slight rumblings; then all was silent again. At one point the flashes gleamed on the ruins of a distant castle, which appeared all on fire; a dark forest lay behind, and it formed a fine contrast. Sometimes the forked flashes pursued one another in a kind of playful progress; at others they dashed at each other as if in terrible combat; all this past between seven and ten in the evening.

"But what are these lightnings, compared with those which made Moses quake and tremble on Mount Sinai; or what were even these, contrasted with the lightnings of God's wrath against sinners? These appearances of nature are striking emblems of divine justice. You have need to flee from the wrath to come. Repent! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The wicked and all the people that forget God, shall be turned into hell.

Dear Willy, if you forget him, what will be your portion? If you say that you do not forget him, how do you prove it?

> Video meliora proboque
> Deteriora sequor,

is the character of too many nominal Christians;—I would not have it to be yours; an enlightened unconverted mind; with eyes and tongue to approve what is right, but the feet walking in the paths of evil. A converted heart will alone enable you to follow his steps, who is, 'the way, the truth, and the life.'

"I sincerely hope that you are beginning to be truly sensible of the evil and danger of sin, and the necessity of seeking God betimes. Occasional indispositions should remind you, that you may never arrive at man's estate. If you are to die a boy, you must look for a boy's religion, a boy's knowledge, a boy's faith, a boy's Saviour, a boy's salvation; or else a boy's ignorance, a boy's obstinacy, a boy's unbelief, a boy's idolatry, a boy's destruction. Remember all this, and beware of sin; above all, dread the sinfulness of an estranged heart. Pray for a new one; pray for grace and pardon, and a soul conformed to the image of Christ; pray for wisdom, for the destruction of pride, vain conceit, and self-sufficiency. Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Friends here inquire after you, in the full hope that you are going on well, creditably, obediently, industriously, humbly and Christianly. Love to all, from

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

What reply was made by Wilberforce to this letter does not appear: his repugnance to a free and unre-

served communication on the subject of personal religion seems not to have been overcome till nearly four years after, though his anxious father longed to elicit something on this point more satisfactory than could be collected from a general acquiescence in the opinions and habits of the family. A letter written by Wilberforce to his father in 1821, discloses a mind under the influence of more distinct views, and stronger feelings, breaking through the fetters of natural reserve.

"My dear Father,

"You will believe me, when I say, that I entirely and most thoroughly agree with you, 'that it is time we should communicate frequently, intimately, and confidentially.' I feel very thankful that you have so plainly declared your thoughts and determinations concerning me; I know my inability to answer you in the way you wish, but I rejoice in an opportunity of telling you what my thoughts have been and still are, in respect of the most important subject of your inquiry. I deeply regret that a false shame has hitherto deterred me from an open avowal of my sentiments and feelings. I will honestly confess to you, that I have never *seriously* considered the subject of the ministry till within the last few months. Brought up from my infancy, with the expectation of becoming a clergyman, and accustomed as I have been to think and speak of it as my future profession, I have been little aware of the difficulty, and have not sufficiently considered the responsibility of the office, which I hoped would one day be mine. You know how much this prospect has pleased me all through my childhood. I have had many fears and alarms about my sinful state, but they soon faded away. The impression has never been permanent till dear little Atherton died. At that time it pleased God to awaken in me a deeper sense of my

dangerous condition, and I prayed very earnestly that God would pardon my sins for Christ Jesus' sake, and that the Holy Spirit would renew my heart. Then I fell into another error; for I began to trust myself instead of the Saviour. I thought I was now proof against temptation, and had the presumption to suppose myself fit for the ministry. But I was awfully deceived. There arose soon after in my mind many doubts of the authenticity of the Scriptures. Wherever I went, or whatever I was doing, these doubts haunted me. I found that I could not, I dared not pray. At first I repulsed these suggestions with horror, but they gradually laid so fast hold of me, that they destroyed all my peace. When engaged in my studies, that which was often ascribed to idleness, was really occasioned by the state of my mind, which was so perplexed that I could not attend to other things; even my pleasures were damped by uneasiness. I have no doubt that if I had been in some situations, I should have become a determined infidel. I tremble, dear papa, while I write thus; and when I look back and think of my situation at that time, I cannot feel sufficiently thankful that my life was spared, and that I was not cut off from God for ever. I found that I had trusted in my own strength, that I had neglected prayer, and while I continued in that neglect, I could not reasonably expect the removal of these distressing searchings of heart. It was with some difficulty I could bring myself on my knees again. I was fearful that God would not hear me. But I read the Bible for encouragement, and I found it there. By continual prayer I was directed to the means of relief, and I have not been troubled with one more doubt since that time. Indeed, I cannot but believe that the death of our poor little Atherton was blest to me. It affected me more than any conversation or other event, and more than any one knew; I have never lost the impression.

"Yet I cannot feel comfortable in becoming a minister of Christ in my present state of mind. My conscience would be uneasy, if I presumed to fill an office, whose functions are so far above my ability or piety; but I earnestly pray that God may give me such a measure of his grace, as may in some degree fit me to become an unworthy, but *true* servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

'Having now freely and confidentially told you what has been passing in my mind, I lie in your hands, and trust you will pardon any error of expression or sentiment which may appear in my letter, and that you will correct whatever you see wrong in me. Receive, my dear papa, my confidence, as the strongest mark of affection and gratitude which can be given by your affectionate, but unworthy son,

WILBERFORCE."

I have no documents by which to trace the progress of this interesting boy during an interval of nearly two years. Able and pious tutors attended to his improvement in literature, and by their conversation and example, aided his progress in religion; which, though still of a reserved character, was doubtless sincere and increasing.

In 1823, Mr. Richmond was in Glasgow, from whence he wrote to his son as follows:

"MY VERY DEAR WILBERFORCE,

"I am very glad that Hartwell Horne proves so acceptable to you. * * * * I cannot express my anxieties on your account, both as they respect your Christian principles, and your future prospects as connected with the ministry. We must indeed become still more communicative and confidential, or the burden of my heart will become heavier than I can bear. It has long been the first

wish of my mind, that you should be a minister of the gospel; but only, and entirely, and unequivocally, without partiality and without hypocrisy as your personal character, experience, and determination, might be formed on a serious, affectionate, conscientious, and prayerful foundation. I want to see my beloved boy first a true Christian, and then a true minister. Oh! may God hear my prayers on this subject. For *this* I cry day and night,— and unworthy as I am of such a blessing, yet I will trust him for it, and I would wrestle like Jacob until I attain it. But you must wrestle too, yea, and with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, and all your strength. You must study your own heart: you should not only study the scriptures, but keep in reading some searching experimental book as a bosom companion. A love of such reading,— at least no alienation from it, proves a useful test of character. * * * * I am glad to hear you give yourself more regularly and resolutely to study. I have often had fears of indolence and inactivity, those banes of all progress, proficiency, and hope. I shall indeed rejoice to find that the bonds are broken. * * * * * Theology itself, important as are its themes and communications, sinks into mere science or literary attainments, unless founded upon, and accompanied by a devotional and affectionate application of its principles to the soul.

"It is much easier to be a divine than a Christian,— an ecclesiastic, than a pastor. You may be little aware how much more truth and wisdom dwell in some cottages and hearts at Turvey, than in many a house, and in many a mind, in which superior advantages seem to prevail, and even where real religion is known and respected. I long for the day when you and I may not only comfortably and confidently converse on these

subjects, on things which belong to our everlasting peace, our prospects in time and eternity; but when you may take such a share in my private parochial intercourse with the parishoners, as may leave no doubt of your being one with us. But then it must be previously manifest that you are *consistent* and in earnest, that you have not only put away childish follies and faults, but are living, and not ashamed to live, under the influence of higher principles. I want you to aid me effectually in the instruction of poor children, in visiting the sick, in conversing with the poor. If you are to be a minister, you should now commence your seven years' apprenticeship to the holy office. But then, your conduct must be uniform, simple, consistent. The reproach of the cross must in some measure be encountered, and the love of Christ in the heart put to some satisfactory test. Think of these things, and write to me about them. Let me have the comfort of knowing more of your mind. Our present interval of separation may be a time of much salutary communication. I would say, in the language of Solomon, "My son, give me thy heart;" but first give it to God. You are arrived at an age when many dangerous temptations will assail you, and you will be put to the proof whether your heart is right with God; and if you are thrown upon the world and its seductions, more than, happily, has hitherto been needed or sought, you will find indeed that it lieth in wickedness, multiplied, subtle, and appalling. May you, my dear son, be preserved in your youth, and when old, never wander from the way in which you have been trained!

"You must, in a very especial manner, consider the daily influence of your temper, conduct and conversation upon your brothers and sisters. An elder brother is usually the blessing or the curse of a household. You never knew, or will know, what I suffered on poor

Nugent's account; but God has, I trust, in mercy over-ruled for eventual good, what seemed to threaten nought but evil. May the course of *your* youth be very different, and may you contribute to heal the remains of former wounds inflicted on my parental feelings.

"Write soon; for letters are long in coming to me. Give a very affectionate message to my much-loved parishoners, and assure them how closely I bear them on my heart's remembrance. Love to all. God bless you, my dear children; yes, God bless you all! There is a certain store of love in this house, from which is drawn a respectable portion to be conveyed to Turvey. Take it, and use it well. Assemble the brotherhood and sisterhood, and kiss them in their succession, telling them it is a proxy from one who loves them well, and that one is their affectionate father,

LEGH RICHMOND."

The following extract, which connects this correspondence, was written by Wilberforce to his father in the same year, and during the same journey to Scotland.

" * * * * I have thought and considered a great deal on the contents of your last letter; I read it, I assure you, with many tears, but they were tears of love to you, and of sorrow that I fall so far short of your wishes and reasonable expectations. You say you wish me first to be a true Christian, and then a true minister; believe me, when I say, that though it is the first, the nearest, and the dearest wish of my heart, I would not have a desire, not the slightest desire, of entering the church in an unfit state of mind. I would rather engage in the meanest occupation of life than be a disgrace to the religion of Christ, by entering into the holy profession, while I am unfit for

it. When I look at the apostles of old, and mark how full they were of love to Christ and their fellow-creatures; or when I look to good men of our own day, who tread in their steps, I shrink from assuming a profession for which I cannot but know myself most unworthy. I am conscious of being a great sinner, and I seem to myself utterly incompetent to be more than a humble disciple in the church of God. But I know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that his Spirit can enable me, sinful as I am, to love and serve him. I have much to be thankful for. I ought to be thankful that I am permitted to think about these things. At times I have felt very happy in prayer and reading the Scriptures. My joy has been such, that I seemed ready not only to love God, but even to give up all the world for his sake; then again the cares and pleasures of life have laid hold of me, and sunk me into sorrow.

"Pray for me, my dear father, that my wavering mind may be fixed in the paths of truth, and may choose that better part, which, when once obtained, shall never be taken away from me; and may God direct me to that profession of life, in which I may most promote his glory, and my own good, and that of my fellow-creatures."

The following year Wilberforce was attacked with a dangerous illness which terminated in his death.

Mr. Richmond did not, on this occasion, imitate the worldly prudence of some persons who labour to conceal from the patient the danger of their state, and with a mistaken kindness prohibit the introduction of religious subjects, from fear of aggravating the disorder. With a heart alive to the eternal interests of his child, he addressed to him the following letters. May the perusal of them afford an instructive lesson to all who are placed under similar circumstances, and teach them

never to forget that "one thing is needful" for others, as well as for themselves; and that the wisdom which would endeavour to save the perishing body at the risk of the immortal soul, is an act of treachery the more criminal, in proportion as its consequences are irreparable and eternal!

"*Turvey, June* 12*th*, 1824.

"My dear Boy,

'I have, as I mentioned to you the other day, for some time wished to press upon your attention the important subject of the Lord's Supper; and, as in the case of each of your sisters, I found that an epistolary correspondence afforded a liberty and facility of communication in the first instance. I trust you will not object to adopting a similar mode. A time of relaxation from your studies, and of indisposition, may afford you a good opportunity for such a purpose. It will be exceedingly gratifying to me to receive some simple, faithful account of your state of mind, views, feelings, and desires in connection with the privilege and duty of commemorating the dying love of Christ to sinners. I wish to receive you at the table of our Lord, both as your affectionate father in the flesh, and your still happier father in the Spirit, with principles enlightened, and heart warmed with a Saviour's mercies. Approach me thus, my beloved son, and write to me with a free, confidential heart. I feel the most lively interest in your spiritual welfare, far beyond what my ordinary manner may betray. You are arrived at an age, when I wish you to become my bosom friend and companion in all things, but above all, in those things which belong to your everlasting peace. I have sometimes feared that other subjects have somewhat monopolized your thoughts; and yet I have the firmest hope that your mind is truly sensible of the value and importance of

divine things. I trust you are constant in prayer, and that your affections are unfeignedly directed towards divine truth. I cannot express to you how much this belief comforts and strengthens my mind, It is allied to every feeling and wish which I have so long and so anxiously cherished, in regard to your future character as a minister of the gospel of Christ. None but God knows how intense my solicitude has been upon that point. It is high time that you should, by the open act of communion, devote yourself to the Redeemer's service, and look upon it as a pledge for your inward principles, and outward practice. You should attentively examine the sacramental service in the Liturgy, and always have a book of experimental and devotional character more or less in private reading. It must ever be kept in remembrance, that the mere literary discussional study of theology, however valuable and needful, is a distinct thing from the affectionate work of the heart, in the exercises of the conscience in the soul. I am earnest that my dear child should enjoy all the privileges of the church of Christ, and adorn them. Search for the evidences of a renewed heart daily; come as a lost, undone sinner, and may you taste that the Lord is gracious. Beware of the world's temptations and levities. We should all feel that time is short, and eternity at hand, and be prepared accordingly. The regular partaking of the Lord's Supper, when rightly viewed, has a tendency to cherish the best affections of the soul, and to preserve both young and old from the dangerous delusions of the world, the flesh, and Satan. Let the communication of these thoughts excite you to self-examination, meditation and prayer. My love and regard for you are great indeed; my own heart is wrapt up in the prosperity of yours. May all your studies be sanctified to the glory of God. May you *now* enjoy a portion of these pleasures, which are at God's right

hand for evermore.—'The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' How delightful a thought for you and for

Your affectionate father,
LEGH RICHMOND."

"*Turvey, June* 22*nd*, 1824.

"MY VERY DEAR CHILD,

"I present you with this book, for the express purpose of your keeping a journal and diary, not merely of passing events as they may occur, but of the thoughts of your heart upon divine things. I earnestly entreat you to do this: I recommend it from long experience as a most beneficial exercise. It is perfectly secret to yourself and God. No one can ever see it without your own knowledge and consent. But such records have been so useful, so consolatory, and so improving that I may make it my paternal entreaty, that you will comply with this request. Suspended in uncertainty with regard to your health and strength, my soul is most anxious for your spiritual good. Trifle not, delay not in this matter. Press forward to the mark and prize of your high calling. Review the past thoughts of your heart—examine the present—anticipate the future. You are in God's hands. I trust the everlasting arms are underneath you. Let me entreat you to open your mind also to me, in frequent correspondence. I cannot express my solicitude for your spiritual welfare. You know all the principles by which a sinner may be saved; you have known them from your infancy; may they be the ornament of your youth! May you rest short of nothing but a well-grounded conviction of your personal interest in Christ! There is a rich provision in him for every possible difficulty and deficiency which can present itself to your thoughts. Oh, how does my heart burn to see you, in every sense of the word, a true

Christian. In a former note I invited you to the Lord's table. Happy, thrice happy shall I be to see you there, added to the number of the Lord's flock.

"Since writing the above, I have received yours. I thank you from my heart. Go on, as your strength and opportunities will allow, by a little at a time; but give me as much of your thoughts and feelings as you can. Tell me of your past years, and early leadings and convictions; tell me more of those things which you have named in former letters. You cannot oblige me more than by giving me the *history* of your heart at various periods. I have known too little of you, my dear child. Let that ignorance on my part cease. I have loved you from your birth, and watched over you till now, with the tenderest affection: but I feel my own deficiency in not communing more with you on the state of your mind in the sight of God. Comfort me now by *frequent* intercourse on these matters. It is the very return of all others which I desire, for all the past anxieties of a father and a minister. May this journey be blessed to you both in soul and body. I trust soon, with God's blessing, to see you again. In the meantime, I commend you to Him, who has all events in his hands, whose consolations are neither few nor small, who gave his Son to die for your sins, and whose compassions fail not. Be much in prayer and self-examination. The God of the waves shall protect and guard you: the God of the land shall comfort you. But seek him aright: trifle not with the great concern. How joyfully shall I welcome you at the Lord's table, if God so will. Adieu for the present, my child, my friend, and, in Christ, my brother.

LEGH RICHMOND."

The journey to Scotland, above alluded to, was recommended with a view of consulting Dr. Stewart, whose

method of treating pulmonary diseases was supposed to have succeeded in many instances.

The following letter was written immediately after Wilberforce's arrival in Scotland: —

"*Turvey, June* 30, 1824.

"My ever dear Son,

"I thank you for your letter, and am glad to hear again from Mr. Marshall that you have borne your travels so far well. You are never out of my thoughts, and I follow you in imagination through every scene of your occupation. But there is an eye that beholds and watches over you, in a way that I cannot do. To him I confide and commend you, for sickness and health, for time and eternity. What a word, what a thought, is *eternity!* What prospects does it set before us! What inconceivable mysteries are involved in it! How does it make the things of time dwindle into insignificance! But what questions of unspeakable import are involved in it! Sin, a corrupt nature, a broken law, an offended God, eternal punishment; conscience, guilt, regeneration, salvation by Christ, faith, hope, love, free grace, undeserved mercy, justification, effectual calling, adoption into God's family, pardon of sin, consolation in Christ, heaven and glory. These, and a thousand accompaniments, are all connected with the idea and the reality of eternity. What a sad proof of the depravity of our heart is our indifference towards thinking, and our backwardness towards speaking upon things which belong to our everlasting peace; and which, nevertheless, if neglected, involve our eternal ruin. We need warnings, and the Lord sends them in many ways. Sickness, pain, bereavements, losses, disappointments, all bring their message with them. The great question between our souls and God is not whether we admit the truths of the Scripture into our understandings, but *whether*

they are so applied to our hearts as to have wrought a change, and become vital principles of faith and practice. Nothing short of this can afford evidence of a saved and safe condition. There is an action of the soul by which it rests upon Christ, and all that he has done, with full confidence; and this produces peace in the conscience. The more we see of ourselves, the more we see our sin; and the more we see our sin, the more we fly to the death and righteousness of Christ, for pardon, deliverance, and hope. We behold not only his sufficiency, but his willingness to save the chief of sinners. For this we love him; and if we love him, we desire and endeavour to keep his commandments; and this is the way of salvation.

"Now, does my dear boy view this in all its integrity? Do the experiences of the past, strengthened by all the variety and succession of instruction which you have from your infancy received, work together to this great end? Can you be satisfied with anything short of this? God forbid? Let nothing interrupt you in this continual work of self-examination; and let self-examination lead you to earnest and ardent prayer. Let no pursuits of literature, no delights of sense, no passing occurrences, no debility of body, no inferior subjects of recreation, prevent you from keeping your thoughts close to God and to eternity. Great have been your mercies.—may your gratitude be great likewise!

"Accustomed as I am to close and faithful dealings with my Christian friends and flock, it would ill-become me to be silent or indifferent where my dearly-beloved child is concerned. Sickness gives both you and me a wholesome admonition. I pray God, from the depths of my heart, that we may each of us improve it to our spiritual welfare. God may have great things to accomplish hereby; let us believe and hope so.

"I had much pleasure in showing you London: and,

if Providence permit, may yet have more, in viewing the fine scenery in your present vicinity along with you: but whether amongst the beauties of art or nature, never, never cease to look for and contemplate the God both of creation or redemption in the midst of all. Keep a continual watch over your disposition, temper, and thoughts. There are not only sins of the temper, but of the understanding also; and pride in every form, intellectual as well as sensual, must be brought low. 'Learn of me,' said the Saviour, 'for I am meek and lowly of heart.' I write, as I would talk with and pray for you. May this dispensation of the Almighty, which has for the present separated us, and given us cause for much anxiety on your account, be a season of much profit to us all! Lay these things to heart; make them the subject of unceasing petition at that throne whence no believing supplicants are ever sent empty away. Wonder not that I cannot rest contented with a superficial religion, but that I look for a deeply experimental life of God in your soul. I place time and eternity before me in holy imagination. I strive, as it were, to penetrate the veil which separates them, and to look earnestly at those things which belong to your and my everlasting peace. Forgive me, my dear child, and may God forgive me, if I have not always and equally pressed these subjects upon your personal attention. They have ever lain near to my heart, and you have had multiplied opportunities of meditating upon them. I trust you have done so. But let me know more and more of your thoughts, past and present. My Christian and parental peace is dependent greatly upon it. I am glad that our friend Dr. Stewart has had so good an opportunity of studying your case. But you are in the Lord's hands. May he overrule every thing for your good. May your confidence be placed only where it is due; and pray for your father, and your father shall pray for you. Amongst

the books in your travelling library, are many most valuable authors. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what they say, so far as you find time and strength to peruse them. Above all, search the Scriptures, for in them you have eternal life. Your mother sends her entire and most affectionate love to you: your sisters and brothers the same. And what shall I add for myself? All that is tender, affectionate, parental and Christian.

From your father,
L. R."

In the month of July, Mr. Richmond joined his son in Scotland, using every means for the restoration of his health. During a short interval of separation, he addressed to him another letter, expressive of the same ardent desire for his spiritual welfare, and written in the same delightful strain of warm and affectionate feeling.

"*Bradford, Aug.* 5, 1824.

"My dear Wilberforce,

"We have so long been fellow-travellers and pilgrims together, and my eye and my heart have been so long accustomed to watch over you, that I cannot help wishing to indulge my affectionate feelings by giving a few lines during this short separation; which, short as it has been, never ceases to present my dear boy to imagination and recollection. I have reason to think, and perhaps the fault is my own, that you are but *imperfectly* aware of my strong and anxious feelings towards you, with respect both to your temporal and spiritual welfare. I sometimes fancy I see this in your manner, and it hurts me. I say little, or probably nothing; but my heart is alive to great sensibilities. Rest assured, my much-loved child, that at all past periods, but most epecially since it has pleased God

to put your health, and of course with it your life, to so marked a trial, I have not ceased for a single hour (and I can hardly except the dreaming hours of the night,) to make *your* comfort and prosperity the subject of my prayers and solicitude. When you may least have expected it from my ordinary manner, even my silence has spoken to God in your behalf. Many and deep have been my meditations, as we ascended the hills, and descended the vales of Scotland; or as we ploughed the waters with our prows and paddles. I have often experienced a kind of stupid impotency of utterance, when my heart has been animated and full. You likewise manifest a sort of reserve on the subject of personal religion, which checks and sometimes chills my rising inclination to more unreserved, free, congenial, and comforting conversation. I wish all this to vanish; and that whatever may be the will of God concerning you, the future days which his providence may permit us mutually to spend together, may be more distinctly marked by free and affectionate communications. But far, far above all, it is my cherished and anxious hope, that you may evince an increasing love to spiritual things, to reading, conversing, and meditating upon the things which belong to your everlasting peace. You have had your warning as to the delicate and precarious tenure by which life, health, and youthful vigor are held. Every day and hour still reminds you of the uncertainty of all things future, so far as this world is concerned. And such warnings are unspeakable mercies, designed by God for the most wise and benevolent purposes.

"The season of amended health, and present suspension of painful and distressing symptoms, is precisely that in which your heart should exercise a peculiar jealousy over itself, lest the comparative trifles of this world, and the ensnaring affections of the flesh, should

deaden your feelings about the grand questions, 'What are the evidences of my salvation? What have I done, what must I do to be saved? Other studies than those directly religious, *may* doubtless have their due and subordinate place. Other books than the holy scriptures, and their expositions, may also have their moderated share of our attention; but if any human study, or any human book, have more of our love and attention, than those which directly lead our hearts to God, something must be very wrong. Idols force themselves upon our notice everywhere, and lawful things may become idols by the abuse of them, and the suffering them to usurp the *first* place in the heart's affections. Never be contented with slight and general hopes of all being right within, but seek and strive after clear and particular evidences, that you 'know whom you have trusted,' for time and eternity. I earnestly entreat you to examine yourself daily on scriptural principles, that you may the more ardently throw yourself on the mercy of a covenant God, for the forgiveness of your sins, the renovation of your heart, and the guidance of your judgment. Never be satisfied with an avowedly imperfect Christianity. A *half* Christian is *no* Christian, nor is he accepted of God. Christ is a whole, perfect, and finished Saviour: and whosoever is a partaker of Christ, is a partaker of *all* that he is, all that he has done, and all that he will do, for the complete salvation of all his chosen. Decency, formality, and cold ceremonial worship, are poor and inefficacious substitutes for heart-service, holy affections, trust in a Saviour, and love to God. Not unfrequent are the times, and your dear mother often experiences them also, when the immensity of that question, 'Am I his, or am I not?' overwhelms me; and I should sink in despondency, if the free, undeserved, and inexpressible mercy of God, did not direct my soul to the Redeemer's blood, which,

when believed in, and applied to the guilty and trembling conscience, cleanseth from all sin, and opens the door to hope and consolation. May my beloved child flee to the same fountain with genuine humiliation, and find the like deliverance; and may his anxious parents be made so far partakers of his thoughts, as to feel strong in the Lord on *his* account. My mind was much affected when I first received you at the table of the Lord, and my heart went out in lively prayer, that you might also be received of God—owned, honoured, and accepted as a child of heaven. Live, speak, and act as a consistent communicant of the church; the vows of the Lord are upon you: but if all be right, you will find that his yoke is easy, and his burden light. I wish to look upon you not only as my child by nature, but as my spiritual child, and therefore, (without a paradox) my spiritual brother. Sweet associations of relationship are formed in the family of God and the household of faith. Many tender and affectionate prayers have been daily offered up for you amongst the poor people of Turvey, as I have several testimonies to prove. We shall soon return to them again, God willing; and may those prayers, united to my own, be fully answered in the gracious state of your soul, as well as in the comfort of your bodily health! But we must, as to the latter, await the Lord's will. He doeth, and will do, all things well. Meditate on these things, and may you and I mutually reap the benefit of such exercises of your heart! As you read this letter, cherish a tender as well as a dutiful sentiment towards him who penned it, and accept it as one more token of that deep-seated love which I bear towards you, and which must increasingly subsist, while I remain a father, and *you* a son.

"I yesterday enjoyed the high mental luxury of walking in the broad aisle of York Minister, quite alone, during the morning-service. As often before, such

sights and such sounds compelled me to weep: and as I was solitary, nothing interrupted the flow of my heart. I recollected being there once with you, and I have not forgotten how much, if I mistake not, your infant heart was also affected at that time. Whether we shall ever again meet together, in that magnificent and astonishing fabric, I know not; but, oh! may God grant that we finally meet in the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."'

In the month of July, Mr. R. engaged a small cottage at Rothsay, in the isle of Bute, at a convenient distance from the physician's residence. From hence he made frequent excursions by sea and land, in the hope, by a change of scene and air, to check the progress of the disorder. It appears from the following letter to his curate, that he had not yet despaired of his son's recovery; but being at once the nurse, the father, and the spiritual guide of his dear boy, he was making every effort on his behalf, and diligently employing the means prescribed by the physician.

"My dear Friend and Brother,

"If the date of this letter may seem to betoken inattention to my promise, or a wrong estimate of your valuable services during my absence from home, I rely on your friendship and candour to ascribe my silence to other causes. I have been almost daily, from morning to night, sailing about with my dear boy upon sea and river; and neither the motion of the steam-boats, nor the lassitude felt at night after such voyages, are favorable to epistolary duties. But I can truly say, that my heart's best prayers and recollections have been with you, and this poor scrawl is meant to tell you so. You well know, likewise, that anxiety within, added to external causes, will easily unhinge the energy of the

mind, and produce a kind of constitutional incapacity and indisposition to duty itself. But neither let my friend nor my flock for a moment conceive that they are forgotten. During many an hour, as I have been floating on the waves, pacing the mountains and glens, admiring the islands and the rocks, tracing the progress of sun or moon upon the ocean or landscape, and amidst all, fixing an anxious and affectionate look upon our dear invalid as he sat by my side; during many such an hour have I dwelt with solicitude and regard on the domestic and parochial scenery of Turvey,—dear Turvey, where so many sweet pledges, both of natural and spiritual love, reside,—where my poor boy was born and trained up, with brothers and sisters no less loved than himself. Our intercourse and conversations under existing circumstances, are deeply interesting to me. He is, upon the whole, in cheerful spirits, and the air of this delightful island particularly suits him. I am just returned from a hill-walk with him, of a mile and a half, and have been surprised at the degree of strength which he evinced. The general symptoms are just now, I think, more favorable. Still there are evident marks of deep-rooted disease, and I am often much perplexed by the fluctuations in his case. It is one in which I feel it wrong either to encourage over-sanguine expectations of permanent amendment, or to give way to any over-desponding sensations as to the result. Happily he is without pain, and in many respects he enjoys himself. He delights in the scenery around us, which is in the highest degree magnificent and beautiful. He enters with his wonted taste into mineral and geological examinations, and wanders gently by the sea-side, hunting for pebbles, animals, shells, sea-weed, &c. and I wander with him. Sometimes a little exertion fatigues him, at other times he bears considerably more without complaining. He has been a thousand miles on the water

since we left London, and sailing always agrees with him. I have every reason to be satisfied with the plan we are pursuing. It much contributes to his strength and comfort, and peace of mind; and, to say the least, has checked the weakening effects of the disorder, and mingled encouragement with apprehensions which might otherwise have gained daily ground. He is evidently thinking very seriously and rightly about his state, and our Christian conversation forms no small part of my comfort, and I trust I may add, of his comfort also. Whatever may be God's will, I feel satisfied that the present dispensation is profitable to us both. May he confirm and increase our hope. I am much gratified by the accounts which I receive of your very auspicious commencement of ministerial labours at Turvey, and beg you to feel assured of the value I put on them. Go on, my dear friend, in the strength of the Lord, and may you pursue the arduous career of holy exertion, in public and in private, to your own comfort, the glory of God, and the good of my dear flock. Make known how affectionately I feel towards them,—how earnestly I desire their prayers, and how sincerely I remember them in mine. My not writing to them at an earlier period has arisen entirely from the constant occupation and anxiety which have monopolized my time and my feelings. Wilberforce thanks you for your kind letter. I hope he will soon feel able to answer it. Dear boy!—he talks with hope of returning to Turvey with amended health, and telling you in person how much he enjoyed the scenery of the north. Pray for him, and me, that we may lay in our heavenly Father's bosom like children, and wait his pleasure like believers. You will not forget the other dear boys,—they are in your hands for good, and may God bless you to them all. Give them my blessing, and let them convey it to all at the Rectory. Believe me,

Yours, affectionately, L. R."

Much of what I should have detailed has been introduced into the Memoir of Mr. Richmond. Two only of Wiberforce's letters remain; the first of these was written to his brother H.

"My dear H.

"I did not think when I parted from you, that I should be as well as I am, for I feel very much better. Sickness and separation have attached me more to you, and to my home, and to all that are in it. Sickness, as is usual, has brought sorrow for its companion, but I trust I do not sorrow as one without hope. My illness has proved a warning to me, and it may also be a warning to you. You saw me brought down, in a very short time, from a state of health and strength, to one of weakness and debility; and all our natures are alike, equally fragile, equally transient. Uncertain is every tie which binds us to life; and therefore it is my prayer, that you, no less than myself, may look forward to our latter end; and not neglect opportunities of attending more closely to the things which belong to our everlasting peace, and guarding against the increasing fascinations of a world that lieth in wickedness."

The second letter was a reply to his father's instructions and preparations for the Lord's Supper.

"My dear Father,

"I thank you for the kind letter you wrote to me on the subject of the Sacrament. I could not have received one which would have more truly convinced me of your affection and desire for my spiritual welfare. Oh! may God give an answer to your prayers and desires on my behalf, and may you see me walking humbly and sincerely in that narrow path which leads to life eternal. I have thought much on the contents of your letter, and have been deeply affected. At first I was discouraged by a sense of unworthiness, and shrunk from the

thought of approaching the Lord's table. It then struck me, that even if I had not attained all I desired, I might still venture with a humble and prayerful spirit, and an entire dependence on Christ. I thought, also, that if I neglected attendance, I should be dishonouring the Saviour by a refusal of an appointed means of grace; and I do hope, that by presenting myself to Christ in his own ordinance, I may be confirmed and strengthened in my faith, and helped on to fulfil the vows made at my baptism, and fight manfully under Christ's banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil. I would then, my dear father, put on the garb of humility, and go and kneel, as the very lowest of his disciples, at the foot of the cross of Jesus, and commemorate with gratitude his cross and passion, his glorious resurrection and ascension,—on the merit of which alone are fixed all my hopes in this world and the next. How thankful do I feel that I may kneel at the foot of the cross. Oh! where besides could I wish to stretch out my aching limbs and die?

"I suppose my journey will make some delay in your intentions, but if I return with renewed health and strength, I would consider that in receiving the sacrament, I give a pledge to God and you, to devote myself soul and body, to the promotion of the divine glory. But if I should not return in health, and if it should seem fit to the Almighty to shorten my life, yet if he will renew my soul by his Holy Spirit, oh! how unspeakable a blessing to wing my flight from sin and sorrow.

"If I were certain of his favour, and my own change of heart, I should only wish to see my Saviour face to face, and praise and love him for ever. I have written hastily, but as long as I could without fatigue, a short but I assure you a sincere letter.

Your affectionate

WILBERFORCE."

The closing scene of Wilberforce will be detailed by one who loved him dearly, and was a witness of his latter moments. Mr. Richmond had desired his daughter to note down the events and conversations of the sick chamber, and he refers to them in the following letter: —

"MY DEARLY-LOVED F.,

"I have been very unwell with a swelled face, accompanied by high fever; and though better, am still an invalid; but this illness is sent for some good end to my soul. I desire to investigate that end in a right spirit. The fire at Turvey has done much mischief, and is indeed a general calamity. I wish you to relieve the sufferers. You may distribute for me both money and clothing. I shall be able to decide better on my return, what sum to subscribe. May we know how to 'glorify God in the fires.'

"Poor ——! although her evidences were faint, I thought them genuine. I have seen many such cases, and despair not. God often permits the signs of true faith to appear very feeble, when, nevertheless, the soul still cleaves to the Saviour, in the midst of many causes of suspicion and perplexity. Some are saved, "yet so as by fire." Happy they who are saved at all.

"I hope you have a long manuscript of recollections concerning our beloved Wilberforce. I depend upon it. Employ speedily some hours in preparing for me all you know relative to that eventful period. I still shed many tears in the remembrance of that dearly-loved boy. I have feelings which never leave me for two hours together. They mingle with all my cheerful, and all my pensive moments. I have particular reasons for delaying to write the memoir, but fully intend to do it.

"I have been at Cambridge. The recognition of many old friends from all parts of England, has much

interested me. Indeed, associations connected with former days, have quite overpowered me. The older I grow, the more acutely I feel everything.

"Take care of too frequent intercourse with the world. I write with a heart full of love; but I must caution you. *There is nothing more dangerous to young Christians than indiscriminate intercourse with persons of no religion.* It is far more likely that we should receive evil, than impart good, in such society. I have experienced this too much myself on many occasions, not to feel it keenly. Prudence and prayer are then especially needful; for we may more easily conform to the world, than bring the world to conform to us. Happy they who have the least to do with it, except in the way of absolute duty and necessity. I often reflect with gratitude on the blessing which God has given to the retired habits and education of my two boys, W—— and H——, one in heaven, and one still on earth. To their seclusion I ascribe their simplicity and happy ignorance of many evils. Premature acquaintance with the wickedness of the world,—(and there is no knowing the world without coming in contact with its wickedness)—has ruined thousands of hopeful young men, and has multiplied the miseries of the hopeless.

"I long for our early morning readings. Latin, Greek, and mathematics, are a very small and inferior part of learning, particularly for the Christian ministry. While heads are filling, hearts are withering. Give my affectionate love to dear ——; next to my own boys I do indeed love him. I long to see more of an unreserved and experimental communication between him and H——. I have numberless feelings about their intercourse which I do not utter, and yet I know not why; but this I know, that I have you all in my heart; but that heart will soon turn to dust. There is a better

heart in heaven. I would have all my dear children enclosed in it.

"Give the children of the Sunday-school a new subject, that they may search for texts to prove it.

"Farewell, dearest F——. I lament many things, but most of all that I am not worthy to be called

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

Mr. R. was evidently ripening for heaven. The tenderness, the deep piety of his loving spirit, the weanedness of his heart from the world, and his earnest desire to transfuse his devout feelings into the minds of all who were connected with him, discover an assimilation to a purer region, and might have prepared us to expect that his departure was not far distant. The documents to which he alludes, are contained in the following communication, which I commend to the serious and attentive perusal, both of young persons and their parents.

CHAPTER VII.

'Here were two souls knit together as the soul of one man: what there is of present separation shall be but for a little while.'

HOWE.

"MY VERY DEAR MR. F——,

"IN compliance with your request, I send you the chief incidents of our brother's closing scene; his conversations with my dear father, and other members of his family, and a few of the letters which were written during that mournful period. You may rely on the accuracy of the whole. My father had intended to have published a memoir of Wilberforce, and with that view he desired me to make memoranda of what passed at the time. He told me more than once, that the blessing which seemed to attend the perusal of his little tracts, encouraged him to put on record the piety of his son; which he considered to be no less honourable to God, and consoling and strengthening to young Christians, than that of the Dairyman's Daughter, or the Young Cottager. He thought that Willy's training for eternity might be read with equal advantage and might assist both in imparting clear views of religion, and in relieving the mind from the fears and anxieties which often distress and harass young Christians in the prospect of death. 'To know that others have been perplexed with the same doubts, alarmed by the same fears, animated by the same hopes, comforted by the same promises, and directed by the same precepts,' he used to say, 'will demonstrate a holy identity in the influence of the

gospel and the effects produced by it; and may comfort the trembling sinner, and confirm the most advanced believer.'

"There are a number of papers in my father's handwriting, relating to my brother's character and dying hours, which are indeed so unconnected and unfinished, that scarcely any use can now be made of them; but they show how interesting a detail the memoir would have been in his hands. He would sit for hours in his study, perusing and adding to these fragments; but the excess of feeling and mental agitation, which the contemplation and reminiscence of the past never failed to renew, greatly impaired his health, and forced him to lay aside his purpose.

"In one of the papers alluded to, we found the following remarks in his own hand. 'I have never given up the design of writing his memoir, and every day's meditation has prepared me for it. But whenever I begin, my spirits sink, my eyes are filled with tears, and I lay aside my papers to a more convenient season, when I may be able to write with more calmness. Alas! this is my weakness!'

"Wilberforce had always been my dear father's companion in his literary and philosophical pursuits. From his childhood, his chief pleasures and recreations were in the study; and he used to retire to the museum to make experiments with the air-pump, or electrical machine, or to read some book of science, while the other boys were engaged in their sports. As he advanced in years, he employed his leisure hours more especially in the study of mineralogy and geology. This congeniality of mind and pursuit contributed to cement the strong attachment which subsisted between my father and Wilberforce, and indeed rendered the one almost an integral part of the other. My dear father had a peculiar talent for connecting science with religion and Wilber-

force seemed more than his other children to afford him materials for a successful cultivation.

"In my father's miscellaneous papers we find the following short notes, evidently written with reference to the projected memoir. 'Early intellectual conversation, great general reading, strong turn for reasoning and argument, deep and close investigation of philosophical questions, acquaintance with subjects of political economy, love of natural history, insects, mineralogy, geology, classics, mathematics. My wish and endeavour has been to cultivate philosophical pursuits, in connection with religion, with my children, as recreations, instead of allowing and encouraging the trifling and often pernicious amusements of the world. I have found my plan answer in his case.'

"Our dear father had succeeded in making his home dear to all his children. Home was never talked of without emotion by any of them. They left it with regret; they returned to it with the fondest affection, and connected with it every endearing association. No patriot Israelite ever sang of the place of his nativity with more enthusiasm, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Our beloved parent's integrity and uniform consistency engaged our esteem, and the multiplied resources of innocent gratification which surrounded us, won our regard.

"As Wilberforce grew up, he was considered by the whole family as the one marked out to fill his father's place in the church, and to his relatives. He became an object of interest to all; and to none was he more endeared than to his loving parent, who clung to him with deeper affection each succeeding year.

"In the spring of 1824, when he had reached his seventeenth year, we were first alarmed for his health. He took cold from a wet ride, and a slight cough

succeeded. One morning in the month of May, my father discovered symptoms of his having ruptured a blood-vessel. His fears were greatly awakened, as appears from a note in his papers. 'As I looked on him that morning, I felt a shock which seemed to shatter me to the very soul, and I have never recovered it.' In a short time Wilberforce's appearance was considerably altered, and his spirits were depressed.

"When a journey to Scotland was proposed, my father was greatly agitated, the more so because it was impossible that at that time he should accompany him, and he dreaded even a short separation from his beloved child. His feelings will be best shown by the following letter.

"*St. Neot's, Monday night.*

"MY EVER DEAR LOVE,

" * * * No one knows, or ever can know, the anxiety which I have felt on our dear child's account. Little as it may have been perceived, I have been inwardly agitated beyond expression, and this must apologize for any weakness or inconsistency of which I have been guilty. God only knows what I have suffered. I have been taken by surprise. The alarming symptoms in the disease of our beloved child, have awakened a thousand feelings and fears. I have reflected on his bodily, but much more acutely on his spiritual state. I have been unwilling to separate from him under all the probable, or at least possible contingencies of the disorder. I have wept and trembled. I have mourned over my past deficiencies towards him. I have had my hopes, not being ignorant of the exercises of his mind for past years. Yet I have had my fears, lest he should have fallen from his first love, and lest his literary pursuits should have weaned his heart from God. For more than a year past, I have hourly meditated on

the course of his education, and preparation for the sacred ministry. He has been the star of my hopes, the source of my anxieties. I have anticipated with exquisite, though unuttered joy and hope, his entrance on the glorious work of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, and I have also been full of anxiety in a view of the falls and disappointments which yearly occur, amidst the contaminations and injurious companionship of a college career. Yet I have never ceased to hope that God will work with him and by him. My declining years have been cheered by associations connected with my interesting boy; but the Lord now sees good,—and blessed be his name,—to hang a dark curtain between me and all these thoughts and visions. Hence I am sometimes fearful, sad, and heavy.

"I see fully the necessity and the propriety of the proposed journey, but I doubt his strength and ability to encounter the fatigue and trial inseparable from it. Chiefly I dread being absent from him when heart and strength may fail, and I may only see him again when sinking into the grave, unaided, unstrengthened, unblessed by his affectionate father. Did I but know more of his mind, I might possibly be more at ease; but his reserve withholds from me this consolation. I have made a gentle, and I hope a considerate attempt, to draw him out by a little opening discussion on the sacrament. I start for Cambridge at half-past four to-morrow. The sight of that place will most acutely remind me of the past as it relates to myself, connected with the contingencies of the future as it may concern him. I have many fears, mingled with the hope of his recovery. I feel very anxious from day to day. May God overrule all these things for the good of each of us! Give my love to all, and an especial blessing to Willy.

Your affectionate,

L. R."

"After it was decided that my brother should go to Scotland, we were advised to send him there by a sea-voyage, in company with Mr. ——. His father was to follow him in a few days. He was much depressed at this time. It was his first separation from the paternal roof, and his mind became deeply affected when the parting hour arrived; and when he was to bid farewell to his beloved mother, to brothers and sisters, to domestics and neighbours, endeared to him by every sweet and tender tie of youthful affection! to the home of his infancy; to almost every person, place, and thing, with which he had been accustomed to associate happiness; the agitations of his feelings increased the weakness of his frame; the conflict of his mind was visible in his countenance, he looked pale and languid; a painful contrast to the usual smile which played on his countenance. On the morning of his departure he was very silent. He looked on us all as we stood around him, and with tears in his eyes he stepped into the carriage. During the interval of separation, my father corresponded with him,* and was very earnest to draw from him a more unreserved communication, and to satisfy himself more thoroughly of the reality of Wilberforce's piety, of which he entertained some doubts, amidst many hopes: but my brother avoided the inquiries of his anxious and distressed parent. The voyage agreed well with him. In the course of a fortnight my father and I followed him into Scotland. We met Willy as we entered the Firth of Clyde in a steam-boat. He looked much better; his spirits were good, and the meeting between us inspired reciprocal feelings of hope and joy.

"For a while Willy's health seemed to be improved; but we soon discovered that there was no material

*See letter p. 198.

amendment. For a few weeks he was buoyant in spirit, and apparently restored; then the hectic fever flushed his cheek, he grew weaker, and again sank into depression. Our dear parent, who at that time did not understand the hopeless nature of the complaint, watched over his wasting child amidst intense anxieties, increased probably by the uncertainty of the issue in his own mind. It was not a temporary separation which alone affected him, though even *this* was a grief heavy to bear; but the least apprehension of losing for *ever* one we love, fills the soul with the bitterest anguish. It is impossible to be sincere, yet calm, under such circumstances, while any hope remains, or any help can be administered. A holy violence of feeling and effort, best discovers the integrity of our principles. There was much in Wilberforce to love and admire. His disposition was very amiable. The usual results of a religious education were visible in him; he showed every outward respect for religion; strictly observed its forms and duties, and admitted the theory of doctrinal truth; but this did not satisfy our dear father. He knew full well that it was very possible to do what was right in the sight of man without a perfect heart,—to cleanse the outside of the platter, or beautify the sepulchre, while all within might be impure; inasmuch as the speculative approval of truth is distinct from its sanctifying influence. Accustomed as our parent had been to contemplate the infinite worth of an immortal soul,—a soul in this instance given to him by God to train for eternity,—it was impossible that he should feel otherwise than intensely anxious while he entertained any doubt of its salvation. It was this uncertainty which so greatly disturbed his peace and injured his health. Wilberforce seemed shut up in impenetrable reserve; he shrank from personal conversation on religious subjects, though his thoughtful and often de-

pressed countenance exhibited traces of inward conflict, and need of help and comfort. He afterwards deeply regretted his silence, and said, 'It was a device of Satan to retard my progress in vital experimental piety.' Our dear parent carried this trouble to God, and 'rolled his sorrows on Him' who alone can help him. For many months, he was sorely tried on this point. But God, always faithful and true, heard and answered his prayers more abundantly than he could ask or think. 'A vehement suitor cannot but be heard of God, whatsoever he asks: if our prayers want success, they want heart; their blessing is according to their vigour.'* The following letters were written to Mrs. R. about this period.

"My dear love,

"Here we are in something like an earthly paradise, if beauty, sublimity, and diversity of scenery can constitute one. The air is most salubrious, the rides delightful. I am glad to say the country agrees well with Wilberforce, who is stronger and in better spirits than I could have expected. He varies occasionally, but suffers little at any time. There is certainly an improvement. The northern experiment has so far answered, that it has cheered his spirits, and afforded him recreation and change of air. I have frequent hopes of his amendment. We have therefore reason for gratitude, whatever may be the inscrutable designs of Providence. My mind reposes with thankfulness on the goodness of God, amidst a thousand anxieties respecting my dear boy. We are constant companions, and have much Christian intercourse together. Not only do prospects, scenery, geology, botany, ships, rocks, mountains, braes, and ordinary occurrences, engage our notice; I have much satisfaction

*Bishop Hall.

in seeing how he enjoys these; but higher things are not forgotten. We pass daily the hour after breakfast in religious exercises. We are taking Mason's admirable Treatise on the Lord's Supper as a kind of text-book. It affords me an opportunity of saying what I wish to him, relative to his own personal interest in spiritual matters. I trust we are going on usefully and prosperously. I think I am in my right place and employment, watching, instructing, nursing, and giving myself wholly to the comfort of my boy under his infirmities and vicissitudes. His cough is troublesome twice or thrice in the day. He pursues a bracing system and a generous diet. To what extent the disease may be preying on the vitals, I dare not conjecture. His present state and appearance are certainly satisfactory, but the complaint is variable and flattering, and I must rejoice with trembling. Oh! for a quiet, reconciled, patient, waiting mind!

"Our present beautiful retreat is doing me good also, and I need it. My mind and nerves have suffered a severe shock. I am conscious of the benefit I derived. How long I may be permitted to enjoy it, God only knows. I would be thankful, and hope to receive grace and strength for the future.

"The weather is become very showery, but is pleasant at intervals. These are days which afford the finest mountain-effects, and in this part of the Western Highlands they are truly grand. We had a rolling tumbling voyage to Ardentenny. Dr. S. seemed on the whole pleased with the appearance of his patient. Dear love to my children. Tell H—— we are surrounded by immense trap-schistus, and red sand-stone rocks, with great variety of form, substance, and arrangement.

* * * Much love from all; from none more than your

LEGH."

"My dear love,

"For a few days after our arrival here, Willy was not so well. The last three days we spent much on the water, and he is stronger and better for it. Dr. S. thinks it a case in which a vigorous pursuit of his bracing system may prove successful, though he speaks with caution. The worst symptoms are, the shortness of breath, and debility in ascending the stairs and short hills. But if the tone of the system can be raised, these symptoms will diminish. His spirits rise and fall as he feels better or worse. I asked Dr. S. what proportion of cases had recovered under his treatment:—he replied, Where it is regularly followed, half. Willy rests much on the hope of amendment, and generally replies to any inquiry after his health, 'I am better.' I never leave him from morning to night. Dr. S. is about five hours sail from us. We spent a pleasant day last Thursday with him in Lord B——'s family.

"I am inwardly struggling and striving to be calm and reconciled to God's will. I am going through depths in the inward meditation of my soul. When you write to Wilberforce, keep in full view the uncertainty of human life, even without, much more with, the uncertainty of disease. Patients like dear W. are full of stronger emotions, and disposed to deeper meditations, as disease threatens a nearer approach to eternity. General sentiments and feelings are more easily preserved than the special applications of them to a particular case. He is still very reserved to me, yet I perceive he reads, and I think meditates, on important subjects. I find it a delicate and a difficult matter to preserve the right balance between the state of his spirits, vacillating, rising and falling with the state of his disease, and a reasonable hope which is not influenced by an earthly association. Endeavour to draw out his sentiments and feelings, and desire him to

keep a letter always on the stocks for you,—to write a little day by day, till the sheet be full.

"So you saw Lord B——'s funeral pass through Bedford. I could wish for Christianity's sake that its open and acknowledged adversary had remained in Greece, where alone his life and conduct seemed to have been doing good. To this country his writings will be a lasting bane, and must continue to injure religion so long as infidelity, blasphemy, and vice, can obtain circulation and popularity, when clothed and armed with the splendour of great genius and talent. These constitute the real objects of worship with many who profess to be Christians. I entertain no doubt that the adoration of an intellectual and poetical idol may be as great a sin, as falling down to the golden image in the plains of Dura. Alas! we have seldom seen true piety and true poetry united; but genius and vice have been too often associated in the annals of mankind. We have need of due discrimination in our estimate of characters, to be aware of the dazzling influence of able corrupters and destroyers of virtue.

"You must only expect, in general, a few lines from me; but I hope enough to convince you how much I love and esteem you. Convey to the people an affectionate pastoral message. The same to Mr. ——; cheer and encourage him in my name. To my dear boys and girls give sweet messages of love: and for yourself accept a fragrant nosegay of pretty things from your own affectionate

LEGH."

"I do not think Willy was fully aware of his danger at this time, though from his reserve it was difficult to ascertain his opinion of himself; and his physician was afraid of discouraging him by a disclosure of his real situation, as he considered it of importance that he

should expect recovery, and cultivate cheerfulness of temper.*

"Willy wrote a few letters during his residence at Rothsay, of which the following are specimens:—

"DEAR ——,

"I am not inattentive or indifferent to the kind solicitude you have expressed for me. I now experience what I have only heard before, that nothing is more consolatory in sickness than to be remembered by those we loved in health. I have been very unwell since I saw you, and I once thought I must have given up my former enjoyments, my future hopes and prospects, even the pleasure of seeing dear friends such as you, ——, and all I held most dear, on earth. I shall never forget the pang which almost broke my heart on leaving home, when I saw the tops of the houses, and the church, and the fields, and the trees of my native village disappear from my sight. I thought, perhaps, I am looking for the last time on the scene of my earliest recollections—my fondest and dearest enjoyments;—but it was a moment of weakness, and I fear it was mingled with a feeling of repining. I had always been happy—too happy; my heart was satisfied with this world, but God was leading me by a path I knew not, in which I should find more certain and durable enjoyment. I needed something to convince me of the emptiness of the world, and to lead me to fix my affections higher. I am *now* much better in health. I do not look like the same person, and I hope I am not presumptuous in anticipa-

Disease and the methods of cure lie within the province of a medical attendant, and under certain circumstances it may not be proper to interfere with him. Yet when there is little or no reasonable expectation of recovery, there is a degree of cruelty in keeping up a delusion, and thus encouraging a patient to delay turning to God till he cannot turn in his bed. It is unjustifiable on any principle of reason or revelation, The practice may be traced to an indifference to religion, or an ignorance of its real character.—EDITOR.

ting another day with you as happy as that spent at W—— a few months ago. Perhaps you will think it a common-place remark, if I express a wish for your company at Rothsay. The situation is beautiful; but beautiful as is the sea stretched now before us, and the mountains and little romantic islands which surround us on all sides, need I say how much more I should enjoy their beauty, were you here to enjoy it with us? I am glad to have dear —— with me. We share our joys together, and think so much alike about every thing. To have been translated so suddenly as I have been, from our flat country to this mountainous region, seems like being taken into fairy land. Neither description nor imagination can do justice to Scottish scenery; but do not suppose, that amidst all its charms I have forgotten England. Oh no! I more than ever love the little blue hills of my native country; the fertile plains, grassy meadows, waving valleys, and elegant rusticity of the cottages, in which we so much excel the hovels of Caledonia. We have here fine exhilarating air; but the nights are cold and bleak. I long to enjoy again an English summer evening,—to recline, as I have often done, on a bank warmed by the setting sun, to feel the balmy breeze which wafts the fragrance of the flowers—to listen to the warbling strain of the nightingale, and give way to the wandering of my imagination, which gave perhaps a delusive yet fascinating sensation of pleasure to the fleeting moment.

"I have sailed above a thousand miles on the sea. I am beginning to like boisterous weather, though I seldom escape the consequences. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,
W."

"About this time my father began to prepare Wilberforce to receive the holy sacrament for the first time,

and they used to retire together every day after breakfast during our stay at Rothsay. Willy listened to his instruction in respectful silence, and seeming acquiescence in the sentiments laid before him: he appeared interested and anxious to be received into full communion with the church of God, and was often observed to be in deep thought and sometimes greatly depressed. His unwillingness, however, to free communication rather increased, and as his health was not materially improved, his father's anxiety often amounted to agony, and he could not conceal the mental agitation which afflicted him. He continued to weep and pray in secret for his child's confidence. From Wilberforce's conversations at a later period, and from letters written about this time, unknown to his father till after his decease, we learnt what had been the deep exercises of his mind—that he was then earnestly seeking the knowledge and enjoyment of God—that eternal things were the daily subjects of his contemplation and inquiry, and that he also suffered much from an insurmountable repugnance to make known his feelings, his wishes, his wants. He told us afterwards, that though he suffered more from suffering alone, he yet seemed like one bound with a chain, and could not venture to lean or place his confidence on any human help. At this time he wrote as follows:

"*Rothsay.*

"My dear Mamma,

"I was beginning to write to you when your letter arrived. Very many thanks to you for it. It is impossible for me to say how much a letter from home rejoices and relieves me, under the peculiar circumstances by which I am separated from it. The simplest thing which happens in Turvey, becomes to me an object of interest.

"I am very sorry I should be the cause of anxiety to you or to any one I love. I feel this thought more than

any pain I suffer in my body. Indeed, I lament our separation as much as you can do. This period is one in which I could have wished we might all have been together, but things do not fall out as we would have them, and it is best for us that they do not. I wish to feel resignation in everything. As for my illness, I trust I receive it at the hand of God, and most firmly believe it to be the greatest mercy he ever vouchsafed me. My heart was engrossed by this world. My affections were not set on things above. I did not sufficiently feel my need of a Saviour. Christ was not my beacon-star to direct the future wanderings of my life; but I looked to the false glare of human ambition, which would have led me to serve myself rather than God: now I have discovered the worthlessness of all my hopes and aims. I find that all I have hitherto done is of no avail in sickness. I have seen what worldly dependance is,—when the world and all that is in it seems about to be hidden from our view for ever. I trust also I have known something of the joy arising out of dependance on Christ in the moment of extremity. I would ask God's forgiveness for making less improvement of his 'loving reproof' than I ought to have done. Remember me to Mr. and Mrs. G——. I hope the school is going on prosperously. I wish my class to be told, that though far from them, I have not forgotten them. I hope they are regular in their attendance, and that if I return, I shall find them all much improved. Oh! if you knew how very often I think of home. I did not know till now how much I was attached to Turvey. I shall never forget my feelings when I lost sight of our little village. I was obliged to summon up every weak and weary faculty to prevent my quite sinking under the removal from it. * * *

Your most affectionate and dutiful son,

W."

"*Rothsay, September.*

"My dear Mamma,

"Many thanks for your affectionate birth-day letter. I shall always recollect my last birth-day; for it was the first in which I felt melancholy. In the full enjoyment of health and spirits, surrounded by all I most loved, and by the companions of my boyhood, those days were wont to pass away more quickly and happily than any other. But as I sailed pensively down the waters of Loch-lomond on the 20th of last month, a day dark and gloomy, and in unison with my feelings; I felt that I was no longer in the spot where I had spent my former anniversaries with those who shared and welcomed my happiness. Yet I solaced the desolation of feeling with the recollection, that though absent, there were those who were thinking of me, and of this your letter convinced me. * * * We spent last Sunday at Greenock; a day, I trust, ever to be remembered by me; for on that day I was admitted to the highest Christian privilege, the sacrament of the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, ordained by him as a perpetual remembrance of his precious death and passion. Oh! that it may be to me a sign and a pledge of my admission to the marriage-supper of the Lamb in glory. I was very much affected, and should have been quite overcome by emotions of my own mind, if I had not felt stronger and better than usual on that day. Now that I am an outward member of the visible church of Christ, may I daily prove myself to be one inwardly, in spirit and in truth; and whatever portion of life God is pleased to allow me, I would devote it to his service, and love him with my whole heart, who first loved me. I wish that another summer was at hand, instead of another winter. I feel a dread of the winter. There is already an autumnal feeling here. The leaves are beginning to change their lively green to more varied hues.

Did the fading leaf ever remind you of a decay of a Christian in this world? Like the early tints displayed by the unfolding bud, are the opening dispositions of a young Christian. His active walk and conversation resemble the healthy vigor of the full-matured foliage and fruit. In the signs of withering decay we see an emblem of his closing scene, when he has arrived at the end of his mortal existence, and sinks into a temporary suspension, to shoot forth in a never-fading spring of immortal joys."

"We spent the months of July, August, and September, in the isle of Bute; but as the season advanced, we were advised to return home. Apparently, there was little improvement in Wilberforce's health. Probably, from being constantly with him, we had not noticed the gradual, yet real increase of the disorder. He certainly considered himself much better, and entertained hopes of recovery, and expressed great pleasure in returning to Turvey. We passed a few days on our way home, with some dear friends in Yorkshire, with whom our father left us, while he went to preach at Bradford. His great anxiety for Willy's eternal destiny, appears by an interesting letter written to him at this time.*

"My brother arrived at Turvey Rectory the beginning of November, and was restored to the quiet and peace of his own family. Six weeks elapsed with little or no alteration in his appearance. In a letter which my father wrote to me at this time, he says,

"Dear Willy is much the same. I wish he was more confidential and communicative as to the real state of his soul. Oh! what would I give for one *voluntary* conversation or letter, detailing the former and present history

* See page 198.

of what is passing in his mind. I think well of it, and I hope it is comfortable; but I want to know this from himself. Many a secret tear does his silence cost me.

"It was during the six months following his return from Scotland, that poor Willy's soul was most severely tried. He never spoke of death, but he must have been sensible of increasing inward decay. He could not hide from himself or his family, the depression and anxiety of his spirit. He was much alone, and when he returned from his closet to his family, the signs of sorrow and the traces of some deep mental conflict were frequently visible in his countenance. The Bible was scarcely ever out of his hand, and after his return from the north, he seldom took up any other book, religious or literary; which was the more remarkable, as his chief occupation and delight had ever been in reading authors on almost all subjects. He would now sit for hours, and nearly whole days, over the Bible, in deep abstraction: he was still silent to all about him, and it was sometimes more than my dear father could bear, to witness the increasing uneasiness of his mind, and the sufferings of his body. After so many ineffectual efforts to penetrate the real state of his heart, our afflicted parent had but one resource—to commit his child to God, in faith, and under the pressure of his agonized feelings to cry, "Thou hast wounded and wilt heal: hast broken and wilt bind up again." The following letters were, I believe, the last my brother wrote.

DEAR ——,

"I am afraid that you will conclude that our trip to the north has cooled our affections, and frozen them into indifference to former friendships. You must think so no longer. * * *

"I am now in that dear home which has sometimes been rendered still dearer by your presence. I reflect

on those hours with much pleasure, but the remembrance is mingled with a feeling of melancholy. It is possible they may return; I mean hours of the same delight: yet I must not forget my gradual decline for the last six months. I am now in a state in which a slight increase of disease might prove fatal: but I am hoping, always hoping; for hope is a symptom of my disorder, so I must hope. I am no longer what you once knew me. The glow of health and spirits does not now enliven my countenance, which looks, I believe, rather sad: yet I know not why it should do so, for I have lost only that which endureth for a moment, and if I obtain that which endureth for ever, the love and mercy of Christ, surely I have reason to rejoice in the exchange. In Christ, and Christ alone, I find peace. He will not cast me away. I have thrown myself, as an unworthy sinner, at the foot of the cross, and there in peace will I lay my head, and I trust cheerfully resign my breath to him who gave it. I used once to love the rose of all the flowers the best; but now it has left me, and I turn to the lily, for it seems to betoken my approach to a world of purity — nor have I any wish for life, if Christ will receive one so unworthy. From how much sin and temptation shall I make my escape by an early death; and quitting these, enter into a heaven of joy, where there is no more curse. I know that in very faithfulness God has afflicted me; — my chief sins were pride and ambition, and these have been the very means,— at least the chief causes, of my disease. Proud of my talents, and seeking the admiration of men, I neglected my health till it was too late to correct the error, and now my dreams of future happiness in this world, and all my ambitious hopes, are fled. But I would not exchange the humility of a Christian for the phantom at which I formerly grasped. People tell me I shall recover. There may be hope, but my own

impression is to the contrary. Pray for me, dear—— and let a tear fall for the sins of

Your affectionate,

W."

"*Jan.* 4, 1825.

"Many, many thanks, dear mamma, for your long and kind letter. I know you love me, and think of me, while you are absent; and it is some little consolation for your absence, and yet but little, for I long for your return very, very much. The house is dull without you, aud I am dull; for I am deprived of the society of one I hold most dear. Do come as soon as circumstances will permit. I would not press it, mamma, but I am not nearly so well as when your left me. My spirits are weak, and my appetite almost gone. * * * * I am glad that you wrote to me so openly and candidly on the subject of death. I feel my earthly tabernacle fast wearing away, and every day brings more occasion for solemn thought and serious reflection; and now, dear mamma, having said this, I know you will be very anxious to hear something about the state of my mind. Just now it is most unhappy. The thought has forced itself upon me, that I am not a child of God, but have been deceiving myself with false hopes. My breast heaving with anguish, and my eyes swollen with tears too big to find a passage, would bear witness to the agony of spirit I have endured this day. But I have cast myself at the feet of my heavenly Father, and have implored him by his mercy, by the love which led him to send a Saviour into the world, by the death and intercession of that Saviour, by the encouragements he has held out to sinners to come unto him, and by the help which he has promised to all those who do so come,—I have implored him not to send me empty

away. I have not yet found comfort, but I am looking and trusting. He has said, Whom I love I chasten. I do hope this may be his dealing with me; and if so, I shall be thankful for it. Amidst these conflicts, I see as it were, a light glimmering through the darkness, which leads me on in hope. Oh, mamma, if you love your son, join your prayers to his, that this life, this ray of hope may increase, and that he may have a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life. I thank you for Miss Jerram's Memoir. I never read any book with more interest. She had exactly the same feelings I have; but God removed them in his own good time! and I derive a hope from her deliverance, that I shall not be cast away. I will not think it. I should deny his word—his promises. Sorrow not, mamma, that I must leave you,—we shall not be long separated. Two little ones are gone before me, and will you not rejoice that God has been so gracious to them? They know not the sin and sorrow of the world. I have known both, and I wish to encounter no more. Not one prayer have I offered up for life; but I have said, Lord, give me a converted heart, and do with my life as seemeth thee best. I feel no desire for life. Do not think I want affection. The thought of parting with you all, is more than I can well bear; but God will give me strength.

"You blame yourself for not having talked with me on religious subjects. I am sorry to say you would have found in me a backwardness which I was never able to overcome; but now if you were here, I could talk most confidentially with you: * * * * * May the Spirit of God rest upon you! May he comfort you under present anxiety—may he speak to your heart in future sorrows—may you find joy in all your tribulations, and an earnest of that rest which is prepared for the people of God! I am,

Your affectionate W."

"The last letter my brother attempted, was to Mr. ——, in Scotland. It was written under great debility, and was left very unfinished:—

"My dear Brother,

"Forgive me if I write this letter in a very disjointed style. I cannot write long together, and it is difficult to resume thoughts once broken in their connection. Many thanks for your kind letter. You need not have begun with excuses. You make me anxious to have you with me—I want to unburden my heart to you. I wish to hear a voice of comfort from you. I never could speak freely on these subjects—I am sorry you found me so backward to religious conversation, but I could not surmount my repugnance—I found it impossible—I was not near enough to death—I had not known trials and conflicts enough to overcome my reserve, and induce me to unbosom my thoughts and feelings. But now that I am struggling for life, now that I have experienced hours of mental agony, which might often have been alleviated, could I have opened my heart: how much do I long to have you near me. How confidently, how freely, would I converse with you!"

"Hitherto Willy's decline had been so gradual, as scarcely to be observed by those who were constantly about him. He rode on horseback daily, sat much with my father in the study, and appeared to his family nearly as usual, except that an increased anxiety was visible in his countenance. But early in January, 1825, a considerable alteration was apparent. He wasted rapidly; death was evidently approaching. We were taken by surprise; for our fears had been lulled asleep. My dear father wrote as follows:—

"My dearest F.

"As I think more uncertainty hangs over the day of your arrival than I wish, I write to hasten your return. Dear Willy droops, he declines fast. He misses you much, and often says he wants you. Many symptoms increase my anxiety about him. He is much weaker within the last few days. Come to us immediately. We want another nurse. His breathing is with difficulty and pain. His sleep and appetite fail — his looks are pale and wan — his whole frame is sinking — his mind seems very calm and composed, but he still says nothing. I am persuaded that a great deal more has passed within than we know of, and that of an excellent kind. Peace and grace be with him and you, and with

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

"P.S. Since I wrote the above I have had a very long, free, unreserved conversation with our dear boy, most affectionate and affecting, and close to the great point. It is an immense relief to my mind. He is to me an interesting mixture of anxiety and hope. His language sometimes resembles that of your own letter: at other times he can trust more. Oh! that I might see both my beloved children, yea, all of them, living by faith on the Son of God! "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

"Willy's most distressing symptom is a kind of suffocating feeling. We know not what this may produce. You will not be surprised at my distress. Do not wait for an escort, but trust Providence for a safe journey home.

(Tuesday)

'You will be anxious to hear how the dear boy is

to-day. He is extremely ill in body, and exceedingly well in mind—in a peculiarly holy frame. He slept a little in the arm-chair last night, but his decay is rapid. He wishes to talk with you on many subjects. I hope he may have strength at intervals to do so. His conversations with me have been most valuable and interesting,—praised be God! I am so comforted by my dear boy's unreserved communications, that I frequently forget the pain of parting. Who could be so selfish as to wish to stop his journey to heaven! Yet how trying to nature is the idea of parting with him! Well, under every bereavement and separation from others, forget not, my dear F——, the use you may always make of your father who loves you. You, also, have been too reserved towards him; for he is indeed and indeed,

Your affectionate parent,

L. R."

"My mother was still at Bath, to which place she had been summoned to attend the dying bed of her own parent, and my father wrote to beg her return.

"MY DEAR LOVE,

"Our dear Willy's weakness has increased with such unexpected rapidity within the last three days, that I wish you to return home immediately. He is exceedingly anxious that you should not delay an hour in coming to him. Amidst my great anxieties, I have the pleasure of telling you that the spell of silence is happily broken between us, and he has opened his whole heart to me. He is in a very anxious but hopeful frame of mind. By our mutual conversation of yesterday and to-day, I am relieved from a heavy burden. All the nameless pangs of my mind, during the last eight months, have been almost blotted out of my remembrance by my present consolations. My prayers are

answered at last, the door of utterance is opened, and I am truly thankful. Your mind, as well as mine, has long anticipated the probable result of this sickness. We must go to the strong-hold for help, and we shall not fail to find it. I am staying from church to enjoy a sabbath with our dear boy: he has had a very bad night, chiefly in the arm-chair; the fever has been excessively high, and the pulse at the utmost. But take comfort from the state of his mind. It is truly interesting. All its natural superiority mingles with its spiritual characteristics. He that once comforted you in your own dangerous sickness, will comfort you in the distress of your soul. Let us trust God in overruling all for the best. When not oppressed by debility and pain, Willy's countenance beams with sweet smiles of composure and love. He often inquires when you may be expected: * * * Of my other feelings I can say but little. No one but God knows all that has passed in my heart for more than eight months, I may say for years, concerning Wilberforce; But God is good and gracious.

Most affectionately yours,
L. R."

"All reserve was now banished from my brother's mind. He opened his whole heart to his father, told him minutely of all his past conflicts, spoke of his present comforts, and begged that he might be closely examined. He wished to satisfy his parent and pastor that his faith was scriptural and sincere. He seemed to go beyond his strength in conversing — even to extreme exhaustion, and appeared very anxious to tell how God had enlightened, converted strengthened, and comforted him. He would sit for hours with his dear father in the study, supported in an easy chair, telling him of all he had gone through,—intreating his pardon for the

uneasiness he had occasioned him by his past silence, and expressing his great joy at now being able to converse with freedom, and mingle their souls together in the delightful interchange of confidence. It was now that our beloved father was indeed comforted, and that he received a full answer to patient prayer. Edified, refreshed, and calmed by the holy language of his child, his mind was supported under the expected and long-dreaded pang of parting. These conversations, which were continued until increasing weakness rendered them impossible, induced my father to form the resolution of writing a memoir of Wilberforce, the imperfect outline of which is all that is left to us. I have often heard my father and brother give the same opinion of the reserve which occasioned so much pain on both sides, and to which frequent allusion has been made. They considered it as God's way of dealing with a peculiar state of mind — intended to humble the pride of the understanding, and silence a love of argument. It was the Holy Spirit, as a sovereign, converting without human agency. Wilberforce said, that for more than three months he had never looked into any book but the Bible; that God's word had been his only study, and that amidst all his anxiety, often amounting to agony of mind, he could find no relief, either from religious books or religious conversation; but was obliged to go to the Bible for everything he wanted to know: — that whenever he opened the Bible, he turned verse after verse into prayer as he read, and that in so doing he felt a force, a sweetness and consolation passing all understanding: — that though he knew he had a father who loved him tenderly, and was so able and willing to instruct him, and remove his perplexities, he felt himself as one who was spell-bound, and could not break silence — and so he retired to his solitary chamber to weep and struggle on in darkness — until the Holy Spirit became

his teacher, showing him the piercing spirituality of a perfect law; amidst conviction and terror of conscience leading him to the cross to seek for mercy through him that was crucified upon it: and enabling him to receive the promise of free salvation in Christ by his blood and righteousness unto justification. 'I have built,' he would say, 'all my hopes for eternity on God's word, which is unerring truth. I have found peace there, and have been sealed by the Spirit which indited that word, having received an earnest of the heavenly inheritance. It was without human aid, that I might give God the glory.'

'I have mentioned to you some interesting conversations which passed at this time between Wilberforce and my dear father. The following paper in my father's handwriting is the only one sufficiently connected for insertion.

"Subjects of conversation with me on Friday:—

"Warburton—examination of evidences—acknowledgment of errors—God's reasons for taking him away from the ministry—prayer—Christ's love—God's way of humbling pride—infidel temptations—on mere educational religion—his secret conflict for four years past between a love of science and a love of religion."

"On Saturday he expressed a wish to see our family surgeon; "not," said he, "that I want medicine, which will do me no good, but I wish for his opinion of the progress of the disorder; it will be a great satisfaction to me to know precisely, how long he thinks I may live. My strength fails; yet the symptoms vary very much." The surgeon arrived in the evening. Willy conversed freely with him, and begged him to be open and explicit. Mr. —— saw clearly that he was now in the last stage of consumption, and he was surprised at the cheerful and unembarrassed manner with which he discoursed on his present situation. I left them together for a few

minutes. On my re-entering the room I was struck with his countenance, which presented a mixture of calm and lively satisfaction, as he was conversing with his medical attendant, who on his return to the family spoke with great feeling of his patient. He said, "the danger is imminent, though it is impossible to say how long he may remain," and added, "I have scarcely ever witnessed so much cheerfulness and composure in any one in the prospect of death; certainly never in so young a person."

* * * I returned to my son, who said that Mr. ——'s visit had afforded much relief to his feelings. "I see what he thinks of my case, and it is right I should know it." There was a union of thoughtfulness and serenity in his manner which affected me exceedingly; but it filled me with gratitude and thankfulness to witness in this well-ordered and calm state of mind an evidence of God's work, and of a divine change. He observed, "I have no expectation of any advantage from medicine; but it may palliate distressing symptoms. The great Physician alone will regulate all for the best, both for body and soul. Oh! I want to *trust him* more and more!"

"In the evening, as we were sitting alone in the study, I asked him whether he had read the book I had put into his hands, and whether he had found its contents satisfactory. Instead of giving any direct reply to this question, he looked at me with an earnest expression of countenance, and said, "Papa, do not be afraid: I wish you to examine me. I am anxious neither to deceive, nor be deceived in respect of my spiritual estate. You cannot be too plain with me." I had been for a long time past earnestly longing for a full disclosure of his thoughts, but his reserve had hitherto kept me from all knowledge of his real estate. In answer to questions of a personal nature, he would only

reply, "I hardly know what to say; another time I may tell better." On religious subjects in general he never refused to converse freely, but he shrank from every attempt at personal application. I was therefore delighted when he thus voluntarily afforded me an opportunity of knowing the secret state of his mind, for which I had long and most anxiously prayed. I told him how much I had wished to gain his confidence, and feared I had not urged him to freedom of intercourse with sufficient earnestness. "Indeed, papa," he said "the fault was not yours. I have felt a backwardness, particularly of late, to disclose what was passing in my mind, and had you pressed me more than you have done, to speak of myself, I believe you would have failed to have obtained your object. But now I feel quite at liberty to talk of myself, and I must first tell you that I think I see God's design in keeping me thus shut up from you. It was his gracious purpose to teach me, in the privacy and solitude of inward meditation, my state as a sinner, and the nature of salvation by a Saviour; here I learnt the deep things of God, and now I would come forth and tell you what Christ has done for my soul." His countenance brightened as he uttered these words; a tear dropped from his cheek, and his eye glistened with animation, as he said, "I have had great exercises of mind of late, but God has been very merciful to me in the midst of them."

"And what," said I, "are your present feelings, my dear boy?" "I feel, papa," he replied, "more hope than joy. I have read of ecstacies in the view of dying, which others have experienced, and to which I am still a stranger; but I have a hope founded on the word of God, which cheers and supports me. I know in whom I have trusted, and I believe he will neither leave nor forsake me. I am not afraid of death; but as I think my time will not be long, I wish to put myself first into

the Lord's hand, and then into yours, that you may search and try me, whether I am in any error." Such an important moment was not to be neglected. I received my child's confidence as an answer to many an anxious and earnest prayer which I had offered up to God, and I resolved to use it, as affording an opportuity of peculiar interest to us both. Satisfied as I had long been with the general view of his religious and moral character, strengthened by a discovery of many evidences of inward principle, still, when I considered the near approach of death and eternity—the value of an immortal soul—the danger of spiritual delusion, and my own immeasurable responsibility as a parent, I resolved to leave nothing unsaid or untried, which would bring our hearts into mutual repose on the great subject of salvation, and my dear child's personal interest therein.

"I found his mind perfectly clear as to the great principle of his acceptance with God, solely and unequivocally through the death and righteousness of Christ. In the most simple and satisfactory manner he renounced all dependance upon every word and deed of his own. "It is," said he, "as a guilty sinner before God, that I throw myself on his mercy. I have no excuse to offer for myself, no plea to put in why God should not utterly destroy me, but that Jesus died to save, to pardon, and to bless me. It is his free gift, and not my deserving. Oh! papa, what would become of me if salvation was by works? What have I ever done, and above all, what in my present state, could I now do, to merit any thing at his hands? God forbid that I should rest on such a flimsy, fallacious system of divinity, as that which ascribes merit to man. I have no merit. I can have none. I thank God I have long known this. I fear many trust in themselves, and thus rob Christ of his glory. Is not this true, papa?"

"Yes, my dear Wilberforce, many do deceive them-

selves, and build for eternity on a wrong foundation. But I have endeavoured to impress on your mind from your childhood, that salvation by grace, and not of works, is the peculiar feature of the gospel of Christ; and do you not now see that this is the doctrine of the Bible?"

'Yes, papa, and it is because, after long and repeated study of the Bible, I have found the doctrine there, that I believe, and am now comforted by it. You will pardon my saying that the opinions which I have formed, and the doctrines on which I rest, have not been imbibed from the sermons I have heard, or the books which I have read, but from a close study of the Scriptures themselves. I have been accustomed to bring sermons and books to the test of the Bible, and not the Bible to them. You cannot think what light and comfort I have found in reading God's own word: I never found any thing like it from any other book."

"I particularly inquired into the history of his mind for more than three years past, in reference to those sceptical temptations which he had formerly described to me; and whether he had been lately tried by the same doubts and difficulties in respect of the truth of the scriptures." "Never," he replied, "no, never. From the time to which you allude, I have felt the most perfect reliance on the word of God; and by much reading of it, and praying over it, I have been so confirmed in my persuasion of its divine origin, as not to have had my confidence once shaken since that period. I have been tried deeply in other respects, but I have never again varied on that important question. The book of God, by God's blessing on its contents, has proved its own heavenly character to my understanding. How thankful I feel for this"——

"A flush of hectic fever occasioned at this moment a short period of debility, and he paused for a few minutes.

He soon resumed his affecting conversation, and said, "I am not ignorant of my besetting sin. It was the pride of the understanding. I always loved to examine thoroughly into the grounds of an opinion before I received it, and generally, though not always, to be deliberate in coming to a conclusion. This habit has often made me appear over-confident in what I said and I know you have felt and lamented it. I do entreat your forgiveness of any instance of this folly which has hurt and grieved you." Then he added, "The recollection of it has greatly humbled; I trust I have seen my fault, and have not applied in vain to the blood which cleanseth from all sin."

"I asked him what had been his views of the ministry, in case God had spared his life. He replied, "You know, papa, it has always been my wish and expectation to be a clergyman, and with this view I have sought to attain various kinds of literary knowledge. I have very often prayed to God to fit me for this office, and I have thought much of the doctrines I should have to preach to others. But I can see a reason why God has put an end to these intentions and prospects. He is removing me out of this life, and does not permit me to enter into the ministry, lest I should be tempted, from the peculiar turn of my mind, to seek the honour and praise of men in my ministrations, more than God's glory, and the salvation of sinners. I think I can see both wisdom and goodness in this dispensation."

"I remarked that the same God who had convinced him of his danger, could have humbled his heart in a variety of ways; and prepared him for the service of the sanctuary, without endangering his safety; and doubtless would have done it if he had seen good to have prolonged his life. "Such discoveries of your own heart, my dear boy, are evidences not only of what God

can do, but a pledge of what he would have done for you." "True, papa; but if he pleased to humble me in the valley of death, may it not be safer and happier for me? The Lord's way must be the best way."

"He then adverted to another subject. "I have been much occupied of late," said he "in thinking of man's natural depravity, and the deceitfulness of the human heart. I have discovered in it many things in which we are apt to overlook or make excuses for it. I am sure I have no ground of hope except I stand with St. Paul, and cry out, I am the chief of sinners." I referred to a conversation which I once had with an individual, who objected to an application of that expression to himself, and said, it was intended only to describe the peculiar circumstances of St. Paul. "Then I am sure," replied Wilberforce, "that person could not have been rightly convicted of guilt in his own conscience. I do not know what the critic may say on such a passage, but I am quite satisfied that when the heart is opened to itself, the expression, *chief of sinners*, will not appear too strong to describe its character. I have often heard you say, papa, that the view of religion which most honors God, is that which most debases the sinner, and most exalts the Saviour. I never felt this to be so true as at the present moment."

"His pallid but intelligent countenance, as he said this seemed to express more than he could find words to utter. He paused a while, and continued, "What a comfort I find in this conversation with you! It is such a relief to my mind! and I am very thankful for it." My own heart was too responsive to that of my beloved child, not to re-echo his own sentiments. I knelt down and returned thanks to God, for the consolation afforded to us both, and prayed earnestly that he would continue to us the same holy interchange of kindred spirit and feeling.

"In another conversation, my dear boy expressed great satisfaction at the remembrance of the preparation for the Lord's Supper, while we resided in the Isle of Bute the preceding summer; a preparation carried on for several weeks before he first received that sacrament in the Episcopal Chapel of Greenock. He observed that in his daily opportunities of reading and conversing with me, he could seldom express his thoughts with freedom, though he deeply felt the importance of the subject before us, but "I shall always feel thankful to you, papa, for the diligent and affectionate manner in which you instructed me. I love that book of Mason's, I shall never forget that day at Greenock Chapel. I was greatly comforted. You preached from Isaiah lv. 1. "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk; without money and without price."—I did indeed thirst for the waters of salvation. Poor Charlotte B—— was there also. Her unexpected death affected me much."

"What were your thoughts," I said, "when you wrote those lines in her album the night before you parted from her."*

"I thought them," he replied, "very suitable to my own feelings; but I little thought she was to realize the sentiment before I did." "She has joined her father in a better world," I said. "Yes, and may I soon be with them; but God knows best, and I wish to commit myself into his hands, for life or death." He then sunk for a while into his chair and dozed. When he awoke he began again to converse. "But papa, papa, do you

* It matters little at what hour of day
The righteous falls asleep. Death cannot come
To him untimely who is fit to die;
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven;
The briefer life, the earlier immortality.

MILLMAN.

indeed think I am on the right foundation? I cannot bear the thought of being deceived; but I do think Christ loves me too well to cast me away, and that I may say, *Faithful is he that has promised, who also will do it.* I love God. I love his word. I love his ways. I love his people, though I feel so unworthy to be counted one of them. Surely such feelings as these do not fit me for hell." An indescribable look of animation pervaded his countenance as he uttered these words, and bespoke the love, faith, hope, and sincerity of his heart, too plainly to be mistaken.

"If," he continued, "God meant to destroy me, would he have shown me these things?"

"I am persuaded not," I answered. "Manoah's wife has proved a comforter to many, and I rejoice that her argument for the merciful designs of God prevails with you."

"I am now fatigued, and must go to bed," said he, "Pray with me, and then good night!"

"Having the assistance of a much-valued friend to undertake the public services of my church, and feeling great anxiety to avail myself of this opportunity to devote myself to my son in his critical and alarming state of health, I remained at home with him the whole of the next day. Although much oppressed by the rapidly-increasing progress of disease and consequent debility, yet he was able to engage in some interesting and very important conversations at intervals during the day. He was carried into the study about eleven o'clock. At his breakfast he expressed a hope that there were many now engaged in prayer for him in the congregation assembled for divine service. "I should love to be in the midst of them, but it cannot be now. It never will be in this world. What a comforting consideration, papa, that wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, Christ has promised to

be present with them! Do you think he is here?" I replied, "I cannot doubt it, my dear boy. It is one of the most consolatory views of the word of God, not only that he is constantly present with every individual believer, in every place, and under every circumstance, but he is also especially present with all such, however, great or small their number, who unite together in acts of worship and religious intercourse. He is alike present at this time with our friends in the church, and with you and me in this room. May God give us grace to realize this and be thankful."

"Soon afterwards, while the servant was removing the breakfast-things, I was stirring the fire, as he complained of the cold; and a short silence ensued. He said presently, with a playful smile, "I was thinking while you stirred the fire, how much easier it is to rake the ashes from the grate, than to get rid of sin from the heart;" and then relapsing into a grave look, he added "how often the ashes of sin deaden the flame of religion in the heart!" This remark—originating in an apparently casual incident—led to a close conversation on the nature of sin, and the difficulties with which a Christian has to contend in his conflicts with indwelling and inbred corruption. I was much struck with his deep acquaintance with the exercises of his own heart, and with the gospel plan of salvation, which he evinced as he continued to dwell on this subject. I rejoiced to observe in him a personal and a practical application of the grand truths of revelation to his own heart; the result of much prayer and meditation, and reading of the sacred volume: his inmost thoughts were thrown into our discourses, which manifested a power and demonstration of the Spirit of God far beyond what I ever anticipated. The reserve which had caused me so much solicitude was entirely removed. With a sweet and endearing freedom of heart and tongue, he expressed

himself so openly, and with such sincerity as filled me with gratitude, and rendered me for a moment insensible —comparatively insensible—to the pang of bereavement which was soon to be undergone. To possess such satisfactory evidences of my child being an heir of glory, and that my temporary loss would prove his eternal gain, and the hope that we should one day meet in the presence of God to part no more, cheered my spirit and tranquillized my mind, under an affliction otherwise insupportable.

"I was making a reference to some expressions in the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, on the nature and character of St. Paul's own experimental acquaintance with the truths which he enforced on others, when I was summoned to join my other children at the dinner table. I told him my absence would allow him a respite from the fatigue of conversation; but that I would soon return to him and resume the subject, and begged him to seek repose for a little while in his own arm-chair. This appeared to me the more necessary, as I had observed an evident and painful struggle between the debility of his frame and the animation of his thoughts. The hour of the afternoon service arriving, I returned to my son, whom I found with the Bible opened before him. He looked at me with a smile, and said, "Well, papa, I have not been asleep, I have been otherwise employed. I revived almost as soon as you left me, and as I wanted to converse with you on the epistle to the Romans, I have been reading through the first eight chapters, whilst you were below, in order that I might have this subject more clear in my recollection." I was surprised and pleased to find that he had strength sufficient for such an exertion, and I reflect on the circumstance with greater interest, as this was, I believe, the last time he was able to read at all.

"He observed that he had purposely stopped at the eighth chapter, because the apostle had there seemed to make a division in his subject and argument. "What a beautiful summary of doctrine these chapters contain, papa! I have thought on them again and again. St. Paul lays his foundation deep in the corruption of human nature, and shows so plainly that neither Jew nor Gentile has any hope from works, but only from faith in Christ Jesus. I have found great comfort from that view of the righteousness of Christ, which the apostle declares to be the only way of salvation. There is,—there can be no other. We have no righteousness of our own—all are under sin—every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. I have been at times perplexed about the principle of acceptance with God, but now I see it quite clearly. With what earnestness does the apostle labour to prove the vanity of all human dependance! I have been thinking as I read these chapters, how entirely the walk of a believer depends on his faith in Christ, and how closely connected the holiness, and the comfort, and the reliance of the soul are with each other. He proceeded to comment on the fifth and sixth chapters, as a train of experimental and practical reasoning deduced from those which preceded them: adding, "but the seventh and eighth chapters have been my delight. I have found my own case so exactly and so clearly described in the seventh, and have been so much comforted by St. Paul's description of his own feelings about sin and Christ, as I can never express. And then the eighth crowns the whole. Oh, what a chapter is *that!* Every word has given me instruction, strength and comfort." I hear said, "And can you make an inward application of the latter part of that chapter to yourself?" "Indeed, papa, I hope I am not deceiving myself, but I do think I can. It lifts me up with such hope and con-

fidence, the language is so sublime, and the doctrine so convincing. It sometimes seems too much for a sinner like me to say;—but all things are possible with God, and he whom God saves, has a *propriety* in all things." He then went through the whole subject of the chapter, making a variety of sensible and solid remarks upon it, and intreating me to examine him as to his personal application of these glorious and gracious truths to his own heart. After he had made some animated observations on the concluding part of this chapter, he said, "But now I want to add one sentence from another part of the epistle, to wind up the whole, and that is, "Oh! the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen." I shall ever retain a vivid recollection of the tone of his voice, and the sparkling look of his eye, which accompanied the utterance of these words. He became immediately much exhausted—the difficulty of breathing increased—the fever ran very high—he bent over the table and fell into a dose, which lasted half an hour. He gradually awoke, and I observed him to fix his eyes on a globe of water which stood near the window, and contained a gold fish. I enquired what he was looking at so earnestly? He replied, "I have often watched the mechanical motion of our gold and silver fish in that globe. There is now only one left, and that seems to be weak and sickly. I wonder which of us will live the longest—the fish or I?" He paused, and then added, "That fish, my dear papa, is supported by the water in the vessel, but I hope I am supported by the waters of salvation. The fish will soon die, and live no

more; but if I am upheld by the water of salvation, I shall live for ever."

"His remark led me to make some observations on the practical use which may be made of natural objects, and the advantages of cultivating a habit of seeing something of God and the soul everywhere, and of accustoming the mind to seek such comparisons and allusions as tend to improve and delight it. Wilberforce observed, "This is the very principle exemplified in our Lord's parables, and in all the figurative language of scripture." At this moment a gleam of light from the setting sun shone upon the gold fish, and produced a brilliant reflection from its scales, as it swam in the glass vessel. "Look," said he, "at its beauty now." "So, my dear boy, may a bright and more glorious sun shine upon you, and gild the evening of your days!" "I hope—" he replied, "although I sometimes feel a cloud and a doubt pass across my mind,—that in the evening-time there shall be light; and then in his light, I shall see light."

"Thus the gold fish furnished us with a kind of parable. It so happened that the fish survived my son two or three weeks; but I never afterwards saw it without a lively recollection of the conversation to which it gave rise; and the ideas associated with it still mingle with the cherished moments of his latter end."

CHAPTER VIII.

How calm the rest!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn out winds expire so soft.'

BLAIR.

"FROM this time my brother kept his room, being too weak to be removed to the study. He sat up during a part of the day in his arm-chair, and conversed with his father in the same strain of elevated piety. His mind was at times strong and vigorous, full of faith, rejoicing in the prospect of death, his heart trusting in God,—then trembling and leaning on his spiritual guide, who watched over him with the overflowings of tenderness, gratitude and love, while his dying son besought him to probe his inmost soul. My father, when with us, usually preserved a dignified composure; speaking little, and with tears; pouring forth his soul in the family devotions; and seeming to say, 'He will soon leave me, but blessed be the name of the Lord!'

"I returned to Turvey on the 10th of January. My father met me in the hall. He wept much as he told me there was no hope of Willy's life; but he soon recovered himself, and said that the agony of bereavement was forgotten in the blessed thought, that he had trained up a child for glory. He then took me up stairs, where I found the dear invalid in a chair before the fire, looking very pale and emaciated, but with a countenance full of peace and love. His eye glistened as I entered. He leaned his head on my shoulder, but was too deeply moved to utter a word. He continued silent a long time,

and scarcely spoke or answered the usual inquiries of affection, In the evening he revived, and seemed disposed to converse. I asked if he could view the approach of death without fear?

"Yes, dear F——, I have no wish to stay one day longer on earth, but I must not be impatient. Lord Jesus come quickly! if it be thy will. I would not linger here, but I pray for patience. Ah! F——, how I long to be free from this poor body, and see my Saviour's face. You can never know how I long for this, till you also have heaven in view, I know in whom I have trusted. He will save me; for he has promised, and he never changes." He then fell into a kind of stupor, murmuring distinctly, "Christ! the sinner's hope." When he awoke, the fever was very high, and his mind seemed to wander. My father entered. He looked up and said, "He fights hard, and I fight hard, but Christ fights harder." He began to pray aloud, struggling for strength and thought, and entreating God that he might not be given up to delirium, of which he had a great dread; and then he praised and blessed God for giving him strength to offer another prayer.

"I sat up with him the greater part of the night. He once startled me by the energy with which, after a long silence, he cried out, "I know in whom I am trusting. I know he never yet left one soul that trusted in him. I will not doubt." He passed a painful night, with alternate fits of fever and shivering. He continually expressed a fear that the fever would occasion delirium. He felt his time so precious, that he could not bear to lose a moment by insensibility; he exclaimed with the utmost vehemence, "O God! most merciful;—O God! do not afflict me with the greatest of all evils,—insanity. I long to glorify thee in my death. Can I glorify thee in

delirium, when I know thee not? Yet not my will but thine be done."

"About five o'clock on Wednesday morning he said, "Now call up papa, and ask him to come and talk with me. I feel as if I should have much to suffer to-day, and I want him here that I may call up some comfort and strength." He came immediately. I retired and did not hear their conversation. My father has more than once told me of the interesting subjects of their discourse, but I am afraid to trust to recollection at this distance of time. I again regret that my beloved father did not live to fulfil his own intentions. I extract from his very imperfect notes, what may possibly apply to their present interview.

"I read the account of Hooker's death to him—substantial calm on his mind, only interrupted for the moment by disease—he told me of his grapplings with infidel objections—of his weeping when a little child, at a sermon I preached from Jeremiah."*

"After breakfast I returned to relieve my father, who, amidst his daily sufferings, was not unmindful of his family or his parish. "*I must work while it is called to-day,*" seemed to be the prevailing sentiment of his mind, and his beloved child's approach to death gave additional weight to the admonition, "what thou doest, do it with all thy might."

"Wilberforce sat silent for some time, then looked up and said, Come, and sit close to me. Let me lean on you. Then putting his arms round me, he exclaimed, "God bless you, my dear!"—he was agitated, and ceased speaking. Presently, he said—"I must leave you—we shall walk no further through this world together—but I hope we shall meet in heaven. Let us

* Jer. iii. 22. "Return! thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger for ever."

now talk of heaven. Do not weep for me dear F——. do not weep, for I am very happy, but think of me, and let the thought make you press forward. I never knew happiness till I knew Christ as a Saviour." He then exhorted and encouraged me to study the Bible with perseverance. "Read the Bible—read the Bible. Let no religious book take its place;—through all my perplexities and distresses, I never read any other book, and I never felt the want of any other. It has been my hourly study, and all my knowledge of the doctrines, and all my acquaintance with the experience and realities of religion, has been derived from the Bible only. I think religious people do not read the Bible enough. Books about religion may be useful, but they will not do instead of the simple truth of the Bible." He then spoke of his regret at parting with us. "Nothing convinces me more of the reality of the change within me, than the feelings with which I can contemplate a separation from my family. I now feel so weaned from the earth, my affections so much in heaven, that I can leave you all without a regret. Yet I do not love you less, but God more." I asked him whether his mind had been distressed for the last few months at the thought of parting from us; for knowing the strength of his affections, I fancied he must have suffered much in subduing and controlling them. "Oh! my dear F——, the pain, the agony I have felt, when I said to myself, 'I must leave them all.' You will never know what bitter hours I have passed: none but God knows what it cost me to break those ties which bound me so strongly to earth. Never, never will you know what I suffered, as I looked at you all, and felt my strength declining, and remembered it must soon be a last look. I thought this must be the bitterness of death; and even after I had found acceptance and peace with God, I still suffered deeply in the prospect of separation, and

never supposed I could willingly part from my family. I knew that God would support me, and carry me through this trial; but a trial I felt it must be to the last: and yet, see me now in the immediate prospect of parting—I am quite happy, and can leave you all without a tear—I know God can unite us all again—and I can trust him here as I can in everything else. Now this change must have been effected by God. It is so evident, I can not mistake it. I could not have acquired this composure myself. God has done it, but I have suffered much in the process." He always appeared comforted when he heard that any one had prayed for him, and frequently entreated those about him to pray; but he used to add, "Do not pray for my life, but that I may have comfort in death." I was writing to W——, and asked him if he had any message to send. He said, "They have been very kind to me, but I am too ill to think of them." Afterwards, seeming to recollect himself, he said, "Come and hold my head while I try to remember them. I would send some message. Tell dear M—— that I am suffering very much, but I can and do rejoice in my sufferings; for every pain is bringing me nearer to heaven. I shall not see her again in this world;" here he seemed quite exhausted. After a while he revived a little. "I want to say something to dear Mr. ——; you told me he had been praying for me. I wish him to know how much I have been comforted by this. How grateful I feel to him! tell him how much I value his prayers, and that they have been answered; for Christ is now precious to me. Through him the fear of death is taken away. I want to tell him more. If I can I will to-morrow, but say this—" He now became exceedingly ill; he breathed with great difficulty; he panted for breath, and his struggles were distressing. The sufferings of his body affected his mind, and he

seemed to lose his comfort and confidence in Christ. He cried out many times, "Oh! pray for me, pray for me, pray for me. This is hard to bear; how different the pains of death are to any other! It is such a struggle to get free." He appeared to suffer much in his mind. My father said, "My dear boy, Christ is still with you. When he once fixes his love, he never takes it away. You may not see him just now, but he is not the less near to you. Nothing can, nothing shall separate you from Christ." Willy cried out, "And did he not say, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" Then he twice repeated, "For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." "Oh! papa!—what shall I do—I am suffering so very much?" "Not one pang too many, my child," said his weeping father, while the big tears rolled down his cheek. "I know it, papa," he answered: "I believe it, I feel it." He continued in a state of suffering nearly the whole day. Towards evening he sunk into a sort of lethargy. He seemed scarcely to know any thing that was passing. About eleven o'clock at night, my father read the 23rd Psalm, and prayed with him. He was able to attend, and it seemed to cheer him. He was better in the morning, and had much comfortable conversation with his father throughout the day. Mr. G—— came to see him. Willy wished to converse with him. He was fearful at first, and expressed some doubt of his salvation: but Mr. G—— encouraged him by his remarks. He assured him that Christ would never give up a soul who had fled to him for refuge. Here Willy, interrupted him, "I believe it, yes, I believe it. Christ has brought me thus far, and he will not leave me. He has said, "Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in *no wise* cast out." I feel now quite certain that Christ will save me." He then adverted to his love for

us, and the parting with us. "We have been a happy family;—so closely united! Every two of us can say, how dearly we love each other—our love has been more than common—I think we shall be a family of love in heaven—two of us are in heaven already, and there will soon be a third—Oh! I feel persuaded we shall meet again." Mr. G—— proposed to read a chapter in the Bible. Willy said he could listen, and Mr. G—— chose parts of the two last chapters of the book of Revelation. He appeared greatly refreshed. His face beamed with joy while he listened to the sublime and glorious description of the new Jerusalem, and anticipated the moment of his own entrance into the holy city, to go out no more for ever; when he should join the melody of the heavenly choir, and make one of the countless throng before the throne of God. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." After a short pause, he said to Mr. G——, "Tell me about the song of Moses and the Lamb, my memory is failing. Repeat it to me." Mr. G—— repeated from Rev. xv., "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O King of saints; who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest."

"Mr. G—— took leave of him, and sometime after his departure, Willy said, "Mr. G—— seemed sent to bring the close of the Bible to be the consolation of my life. It is singular that he should have fixed on those chapters, for I have read them so often; again and again in my hours of sorrow; longing, praying, but not daring to believe I should ever be admitted to that glorious company; how have I wept over them!"

"Mr. F—— paid him a visit, and Wilberforce was very earnest in pressing him to examine the state of his mind, saying, "I would neither deceive nor be deceived."

Mr. F—— replied, "You are now too much exhausted for conversation; I have heard from your papa the state of your mind, and I am quite satisfied with his opinion of you: for our ideas of true conversion are the same." "Yes," said he, "but I would rather you should examine me for yourself,—I want you also to search me."

"He asked Mr. F—— whether the feeling of assurance was necessary to salvation. "I do not," he said, "always feel alike; sometimes when illness overpowers me, my comfort is gone, and I am afraid that after all I shall perish; but I know that in my darkest season I still love my Saviour above everything."

"My dear Wilberforce," said Mr. F——, "you cannot have a more able counsellor in your perplexities, than your affectionate father, and your very weak state inclines me to be brief. Our religion may be explained in a few words, as least as far as it is necessary to your peace and safety. You must have a title to heaven, and a meetness for its enjoyment; you need not now trouble yourself on other points. The title is Christ's merits. Do you rest on them alone for acceptance with God?"

"Oh, yes; I have no other hope or trust. If I have confidence or comfort, I get it only there!" "Well, then, the next thing is a meetness for heaven. If any man belong to Christ he has the mind of Christ; he is a new creature; religion is his life as well as his peace." "Indeed, indeed," he replied, "I do love Christ; I long to be where he is, to dwell with him for ever." "Then all is safe, Wilberforce; I am quite satisfied that he who has worked the one in you, has procured the other for you." "But your eye, Mr. F——, your eye looks as if it doubted of me." "No, my dear Wilberforce, I am not doubting, I am looking on you with deep interest."

"Mr. F—— went away with a promise to see him again in a few days; but my brother died before the time fixed for another visit.

"He slept for some time, and then suddenly sat up in his chair with apparent ease; he breathed freely, spoke distinctly, seemed free from pain, and his countenance looked satisfied and happy. I was quite surprised at the change, and said, "My dear Willy, you seem much better." "Yes," he answered, "I am much better. This is a precious moment, and now I hope I shall be able to talk to you a little. This is an answer to prayer, dear F——. I have much longed to glorify God in my death, and ever since last Sunday I have been praying for one hour of ease and strength to speak to you all for the last time, and tell you what I now think of the importance of religion. Hitherto you have seen me so overpowered by disease, that you could not judge of my comfort and confidence in my principles. But God has granted my request, and I will glorify him." He then began an interesting conversation, and spoke with astonishing ease. He was very plain and sincere. He told me kindly of faults and errors which he had observed in me; and he endeavoured to correct them, and encouraged me from his own experience to persevere in striving against them. "My dear, my very dear F——," he said, "I hope we shall meet in heaven. I could not talk to you in this calm manner, if I did not believe we should meet again. But you have much to learn—much to do before you can get there. There is but one road, and without an entire dedication of the heart to God, you cannot walk in it." He spoke of the dangers of a religious education; of having the form of religion, while the heart was still unchanged, and the will unsubdued. He spoke also of what he called *sentimental religion*, telling me how easy it was to write in beautiful poetical language without any real feeling of heart; and he mentioned some instances where religion was but a bright fiction of the imagination; and others where it proved itself a trans-

forming principle in the life and conduct. "My dear sister, be a *real* disciple—be in earnest—you will want *heart*-religion when you come to die—the poetry of religion will not do then;"—reminding me of some letters I had written to him. He again recommended to me most earnestly the constant study of the Bible. "Here," he said, "I speak in a peculiar manner from recent experience—for the last three months the Bible has been my sole instructor—it has gradually led me on to clear light and real experience, till every promise is my own. I have read the greater part of it through, several times during my illness; and often on a Sunday, when I have spent the day alone, I have read the whole of the New Testament, unable to leave off till I had grasped all the mind of the Spirit at once. Perhaps papa has thought I read too few religious books—he has looked anxious at my neglect of many he put in my way—I do not give myself in this respect for an example—but I have found little benefit from books, sermons, or conversations. The Bible, the Bible alone has taught me everything. If I read books on religion, however excellent, the thought always haunted me—this is human—it may be wrong. I could not rest till I went to the Bible. Here I felt sure that all was divine and infallible; and I found such comfort in the simple truth of God's word, that I set aside every other book, dissatisfied. I may well be earnest, then, in pressing you to go to the Bible."

"He then said, "But you must pray over the Bible;—without the teaching of the Spirit it will do you no good: you must apply it as you go on to yourself, and feel it personally, or you will get no benefit, though you stand the whole day over it. I have been in the habit of reading the Bible on my knees, and I recommend you to do the same. It encourages prayer. I have found it very useful to turn Scripture into prayer, using the

very words. There is not a psalm I have not turned into a prayer. I have felt so safe in making prayers from the Bible, because then I knew I could not err; and let prayer always be preceded by self-examination; lay your heart bare before God: indulge not even a doubtful feeling; one secret sin would cloud all."

"I had marked the depression of his spirit when the symptoms of his disease appeared more unfavourable, and I asked him if he had any fear of death now. He answered me with great firmness,—"No, not any—I have unshaken confidence in Jesus as a Saviour—he has taken away the sting of death, and for his sake the Father will receive me as his child." I replied, "You had, dear Willy, great doubts of your salvation, and many fears of death during some periods of your illness." "Oh, yes; indeed I had! I have been on the verge of despair, and have known its agonies. My pain of body was at times very great, but nothing in comparison with the agony of my spirit. I struggled on in darkness and in silence. It was known only to myself and God; but I was supported and carried through all, and now I would encourage you, my dearest sister, by telling you what succeeded in my case. I will tell you just what I did. After a season of much doubt and terror, during which I felt as if all was delusion, and I should be cast into hell, I determined to go at once boldly to God, in the name of Christ, and plead the promises which were then before me in the Bible. I fell down upon my knees—I groaned—I wept—I prayed most fervently—I said, 'Here I am, Lord, a poor perishing sinner—my sins are heavy and alarming—I cannot bear them myself—I feel my body decaying—I must soon die, and I dare not appear before Thee, the pure and holy God, as I now am—I read of a Saviour thou hast provided for sinners, and I come to him to be saved from eternal death—I come to the cross of Christ—I

cling to it as my only hope—if thou, O Christ, wilt not save me, no one else can, and I must perish—Lord save me—Jesus! have mercy on me!' I persevered thus again and again—I kept on praying in this way—I took nothing with me but a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, and I said, 'Lord! I will not go except thou bless me.' I know I prayed sincerely, and I was heard and answered. I found that promise true. "Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." God was good to me. My soul required severe discipline; but he comforted me in his own time—I found Christ able and willing to do all I required—I was enabled to receive him as my complete salvation, and I sometimes had such peace in believing on him,—such hours of unspeakable happiness, that the remembrance of it makes up for all this suffering. I never again lost my hope in Christ, though for the moment my disease overpowered me and clouded the past. Now I tell you all this for your encouragement and direction. Seek as I did, and you shall find the same pardon for sin, the same peace in death." We next talked about prayer. I told him of the difficulties I felt. I remember well his eager look, as he said, "Not find comfort in prayer, dear F——! It sounds like a strange contradiction to me—it is my only comfort. When I am able to pray, I am sure to be happy, and my prayer is, that I may have strength and sense to pray. But I must remember how differently we are circumstanced—I am just entering eternity—I see everything in a new light, as I never did before—as none but a dying person can see. All my thoughts and feelings are changed—I have not memory now to recollect how I used to feel, when I first began to pray—perhaps I had the same doubts—my memory is gone—Oh! how the Lord has humbled me—I used to be so proud of my understanding—I can now scarcely answer the simplest question." Presently he seemed to gather

strength, and said, "We were talking about prayer; yes, all my comfort is in prayer. There *must* be comfort in prayer—the chief thing is to examine your heart—ask God to search it for you—take care you are cherishing no secret sin or hidden idol. God is a merciful God; but he is a jealous God, and he will have the whole heart. Only persevere in praying, and indeed you will find comfort in prayer." He then told me how seriously it had been impressed upon his mind, that his death was to be the life of others. "I think, my dearly beloved sister, it is for your good; and will not this thought make you more in earnest? *Oh! I would die ten painful deaths to save one soul!* We shall meet again in heaven. Now come and kiss me and let me lean upon you." He rested a short time, and said, "Now send for H——, I want to speak to her while my strength lasts." His conversation with her was very searching, but very affectionate. He loved this sister very dearly. She was naturally volatile and buoyant in her spirits, and this disposition sometimes betrayed her into levity. The liveliness of her conversation had often pleased him, but he now thought he had encouraged her in some things inconsistent with real piety. He was earnest beyond his strength in conversing with her. He put very plain and close questions:—saying, "I must be answered; I must speak plainly; I am afraid, my beloved sister, you do not think enough about religion. I do not see decided proofs of real conversion in you. I have not a *sure* hope, that if you die as you now are, I shall meet you in heaven. Oh! H—— it is my last request,—with my dying breath I am entreating you to seek the salvation of your soul. Suppose you were in my place—in this chair instead of me—waiting for death day by day—could you meet it as I do? Oh! do, my dear sister! do think of death while you are in health. If I had not sought Christ before I was

brought so low, I should have had no strength or sense to seek him now. I went to Jesus as a poor weak sinner, and found sweet rest, and I am happy now amidst all this suffering." He spoke in a very affectionate manner of the subject nearest her heart. "Your merry peal will soon succeed my death-knell. Take care that the good seed is not choaked by the pleasures of life! Seek first the kingdom of God. Remember H——, *you have to die.* Oh! I cannot leave you in peace, unless I have good hope that I shall meet you in heaven. If I thought there was one amongst you—oh! I cannot bear that thought!" He continued, "H——, there is nothing so opposed to religion,—to the mind of Christ, as levity and trifling. It will keep you back more than anything. Take my solemn warning—I speak from my own experience,—you will never be a consistent Christian, and you will never grow in grace, if you indulge in *habitual* trifling conversation. It is not like the mind of Christ; your temper is very playful and volatile, and Satan may use it as a snare to injure your soul. *Piety and levity cannot long dwell in the same heart.* One will destroy the other. * * * * You see, dear H——, I am very plain and sincere. I used to be so shy. But I do not feel afraid of speaking my mind now. How little does one care about the world and its opinions when death is near;—death takes away all reserve. I care not if the whole world were asssembled around me—I would tell them what I now think of religion—I should like to see many here, that I might tell them what the Lord hath done for my soul." He then sent for H——, his favourite brother and companion. Willy was much affected. He seemed to say farewell to H—— with deep emotion. He entreated him to supply his place in everything—particularly in being a comfort to his father, and filling his place in the ministry. On this latter subject he spoke much.

He said, "From a child it has been my delight to think of being a clergyman of the church of England; but it is God's will to pass me by, and take you, dear H——, and honour you thus. I resign my place to you; fill it faithfully." Then turning to his father, he said, "Give H—— a double portion of your love. He is to fill my place, as well as his own, to you. I make a transfer to him of all the affection you have borne to me." He paused for breath, and then continued, "We have loved each other very dearly, we always loved as brothers amidst our little quarrels,— did we not? I love you now more than ever, and I must talk to you about your soul." He addressed him in very plain language asking him questions. H—— seemed confused and distressed; for there were others present. Willy said, "Poor H——, you feel shy on this subject—I used to feel the same once—I could not speak once, but that reserve is all gone; I am not ashamed to say what I feel now. You will feel as I do, some day." He then begged that all would retire and leave H—— alone with him, No one heard the conversation which passed between them. He next sent for his younger brothers; they wept much as he addressed them. He spoke very touchingly to his younger sister, who was then a little child. "Would you like to meet poor Willy in heaven, dear C——, then you must love God. Pray to God to make you love him, and to make you a good child, a holy child. Will you promise me one thing, my dear C——, that you will never go out of your room in the morning till you have read a few verses in the Bible, and prayed to God. If you do not pray to God, you will not meet poor Willy in heaven. I will give you a verse to think of when I am dead: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Say that verse to yourself every night when you lie down."

"He sent for several people in the village to come and bid him farewell. There was one old person for whom he had a special regard. She had been much with him in his childhood, and he used to tell her, "if he lived to be a man, and had a house of his own, she should come and keep it." He held out his hand to her affectionately, and, alluding to his promise, said "I shall have no house in this world, Nanny, for you to come and keep—but I shall still have a house—a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." His countenance as he spoke assumed a singularly sweet and happy expression—such a beaming look of love and joy, that every one noticed it. The hectic flush glowed on his cheek—his eyes sparkled with a peculiar lustre—and the marble forehead was smooth and placid. It was the parting loveliness of a body irradiated by a soul full of meekness, calmness, joy and confidence. Instead of being exhausted by such lengthened conversations, as we expected, he seemed full of vigour, and rather refreshed. He conversed a good deal with both his parents. "What a striking answer," he said, "I have had to prayer; God has allowed me time and strength to speak to you all, and has so filled me with sweet peace and joy, that I never could have conceived there was such happiness to be known here." He then said, "I should like the whole family to assemble round me, that I may look at you altogether, while I am so happy. He then offered up a fervent and touching prayer to God, blessing him for his great goodness, and commending us to him for salvation. He paused a moment, and concluded, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

"He remained in this happy frame of mind a short time, when all seemed to pass away as a dream; the fever returned—great suffering succeeded—and his

whole frame was agitated. At intervals he referred to the past season of happiness, and the recollection of it comforted him. He repeated what he had before said, several times, "I would go through all again for one such sweet hour."

"In the evening he was dejected by a dread of delirium, and prayed earnestly that he might retain his senses to the last, often exclaiming, "I cannot glorify Thee in delirium." He called this a happy day, because he thought he had done good by his faithful addresses.

"My father came to read and pray with him before he retired to rest. Willy said, "I am too tired to listen. I should like to dream of the past; papa, there will be no distraction in heaven."

"Friday was a mournful day. My brother's sufferings were greatly increased. He could find no position in which to rest. He breathed with difficulty, and at times seemed almost suffocated; and the soul, as if in sympathy ,with the body, became full of doubt and terror. He called out in great agitation—"Oh! pray for me—pray for me—say something to comfort me." I read to him some verses from the forty-third of Isaiah. He continued to exclaim,—"Oh! pray for me, pray for me! I am in great suffering." I opened the Annals of the Poor, and read to him the account of the Dairyman's Daughter's last hours. He listened attentively, and then repeated the words, "The Lord deals very gently with me, and gives me peace. It is not dark, my Lord is there, and he is my light and salvation." He appeared a little more composed, and I turned to the tract of Little Jane. I read to him some passages. "Ah!" said he, "they got safe through, and why not I? I am glad, dear F——, that you thought of the Dairyman's Daughter and Little Jane. They are just the examples I want. They suffered much, but it was

not dark to them. Oh, death! death! what is it? I have still to go through death — the dark valley. He sat for some time in silence, with his head resting on the table. Though he did not speak, I could perceive that there was something passing in his mind which shook his whole frame. Suddenly, with a wild expression of countenance, and in a bitter tone, he exclaimed, "Oh! agony! agony! agony! agony! I shall perish after all." I was much frightened, and went to call my father. I told him Willy must be delirious. When my father saw him he said, "Oh no! this is no delirium. I know exactly what he is passing through." He sat down beside Wilberforce, and began to talk soothingly to him, but he refused to be comforted. He still cried out with his whole remaining strength, "Oh, agony! agony! agony! Satan will have me after all. Papa, pray for me; he tells me I shall be lost — he tells me my sins will damn me. Oh, papa, this is agony! all is dark, dark — all gone — all lost — and has Christ brought me thus far to leave me at last?" My dear father was much overcome at this scene, and struggled hard for composure. He repeated text after text; and with apparent calmness, and in his own tender and peculiar manner, enlarged on the faithful love of the Saviour. He assured Willy of his full persuasion that Christ's honor was pledged in presenting his soul safe to the Father: that this was the last attack of Satan; that he took advantage of his bodily weakness, to distress, when he could not harm him. But poor Willy seemed still more agitated. The cold drops stood on his forehead — his look betrayed the deepest anguish, and he shook with terror. "Oh! papa! what will become of me," he cried; "I am going into the dark valley *alone.* Jesus has left me. It is all dark, dark, dark. The rod and the staff do not support me. Satan fights hard for me, and he will carry me away at last." His

bodily sufferings seemed quite forgotten, and were lost in the bitter anguish of his mind, and he still continued to repeat, "Agony! agony." My dear father tried again by a variety of argument, and by a frequent appeal to Scripture, to support his despairing child, but in vain. He seemed given up for a time to such sharp and sore besetments as baffled all attempts to administer comfort. After a silence of some minutes, and when he seemed nearly fainting, my dear father solemnly repeated, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." These were the first words which made any impression on Wilberforce. He said, "Ah! papa, I used to love those words, but they are gone; I will try to understand them; say them again." My father repeated the affecting words of the Saviour to his tempted disciple. Willy listened to them with intense interest. When he heard the words, "but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not," he exclaimed, "Oh, my dear papa, do you think that Christ is praying for me? Does he pray for me in this hour of darkness, when I have no faith?"

"Certainly, my dear boy, I cannot doubt it. I am quite sure he is praying for you at this instant. Take courage, then. Do you think God will not hear Christ's prayer? "Him the Father heareth always." His mind became a little calmer, but he still looked uneasy, and repeated slowly, "Can I have been brought to love him so, only to perish? Can such feelings as I have, such a hatred of sin, be fitting me for hell? No, it cannot be—such feelings could not exist in hell—He will save me, as the chief of sinners." Presently he exclaimed, "Jesus has not left me. I see him again—more precious than ever—my Saviour—my hope. How could I distrust him—I am more than conqueror. Papa, I feel safe—I am Christ's. Why did I doubt?

I am so strengthened. Dear papa, I can give you no idea of the anguish of my heart. It exceeded all I supposed endurable. I thought myself in Satan's hands. It must have been such anguish as this which made the Saviour cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I never knew what suffering was before; I thought I was lost." "And what do you now think." "I have great peace, firm confidence; I am so strengthened, papa, in my faith—so strengthened—hell shall not prevail; Christ has saved me—none shall pluck me out of his hand. I should not be afraid to grapple with this dreadful foe again; I should not be afraid, if Jesus were standing by"—and then shuddering at his own recollections, he added, "But, papa, I hope God will not see it necessary to try me in this way again; I hope not. It was indeed a dreadful struggle." "Why say so?" said his father, "it is possible God may see fit thus to try your faith again. You see how he has supported you—you have been the conqueror—why then shrink?"

"Oh no! I will not shrink, I could go through it again, if it were God's will; I could not see my Saviour in that dark hour, but now I know he was near me." And then shuddering at his own words, he added, "but I hope it will not be necessary again to try me thus."

"This last sorrow attached him more than ever to his father. He could not bear that he should be out of his sight, and listened to every word which fell from him, with the most grateful love and confiding simplicity. He truly hung upon his lips. Never was there a more affecting sight, than to behold this loving father and no less loving son, now blending every feeling and thought of their hearts together, and so closely united in religious intercourse, that they seemed as it were a twin soul.

"My father was obliged to leave Wilberforce for a

little while; on his return, the latter, looking up with a smile, said, "Papa, I cannot pray now—I am so very ill; but I have been *praising*." "For what, my dear boy?" "I have been blessing God for giving me such a father; when I can say nothing else, I can praise God for such a dear father; to whom I can tell all, and who helps me on to heaven." This was almost too much for my father; he could neither speak nor weep, he seemed absorbed in unutterable feelings; the fountain of tears was dried up.

"Willy did not wait for a reply. "I am sorry, papa I did not open my mind to you before; how much happier I should have been, if I had done so. I have now no reserve—I can tell you every thing. You *are* my friend and my guide; my dear, dear papa, I *do* love you; you have so helped me in my great trial."

"In the evening he conversed with his father on the bitter agony through which he had passed in the morning, with calmness and faith. Some one present asked him what he thought to be the best evidences of conversion—"A broken heart and a contrite spirit," he replied, "This is what I brought to God, and it was the only evidence I could rely on."

"The next day he expressed some impatience at lingering so long, earnestly desiring that this might be his last day; but he soon checked himself, and prayed against a restless spirit. He sometimes cried out, "How long, how long! when shall I be free! How my spirit struggles to get away from this poor weary body! Papa, do you think I shall linger here another day?" And without waiting for a reply, he said, "But my times are in thy hands, O God—I must die daily—I will patiently wait thy will." He called me to him, and gave me a copy of Miss Jerram's Memoir. He said it had been of great use to him, and that God's dealings with her had sometimes comforted him. "We both passed through

great sorrows, but God comforted us both in his own time. Read it, dear F——; I give you my copy; I have no further need of it, and may God bless it to you.' He asked to have the 17th chapter of St. John read to him, and remarked, "How very plain is the doctrine of that chapter! I wonder there should be so much controversy about it."

"What is to-morrow?" he asked. "It is the Sabbath." He seemed pleased, and earnestly begged that the congregation might be requested to pray for him in the church. On Sunday morning he was much weaker, and his end was evidently fast approaching, To a kind friend who had nursed him, he said, "How do I look now?" She saw the approach of death in his languid eye and pallid countenance. "You look worse, Master Wilberforce, I do not think that you can live much longer." The effect produced by her opinion was truly astonishing. His dim eye lighted up, all his features assumed a new life, and turning to her he said, "Oh, thank you, dear Mrs. G——, good news! you tell me good news. Shall I indeed be in heaven to-day?" My father came into the room. "Papa," said he, "how do I look—am I altered?" "No, my dear boy, I see little difference in you." He was evidently disappointed. "Do you see no difference?" said he, "Mrs. G—— does. She has made me happy,—she thinks I may die to-day." My father sat with him the whole of the day while we were at church, and Willy asked him to read the service for the visitation of the sick. He listened with devout attention, and when it was ended he said, "Oh! my dear papa, what beautiful prayers! what an affecting service! it expresses my whole heart."

"He then said to his mother, "I love to look at you, mamma. I love to smile at you, but I want to smile at Jesus." He asked her to draw near, and let him

lean on her bosom. "It is sweet to lean on you, dear mamma; but I long to lean on the bosom of Jesus." He conversed with his father in the afternoon for the last time. Reference is made to the conversation in his papers as follows:"

"Agony—conflict—triumph—glorying in this second struggle with Satan—expecting another struggle—not fearing it. The enemy subdued, bruised under his feet. Longing to be in heaven—not able to form any idea of another world, yet full of confidence of being there—'I know in whom I am trusting'—dreading to linger, yet bowing to the will of God. His joy in the prayers of the church for him—Christ will save me."

"He had been accustomed to teach a class in the Sunday school, and begged that his dying message might be written down and sent to the children that evening. He had not been able to lie in bed for a week, owing to the pain in his side; but on Sunday evening he expressed a wish to be undressed and put into bed, being inclined to sleep. He was accordingly put to bed, and lay very tranquil and comfortable. My father stood watching beside him till he thought him asleep. He then went to his study, as he afterwards told us, to pray, that if it were God's will, his child might have quiet and ease in his last moments; for he much dreaded the severity of a dying agony, which from the past he thought probable. As he was going away he blessed him, and looking at him as he lay, serene and beautiful in his repose, he said, "So He giveth His beloved sleep." Willy opened his eyes on hearing these words, and replied, "Yes, dear papa, and the rest which Christ gives is sweet." These were his last words. He immediately sunk into a long and peaceful slumber. We were sitting near him. Mrs. ——, his faithful nurse, stood and watched beside him. We could hear distinctly every breath he drew, and the least change

in the sound was perceptible. One or two breathings were slower and longer, which made us get up and look at him. He appeared as if slumbering very sweetly. There was no alteration in his countenance, and we were going to sit down again, when Mrs. —— said, "Call your papa, immediately." We did so, and he came just in time to hear his last sigh. I think he awoke from sleep but felt no pain, nor was sensible of death. My father raised Willy's head upon his arm, and contemplated it for a minute. The countenance looked placid, as if it had beheld the Saviour's face in righteousness and was satisfied. My father pressed the lifeless body to his bosom, and burst into a flood of tears; struggling with nature's anguish. At length, subduing his feelings, he said, "My child is a saint in glory." He bid us all follow him to the study, that we might praise God for his mercy and loving-kindness. He opened the Bible and read the two last chapters of the Book of Revelations, and then knelt down and prayed with us. It was a moment not to be forgotten. Our dear father appeared so absorbed in the contemplation of his child's entrance into heaven, and his union with the spirits of the just made perfect, as to be scarcely conscious of the presence of his family around him.

"Between the death and the funeral of my brother, my dear father's mind was often severely exercised. Sometimes he would weep, and say, 'All thy waves and storms are gone over me!' and then, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!' 'He giveth and he taketh away, and blessed be his holy name!' He would rise early in the morning to gaze on the peaceful countenance of his departed child. We overheard him giving vent to the mingled emotions of his heart in the chamber of death. But he was comforted in tribulation, and he returned to his family, to soothe their

sorrows with the comfort wherewith he was comforted of God. He said little, but his calm and subdued spirit bespoke Christian resignation. He used to teach us that disquiet was the result of distrust, and we saw in his silent submission an example of his own principle, that his heart trusted in God. 'Though his hand be lifted up to destroy, yet from that very hand do I expect salvation.'"*

"A vault was opened for Wilberforce under the chancel. An incident occurred which much affected us, and which showed the pious and affectionate sympathy of the people in the sorrows of their pastor. The workmen had not completed the vault till past eleven o'clock at night, when they agreed to descend into it, and consecrate the place which was shortly to receive our brother's remains, by prayer. The sepulchre of the dead became holy ground. They joined in praises to him who is the resurrection and the life, and who has enlightened the gloomy grave by his own presence. They continued in prayer till midnight, commending their beloved minister to the grace of God—invoking blessings on his family, and entreating that this mournful event might be overruled to the increase of religion in the parish; and may we not hope, that their prayer was heard? The subsequent state of the village may be described as life from the dead. In the morning of my brother's interment, my father prayed with his family, I trust that the Spirit of God poured out his special influence on the minds of those present. A friend afterwards observed, "This is the fervent prayer of a righteous man, which availeth much. Can we doubt that it is recorded in heaven, and will long be remembered on earth!"

"From this time, our dear father gave himself up to the work of the ministry with redoubled diligence.

* Leighton.

The congregations were large and attentive. He went daily from cottage to cottage amongst the poor, warning, exhorting, comforting, and confirming the souls of the disciples in the grace of God. He used to meet persons nearly every evening in the week, for prayer and exposition of the Scriptures. Many a heart in Turvey still glows at the recollection of these seasons. There was a general revival of religion, both amongst old and young, and scarcely a day passed in which some one did not anxiously inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" There might be in this excitement something that was of a doubtful character, but there were certainly many real conversions, and a general and increased attention towards religion, unknown at any former period. My father seldom left his parish, or saw any one out of his own family; to whom he became still more endeared, and for whose progress and improvement in religion, he manifested an anxiety even to depression, and an earnestness which impaired his own health. He had naturally very high spirits and was at times playful in his conversation; but now, though he sometimes smiled, he was ever thoughtful, pensive and silent. He appeared to be wounded by the least approximation to levity, and was continually pressing on us a more serious apprehension of eternity. On one occasion, when he thought we had indulged in a conversation too little in unison with the late event—he made no remark at the time, but the next morning I found on my table the following note.

"My dearest Child,

"There is a degree of relief to a tender spirit in the communication of its thoughts and feelings. The affecting scenes of this time twelvemonth have scarcely ever been absent from my recollection even for a moment. In the midst of our (perhaps too great) hilarities, I have pic-

tured to my imagination Willy dying last week, and this week dead in the house. Have we all felt and done as much as we ought on this affecting occasion? Is the sacredness and solemnity of that interesting period preserved in our hearts? Has the erection of another tablet in the church sufficiently moved our affections? Monday evening was a trying hour to my heart. My poor Willy died on that day, and as on next Sunday we buried him. Oh! let you and I my dear F——, ponder these things in our souls for good, * * * * Amidst the living, let us not forget the dead.

L. R."

"My dear father for many years had been accustomed to write pastoral letters to his parishoners, which were read in the school-room to those who chose to attend. The following address to them was written soon after my brother's death.

"My dear Friends, Neighbours, and Parishioners,

"In the midst of my sorrows at the removal of my dearly-loved child, I wish you to know that the Lord supports me wonderfully. I cannot yet come out amongst you, but I cannot be quite silent. I have therefore desired my dear friend and fellow-labourer to read this letter to you. I have preached the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to you more than nineteen years, and through his mercy I have seen some precious fruits of these labours amongst you, but never have I witnessed a more beautiful or triumphant evidence that I have not taught, preached, or lived in vain, than in the case of my dear son, now a sharer of the Redeemer's glory in heaven. Oh! what a call for praise, that he was not only my natural, but also my spiritual child. Such was his love to Christ, and Christ's love to him

that I am lost in wonder, love, and praise. I am persuaded there are many of you who feel deeply for me. You can weep with me when I weep, and rejoice with me when I rejoice. You have prayed for my child. It was the delight of his heart to hear of your love and sympathy, and he dwelt on the interest you took in his welfare to the very day of his death. He was indeed a boy of no common mind, and the Lord sanctified his great natural endowments to his own glory. I feel more and more every hour, what a treasure I have lost; but at the same time I see more and more what a blessedness he has attained. I have been watching him at home and abroad, with a parent's eye and a Christian's heart, both for his body and soul, ever since disease fastened on his frame last summer, and no one will ever know what my anxieties have been during that period. But I trust God meant all for my good. The trial, severely as I have felt it, has shown me more of myself, and more of my God. My prayers for my dear child have been abundantly answered. Blessed be God! he was enabled to disclose his whole heart to me, and to others, before he was taken away. He conversed with many in a most useful and edifying manner, exhorting them to prayer, faith, and holiness. He could tell them all, that he knew in whom he trusted, and could look at death with perfect peace. Believe me, then, when I tell you that though I am greatly affected, and humbled in the dust with a sense of sin and sorrow, yet that my mercies are so abounding in abounding chastisement, that I can, and do rejoice in tribulation. Oh! may it work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and may hope make me more faithful and diligent, that I be not ashamed of the gospel in principle or practice, for your sakes, as well as my own. It is a great comfort to me now, as I am kept from ministering to you for a season, that you have one amongst you

who preaches the same truth, and in the same spirit. May our common Lord and Saviour bless him, and you, and me together. I beg your prayers, at this season in particular, for me and mine. They are no longer needful for my beloved son. Let them be transferred to the surviving members of my family. Pray especially for those who watch for your souls; that we may experience help and comfort in ourselves, and dispense the word of life with more zeal and love. Pray that there may be no divisions or wanderings of heart amongst us—that we may be all of one mind and judgment, in those things which make for our ever lasting peace. Pray that the young children may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. My dear boy sent them a message on his dying bed, which was read to them a short time before his happy soul entered into rest. May the whole school remember it for his sake, and their soul's sake. God bless you all, my dear friends: I cannot doubt but that you will bear me on your hearts to a throne of grace.

"Your affectionate Minister,
L. R."

"When my father resumed his labours amongst the people, he seemed to be aware of his declining health, though he said nothing to the family. His usual and only reply, when we expressed our fears, was, "I must work while it is called to-day:—the night cometh when no man can work." He appeared moulded into the spirit of the apostle; "affectionately desirous to spend and be spent in the service of his flock, and to impart to them not only the gospel of Christ, but if it were possible, his own soul also;" and the people caught the holy contagion of his fervent zeal and love. There was between them an almost unexampled reciprocity of

regard and desire "to glorify God, and walk humbly, justly, and unblameably before him."*

"You will receive with indulgence the overflowings of my heart towards a father whose memory is still cherished by his family and by his parishoners, with the deepest gratitude, and I hope we may add, with an unfeigned anxiety to walk in the steps of his bright example, and meet him again in everlasting glory.

Believe me, my very dear Sir,

Your affectionate and faithful

F——"

* 1 Tess. ii. 8, 10.

CHAPTER IX.

'Sure 'tis a solemn thing to die, my soul.'

BLAIR.

'This only can reconcile us to the grave, that our greatest hopes lie beyond it.'

HOWE.

WE proceed with the same view of illustration, to notice some particulars relating to the third daughter of Mr. Richmond, who survived her father only a year and a half. She was also the child of faith and prayer, and equally the object of his tender solicitude with the rest of his family.

I am not warranted to present her character as an instance of high attainment in piety; but the exercises of her mind during her last illness, sufficiently disclose the salutary effect of a religious education; and while we indulge the pleasing hope that she has joined her beloved father in the mansions of the blessed, her case will afford additional encouragement to the Christian parent, to sow in his children's hearts the seeds of eternal life, which, watered "by the early and latter rain," seldom fail to spring up and ripen to reward his labours, as occasions arise in the varying circumstances and events of life.

This amiable young woman "possessed an exuberance of animal spirits, and a turn for the ludicrous, which was very difficult to be restrained within the bounds of discretion, and gave her dear father much anxiety." *

* Extracted from Mrs. R.'s letter to the Author.

A volatile temper is in all cases a grevious hindrance to intellectual and spiritual improvement. Good conversation cannot consist with the indulgence of "foolish talking and jesting," and the mind is diverted by it from solid and useful pursuits. We may attempt to excuse this cast of character, and speak of it as a playfulness of temper: but after all, it cannot be approved. The disposition to amuse ourselves with the defects or peculiarities of *others*, may generally be traced to vanity in *ourselves;* and is a habit of mind wholly inconsistent with the spirit of humility and love, as well as a sad forgetfulness of that solemn caution, "Every idle word that a man shall speak, he shall give an account thereof at the day of judgment."*

There was not, however any thing cynical or severe in the strain of this young person's conversation. She was naturally frank, open, and kind hearted, and to oblige another was a real satisfaction to herself. It was rather a thoughtless propensity, common to many young people, "to giggle and make giggle,"† that I am lamenting.

It is difficult to speak of the dead so as not to wound the tender feelings of the living, but when it is required to pourtray character, the simple declaration of the truth is best, and is indeed the only course consistent with Christian integrity. She who forms the subject of my present remarks, affixed a solemn seal to their truth in the affecting review which she took of the past in her dying hours. It is a source of much congratulation that she is now beyond the opinion of man, whose imperfect knowledge renders him at all times incompetent to pronounce on his fellow-creatures, and should remind him of the danger of assuming a prerogative he cannot claim. "Judge nothing before the time."

Mr. Richmond placed his daughter at school at ——,

* Matt. xii. 36. † Cowper's Letters.

where he expected that the strictest attention would be paid to her principles and conduct. I have no reason to suppose that he was dissatisfied with the care and vigilance of those to whom he had entrusted his child; but whatever she had acquired in other respects, it does not appear that at the close of her education she had made any advancement in religion.

About this time Mr. R. addressed the following letter to her:—

"DEAR H——,

"And now comes your turn. Receive, read, mark, and inwardly digest. I do not know how much you are grown in stature, but I do hope you are growing in wisdom. Then, whether you are to be a woman tall, or a woman short, will signify very little. You will, if your wisdom be of the right kind, be of a tall mind and of tall attainments, and we will call you the little woman with the great soul. I have heard of a person's soul being so mean and small, that if you were to put it into a hollow mustard-seed and shake it well, it would rattle. Now that is not the sort of soul I wish to discover in you. I want to see a soul in you which can embrace all useful and requisite knowledge—a soul which can extend its energies beyond ordinary limits; which can feel for all around you, and carry its benevolent activity throughout the universe; which can contemplate the globe, such a one as you study at B——, and find new problems upon it: as, how to carry the gospel into all latitudes and all longitudes; how to excite pity for the poor heathen in every zone and climate of the world; how to equalize all nations in the sympathy of Christian love, and thus make a spiritual equator; how to estimate the coldness of religion in the burning regions of the tropics, and how to carry the lively heat of evangelical charity into the districts of the poles. I would

have you capable of grasping all these questions in your heart, with as much ease as your hands would clasp a doll, or as mine would clasp your own dear self to my bosom. But why do I wish that your soul may become thus capacious? Simply to this end, that you may thereby resemble him who so loved the world, that he came into it to save sinners; yes, H——, sinners like unto you. Have you ever thought of this great truth as you ought? Is foolishness still bound up in the heart of my child? Is human existence only to be estimated by playthings, and holidays, and all the etceteras of a light-minded state? What, a young damsel, almost fourteen years old, and no more progress in divine things! Study your Bible, and remember your privileges. Study your Bible, and dig deep for a foundation whereon to build your house. Study your Bible, and say what must become of all the thoughtless little girls in the world, if they do not repent and believe. Once more, study your Bible, and learn what you first owe to God, and then to your parents, and then to brothers and sisters, then to teachers, and then to schoolfellows, and then to all mankind. Such a meditation will, with God's blessing, prove a merciful hour to your own soul, and for the sake of your's, to my soul also. I hope you will now pursue your education with earnestness. Now is the time to lay in a stock of useful knowledge. You cannot set too high a value on the advantages which you possess. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Childhood and its vanities must speedily pass away, and you must have done with childish things. Learn to pray, and commit your whole soul and body to Christ. He is able to keep what you give into his hand, unto the great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. You are now of the age at which little Jane did this. Are you like her? Are you as ready to meet your God as she was? Ask

the question of your heart, and carry it to the throne of mercy, where all praying souls are made welcome. I hoped you liked the Bible-meeting at Northampton. I wish you early to cultivate a cordial interest in that great work—the greatest work of the age. In the day when Dame Eleanor's cross* was built, the Bible was unknown to the greatest part of the country. What a contrast now? The angel flies through heaven and earth, presenting it to all. The stone cross was once almost an idol; but the true cross proclaimed in the Bible, is the real Christian's ensign, prop, and delight. Farewell, dear love. I am

Your own dear father,

L. R."

The next letter was written to the same daughter on her birth-day.

"DEAR H——,

"The return of a birth-day is the signal for gratitude. Fourteen years ago, as I sat in my little study at Brading, in the Isle of Wight, about six in the morning, in came a woman bearing in her arms a little baby, and wished me joy of the same—now this little baby was a little girl, and that little girl was my H——, and now is the fifteenth time that joy has been uttered from year to year whenever that day was named. But what is joy? Is it only a holiday? But what is joy? Is it only a game of play—is it merely a jumping, and frisking, and running, and chattering, and doll-dressing, and merry-making, and feast-keeping? Is this all the joy of a birth-day? Away, far away be all such feeble interpretations of the word. Then what is a birth-day joy? Is it not the joy of parents, when they see their children

* This cross is erected about a mile from Northampton, and was once held in great veneration by Romish devotees.

growing up in the fear of the Lord, and in the practice of holiness? Is it not the joy of the husbandman, when he sees his crops ripe and plentiful, and offering the promise of harvest? Is it not the joy of the gardener, when he perceives his young trees thrive, and blossom, and bear fruit? Is it not the joy of the mother bird, when after all her watchings, and tremblings, and flutterings over the nest, she sees her little ones begin to fly, and become capable of answering the end of Divine Providence in their creation? Is it not the joy of the Christian instructor, when, after hours, and days, and months, and years spent in warning, teaching, guiding, praying for, and affectionately superintending the young pupil's best interests—that pupil proves a living commentary on the precepts received, grows in grace, and love, and humility, and activity, and obedience, and as a bud of promise cheers the hearts of surrounding friends with prospects of usefulness through life in all its relative circumstances? If such be the ingredients of birth-day joy, when duly estimated, may I be gratified in expressing my joy to-day; and can you also participate in joy thus appreciated? God bless you, my dear H——, on this day, and on every day. Time flies, opportunity flies, the school-hour flies, childhood flies, all things are hastening to a grand consummation,—what a solemn thought! May my child conceive and cherish it to the glory of God, and her own everlasting consolation. May Christ become to her a gracious Saviour, received, loved and honored by her. Such is the prayer of her affectionate father.

L. R."

On an occasion of indisposition, Mr. R. writes again.

"DEAR H——,

"My anxious wish for your spiritual and temporal

welfare induces me to express my thoughts to you in these little notes. I cannot tell you how much I desire that this season of sickness may be blessed of God to your present and everlasting good. This thought is continually before me, and I pray constantly to him that you may be inwardly strengthened by the power of his might. Examine yourself. Prove yourself. Bring your heart and all your thoughts before God, and make a solemn surrender of yourself to him. Employ with gratitude and patience the means which are prescribed for your recovery, but trust in him alone. Physicians can do nothing without his blessing on their medicines. I thank God for your last note, and shall be much pleased when you can and will write me another. Above all things be much in prayer: in the watches of the night speak to God: in the events of the day, tell him how much you need and depend on him. In moments of weakness, ask him for strength; in seasons of pain, petition for contentment. He will of his riches abundantly supply your need. But you must deal faithfully with yourself, and humbly and perseveringly with him. Be not content with merely saying, "Christ died for sinners." Try to get an evidence that you have a personal interest in him. This may be known by the state of your heart towards him. "We love him because he first loved us." His love produces love, and our love to him proves that he has loved, and does love us. Are you ignorant? he is wisdom. Are you guilty? he is righteousness. Are you unholy? he is sanctification. Are you a captive? he is redemption. What is he not to the sinner? his strength is perfect in the believer's weakness, He was tempted in all points like as we are, and therefore knows how to succour them that are tempted. Oh my child! if you can only cleave to him, and all that he is, and all he has promised to be,

nothing can harm you. Meditate on these things, and may God make them quite and entirely your own.

"Now for a text for reflection. "In all our afflictions he was afflicted. Not a pang ever distressed our bodies, nor a trial our hearts, but Jesus has felt it, and he not only felt it in himself, but he feels it for and in us. What a consolation is here? This thought has supported thousands in their trouble. May it support you. Behold Christ in every thing, see him everywhere, acknowledge him in every trial; for he sympathizes in all the trials of them that are his. They have not one pain too many. Even sufferings will all work together for good to them that love him. I wished my loved H—— may see, feel, believe, and enjoy this encouraging thought, and make it her own. God love and bless you. So prays

Your affectionate father,
L. R."

On another occasion he writes: —

"DEAR LOVE,

"The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? So said the prophet of old, and so will every one say that knows the plague of his own heart. I want you to employ your whole time now in studying your heart, that you may increasingly feel your need of a Saviour. Who else can cleanse your heart, but he who died for its salvation. Do not be contented with a little religion, a little knowledge, a little hope. Press forward to the enjoyment of a great and gracious religion, much knowledge of Christ, and a glorious hope full of immortality. I am indeed most anxious that you may now in right earnest seek and find the Lord. "What must I do to be saved?" is a great question. How shall my deceit-

ful heart be renewed? Whenever I die, whither shall I go? are all questions connected with it. Ask God with all your heart for a right answer.

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

This letter was followed by another under the same circumstances.

"DEAR CHILD,

"Your reminding me not to forget to write to you, leads me to hope that you read my little notes with a desire to profit by them. You do not know how anxious I am for your soul's good. What God designs for you in this present illness, I know not: but this I know, that you cannot be too earnest about your eternal state. You cannot mourn for sin too deeply. You cannot love Christ too affectionately. You cannot trust in his blood and righteousness too firmly. I want you to be a monument of mercy; a believing, loving, praying child. If God is pleased to restore you to health, may you adorn the doctrine which you have been taught, and if he should see good to remove you to another world, O may you sleep sweetly in Jesus. Be much in prayer: "Seek and ye shall find." No favor is too great for God to grant. You are past the age of childish ignorance, and are now an accountable being.

"My H——, nothing will satisfy me, short of your being a true child of God. What effect have recent events produced on your mind? What desires, what fears, what hopes, what views of sin and Christ? * * * * May God make you a joy to

Your affectionate father,

L. R."

In the year 1825 an offer of marriage was made to

this daughter, of which Mr. R. expressed his cordial approbation in the following short note.

"My dear Friend,

"On consulting Mrs. R. and our dear H——, they both agree, that the beginning of July is the earliest period at which the object in view can be accomplished. So leaving it in their hands, I simply put my seal of approbation and consent to their decision; and I do so with a heart full of love and esteem for you both. May God bless your prospects, and your souls in them. I love all my children too well not to say, that in committing H—— into your hands, I give you one of my cherished treasures, and sources of domestic endearment. I feel parting with my daughter the more, from the removal of my loved, my much-loved Wilberforce. His death, with all its affecting associations, has had a peculiar, I trust a very useful effect, upon all my feelings, sentiments, ministrations, prospects, and thoughts for time and eternity. The subject is wound up with my heart's experience, in a way I can never describe. I pray God to overrule it for the present and eternal good of myself and dear family.

Your's very truly and affectionately,

L. R."

Previous to the marriage of his daughter, Mr. R. put into her hands a paper of directions for her future conduct, which, for simplicity, affection, and sound practical wisdom, may be considered one of the best dowries that a Christian parent could bestow on his child.

The paper is entitled, "Marriage Admonitions to H——, from her affectionate father, L. R."

"My much-loved Daughter.

'When your sister Mary left her paternal roof, I

gave her a paper of admonitions, which I requested her sometimes to read for her own and for her father's sake. I do the same for you, in the form of a friendly string of maxims, to regulate your conduct in your new and very responsible situation.

"1st. Aim at keeping a devoted heart for God in the least and most common transactions of every hour; as well as in those events which may seem to call the loudest for manifestations of religious conscience and principle.

"2d. Pray regularly and frequently, not seldom and occasionally, for grace to live and die by.

"3d. Remember the principles and professions of your father's house, and everywhere endeavour to preserve its character, by consistency in conduct, conversation, and temper.

"4th. Form no hasty intimacies; and none whatever but such as may promote seriousness of heart, tongue, and demeanour.

"5th. Beware of cheerfulness degenerating into levity, and ignorance of the world into prejudice

"6th. Guard against hasty judgments of character, and above all against hastily uttering sentiments, and making remarks to the disparagement of others.

"7th. Wherever you are, in the first place, remember that God's eye is upon you; and then imagine also that your husband and father are present. It may be a fanciful, but it is a profitable supposition.

"8th. Keep in constant recollection the wise, prudent, and conscientious example of your dear mother. Be cautious when in religious company, and endeavour to sustain a deportment which may induce the excellent of the earth to desire your society for their own sake as well as yours.

"9th. Particularly avoid making the errors, failings, faults, or follies of good people, either in private or

public matters, the subject of rash and unguarded remarks. Be known for charity, forbearance, and kindness

"10th. Keep Christ's golden rule, (Luke vi. 31.) in perpetual remembrance: it is the panacea for most of the evils of life, so far as they are connected with social intercourse.

"11th. Entertain no prejudices against nations, churches, sects, or parties; they are the bane of truth, charity, and comfort, and are directly opposed to the letter and spirit of Christianity. You may and ought to have a conscientious, well-founded preference, but not one half-formed or ill-formed prejudice against any one.

"12th. Be conscientious towards all; friendly with few; intimate with fewer still; strictly confidential with fewest of all.

"13th. From the hour you marry, you assume the character of a matron; be not a childish, girlish, wife; the vows of God are upon you, sustain their gravity and prudence in all things.

"14th. If circumstances and friendly connections lead you into the superintendence of charitable institutions, enter upon your office with prayer and consideration, and persevere in the discharge of its duties with patience and well-guided zeal.

"15th. Let no natural vivacity of temper, no occasionally-indulged sallies of humour and jocularity throw a shade over the exercise of solid principle. Little foolish things give a colour to character, and are more easily caught at than grave and good sentiments.

"16th. All eyes are sure to be fixed on a young wife: beware of, while you conform to, that sort of bridal publicity, which is necessarily connected with evey circle of residents and acquaintance.

"17th. Choose female intimates with circumspection:

many civil, hospitable, agreeable persons, are far from being improving companions; we may owe and pay them the debt of civility, kindness, and gratitude, and yet not be obliged to give them too much of our time and affection. Two or three truly Christian women form a circle sufficiently large for profitable friendship.

"18th. In every circle of acquaintance, however small, you will find more or less of party spirit prejudice, and too great freedom of remark on persons and circumstances connected with them; beware of joining in these. Be slow to judge, rather than swift to speak; the best Christians often fail here.

"19th. You are much given to laughter, my dear child: and many a hearty laugh I have enjoyed with you; and I would not turn your laughter into sorrow; but this propensity may prove a snare to you. Watch and be jealous of it; banish what looks like giggling, lightness, and folly; and cultivate a chastened cheerfulness and simplicity of manner in all companies.

"20th. Never forget that you are entering an entire circle of strangers, and that a very few weeks or months will establish your character amongst them.

"Once more, I say, think of your father's house and reputation. When I look upon myself and all that belongs to me, I feel ashamed of my own feeble, faint attempts to serve God, and adorn his gospel; yet the Christian world has attached to them, however undeservedly, a value; and by the name and character of their father, will my children be tried and appreciated.

"21st. Keep indelibly engraven on your heart the affecting scenes of last January. A dying brother's faithful admonitions—his last words, his last looks of mortal affection. Our household never witnessed the like; was never so tried. The memorials dwell on my heart with increasing poignancy. I say less, but I feel more; there is a solemn, silent, softening, and subduing

influence, which often overwhelms me. May you retain a vivid recollection, with a perpetual blessing, of that day when our Wilberforce fled from earth to heaven.

"22nd. Be especially attentive to the opinion which your demeanour may inspire amongst your husband's relations. No doubt he has praised you before them: endeavour to prove in all points that he has done you no more than justice; much family peace and love depends upon this.

"23rd. There are many excellent hints in the book entitled, "A Whisper to a New Married Pair." I recommend them to your perusal; and there are many more excellent hints to wives and women in the Bible, from Solomon, Paul, and Peter; study them well.

"24th. When you think of your father, bear with his infirmities and pardon his faults, but remember his principles and instructions, so far as they have been agreeable to the will of God.

"25th. Be not contented with any thing short of deep, devoted, diligent, decided seriousness. Make not the too numerous half-hearted and decent, but dubious Christians, your patterns for imitation. Set your mark and standard very high, and aim deliberately to regulate your conduct by it.

"26th. If you and your husband happen to differ in opinion or feeling on any point, remember whom you have promised to love, honour, and obey, and this will settle all things.

"27th. Of your husband's warm affections towards you, I entertain no doubt; strive to preserve them by daily elevation of character: not so much by fondness as by prudence and dignity. Study his character, he will study yours. May you both learn to raise a fabric of connubial happiness by mutal wisdom and love.

"28th. I trust you are taught in the school of Christ; rely not, however, on the past privileges of education,

but seek present evidences, such as will comfort you under sudden alarms and distresses, should they occur. Try to get acquainted with yourself by a review of your whole life, and often carry to the Lord, in prayer and confidence, the results of an examination into your heart and conduct.

"29th. Observe great simplicity and plainness in dress. A clergyman's wife should be a pattern to others in these respects; there is a just complaint made of many females who profess to be religious, that they are far too showy and gay in their outward apparel; remember the apostle's injunction, 1 Peter iii. 1 — 6.

"30th. Never think yourself too old to learn; the most valuable period of education is perhaps from twenty to forty years of age. *The matured mind is fittest to become the little child.*

"31st. You are bidding farewell to your father's house, the home of your infancy, childhood, and youth; yet the remembrance of the principles in which you have been educated should follow you through life, wherever Divine Providence may see fit to call you. May they be a guide to you at all times, and a consolation to you in your final removal from a sinful and changing world.

"Christ has been made known to you fully and freely; let Christ be your *all in all,* both now and for ever. Receive my parting advice in love, and be assured, my beloved child, it comes from the affectionate heart of

Your dear father,
L. R."

A short time before her marriage, Miss H. R. paid a visit to ——. I was gratified in discovering in a young woman, not yet twenty years of age, so much thought and good sense on the subjects of our conversation. In

common with the rest of her family, she entertained a deep sense of her father's affection, consistency, and uniform anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his children.

When I adverted to her responsibility on the ground of past privileges, and to the necessity of a personal application of the principles in which she had been educated, she observed, "I know that religion requires something more of me than respect for my father," and she then proceeded to state to me some of the perplexities of her mind on certain doctrines, which led me to remark that young people were apt to begin where they should end, and as an old author has quaintly said, wish "to matriculate at the university of election, before they have passed through the grammar-school of repentance and faith." I advised her to lay aside the consideration of the deep things of God. These, said I, are far beyond the range of a young disciple. The time may arrive when such subjects may be studied with advantage, for it is a great mistake to suppose that God has revealed anything which is unserviceable to his church, or needless to be understood: but infancy, youth, and manhood are not to be fed with the same aliment. I have no wish to conceal from you that my mind is made up on these subjects, though I am far from being confident in the certainty of my own conclusions on points which are debateable and still debated amongst good and wise men; but I feel no hesitation in dissuading *you* from employing your thoughts on speculations, which at present will retard rather than aid your progress. To ascertain your conversion, and the reality of your piety, by the plain practical tests of the Bible, ought to be your chief and indeed only concern. Admit that God calls, and keeps, and alone can bring you to heaven, and you know all that is essential to your salvation."

"Yes: but if God does not call"—

"Then call on him; 'Turn thou me, O good Lord, and so shall I be turned.'"

We made a transition to her approaching marriage. I alluded to her pleasing prospect of being united to a man of principle and piety, and to the satisfaction her father had expressed in the anticipation of that event.

She requested me to converse with her on the duties of her new relation.

"You entertain, my dear young friend, no doubt, the usual expectations of happiness in married life, and I do not wish to damp them; but I am compelled to acknowledge that I have not witnessed much conjugal felicity. People jog on in life, beeause they cannot do otherwise; if they are not indifferent to each other, nor annoy each other by contention and ill-humour, they still appear to me to derive but little satisfaction from their connexion; little in comparison with what the relation is intended and calculated to inspire."

"What are the usual causes of the disappointment in such cases?"

"Shall we say that there is want of affinity of character in the parties—that the connexion has been formed on some selfish calculation—that a mutual though not designed deception has been practised—that greater demands are made than a fallen nature can answer—that people are more tenacious of their claims than of their duties, and forget that affection needs cultivation as much or more, *after* than *before* marriage?

"All these causes are fatal to happiness; yet where they may not exist, much uneasiness often arises in married life, from a disregard to the ordinance of God in that relation. Reference should be made to his rule and appointment. It is true he has made the man a sort of autocrat, (ὁ δεσποτης); the head of a house, to superintend and direct every important movement in it;

it though entrusted with the chief power, he is responsible to God for the use he makes of it. Authority is granted to no one for the purpose of mere self-gratification. The trust is abused when it is perverted to this end. Man is constituted the head, for the good of the members; and he must rule with tenderness, forbearance, and affection. Matthew Henry has prettily expressed the idea,—"God made woman out of man's side. Not out of his head, to rule; nor out of his feet, to be trampled on; but out of his rib, which lies near his heart, to be loved and cherished." And when man forgets that his reign is the dominion of affection, he provokes God, by an abuse, and misuse of power, to resign his house to disorder and rebellion.

"*The wife has also her place.* She is equal in *nature,* but not in *relation.* She must shine by reflection; and will suffer an eclipse in her dignity, and bankruptcy in her happiness, whenever she sets up for herself, and affects equality and independence. Her earthly hopes and satisfactions should emanate from her husband, and centre in him. The rule of duty for a Christian wife is, "in and for the Lord." Her obedience must not vary with the capricious influences of feeling, but rest on the firmer basis of conformity to the ordinance of God. Affection may make duty delightful, but it is not the foundation of it. When a wife has just reason to disapprove of her husband's conduct, she may reason and remonstrate; occasions may unhappily arise in which conscience requires dissent, and even disobedience; but in general it is a woman's privilege, as well as duty, to call her husband "lord," and to keep within the limits which God has wisely and graciously appointed."

My young friend thanked me for my instructions, which she assured me were in unison with her own views, and that she meant to enter on her new relation with these principles.

The interval between her marriage and early death might have been more fully described by one who is best able to appreciate her conduct. But motives of delicacy and regard to his feelings have restrained me from making an application to him, and led me to prefer the insertion of an extract from her mother's letter. Mrs. R. writes:—

"Her time was chiefly spent in the retired duties of domestic life. She seldom engaged in anything of a public nature. She became a most exemplary and conscientious wife—a fond and tender mother to her little boy, whom she regarded with anxiety, and was preparing to train in the principles and piety of her dear father. Increasingly beloved by her husband, whose comfort and happiness on his return from his daily and laborious occupations, she assiduously studied to promote—her short day of life sweetly glided on, and, like the flower of the desert, she attracted little notice beyond the immediate circle of the few friends to whom she attached herself."

In September, 1828, Mrs. A—— gave birth to her second child. An account of the event and its afflictive results, was communicated at the time in the letter which follows:—

* * * * * * * * *

"I saw our poor H—— on the afternoon after the birth of her child. She then appeared extremely well, and nursing a sweet infant with a mother's joy. On Wednesday she complained of pain, and passed a very restless night. The next day Mr. A—— called in a physician, who seemed uneasy at her symptoms, and enjoined the utmost quiet, particularly requesting that no one should speak of her danger, or say anything to

excite or agitate her mind. On Friday she grew worse and inquired if there were danger, expressing her own conviction that she would not recover. Her friends, in compliance with the strict injunctions of the medical man, discouraged her inquiries, and endeavoured to draw her mind to other subjects. But in reply, she said, "Is this kind, to keep my thoughts from eternity? I cannot realize death, and you will not help me. Can I think too much of death?" She then inquired for me, and desired that I might be sent for. Aware of the great change in her countenance, as I entered the room, she kept her eyes shut, remarking to the nurse, "I will keep my eyes shut, I shall be so agitated at seeing my dear sister's distress, she will see me so changed." She was indeed changed; her countenance which only a week before had the bright hue of health, was now pale and wan. Oh! my dear Mrs. F——, how awful is the execution of the sentence, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' Even where Christ has taken away the sting, the expiring agony of death is terrible. Is it not a strange infatuation that our latter moments should ever be absent from our thoughts—that we can trifle where we ought to tremble, and be comparatively indifferent to the only event which is of real importance to us?"

"I was earnestly requested, before I went into the sick room, to show no alarm at her danger, and to avoid conversing upon death. But I gazed at her marble countenance for a few moments, and all hope of her life fled. The particular appearance of death cannot be mistaken, and I resolved to speak plainly to her of her situation. But H—— began of her own accord. She put her hand into mine as I sat down beside her. "F——, love, we meet as dying sisters this time." "Dear H——," I replied, "Tell me how you feel." "F——, I feel that in a few hours I must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ and there render an account

of all the deeds done in the body, and my sins press heavy upon me. F——, talk to me about death. I shall not recover. I have felt assured of this from the first, but no one will talk to me; even my dear husband shrinks from it; but I *must* speak of death now. I hope you will converse with me." I assured her of my intention and willingness to do so, and I began to inquire into the state of her mind. She lamented her sad neglect of religion in days past, that she had greatly failed to improve opportunities, and had grievously put off preparation for a dying hour. "Now, dear F——, I feel the value of time—now I see why I was sent into this world; my whole life ought to have been a preparation for this hour. Oh! dear, dear F——, how time has been trifled away."

"She seemed exceedingly distressed at these recollections, and particularly referred to the instructions and example of her dear father—and expressed in the strongest terms her gratitude to him for teaching her to honour religion from her infancy. "Now, F——, I feel his worth. Oh, what a father we had—how his prayers and entreaties, and holy example rise before me. I never, never can express my love for my father. On a death-bed I have learnt his value"—then adding, "But on a death- bed I have learnt my responsibilities for such a parent. I shall soon have to answer for many things, but I have most to answer for in having had such a parent. I have enjoyed unparalleled mercies through childhood and youth. Oh! I have much—very much to answer for. *If I am saved, it will indeed be a miracle of miracles;* but F——, I have a hope, and I cannot give up hope—Christ is my hope; his blood can cleanse me from my sins, and for his sake even *I* may find pardon."

"She then named several of her friends and relations whom she thought would be shocked at the intelligence

of her early and unexpected death. She sent kind messages to them. The poor people of Turvey, and recollections of the home of her youth, seemed much in her thoughts, and deeply affected her. "F——, give my affectionate love to them all. Turvey is very dear to me."

"The state of one of her intimate friends distressed her. "How I regret (alluding to this lady) that our conversation and intercourse has been so little profitable to either of us. I wish I could see —— before I die. I have much I want to say to her. I want to press religion on her mind. Oh that I could see her a real Christian before I die." She spoke much of her dear aunt, who had kindly nursed her all the week with the patient tenderness and affection of a mother. "I hope my beloved aunt knows Christ and his doctrines. I think I shall meet her in heaven." She entreated me to explain the nature of religion to the nurse, "I am too weak to talk to her now, but I hope you will, dear F——: I am afraid she has not a right knowledge of religion. She has been telling me, there can be no doubt of my going to heaven, because I am so good and amiable. Oh! this is false; this is error; this is no foundation to build on for eternity. Explain to her the nature of sin, and salvation by Christ. I cannot bear the thought of leaving that kind and faithful creature in ignorance. I have been talking to ——," alluding to one of the servants, "and have tried to show her the importance of preparing for early death. I wish I had strength to speak to nurse also." H—— then returned to the subject of her own departure: "Oh! I am frightened when I think of dying. I have not accustomed myself to think of dying as I ought to have done." I suggested to her mind what appeared to me best suited to her case; that Christ was our lamp in that dreary valley, our strong consolation in the bitter

pains of death. She replied, "I can trust Christ with my soul. I can hope he will pardon and save it; but I feel alarmed about the bodily pains of death: they are fearful in prospect; but I will not dwell on the future, it disturbs me. I will trust God." I said, "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,"—interrupting me she exclaimed with great emotion, "Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

"She now referred to Wilberforce, and said, "Poor Willy went through this awful time before me, but all was safe and happy with him. I trust it will be so with me. My dear, dear father, he has also gone through death. None of us know what sorrow he endured in that awful hour. He was indeed a loss to us all, but I am now glad he is gone before me."

"The prospect of leaving her infants agitated her mind throughout the day. "To be left without a mother! Oh this is hard! Oh! God take care of my poor babes." Her chief conversation about the children was with her husband, and I believe she gave him many directions about their education.

"On Saturday my mother arrived; H—— was too ill to converse with her, but she assured her that her own mind was in peace.

"My sister appeared to be dying the whole of Saturday night, but very gradually. She begged we would all leave the room, as the evening came on, and that she might be left alone with her husband, who sat the whole of the night beside her, to converse as her strength would permit.

"At six o'clock on Sunday morning, she desired that we might be called into the room. We found Mr. —— supporting her in his arms; death was on her countenance, she breathed with difficulty and was quite cold. She said, "I wish to see Mr. ——" (the medical man who attended her in her confinement.) When he came,

she inquired of him, how long she might live; he said, "Perhaps three hours." She requested her husband to send for Mr. W——. On his arrival she exerted her last strength to converse with him, but their conversation was carried on in so low a tone that I could not catch the whole. I heard my sister question Mr. W—— most earnestly about a true and a false faith, and whether he thought her faith sincere and genuine. He spoke very decidedly of the safety of her state, and she appeared to receive comfort from his opinion. At her request he administered the Lord's Supper. We knelt round her bed in silence and deep anguish. She clasped her hands, and seemed to be in earnest prayer the whole time. At the conclusion she thanked Mr. ——, and said, "You have refreshed me in body and mind. This is the hour of extremity, but Christ is all." She then became much oppressed, and struggled hard for breath, and in a little time asked for her children. When the eldest was brought, she clasped him for a moment to her breast, and said, "This boy has been my idol." She next begged that the infant might be brought to her. "I want to see if I can bring my will to God's will." The babe was placed in her arms, she looked at it, was much agitated, and exclaimed, "Oh! take it away, take it away, I cannot bear this! O God! take care of my darling babe!" She followed it with her eyes as the nurse carried it away, and seemed to be in prayer for it. She then took leave of each of us separately. To her mother she said, "I shall soon be with my dear papa." The interview with her husband was very affecting. She was most ardently attached to Mr. ——; she desired him to kneel down and commit her soul to God in the agony of departure. Presently she whispered, "I cannot hear now." Then—"My sight is failing—Oh! this is death!" She begged we would keep perfect silence, and lay her straight down

on the bed. We stood motionless and gazing on her. She made several attempts to speak, but in vain, but I heard her breathe out very faintly, "Now it begins to look lovely!" A moment after, fixing her eyes upward, and smiling with a placid countenance, she drew a last deep breath, and all was hushed in silence.

'Are we not allowed, my dear Mrs. F——, to believe that my sister has joined angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven? Her short and painful illness afforded less scope for the exercises and evidences of a renewed heart than we witnessed in the last hours of our beloved Wilberforce. Yet here we have not been left to sorrow as without hope. "Beloved for the father's sake," seemed inscribed in characters of mercy on her death-bed. The effect of her education and early acquaintance with the principles of religion could not be mistaken. Her father's prayers and unwearied and affectionate solicitude for his child's spiritual welfare—the "line upon line and precept upon precept," which he pressed on her mind; together with poor Willy's earnest addresses and entreaties in his dying hour, seemed to recur to her with new force, and poured a flood of light, conviction and consolation on her soul, leading her in penitence and faith to rest all her hopes on that one oblation, propitiation, and satisfaction, which was once made for sin by the Lamb of God, in whose precious blood all transgression, known and unknown, is washed away for ever.

Believe me, my dear Mrs. F——,
I am your most affectionate, &c."

I would not be thought to cast a shade on the hopes so affectionately expressed in the above letter, the subject of which is, I trust, a happy spirit in heaven. Yet I feel it necessary, as a Christian minister, to subjoin a few salutary cautions, especially to *young* people

against too exclusive a reliance on what may take place in our latter moments. The scripture makes an appeal to living hours and holy fruits, and these are the tests on which we can most safely depend. The gold passes through the fire, and the result of the purifying process alone determines its character. It is the language of inspiration, "As a man sows so shall he reap."

Let me remind those young persons whose opinions are correct, but who are conscious that their hearts are yet far from God, not to run the hazard, the tremendous hazard, of losing their souls, by delay; nor expect peace and safety at last, unless they are now seeking to lay up the support of a faith which worketh by love and obedience. "It is the tenor of the life, not that of the few morbid and suffering scenes which precede dissolution, that fixes the character. We are not authorized by Scripture to place any dependence on the last periods of sinking nature, through which the Christian may be called to pass to his eternal reward." *

* Life of the Rev. T. Scott, p. 515.

CHAPTER X.

"If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."
—MACCABEES.

IN reviewing what has now been submitted to the public, there seems little need of further comment, since it is probable that the intelligent reader has anticipated every suggestion which I might be disposed to offer.

Of Mr. Richmond's plans for his children, I must leave the Christian parent to form his own opinion; observing that whether he adopts them in whole or in part, he should never forget that *instruction,* however large or correct, is not *education;* that true piety consists not in form, in its most scrupulous use; nor in a speculation claiming the bare assent and approval of the mind; nor in any influence occasionally to be felt. It is a principle pervading every family of a man's moral nature. Religion is estimated far below its real character, when it is regarded as an affair of dutiful necessity: or as a medicine taken for ulterior relief: rather than as a well-spring of life and health, to which the soul turns for satisfaction and delight, and without which it can neither be peaceful nor happy. The truths of the Bible may be taught in their utmost purity, and yet, unless their spirit be transfused into the affections of the heart, and the habits of the life, they will fall short of the effect and design of real Christianity. Mere knowledge of religion, without a corresponding feeling and practice, often issues in a fatal apathy,

and forms a character which becomes at last impervious to every sacred impression. It has been well said by a profound moralist, that "to handle holy things without feeling, is to be cauterized in the end." It has been clearly shown on what principle Mr. Richmond conducted his plan of education;—that his grand aim was to touch the heart, and to make duty and delight synonymous. Yet some caution is necessary in the exclusive application of strictly religious principles. There a variety of motives which act most salutarily to present advantage, and which impose powerful restraints on the impulses of a corrupt nature; and if we strip a youth of all regard for his interest or reputation, we expose him, in the absence of higher motives, to be driven along by the current of his own passions, till he makes shipwreck of all that is valuable for this world and the next. To this neglect of inferior motives I am disposed to ascribe the misconduct of many children of religious parents; and it therefore becomes an inquiry of no small importance (though of difficult and delicate character,) whether the entire disuse of subordinate influences is wise, or even safe in a course of education. May we not be guided in this inquiry by the sanction of the supreme Ruler himself;* who, while he taught the more excellent way, yet formed laws for human conduct, and held out motives for obedience, not always the best in themselves, but the best in reference to the circumstances and capacities of his creatures. Nor am I inclined to reject any influence for the present advantage, in which there is nothing opposed to the spirit or the dictates of religion.

Another circumstance which is often undervalued in education, is the establishment of good habits; and that, too, prior to the full admission of good principles. Habits, it is true, are formed by a series of actions, and actions must spring from principles of some kind; but the prin-

* Ezekiel xx. 25.

ciple at first may be little more than custom or association: yet are the habits valuable, as preparing a future powerful co-operation with right principle; for nothing proves a greater obstacle to truth in opinion, than error in conduct. There is a deep and intimate knowledge of the influence of habit in that declaration of our blessed Lord, "If any man will do the will of my heavenly Father, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." John vii. 17.

Corrupt practice is a fruit of darkness, and increaseth darkness; and though correct habits are not the cause of divine light, they prepare the soil for the heavenly seed, and clear away the weeds and thorns which would check its vegetation, and retard its growth. The language which reflects on human agency as useless, and even presumptuous, until a divine power has commenced its mighty operation, is not in accordance with reason or Scripture; and a propensity to form systems, and distort the doctrines of religion, is often connected with indolence and selfishness, which shrink from the labour of instruction.

Mr. Richmond's great care to regulate the private intercourse of his children, is another feature in his system of education which deserves particular attention. It is evident, from one remark in his own memoranda, that he intended to have urged this topic in the projected memoir of his son: "The great value of scientific and rational amusement in supplying materials for good and useful conversation."

The unprofitable manner in which the hours of social intercourse are too often spent, has been lamented by many. It may not be desirable, nor is it always profitable, to introduce strictly religious subjects on every occasion. Sacred things should be handled with reverence and feeling, or we shall be in danger of making an unholy use of that which is holy. But it is very

possible to converse on ordinary things in the spirit of religion; we may aim to improve ourselves or others, and not merely pass away the time in tales of wonder. We cannot be walking with God, in a heavenly tender frame of mind, or with any just sense of our position, as standing on the brink of eternity, while we propose to ourselves no higher object than amusement — no accession of ideas, nor elevation of devout affections. Can our communications "administer grace to the hearer," *when the amount, if written down would shame a wise man, and distress the mind of a sincere Christian?*

There is also, with young and old, a prevalent and bad habit, of talking of persons, rather than of things. This is seldom innocent, and often pregnant with many evils. Such conversation insensibly slides into detraction; and by dwelling on offences, we expose our own souls to contagion, and are betrayed into feelings of pride, envy, and jealousy; and even when we speak of others in terms of commendation, "we are sure to come in with a *but* at the last, and drive a nail into our neighbour's reputation."

The disuse of good conversation proceeds from poverty of ideas, no less than from want of heart-religon. Persons select light and trivial subjects, because they have no materials for a higher intercharge of sentiment. If more pains were taken to cultivate the mind, there would be less difficulty in speaking to edification; and less need of having recourse to amusements, which differ little in their effect and influence from others, which, by common consent, have been denounced as inconsistent with vital religion.

If the "Domestic Portraiture" should fall into the hands of any one who has been accustomed to associate the idea of folly and delusion with a serious profession of religion,— he may observe in what is here detailed,

that a sincere Christian may be a man of taste and intelligence; and that it is not necessary to be illiterate or enthusiastic to believe the Bible, and regulate a family in accordance with its principles; but that elegant accomplishments and a becoming attention to the usages of society, as far as they are innocent or useful, may be found in alliance with the warmest devotion and most conscientious regard to the laws of God.

In bidding farewell to this little work, which I have now brought to a conclusion, one thought enters my mind and produces deep emotion. I have increased the responsibilities of Mr. Richmond's family, by holding them up to public observation. Wherever the present volume may obtain circulation, their father's honour, and — a still more important consideration — their father's principles, will be ultimately connected with their conduct, and the value of them be appreciated by their effects, His eye is no longer upon them, nor his bright example before them; neither has every member of his family enjoyed the full benefit of his affectionate and careful superintendence. But I am persuaded that the traces he has left, are too deeply engraven ever to be erased from their remembrance; and that a father's blessing will follow them to the latest hour of their earthly pilgrimrge. It is my heart's desire and prayer to God, that they may retain a lively recollection of his instructions, and continue to walk worthy of their vocation, irreprovable and without rebuke, until they rejoin their departed relatives, and with them "praise God for such a father."

THE END.

RICHMOND'S TRACTS;

DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER, YOUNG COTTAGER OR LITTLE JANE NEGRO SERVANT, &c.

BY THE
REV. LEGH RICHMOND, A.M.
LATE RECTOR OF TURVEY, BEDFORDSHIRE

EDITED
BY THE REV. JOHN AYRE, A.M.

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1859.

CONTENTS.

S. Douglas Wyeth, Agt., Stereotyper,
No. 7 Pear St., Philadelphia.

TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.,

THIS LITTLE WORK,

DESIGNED TO BEAR A TESTIMONY, DRAWN FROM REAL FACTS AND OCCURRENCES,

TO THE

INFINITE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH,

When received in the Heart and exemplified in the Conduct,

IS DEDICATED,

AS A TOKEN OF GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE REGARD, WHICH THE AUTHOR ENTERTAINS TOWARDS A CHARACTER SO LONG AND JUSLY APPROVED,

AS

THE FAITHFUL MONITOR OF THE RICH, THE TRIED FRIEND OF THE POOR, THE UNWEARIED SUPPORTER OF RELIGION, AND THE ACKNOWLEDGED BENEFACTOR OF MANKIND.

INTRODUCTION.

It has been thought that an enlarged edition of the "Annals of the Poor," might not be unacceptable to the public; and that a brief sketch of the Author's life might with advantage be appended. It has fallen to my lot to superintend such a publication.

The "Dairyman's Daughter" is enlarged with a number of letters, &c., written by herself to her relatives. The originals of these have been preserved in the Author's possession. There are also added two letters addressed to her by the Author. I have judged it expedient not to interrupt the course of the narrative, and have therefore thrown together the additional matter in the form of an appendix.

The "Young Cottager," and the "Negro Servant," are reprinted without alteration, from the last edition.

Two little pieces from Mr. Richmond's pen, inserted in the first volume of the Christian Guardian, now for the first time accompany his larger tracts. They are entitled "The Cottage Conversation," and "A visit to the Infirmary."

I have a melancholy satisfaction in sketching the life of my lamented father-in-law, and I willingly embrace the opportunity of affectionately paying a public tribute to the memory of one so valued and beloved. I purposely refrain from intruding into the province of the biographer: a complete memoir of Mr. R. having been

already given to the public. My aim is only to catch two or three prominent features of his character, introducing just so much of narration as may serve to render my observations intelligible.

Legh Richmond was born at Liverpool, Jan. 29, 1772. He was the eldest child of Dr. Henry Richmond, the descendant of an ancient and honourable family. A remarkable casualty befell him in his childhood, the effects of which he never recovered. At a very early age, in leaping from a wall, he contracted an injury in his left leg, which issued in incurable lameness. It is somewhat singular that an accident nearly similar occurred to a younger brother, and also to his second son. Each of them, in infancy, fell from an open window. The former was killed, and the latter was ever after afflicted in the same limb with the same kind of lameness as his father.

After a private preparatory education, Legh Richmond was admitted a member of Trinity College, Cambridge. While an under-graduate, he pursued his studies with a talent and a zeal which gave fair promise that the highest honours of his year were not beyond his reach. These hopes were however blighted by a severe illness, which was partly owing to his anxious and unremitted application. Precluded by this cause, from engaging in the honourable contention of the senate-house, he received what is academically termed an ægrotat degree; commencing B.A. in 1794; and with some intermissions he resided in the university three years longer.

We are now to view Mr. Richmond in a totally different character. In the summer of 1797, he became, within the space of a very few weeks, (to borrow his own words,) "academically a master of arts, domestically a husband, parochially a deacon." He had been originally destined to the law; but having imbibed a distaste for that profession, his attention was subsequently directed

to the church, and he was now admitted to the sacred office. Brading, a secluded village in the Isle of Wight, was the scene of his earliest pastoral labours. He was ordained to the curacy of this place and the little adjoining village of Yaverland; and in Yaverland church he delivered his first sermon.

These scenes will long be dear to Christian remembrance. Lovely in themselves, and consecrated by the pen of Legh Richmond, they will be viewed with no ordinary feelings: and he who disdains not the "simple annals of the poor," while he treads the sod which covers "little Jane," or visits the lowly cottage of the "Dairyman," will not fail to glorify God for those who *here* have slept in Jesus, and "though dead, yet speak."

At the time of his ordination, Mr. Richmond saw little of the magnitude of that work in which he was engaging. As yet, he was himself but little acquainted with the things of God, and was therefore little qualified to become the spiritual instructor of others. His habits of life were decorous and exemplary, his pulpit compositions interesting and moral, but as yet he was little imbued with the spirit of vital godliness. This man, however, (may it not be said?) was "a chosen vessel to the Lord." Ere many months elapsed, a complete revolution was effected in his religious sentiments. This is, under God, mainly to be ascribed to the perusal of Mr. Wilberforce's "Practical View of Christianity," He now with enlightened understanding and decisive zeal, set himself to "do the work of an evangelist." Not only was he in the pulpit, instant in "preaching the word," but he was also to be found with his pastoral admonitions in the dwellings of his flock, and could desend, with sweet and winning gentleness, to "feed his lambs." The fruit of his labours was speedily apparent. "Little Jane" was the first flower which bloomed from the good seed he was sowing.

The circumstances attendant upon his intercourse with the subjects of the Annals will be found narrated in the several tracts. I only observe in this place, that "little Jane" died January 30th. 1799, in her fifteenth year: that the conversations with the "Negro Servant" were held during the summer of 1803, and that the death of the "Dairyman's Daughter" took place May 30th, 1801: her age was thirty-one.

After a residence of about seven years in the Isle of Wight, where his labours had been evidently and largely blessed, Mr. Richmond removed to London. He was here to take a share in the duties of the Lock Chapel. The very first sermon he delivered from the pulpit of this place was, there is every reason to belive, under God's blessing, the instrumental means of effecting a saving change in the heart of, at least, one individual.

Scarcely, however, was he well settled in this new scene, when the good providence of God removed him to the rectory of Turvey, Bedfordshire, He was presented to this living by Miss Fuller, in 1805.

Long will the name of Richmond be venerated at Turvey; long will the savour of his affectionate ministrations abide in the hearts of his mourning flock. A singular blessing still attended him. From the earliest to literally the latest, his preaching was visibly "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

It was during his residence at Turvey, that most of Mr. Richmond's publications were undertaken. He had previously printed two or three single semons;* but it was at Turvey that his great work, "The Fathers of the English church," was carried on. For the superintendance of this important undertaking he was eminently qualified. Accident, or I would rather say, a remark-

* These were, a Fast-day Sermon, and one On the Close of the Year, preached at Brading; and a sermon on Cruelty to the Brute Creation, delivered at Bath.

able providence, had, in the first instance, introduced him, while in the Isle of Wight, to the writings of our earlier and greatest theologians; and the study of them he had ever since zealously prosecuted. To a familiar acquaintance with the works of these divines, Mr. Richmond united the greatest impartiality and judgment in forming his selections. His work therefore presents, in a comparatively small compass, a large proportion of the most valuable of the remains of our martyrs and confessors. It is not perhaps too much to say that it has been mainly instrumental in awakening to the reformers that attention and interest with which they are now increasingly regarded.

It was during his residence at Turvey also that Mr. Richmond drew up the narratives which are contained in the present volume, They were originally (in substance) inserted in the earlier numbers of the Christian Guardian. Having here attracted considerable attention, they were then published in the form of separate tracts, and afterwards, with considerable augmentations in the first edition of this volume.

It may appear perhaps unnecessary to pronounce an opinion on productions, which have been circulated by millions, and translated into twenty languages; and which, in a multitude of well-authenticated instances, have been, by the blessing of God, signally effective of good. I cannot however forbear to say, that in Legh Richmond's writings, more than in those of perhaps any other author, you behold the character of the man. His beautiful simplicity, his lively imagination, his tenderness of feeling, his devoted piety, were the characteristics of the man which enshrined him in the affections of all who knew him. And who can read a page of his Annals, and not recognise in those interesting narratives the same simple plainness, the same glowing fancy, the same touching pathos, the same ardent piety? In sketching

his villagers, he has unconsciously delineated himself. He admits us to his retirement and meditations, shows us his hopes and fears, and presents us with all the secret workings of his soul. We admire the gifted minister of God, who in the deep humility of his spirit disdained not to listen to the voice of admonition, though it reached him from the lowly cottage; we cannot withhold our affection from the man.

If I were called on to say which of the narratives I prefer, I should most probably be inclined to fix on that of the "Young Cottager." There is something, in my judgment, irresistibly engaging in the character and history of that simple girl. I can *venerate* the high and exalted piety of the "Dairyman's Daughter," who, with a masculine strength of understanding, had ever her word of counsel even for the minister; but I *love* the little, backward, neglected, retiring child, who starts forth at once in all the moral beauty of Christian attainment. There is something too in the condition of Jane which seems especially to call for our sympathy. The Dairyman's Daughter was constantly surrounded by a circle of affectionate relatives, who regarded her with reverence and love; while Jane's religion was, at best, little appreciated, often despised and ridiculed by her family, and her last hours were disturbed by sounds of blasphemy, proceeding from a parent. Many of the incidents also of this tale might be appealed to as conferring upon it a *peculiar* interest. The scene, for example, where Mr. Richmond, on his first visit to her, while speaking of the good news of the gospel, enquires, "who brings this good news?" and is answered, "Sir, *you* brought it to *me;*" I know not who can read unmoved. Her parting benediction too—"God bless and reward you"—when with an unexpected exertion she threw her arms around him and expired—is inexpressibly affecting.

I close what I have to say on the subject of these

tracts, by adding, that a few years ago, two gravestones were erected in the churchyards of Arreton and Brading respectively, to the memory of the "Dairyman's Daughter," and the "Young Cottager."

On the former are inscribed the following lines: the composition of a lady.

"Stranger, if e'er by chance or feeling led,
Upon this hallowed earth thy footsteps tread,
Turn from the contemplation of the sod,
And think on her whose spirit rests with God.
Lowly her lot on earth — but he who bore
Tidings of grace and blessings to the poor
Gave her, his truth and faithfulness to prove,
The choicest treasures of his boundless love: —
Faith, that dispelled affliction's darkest gloom,
Hope, that could cheer the passage to the tomb,
Peace, that not hell's dark legions could destroy,
And love, that filled the soul with heavenly joy.
Death of its sting disarmed, she knew no fear,
But tasted heaven, e'en while she lingered here:
Oh; happy saint! may we like thee be blest,
In life be faithful, and in death find rest."

The following epitaph is from Mr. Richmond's pen.

"Ye who delight the power of God to trace,
And mark with joy each monument of grace,
Tread lightly o'er this grave, as you explore
'The short and simple annals of the poor.'

"A child reposes underneath this sod,
A child to memory dear, and dear to God:
Rejoice, yet shed the sympathetic tear,
Jane, 'the Young Cottager,' lies buried here."

During his residence at Turvey, Mr. Richmond became extendedly known to the public as the cordial friend, and ready advocate of the different religious societies, which have within the last thirty years grown up amongst us. His persuasive and pathetic eloquence in

the pulpit or on the platform, when awaking Christian sympathy in behalf of the idolatrous Gentile, or the unbelieving Jew, will not be readily forgotten by the multitudes who have, so often, delighted and instructed, hung upon his lips. I believe his earliest appearance in this character, was on the ninth anniversary of the Church Missionary Society, before whom he was appointed, in 1809, to preach their annual sermon. This sermon may be appealed to as a fair and characteristic specimen of his powers in the pulpit; though I must be allowed to say, that to his flowing and harmonious language, his graceful delivery, and sweet expression of features, beaming with love to God, and good-will to men, imparted a charm which the mere reader of a printed sermon can by no means duly appreciate.

His preaching, for a long series of years, was altogether extemporaneous. His ready utterance, his exuberant fancy, his aptness of illustration, his deep knowledge of divine things, rendered his sermons always interesting and useful. Perhaps he did not, upon common occasions, allow himself sufficient previous study; but if this *were* his fault, he acted upon principle, "Why," he would often say, "why need I labour, when our simple villagers are far more *usefully* instructed in my plain, easy, familiar manner? The only result would be, that I should address them in a style beyond their comprehension."

His appearance on the platform of a public meeting, was universally hailed with pleasure. His ready adaptation of passing incidents, the suavity of his addresses, sometimes solemn, sometimes even jocose, interspersed with interesting narratives, which he could so well relate, deservedly placed him high in public esteem.

I ought, perhaps to state, that in 1814, Mr. Richmond was appointed chaplain to the late Duke of Kent, by whom he was honoured with a share of his Royal High

ness's friendship. In 1817 Mr. R. was presented by the late Emperor Alexander of Russia, with a splendid ring, as a testimony of the approbation with which his Imperial Majesty viewed the narratives in this volume.

Many peaceful years were passed at Turvey. Happy in the bosom of his family, no man more excelled as a pattern of domestic virtues than Legh Richmond.

At length, in 1825, Mr. R.'s domestic happiness sustained a severe blow by the death of his second son, a youth in his nineteenth year. For this beloved child, he had fostered many a fond hope and anxious expectation, and beheld with all a father's joy, "non flosculos — sed jam certos atque deformatos fructus." This fair flower was withered by consumption, and the bereaved parent, though he submitted as a Christian, yet sorrowed as a man. In a few short months the stroke was repeated. Intelligence arrived that his eldest son, who had been absent many years, had died on his voyage from India to England.

These afflictive dispensations had a marked and peculiar effect upon Legh Richmond. He who used to be the life of the domestic and social circle, would now be silent and abstracted: yet it was not the morbid gloom of a repining heart, it was rather the solemnity of conviction that *he* should ere long rejoin his lamented children. His bodily health too seemed in some measure decaying. His multitude of pastoral duties were too heavy for his strength. For the last twelve months of his life he was troubled with an irritating cough, which seemed to indicate an affection of the lungs. At length, (March 1827,) he contracted a violent cold, which issued in pleurisy; from which however he shortly appeared to be recovering. During all this time, when certainly no immediate danger was apprehended, he was peacefully and quietly setting his house in order. To his family

he knew the idea of separation would be agony: he therefore scarcely hinted to *them* what he felt was nigh at hand: but to a clerical friend, he, in striking words, professed that simple reliance on the atonement of Christ, which alone can cheer and support the soul in the hour of dissolution. It soon became evident to those around him, that the flood of life was ebbing calmly yet fast: and at last, (May 8,) without pain or struggle, the ready spirit sweetly and softly passed from her mortal tenement: and Legh Richmond slept in Jesus.

Farewell, dear friend and father! Very pleasant were the hours and years of our communion: but they are passed away, and the savour only, sad yet sweet, remains. "Farewell, dear friend, till the morning of an eternal day renew our personal intercourse!" May *I* meet thee in a better world.

I cannot but connect the closing hours of my beloved friend, with that affecting prayer which he has breathed in the Young Cottager, (Part IV.) He had been describing the useful course and peaceful termination of a little rivulet, which glides through a very lovely glen, by which he was meditating. "May my course be like unto thine, thou little rivulet! Though short be my span of life, yet may I be useful to my fellow-sinners, as I travel onwards! Let me be a dispenser of spiritual support and health to many! Like this stream may I prove the poor man's friend by the way, and water the souls that thirst for the river of life, wherever I meet them! And if it pleases thee, O my God, let me in my latter end be like this brook! It calmly, though not quite silently flows through this scene of peace and loveliness, just before it enters the sea. Let me thus gently close my days likewise; and may I not unusefully tell to others of the goodness and mercy of my Saviour, till I arrive at the vast ocean of eternity."

That prayer was surely answered. He *did* tell to men, with abundant blessing, of the goodness and mercy of his Saviour: he *did* thus gently close his days.

Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ;
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy.

J. A.

Islington, Feb. 21*st*, 1828.

THE

DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER.

PART I.

It is a delightful employment to discover and trace the operations of divine grace, as they are manifested in the dispositions and lives of God's real children. It is peculiarly gratifying to observe how frequently, among the poorer classes of mankind, the sunshine of mercy beams upon the heart, and bears witness to the image of Christ which the Spirit of God has impressed thereupon. Among such the sincerity and simplicity of the Christian character appear encumbered by those obstacles to spirituality of mind and conversation, which too often prove a great hinderance to those who live in the higher ranks. Many are the difficulties which riches, worldly consequence, high connections, and the luxurious refinements of polished society, throw in the way of religious profession. Happy indeed it is (and some such happy instances I know) where grace has so strikingly supported its conflict with natural pride, self importance, the allurements of luxury, ease, and worldly opinion, that the noble and mighty appear adorned with genuine poverty of spirit, self-denial, humble-mindeness and deep spirituality of heart.

But, in general, if we want to see religion in its most simple and pure character, we must look for it among the poor of this world, who are rich in faith. How often

is the poor man's cottage the palace of God! Many can truly declare, that they have there learned the most valuable lessons of faith and hope, and there witnessed the most striking demonstrations of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God,

The character which the present narrative is designed to introduce to the notice of my readers, is given *from real life and circumstance:* I first became acquainted with her by receiving the following letter, which I transcribe from the original now before me.

"REV. SIR,

"I take the liberty to write to you. Pray excuse me, for I have never spoken to you. But I once heard you, when you preached at —— church. I believe you are a faithful preacher to warn sinners to flee from the wrath that will be revealed against all those that live in sin, and die impenitent. Pray go on in the strength of the Lord. And may he bless you, and crown your labour of love with success, and give you souls for your hire!

"The Lord has promised to be with those whom he calls and sends forth to preach his word to the end of time: for without him we can do nothing. I was much rejoiced to hear of those marks of love and affection to that poor soldier of the S. D. militia. Surely the love of Christ sent you to that poor man: may that love ever dwell richly in you by faith! may it constrain you to seek the wandering souls of men with the fervent desire to spend and be spent for his glory! May the unction of the Holy Spirit attend the word spoken by you with power, and convey deep conviction to the hearts of your hearers! May many of them experience the divine change of being made new creatures in Christ!

"Sir, be fervent in prayer with God for the conviction and conversion of sinners. His power is great, and who

can withstand it? He has promised to answer the prayer of faith, that is put up in his Son's name. 'Ask what ye will, it shall be granted you.' How this should strengthen our faith when we are taught by the word and the Spirit how to pray! O that sweet inspiring hope! how it lifts up the fainting spirits, when we look over the precious promises of God! What a mercy if we know Christ and the power of his resurrection in our own hearts! Through faith in Christ we rejoice in hope, and look up in expectation of that time drawing near, when all shall know and fear the Lord, and when a nation shall be born in a day.

"What a happy time, when Christ's kingdom shall come! then shall 'his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Men shall be daily fed with the manna of his love, and delight themselves in the Lord all the day long. Then what a paradise below will they enjoy! How it animates and enlivens my soul with vigour to pursue the ways of God, that I may even now bear some humble part in giving glory to God and the Lamb!

"Sir, I begin to write this on Sunday, being detained from attending on public worship. My dear and only sister, living as a servant with Mrs. ——, was so ill, that I came here to attend in her place and on her. But now she is no more.

"I was going to entreat you to write to her in answer to this; she being convinced of the evil of her past life, and that she had not walked in the ways of God, nor sought to please him. But she earnestly desired to do so, This makes me have a comfortable hope that she is gone to glory, and that she is now joining in sweet concert with the angelic host in heaven, to sing the wonders of redeeming love. I hope I may now write, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.'

"She expressed a desire to receive the Lord's Supper and commemorate his precious death and sufferings. I

told her as well as I was able, what it was to receive Christ into her heart; but as her weakness of body increased. she did not mention it again. She seemed quite resigned before she died. I do hope she is gone from a world of death and sin to be with God for ever.

"Sir, I hope you will not be offended with me, a poor ignorant person, to take such a liberty as to write to you. But I trust, as you are called to instruct sinners in the ways of God, you will bear with me, and be so kind to answer this ill-wrote letter, and give me some instructions. It is my heart's desire to have the mind that was in Christ, that when I awake up in his likeness, then I may be satisfied.

"My sister expressed a wish that you might bury her. The minister of our parish, whither she will be carried, cannot come. She will lie at ——. She died on Tuesday morning, and will be buried on Friday or Saturday (whichever is most convenient to you) at three o'clock in the afternoon. Please to send an answer by the bearer, to let me know whether you can comply with this request,

"From your unworthy servant,

"ELIZABETH W—— E."

I was much struck with the simple and earnest strain of devotion which this letter breathed. It was but indifferently written and spelt. But this the rather tended to endear the hitherto unknown writer, as it seemed characteristic of the union of humbleness of station with eminence of piety. I felt quite thankful that I was favoured with a correspondent of this description; the more so, as such characters were at that time very rare in the neighbourhood. I have often wished that epistolary intercourse of this kind was more encouraged and practised among us. I have the greatest reason to speak well of its effects both on myself and others. Communi-

cation by letter as well as by conversation with the pious poor, has often been the instrument of animating and reviving my own heart in the midst of duty, and of giving me the most profitable information for the general conduct of the ministerial office.

As soon as the letter was read, I enquired who was the bearer of it.

"He is waiting at the outside of the gate, Sir;" was the reply.

I went out to speak to him, and saw a venerable old man, whose long hoary hair and deeply wrinkled countenance commanded more than common respect. He was resting his arm upon the gate, and tears were streaming down his cheeks. On my approach he made a low bow and said,

"Sir, I have brought you a letter from my daughter; but I fear you will think us very bold in asking you to take so much trouble."

"By no means," I replied; "I shall be truly glad to oblige you and any of your family in this matter, provided it be quite agreeable to the minister of your parish."

"Sir, he told me yesterday, that he should be very glad if I could procure some gentleman to come and bury my poor child for him, as he lives five miles off, and has particular business on that day: so when I told my daughter, she asked me to come to you, Sir, and bring that letter, which would explain the matter.

I desired him to come into the house, and then said,

"What is your occupation?"

"Sir, I have lived most of my days in a little cottage at ——, six miles from here. I have rented a few acres of ground, and kept some cows, which, in addition to my day labour, has been the means of supporting and bringing up my family."

"What family have you?"

"A wife, now getting very aged and helpless, two sons, and one daughter; for my other poor dear child is just departed out of this wicked world."

"I hope for a better."

'I hope so too: poor thing, she did not use to take to such good ways as her sister; but I do believe that her sister's manner of talking with her before she died was the means of saving her soul. What a mercy it is to have such a child as mine is! I never thought about my own soul seriously till she, poor girl, begged and prayed me to flee from the wrath to come."

"How old are you?"

"Near seventy, and my wife is older; we are getting old and almost past our labour, but our daughter has left a good place, where she lived in service, on purpose to come home and take care of us and our little dairy. And a dear, dutiful, affectionate girl she is."

"Was she always so?"

"No, Sir; when she was very young, she was all for the world, and pleasure, and dress, and company. Indeed we were all very ignorant, and thought if we took care for this life, and wronged nobody, we should be sure to go to heaven at last. My daughters were both wilful, and like ourselves, strangers to the ways of God and the word of his grace. But the eldest of them went out to service, and some years ago she heard a sermon preached at —— church, by a gentleman that was going to ——, as chaplain to the colony, and from that time she seemed quite another creature. She began to read the Bible, and became sober and steady. The first time she returned home afterwards to see us, she brought us a guinea which she had saved from her wages, and said, as we were getting old, she was sure we should want help; adding, that she did not wish to spend it in fine clothes, as she used to do, only to feed pride and vanity. She said, she would rather show gratitude to her dear father

and mother, because Christ had shown such mercy to her.

"We wondered to hear her talk, and took great delight in her company; for her temper and behaviour were so humble and kind, she seemed so desirous to do us good both in soul and body, and was so different from what we had ever seen her before, that, careless and ignorant as we had been, we began to think there must be something real in religion, or it never could alter a person so much in a little time.

"Her youngest sister, poor soul! used to laugh and ridicule her at that time, and said her head was turned with her new ways. 'No, sister,' she would say, 'not my *head*, but I hope my *heart* is turned from the love of sin to the love of God. I wish you may one day see, as I do, the danger and vanity of your present condition.'

"Her poor sister would reply, 'I do not want to hear any of your preaching; I am no worse than other people, and that is enough for me.'—'Well, sister,' Elizabeth would say, 'if you will not hear me, you cannot hinder me from praying for you, which I do with all my heart.'

"And now, Sir, I believe those prayers are answered. For when her sister was taken ill, Elizabeth went to Mrs. ——'s to wait in her place, and take care of her. She said a great deal to her about her soul, and the poor girl began to be so deeply affected, and sensible of her past sin, and so thankful for her sister's kind behaviour, that it gave her great hopes indeed for her sake. When my wife and I went to see her as she lay sick, she told us how grieved and ashamed she was of her past life; but said, she had a hope through grace that her dear sister's Saviour would be her Saviour too; for she saw her own sinfulness, felt her own helplessness, and only wished to cast herself upon Christ as her hope and salvation.

"And now, Sir, she is gone; and I hope and think

her sister's prayers for her conversion to God have been answered. The Lord grant the same for her poor father and mother's sake likewise!"

This conversation was a very pleasing commentary upon the letter which I had received, and made me anxious both to comply with the request, and to become acquainted with the writer. I promised the good Dairyman to attend on the Friday at the appointed hour; and after some more conversation respecting his own state of mind under the present trial, he went away.

He was a reverend old man; his furrowed cheeks, white locks, weeping eyes, bent shoulders, and feeble gait, were characteristic of the aged pilgrim. As he slowly walked onwards, supported by a stick, which seemed to have been the companion of many a long year, a train of reflections occurred, which I retrace with pleasure and emotion.

At the appointed hour I arrived at the church; and after a little while, was summoned to the churchyard gate to meet the funeral procession. The aged parents, the elder brother, and the sister, with other relatives, formed an affecting group. I was struck with the humble, pious, and pleasing countenance of the young woman from whom I had received the letter. It bore the marks of great seriousness without affectation, and of much serenity mingled with a glow of devotion.

A circumstance occurred during the reading of the Burial Service, which I think it right to mention, as one among many testimonies of the solemn and impressive tendency of our truly evangelical Liturgy.

A man of the village, who had hitherto been of a very careless and even profligate character, went into the church through mere curiosity, and with no better purpose than that of vacantly gazing at the ceremony. He came likewise to the grave, and during the reading of those prayers which are appointed for that part of the

service, his mind received a deep, serious conviction of his sin and spiritual danger. It was an impression that never wore off, but gradually ripened into the most satisfactory evidence of an entire change, of which I had many and long-continued proofs. He always referred to the Burial Service, and to some particular sentences of it, as the clearly ascertained instrument of bringing him through grace, to the knowledge of the truth.

The day was therefore one to be remembered. Remembered let it be by those who love to hear "the short and simple annals of the poor."

Was there not a manifest and happy connexion between the circumstances that providently brought the serious and the careless to the same grave on that day together? How much do *they* lose who neglect to trace the leadings of God in providence, as links in the chain of his eternal purpose of redemption and grace!

"While Infidels may scoff, let us adore!"

After the service was concluded, I had a short conversation with the good old couple and their daughter. She told me that she intended to remain a week or two at the gentleman's house where her sister died, till another servant should arrive and take her sister's place.

"I shall be truly obliged," said she "by an opportunity of conversing with you, either there or at my father's, when I return home, which will be in the course of a fortnight at the furthest. I shall be glad to talk to you about my sister, whom you have just buried."

Her aspect and address were highly interesting. I promised to see her very soon; and then returned home, quietly reflecting on the circumstances of the funeral at which I had been engaged. I blessed the God of the poor, and prayed that the poor might become rich in faith, and the rich be made poor in spirit.

PART II.

A SWEET solemnity often possesses the mind, whilst retracing past intercourse with departed friends. How much is this increased, when they were such as lived and died in the Lord! The remembrance of former scenes and conversations with those, who, we believe, are now enjoying the uninterrupted happiness of a better world, fills the heart with pleasing sadness, and animates the soul with the hopeful anticipation of a day when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed in the assembling of all his children together, never more to be separated. Whether they were rich or poor, while on earth, is a matter of trifling consequence: the valuable part of their character is, that they are kings and priests unto God, and this is their true nobility. In the number of now departed believers, with whom I once loved to converse on the grace and glory of the kingdom of God, was the Dairyman's daughter.

About a week after the funeral, I went to visit the family at ——, in whose service the youngest sister had lived and died, and where Elizabeth was requested to remain for a short time in her stead.

The house was a large and venerable mansion. It stood in a beautiful valley at the foot of a high hill. It was embowered in fine woods, which were interspersed in every direction with rising, falling, and swelling grounds. The manor-house had evidently descended through a long line of ancestry, from a distant period of time. The Gothic character of its original architecture was still preserved in the latticed windows, adorned with carved divisions and pillars of stonework. Several pointed terminations also, in the construction of the roof, according to the custom of our fore-fathers, fully corresponded with the general features of the building.

One end of the house was entirely clothed with the thick foliage of an immense ivy, which climbed beyond customary limits, and embraced a lofty chimney up to its very summit. Such a tree seemed congenial to the walls that supported it, and conspired with the antique fashion of the place to carry imagination back to the days of our ancestors.

As I approached, I was led to reflect on the lapse of ages, and the successive generations of men, each in their turn occupying lands, houses, and domains; each in their turn also disappearing, and leaving their inheritance to be enjoyed by others. David once observed the same, and cried out, "Behold thou hast made my days as a handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best estate is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them."

Happy would it be for the rich, if they more frequently meditated on the uncertainty of all their possessions, and the frail nature of every earthly tenure. "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour, abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings. Like sheep, they are laid in the grave: death shall feed on them: and their beauty shall consume in the grave, from their dwelling."

As I advanced to the mansion, a pleasing kind of gloom overspread the front: it was occasioned by the shade of trees, and gave a characteristic effect to the ancient fabric. I instantly recollected that death had very lately visited the house, and that one of its present inhabitants was an affectionate mourner for a departed sister.

There is a solemnity in the thought of a recent death, which will associate itself with the very walls from whence we are conscious that a soul has just taken its flight to eternity.

After passing some time in conversation with the superiors of the family, in the course of which I was much gratified by hearing of the unremitted attention which the elder sister had paid to the younger, during the illness of the latter; I received likewise other testimonies of the excellency of her general character and conduct in the house: I then took leave, requesting permission to see her, agreeably to the promise I had made at the funeral, not many days before.

I was shown into a parlour, where I found her alone. She was in deep mourning. She had a calmness and serenity in her countenance, which exceedingly struck me, and impressed some idea of those attainments which a further acquaintance with her afterwards so much increased.

She spoke of her sister. I had the satisfaction of finding that she had given very hopeful proofs of a change of heart, before she died. The prayers and earnest exhortations of Elizabeth had been blessed to a happy effect. She described what had passed with such a mixture of sisterly affection, and pious dependence on the mercy of God to sinners, as convinced me that her own heart was under the influence of "pure and undefiled religion."

She requested leave occasionally to correspond with me on serious subjects, stating that she needed much instruction. She hoped I would pardon the liberty which she had taken by introducing herself to my notice. She expressed a trust that the Lord would overrule both the death of her sister, and the personal acquaintance with me that resulted from it, to a present and future good, as it respected herself and also her

parents, with whom she statedly lived, and to whom she expected to return in a few days.

Finding that she was wanted in some household duty, I did not remain long with her; but left her with an assurance that I proposed to visit her parents shortly.

"Sir," said she, "I take it very kind that you have condescended to leave the company of the rich and converse with the poor. I wish I could have said more to you respecting my own state of mind. Perhaps I shall be better able another time. When you next visit me, instead of finding me in these noble walls, you will see me in a poor cottage. But I am happiest when there. Once more, Sir, I thank you for your past kindness to me and mine, and may God in many ways bless you for it!"

I quitted the house with no small degree of satisfaction, in consequence of the new acquaintance which I had formed. I discovered traces of a cultivated, as well as a spiritual mind. I felt that religious intercourse with those of low estate may be rendered eminently useful to others, whose outward station and advantages are far above their own.

How often does it appear, that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."

It was not unfrequently my custom, when my mind was filled with any interesting subject for meditation, to seek some spot where the beauties of natural prospect might help to form pleasing and useful associations. I therefore ascended gradually to the very summit of the hill adjoining the mansion where my visit had just been made. Here was placed an elevated sea-mark: it was in the form of a triangular pyramid, and built of stone. I

sat down on the ground near it, and looked at the surrounding prospect, which was distinguished for beauty and magnificence. It was a lofty station, which commanded a complete circle of interesting objects to engage the spectator's attention.

Southward the view was terminated by a long range of hills, at about six miles distance. They met, to the westward, another chain of hills, of which the one whereon I sat formed a link, and the whole together nearly encompassed a rich and beautiful valley, filled with corn-fields and pastures. Through this vale winded a small river for many miles: much cattle were feeding on its banks. Here and there lesser eminences arose in the valley; some covered with wood, others with corn or grass, and a few with heath or fern. One of these little hills was distinguished by a parish church at the top, presenting a striking feature in the landscape. Another of these elevations, situated in the centre of the valley, was adorned with a venerable holly-tree, which has grown there for ages. Its singular height and wide-spreading dimensions not only render it an object of curiosity to the traveller, but of daily usefulness to the pilot, as a mark visible from the sea, whereby to direct his vessel safe into harbour. Villages, churches, country-seats, farm-houses, and cottages, were scattered over every part of the southern valley. In this direction also, at the foot of the hill where I was stationed, appeared the ancient mansion, which I had quitted, embellished with its woods, groves, and gardens.

South-eastward, I saw the open ocean, bounded only by the horizon. The sun shone, and gilded the waves with a glittering light that sparkled in the most brilliant manner. More to the east, in continuation of that line of hills where I was placed, rose two downs, one beyond the other; both covered with sheep, and the sea just visible over the farthest of them, as a terminating

boundary. In this point ships were seen, some sailing, others at anchor. Here the little river, which watered the southern valley, finished its course, and ran through meadows into the sea, in an eastward direction.

On the north the sea appeared like a noble river, varying from three to seven miles in breadth, between the banks of the opposite coast and those of the island which I inhabited. Immediately underneath me was a fine woody district of country, diversified by many pleasing objects. Distant towns were visible on the opposite shore. Numbers of ships occupied the sheltered station which this northern channel afforded them. The eye roamed with delight over an expanse of near and remote beauties, which alternately caught the observation, and which harmonized together, and produced a scene of peculiar interest.

Westward the hills followed each other, forming several intermediate and partial valleys, in a kind of undulations, like the waves of the sea; and bending to the south, completed the boundary of the larger valley before described, to the southward of the hill on which I sat. In many instances the hills were cultivated with corn to their very summits, and seemed to defy the inclemency of weather, which, at these heights, usually renders the ground incapable of bringing forth and ripening the crops of grain. One hill alone, the highest in elevation, and about ten miles to the south-westward, was enveloped in a cloud, which just permitted a dim and hazy sight of a signal-post, a light-house, and an ancient chantry, built on its summit.

Amidst these numerous specimens of delightful scenery I found a mount for contemplation, and here I indulged it.

"How much of the natural beauties of Paradise still remain in the world, although its spiritual character has been so awfully defaced by sin! But when divine grace renews the heart of the fallen sinner, Paradise is regained,

and much of its beauty restored to the soul. As this prospect is compounded of hill and dale, land and sea, woods and plains, all sweetly blended together and relieving each other in the landscape: so do the gracious dispositions wrought in the soul, produce a beauty and harmony of scene to which it was before a stranger.

I looked towards the village in the plain below, where the Dairyman's younger daughter was buried. I retraced the simple solemnities of the funeral. I connected the principles and conduct of her sister with the present probably happy state of her soul in the world of spirits, and was greatly impressed with a sense of the importance of family influence as a mean of grace. "That young woman," I thought, "has been the conductor of not only a sister, but perhaps a father and mother also, to the true knowledge of God, and may, by divine blessing, become so to others. It is a glorious occupation to win souls to Christ, and guide them out of Egyptian bondage through the wilderness into the promised Canaan. Happy are the families who are walking hand in hand together, as pilgrims, towards the heavenly country. May the number of such be daily increased!"

Casting my eye over the numerous dwellings in the vales on my right and left, I could not help thinking, "how many of their inhabitants are ignorant of the ways of God, and strangers to his grace! May this thought stimulate to activity and diligence in the cause of immortal souls! They are precious in God's sight—they ought to be so in ours."

Some pointed and affecting observations to that effect recurred to my mind as having been made by the young person with whom I had been just conversing. Her mind appeared to be much impressed with the duty of speaking and acting for God "while it is day;" conscious that "the night cometh, when no man can work." Her laudable anxiety on this head was often testified to

me afterwards, both by letter and conversation. What she felt herself in respect to endeavours to do good, she happily communicated to others with whom she corresponded or conversed.

Time would not permit my continuing so long in the enjoyment of these meditations on this lovely mount of observation, as my heart desired. On my return home I wrote a few lines to the Dairyman's daughter, chiefly dictated by the train of thought which had occupied my mind while I sat on the hill.

On the next Sunday evening I received her reply, of which the following is a transcript.

"*Sunday.*

"REV. SIR,

"I am this day deprived of an opportunity of attending the house of God, to worship him. But, glory be to his name! he is not confined to time nor place. I feel him present with me where I am, and his presence makes my Paradise, for where he is, is heaven. I pray God that a double portion of his grace and Holy Spirit may rest upon you this day; that his blessing may attend all your faithful labours; and that you may find the truth of his Word, assuring us, that wherever we assemble together in his name, there he is in the midst to bless every waiting soul.

"How precious are all his promises! We ought never to doubt the truth of his word. For he will never deceive us if we go on in faith, always expecting to receive what his goodness waits to give. Dear Sir, I have felt it very consoling to read your kind letter today. I feel thankful to God for ministers in our church who love and fear his name: there it is where the people in general look for salvation; and there may they ever find it, for Jesu's sake! May his Word, spoken by you his chosen vessel of grace, be made spirit and life to their

dead souls! May it come from you as an instrument in the hands of God, as sharp arrows from a strong archer, and strike a death-blow to all their sins! How I long to see the arrows of conviction fasten on the minds of those that are hearers of the Word and not doers! O Sir! be ambitious for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. It will add to the lustre of your crown in glory, as well as to your present joy and peace. We should be willing to spend and be spent in his service, saying, 'Lord, may thy will be done by me in earth, even as it is by thy angels in heaven.' So you may expect to see his face with joy, and say, 'Here am I, Lord, and all the souls thou hast given me.'

"It seems wonderful that we should neglect any opportunity of doing good, when there is, if it be done from love to God and his creatures, a present reward of grace, in reflecting that we are using the talents committed to our care according to the power and ability which we receive from him. God requires not what he has not promised to give. But when we look back, and reflect that there have been opportunities in which we have neglected to take up our cross and speak and act for God; what a dejection of mind we feel! We are then justly filled with shame. Conscious of being ashamed of Christ, we cannot come with that holy boldness to a throne of grace, nor feel that free access when we make our supplications.

"We are commanded to provoke one another to love and good works; and where two are agreed together in the things of God, they may say,

> 'And if our fellowship below,
> In Jesus be so sweet,
> What heights of rapture shall we know,
> When round the throne we meet!'

"Sir, I hope Mrs. —— and you are both of one heart and one mind. Then you will sweetly agree in all things

that make for your present and eternal happiness. Christ sent his disciples out, not singly, but two and two; that they might comfort and help each other in those ways and works which their Lord commanded them to pursue.

"It has been my lot to have been alone the greatest part of the time that I have known the ways of God. I therefore find it such a treat to my soul when I can meet with any who love to talk of the goodness and love of God, and all his gracious dealings. What a comfortable reflection, to think of spending a whole eternity in that delightful employment! to tell to listening angels his love, 'immense, unsearchable!'

"Dear Sir, I thank you for your kindness and condescension in leaving those that are of high rank and birth in the world, to converse with me who am but a servant here below. But when I consider what a high calling, what honour and dignity God has conferred upon me, to be called his child, to be born of his Spirit, made an heir of glory, and joint heir with Christ; how humble and circumspect should I be in all my ways, as a dutiful and loving child to an affectionate and loving Father! When I seriously consider these things, it fills me with love and gratitude to God, and I do not wish for any higher station, nor envy the rich. I rather pity them if they are not good as well as great. My blessed Lord was pleased to appear in the form of a servant; and I long to be like him.

"I did not feel in so happy a frame for conversation that day, nor yet that liberty to explain my thoughts, which I sometimes do. The fault must have been all in myself; for there was nothing in you but what seemed to evidence a Christian spirit, temper, and disposition. I very much wished for an opportunity to converse with you. I feel very thankful to God that you do take up the cross, and despise the shame: if you are found faithful, you will soon sit down with him in glory

"I have written to the Rev. Mr. ——, to thank him for permitting you to perform the Burial Service at ——, over my dear departed sister, and to tell him of the kind way in which you consented to do it. I should mention that your manner of reading the service on that day had a considerable effect on the hearers.

"Pray excuse all faults, and correct my errors. I expect in a few days to return home to my parents' house. We shall rejoice to see you there.

"From your humble servant in Christ,

"E—— W——."

It was impossible to view such a correspondent with indifference. I had just returned from a little cottage assembly, where, on Sunday evenings, I sometimes went to instruct a few poor families in one of the hamlets belonging to my parish. I read the letter, and closed the day with thanksgiving to God for thus enabling those who fear his name to build up each other in faith and love.

Of old time, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name."

That book of remembrance is not yet closed.

PART III.

THE mind of man is like a moving picture, supplied with objects, not only from contemplation on things present, but from the fruitful sources of recollection and anticipation.

Memory retraces past events, and restores an ideal reality to scenes which are gone by for ever. They live again in revived imagery, and we seem to hear and see with renewed emotions what we heard and saw at a former period. Successions of such recollected circumstances often form a series of welcome memorials. In religious meditation the memory becomes a sanctified instrument of spiritual improvement.

Another part of this animated picture is furnished by the pencil of Hope. She draws encouraging prospects for the soul by connecting the past and present with the future. Seeing the promises afar off, she is persuaded of their truth, and embraces them as her own.

The Spirit of God gives a blessing to both these acts of the mind, and employs them in the service of religion. Every faculty of body and soul, when considered as a part of "the purchased possession" of the Saviour, assumes a new character. How powerfully does the Apostle, on this ground, urge a plea for holy activity and watchfulness: "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

The Christian may derive much profit and enjoyment from the use of the memory as it concerns those transactions in which he once bore a part. In his endeavours to recall past conversations and intercourse with deceased

friends in particular, the powers of remembrance greatly improve by exercise. One revived idea produces another till the mind is most agreeably and usefully occupied with lively and holy imaginations.

> "Lull'd in the countless chambers of the brain,
> Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain;
> Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise!
> Each stamps its image as the other flies;
> Each, as the varied avenues of sense
> Delight or sorrow to the soul dispense,
> Brightens or fades: yet all, with sacred art,
> Control the latent fibres of the heart."

May it please God to bless, both to the reader and the writer, this feeble attempt to recollect some of the communications which I once enjoyed in my visits to the Dairyman's dwelling!

Very soon after the receipt of the last letter, I rode for the first time to see the family at their own home. The principal part of the road lay through retired, narrow lanes, beautifully over-arched with groves of nut and other trees, which screened the traveller from the rays of the sun, and afforded many interesting objects for admiration in the flowers, shrubs and young trees, which grew upon the high banks on each side of the road. Many grotesque rocks, with little trickling streams of water occasionally breaking out of them, varied the recluse scenery, and produced a romantic and pleasing effect.

Here and there the more distant prospect beyond was observable through gaps and hollow places on the roadside. Lofty hills, with navy signal-posts, obelisks, and light-houses on their summits, appeared at these intervals: rich corn-fields were also visible through some of the open places; and now and then, when the road ascended a hill, the sea, with ships at various distances, was seen. But for the most part shady seclusion, and

objects of a more minute and confined nature, gave a character to the journey, and invited contemplation.

How much do they lose who are strangers to serious meditation on the wonders and beauties of nature! How gloriously the God of creation shines in his works! Not a tree, or leaf, or flower; not a bird or insect, but it proclaims in glowing language, "God made me."

As I approached the village where the good old Dairyman dwelt, I observed him in a little field, driving his cows before him towards a yard and hovel which adjoined his cottage. I advanced very near him without his observing me, for his sight was dim. On my calling out to him, he started at the sound of my voice, but with much gladness of heart welcomed me, saying—"Bless your heart, Sir, I am very glad you are come: we have looked for you every day this week."

The cottage-door opened, and the daughter came out, followed by her aged and infirm mother. The sight of me naturally brought to recollection the grave at which we had before met. Tears of affection mingled with the smile of satisfaction with which I was received by these worthy cottagers. I dismounted, and was conducted through a neat little garden, part of which was shaded by two large overspreading elm-trees, to the house. Decency and order were manifest within and without. No excuse was made here, on the score of poverty, for confusion and uncleanliness in the disposal of their little household. Every thing wore the aspect of neatness and propriety. On each side of the fire-place stood an old oaken arm-chair, where the venerable parents rested their weary limbs after the day's labour was over. On a shelf in one corner lay two Bibles, with a few religious books and tracts. The little room had two windows; a lovely prospect of hills, woods, and fields, appeared through one; the other was more than half obscured by the branches of a vine which was trained across it;

between its leaves the sun shone, and cast a cheerful light over the whole place.

"This," thought I, "is a fit residence for piety, peace, and contentment. May I learn a fresh lesson for advancement in each through the blessing of God on this visit!"

"Sir," said the daughter, "we are not worthy that you should come under our roof. We take it very kind that you should travel so far to see us."

"My Master," I replied, "came a great deal further to visit us poor sinners. He left the bosom of his Father, laid aside his glory, and came down to this lower world on a visit of mercy and love; and ought not we, if we profess to follow him, to bear each other's infirmities, and go about doing good as he did?"

The old man now entered, and joined his wife and daughter in giving me a cordial welcome. Our conversation soon turned to the loss they had so lately sustained. The pious and sensible disposition of the daughter was peculiarly manifested, as well in what she said to her parents, as in what she more immediately addressed to myself. I had now a further opportunity of remarking the good sense and agreeable manner which accompanied her expressions of devotedness to God, and love to Christ for the great mercies which he had bestowed upon her. During her residence in different gentlemen's families where she had been in service, she had acquired a superior behaviour and address; but sincere piety rendered her very humble and unassuming in manner and conversation. She seemed anxious to improve the opportunity of my visit to the best purpose for her own and her parents' sake; yet there was nothing of unbecoming forwardness, no self-consequence or conceitedness in her conduct. She united the firmness and solicitude of the Christian with the modesty of the female and the dutifulness of the daughter. It was impossible to be in her

company and not observe how truly her temper and conversation adorned the principles which she professed.

I soon discovered how eager and how successful also she had been in her endeavours to bring her father and mother to the knowledge and experience of the truth. This is a lovely feature in the character of a young Christian. If it have pleased God in the free dispensations of his mercy to call the child by his grace, while the parent remains still in ignorance and sin, how great is the duty incumbent on that child to do what is possible to promote the conversion of those to whom so much is owing! Happy is it when the ties of grace sanctify those of nature!

The aged couple evidently regarded and spoke of this daughter as their teacher and admonisher in divine things, while at the same time they received from her every token of filial submission and obedience, testified by continual endeavours to serve and assist them to the utmost of her power in the daily concerns of the household.

The religion of this young woman was of a highly spiritual character, and of no ordinary attainment. Her views of the divine plan in saving the sinner, were clear and scriptural. She spoke much of the joys and sorrows which, in the course of her religious progress, she had experienced: but she was fully sensible that there is far more in real religion than mere occasional transition from one frame of mind and spirits to another. She believed that the experimental acquaintance of the heart with God principally consisted in so living upon Christ by faith, as to aim at living like him by love. She knew that the love of God toward the sinner, and the path of duty prescribed to the sinner, are both of an unchangeable nature. In a believing dependence on the one, and an affectionate walk in the other, she sought and found

"the peace of God which passeth all understanding;" "for so he giveth his beloved rest."

She had read but few books besides her Bible; but these few were excellent in their kind, and she spoke of their contents as one who knew their value. In addition to a Bible and Prayer-book, "Doddridge's Rise and Progress," "Romaine's Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith," "Bunyan's Pilgrim," "Alleine's Alarm," "Baxter's Saint's Everlasting Rest," a hymn-book, and a few tracts, composed her library.

I observed in her countenance a pale and delicate hue, which I afterwards found to be a presage of consumption; and the idea then occurred to me that she would not live very long.

Time passed on swiftly with this interesting family; and after having partaken of some plain and wholesome refreshment, and enjoyed a few hours' conversation with them, I found it was necessary for me to return homewards. The disposition and character of the parties may be in some sort ascertained by the expressions used at parting.

"God send you safe home again," said the aged mother, "and bless the day that brought you to see two poor old creatures, such as we are, in our trouble and affliction. Come again, Sir, come again, when you can; and though I am a poor ignorant soul, and not fit to talk to such a gentleman as you, yet my dear child shall speak for me; she is the greatest comfort I have left, and I hope the good Lord will spare her to support my trembling limbs and feeble spirits, till I lie down with my other dear departed children in the grave."

"Trust to the Lord," I answered, "and remember his gracious promise; 'Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoary hairs I will carry you.'"

"I thank you, Sir," said the daughter, 'for your Christian kindness to me and my friends. I believe the

blessing of the Lord has attended your visit, and I hope that I have experienced it to be so. My dear father and mother will, I am sure, remember it; and I rejoice in the opportunity of seeing so kind a friend under this roof. My Saviour has been abundantly good to me in plucking me 'as a brand from the burning,' and showing me the way of life and peace: and I hope it is my heart's desire to live to his glory. But I long to see these dear friends enjoy the power and comfort of religion likewise."

"I think it evident," I replied, "that the promise is fulfilled in their case; 'It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.'"

"I believe it," she said, "and praise God for the blessed hope."

"Thank him too, that you have been the happy instrument of bringing them to the light."

"I do, Sir; yet, when I think of my own unworthiness and insufficiency, I rejoice with trembling."

"Sir," said the good old man, "I am sure the Lord will reward you for this kindness. Pray for us, old as we are, sinners as we have been, that yet he would have mercy upon us at the eleventh hour. Poor Betsy strives much for our sakes, both in body and soul; she works hard all day to save us trouble, and I fear has not strength to support all she does; and then she talks to us, and reads to us, and prays for us, that we may be saved from the wrath to come. Indeed, Sir, she's a rare child to us."

"Peace be to you and to all that belong to you!"

"Amen, and thank you, dear Sir," was echoed from each tongue.

Thus we parted for that time. My returning meditations were sweet, and, I hope, profitable.

Many other visits were afterwards made by me to this peaceful cottage, and I always found increasing reason to thank God for the intercourse I there enjoyed.

An interval of some length occurred once during that

year, in which I had not seen the Dairyman's family. I was reminded of the circumstance by the receipt of the following letter.

"REV. SIR,

"I have been expecting to see or hear from you for a considerable time. Excuse the liberty I take in sending you another letter. I have been confined to the house the greater part of the time since I left ——. I took cold that day, and have been worse ever since. I walk out a little on these fine days, but seem to myself to walk very near on the borders of eternity. Glory be to God, it is a very pleasing prospect before me. Though I feel the workings of sin, and am abased, yet Jesus shows his mercy to be mine, and I trust that I am his. At such times,

'My soul would leave this heavy clay
At his transporting word,
Run up with joy the shining way
To meet and prove the Lord.

Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love and arms of faith
Would bear me conqu'ror through.'

My desire is to live every moment to God, that I may, through his grace, be kept in that heavenly, happy frame of mind, that I shall wish for at the hour of death. We cannot live nor die happy without this; and to keep it, we must be continually watching and praying. For we have many enemies to disturb our peace. I am so very weak, that now I can go no where to any outward means for that help which is so refreshing to my spirit.

"I should have been very happy to have heard you last Sunday, when you preached at ——: I could not walk so far. I hope the word spoken by you was made a

blessing to many that heard it. It was my earnest prayer to God that it might be so. But, alas! once calling does not awaken many that are in a sound sleep. Yet the voice of God is sometimes very powerful, when his ministers speak; when they are influenced by his Holy Spirit, and are simple and sincere in holding forth the Word of Life. Then it will teach us all things, and enlighten our mind, and reveal unto us the hidden things of darkness, and give us out of that divine treasure 'things new and old.' Resting on God to work in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, we ought always to work as diligent servants, that know they have a good Master, that will surely not forget their labour of love.

"If we could but fix our eyes always on that crown of glory that awaits us in the skies, we should never grow weary in well-doing; but should run with patience and delight in the work and ways of God, where he appoints us. We should not then, as we too frequently do, suffer these trifling objects here on earth to draw away our minds from God, to rob him of his glory, and our souls of that happiness and comfort which the believer may enjoy amidst outward afflictions. If we thus lived more by faith in the Son of God, we should endeavour to stir up all whom we could, to seek after God. We should tell them what he has done for us, and what he would do for them, if they truly sought him. We should show them what a glorious expectation there is for all true believers and sincere seekers.

"When our minds are so fixed on God, we are more desirous of glorifying him, in making known his goodness to us, than the proud rich man is of getting honour to himself. I mourn over my own backwardness to this exercise of duty, when I think of God's willingness to save the vilest of the vile, according to the dispensations of his eternal grace and mercy. O! how amiable, how

lovely does this make that God of love appear to poor sinners, that can view him as such. How is the soul delighted with such a contemplation! They that have much forgiven, how much they love!

"These thoughts have been much on my mind since the death of ——. I trust the Lord will pardon me for my neglect. I thought it was my duty to speak or write to him: you remember what I said to you respecting it. But I still delayed till a more convenient season. O! how I was struck when I heard the Lord had taken him so suddenly. I was filled with sorrow and shame for having neglected what I had so often resolved to do. But now the time of speaking for God to him was over. Hence we see that the Lord's time is the best time. Now the night of death was come upon him; no more work was to be done. If I had done all that lay in my power to proclaim reconciliation by Christ to his soul, whether he had heard or no, I should have been clear of his blood. But I cannot recall the time that is past, nor him from the grave. Had I known the Lord would have called him so suddenly, how diligent I should have been to warn him of his danger! But it is enough that God shows us what *we* are to do, and not what *he* is about to do with us or any of his creatures. Pray, Sir, do all you can for the glory of God. The time will soon pass by, and then we shall enter that glorious rest that he hath prepared for them that love him. I pray God to fill you with that zeal and love, which he only can inspire, that you may daily win souls to Christ. May he deliver you from all slavish fear of man, and give you boldness, as he did of old those that were filled with the Holy Ghost and with power!

"Remember, Christ hath promised to be with all his faithful ministers to the end of time. The greater dangers and difficulties they are exposed to, the more powerful his assistance. Then, Sir, let us fear none but him. I

hope you will pray much for me a poor sinner, that God will perfect his strength in my weakness of body and mind. For without him I can do nothing. But when I can experience the teaching of that Holy One, I need no other teacher. May the Lord anoint you with the same, and give you every grace of his Holy Spirit, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God; that you may know what is the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus: that you may be in the hand of the Lord, as a keen archer to draw the bow, while the Lord directs and fastens the arrows of conviction in the hearts of such as are under your ministry!

"I sincerely pray that you may be made a blessing to him that has taken the place of the deceased. I have heard that you are fellow-countrymen: I hope you are, however, both as strangers in this world, that have no abiding place, but seek a country out of sight.

"Pray excuse all faults, from
your humble servant in the
bonds of the Gospel of Christ,
'E—— W——."

When I perused this and other letters, which were at different times written to me by the Dairyman's daughter, I felt that, in the person of this interesting correspondent, were singularly united the characters of an humble disciple and a faithful monitor. I wished to acknowledge the goodness of God in each of these her capacities.

I sometimes entertain a hope that the last day will unfold the value of these epistolary communications, beyond even any present estimate of their spiritual importance.

PART IV.

THE translation of sinners, "from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son," is the joy of Christians and the admiration of angels. Every penitent and pardoned soul is a new witness to the triumphs of the Redeemer over sin, death, and the grave. How great the change that is wrought! The child of wrath becomes a monument of grace—a brand plucked from the burning! "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." How marvellous, how interesting, is the spiritual history of each individual believer! He is, like David, "a wonder unto many;" but the greatest wonder of all to himself. Others may doubt whether it be so, or not; but to *him* it is unequivocally proved, that, from first to last, grace alone reigns in the work of his salvation.

The character and privileges of real Christians are beautifully described in the language of our church; who, when speaking of the objects of divine favour and compassion, says: "They that be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works; and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity."

Such a conception and display of the Almighty wisdom, power, and love, is indeed "full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members; and drawing up their minds to high and

heavenly things: it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, and doth fervently kindle their love towards God."

Nearly allied to the consolations of a good hope through grace, as it respects our own personal state before God, is that of seeing its evidences shed lustre over the disposition and conduct of others. Bright was the exhibition of the union between true Christian enjoyment and Christian exertion, in the character whose moral and spiritual features I am attempting to delineate.

It seemed to be the first wish of her heart to prove to others, what God had already proved to her, that Jesus is "the way, and the truth, and the life." She desired to evince the reality of her calling, justification, and adoption into the family of God, by showing a conformity to the image of Christ, and by walking "religiously in good works:" she trusted, that, in this path of faith and obedience, she should "at length, by God's mercy, attain to everlasting felicity."

I had the spiritual charge of another parish, adjoining to that in which I resided. It was a small district, and had but few inhabitants. The church was pleasantly situated on a rising bank, at the foot of a considerable hill. It was surrounded by trees, and had a rural, retired appearance. Close to the church-yard stood a large old mansion, which had formerly been the residence of an opulent and titled family; but it had long since been appropriated to the use of the estate as a farm-house. Its outward aspect bore considerable remains of ancient grandeur, and gave a pleasing character to the spot of ground on which the church stood.

In every direction the roads that led to this house of God possessed distinct but interesting features. One of them ascended between several rural cottages, from the sea-shore, which adjoined the lower part of the village

street. Another winded round the curved sides of the adjacent hill, and was adorned both above and below with numerous sheep, feeding on the herbage of the down. A third road led to the church by a gently rising approach, between high banks, covered with young trees, bushes, ivy, hedge-plants, and wild flowers.

From a point of land which commanded a view of all these several avenues, I used sometimes for a while to watch my congregation gradually assembling together at the hour of Sabbath worship. They were in some directions visible for a considerable distance. Gratifying associations of thought would form in my mind, as I contemplated their approach, and successive arrival within the precincts of the house of prayer.

One day, as I was thus occupied, during a short interval previous to the joys of divine service, I reflected on the hour which David experienced, at the time he exclaimed: "I was glad, when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

I was led to reflect upon the various blessings connected with the establishment of public worship. "How many immortal souls are now gathering together to perform the all-important work of prayer and praise—to hear the word of God—to feed upon the bread of life! They are leaving their respective dwellings, and will soon be united together in the house of prayer. How beautifully does this represent the effect produced by the voice of 'the Good Shepherd,' calling the sheep from every part of the wilderness into his fold! As these fields, hills, and lanes, are now covered with men, women, and children, in various directions, drawing nearer to each other, and to the object of their journey's

end: even so, many 'shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.'"

Who can rightly appreciate the value of such hours as these?—hours spent in learning the ways of holy pleasantness and the paths of heavenly peace—hours devoted to the service of God and of souls; in warning the sinner to flee from the wrath to come; in teaching the ignorant how to live and die; in preaching the gospel to the poor; in healing the broken-hearted; in declaring "deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind."—"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

My thoughts then pursued a train of reflection on the importance of the ministerial office, as connected in the purposes of God with the salvation of sinners. I inwardly prayed that those many individuals whom he had given me to instruct, might not, through my neglect or error, be as sheep having no shepherd, nor as the blind led by the blind: but rather that I might, in season, and out of season, faithfully proclaim the simple and undisguised truths of the gospel, to the glory of God and the prosperity of his church.

At that instant, near the bottom of the enclosed lane which led to the churchyard, I observed a friend, whom, at such a distance from his own home, I little expected to meet. It was the venerable dairyman. He came up the ascent, leaning with one hand on his trusty staff, and with the other on the arm of a younger man, well known to me, who appeared to be much gratified in meeting with such a companion by the way.

My station was on the top of one of the banks which formed the hollow road beneath. They passed a few yards below me. I was concealed from their sight by a

projecting tree. They were talking of the mercies of God, and the unsearchable riches of his grace. The dairyman was telling his companion what a blessing the Lord had given him in his daughter. His countenance brightened as he named her and called her his precious Betsy.

I met them at a stile not many yards beyond, and accompanied them to the church, which was hard by.

"Sir," said the old man, "I have brought a letter from my daughter—I hope I am in time for divine service. Seven miles is now become a long walk for me: I grow old and weak—I am very glad to see you, Sir."

"How is your daughter?"

"Very poorly indeed, Sir: very poorly.—The doctors say it is a decline. I sometimes hope she will get the better of it; but then again I have many fears. You know, Sir, that I have cause to love and prize her. O! it would be such a trial; but the Lord knows what is best. Excuse my weakness, Sir."

He put a letter into my hand, the perusal of which I reserved till afterwards, as the time was nigh for going into church.

The presence of this aged pilgrim, the peculiar reverence and affection with which he joined in the different parts of the service, excited many gratifying thoughts in my mind; such as rather furthered than interrupted devotion.

The train of reflection in which I had been engaged, when I first discovered him in the road, at intervals recurred powerfully to my feelings, as I viewed that very congregation assembled together in the house of God, whose steps, in their approaches towards it I had watched with prayerful emotions.

"Here the rich and poor meet together in mutual acknowledgment, that the Lord is the Maker of them all; and that all are alike dependent creatures, looking up to

one common Father to supply their wants, both temporal and spiritual.

"Again, likewise will they meet together in the grave, that undistinguishing receptacle of the opulent and the needy.

"And once more, at the judgment-seat of Christ shall the rich and the poor meet together, that 'every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'

"How closely connected in the history of man are these three periods of a general meeting together!

"The house of prayer—the house appointed for all living—and the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. May we never separate these ideas from each other, but retain them in a sacred and profitable union! So shall our worshipping assemblies on earth be representative of the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

When the congregation dispersed, I entered into discourse with the Dairyman and a few of the poor of my flock, whose minds were of like disposition to his own. He seldom could speak long together without some reference to his dear child. He loved to tell how merciful his God had been to him, in the dutiful and affectionate attentions of his daughter. All real Christians feel a tender spiritual attachment toward those who have been the instrument of bringing them to an affectual knowledge of the way of salvation: but when that instrument is one so nearly allied, how dear does the relationship become!

If my friend the dairyman was in any danger of falling into idolatry, his child would have been the idol of his affections. She was the prop and stay of her parents' declining years; and they scarcely knew how sufficiently to testify the gratitude of their hearts, for the comfort and blessing which she was the means of affording them.

While he was relating several particulars of his family history to the others, I opened and read the following letter.

"SIR,

"Once more I take the liberty to trouble you with a few lines. I received your letter with great pleasure, and thank you for it. I am now so weak, that I am unable to walk to any public place of divine worship, a privilege which has heretofore always so much strengthened and refreshed me. I used to go in anxious expectation to meet my God, and hold sweet communion with him, and I was seldom disappointed. In the means of grace, all the channels of divine mercy are open to every heart that is lifted up to receive out of that divine fulness grace for grace. These are the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. How have I rejoiced to hear a faithful and lively messenger, just come, as it were from communion with God at the throne of grace, with his heart warmed and filled with divine love, to speak to fallen sinners! Such an one has seemed to me as if his face shone as that of Moses did with the glory of God, when he came down from the mount; where he had been within the vail. May you, Sir, imitate him, as he did Christ, that all may see and know that the Lord dwelleth with you, and that you dwell in him through the unity of the blessed Spirit. I trust you are no stranger to his divine teaching, aid, and assistance, in all you set your hand to do for the glory of God.

"I hope, Sir, the sincerity of my wishes for your spiritual welfare will plead an excuse for the freedom of my address to you. I pray the giver of every perfect gift, that you may experience the mighty workings of his gracious Spirit in your heart and your ministry, and rest your all on the justifying and purifying blood of an expiring Redeemer. Then will you triumph in his strength, and be enabled to say with the poet:—

'Shall I through fear of feeble men
The Spirit's course strive to restrain?
Or, undismay'd in deed and word,
Be a true witness for my Lord?

'Aw'd by a mortal's frown, shall I
Conceal the Word of God most high?
How then before thee shall I dare
To stand, or how thine anger bear?

'Shall I, to soothe th' unholy throng,
Soften thy truths, and smooth my tongue,
To gain earth's gilded toys, or flee
The cross endur'd, my God, by thee?

'What then is he, whose scorn I dread,
Whose wrath or hate makes me afraid?
A man! an heir of death! a slave
To sin, a bubble on the wave?

'Yea, let men rage, since thou wilt spread
Thy shadowing wings around my head:
Since in all pain thy tender love
Will still my sure refreshment prove.

'Still shall the love of Christ constrain
To seek the wand'ring souls of men,
With cries, entreaties, tears to save,
And snatch them from the yawning grave.

'For this let men revile my name,
No cross I shun, I fear no shame:
All hail reproach, and welcome pain,
Only thy terrors, Lord, restrain.'

"I trust, Sir, that you see what a glorious high calling yours is, and that you are one of those who walk humbly with God, that you may be taught of him in all things. Persons in your place are messengers of the most high God. It is too much to say, they should live like the angels in all holiness, and be filled with love and zeal for men's souls? They are ambassadors, in Christ's stead, to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God. So

that your calling is above that of angels: for they are *afterward* to minister to the heirs of salvation; but the sinner must be *first* reconciled to God. And you are called upon from day to day to intercede with man, as his friend, that you may win souls to Christ. Christ is ascended up on high, to intercede with his Father for guilty sinners, and to plead for them the merits of his death. So that Christ and his faithful ministers, through the operation of the blessed Spirit, are co-workers together. Yet without him we can do nothing; our strength is his strength, and his is all the glory from first to last.

"It is my heart's prayer and desire, Sir, that you may, by a living faith, cleave close to that blessed, exalted Lamb of God, who died to redeem us from sin—that you may have a sweet communion with Father, Son, and Spirit—that you may sink deep in humble love, and rise high in the life of God. Thus will you have such discoveries of the beauties of Christ and his eternal glory, as will fill your heart with true delight.

"If I am not deceived, I wish myself to enjoy his gracious favour, more than all the treasures which earth can afford. I would in comparison look upon them with holy disdain, and as not worth an anxious thought, that they may not have power on my heart, to draw or attract it from God, who is worthy of my highest esteem, and of all my affections. It should be our endeavour to set him alway before us, that in all things we may act as in his immediate presence: that we may be filled with that holy fear, so that we may not dare wilfully to sin against him. We should earnestly entreat the Lord to mortify the power and workings of sin and unbelief within us, by making Christ appear more and more precious in our eyes, and more dear to our hearts.

"It fills my heart with thankful recollections, while I attempt in this weak manner to speak of God's love to

man. When I reflect on *my* past sins and *his* past mercies, I am assured, that if I had all the gifts of wise men and angels, I could never sufficiently describe my own inward sense of his undeserved love towards me. We can better enjoy these glorious apprehensions in our hearts, than explain them to others. But, O! how unworthy of them all are we! Consciousness of my own corruptions keeps me often low; yet faith and desire will eagerly mount on high, beseeching God that he would, according to the Apostle's prayer, fill me with all his communicable fulness, in the gifts and graces of his Spirit; that I may walk well-pleasing before him, in all holy conversation, perfecting holiness in his fear.

"If I err in boldness, Sir, pray pardon me, and in your next letter confirm my hope, that you will be my counsellor and guide.

"I can only recompense your kindness to me by my prayers, that your own intercourse with God may be abundantly blessed to you and yours. I consider the Saviour saying to you, as he did to Peter, 'Lovest thou me?' And may you by heartfelt experience be compelled to reply, 'Thou knowest all things, and thou knowest that I love thee' supremely. May he have evident marks of it in all your outward actions of love and humanity, in feeding his flock, and in the inward fervour and affection of all your consecrated powers: that you may be zealously engaged in pulling down the strong holds of sin and Satan, and building up his church; sowing the seeds of righteousness, and praying God to give the increase—that you may not labour for him in vain; but may see the trees bud and blossom, and bring forth fruit abundantly, to the praise and glory of your heavenly Master. In order to give you encouragement he says, whosoever 'converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death:' and that will

increase the brightness of your crown in glory. This hath Christ merited for his faithful ministers.

"I hope, Sir, you will receive grace to be sincere in reproving sin, wherever you see it. You will find divine assistance, and all fear and shame taken from you. Great peace will be given to you, and wisdom, strength, and courage, according to your work. You will be as Paul; having much learning, you can speak to men in all stations in life, by God's assistance. The fear of offending them will never prevent you, when you consider the glory of God; and man's immortal soul is of more value, than his present favour and esteem. In particular, you are in an office wherein you can visit *all* the sick. Man's extremity is often God's opportunity. In this way you may prove an instrument in his hand to do his work. Although he *can* work without means, yet his usual way is by means: and I trust you are a chosen vessel unto him, to prove his name and declare his truth to all men.

"Visiting the sick is a strict command, and a duty for every Christian. None can tell what good may be done. I wish it was never neglected, as it too often is. Many think, that if they attend in the church, the minister to preach, and the people to hear, their duty is done. But more is required than this. May the Lord stir up the gift that is in his people and ministers, that they may have compassion on their fellow-sinners, that they may never think it too late, but remember, that, while there is life, there is hope!

"Once more, I pray, Sir, pardon and excuse all my errors in judgment, and the ignorance that this is penned in; and may God bless you in all things, and particularly your friendship to me and my parents! What a comfort is family religion! I do not doubt, but this is your desire, as it is mine to say,

'I and my house will serve the Lord,
But first obedient to his word
I must myself appear:
By actions, words, and tempers show,
That I my heavenly Master know,
And serve with heart sincere.

'I must the fair example set,
From those that on my pleasure wait
The stumbling block remove;
Their duty by my life explain,
And still in all my works maintain
The dignity of love.

'Easy to be entreated, mild,
Quickly appeased and reconciled,
A follower of my God:
A saint indeed I long to be,
And lead my faithful family
In the celestial road.

'Lord, if thou dost the wish infuse,
A vessel fitted for thy use
Into thy hands receive:
Work in me both to will and do,
And show them how believers true
And real Christians live.

'With all-sufficient grace supply,
And then I'll come to testify
The wonders of thy name,
Which saves from sin, the world, and hell;
Its power may every sinner feel,
And every tongue proclaim!

'Cleans'd by the blood of Christ from sin,
I seek my relatives to win,
And preach their sins forgiven;
Children, and wife, and servants seize,
And through the paths of pleasantness,
Conduct them all to heaven.'

"Living so much in a solitary way, books are my companions; and poetry which speaks of the love of God and the mercies of Christ, is very sweet to my mind. This must be my excuse for troubling you to read verses which others have written. I have intended, if my declining state of health permit, to go to —— for a few days. I say this, lest you should call in expectation of seeing me, during any part of next week. But my dear father and mother, for whose precious souls I am very anxious, will reap the benefit of your visit at all events. From

"Your humble and unworthy servant,
"E—— W——."

Having read it, I said to the father of my highly valued correspondent,

"I thank you for being the bearer of this letter: your daughter is a kind friend and faithful counsellor to me, as well as to you. Tell her how highly I esteem her friendship, and that I feel truly obliged for the many excellent sentiments which she has here expressed. Give her my blessing, and assure her that the oftener she writes, the more thankful I shall be."

The Dairyman's enlivened eye gleamed with pleasure as I spoke. The praise of his Elizabeth was a string which could not be touched without causing every nerve of his whole frame to vibrate.

His voice half faltered, as he spoke in reply; the tear started in his eyes; his hand trembled as I pressed it; his heart was full; he could only say,

"Sir, a poor old man thanks you for your kindness to him and his family; God bless you, Sir; I hope we shall soon see you again."

Thus we parted for that day.

PART V.

It has not unfrequently been observed, that when it is the Lord's pleasure to remove any of his faithful followers out of this life at an early period of their course, they make rapid progress in the experience of divine truth. The fruits of the Spirit ripen fast, as they advance to the close of mortal existence. In particular, they grow in humility, through a deeper sense of inward corruption, and a clearer view of the perfect character of the Saviour. Disease and bodily weakness make the thoughts of eternity recur with frequency and power. The great question of their own personal salvation, the quality of their faith, the sincerity of their love, and the purity of their hope, is in continual exercise.

Unseen realities, at such a time, occupy a larger portion of thought than before. The state of existence beyond the grave, the invisible world, the unalterable character of the dead, the future judgment, the total separation from every thing earthly, the dissolution of body and spirit, and their reunion at the solemn hour of resurrection—these are subjects for their meditation, which call for serious earnestness of soul. Whatever consolations from the Spirit of God they may have enjoyed heretofore, they become now doubly anxious to examine and prove themselves, "whether they be indeed in the faith." In doing this they sometimes pass through hidden conflicts of a dark and distressing nature: from which, however, they come forth, like gold tried in the furnace. Awhile they may sow in tears, but soon they reap in joy.

Their religious feelings have then, perhaps, less of ecstacy, but more of serenity.

As the ears of corn ripen for the harvest, they bow

their heads nearer to the ground. So it is with believers; they then see more than ever of their own imperfections, and often express their sense of it in strong language: yet they repose with a growing confidence on the love of God through Christ Jesus. The nearer they advance to their eternal rest, the more humble they become, but not the less useful in their sphere. They feel anxiously desirous of improving every talent they possess, to the glory of God, knowing that the time is short.

I thought I observed the truth of these remarks fulfilled in the progressive state of mind of the Dairyman's daughter.

Declining health seemed to indicate the will of God concerning her. But her character, conduct, and experience of the divine favour, increased in brightness as the setting sun of her mortal life approached its horizon. The last letter which, with the exception of a very short note, I ever received from her, I shall now transcribe. It appeared to me to bear the marks of a still deeper acquaintance with the workings of her own heart, and a more entire reliance upon the free mercy of God.

The original, while I copy it, strongly revives the image of the deceased, and the many profitable conversations which I once enjoyed in her company, and that of her parents. It again endears to me the recollections of cottage piety, and helps me to anticipate the joys of that day, when the spirits of the glorified saints shall be reunited to their bodies, and be for ever with the Lord.

The writer of this and the preceding letters herself little imagined, when they were penned, that they would ever be submitted to the public eye: that they now are so, results from a conviction that the friends of the pious poor will estimate them according to their value; and a hope that it may please God to honour these memorials of the dead, to the effectual edification of the living.

"REV. SIR,

"In consequence of your kind permission, I take the liberty to trouble you with another of my ill-written letters; and I trust you have too much of your blessed Master's lowly, meek, and humble mind, to be offended with a poor, simple, ignorant creature, whose intentions are pure and sincere in writing. My desire is, that I, a weak vessel of his grace, may glorify his name for his goodness towards me. May the Lord direct me by his counsel and wisdom. May he overshadow me with his presence; that I may sit beneath the banner of his love, and find the consolations of his blessed Spirit sweet and refreshing to my soul!

"When I feel that I am nothing, and God is all in all, then I can willingly fly to him, saying, 'Lord, help me; be unto me my Prophet, Priest, and King. Let me know the teaching of thy grace, and the disclosing of thy love.' What nearness of access might we have if we lived more near to God! What sweet communion might we have with a God of love! He is the great I AM. How glorious a name! Angels with trembling awe prostrate themselves before him, and in humble love adore and worship him. One says,

> 'While the first archangel sings,
> He hides his face behind his wings.'

Unworthy as I am, I have found it by experience, that the more I see of the greatness and goodness of God, and the nearer union I hope I have had with him through the Spirit of his love, the more humble and self-abased I have been.

"But every day I may say, 'Lord, how little I love thee, how far I live from thee, how little I am like thee in humility!' It is nevertheless my heart's desire to love and serve him better. I find the way in which God does more particularly bless me, is when I attend

on the public ordinances of religion. These are the channels through which he conveys the riches of his grace and precious love to my soul. These I have often found to be indeed the time of refreshing and strengthening from the presence of the Lord. Then I can see my hope of an interest in the covenant of his love, and praise him for his mercy to the greatest of sinners.

"I earnestly wish to be more established in his ways, and to honour him in the path of duty, whilst I enjoy the smiles of his favour. In the midst of all outward afflictions I pray that I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection within my soul. If I were always thus, my summer would last all the year; my will would then be sweetly lost in God's will, and I should feel a resignation to every dispensation of his providence and his grace, saying, 'Good is the will of the Lord: Infinite Wisdom cannot err.' Then would patience have its perfect work.

"But, alas! sin and unbelief often, too often, interrupt these frames, and lay me low before God in tears of sorrow. I often think what a happiness it would be, if his love were so fixed in my heart, that I might willingly obey him with alacrity and delight, and gradually mortify the power of self-will, passion, and pride. This can only arise from a good hope through grace, that we are washed in that precious blood which cleanses us from every sinful stain, and makes us new creatures in Christ. O that we may be the happy witnesses of the saving power and virtue of that healing stream which flows from the fountain of everlasting love!

"Sir, my faith is often exceedingly weak: can you be so kind as to tell me, what you have found to be the most effectual means of strengthening it? I often think how plainly the Lord declares, Believe only, and thou shalt be saved. Only have faith; all things are possible to him that has it. How I wish that we could remove

all those mountains that hinder and obstruct the light of his grace; so that, having full access unto God through that ever-blessed Spirit, we might lovingly commune with him as with the dearest of friends. What favour doth God bestow on worms! And yet we love to murmur and complain. He may well say, What should I have done more, that I have not done? or wherein have I proved unfaithful or unkind to my faithless backsliding children?

"Sir, I pray that I may not grieve him, as I have done, any more. I want your counsel and your prayers for me in this matter. How refreshing is the sight of one that truly loves God, that bears his image and likeness!

"But delightful as is conversation with true believers on earth, whose hearts are lifted up to things above, yet what is this to that happy day which will admit us into more bright realms; where we shall for ever behold a God of love in the smiling face of his Son who is the express image of his Father and the brightness of his glory? Then, if found in him, we shall be received by the innumerable hosts of angels who wait around his throne.

"In the mean time, Sir, may I take up my cross, and manfully fight under Him, who for the glory that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now set down at his Father's right hand in majesty! I thank you for the kind liberty you have given me of writing to you. I feel my health declining, and I find a relief during an hour of pain and weakness in communicating these thoughts to you.

"I hope, Sir, you go on your way rejoicing; that you are enabled to thank Him who is the Giver of every good gift, spiritual, temporal, and providential, for blessings to yourself and your ministry. I do not doubt but you often meet with circumstances which are not pleasing

to nature, yet, by the blessing of God, they will be all profitable in the end. They are kindly designed by grace to make and keep us humble. The difficulties which you spoke of to me some time since will, I trust, disappear.

"My dear father and mother are as well as usual in bodily health, and I hope grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. My chief desire to live is for their sakes. It now seems long since we have seen you. I am almost ashamed to request you to come to our little cottage to visit those who are so much below your station in life. But if you cannot come, we shall be very glad if you will write a few lines. I ought to make an excuse for my letter, I spell so badly: this was a great neglect when I was young. I gave myself greatly to reading but not to the other, and now I am too weak and feeble to learn much.

"I hear sometimes of persons growing serious in your congregation. It gives me joy, and if true, I am sure it does so to yourself. I long for the pure gospel of Christ to be preached in every church in the world, and for the time when all shall know, love, and fear the Lord; and the uniting Spirit of God shall make them of one heart and mind in Christ our great Head. Your greatest joy I know will be in labouring much for the glory of God in the salvation of men's souls. You serve a good Master. You have a sure reward. I pray God to give you strength according to your day.

"Pray, Sir, do not be offended at the freedom and manner of my writing. My parents' duty and love to you are sent with these lines, from

"Your humble servant in Christ,

"E—— W——."

Epistolary communications, when written in sincerity of heart, afford genuine portraits of the mind. May the foregoing be viewed with Christian candour, and consecrated to affectionate memory!

PART VI

TRAVELLERS, as they pass through the country, usually stop to inquire whose are the splendid mansions which they discover among the woods and plains around them. The families, titles, fortune, or character of the respective owners, engage much attention. Perhaps their houses are exhibited to the admiring stranger. The elegant rooms, costly furniture, valuable paintings, beautiful gardens and shrubberies, are universally approved; while the rank, fashion, taste, and riches of the possessor, afford ample materials for entertaining discussion. In the mean time, the lowly cottage of the poor husbandman is passed by as scarcely deserving of notice. Yet perchance such a cottage may often contain a treasure of infinitely more value than the sumptuous palace of the rich man; even "the pearl of great price." If this be set in the heart of the poor cottager, it proves a gem of unspeakable worth, and will shine among the brightest ornaments of the Redeemer's crown, in that day when he maketh up his "jewels."

Hence, the Christian traveller, while in common with others he bestows his due share of applause on the decorations of the rich, and is not insensible to the beauties and magnificence which are the lawfully allowed appendages of rank and fortune, cannot overlook the humbler dwelling of the poor. And if he should find that true piety and grace beneath the thatched roof, which he has in vain looked for amidst the worldly grandeur of the rich, he remembers the declarations in the Word of God. He sees with admiration, that "the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, who dwelleth in the high and holy place, dwelleth with *him also* that is of a contrite and humble spirit," (Isaiah, lvii.

15;) and although heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool, yet, when a house is to be built, and a place of rest to be sought for himself, he says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."—Is. lxii. 1, 2.

When a house is thus tenanted, faith beholds this inscription written on the walls, *The Lord lives here.* Faith therefore cannot pass it by unnoticed, but loves to lift up the latch of the door, and to sit down and converse with the poor although perhaps despised inhabitant. Many a sweet interview does Faith obtain, when she thus takes her walks abroad. Many such a sweet interview have I myself enjoyed beneath the roof where dwelt the Dairyman and his little family.

I soon perceived that his daughter's health was rapidly on the decline. The pale wasting consumption, which is the Lord's instrumeut for removing so many thousands every year from the land of the living, made hasty strides on her constitution. The hollow eye, the distressing cough, and the often too flattering red on the cheek, foretold the approach of death.

What a field for usefulness and affectionate attention, on the part of Ministers and Christian friends, is opened by the frequent attacks, and lingering progress of *consumptive* illness! How many such precious opportunities are daily lost, where Providence seems in so marked a way to afford time and space for serious and godly instruction! Of how many may it be said, "The way of peace have they not known!" for not one friend ever came nigh, to warn them to "flee from the wrath to come."

But the Dairyman's daughter was happily made acquainted with the things which belonged to her everlasting peace before the present disease had taken root in her constitution. In my visits to her, I went rather to receive information than to impart it. Her mind was

abundantly stored with divine truths, and her conversation was truly edifying. The recollection of it must ever produce a thankful sensation in my heart.

I one day received a short note to the following effect:

"DEAR SIR,

"I should be very glad, if your convenience will allow, that you would come and see a poor unworthy sinner: my hour-glass is nearly run out, but I hope I can see Christ to be precious to my soul. Your conversation has often been blessed to me, and I now feel the need of it more than ever. My father and mother send their duty to you.

"From your obedient,

"And unworthy servant,

"E—— W——."

I obeyed the summons that same afternoon. On my arrival at the Dairyman's cottage, his wife opened the door. The tears streamed down her cheek, as she silently shook her head. Her heart was full. She tried to speak, but could not. I took her by the hand, and said,

"My good friend, all is right, and as the Lord of wisdom and mercy directs."

"O! my Betsy, my dear girl, is so bad, Sir: what shall I do without her?—I thought I should have gone first to the grave, but——."

"But, the Lord sees good that before you die yourself, you should behold your child safe home to glory. Is there no mercy in this?"

"O dear Sir! I am very old and very weak; and she is a dear child, the staff and prop of a poor old creature, as I am."

As I advanced, I saw Elizabeth sitting by the fire-side, supported in an arm-chair by pillows, with every mark of rapid decline and approaching death A sweet smile

of friendly complacency enlightened her pale countenance, as she said,

"This is very kind indeed, Sir, to come so soon after I sent to you. You find me daily wasting away, and I cannot have long to continue here. My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my weak heart, and I trust will be my portion for ever."

The conversation was occasionally interrupted by her cough and want of breath. Her tone of voice was clear, though feeble; her manner solemn and collected, and her eye though more dim than formerly, by no means wanting in liveliness, as she spoke. I had frequently admired the superior language in which she expressed her ideas, as well as the scriptural consistency with which she communicated her thoughts. She had a good natural understanding; and grace, as is generally the case, had much improved it. On the present occasion I could not help thinking she was peculiarly favoured. The whole strength of gracious and natural attainments seemed to be in full exercise.

After taking my seat between the daughter and the mother, (the latter fixing her fond eyes upon her child with great anxiety while we were conversing,) I said to Elizabeth,

"I hope you enjoy a sense of the Divine presence, and can rest all upon him who has 'been with thee,' and has kept 'thee in all places whither thou hast gone,' and will bring thee into 'the land of pure delights, where saints immortal reign.'"

"Sir, I think I can. My mind has lately been sometimes clouded, but I believe it has been partly owing to the great weakness and suffering of my bodily frame, and partly to the envy of my spiritual enemy, who wants to persuade me that Christ has no love for me, and that I have been a self-deceiver."

"And do you give way to his suggestions? Can you

doubt amidst such numerous tokens of past and present mercy?"

"No, Sir, I mostly am enabled to preserve a clear evidence of his love. I do not wish to add to my other sins that of denying his manifest goodness to my soul. I would acknowledge it to his praise and glory."

"What is your present view of the state in which you were, before you felt seriously concerned about the salvation of your soul?

"Sir, I was a proud, thoughtless girl, fond of dress and finery; I loved the world and the things that are in the world; I lived in service among worldly people, and never had the happiness of being in a family where worship was regarded, and the souls of the servants cared for either by master or mistress. I went once on a Sunday to church, more to see and be seen, than to pray or hear the Word of God. I thought I was quite good enough to be saved, and disliked and often laughed at religious people. I was in great darkness; I knew nothing of the way of salvation; I never prayed, nor was sensible of the awful danger of a prayerless state. I wished to maintain the character of a good servant, and was much lifted up whenever I met with applause. I was tolerably moral and decent in my conduct, from motives of carnal and worldly policy; but I was a stranger to God and Christ; I neglected my soul; and had I died in such a state, hell must, and would justly, have been my portion."

"How long is it since you heard the sermon which you hope, through God's blessing, effected your conversion?"

"About five years ago."

"How was it brought about?"

"It was reported that a Mr. ——, who was detained by contrary winds from embarking on board ship as chaplain to a distant part of the world, was to preach at

—— church. Many advised me not to go, for fear he should turn my head; as they said he held strange notions. But curiosity, and an opportunity of appearing in a new gown, which I was very proud of, induced me to ask leave of my mistress to go. Indeed, Sir, I had no better motives than vanity and curiosity. Yet thus it pleased the Lord to order it for his own glory.

"I accordingly went to church, and saw a great crowd of people collected together. I often think of the contrary states of my mind during the former and latter part of the service. For a while, regardless of the worship of God, I looked around me, and was anxious to attract notice myself. My dress, like that of too many gay, vain, and silly servant girls, was much above my station, and very different from that which becomes an humble sinner, who has a modest sense of propriety and decency. The state of my mind was visible enough from the foolish finery of my apparel.

"At length, the clergyman gave out his text: 'Be ye clothed with humility.' He drew a comparison between the clothing of the body with that of the soul. At a very early part of his discourse, I began to feel ashamed of my passion for fine dressing and apparel: but when he came to describe the garment of salvation with which a Christian is clothed, I felt a powerful discovery of the nakedness of my own soul. I saw that I had neither the humility mentioned in the text, nor any one part of the true Christian character. I looked at my gay dress, and blushed for shame on account of my pride. I looked at the minister, and he seemed to be as a messenger sent from heaven to open my eyes. I looked at the congregation, and wondered whether any one else felt as I did. I looked at my heart, and it appeared full of iniquity. I trembled as I spoke, and yet I felt a great drawing of heart to the words he uttered.

"He opened the riches of divine grace in God's method

of saving the sinner. I was astonished at what I had been doing all the days of my life. He described the meek, lowly, and humble example of Christ; I felt proud, lofty, vain, and self-consequential. He represented Christ as 'Wisdom;' I felt my ignorance. He held him forth as-'Righteousness;' I was convinced of my own guilt. He proved him to be 'Sanctification;' I saw my corruption. He proclaimed him as 'Redemption;' I felt my slavery to sin, and my captivity to Satan. He concluded with an animated address to sinners, in which he exhorted them to flee from the wrath to come, to cast off the love of outward ornaments, to put on Jesus Christ, and be clothed with true humility.

"From that hour I never lost sight of the value of my soul and the danger of a sinful state. I inwardly blessed God for the sermon, although my mind was in a state of great confusion.

"The preacher had brought forward the ruling passion of my heart, which was pride in outward dress; and by the grace of God it was made instrumental to the awakening of my soul. Happy, Sir, would it be, if many a poor girl, like myself, were turned from the love of outward adorning and putting on of fine apparel, to seek that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

"The greater part of the congregation, unused to such faithful and scriptural sermons, disliked and complained of the severity of the preacher: while a few, as I afterwards found, like myself, were deeply affected, and earnestly wished to hear him again. But he preached there no more.

"From that time I was led, through a course of private prayer, reading, and meditation, to see my lost estate as a sinner, and the great mercy of God through Jesus Christ in raising sinful dust and ashes to a share in the

glorious happiness of heaven. And, O Sir! what a Saviour I have found! He is more than I could ask or desire. In his fulness I have found all that my poverty could need; in his bosom I have found a resting-place from all sin and sorrow; in his word I have found strength against doubt and unbelief."

"Were you not soon convinced," I said, "that your salvation must be an act of entire grace on the part of God, wholly independent of your own previous works or deservings?"

"Dear Sir, what were my works before I heard that sermon, but evil, carnal, selfish, and ungodly? The thoughts of my heart, from my youth upward, were only evil and that continually. And my deservings, what were they, but the deservings of a fallen, depraved, careless soul, that regarded neither law nor gospel? Yes, Sir, I immediately saw that if ever I were saved, it must be by the free mercy of God, and that the whole praise and honour of the work would be his from first to last."

"What change did you perceive in yourself with respect to the world?"

"It appeared all vanity and vexation of spirit. I found it necessary to my peace of mind to come out from among them and be separate. I gave myself to prayer; and many a happy hour of secret delight I enjoyed in communion with God. Often I mourned over my sins, and sometimes had a great conflict through unbelief, fear, temptation to return back again to my old ways, and a variety of difficulties which lay in my way. But He who loved me with an everlasting love, drew me by his loving kindness, showed me the way of peace, gradually strengthened me in my resolutions of leading a new life, and taught me, that while without him I could do nothing, I yet might do all things through his strength."

"Did you not find many difficulties in your situation, owing to your change of principle and practice?"

'Yes, Sir, every day of my life. I was laughed at by some, scolded at by others, scorned by enemies, and pitied by friends. I was called hypocrite, saint, false deceiver, and many more names which were meant to render me hateful in the sight of the world. But I esteemed the reproach of the cross an honour. I forgave and prayed for my persecutors, and remembered how very lately I had acted the same part towards others myself. I thought also that Christ endured the contradiction of sinners; and, as the disciple is not above the Master, I was glad to be in any way conformed to his sufferings."

"Did you not then feel for your family at home?"

"Yes, that I did indeed, Sir; they were never out of my thoughts. I prayed continually for them, and had a longing desire to do them good. In particular I felt for my father and mother, as they were getting into years, and were very ignorant and dark in matters of religion."

"Aye," interrupted her mother, sobbing, "ignorant and dark, sinful and miserable we were, till this dear Betsy—this dear Betsy—this dear child, Sir, brought Christ Jesus home to her poor father and mother's house."

"No, dearest mother, say rather, Christ Jesus brought your poor daughter home, to tell you what he had done for her soul, and, I hope, to do the same for yours."

At this moment the Dairyman came in with two pails of milk hanging from the yoke on his shoulders. He had stood behind the half-opened door for a few minutes, and heard the last sentences spoken by his wife and daughter.

"Blessing and mercy upon her!" said he, "it is very true; she left a good place of service on purpose to live with us, that she might help us both in soul and body.

Sir, don't she look very ill? I think, Sir, we shan't have her here long."

"Leave that to the Lord," said Elizabeth. "All our times are in his hand, and happy it is that they are. I am willing to go; are you not willing, my father, to part with me into *his* hands, who gave me to you at first?"

"Ask me any question in the world but that," said the weeping father.

"I know," said she, "you wish me to be happy."

"I do, I do," answered he: "let the Lord do with you and us as best pleases him."

I then asked her, on what her present consolations chiefly depended, in the prospect of approaching death.

"Entirely, Sir, on my view of Christ. When I look at myself, many sins, infirmities, and imperfections cloud the image of Christ which I want to see in my own heart. But when I look at the Saviour himself, he is altogether lovely; there is not one spot in his countenance, nor one cloud over all his perfections.

"I think of his coming in the flesh, and it reconciles me to the sufferings of the body; for he had them as well as I. I think of his temptations, and believe that he is able to succour me when I am tempted. Then I think of his cross, and learn to bear my own. I reflect on his death, and long to die unto sin, so that it may no longer have dominion over me. I sometimes think on his resurrection, and trust that he has given me a part in it, for I feel that my affections are set upon things above. Chiefly I take comfort in thinking of him as at the right hand of the Father, pleading my cause, and rendering acceptable even my feeble prayers, both for myself, and, as I hope, for my dear friends.

"These are the views which, through mercy, I have of my Saviour's goodness; and they have made me wish and strive in my poor way to serve him, to give myself

up to him, and to labour to do my duty in that state of life into which it has pleased him to call me.

"A thousand times I should have fallen and fainted, if he had not upheld me. I feel that I am nothing without him. He is all in all.

"Just so far as I can cast my care upon him, I find strength to do his will. May he give me grace to trust him till the last moment! I do not fear death, because I believe that he has taken away its sting. And O! what happiness beyond!—Tell me, Sir, whether you think I am right. I hope I am under no delusion. I dare not look for my hope in any thing short of the entire fulness of Christ. When I ask my own heart a question, I am afraid to trust it, for it is treacherous, and has often deceived me. But when I ask Christ, he answers me with promises that strengthen and refresh me, and leave me no room to doubt his power and will to save. I am in his hands, and would remain there; and I do believe that he will never leave nor forsake me, but will perfect the thing that concerns me. He loved me and gave himself for me, and I believe that his gifts and callings are without repentance. In this hope I live, in this hope I wish to die."

I looked around me, as she was speaking, and thought, "Surely this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." Every thing appeared neat, cleanly, and interesting. The afternoon had been rather overcast with dark clouds; but just now the setting sun shone brightly and somewhat suddenly into the room. It was reflected from three or four rows of bright pewter plates and white earthen-ware, arranged on shelves against the wall; it also gave brilliancy to a few prints of sacred subjects that hung there also, and served for monitors of the birth, baptism, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ.

A large map of Jerusalem, and an hieroglyphic of "the old and new man," completed the decorations on

that side of the room. Clean as was the whitewashed wall, it was not cleaner than the rest of the place and its furniture. Seldom had the sun enlightened a house, where order and general neatness (those sure attendants of pious poverty) were more conspicuous.

The gleam of setting sunshine was emblematical of the bright and serene close of this young Christian's departing season. One ray happened to be reflected from a little looking-glass upon her face. Amidst her pallid and decaying features there appeared a calm resignation, triumphant confidence, unaffected humility, and tender anxiety, which fully declared the feelings of her heart.

Some further affectionate conversation, and a short prayer, closed this interview.

As I rode home by departing daylight, a solemn tranquillity reigned throughout the scene. The gentle lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep just penned in their folds, the humming of the insects of the night, the distant murmurs of the sea, the last notes of the birds of day, and the first warblings of the nightingale, broke upon the ear, and served rather to increase than lessen the peaceful serenity of the evening and its corresponding effects on my own mind. It invited and cherished just such meditations as my visit had already inspired. Natural scenery, when viewed in a Christian mirror, frequently affords very beautiful illustrations of divine truths. We are highly favoured, when we can enjoy them, and at the same time draw near to God in them.

PART VII.

It is a pleasing consideration, that, amidst the spiritual darkness which unhappily prevails in many parts of the land, God nevertheless has a people. It not unfrequently happens that single individuals are to be found, who, though very disadvantageously situated with regard to the ordinary means of grace, have received truly saving impressions, and through a blessing on secret meditation, reading, and prayer, are led to the closest communion with God, and become eminently devoted Christians. It is the no small error of too many professors of the present day, to overlook or undervalue the instances of this kind which exist. The religious profession and opinions of some have too much of mere *machinery* in their composition. If every wheel, pivot, chain, spring, cog, or pinion, be not exactly in its place, or move not precisely according to a favourite and prescribed system, the whole is rejected as unworthy of regard. But happily "the Lord knoweth them that are his;" nor is the impression of his own seal wanting to characterize some, who, in comparative seclusion from the religious world, "name the name of Christ, and depart from iniquity."

There are some real Christians so peculiarly circumstanced in this respect, as to illustrate the Poet's beautiful comparison,

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness in the desert air."

Yet this was not altogether the case with the Dairyman's daughter. Her religion had indeed ripened in seclusion from the world, and she was intimately known

but to few; but she lived usefully, departed most happily, and left a shining track behind her. While I attempt a faint delineation of it, may I catch its influence, and become, through inexpressible mercy, a follower of "them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises!"

From the time wherein I visited her, as described in my last paper, I considered her end as fast approaching. One day I received a hasty summons to inform me that she was dying. It was brought by a soldier, whose countenance bespoke seriousness, good sense, and piety.

"I am sent, Sir, by the father and mother of Elizabeth W——, at her own particular request, to say, how much they all wish to see you. She is going *home*, Sir, very fast indeed."

"Have you known her long?" I replied.

"About a month, Sir; I love to visit the sick; and hearing of her case from a person who lives close by our camp, I went to see her. I bless God that ever I did go. Her conversation has been very profitable to me."

"I rejoice," said I, "to see in you, as I trust, a *brother soldier*. Though we differ in our outward regimentals, I hope we serve under the same spiritual Captain. I will go with you."

My horse was soon ready. My military companion walked by my side, and gratified me with very sensible and pious conversation. He related some remarkable testimonies of the excellent disposition of the Dairyman's daughter, as they appeared from recent intercourse which he had had with her.

"She is a bright diamond, Sir," said the soldier, "and will soon shine brighter than any diamond upon earth."

We passed through lanes and fields, over hills and valleys, by open and retired paths, sometimes crossing over, and sometimes following the windings of a little brook, which gently murmured by the road-side. Con-

versation beguiled the distance, and shortened the apparent time of our journey, till we were nearly arrived at the Dairyman's cottage.

As we approached it, we became silent. Thoughts of death, eternity, and salvation, inspired by the sight of a house where a dying believer lay, filled my own mind, and, I doubt not, that of my companion also.

No living object yet appeared, except the Dairyman's dog, keeping a kind of mute watch at the door; for he did not, as formerly, bark at my approach. He seemed to partake so far of the feelings appropriate to the circumstances of the family, as not to wish to give a hasty or painful alarm. He came forward to the little wicket-gate, then looked back at the house-door, as if conscious there was sorrow within. It was as if he wanted to say, "tread softly over the threshold, as you enter the house of mourning; for my master's heart is full of grief."

The soldier took my horse and tied it up in a shed. A solemn serenity appeared to surround the whole place: it was only interrupted by the breezes passing through the large elm-trees, which stood near the house, and which my imagination indulged itself in thinking were plaintive sighs of sorrow. I gently opened the door; no one appeared, and all was still silent. The soldier followed; we came to the foot of the stairs.

"They are come," said a voice, which I knew to be the father's; "they are come."

He appeared at the top; I gave him my hand and said nothing. On entering the room above, I saw the aged mother and her son supporting the much-loved daughter and sister: the son's wife sat weeping in a window-seat, with a child on her lap; two or three persons attended in the room to discharge any office which friendship or necessity might require.

I sat down by the bed-side. The mother could not weep, but now and then sighed deeply, as she alternately

looked at Elizabeth and at me. The big tear rolled down the brother's cheek, and testified an affectionate regard. The good old man stood at the foot of the bed, leaning upon the post, and unable to take his eyes off the child from whom he was so soon to part.

Elizabeth's eyes were closed, and as yet she perceived me not. But over the face, though pale, sunk, and hollow, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, had cast a triumphant calm.

The soldier, after a short pause, silently reached out his Bible, towards me, pointing with his finger at 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 58. I then broke silence by reading the passage, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

At the sound of these words her eyes opened, and something like a ray of divine light beamed on her countenance, as she said, "Victory, victory! through our Lord Jesus Christ."

She relapsed again, taking no further notice of any one present.

"God be praised for the triumph of faith!" said I.

"Amen," replied the soldier.

The Dairyman's uplifted eye showed that the Amen was in his heart, though his tongue failed to utter it.

A short struggling for breath took place in the dying young woman, which was soon over; and then I said to her,

"My dear friend, do you not feel that you are supported?"

"The Lord deals very gently with me," she replied.

"Are not his promises now very precious to you?"

"They are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus."

"Are you in much bodily pain?"

"So little, that I almost forget it."

"How good the Lord is!"

"And how unworthy am I!"

"You are going to see him as he is."

"I think——I hope——I believe that I am."

She again fell into a short slumber.

Looking at her mother, I said, "What a mercy to have a child so near heaven as yours is!"

"And what a mercy," she replied, in broken accents, "if her poor old mother might but follow her there! But, Sir, it is so hard to part!"

"I hope through grace by faith you will soon meet, to part no more: it will be but a little while."

"Sir," said the Dairyman "that thought supports me, and the Lord's goodness makes me feel more reconciled than I was."

"Father——mother"——said the reviving daughter, "he is good to me——trust him, praise him evermore."

"Sir," added she in a faint voice, "I want to thank you for your kindness to me——I want to ask a favour;——you buried my sister——will you do the same for me?"

"All shall be as you wish, if God permit," I replied.

"Thank you, Sir, thank you;——I have another favour to ask——When I am gone, remember my father and mother. They are old, but I hope the good work is begun in their souls——My prayers are heard——Pray, come and see them——I cannot speak much, but I want to speak for their sakes——Sir, remember them."—

The aged parents now sighed and sobbed aloud, uttering broken sentences, and gained some relief by such an expression of their feelings.

At length I said to Elizabeth, "Do you experience any doubts or temptations on the subject of your eternal safety?"

"No, Sir; the Lord deals very gently with me, and gives me peace."

What are your views of the dark valley of death, now that you are passing through it?"

"It is *not* dark."

"Why so?"

"My Lord is *there*, and he is my light and my salvation."

"Have you any fears of more bodily suffering?"

"The Lord deals so gently with me; I can trust him."

Something of a convulsion came on. When it was past, she said again and again,

"The Lord deals very gently with me. Lord, I am thine, save me——Blessed Jesus——precious Saviour——His blood cleanseth from all sin——Who shall separate?——His name is Wonderful——Thanks be to God——He giveth us the victory——I, even I, am saved——O grace, mercy, and wonder—Lord, receive my spirit!——Dear Sir,——dear father, mother, friends, I am going——but all is well, well, well——."

She relapsed again—We knelt down to prayer—The Lord was in the midst of us, and blessed us.

She did not again revive while I remained, nor ever speak any more words which could be understood. She slumbered for about ten hours, and at last sweetly fell asleep in the arms of that Lord, who had dealt so gently with her.

I left the house an hour after she had ceased to speak. I pressed her hand as I was taking leave, and said, "Christ is the resurrection and the life." She gently returned the pressure, but could neither open her eyes, nor utter a reply.

I never had witnessed a scene so impressive as this before. It completely filled my imagination as I returned home.

"Farewell," thought I, "dear friend, till the morning of an eternal day shall renew our personal intercourse. Thou wast a brand plucked from the burning, that thou

mightest become a star shining in the firmament of glory. I have seen thy light and thy good works, and will therefore glorify our Father which is in heaven. I have seen, in thy example, what it is to be a sinner freely saved by grace. I have learned from thee, as in a living mirror, *who* it is that begins, continues, and ends the work of faith and love. Jesus is all in all: he will and shall be glorified. He won the crown, and alone deserves to wear it. May no one attempt to rob him of his glory! He saves, and saves to the uttermost. Farewell, dear sister in the Lord. Thy flesh and thy heart may fail; but God is the strength of thy heart, and shall be thy portion for ever."

PART VIII.

WHO can conceive or estimate the nature of that change which the soul of a believer must experience at the moment when, quitting its tabernacle of clay, it suddenly enters into the presence of God? If, even while "we see through a glass darkly," the views of divine love and wisdom are so delightful to the eye of faith; what must be the glorious vision of God, when seen face to face? If it be so valued a privilege here on earth to enjoy the communion of saints, and to take sweet counsel together with our fellow-travellers towards the heavenly kingdom; what shall we see and know when we finally "come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant?"

If, during the sighs and tears of a mortal pilgrimage,

the consolations of the Spirit are so precious, and the hope full of immortality is so animating to the soul; what heart can conceive, or what tongue utter its superior joys, when arrived at that state, where sighing and sorrow flee away, and the tears shall be wiped from every eye?

Such ideas were powerfully associated together in my imagination, as I travelled onward to the house, where, in solemn preparation for the grave, lay the remains of the Dairyman's daughter.

She had breathed her last shortly after the visit related in my former account. Permission was obtained, as before in the case of her sister, that I should perform the funeral service. Many pleasing yet melancholy thoughts were connected with the fulfilment of this task. I retraced the numerous and important conversations which I had held with her. But these could now no longer be maintained on earth. I reflected on the interesting and improving nature of *Christian* friendships, whether formed in palaces or in cottages; and felt thankful that I had so long enjoyed that privilege with the subject of this memorial. I then indulged a selfish sigh for a moment, on thinking that I could no longer hear the great truths of Christianity uttered by one who had drunk so deep of the waters of the river of life. But the rising murmur was checked by the animating thought; "She is gone to eternal rest—could I wish her back again in this vale of tears?"

At that moment, the first sound of a tolling bell struck my ear. It proceeded from a village church in the valley directly beneath the ridge of a high hill, over which I had taken my way.—It was Elizabeth's funeral knell.

The sound was solemn; and in ascending to the elevated spot over which I rode, it acquired a peculiar tone and character. Tolling at slow and regulated inter-

v[illegible], (as was customary for a considerable time previous to the hour of burial,) the bell, as it were, proclaimed the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord, and also the necessity of the living pondering these things, and laying them to heart. It seemed to say, "Hear my warning voice, thou son of man. There is but a step between thee and death. Arise, prepare thine house, for thou shalt die, and not live."

The scenery was in unison with that tranquil frame of mind which is most suitable for holy meditation. A rich and fruitful valley lay immediately beneath; it was adorned with corn-fields and pastures, through which a small river winded in a variety of directions, and many herds grazed upon its banks. A fine range of opposite hills, covered with grazing flocks, terminated with a bold sweep into the ocean, whose blue waves appeared at a distance beyond. Several villages, hamlets, and churches, were scattered in the valley. The noble mansions of the rich, and the lowly cottages of the poor added their respective features to the landscape. The air was mild and the declining sun occasioned a beautiful interchange of light and shade upon the sides of the hills. In the midst of this scene, the chief sound that arrested attention was the bell tolling for the funeral of the Dairyman's daughter.

Do any of my readers inquire why I describe so minutely the circumstances of prospect scenery which may be connected with the incidents I relate? My reply is, that the God of redemption is the God of creation likewise; and that we are taught in every part of the Word of God to unite the admiration of the beauties and wonders of nature to every other motive for devotion. When David considered the heavens, the work of God's fingers, the moon and the stars, which he has ordained, he was thereby led to the deepest humiliation of heart before his Maker. And when he viewed the sheep and

the oxen and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, he was constrained to cry out, "O Lord, our Lord! how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

I am the Poor Man's Friend, and wish more especially that every poor labouring man should know how to connect the goodness of God in creation and providence with the unsearchable riches of his grace in the salvation of a sinner. And where can he learn this lesson more instructively than in looking around the fields where his labour is appointed, and there tracing the handy-work of God in all that he beholds? Such meditations have often afforded me both profit and pleasure, and I wish my readers to share them with me.

The Dairyman's cottage was rather more than a mile distant from the church. A lane, quite overshaded with trees and high hedges, led from the foot of the hill to his dwelling. It was impossible at that time to overlook the suitable gloom of such an approach to the house of mourning.

I found, on my entrance, that several Christian friends, from different parts of the neighbourhood, had assembled together, to pay their last tribute of esteem and regard to the memory of the Dairyman's daughter. Several of them had first become acquainted with her during the latter stage of her illness; some few had maintained an affectionate intercourse with her for a longer period. But all seemed anxious to manifest their respect for one who was endeared to them by such striking testimonies of true Christianity.

I was requested to go into the chamber where the relatives and a few other friends were gone to take a last look at the remains of Elizabeth.

It is not easy to describe the sensation which the mind experiences on the first sight of a dead countenance, which, when living, was loved and esteemed for the sake

of that soul which used to give it animation. A deep and awful view of the separation that has taken place between the soul and body of the deceased, since we last beheld them, occupies the feelings; our friend seems to be both near, and yet far off. The most interesting and valuable part is fled away; what remains is but the earthly perishing habitation, no longer occupied by its tenant. Yet the features present the accustomed association of friendly intercourse. For one moment, we could think them asleep. The next reminds us that the blood circulates no more; the eye has lost its power of seeing, the ear of hearing, the heart of throbbing, and the limbs of moving. Quickly, a thought of glory breaks in upon the mind, and we imagine the dear departed soul to be arrived at its long-wished-for rest. It is surrounded by cherubim and seraphim, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb on Mount Zion. Amid the solemn stillness of the chamber of death, imagination hears heavenly hymns chanted by the spirits of just men made perfect. In another moment, the livid lips and sunken eye of the clay-cold corpse recall our thoughts to earth, and to ourselves again. And while we think of mortality, sin, death, and the grave, we feel the prayer rise in our bosom, "O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

If there be a moment when Christ and salvation, death, judgment, heaven, and hell, appear more than ever to be momentous subjects of meditation, it is that which brings us to the side of a coffin containing the body of a departed believer.

Elizabeth's features were altered, but much of her likeness remained. Her father and mother sat at the head, her brother at the foot of the coffin. The father silently and alternately looked upon his dead child, and then lifted up his eyes to heaven. A struggle for resignation to the will of God was manifest in his counte-

nance; while the tears rolling down his aged cheeks, at the same time declared his grief and affection. The poor mother cried and sobbed aloud, and appeared to be much overcome, by the shock of separation from a daughter so justly dear to her. The weakness and infirmity of old age added a character to her sorrow, which called for much tenderness and compassion.

A remarkably decent looking woman, who had the management of the few simple though solemn ceremonies which the case required, advanced towards me, saying,

"Sir, this is rather a sight of joy than of sorrow. Our dear friend Elizabeth finds it to be so, I have no doubt. She is beyond *all* sorrow: do you not think she is, Sir?"

"After what I have known, and seen, and heard," I replied, "I feel the fullest assurance, that, while her body remains here, her soul is with her Saviour in Paradise. She loved him *here*, and *there* she enjoys the pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore."

"Mercy, mercy upon a poor old creature almost broken down with age and grief!—What shall I do?" —Betsy's gone. My daughter's dead.—O my child! I shall never see thee more.—God be merciful to me a sinner!" sobbed out the poor mother.

"That last prayer, my dear good woman," said I, "will bring you and your child together again. It is a cry that has brought thousands to glory. It brought your daughter there, and I hope it will bring you thither likewise. God will in no wise cast out any that come to him.

"My dear," said the Dairyman, breaking the long silence he had maintained, "let us trust God with our child; and let us trust him with our own selves. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord! We are old, and can have but a

little farther to travel in our journey, and then——" he could say no more.

The soldier mentioned in my last paper, reached a Bible into my hand, and said, "Perhaps, Sir, you would not object to reading a chapter before we go to the church?"

I did so; it was the fourteenth of the book of Job. A sweet tranquillity prevailed while I read it. Each minute that was spent in this funeral chamber seemed to be valuable. I made a few observations on the chapter, and connected them with the case of our departed sister.

"I am but a poor soldier," said our military friend, "and have nothing of this world's goods beyond my daily subsistence; but I would not exchange my hope of salvation in the next world, for all that this world could bestow without it. What is wealth without grace? Blessed be God! as I march about from one quarters to another, I still find the Lord wherever I go; and thanks be to his holy name, he is here to-day in the midst of this company of the living and the dead. I feel that it is good to be here."

Some other persons present began to take a part in our conversation, in the course of which the life and experience of the Dairyman's daughter were brought forward in a very interesting manner. Each friend had something to relate in testimony of her gracious disposition. A young woman under twenty, who had hitherto been a very light and trifling character, appeared to be remarkably impressed by the conversation of that day; and I have since had ground to believe that divine grace then began to influence her in the choice of that better part, which shall not be taken from her.

What a contrast does such a scene as this exhibit, when compared with the dull, formal, unedifying, and often indecent manner, in which funeral parties assemble in the house of death!

As we conversed, the parents revived. Our subject

of discourse was delightful to their hearts. Their child seemed almost to be alive again, while we talked of her. Tearful smiles often brightened their countenances, as they heard the voice of friendship uttering their daughter's praises; or rather the praises of Him, who had made her a vessel of mercy, and an instrument of spiritual good to her family.

The time for departing to the church was now at hand.

I went to take my last look at the deceased.

There was much written on her countenance. She had evidently died with a smile. It still remained, and spoke the tranquillity of her departed soul. According to the custom of the country, she was decorated with leaves and flowers in the coffin: she seemed as a bride gone forth to meet the bridegroom. These indeed were fading flowers, but they reminded me of that Paradise where flowers are immortal, and where her never-dying soul is at rest.

I remembered the last words which I had heard her speak, and was instantly struck with the happy thought, that "death was indeed swallowed up in victory."

As I slowly retired, I said inwardly, "Peace, my honoured sister, be to *thy* memory and to *my* soul, till we meet in a better world."

In a little time the procession formed: it was rendered the more interesting by the consideration of so many that followed the coffin being persons of a devoted and spiritual character. The distance was rather more than a mile. I resolved to continue with and go before them, as they moved slowly onwards.

Immediately after the body came the venerable father and mother,* bending with age, and weeping through

* The mother died not long after her daughter; and I have good reason to believe, that God was merciful to her, and took her to himself.

An interesting account of a visit recently made to the Dairyman's cottage, appeared in the Christian Guardian, for October 1813. — A still more recent

much affection of heart. Their appearance was calculated to excite every emotion of pity, love, and esteem. The other relatives followed them in order, and the several attendant friends took their places behind.

After we had advanced about a hundred yards, my meditation was unexpectedly and most agreeably interrupted by the friends who attended beginning to sing a funeral psalm. Nothing could be more sweet or solemn. The well known effect of the open air in softening and blending the sounds of music, was here peculiarly felt. The road through which we passed was beautiful and romantic. It lay at the foot of a hill, which occasionally re-echoed the voices of the singers, and seemed to give faint replies to the notes of the mourners. The funeral knell was distinctly heard from the church tower, and greatly increased the effect which this simple and becoming service produced.

We went by several cottages: a respectful attention was universally observed as we passed: and the countenances of many proclaimed their regard for the departed young woman. The singing was regularly continued, with occasional intervals of about five minutes during our whole progress.

I cannot describe the state of my own mind as peculiarly connected with this solemn singing. I was reminded of elder times and ancient piety. I wished the practice more frequent. It seems well calculated to excite and cherish devotion and religious affections.

Music, when judiciously brought into the service of religion, is one of the most delightful, and not least efficacious means of grace. I pretend not too minutely to conjecture as to the actual nature of those pleasures which, after the resurrection, the reunited body and soul

visit to the good old Dairyman (who still lives, at the age of 82) has been made by the author of this narrative. (JUNE 1814.)

The good old Dairyman died in 1816. — His end was eminently Christian.

will enjoy in heaven; but I can hardly persuade myself that melody and harmony will be wanting, when even the sense of hearing shall itself be glorified.

We at length arrived at the church. Looking upwards as I drew near the porch, I observed a dial on the wall. The sun's declining rays directed the shadow to the evening hour. As I passed underneath this simple but solemn monitor, I was reminded of the lapse of time, the uncertainty of life, and sure approach of eternity. I thought with David, "We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." "Lord, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The service was heard with deep and affectionate attention. When we came to the grave, the hymn which Elizabeth had selected was sung. All was devout, simple, animating. We committed our dear sister's body to the earth, in full hope of a joyful resurrection from the dead.

Thus was the vail of separation drawn for a season. She is departed and no more seen. But she *will* be seen on the right hand of her Redeemer at the last day; and will again appear to his glory, a miracle of grace and monument of mercy.

My reader, rich or poor, shall you and I appear there likewise? Are we "clothed with humility," and arrayed in the wedding-garment of a Redeemer's righteousness? Are we turned from idols to serve the living God? Are we sensible of our own emptiness, and therefore flying to a Saviour's fulness to obtain grace and strength? Do we indeed live in Christ, and on him, and by him, and with him? Is he our all in all? Are we "lost and found?" "dead and alive again?"

My *poor* reader, the Dairyman's daughter was a *poor* girl, and the child of a *poor* man. Herein thou resemblest

her: but dost thou resemble *her*, as she resembled Christ? Art thou made rich by faith? Hast thou a crown laid up for thee? Is thine heart set upon heavenly riches? If not, read this story once more, and then pray earnestly for like precious faith.

But if, through grace, thou dost love and serve the Redeemer that saved the Dairyman's daughter, grace, peace, and mercy be with thee! The lines are fallen unto thee in pleasant places: thou hast a goodly heritage. Press forward in duty, and wait upon the Lord, possessing thy soul in holy patience. Thou hast just been with me to the grave of a departed believer. Now "go thy way, till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

A TRIBUTE of affection has recently been paid to the memory of the Dairyman's daughter, by raising a subscription and putting up a grave-stone, on which the following verses are inscribed:

"Stranger! if e'er by chance or feeling led,
Upon this hallowed turf thy footsteps tread,
Turn from the contemplation of the sod,
And think on her whose spirit rests with God.
Lowly her lot on earth,—but He, who bore
Tidings of grace and blessings to the poor
Gave her, his truth and faithfulness to prove,
The choicest treasures of his boundless love,—
(Faith, that dispell'd affliction's darkest gloom;
Hope, that could cheer the passage to the tomb;
Peace, that not Hell's dark legions could destroy;
And love, that fill'd the soul with heavenly joy.)
Death of its sting disarm'd, she knew no fear,
But tasted heaven e'en while she linger'd here.
Oh, happy saint!—may we like thee be blest:
In life be faithful, and in death find rest!"

APPENDIX.

THE first two letters were addressed by the Dairyman's daughter to her father. I of course omit those passages which are strictly personal and private.

TO MR. JOSEPH WALLBRIDGE.

Southampton, Feb. 23, 1797.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FATHER,

* * * *

And now, my dear father, I do not know what to say to change the scene. I suppose you were a little alarmed the other day, when the fleet of colliers came in, and they were taken for French. It was reported here that they were landed at several places; and we should have soon been over in the island for shelter from them: as if by that means we could "flee from the wrath to come," or stay the hand of an Almighty and justly-avenging God, who for the sins of mankind has sent his judgments abroad in the earth. And even now we are ready to say to that God who hath so long withheld the sword of vengeance from destroying us, and still extends his everlasting arms of mercy to save us—"Depart from us"—for we desire not the knowledge of him. But I hope, my dear father, that the Lord will have mercy on us and bring us out of that gross darkness into his marvellous light, and set our feet on a rock that is higher that we are. But we are informed by the word of God,

that if we would have all these blessings bestowed on us, we must fix all our hopes and our faith on the blessed Lamb of God that was slain to redeem the fallen children of Adam. For "as in Adam all died, so shall all" true believers "in Christ be made alive" to God: and then, my dear father, we may say,

"Prisoners of hope, lift up your heads
The day of liberty draws near;
Jesus, who on the serpent treads,
Shall soon in your behalf appear:
The Lord will to his temple come,
Prepare your hearts to make him room.

My dear father, I hope that God will not suffer sickness or death ever to surprise us unawares, or find us in a state unprepared.

* * * *

Please to give my duty to my dear and tender mother, and accept the same yourself, and love to dear brothers and sisters: and may the blessed Spirit of God be very powerful in all your hearts to root out every evil.

LETTER II.

Southampton, April 11, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have been silent longer than I should, had my dear sister written before; but, as I know all things are guided and governed by Him whom my soul loveth, I wait patiently his appointed time. O, my dear father, it is good to trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name. O, if you have not tasted how good and gracious the Lord is, then turn and seek him while he may be found. None ever sought his glorious face in vain; and those "that come unto me (saith the dear

Lamb of God) I will in no wise cast out." No: his tender love, pity, and compassion, never fail to poor sinners. No: though my dear mother and father have lived to near the time that my God hath said shall be the age of man; and ye have still been sinning and grieving, and hiding as it were your faces from that God who is still pursuing you with his love and mercy, yea, even the blessed Jesus, who is still making intercession for sinners at his Father's right hand. And

"When justice bared the sword
To cut the fig-tree down,
The pity of my Lord
Cried, let it still alone:
The Father mild inclined his ear,
And spares us yet another year."

But remember, my dear friends, his blessed words: "my Spirit shall not always strive with man;" and, "except you are born again, ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven;" and if you are not washed in the precious blood of that dear Lamb of God, you can have no part with him; and if his Spirit does not "bear witness with your spirit" that you are born of God, you are still in your sins, and strangers to the blood that bought you on the tree. Oh! my daily prayer to God is, that he will "turn you, and so shall you be turned." Oh! the dear Redeemer still waits to be gracious; he is ever ready to pardon your sins, and seal it with his precious blood; he is ever calling, "Come unto me, all ye that do labour and are heavy laden" with the burden of your sins, "and I will give you rest." Then I entreat you, my dear friends, in the name of the most high God, that ye turn and lay hold of the ever-blessed Jesus as your shield of faith, and he will arm you with the whole armour of God. But remember this: though God is full of love and mercy, yet he will be sought unto. Then draw nigh unto God in secret prayer, and God will draw

nigh unto your precious souls, and that to bless them; and will say unto you, believe on me, "my grace is sufficient for you," I will cleanse you in my precious blood: and then shall your leprosy be healed, and you shall return without spot. And then you must watch and pray to him continually to keep you clean. Oh! he is always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and more ready to give than we to ask. Remember, my dear father, that the language of every prayerless and unconverted soul is, "depart from me, O God;" for we desire not the knowledge of the Most High. Then put off the evil day no longer, lest you should hear *him* say, who is willing and able to save to the utmost those that come unto him, "I have stretched out my hand all the day long, and no man regarded." And "behold I knock at the door of every man's heart, and to him that openeth unto me I will come in, and sup with him, and he with me. My dear father, these are blessed and comfortable words; and I am his living witness, and I "set to my seal" that Jesus is true. O the happy state of the children of God! Now I ask and receive: I seek and I find him whom my soul loveth; yea, I always find I have a very near access, through his blessed intercession, to supplicate the throne of grace; and now I can say,

"Before the throne my surety stands,
My name is written on his hands;"

and now I am so filled with the peace and love of God, that I can lift up my soul and say,

"My God, I know, I feel thee mine,
And will not quit my claim,
Till all I have is lost in thine,
And all renewed I am;"

and

"Where'er I am, where'er I move,
I meet the object of my love."

The Lord doth so strengthen my faith in him, that I find all his promises stand engaged to make me blessed. O may God pardon what his poor unworthy dust has written through ignorance, which is not agreeable to his most blessed will which I will ever seek to fulfil!

* * * *

I have so little taste for the conversation of this world, that it is very unpleasant to think on it. My sister's love and duty to all. Mr. B. will be in the island soon, please God, and then you are to write to her. Desire my brother to write to and direct her to the house of God in Bath, for she is still walking in darkness and is ignorant of it. O may the Lord be graciously pleased to bring you all into his marvellous light, that you may praise him in time and eternity: then strive to enter in at the strait gate. . . . If the Lord shall please to spare me, I hope to see you ere long; if not in this world, in that where we shall bask in unutterable bliss. My dear friends, take not this advice amiss from your unworthy child; it is the command of my blessed Lord, "when thou art converted, remember thy brethren:" and I daily take up my cross and follow him whithersoever he goeth: and I pray God enable you to do the same. O how should I rejoice and praise my God to see you enabled, through the inspiration of the Spirit of the Most High, to answer this ill-written letter!—Farewell, in the Lord, dear friends.

The third letter is to her sister.

LETTER III.

Cowes, October 14, 1798.

My dear Sister,

I have not had a convenient opportunity to write till now: I hope you have not been unhappy at

my long silence. Consider that God is my keeper, therefore, "I shall lack no manner of thing that is good." I entreat you to commend the keeping of your soul, spirit, and body to the Lord, for he is a promise-making, and a true and faithful promise-keeping God.

> "Then let me commend my Saviour to you,
> The publican's friend and advocate too."

My dear, I say that God is my keeper: you will say, he is yours—it is true, for "in him we all live, move, and have our being;" but I can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and

> "He is now pleading his merits and death,
> And still interceding for sinners beneath;"

and he is waiting to be gracious to you, for he is long-suffering and kind, plenteous in goodness; his love and mercy know no end nor bounds, and his compassions fail not: now, my dear,

> "Ready for you the angels wait,
> To triumph in your blest estate;
> Tuning their harps, they long to praise
> The wonders of redeeming grace."

O my dear sister, search the scriptures diligently; pray to God earnestly; for in so doing, you will find that he is a God "nigh at hand, and not afar off." He has promised to be found of those that seek him; for none ever sought his face in vain, neither did ever any trust in him, and was deceived. O my dear sister, if you did but believe how willing God is to reveal his Son in your heart, the hope of glory! O how would your soul be ravished, if Christ would appear to you the altogether lovely, and the first among ten thousand! Then could you say those blessed words,

> "My soul, through my Redeemer's love,
> Saved from the second death I feel;
> My eyes from tears of dark despair,
> My feet from falling into hell.

Wherefore to him my feet shall run,
My eyes on his perfections gaze,
My soul shall live for God alone,
And all within me shout his praise."

I entreat you to read the word of God carefully, for in it is eternal life. All the promises there stand engaged to make you blessed, if you truly repent, and forsake your sins, and turn to God with full purpose of heart, and fully believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that he will save you from your sins, with a present and everlasting salvation: for he says, only believe and thou shall be saved. We should receive the Word of God, as if it was the awful voice of God from heaven. It *will* be awful to the wicked and unconverted: . . . . O may the Lord quicken your dead soul

——————— "with life divine,
And make you in his image shine."

O may you feel the kindlings of love divine shed abroad in your heart. Farewell in the Lord, my dear sister.

The following little narrative seems to have been intended for her own private use. It is apparently left unfinished.

November 30, 1800.

ELIZABETH WALLBRIDGE, BORN JULY 29, 1770.

I feel my mind more composed when writing, and more free from wandering thoughts, than at any other time; for I have little retirement, and when I have, it is seldom free from disturbances, so that I am almost continually conversant with the world. The Lord knoweth what a burden it is to my mind, and how impatient I have been. May the Lord pardon his unfaithful, unprofitable servant, and sanctify me throughout, soul,

spirit, and body, and plunge me in the Godhead's deepest sea, that I may be lost in his immensity. O glorious hope of perfect love! may it ever fill and lift my ravished spirit up to things above; *there* I shall for ever love.

I thought I would just set down, as the Lord is pleased to give me time and strength, a few of his particular mercies and favours as I can recollect. He has abounded in love and mercy to me: O that I had made him all the returns that love could make by giving myself a sacrifice daily unto him! But now I have to lament my short comings, and to apply to the "blood of sprinkling" which speaks my sins forgiven, and purifies my soul and makes it meet for heaven. O what a precious Saviour have I found! O that I could make him known to all mankind, that all may turn and taste the riches of his grace! At present I am so very weak in body and mind that I can recollect but very little: it has been decaying near four years; but in the Lord Jehovah is my everlasting strength, and whoever relies on him shall never be ashamed, and shall be freed from all slavish fears.

I seemed to have some fear of God, and love to him from my childhood. His restraining grace kept me from falling into great and open sin, and gave me such a love to truth and uprightness, that I seemed to hate every false way, word, and work, in myself and others. I remember, when I went to school, one of my playmates that I was very fond of, used to take every opportunity to get money from her mother unknown to her, and bring to school, and buy all kinds of little toys, and then freely give me and another or two an equal share with herself. But O how did the Spirit of the Lord strive with me at that time and convince me of the evil, so that I had no peace of mind whilst I partook of the sin, and yet I had not strength to resist it. It was so on my mind that I ought to make her fault known, not to conceal it and partake of part. I could see it a great evil in the

person that sold her the things, whose daughter took part, and, I believe, knew as well as I did how she came by it; but I never revealed it, though I always bore it on my mind with abhorrence. What a sad thing to yield to sin against such clear convictions!

I was early taught a form of prayer, which I continued to repeat in a careless manner when I was laid down in bed, but very often I fell asleep before I said them half. But, blessed be God, he still spared me, and often drew me to himself by the cords of love; for at an early age he drew me to secret prayer, where I often felt the kindlings of his love; but had none to set me forward, so that I often neglected this duty; but when alone I have often felt great sweetness in it. I believe if I had heard the gospel preached, I should have been very early devoted to that God I now love and adore. But I do not yet love him as he has promised I shall, with all my loving heart, when sin is all destroyed. O happy moment, how I long for it!

The last document is

HER WILL.

My dear father, and mother, and brothers—If it should please the Lord to spare you all, till after my decease, I take this opportunity to set down what I simply desire, if it be the Lord's will and agreeable to you all. If I die under this roof, it will be best as soon as I am dead, to have my coffin made; let Mr. —— make it, if it is quite agreeable; and then I can be carried down stairs, not to disturb you or break your rest. And there the angels of my covenant-making and promise-keeping God will watch over me and protect my sleeping dust; so that you need not fear any evil spirit.

for they will have done with me for ever, they will never assault me any more; I shall then, through Christ, who hath loved me with an everlasting love, gain the glorious victory over all the principalities and powers of darkness; for they know that I am a redeemed captive from their power, though they cease not to tempt me to return to my former customs, that I may be again in bondage to fear: but glory be given to God, his grace is sufficient for me; hitherto he hath brought me safe through, and I know he will save to the end. May I lift up my heart to him and cry—O thou

> "Fairer than the sons of men,
> Do not let me turn again."

Let my coffin be very plain, neat, and strong, made to cover very close. Let it be made white inside and out, if no trouble; and for my shroud a little wool will do, if you like it: it will be less expense; for it will all turn to dust. I care not who you ask to my funeral: I want no form of young people, I had rather have those that love God, that they may rejoice over me with angels above, and praise a God of love. [*She then names several friends whom she desired to be present, and proceeds.*] Let them all meet together that can or will come . . . and I trust they will feel the Lord powerfully present in the midst to bless every waiting soul, and reveal the secrets of his love. Mr. Richmond or the minister of Newchurch, which you please; I love them both, because they love God: for "God is love," and his love constrains us to love one another. . . . . Do not be afraid of disturbing the peaceful dead in singing praises to God and the Lamb who hath redeemed me from sin. It may be, my happy spirit may be permitted to join with listening angels who catch the approving sound, while all heaven's host cry—a child is born into our world above.

Let these hymns be sung: the 37th, "Hosanna to

Jesus on high;" the 35th, "'Tis finished, 'tis done;" the 33rd, "Ah lovely appearance of death;" the 50th, in the large book, "Hark, a voice divides the sky." If the preacher please, for the glory of God, and the good of the living, let him preach a sermon from Psalm cxvi. 15. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and may the word be attended with power; a divine energy and the quickening influence of the Spirit of God rest upon the minister and the hearers, that glory may be given to God, and great good done in his precious name; that his saints that love him may be strengthened and refreshed and built up in their most holy faith; that they may go on their way rejoicing in the strength of the Lord, from grace to grace, till glory end what grace begun; that they may be fully prepared to meet death with Christian courage. And may all my dear friends follow on to know the Lord, and experimentally to feel the saving power of divine grace in each of their hearts, that they may give glory to God, and triumphantly quit the stage of mortality, shouting—victory through the blood of the Lamb that was slain, who now is ascended on high for ever to reign. But I would have all remember, if they have never yet been convinced of their lost and miserable state by nature, that it is high time for them to awake out of sleep, and cry mightily to God to show them their danger and save them from destruction. For without faith and prayer you cannot be saved. Then come like the humble publican, with a feeling sense of your sins, and true faith in *his* merits to atone for your sins and cleanse your guilty souls, and you will be sure to find mercy, pardon, and peace, and grace to help you in every time of need. When I was brought home, I was in great hopes I should see a great change; but I have been painfully disappointed to the present moment, which often fills my heart with grief and sorrow, to see sinners so uncon-

cerned upon the brink of death. But if I am never permitted to see that happy change, I hope you will experience it, and meet me in glory: there we shall part no more. [*The remainder is occupied with the distribution of her little property, consisting almost entirely of wearing apparel, among her relatives.*]

The following letters were addressed to the Dairyman's daughter by Mr. Richmond. The first is merely a short note, but it is inserted as a characteristic illustration of the style in which he addressed her.

LETTER I.

It has pleased God, my Christian sister, for several weeks past to keep me in a state of sickness, from which soon by his goodness I hope to be relieved. I am at present unable to say half what I wish to you; but lest you should suspect me of inattention to your friendly and welcome letter, I write these few lines to say, that you shall either hear from me at length, or see me shortly. May God support you through your trial of ill-health; and the nearer you approach the other world, whenever it be God's appointed time, may you be more and more heavenly-minded. Peace be multiplied to you. I pray for you and beg you to know

How faithfully I am,
Yours in Christ,
L. RICHMOND.

LETTER II.

You may be assured upon the faith of one who loves God and would fain serve and obey him, that you are not out of my mind, though I have been prevented from doing myself the pleasure of calling upon you. I have also delayed writing till now from an almost daily expectation of coming your way, but as it has happened otherwise, I now acknowledge the receipt of your last letter, and rejoice at the sight of words dictated by a spirit of godliness, humility, and love. In a perverse and adulterous generation, like the present one, what can be so cheering to the soul as converse with those who really know the Lord, and love him because he hath first loved them? I am well convinced of the propriety and force of your advice with respect to my conduct, and that of the ministers of the gospel in general. God grant such a weak and unprofitable servant as I am, may find grace and ability to conduct myself as becomes a faithful labourer in the vineyard! For who can do it of his own strength? What are the natural powers of sinful man to work out the righteousness of God? To the Spirit of Christ, which changeth and strengtheneth the inner man, we must attribute all: to him be honour, glory, and praise in all the churches now and evermore.

I have read your two books, and find much profit in them both. It appears that the life of Madame Guion should be attended to with some caution, which Mr. Wesley very frequently draws our observation to in his short notes at the bottom of the pages. She was sometimes influenced by notions which had not a sufficiently strong *scriptural* foundation, and therefore in *these things* should not be set as a pattern; but her love of God and her anxiety to be for ever joined to him, are lovely and

interesting. The true rule for discerning the motions and operations of the blessed Spirit within us, is to compare our feelings with those ways of holiness, happy fruits of the Spirit, which the apostle describes: let every thing be referred to this as a standard and we never shall be mistaken. May God so guide and direct you and me to all goodness, that our works may glorify —not *ourselves*, none but Jesus can do that, but—our Father which is in heaven. May numbers have reason, through the mercy of God, to bless our memory: and may the seed which in my ministerial capacity I am commissioned to sow, to plant, and to water, receive its due increase from God. I assure you this lies much at my heart, and occupies much of my thoughts, seeing and "knowing the terrors of the Lord," I would "persuade men" with all truth, earnestness, and sincerity, to flee from the wrath to come, and throw themselves and their sins at the foot of the cross, with true repentance and faith. Faith is the hand which we stretch forth to receive the benefits of Christ's blood; it is the soul of the spiritual life, and the grand distinguishing characteristic of the true Christian from the false; it is the touchstone of Christianity; the burning coal which sets fire to the sacrifice on the altar; the sun which enlightens the wilderness of the world; the lantern which guides our feet through the valley of the shadow of death. True faith never can be separated from hope and love; they are three lovely sisters who take up their dwelling in the heart when it becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost; their parent is God, and their offspring, righteous works: how do they shine forth in the midst of a vain and wicked world, like a candle set upon a hill in a dark and gloomy night! May their operations spread wider and wider over the face of the world, and may the church of God increase in their fruits, till at length the happy time shall arrive when the kingdoms of this world shall

become the kingdom of the Lord and his Anointed. God hasten so blessed a period!

I was much shocked at the sudden death of my neighbour ——. Such unprepared calls ought to operate upon those that are left behind, as salutary warnings: alive and healthy this morning, who knoweth that this very night our souls shall not be required of us? Let us be on the watch and endeavour to make others so, for we "know neither the day nor the hour" of our Master's coming. I am told that his successor has given some strong calls to duty and attentiveness in religion, which I hope in God will prove efficacious. He appears in conversation very much in earnest, and seems steady and persevering; but I have only seen him twice. In that parish you well know how much reformation is wanted. Alas! into what place can we go where it is not wanting? Iniquity triumphs, and presumption darkens the very heavens with her wide-spreading wings; blasphemy, covetousness, and uncleanness, abound and prosper; men are lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God. Does not the world go just as Satan would have it? Sometimes he will even suggest to the faithful that their endeavours are in vain, and he tempts to inactivity and sloth; but, blessed be God, the Bible is in our hands, and there we find arguments, and strength, and consolation, and admonition, and precept, and commandment, and encouragement to proceed in the mighty task of beating down the strong holds of iniquity, and destroying the works of the devil. Even though "the overflowings of ungodliness may make us afraid," God worketh the good cause, and in the end it shall prosper. The church shall never fail, nor shall the gates of hell prevail against it. Your health, I hear, is weak: may God strengthen the inner man as he thinks fit to weaken the outer; may his kingdom rule in your heart, though the outward fortifications crumble to dust. If it please

God to shorten the span of your life, I trust you will meet your Redeemer with peace and joy, and that you will employ the rest of that time which is appointed you on earth in promoting the cause of righteousness, in combating the artifices of Satan, resisting the ways of ungodliness, conversing with God in fervent prayer and holy meditation, contemplating his redeeming love, and hungering after higher and higher degrees of virtue. May the prospect of an heavenly inheritance keep you alive to holiness and gratitude, and in looking upon the world around, remember that the true spirit of the gospel teaches us to love the sinner whilst we hate the sin.—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you from God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believe me to be

Yours, with Christian regard.

L. RICHMOND.

THE

NEGRO SERVANT.

PART I.

If a map of the world, instead of being coloured as is usual, with many gay and brilliant tints, in order to distinguish its various continents, kingdoms, and islands, from each other, were to be painted with darker or brighter hues corresponding with the spiritual character of the inhabitants, what a gloomy aspect would be presented to the eye of the *Christian* geographer by the greater portion of the habitable globe!—How dark would be the shade thus cast over the larger districts of the vast continents of Asia and America! and what a mass of gloom would characterize the African quarter of the world!

Here and there a bright spot would mark the residence of a few missionary labourers devoting themselves to God, and scattering the rays of Christian light among the surrounding heathen: but over the greater part "the blackness of darkness" would emblematically describe the iron reign of Mahometan superstition and Pagan idolatry.

The Christian prays that God would "have respect unto the covenant; for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." He hopes to see the nations "open their eyes, and turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they

may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith."

The curse originally pronounced on the descendants of Ham, has, in a variety of respects, both temporal and spiritual, been awfully fulfilled: "A servant of servants shall he be." Slavery, as well of mind as body, has been continued amongst the Africans through their generations, in a manner which at once proves the truth of the divine prediction, and yet calls aloud for the ardent prayers and active exertions of Christians in their behalf. The time will come when the heathen shall be proved to have been given to Christ "for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." The degraded Hottentot and the poor benighted Negro will look from the ends of the earth unto Jesus, and be saved. "Many shall go to and fro, and knowledge shall thereby be increased." The Redeemer "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," in beholding the gathering together, not only of the outcasts of Israel, that are ready to perish; but of Churches and people from all the tongues, and kindreds, and nations of the earth. In the day of his appearing, the sons of Africa will vie with their brethren of the North, and the West, and the East, in resounding the praises of God their Saviour from one end of the earth to the other.

In the mean time, we rejoice in every occasional instance of the love and power of God in effecting the conversion of some, who appear as the first fruits of that harvest which shall hereafter so fruitfully grow up, to the honour of Christ and the blessedness of his redeemed people.

The following narrative of real facts may, perhaps, illustrate the importance of the foregoing remarks.

During a residence of some years continuance, in the neighbourhood of the sea, an officer in the navy called upon me, and stated, that he had just taken lodging in

the parish for his wife and children; and had a Negro, who had been three years in his service. "The lad is a deserving fellow," said the officer, "and he has a great desire to be baptized; I have promised him to ask you to do it, if you have not any objections."

"Does he know any thing," I replied, "of the principles of the Christian religion?"

"O yes, I am sure he does," answered the Captain; "for he talks a deal about it in the kitchen, and often gets laughed at for his pains; but he takes it all very patiently."

"Does he behave well as your servant?"

"Yes, that he does: he is as honest and civil a fellow as ever came on board a ship, or lived in a house."

"Was he always so well behaved?"

"No," said the officer; "when I first had him, he was often very unruly and deceitful; but for the last two years he has been quite like another creature."

"Well, Sir, I shall be very glad to see him, and think it probable I shall wish to go through a course of instruction and examination; during which I shall be able to form a judgment how far it will be right to admit him to the sacrament of baptism. Can he read?"

"Yes," replied his master; "he has been taking great pains to learn to read for some time past, and can make out a chapter in the Bible pretty well, as my maid servant informs me. He speaks English better than many of his countrymen, but you will find it a little broken. When will it be convenient that I should send him over to you?"

"To-morrow afternoon, Sir, if you please."

"He shall come to you about four o'clock, and you shall see what you can make of him."

With this promise he took his leave. I felt glad of an opportunity of instructing a native of that land whose wrongs and injuries had often caused me to sigh and

mourn: the more so, when I reflected *who* had been the aggressors.

At the appointed hour, my negro disciple arrived. He was a very young looking man, with a sensible, lively, and pleasing countenance.

I desired him to sit down, and said, "Your master informs me, that you wish to have some conversation with me respecting Christian baptism."

"Yes, Sir, me very much wish to be a Christian," said he.

"Why do you wish so?"

"Because me know that Christian go to heaven when he die."

"How long have you had that wish?" I said.

"Ever since me hear one goot minister preach in America, two years ago."

"Where were you born?"

"In Africa. Me was very little boy when me was made slave by de white men."

"How was that?"

"Me left father and mother one day at home to go get shells by de sea-shore, and as I was stooping down to gather dem up, some white sailors came out of a boat and took me away. Me never see father nor mother again."

"And what became of you then?"

"Me was put into ship, and brought to Jamaica, and sold to a master, who kept me in his house to serve him some years; when, about three years ago, Captain W——, my master dat spoke to you, bought me to be his servant on board his ship. And he be goot master; he gave me my liberty, and made me free, and me live with him ever since."

"And what thoughts had you about your soul all that time before you went to America?" I asked him.

"Me no care for my soul at all before den. No man teach me one word about my soul."

"Well, now tell me further about what happened to you in America. How came you there?"

"My master take me dere in his ship, and he stop dere one month, and den me hear the goot minister."

"And what did that minister say?"

"He said, me was great sinner."

"What, did he speak to you in particular?"

'Yes, me tink so; for dere was great many to hear him, but he tell dem all about me."

"What did he say?"

"He say about all de tings dat were in my heart."

"What things?"

"My sin, my ignorance, my know noting, my believe noting. De good minister made me see dat me *tink* noting goot, no *do* noting goot."

"And what else did he tell you?"

"He sometime look me in de face, and say, dat Jesus Christ came to die for sinners, poor black sinners, as well as white sinners. Me tought dis was very goot, very goot indeed, to do so for a wicked sinner."

"And what made you think this was all spoken to you in particular?"

"Because me sure no such wicked sinner as me in all de place. De goot minister must know me was dere."

"And what did you think of yourself while he preached about Jesus Christ?"

"Sir, me was very much afraid, when he said de wicked must be turned into hell-fire. For me felt that me was very wicked sinner, and dat make me cry. And he talk much about de love of Christ to sinners, and dat make me cry more. And me tought me must love Jesus Christ; but me not know how, and dat make me cry again."

"Did you hear more sermons than one during that month?"

"Yes, Sir; master give me leave to go tree times, and all de times me wanted to love Jesus more, and do what Jesus said; but my heart seem sometime hard, like a stone."

"Have you ever heard any preaching since that time?"

"Never, till me hear sermon at dis church last Sunday, and den me long to be baptized in Jesus' name; for me had no Christian friends to baptize me when little child."

"And what have been your thoughts all the time since you first heard these sermons in America? did you tell any body then what you felt?"

"No, me speak to nobody but to God den. De goot minister say, dat God hear de cry of de poor; so me cry to God, and he hear me. And me often tink about Jesus Christ, and wish to be like him."

"Can you read?"

"A little."

"Who taught you to read?"

"God teach me to read."

"What do you mean by saying so?"

"God give me desire to read, and dat make reading easy. Master give me Bible, and one sailor show me de letters: and so me learned to read by myself, with God's good help."

"And what do you read in the Bible?"

"O! me read all about Jesus Christ, and how he loved sinners; and wicked men killed him, and he died, and came again from de grave, and all dis for poor negro. And it sometime make me cry, to tink dat Christ love so poor negro."

"And what do the people say about your reading and praying, and attention to the things of God?"

"Some wicked people dat do not love Jesus Christ, call me great fool, and negro dog, and black hypocrite.

And dat make me sometime feel angry: but den me remember Christian must not be angry for dat. Jesus Christ was called ugly black names, and he was quiet as a lamb; and so den me remember Jesus Christ, and me say noting again to dem."

I was much delighted with the simplicity and apparent sincerity of this poor negro; and wished to ascertain what measure of light and feeling he possessed on a few leading points. St. Paul's summary of religion* occurring to me, I said, "Tell me what is faith? What is your own faith? What do you believe about Jesus Christ, and your own soul?"

"Me believe," said he, "dat Jesus Christ came into de world to save sinners; and dough me be chief of sinners, yet Jesus will save me, dough me be only poor black negro."

"What is your hope? What do you hope for, both as to this life and that which is to come?"

"Me hope Christ Jesus will take goot care of me, and keep me from sin and harm, while me live here; and me hope, when me come to die, to go and live with him always, and never die again."

"What are your thoughts about Christian love or charity? I mean whom and what do you most love?"

"Me love God de Father, because he was so goot to send his Son. Me love Jesus Christ, because he love me. Me love all men, black men and white men too; for God made dem all. Me love goot Christian people, because Jesus love dem, and dey love Jesus."

Such was my first conversation with this young disciple; I rejoiced in the prospect of receiving him into the church, agreeably to his desire. I wished, however, to converse somewhat further, and enquire more minutely

* Now abideth faith, hope, charity; these three: but the greatest of these is charity. (1 Cor. xiii. 13.)

into his conduct; and promised to ride over, and see him in a few days at his master's lodgings.

When he was gone, I thought within myself, God had indeed redeemed souls by the blood of his Son, "out of *every* kindred and tongue, and people and nation." If many of them for a season are devoted to earthly slavery,* through the cruel avarice of man; yet, blessed be God, some amongst them are, through divine grace, called to the glorious liberty of the children of God; and so are redeemed from the slavery of him who takes so many captive at his will.

It is a happy thought, that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth, O sing praises unto the Lord."

PART II.

When we endeavour to estimate the worth of an immortal soul, we are utterly lost in the attempt. The art of spiritual computation is not governed by the same principles and rules which guide our speculations concerning earthly objects. The value of gold, silver, merchandise, food, raiment, lands, and houses, is easily regulated by custom, convenience, or necessity. Even the more capricious and imaginary worth of a picture, medal, or statue, may be reduced to something of systematic rule. Crowns and sceptres have had their adjudged valuation, and kingdoms have been bought and sold for sums of money. But who can affix the adequate price to a human soul? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The principles of ordinary arithmetic all fail here

* This circumstance took place before the late abolition of the slave-trade

and we are constrained to say, that He alone who paid the ransom for sinners, and made the souls of men his "purchased possession," can comprehend and solve the arduous question. They are indeed "bought with a price:" but are "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." We shall only ascertain the value of a soul, when we shall be fully able to estimate the worth of a Saviour.

Too often have we been obliged to hear what is the price which sordid unfeeling avarice has affixed to the *body* of a poor negro slave; let us now attempt, while we peruse the foregoing narrative, to meditate on the value which Infinite Mercy has attached to his *soul.*

Not many days after the first interview with my negro disciple, I went from home with the design of visiting and conversing with him again at his master's house, which was situated in a part of the parish near four miles distant from my own. The road which I took lay over a lofty down, which commands a prospect of scenery seldom exceeded in beauty and magnificence. It gave birth to silent but instructive contemplation.

The down itself was covered with sheep, grazing on its wholesome and plentiful pasture. Here and there a shepherd's boy kept his appointed station, and watched over the flock committed to his care. I viewed it as an emblem of my own situation and employment. Adjoining the hill lay an extensive parish, wherein many souls were given me to watch over, and render an account of, at the day of the great Shepherd's appearing. The pastoral scene before me seemed to be a living parable, illustrative of my own spiritual charge. I felt a prayerful wish, that the good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, might enable me to be faithful to my trust.

It occurred to me, about the same time, that my young African friend was a sheep of another more distant fold,

which Christ will yet bring to hear his voice. For there shall be one fold and one Shepherd, and all nations shall be brought to acknowledge that he alone "restoreth our souls, and leadeth us into the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." On the left hand of the hill, as I advanced eastward, and immediately under its declivity, extended a beautiful tract of land intersected by a large arm of the sea, which (as the tide was fast flowing in) formed a broad lake or haven of three miles in length. Woods, villages, cottages, and churches, surrounded it in most pleasing variety of prospect. Beyond this lay a large fleet of ships of war, and not far from it another of merchantmen, both safe at anchor, and covering a tract of the sea of several miles in extent. Beyond this again, I saw the fortifications, dock-yards, and extensive public edifices of a large seaport town. The sun shone upon the windows of the buildings and the flags of the ships, with great brightness, and added much to the splendour of the view.

I thought of the concerns of empires, the plans of statesmen, the fate of nations, and the horrors of war. Happy will be that day, when He shall make wars to cease unto the end of the earth, and peace to be established on its borders!

In the mean time, let us be thankful for those vessels and instruments of defence, which, in the hands of God, preserve our country from the hand of the enemy and the fury of the destroyer. What, thought I, do we not owe to the exertions of the numerous crews on board those ships, who leave their homes to fight their country's battles, and maintain its cause, whilst we sit every man under his vine and fig-tree, tasting the sweets of a tranquillity unknown to most other nations in these days of conflict and bloodshed!

On my right hand, to the south and south-east, the unbounded ocean displayed its mighty waves. It was

covered with vessels of every size, sailing in all directions: some outward-bound to the most distant parts of the world; others, after a long voyage, returning home, laden with the produce of remote climes: some going forth in search of the enemy; others sailing back to port after the hard-fought engagement, and bearing the trophies of victory in the prizes which accompanied them home.

At the south-west of the spot on which I was riding, extended a beautiful semicircular bay, of about nine or ten miles in circumference, bounded by high cliffs of white, red, and brown-coloured earths. Beyond this lay a range of hills, whose tops are often buried in cloudy mists, but which then appeared clear and distinct. This chain of hills, meeting with another from the north, bounds a large fruitful vale, whose fields, now ripe for harvest, proclaimed the goodness of God in the rich provision which he makes for the sons of men. It is he who "prepares the corn: he crowns the year with his goodness, and his paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the vallies also are covered-over with corn: they shout for joy, they also sing."

> . . . . . "The roving sight
> Pursues its pleasing course o'er neighbouring hills
> Of many a different form and different hue;
> Bright with the rip'ning corn, or green with grass,
> Or dark with clover's purple bloom."

As I looked upon the numerous ships moving before me, I remembered the words of the Psalmist: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths;

their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad, because they be quiet: so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. O! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." (Psalm cvii.)

The Negro Servant then occurred to my mind. Perhaps, thought I, some of these ships are bound to Africa, in quest of that most infamous object of merchandise, a cargo of black slaves. Inhuman traffic for a nation that bears the name of Christian! Perhaps these very waves which are now dashing on the rocks at the foot of this hill, have, on the shores of Africa, borne witness to the horrors of forced separation between wives and husbands, parents and children, torn asunder by merciless men, whose hearts have been hardened against the common feeling of humanity by long custom in this cruel trade. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." When shall the endeavours of *that* truly Christian *friend* of the oppressed negro be crowned with success, in the abolition of this wicked and disgraceful traffic? *

As I pursued the meditations which this magnificent and varied scenery excited in my mind, I approached the edge of a tremendous perpendicular cliff, with which the down terminates; I dismounted from my horse, and tied it to a bush. The breaking of the waves against the foot of the cliff at so great a distance beneath me, produced an incessant and pleasing murmur. The sea-gulls were flying between the top of the cliff where I

* The day has since arrived, when the persevering efforts of Mr. Wilberforce, to accomplish this happy purpose, have been fully answered. THE SLAVE-TRADE IS ABOLISHED. The church of God rejoices at this triumph of the cause of Christ over the powers of darkness.

stood, and the rocks below, attending upon their nest, built in the holes of the cliff. The whole scene, in every direction, was grand and impressive: it was suitable to devotion. The Creator appeared in the works of his creation, and called upon the creature to honour and adore. To the believer, this exercise is doubly delightful. He possesses a right to the enjoyments of nature and Providence, as well as to the privileges of grace. His title-deed runs thus: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

I cast my eye downwards a little to the left towards a small cove, the shore of which consists of fine hard sand. It is surrounded by fragments of rock, chalk-cliffs, and steep banks of broken earth. Shut out from human intercourse and dwellings, it seems formed for retirement and contemplation. On one of these rocks I unexpectedly observed a man sitting with a book, which he was reading. The place was near two hundred yards perpendicularly below me, but I soon discovered by his dress, and by the black colour of his features, contrasted with the white rocks beside him, that it was no other than my negro disciple, with, as I doubted not, a Bible in his hand. I rejoiced at this unlooked-for opportunity of meeting him in so solitary and interesting a situation. I descended a steep bank, winding by a kind of rude staircase, formed by fishermen and shepherds' boys in the side of the cliff down to the shore.

He was intent on his book, and did not perceive me, till I approached very near to him.

"William, is that you?"

"Ah! Massa, me very glad to see you. How came Massa into dis place? Me tought nobody here, but only God and me."

"I was coming to your master's house to see you, and

rode round by this way for the sake of the prospect. I often come here in fine weather, to look at the sea and the shipping. Is that your Bible?"

"Yes, Sir;* dis my dear goot Bible."

"I am glad," said I, "to see you so well employed. It is a good sign, William."

"Yes, Massa, a sign dat God is goot to me; but me never goot to God."

"How so?"

"Me never tank him enough: me never pray to him enough: me never remember enough, who give me all dese goot tings. Massa, me afraid, my heart is very bat. Me wish me was like you."

"Like me, William? Why, you are like me, a poor helpless sinner, that must, as well as yourself, perish in his sins, unless God, of his infinite mercy and grace, pluck him as a brand from the burning, and make him an instance of distinguishing love and favour. There is no difference; we have both come short of the glory of God: all have sinned."

"No, me not like you, Massa: me tink nobody like me, nobody feel such a heart as me."

"Yes, William, your feelings, I am persuaded, are like those of every truly convinced soul, who sees the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the greatness of the price which Christ Jesus paid for the sinner's ransom. You can say in the words of the hymn,

'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.'"

"O yes, Sir, me believe that Jesus die for poor negro. What would become of poor wicked negro, if Christ no die for him? But he die for de chief of sinners, and dat make my heart sometime quite glad."

* In the course of conversation, he sometimes addressed me with the word "Massa," for "Master," according to the well-known habit of the negro slaves in the West Indies; and sometimes, "Sir," as he was taught since his arrival in England; but the former word seemed to be most familiar to him.

"What part of the Bible were you reading, William?"

"Me read how de man upon de cross spoke to Christ, and Christ spoke to him. Now dat man's prayer just do for me: 'Lord, remember me.' Lord, remember poor negro sinner: dis is my prayer every morning, and sometime at night too; when me cannot tink of many words, den me say de same again, Lord, remember poor negro sinner."

"And be assured, William, the Lord hears that prayer. He pardoned and accepted the thief upon the cross, and he will not reject you; he will in no wise cast out any that come to him."

"No, Sir, I believe it; but dere is so much sin in my heart, it make me afraid and sorry. Massa, do you see dese limpets,* how fast dey stick to de rocks here? Just so, sin stick fast to my heart."

"It may be so, William: but take another comparison: do you cleave to Jesus Christ by faith in his death and righteousness, as those limpets cleave to the rock, and neither seas nor storms shall separate you from his love."

"Dat is just what me want."

"Tell, me, William, is not that very sin which you speak of, a burden to you? You do not love it; you would be glad to obtain strength against it, and to be freed from it; would you not?"

"O yes; me give all dis world, if me had it, to be without sin."

"Come then, and welcome, to Jesus Christ, my brother; his blood cleanseth from all sin. He gave himself as a ransom for sinners. He hath borne our grief and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are

* A kind of shell-fish, which abound in the place where we were, and which stick to the rocks with exceeding great force.

healed. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Come, freely come to Jesus, the Saviour of sinners."

"Yes, Massa," said the poor fellow, weeping, "me will come: but me come very slow; very slow, Massa: me want to run, me want to fly. Jesus is very goot to poor negro, to send you to tell him all dis."

"But this is not the first time you have heard these truths?"

"No, Sir, dey have been comfort to my soul many times, since me hear goot minister preach in America, as me tell you last week at your house."

"Well, now I hope, William, that since God has been so graciously pleased to open your eyes, and affect your mind with such a great sense of his goodness, in giving his Son to die for your sake; I hope that you do your endeavour to keep his commandments; I hope you strive to behave well to your master and mistress, and fellow-servants. He that is a Christian inwardly, will be a Christian outwardly; he that truly and savingly believes in Christ, will show his faith by his works, as the Apostle says. Is it not so, William?

"Yes, Sir, me want to do so. Me want to be faithful. Me sorry to tink how bat servant me was, before de goot tings of Jesus Christ come to my heart. Me wish to do well to my Massa, when he see me and when he not see me; for me know God always see me. Me know, dat if me sin against mine own Massa, me sin against God, and God be very angry with me. Beside, how can me love Christ, if me do not what Christ tell me? Me love my fellow-servants, dough as I tell you before, dey do not much love me, and I pray God to bless dem. And when dey say bat things, and try to make me angry, den me tink, if Jesus Christ were in poor negro's place, he would not revile and answer again with bat words and temper, but he say little, and pray much. And so den me say noting at all, but pray God to forgive dem."

The more I conversed with this African convert, the more satisfactory were the evidences of his mind being spiritually enlightened, and his heart effectually wrought upon by the grace of God.

The circumstances of the place in which we met together, contributed much to the interesting effect which the conversation produced on my mind. The little cove or bay was beautiful in the extreme. The air was calm and serene. The sun shone, but we were sheltered from its rays by the cliffs. One of these was stupendously lofty and large. It was white as snow: its summit hung directly over our heads. The sea-fowl were flying around it. Its whiteness was occasionally chequered with dark green masses of samphire, which grew there. On the other side, and behind us, was a more gradual declivity of many-coloured earths, interspersed with green patches of grass and bushes, and little streams of water trickling down the bank, and mingling with the sea at the bottom. At our feet the waves were advancing over shelves of rocks covered with great variety of sea-weeds, which swam in little fragments, and displayed much beauty and elegance of form, as they were successively thrown upon the sand.

Ships of war and commerce were seen at different distances. Fishermen were plying their trade in boats nearer to the shore. The noise of the flowing tide, combined with the voices of the sea-gulls over our heads, and now and then a distant gun fired from the ships as they passed along, added much to the peculiar sensations to which the scene gave birth. Occasionally the striking of oars upon the waves, accompanied by the boatman's song, met the ear. The sheep aloft upon the down sometimes mingled their bleatings with the other sounds. Thus all nature seemed to unite in impressing an attentive observer's heart with affecting thoughts.

I remained for a considerable time in conversation

with the Negro, finding that his master was gone from home for the day, and had given him liberty for some hours. I spoke to him on the nature, duty, and privilege of Christian baptism; pointed out to him from a prayer-book which I had with me, the clear and scriptural principles of our own church upon that head, and found that he was very desirous of conforming to them. He appeared to me to be well qualified for receiving that sacramental pledge of his Redeemer's love; and I rejoiced in the prospect of beholding him no longer a "stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God."

"God," said I to him, "'has promised to sprinkle many nations,' not only with the waters of baptism, but also with the dews of his heavenly grace. He says, he will not only 'pour water on him that is thirsty,' but, 'I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.'"

"Yes, Massa," said he, "he can make me to be clean in heart, and of a right spirit; he can purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: he can wash me, and I shall be whiter dan snow."

"May God give you these blessings, and confirm you in every good gift!"

I was much pleased with the affectionate manner in which he spoke of his parents, from whom he had been stolen in his childhood: and his wishes that God might direct them by some means to the knowledge of a Saviour.

"Who knows," I said, "but some of these ships may be carrying a missionary to the country where they live, to declare the good news of salvation to your countrymen, and to your own dear parents in particular, if they are yet alive?"

"O! my dear fader and moder: my dear gracious Saviour," exclaimed he, leaping from the ground as he

spoke, "if dou wilt but save deir souls, and tell dem what dou hast done for sinner — but —"

He stopped and seemed much affected.

"My friend," said I, "I will now pray with you for your own soul, and for those of your parents also."

"Do, Massa, dat is very goot and kind; do pray for poor negro souls here and every where."

This was a new and solemn "house of prayer." The sea-sand was our floor, the heavens were our roof, the cliffs, the rocks, the hills, and the waves, formed the walls of our chamber. It was not indeed a "place where prayer was wont to be made;" but for this once it became a hallowed spot; it will, by me, ever be remembered as such. The presence of God was there.—I prayed.—The Negro wept.—His heart was full. I felt with him, and could not but weep likewise.

The last day will show whether our tears were not the tears of sincerity and Christian love.

It was time for my return; I leaned upon his arm, as we ascended the steep cliff in my way back to my horse, which I had left at the top of the hill. Humility and thankfulness were marked in his countenance. I leaned upon his arm with the feelings of a *brother*. It was a relationship I was happy to own.—I took him by the hand at parting, appointed one more interview previous to the day of baptizing him, and bid him farewell for the present.

"God bless you, my dear Massa."

"And you, my fellow Christian, for ever and ever."

PART III.

THE interesting and affecting conversation which I had with the Negro Servant, produced a sensation not easy to be expressed. As I returned home, I was led into meditation on the singular clearness and beauty of those evidences of faith and conversion of heart to God, which I had just seen and heard. How plainly, I thought, it appears, that salvation is "freely by grace through faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." What but the Holy Spirit, who is the author and giver of the life of grace, could have wrought such a change from the once dark, perverse, and ignorant heathen, to this now convinced, enlightened, humble, and believing Christian? How manifestly is the uncontrolled sovereignty of the divine will exercised in the calling and translating of sinners from darkness to light! what a lesson may the nominal Christian of a civilized country sometimes learn from the simple, sincere religion of a converted heathen!

I afterwards made particular inquiry into this young man's domestic and general deportment. Every thing I heard was satisfactory; nor could I entertain a doubt respecting the consistency of his conduct and character. I had some further conversations with him, in the course of which I pursued such a plan of scriptural instruction and examination, as I conceived to be the most suitable to his progressive state of mind. He improved much in reading, carried his Bible constantly with him, and took every opportunity, which his duty to his master's service would allow, for perusing it. I have frequently had occasion to observe, that amongst the truly religious poor, who have not had the advantage of being taught to read in early youth, a concern about the soul, and a desire to

know the word of God, have proved effectual motives for their learning to read with great ease and advantage to themselves and others. It was strikingly so in the pre sent case.

I had, for a considerable time, been accustomed to meet some serious persons once a week, in a cottage at no great distance from the house where he lived, for the purpose of religious conversation, instruction, and prayer. Having found these occasions remarkably useful and interesting, I thought it would be very desirable to take the Negro there, in order that there might be other witnesses to the simplicity and sincerity of real Christianity, as exhibited in the character of this promising young convert. I hoped it might prove an eminent mean of grace to excite and quicken the spirit of prayer and praise amongst some of my parishioners, over whose spiritual progress I was anxiously watching.

I accordingly obtained his master's leave that he should attend me to one of my cottage assemblies. His master, who was thoroughly convinced of the extraordinary change in conduct and disposition, which religion had produced in his servant, was pleased with my attention to him, and always spoke well of his behaviour.

I set out on the day appointed for the interview. The cottage at which we usually assembled, was near four miles distance from my own residence: my road lay along the foot of the hill mentioned in my last account of the Negro, from the summit of which so luxuriant a prospect was seen. On my right hand the steep acclivity of the hill intercepted all prospect, except that of numerous sheep feeding on its rich and plentiful produce. Here and there the nearly perpendicular side of a chalk-pit varied the surface of the hill, contrasting a dazzling white to the sober green of the surrounding bank.

On the left hand, at the distance of near half a mile, the tide flowed from the sea into a lake or haven of con-

siderable length and breadth. At one end of it, fishing and pilot vessels lay at anchor; at the other appeared the parish-church amongst the adjoining woods and fields. The bells were ringing; a gently swelling sound was brought along the surface of the water, and an echo returned from a prominent part of the hill, beneath which I was riding. The whole scene was delightful.

I passed some rural and beautifully situated cottages, which seemed to be formed as fit residences for peace and tranquillity; each was surrounded by a garden, and each had a little orchard or field adjacent, where the husbandman's cow enjoyed her own pasture, and at the same time prepared rich provision for her owner's family. Such was the wise and considerate allotment which the landlords and farmers had *here* made for the labouring poor. The wholesome vegetable, the medicinal herb, and the sweet-scented flower, intermingled as they grew around those little dwellings; and reminded me, as I looked upon them, how comfortable is the lot of the industrious poor, whose hearts have learned the lesson of gratitude, in the school of heavenly wisdom! For them, as mercifully as for their richest neighbour, the sun shines, the rain descends, the earth brings forth her increase, the flower blossoms, the birds sing; their wants are few, and contentment makes them less. How great the blessing of being poor in this world, but rich in faith, and a chosen inheritance in a better!

I knew that this was the character of some whose humble, but neat and cleanly cottages I passed. A few such features in a prospect render it most lovely. Peace be to their memory, both as pilgrims and strangers here; and as ransomed souls, whom I hope to meet in glory hereafter!

The house to which I was travelling was situated at the corner of an oak wood, which screened it both from the burning heat of summer suns, and the heavy blasts

of winter south-west storms. As I approached it, I saw my friend the Negro sitting under a tree, and waiting my arrival. He held in his hand a little tract which I had given him; his Bible lay on the ground. He rose with much cheerfulness, saying, "Ah! Massa, me very glad to see you; me tink you long time coming."

"William, I hope you are well. I am going to take you with me to a few of my friends, who, I trust, are truly sincere in their religious pursuits. We meet every Wednesday evening for conversation about the things that belong to our everlasting peace, and I am sure you will be a welcome visitor."

"Massa, me not goot enough to be with such goot people. Me great sinner. Dey be goot Christian."

"If you were to ask them, William, they would each tell you they were worse than others. Many of them were once, and that not very long ago, living in an openly sinful manner, ignorant of God and the enemies of Jesus Christ by thought and deed. But divine grace stopped them in their wicked course, and subdued their hearts to the love and obedience of him and his gospel. You will only meet a company of poor fellow-sinners, who love to speak and sing the praises of redeeming love; and I am sure, William, that is a song in which you will be willing to join them."

"O! yes, Sir, dat song just do for poor Negro."

By this time we had arrived at the cottage garden gate. Several well-known faces appeared in and near the house, and the smile of affection welcomed us as we entered. It was known that the Negro was to visit the little society this evening, and satisfaction beamed in every countenance, as I took him by the hand and introduced him among them, saying, "I have brought a brother from Africa to see you, my friends. Bid him welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Sir," said an humble and pious labourer, whose heart

and tongue always overflowed with Christian kindness, "we are at all times glad to see our dear Minister, but especially so to-day in such company as you have brought with you. We have heard how merciful the Lord has been to him. Give me your hand, good friend (turning to the Negro.) God be with you here and every where; and blessed be his holy name for calling sinners, as I hope he has done you and me, to love and serve him for his mercy's sake."

Each one greeted him as he came into the house, and some addressed him in very kind and impressive language.

"Massa," said he, "me not know what to say to all dese goot friends: me tink dis look a little like heaven upon earth."

He then with tears in his eyes, which almost, before he spoke, brought responsive drops into those of many present, said, "Goot friends and bredren in Christ Jesus, Got bless you all, and bring you to heaven at de last."

It was my stated custom, when I met to converse with those cottagers, to begin with prayer and reading a portion of the Scriptures.

When this was ended, I told the people present, that the providence of God had placed this young man for a time under my ministry; and that, finding him seriously disposed, and believing him to be very sincere in his religious profession, I had resolved on baptizing him agreeably to his own wishes. I added, that I had now brought him with me to join in Christian conversation with us; for, as, in old times, they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, in testimony that they thought upon his name, (Mal. iii. 16,) so I hoped we were fulfilling a Christian and brotherly duty in thus assembling for mutual edification.

Addressing myself to the Negro, I said, "William, tell me who made you?"

"Got, de goot Fader."

"Who redeemed you?"

"Jesus, his dear Son, who died for me."

"Who sanctified you?"

"The Holy Ghost, who teach me to know de goot Fader, and his dear Son Jesus."

"What was your state by nature?"

"Me wicked sinner, me know noting but sin, me do noting but sin, my soul more black dan my body."

"Has any change taken place in you since then?"

"Me hope so, Massa, but me sometime afraid no."

"If you are changed, who changed you?"

'Got de goot Fader; Jesus his dear Son; and Got de Holy Spirit."

"How was any change brought about in you?"

"Got make me a slave, when me was young little boy."

"How, William, would you say, God made you a slave?"

"No, Massa, no: me mean, Got let me be made slave by white men, to do me goot."

"How to do you good?"

"He take me from de land of darkness, and bring me to de land of light."

"Which do you call the land of light; the West India Islands?"

"No, Massa, dey be de land of Providence, but America be de land of light to me; for dere me first hear goot minister preach. And now dis place where I am now, is de land of more light; for here you teach me more and more and more how goot Jesus is to sinners."

"What does the blood of Christ do?"

"It cleanse from all sin: and so me hope from my sin."

"Are then all men cleansed from sin by his blood?"

"O no, Massa."

"Who are cleansed and saved?"

"Dose dat have faith in him."

"Can you prove that out of the Bible?"

"Yes, Sir: 'He dat believeth on de Son, hath everlasting life; and he dat believeth not de Son, shall not see life, but de wrath of Got abideth on him.'" (John iii. 36.)

"What is it to have faith?"

"Me suppose dat it is to tink much about Jesus Christ, to love him much, to believe all he says to be true, to pray to him very much; and when we feel very weak and very sinful, to tink dat he is very strong and very goot, and all dat for my sake."

"And have you such a faith as you describe?"

"O Massa! me tink sometime me have no faith at all."

"Why so, William?"

"When me want to tink about Jesus Christ, my mind run about after oder tings: when me want to love him, my heart seem quite cold; when me want to believe all to be true what he says to sinners, me den tink it is not true for me: when me want to pray, de devil put bat, very bat toughts into me, and me never tank Christ enough. Now all dis make me sometime afraid I have no faith."

I observed a very earnest glow of attention and fellow-feeling in some countenances present, as he spoke these words. I then said,

"I think, William, I can prove that you have faith, notwithstanding your fears to the contrary. Answer me a few more questions.

"Did you begin to think yourself a great sinner, and to feel the want of a Saviour, of your ownself, and by your own thought and doing?"

"O! no; it came to me, when me tink noting about it, and seek noting about it."

"Who sent the good minister in America to awaken your soul by his preaching?"

"Got, very certainly."

"Who then began the work of serious thought in your mind?"

"De goot Got; me could not do it of myself, me sure of dat."

"Do you not think that Jesus Christ and his salvation is the one thing most needful and most desirable?"

"O! yes, me quite sure of dat."

"Do you not believe that he is able to save you?"

"Yes, he is able to save to de uttermost."

"Do you think he is not willing to save you?"

"Me dare not say dat. He so goot, so merciful, so kind, to say, he will in no wise cast out any dat come to him."

"Do you wish, and desire, and strive to keep his commandments?"

"Yes, Massa, because me love him, and dat make me want to do as he say."

"Are you willing to suffer for his sake, if God should call you to do so?"

"Me do tink me could die for de love of him: he not tink it too much to die for wicked sinner; why should wicked sinner tink it much to die for so goot and righteous a Saviour?"

"I think and hope I may say to you, William, thy faith hath made thee whole."

Thus ended my examination for the present. The other friends who were in the house listened with the most affectionate anxiety to all that passed. One of them observed, not without evident emotion,

"I see, Sir, that though some men are white, and some are black, true Christianity is all of one colour. My own heart has gone with this good man every word he has spoken."

"And so has mine," gently re-echoed from every part of the room.

After some time passed in more general conversation on the subject of the Negro's history, I said, "Let us now praise God for the rich and unspeakable gift of his grace, and sing the hymn of redeeming love:"—

> Now begin the heavenly theme,
> Sing aloud in Jesu's name, &c.

which was accordingly done. Whatever might be the merit of the natural voices, it was evident there was spiritual melody in all their hearts.

The Negro was not much used to our way of singing, yet joined with great earnestness and affection, that showed how truly he felt what he uttered. When the fifth verse was ended,

> Nothing brought him from above,
> Nothing but redeeming love;

he repeated the words, almost unconscious where he was

"No, noting, noting but redeeming love, bring him down to poor William; noting but redeeming love."

The following verses were added, and sung by way of conclusion:—

> See, a stranger comes to view;
> Though he's black,* he's comely too;
> Comes to join the choirs above,
> Singing of redeeming love.
> Welcome, Negro, welcome here,
> Banish doubt and banish fear;
> You, who Christ's salvation prove,
> Praise and bless redeeming love.

I concluded with some remarks on the nature of salvation by grace, exhorting all present to press forward in the heavenly journey. It was an evening, the circumstances of which, had they never been recorded on earth, were yet doubtless registered in the book of remembrance above.

* Song of Solomon, i. 5.

I then fixed the day for the baptism of the Negro, and so took leave of my little affectionate circle.

The moon shone bright as I returned home, and was beautifully reflected from the waters of the lake: harmony and repose characterized the scene. I had just been uniting in the praises of the God of grace and providence; and now the God of nature demanded a fresh tribute of thanksgiving for the beauties and comforts of creation: as David sang, "When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained: what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?

In a few days the Negro was baptized; and not long after went on a voyage with his master.

Since that time I have not been able to hear any tidings of him: whether he yet wander as a pilgrim in this lower world, or whether he has joined the heavenly choir in the song of "redeeming love" in glory, I know not. This I do know, he was a monument to the Lord's praise. He bore the impression of the Saviour's image on his heart, and exhibited the marks of divine grace in his life and conversation, with singular simplicity and unfeigned sincerity.

Give to God the glory.

My interviews with the Negro suggested the following lines, which are here subjoined, under the title of

THE NEGRO'S PRAYER

Jesus, who mak'st the meanest soul
  An object of thy care,
Attend to what my heart would speak—
  Hear a poor Negro's prayer.

For thou, when bleeding on the cross,
My sins and griefs didst bear;
Wherefore, my Lord, thou 'lt not refuse
To hear the Negro's prayer.

I was a helpless Negro boy,
That wander'd on the shore:
Thieves took me from my parents' arms —
They saw their child no more.

And yet the lot which seem'd so hard,
God's faithfulness did prove;
For I was carried far from home,
To learn a Saviour's love.

Poor and despised though I was,
Thine arm, O God! was nigh;
And when thy mercy first I knew,
Sure none so glad as I.

In ign'rance long my soul had dwelt,
A rebel bold I 'd been:
But thy great kindness, O my God!
Sav'd me from all my sin.

Mine was a wretched state, expos'd
To men and angels' view;
A slave to man, a slave to sin,
A slave to Satan too.

But if thy Son hath made me free,
Then am I free indeed;
From powers of darkness, sin, and hell,
Thy love my soul has freed.

Lord, send thy word to that far land,
Where none but Negroes live:
Teach them the way, the truth, the life,
Which thou alone canst give.

O! that my father, mother dear,
Might there thy mercy see;
Tell them what Christ has done for them,
What Christ has done for me.

Whose God is like the Christian's God?
  Who can with him compare?
He hath compassion on my soul,
  And hears a Negro's prayer.

Lord Jesus, thou hast shed thy blood
  For thousands such as me;
Though some despise poor Negro slave,
  I'm not despised by thee.

This is my heart's first wish below,
  To prove thy constant care:
Keep me from sin and danger, Lord,
  And hear a Negro's prayer.

In heaven the land of glory lies:
  If I should enter there,
I'll tell the Saints and Angels too,
  Thou heard'st a Negro's prayer.

THE

YOUNG COTTAGER.

PART I.

When a serious Christian turns his attention to the barren state of the wilderness through which he is travelling, frequently must he heave a sigh for the sins and sorrows of his fellow-mortals. The renewed heart thirsts with holy desire, that the Paradise which was lost through Adam, may be fully regained in Christ. But the overflowings of sin within and without, the contempt of sacred institutions, the carelessness of soul, the pride of unbelief, the eagerness of sensual appetite, the ambition for worldly greatness, and the deep-rooted enmity of the carnal heart against God; these things are as "the fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought," which distress his soul, as he journeys through "that great and terrible wilderness."

Sometimes, like a solitary pilgrim, he "weeps in secret places," and "rivers of waters run down his eyes, because men keep not the law of God."

Occasionally he meets with a few fellow-travellers, whose spirit is congenial with his own, and with whom he can take "sweet counsel together." They comfort and strengthen each other by the way. Each can relate something of the mercies of his God, and how kindly they have been dealt with, as they travelled onwards.

The dreariness of the path is thus beguiled, and now and then, for a while, happy experiences of the divine consolations cheer their souls; "the wilderness and the solitary place is glad for them; the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose."

But even at the very time when the Christian is taught to feel the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to trust that he is personally interested in the blessings of salvation, and to believe that God will promote his own glory by glorifying the penitent sinner; yet sorrows will mingle with his comforts, and he will rejoice not without trembling, when he reflects on the state of other men. The anxieties connected with earthly relations are all alive in his soul, and, through the operation of the Spirit of God, become sanctified principles and motives for action. As the husband and father of a family, as the neighbour of the poor, the ignorant, the wicked, and the wretched; above all, as the spiritual overseer of the flock, if such be his holy calling, the heart which has been taught to feel for its own case, will abundantly feel for others.

But when he attempts to devise means in order to stem the torrent of iniquity, to instruct the ignorant, and to convert the sinner from the error of his way, he cannot help crying out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Unbelief pauses over the question, and trembles. But faith quickly revives the inquirer with the cheering assurance, that "our sufficiency is of God," and saith, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass."

When he is thus affectionately engaged for the good of mankind, he will become seriously impressed with the necessity of early attentions to the young in particular. Many around him are grown gray-headed in sin, and give but little prospect of amendment. Many of the parents and heads of families are so eagerly busied in

the profits, pleasures, and occupations of the world, that they heed not the warning voice of their instructor. Many of their elder children are launching out into life, headstrong, unruly, "earthly, sensual, devilish;" they likewise treat the wisdom of God, as if it were foolishness. But, under these discouragements, we may often turn with hope to the very young, to the little ones of the flock, and endeavour to teach them to sing Hosannas to the Son of David, before their minds are wholly absorbed in the world and its allurements. We may trust that a blessing shall attend such labours, if undertaken in faith and simplicity, and that some at least of our youthful disciples, like Josiah, while they are yet young, may begin to seek after the God of their fathers.

Such an employment, especially when blessed by any actual instances of real good produced, enlivens the mind with hope, and fills it with gratitude. We are thence led to trust that the next generation may become more fruitful unto God than the present, and the church of Christ be replenished with many such as have been called into the vineyard "early in the morning." And should our endeavours for a length of time apparently fail of success, yet we ought not to despair. Early impressions and convictions of conscience have sometimes lain dormant for years, and at last revived into gracious existence and maturity. It was not said in vain, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

What a gratifying occupation is it to an affectionate mind, even in a way of nature, to walk through the fields, and lead a little child by the hand, enjoying his infantine prattle, and striving to improve the time by some kind word of instruction! I wish that every Christian pilgrim in the way of grace, as he walks through the Lord's pastures, would try to lead at least one little child by the hand; and perhaps while he is

endeavouring to guide and preserve his young and feeble companion, the Lord will recompense him double for all his cares, by comforting his own heart in the attempt The experiment is worth the trial. It is supported by this recollection: "The Lord will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him. Behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and *shall gently lead those that are with young.*"

I shall plead no further apology for introducing to the notice of my readers a few particulars relative to a young female Cottager, whose memory is particularly endeared to me, from the circumstance of her being, so far as I can trace or discover, my firstborn spiritual child in the ministry of the gospel. She was certainly the first, of whose conversion to God under my own pastoral instruction, I can speak with precision and assurance.

Every parent of a family knows that there is a very interesting emotion of heart connected with the birth of his firstborn child. Energies and affections to which the mind has hitherto been almost a stranger, begin to unfold themselves and expand into active existence, when he first is hailed as a father. But may not the spiritual parent be allowed the possession and indulgence of a similar sensation in his connexion with the children whom the Lord gives him, as begotten through the ministry of the word of life? If the firstborn child in nature be received as a new and acceptable blessing; how much more so the firstborn child in grace! I claim this privilege; and crave permission, in writing what follows, to erect a monumental record, sacred to the memory of a dear little child, who, I trust, will at the last day prove my crown of rejoicing.

Jane S—— was the daughter of poor parents, in the village where it pleased God first to cast my lot in the

ministry. My acquaintance with her commenced, when she was twelve years of age, by her weekly attendance at my house amongst a number of children whom I invited and regularly instructed every Saturday afternoon.

They used to read, repeat catechisms, psalms, hymns, and portions of scripture. I accustomed them also to pass a kind of free conversational examination, according to their age and ability, in those subjects by which I hoped to see them made wise unto salvation.

On the summer evenings I frequently used to assemble this little group out of doors in my garden, sitting under the shade of some trees, which protected us from the heat of the sun. From hence a scene appeared which rendered my occupation the more interesting: for adjoining the spot where we sat, and only separated from us by a fence, was the church-yard, surrounded with beautiful prospects in every direction.

There lay the mortal remains of thousands, who from age to age, in their different generations, had been successively committed to the grave, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Here the once-famed ancestors of the rich, and the less known forefathers of the poor, lay mingling their dust together, and alike waiting the resurrection from the dead.

I had not far to look for subjects of warning and exhortation suitable to my little flock of lambs that I was feeding. I could point to the heaving sods that marked the different graves, and separated them from each other, and tell my pupils, that, young as they were, none of them were too young to die; and that probably more than half of the bodies which were buried there, were those of little children. I hence took occasion to speak of the nature and value of a soul, and to ask them where they expected their souls to go when they departed hence and were no more seen on earth.

I told them who was "the resurrection and the life," and who alone could take away the sting of death. I used to remind them that the hour was "coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." I often availed myself of these opportunities to call to their recollection the more recent deaths of their own relatives, that lay buried so near us. Some had lost a parent, others a brother or sister; some perhaps had lost all these, and were committed to the mercy of their neighbours, as fatherless and motherless orphans. Such circumstances were occasionally useful to excite tender emotions, favourable to serious impression.

Sometimes, I sent the children to the various stones which stood at the head of the graves, and bid them learn the epitaphs inscribed upon them. I took pleasure in seeing the little ones thus dispersed in the churchyard, each committing to memory a few verses written in commemoration of the departed. They would soon accomplish the desired object, and eagerly return to me ambitious to repeat their task.

Thus my churchyard became a book of instruction, and every grave-stone a leaf of edification for my young disciples.

The church itself stood in the midst of the ground. It was a spacious antique structure.

Within those very walls I first proclaimed the message of God to sinners. As these children surrounded me, I sometimes pointed to the church, spoke to them of the nature of public worship, the value of the Sabbath, the duty of regular attendance on its services, and urged their serious attention to the means of grace. I showed them the sad state of many countries, where neither churches nor bibles were known; and the no less melan-

choly condition of multitudes at home, who sinfully neglect worship, and slight the Word of God. I thus tried to make them sensible of their own favours and privileges.

Neither was I at a loss for another class of objects around me, from which I could draw useful instruction: for many of the beauties of created nature appeared in view.

Eastward of us extended a large river or lake of sea-water, chiefly formed by the tide, and nearly enclosed by land. Beyond this was a fine bay and road for ships, filled with vessels of every size, from the small sloop or cutter to the first-rate man of war. On the right hand of the haven rose a hill of peculiarly beautiful form and considerable height. Its verdure was very rich, and many hundred sheep grazed upon its sides and summit. From the opposite shore of the same water a large sloping extent of bank was diversified with fields, woods, hedges, and cottages. At its extremity stand, close to the edge of the sea itself, the remains of the tower of an ancient church, still preserved as a sea-mark. Far beyond the bay, a very distant shore was observable, and land beyond it; trees, towns, and other buildings, appeared, more especially when gilded by the reflected rays of the sun.

To the south-westward of the garden was another down covered also with flocks of sheep, and a portion of it fringed with trees.

At the foot of this hill lay the village, a part of which gradually ascended to the rising ground on which the church stood.

From the intermixture of houses with gardens, orchards, and trees, it presented a very pleasing aspect. Several fields adjoined the garden on the east and north, where a number of cattle were pasturing. My own little shrubberies and flower-beds variegated the view, and

recompensed my toil in rearing them, as well by their beauty as their fragrance.

Had the sweet Psalmist of Israel sat in this spot, he would have glorified God the Creator by descanting on these his handy works. I cannot write psalms like David; but I wish in my own poor way to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to show forth his wonderful works to the children of men. But had David been also surrounded with a troop of young scholars in such a situation, he would once more have said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

I love to retrace these scenes—they are past, but the recollection is sweet.

I love to retrace them—for they bring to my mind many former mercies, which ought not, for the Lord's sake, to be forgotten.

I love to retrace them—for they re-assure me that, in the course of that private ministerial occupation, God was pleased to give me so valuable a fruit of my labours.

Little Jane used constantly to appear on these weekly seasons of instruction. I made no very particular observations concerning her during the first twelve months or more after her commencement of attendance. She was not then remarkable for any peculiar attainment. On the whole, I used to think her rather more slow of apprehension than most of her companions. She usually repeated her tasks correctly, but seldom was able to make answers to questions for which she was not previously prepared with replies—a kind of extempore examination in which some of the children excelled. Her countenance was not engaging, her eye discovered no remarkable liveliness. She read tolerably well, took pains, and improved in it.

Mildness and quietness marked her general demeanour. She was very constant in her attendance on public wor-

ship at the church, as well as on my Saturday instruction at home. But, generally speaking, she was little noticed, except for her regular and orderly conduct. Had I then been asked, of which of my young scholars I had formed the most favourable opinion, poor Jane might probably have been altogether omitted in the list.

How little do we oftentimes know what God is doing in other people's hearts! What poor calculators and judges we frequently prove, till he opens our eyes! His thoughts are not our thoughts; neither are our ways his ways.

Once indeed, during the latter part of that year, I was struck with her ready attention to my wishes. I had, agreeably to the plan above mentioned, sent her into the churchyard to commit to memory an epitaph which I admired. On her return she told me, that, in addition to what I had desired, she had also learned another, which was inscribed on an adjoining stone; adding, that she thought it a very pretty one.

I thought so too, and perhaps my readers will be of the same opinion. Little Jane, though dead, yet shall speak. While I transcribe the lines, I can powerfully imagine that I hear her voice repeating them; the idea is exceedingly gratifying to me.

EPITAPH ON MRS. A. B.

Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear,
That mourns thy exit from a world like this;
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And stay'd thy progress to the seats of bliss.

No more confined to grov'ling scenes of night,
No more a tenant pent in mortal clay,
Now should we rather hail thy glorious flight,
And trace thy journey to the realms of day.

The above was her appointed task; and the other which she voluntarily learned and spoke of with pleasure, is this:

EPITAPH ON THE STONE ADJOINING.

It must be so — Our father Adam's fall
And disobedience, brought this lot on all.
All die in him — But hopeless should we be,
Blest Revelation! were it not for thee.
Hail, glorious Gospel! heavenly light, whereby
We live with comfort, and with comfort die;
And view beyond this gloomy scene, the tomb
A life of endless happiness to come.

I afterwards discovered that the sentiment expressed in the latter epitaph had much affected her. But at the period of this little incident, I knew nothing of her mind. I had comparatively overlooked her. I have often been sorry for it since. Conscience seemed to rebuke me, when I afterwards discovered what the Lord had been doing for her soul, as if I had neglected her. Yet it was not done designedly. She was unknown to us all; except that, as I since found out, her regularity and abstinence from the sins and follies of her young equals in age and station brought upon her many taunts and jeers from others, which she bore very meekly. But at that time I knew it not.

I was young myself in the ministry, and younger in Christian experience. My parochial plans had not as yet assumed such a principle of practical order and inquiry, as to make me acquainted with the character and conduct of each family and individual in my flock.

I was then quite a learner, and had much to learn.

And what am I now? — A learner still: and if I have learned any thing, it is this, that I have every day more and more yet to learn. Of this I am certain; that my young scholar soon became my teacher. I *first* saw what true religion could accomplish, in witnessing her expe-

rience of it. The Lord once "called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of his disciples," as an emblem and an illustration of his doctrine. But the Lord did more in the case of little Jane. He not only called *her*, as a child, to show by a similitude, what conversion means: but he also called her by his grace to be a vessel of mercy and a living witness of that almighty power and love by which her own heart was turned to God.

PART II.

THERE is no illustration of the nature and character of the Redeemer's kingdom on earth which is more grateful to contemplation, than that of the shepherd and his flock. Imagination has been accustomed from our earliest childhood to wander amongst the fabled retreats of the Arcadian shepherds. We have probably often delighted ourselves in our own native country, by witnessing the interesting occupation of the pastoral scene. The shepherd, tending his flock on the side of some spacious hill, or in the hollow of a sequestered valley: folding them at night, and guarding them against all danger; leading them from one pasture to another, or for refreshment to the cooling waters—these objects have met and gratified our eyes, as we travelled through the fields, and sought out creation's God amidst creation's beauties. The poet and the painter have each lent their aid to cherish our delight in these imaginations. Many a descriptive verse has strengthened our attachment to the pastoral scene, and many a well-wrought picture has occasioned it to glow like a reality in our ideas.

But far more impressively than these causes can possibly effect, has the Word of God endeared the subject to our hearts, and sanctified it to Christian experience.

Who does not look back with love and veneration to those days of holy simplicity, when the patriarchs of the church of God lived in tents and watched their flocks? With what a strength and beauty of allusion do the Prophets refer to the intercourse between the shepherd and flock for an illustration of the Saviour's kingdom on earth! The Psalmist rejoiced in the consideration that the Lord was his Shepherd, and that therefore he should not want. The Redeemer himself assumed this interesting title, and declared that "his sheep hear his voice, he knows them and they follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life."

Perhaps at no previous moment was this comparison ever expressed so powerfully, as when his risen Lord gave the pastoral charge to the lately offending but now penitent disciple, saying, "Feed my sheep." Every principle of grace, mercy, and peace, met together on that occasion. Peter had thrice denied his Master: his Master now thrice asked him, "Lovest thou me?" Peter each time appealed to his own, or to his Lord's consciousness of what he felt within his heart. As often Jesus committed to his care the flock which he had purchased with his blood. And that none might be forgotten, he not only said, "Feed my sheep," but, "Feed my lambs," also.

May every instructor of the young keep this injunction enforced on his conscience and affections!—I return to little Jane ——.

It was about fifteen months from the first period of her attendance on my Saturday school, when I missed her from her customary place. Two or three weeks had gone by, without my making any particular enquiry respecting her. I was at length informed that she was not well. But, apprehending no peculiar cause for alarm, nearly two months passed away without any further mention of her name being made.

At length a poor old woman in the village, of whose religious disposition I had formed a good opinion, came and said to me, "Sir, have you not missed Jane S—— at your house on Saturday afternoons?"

'Yes," I replied, "I believe she is not well."

"Nor ever will be, I fear," said the woman.

"What! do you apprehend any danger in the case?"

"Sir, she is very poorly indeed, and I think is in a decline. She wants to see you, Sir; but is afraid you would not come to see such a poor young child as she is."

"Not go, where poverty and sickness may call me! how can she imagine so? at which house does she live?"

"Sir, it is a poor place, and she is ashamed to ask you to come there. Her near neighbours are noisy, wicked people, and her own father and mother are strange folks. They all make game at poor Jenny, because she reads her Bible so much."

"Do not tell me about poor places, and wicked people; that is the very situation where a Minister of the gospel is called to do the most good. I shall go to see her; you may let her know my intention."

"I will, Sir; I go in most days to speak to her, and it does one's heart good to hear her talk."

"Indeed!" said I: "what does she talk about?"

"Talk about, poor thing! why, nothing but good things, such as the Bible, and Jesus Christ, and life, and death, and her soul, and heaven, and hell, and your discourses, and the books you used to teach her, Sir. Her father says he'll have no such godly doings in his house; and her own mother scoffs at her, and says she supposes Jenny counts herself better than other folks. But she does not mind all that. She will read her books, and then talk so pretty to her mother, and beg that she would think about her soul."

"The Lord forgive me," thought I, "for not being

more attentive to this poor child's case." I seemed to feel the importance of infantine instruction more than ever I had done before, and felt a rising hope that this girl might prove a kind of first fruits of my labours.

I now recollected her quiet, orderly, diligent attendance on our little weekly meetings; and her marked approbation of the epitaph, as related in my last paper, rushed into my thoughts. "I hope, I really hope," said I, "this dear child will prove a true child of God. And if so, what a mercy to her, and what a mercy for me!"

The next morning I went to see the child. Her dwelling was of the humblest kind. It stood against a high bank of earth, which formed a sort of garden behind it. It was so steep that but little would grow in it; yet that little served to show not only, on the one hand, the poverty of its owners, but also to illustrate the happy truth, that even in the worst of circumstances the Lord does make a kind provision for the support of his creatures. The front aspect of the cottage was chiefly rendered pleasing, by a honeysuckle, which luxuriantly climbed up the wall, enclosing the door, windows, and even the chimney, with its twining branches. As I entered the house-door, its flowers put forth a very sweet and refreshing smell. Intent on the object of my visit, I at the same moment offered up silent prayer to God, and entertained a hope, that the welcome fragrance of the shrub might be illustrative of that all-prevailing intercession of a Redeemer, which I trusted was, in the case of this little child, as "a sweet-smelling savour" to her heavenly Father. The very flowers and leaves of the garden and field are emblematical of higher things, when grace teaches us to make them so.

Jane was in bed up stairs. I found no one in the house with her, except the woman who had brought me the message on the evening before. The instant I looked on the girl I perceived a very marked change in her

countenance: it had acquired the consumptive hue, both white and red. A delicacy unknown to it before quite surprised me, owing to the alteration it produced in her look. She received me first with a very sweet smile, and then instantly burst into a flood of tears, just sobbing out,

"I am so glad to see you, Sir."

"I am very much concerned at your being so ill, my child, and grieved that I was not sooner aware of your state. But I hope the Lord designs it for your good." Her eye, not her tongue, powerfully expressed, "I hope and think he does."

"Well, my poor child, since you can no longer come to see me, I will come and see you, and we will talk over the subjects which I have been used to explain to you."

"Indeed, Sir, I shall be so glad."

'That I believe she will," said the woman; "for she loves to talk of nothing so much as what she has heard you say in your sermons, and in the books you have given her."

"Are you really desirous, my dear child, to be a true Christian?"

"O! yes, yes, Sir; I am sure I desire that above all things."

I was astonished and delighted at the earnestness and simplicity with which she spoke these words.

"Sir," added she, "I have been thinking as I lay on my bed for many weeks past, how good you are to instruct us poor children; what must become of us without it?"

"I am truly glad to perceive that my instructions have not been lost upon you, and pray God that this your present sickness may be an instrument of blessing in his hands to prove, humble, and sanctify you. My dear child, you have a soul, an immortal soul to think of; you remember what I have often said to you about

the value of a soul: 'What would it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'"

"Yes, Sir, I remember well you told us, that when our bodies are put into the grave, our souls will then go either to the good or the bad place."

"And to which of these places do you think that, as a sinner in the sight of God, you deserve to go?"

"To the bad one, Sir."

"What, to everlasting destruction?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Why so?"

"Because I am a great sinner."

"And must all great sinners go to hell?"

"They all deserve it; and I am sure I do."

'But is there no way of escape? Is there no way for a great sinner to be saved?"

"Yes, Sir, Christ is the Saviour."

"And whom does he save?"

"All believers."

"And do you believe in Christ yourself?"

"I do not know, Sir: I wish I did; but I feel that I love him."

"What do you love him for?"

"Because he is good to poor children's souls like mine."

"What has he done for you?"

"He died for me, Sir; and what could he do more?"

"And what do you hope to gain by his death?"

"A good place when I die, if I believe in him, and love him."

"Have you felt any uneasiness on account of your soul?"

"O! yes, Sir, a great deal. When you used to talk to us children on Saturdays, I often felt as if I could hardly bear it, and wondered that others could seem so careless. I thought I was not fit to die. I thought of all the bad

things I had ever done and said, and believed God must be very angry with me; for you often told us, that God would not be mocked; and that Christ said, if we were not converted we could not go to heaven. Sometimes I thought I was so young it did not signify: and then again it seemed to me a great sin to think so: for I knew I was old enough to see what was right and what was wrong; and so God had a just right to be angry when I did wrong. Besides, I could see that my heart was not right: and how could such a heart be fit for heaven? Indeed, Sir, I used to feel very uneasy."

"My dear Jenny, I wish I had known all this before. Why did you never tell me about it?"

"Sir, I durst not. Indeed, I could not well say what was the matter with me: and I thought you would look upon me as very bold if I had spoke about myself to such a gentleman as you: yet I often wished that you knew what I felt and feared. Sometimes, as we went away from your house, I could not help crying; and then the other children laughed and jeered at me, and said I was going to be very good they supposed, or at least to make people think so. Sometimes, Sir, I fancied you did not think so well of me as of the rest, and that hurt me; yet I knew I deserved no particular favour, because I was the chief of sinners."

"My dear, what made St. Paul say he was the chief of sinners? In what verse of the Bible do you find this expression, 'the chief of sinners:' can you repeat it?"

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners:—is not that right, Sir?"

"Yes, my child, it is right; and I hope that the same conviction which St. Paul had at that moment, has made you sensible of the same truth. Christ came into the world to save sinners; my dear child, remember now

and for evermore that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners."

"Sir, I am so glad he did. It makes me hope that he will save me, though I am a poor sinful girl. Sir, I am very ill, and I do not think I shall ever get well again. I want to go to Christ, if I die."

"Go to Christ while you live, my dear child, and he will not cast you away when you die. He that said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' waits to be gracious to them, and forbids them not.

"What made you first think so seriously about the state of your soul?"

"Your talking about the graves in the churchyard, and telling us how many young children were buried there. I remember you said, one day, near twelve months ago, 'Children! where will you be an hundred years hence? Children! where do you think you shall go when you die? Children! if you were to die to-night, are you sure you should go to Christ and be happy?' Sir, I shall never forget your saying 'Children,' three times together in that solemn way."

"Did you never before that day feel any desire about your soul?"

"Yes, Sir; I think I first had that desire almost as soon as you began to teach us on Saturday afternoons; but on that day I felt as I never did before. I shall never forget it. All the way as I went home, and all that night, those words were in my thoughts: 'Children! where do you think you shall go, when you die?' I thought I must leave off all my bad ways, or where should I go when I died?"

"And what effect did these thoughts produce in your mind?"

"Sir, I tried to live better, and I did leave off many bad ways; but the more I strove, the more difficult I

found it, my heart seemed so hard: and then I could not tell any one my case."

"Could not you tell it to the Lord, who hears and answers prayer?"

"My prayers (here she blushed and sighed) are very poor at the best, and at that time I scarcely knew how to pray at all, as I ought. But I did sometimes ask the Lord for a better heart."

There was a character in all this conversation which marked a truly sincere and enlightened state of mind. She spoke with all the simplicity of a child, and yet the seriousness of a Christian. I could scarcely persuade myself that she was the same girl I had been accustomed to see in past time. Her countenance was filled with interesting affections, and always spoke much more than her tongue could utter. At the same time she now possessed an ease and liberty in speaking, to which she had formerly been a stranger: nevertheless she was modest, humble, and unassuming. Her readiness to converse was the result of spiritual anxiety, not childish forwardness. The marks of a divine change were too prominent to be easily mistaken; and in this very child, I, for the first time, witnessed the evident testimonies of such a change. How encouraging, how profitable to my own soul!

"Sir," continued little Jane, "I had one day been thinking that I was neither fit to live nor die: for I could find no comfort in this world, and I was sure I deserved none in the other. On that day you sent me to learn the verse on Mrs. B——'s headstone, and then I read that on the one next to it."

"I very well remember it, Jenny; you came back, and repeated them both to me."

"There were two lines in it which made me think and meditate a great deal."

"Which were they?"

Hail, glorious Gospel, heavenly light, whereby
We live with comfort, and with comfort die."

I wished that glorious gospel was mine, that I might live and die with comfort; and it seemed as if I thought it would be so. I never felt so happy in all my life before. The words were often in my thoughts,

'Live with comfort, and with comfort die.'

'Glorious gospel' indeed! I thought.

"My dear child, what is the meaning of the word gospel?"

"Good news."

"Good news for whom?"

"For wicked sinners, Sir."

"Who sends this good news for wicked sinners?"

"The Lord Almighty..'

"And who brings this good news?"

"Sir, *you* brought it to *me*."

Here my soul melted in an instant, and I could not repress the tears which the emotion excited. The last answer was equally unexpected and affecting. I felt a father's tenderness and gratitude for a new and firstborn child.

Jane wept likewise.

After a little pause she said,

'O Sir! I wish you would speak to my father, and mother, and little brother; for I am afraid they are going on very badly.

"How so?"

"Sir, they drink, and swear, and quarrel, and do not like what is good: and it does grieve me so, I cannot bear it. If I speak a word to them about it, they are very angry, and laugh, and bid me be quiet, and not set up for their teacher. Sir, I am ashamed to tell you this of them, but I hope it is not wrong; I mean it for their good."

"I wish your prayers and endeavours for their sake may be blessed: I will also do what I can."

I then prayed with the child, and promised to visit her constantly.

As I returned home, my heart was filled with thankfulness for what I had seen and heard. Little Jane appeared to be a first fruits of my parochial and spiritual harvest. This thought greatly comforted and strengthened me in my ministerial prospects.

My partiality to the memory of little Jane will probably induce me to lay some further particulars before the reader.

PART III.

DIVINE grace educates the reasoning faculties of the soul, as well as the best affections of the heart; and happily consecrates them both to the glory of the Redeemer. Neither the disadvantages of poverty nor the inexperience of childhood are barriers able to resist the mighty influence of the Spirit of God, when "he goeth forth where he listeth."—"God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty." The truth of this scriptural assertion was peculiarly evident in the case of my young parishioner.

Little Jane's illness was of a lingering nature. I often visited her. The soul of this young Christian was gradually, but effectually, preparing for heaven. I have seldom witnessed in any older person, under similar circumstances, stronger marks of earnest enquiry, continual seriousness, and holy affections. One morning, as I was walking through the churchyard, in my way to visit her, I stopped to look at the epitaph which had

made such a deep impression on her mind. I was struck with the reflection of the important consequences which might result from a more frequent and judicious attention to the inscriptions placed in our burying-grounds, as memorials of the departed. The idea occurred to my thoughts, that as the two stone tables given by God to Moses were once a mean of communicating to the Jews from age to age, the revelation of God's will as concerning the law; so these funeral tables of stone may, under a better dispensation, bear a never-failing proclamation of God's good-will to sinners as revealed in the gospel of his grace, from generation to generation. I have often lamented, when indulging a contemplation among the graves, that some of the inscriptions were coarse and ridiculous; others, absurdly flattering; many, expressive of sentiments at variance with the true principles of the word of God; not a few, barren and unaccompanied with a single word of useful instruction to the reader. Thus a very important opportunity of conveying scriptural admonition is lost. I wish that every grave-stone might not only record the names of our deceased friends, but also proclaim the name of Jesus, as the only name given under heaven, whereby men can be saved. Perhaps, if the Ministers of religion were to interest themselves in this manner, and accustom their people to consult them as to the nature of the monumental inscriptions which they wish to introduce into churches and churchyards, a gradual improvement would take place in this respect. What is offensive, useless, or erroneous, would no longer find admittance, and a succession of valuable warning and consolation to the living would perpetuate the memory of the dead.

What can be more disgusting than the too common spectacle of trifling, licentious travellers, wandering about the churchyards of the different places through which they pass, in search of rude, ungrammatical, ill-spelt, and

absurd verses among the grave-stones: and this for the gratification of their unholy scorn and ridicule! And yet how much is it to be deplored that such persons are seldom disappointed in finding many instances which too readily afford them the unfeeling satisfaction which they seek! I therefore offer this suggestion to my reverend brethren, that as no monument or stone can be placed in a church or churchyard without their express consent or approbation, whether one condition of that consent being granted, should not be a previous inspection and approval of every inscription which may be so placed within the precincts of the sanctuary.

The reader will pardon this digression, which evidently arose from the peculiar connexion established in little Jane's history, between an epitaph inscribed on a grave-stone, and the word of God inscribed on her heart. When I arrived at Jane's cottage, I found her in bed, reading Dr. Watts's Hymns for Children, in which she took great pleasure.

"What are you reading this morning, Jane?"

"Sir, I have been thinking very much about some verses in my little book.—Here they are:

'There is an hour when I must die,
Nor do I know how soon 'twill come:
A thousand children young as I,
Are called by death to hear their doom.

'Let me improve the hours I have,
Before the day of grace is fled;
There's no repentance in the grave,
Nor pardon offer'd to the dead.'

"Sir, I feel all that to be very true; and I am afraid I do not improve the hours I have as I ought to do. I think I shall not live very long; and when I remember my sins, I say,

'Lord, at thy foot, asham'd I lie,
Upward I dare not look;
Pardon my sins before I die,
And blot them from thy book.'

Do you think he *will* pardon me, Sir?"

"My dear child, I have great hopes that he HAS pardoned you: that he has heard your prayers, and put you into the number of his true children already. You have had strong proofs of his mercy to your soul."

'Yes, Sir, I have; and I wish to love and bless him for it. He is good, *very* good."

It had for some time past occurred to my mind, that a course of *regulated* conversations on the first principles of religion, would be very desirable from time to time, for this interesting child's sake; and I thought the Church Catechism would be the best groundwork for that purpose.

"Jenny," said I, "you can repeat the Catechism?"

"Yes, Sir; but I think that has been one of my sins in the sight of God."

"What! repeating your Catechism?"

"Yes, Sir, in such a way as I used to do it."

"How was that?"

"Very carelessly indeed. I never thought about the meaning of the words, and that must be very wrong. Sir, the Catechism is full of good things; I wish I understood them better."

"Well then, my child, we will talk a little about those good things which, as you truly say, are contained in the Catechism. Did you ever consider what it is to be a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven?"

"I think, Sir, I have lately considered it a good deal; and I want to be such, not only in name, but in deed and in truth. You once told me, Sir, that, 'as the branch is to the vine, and the stone to the building, and

the limb to the body and the head, so is a true believer, to the Lord Jesus Christ.' But how am I to know that I belong to Christ as a true *member*, which you said one day in the church, means the same as a *limb* of the body, such as a leg or an arm?"

"Do you love Christ now in a way you never used to do before?"

"Yes, I think so indeed."

"Why do you love him?"

"Because he first loved me."

"How do you know that he first loved you?"

"Because he sent me instruction, and made me feel the sin of my heart, and taught me to pray for pardon, and love his ways: he sent you to teach me, Sir, and to show me the way to be saved; and now I want to be saved in that way that he pleases. Sometimes I feel as if I loved all that he has said and done, so much, that I wish never to think about any thing else. I know I did not use to feel so; and I think if he had not loved me first, my wicked heart would never have cared about him. I once loved any thing better than religion, but now it is every thing to me."

"Do you believe in your heart that Christ is able and willing to save the chief of sinners?"

"I do."

"And what are you?"

"A young, but a great sinner."

"Is it not of his mercy that you know and feel yourself to be a sinner?"

"Certainly; yes, it must be so."

"Do you earnestly desire to forsake all sin?"

"If I know myself, I do."

"Do you feel a spirit within you, resisting sin, and making you hate it?"

"Yes, I hope so."

"Who gave you that spirit? were you always so?"

"It must be Christ, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I was quite different once."

"Now then, my dear Jane, does not all this show a connexion between the Lord Jesus Christ and your soul? Does it not seem, as if you lived, and moved, and had a spiritual being from him? Just as a limb is connected with your body, and so with your head, and thereby gets power to live and move through the flowing of the blood from one to the other: so are you spiritually a limb or member of Christ, if you believe in him; and thus obtain, through faith, a power to love him, and live to his praise and glory. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, Sir, I believe I do; and it is very comfortable to my thoughts to look up to Christ as a living head, and to consider myself as the least and lowest of all his members."

"Now, tell me what your thoughts are as to being a child of God."

"I am sure, Sir, I do not deserve to be called his child."

"Can you tell me who *does* deserve it?"

"Not one, Sir."

"How then comes any one to be a child of God, when by nature we are all children of wrath?"

"By God's grace, Sir."

"What does grace mean?"

"Favour; free favour to sinners."

"Right; and what does God bestow upon the children of wrath, when he makes them children of grace?"

"A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; is it not, Sir?"

"Yes, this is the fruit of Christ's redeeming love: and I hope *you* are a partaker of the blessing. The family of God is named after him, and he is the first-born of many brethren. What a mercy that Christ calls himself '*a brother!*' My little girl, he is *your* brother; and will

not be ashamed to own you, and present you to his Father at the last day, as one that he has purchased with his blood."

"I wish I could love my Father and my Brother which are in heaven, better than I do. Lord be merciful to me a sinner! I think, Sir, if I am a child of God, I am often a rebellious one. He shows kindness to me beyond others, and yet I make a very poor return.

> "Are these thy favours, day by day,
> To me above the rest?
> Then let me love thee more than they,
> And strive to serve thee best.'"

"That will be the best way to approve yourself a real child of God. Show your love and thankfulness to such a Father, who hath prepared for you an inheritance among the saints in light, and made you 'an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, as well as a member of Christ, and a child of God.' Do you know what 'the kingdom of heaven' means?"

Just at that instant, her mother entered the house below, and began to speak to a younger child in a passionate, scolding tone of voice, accompanied by some very offensive language; but quickly stopped on hearing us in conversation up stairs.

"Ah, my poor mother!" said the girl, "you would not have stopped so short, if Mr. —— had not been here. Sir, you hear how my mother swears; pray say something to her; she will not hear *me*."

I went towards the stair-head, and called to the woman; but ashamed at the thought of my having probably overheard her expressions, she suddenly left the house, and for that time escaped reproof.

"Sir," said little Jane, "I am so afraid, if I go to heaven, I shall never see my poor mother there. I wish I may; but she does swear so, and keep such bad com-

pany. As I lie here a-bed, Sir, for hours together, there is often so much wickedness, and noise, and quarrelling down below, that I do not know how to bear it. It comes very near, Sir, when one's father and mother go on so. I want them all to turn to the Lord, and go to heaven.—Tell me now, Sir, something about being an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

"You may remember, my child, what I have told you when explaining the Catechism in the church, that 'the kingdom of heaven' in the Scriptures means the Church of Christ upon earth, as well as the state of glory in heaven. The one is a preparation for the other. All true Christians are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and shall inherit the glory and happiness of his kingdom, and live with Christ and be with him for ever. This is the free gift of God to his adopted children; and all that believe aright in Christ shall experience the truth of that promise, 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' You are a poor girl now, but I trust, 'an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' You suffer now; but are you not willing to suffer for his sake, and to bear patiently those things to which he calls you?"

"O yes, very willing; I would not complain. It is all right."

"Then, my dear, you shall reign with him. Through much tribulation you may, perhaps, enter into the kingdom of God; but tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope. As a true 'member of Christ,' show yourself to be a dutiful 'child of God,' and your portion will be that of an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Faithful is He that hath promised; commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass."

"Thank you, Sir; I do so love to hear of these things.

And I think, Sir, I should not love them so much, if I had no part in them. Sir, there is one thing I want to ask you. It is a great thing, and I may be wrong—I am so young—And yet I hope I mean right——"

Here she hesitated, and paused.

"What is it? do not be fearful of mentioning it."

A tear rolled down her cheek—a slight blush coloured her countenance. She lifted up her eyes to heaven for a moment, and then fixing them on me with a solemn affecting look, said,

"May so young a poor child as I am, be admitted to the Lord's Supper? I have for some time wished it, but dared not to mention it, for fear you should think it wrong."

"My dear Jenny, I have no doubt respecting it, and shall be very glad to converse with you on the subject, and hope that He who has given you the desire, will bless his own ordinance to your soul. Would you wish it now, or to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, if you please, Sir,—will you come to-morrow, and talk to me about it? and if you think it proper, I shall be thankful. I am growing faint now—I hope to be better when you come again."

I was much pleased with her proposal and rejoiced in the prospect of seeing so young and sincere a Christian thus devote herself to the Lord, and receive the sacramental seal of a Saviour's love to her soul.

Disease was making rapid inroads upon her constitution, and she was aware of it. But as the outward man decayed, she was strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man. She was evidently ripening fast for a better world.

I remember these things with affectionate pleasure—they revive my earlier associations, and I hope the recollection does me good. I wish them to do good to thee, likewise, my reader; and therefore I write them down.

May the simplicity that is in Christ render

"The short and simple annals of the poor"

a mean of grace and blessing to thy soul! Out of the mouth of this babe and suckling may God ordain thee strength! If thou art willing, thou mayest perchance hear something further respecting her.

PART IV.

I WAS so much affected with my last visit to little Jane, and particularly with her tender anxiety respecting the Lord's Supper, that it formed the chief subject of my thoughts for the remainder of the day.

I rode in the afternoon to a favourite spot, where I sometimes indulged in solitary meditation; and where I wished to reflect on the interesting case of my little disciple.

It was a place well suited for such a purpose.

In the widely sweeping curve of a beautiful bay, there is a kind of chasm or opening in one of the lofty cliffs which bound it. This produces a very romantic and striking effect. The steep-descending sides of this opening in the cliff are covered with trees, bushes, wild flowers, fern, wormwood, and many other herbs, here and there contrasted with bold masses of rock or brown earth.

In the higher part of one of these declivities, two or three picturesque cottages are fixed, and seem half suspended in the air.

From the upper extremity of this great fissure or opening in the cliff, a small stream of water enters by a cascade, flows through the bottom, winding in a varied course of about a quarter of a mile in length; and then runs into the sea across a smooth expanse of firm hard sand, at the lower extremity of the chasm. At this point,

the sides of the woody banks are very lofty, and to a spectator from the bottom, exhibit a mixture of the grand and beautiful not often exceeded.

Near the mouth of this opening was a little hollow recess, or cave, in the cliff, from whence, on one hand, I could see the above-described romantic seene; on the other, a long train of perpendicular cliffs, terminating in a bold and wild-shaped promontory, which closed the bay at one end, while a conspicuous white cliff stood directly opposite, about four miles distant, at the further point of the bay.

The open sea, in full magnificence, occupied the centre of the prospect; bounded, indeed, in one small part, by a very distant shore, on the rising ascent from which the rays of the sun rendered visible a cathedral church, with its towering spire, at near thirty miles distance. Every where else, the sea beyond was limited only by the sky.

A frigate was standing into the bay, not very far from my recess; other vessels of every size, sailing in many directions, varied the scene, and furnished matter for a thousand sources of contemplation.

At my feet the little rivulet, gently rippling over pebbles, soon mingled with the sand, and was lost in the waters of the mighty ocean. The murmuring of the waves, as the tide ebbed or flowed, on the sand; their dashing against some more distant rocks, which were covered fantastically with sea-weed and shells; sea-birds floating in the air aloft, or occasionally screaming from their holes in the cliffs; the hum of human voices in the ships and boats, borne along the water: all these sounds served to promote, rather than interrupt, meditation. They were soothingly blended together, and entered the ear in a kind of natural harmony.

In the quiet enjoyment of a scene like this, the lover of nature's beauties will easily find scope for spiritual illustration.

Here I sat and mused over the interesting character and circumstances of little Jane. Here I prayed that God would effectually teach me those truths which I ought to teach her.

When I thought of her youth, I blushed to think how superior she was to what I well remembered myself to have been at the same age: nay, how far my superior at that very time. I earnestly desired to catch something of the spirit which appeared so lovely in her: for simple, teachable, meek, humble, yet earnest in her demeanour, she bore living marks of heavenly teaching.

"The Lord," thought I, "has called this little child, and set her in the midst of us, as a parable, a pattern, an emblem. And he saith, 'Verily, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' O that I may be humble as this little child!"

I was thus led into a deep self-examination, and was severely exercised with fear and apprehension, whether I was myself a real partaker of those divine influences which I could so evidently discover in her. Sin appeared to me just then to be more than ever "exceeding sinful." Inward and inbred corruptions made me tremble. The danger of self-deception in so great a matter alarmed me—I was a teacher of others: but was I indeed spiritually taught myself?

A spirit of anxious enquiry ran through every thought: I looked at the manifold works of creation around me; I perceived the greatest marks of regularity and order; but *within* I felt confusion and disorder.

"The waves of the sea," thought I, "ebb and flow in exact obedience to the laws of their Creator.—Thus far they come, and no farther—they retire again to their accustomed bounds; and so maintain a regulated succession of effects.

"But, alas! the waves of passion and affection in the

human breast, manifest more of the wild confusion of a storm, than the orderly regularity of a tide—Grace can alone subdue them.

'What peaceful harmony subsists throughout all this lovely landscape!—These majestic cliffs, some clothed with trees and shrubs; others bare and unadorned with herbage, yet variegated with many-coloured earths; these are not only sublime and delightful to behold, but they are answering the end of their creation, and serve as a barrier to stop the progress of the waves.

"But how little peace and harmony can I comparatively see in my own heart! The landscape *within* is marred by dreary barren wilds, and wants that engaging character which the various parts of this prospect before me so happily preserve.—Sin, sin, is the bane of mortality, and heaps confusion upon confusion, wherever it prevails.

"Yet, saith the voice of Promise, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you.'—O! then, 'may I yield myself unto God, as one that am alive from the dead, and my members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' And thus may I become an able and willing minister of the New Testament!

"I wish I were like this little stream of water—It takes its first rise scarcely a mile off: yet it has done good even in that short course. It has passed by several cottages in its way, and afforded life and health to the inhabitants—it has watered their little gardens as it flows, and enriched the meadows near its banks. It has satisfied the thirst of the flocks that are feeding aloft on the hills, and perhaps refreshed the shepherd's boy who sits watching his master's sheep hard by. It then quietly finishes its current in this secluded dell, and, agreeably to the design of its Creator, quickly vanishes in the ocean.

"May *my* course be like unto thine, thou little rivulet!

Though short be my span of life, yet may I be useful to my fellow-sinners, as I travel onwards! Let me be a dispenser of spiritual support and health to many! Like this stream, may I prove 'the poor man's friend' by the way, and water the souls that thirst for the river of life, wherever I meet them!—And, if it please thee, O my God! let me in my latter end be like this brook. It calmly, though not quite silently, flows through this scene of peace and loveliness, just before it enters the sea. Let me thus gently close my days likewise; and may I not unusefully tell to others of the goodness and mercy of my Saviour, till I arrive at the vast ocean of eternity!

"Thither," thought I, "little Jane is fast hastening. Short; but not useless, has been *her* course. I feel the great importance of it in my own soul at this moment. I view a work of mercy *there*, to which I do hope I am not quite a stranger in the experience of my own heart. The thought enlivens my spirit, and leads me to see, that, great as is the power of sin, the power of Jesus is greater: and, through grace, I *may* meet my dear young disciple, my child in the gospel, my sister in the faith, in a brighter, a better world hereafter."

There was something in the whole of this meditation, which calmed and prepared my mind for my promised visit the next day. I looked forward to it with affectionate anxiety.

It was now time to return homewards. The sun was setting. The lengthened shadows of the cliffs, and of the hills towering again far above them, cast a brown but not unpleasing tint over the waters of the bay. Further on, the beams of the sun still maintained their splendour. Some of the sails of the distant ships, enlivened by its rays, appeared like white spots in the blue horizon, and seemed to attract my notice, as if to claim at least the

passing prayer, "God speed the mariners on their voyage!"

I quitted my retreat in the cliff with some reluctance; but with a state of mind, as I hoped, solemnized by reflection, and animated to fresh exertion.

I walked up by a steep pathway, that winded through the trees and shrubs on the sides of one of the precipices. At every step, the extent of prospect enlarged, and acquired a new and varying character, by being seen through the trees on each side. Climbing up a kind of rude, inartificial set of stone stairs in the bank, I passed by the singularly-situated cottages, which I had viewed from beneath; received and returned the evening salutation of the inhabitants, sitting at their doors, and just come home from labour; till I arrived at the top of the precipice, where I had left my horse tied to a gate.

Could *he* have enjoyed it, he had a noble prospect around him in every direction from this elevated point of view, where he had been stationed while I was on the shore below. But wherein he most probably failed, I think his rider did not. The landscape, taken in connexion with my recent train of thought about myself and little Jane, inspired devotion.

The sun was now set: the bright colours of the western clouds faintly reflected from the south-eastern hills, that were unseen from my retreat in the cliff, or only perceived by their evening shadows on the sea, now added to the beauty of the prospect on the south and west. Every element contributed to the interesting effect of the scenery. The *earth* was diversified in shape and ornament. The *waters* of the ocean presented a noble feature in the landscape. The *air* was serene, or only ruffled by a freshing breeze from the shore. And the sun's *fiery* beams, though departing for the night, still preserved such a portion of light and warmth, as rendered all the rest delightful to an evening traveller.

The next morning I went to Jane's cottage. On entering the door, the woman who so frequently visited her, met me, and said:

"Perhaps, Sir, you will not wake her just yet; for she has dropped asleep, and she seldom gets much rest, poor girl."

I went gently up stairs.

The child was in a half-sitting posture, leaning her head upon her right hand, with her Bible open before her. She had evidently fallen asleep while reading. Her countenance was beautifully composed and tranquil. A few tears had rolled down her cheek, and (probably unknown to her) dropped upon the pages of her book.

I looked around me for a moment. The room was outwardly comfortless and uninviting: the walls out of repair; the sloping roof somewhat shattered; the floor broken and uneven; no furniture, but two tottering bedsteads, a three-legged stool, and an old oak chest—the window broken in many places, and mended with patches of paper. A little shelf against the wall, over the bedstead where Jane lay, served for her physic, her food, and her books.

"Yet *here*," I said to myself, "lies an heir of glory, waiting for a happy dismissal. Her earthly home is poor indeed: but she has a house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She has little to attach her to this world: but what a weight of glory in the world to come! This mean, despised chamber is a palace in the eye of faith, for it contains one that is inheritor of a crown."

I approached without waking her, and observed that she had been reading the twenty-third chapter of St. Luke. The finger of her left hand lay upon the book, pointing to the words, as if she had been using it to guide her eye whilst she read.

I looked at the place, and was pleased at the apparently

casual circumstance of her finger pointing at these words: —"Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom."

"Is this casual or designed?" thought I—"Either way it is remarkable."

But in another moment I discovered that her finger was *indeed* an index to the thoughts of her heart.

She *half* awoke from her dozing state, but not sufficiently so to perceive that any person was present, and said, in a kind of whisper,

"Lord, remember me—Remember me—Remember—Remember a poor child—Lord, remember me——"

She then suddenly started, and perceived me, as she became fully awake—a faint blush overspread her cheeks for a moment, and then disappeared.

"Dame K——, how long have I been asleep?—Sir, I am very sorry——"

"And I am very glad to find you thus," I replied: "you may say with David, 'I laid me down and slept: I awaked, for the Lord sustained me.' What were you reading?"

"The history of the crucifying of Jesus, Sir."

"How far had you read when you fell asleep?"

"To the prayer of the thief that was crucified with him: and when I came to that place, I stopped, and thought what a mercy it would be, if the Lord Jesus should remember me likewise—and so I fell asleep, and I fancied in my dream, that I saw Christ upon the cross; and I thought I said, 'Lord, remember me'—and I am sure he did not look angry upon me—and then I awoke."

All this seemed to be a sweet commentary on the text, and a most suitable forerunner of our intended sacramental service.

"Well, my dear child, I am come, as you wished me, to administer the sacrament of the body and blood of

our blessed Saviour to you; and I dare say neighbour K—— will be glad to join us."

"Talk to me a little about it first, Sir, if you please."

"You remember what you have learned in your Catechism about it.—Let us consider.—A sacrament, you know, is 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.' Now the Lord has ordained bread and wine in the holy supper, as the outward mark, which we behold with our eyes. It is a sign, a token, a seal of his love, grace, and blessing, which he promises to, and bestows on, all who receive it, rightly believing on his name and work. He, in this manner, preserves amongst us, a 'continual remembrance of his death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.'

"What do you believe respecting the death of Christ, Jenny?"

"That because he died, Sir, we live."

"What life do we live thereby?"

"The life of grace and mercy *now*, and the life of glory and happiness hereafter: is it not, Sir?"

"Yes, assuredly; this is the fruit of the death of Christ: and thus he 'opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.' As bread and wine strengthen and refresh *your* poor weak fainting body in this very sickness, so does the blessing of his body and blood strengthen and refresh the souls of all that repose their faith, hope, and affections on Him who loved us and gave himself for us."

Tears ran down her cheeks, as she said, "O! what a Saviour!—O! what a sinner!—How kind—how good!—And is this for me?"

"Fear not, dear child: He that has made you to love him thus, loves you too well to deny you. He will in no wise cast out any that come to him."

"Sir, said the girl, "I can never think about Jesus,

and his love to sinners, without wondering how it can be. I deserve nothing but his anger on account of my sins. Why then does he love me?—My heart is evil. Why then does he love me?—I continually forget all his goodness. Why then does he love me?—I neither pray to him, nor thank him, nor do any thing as I ought to do. Why then such love to me?"

"How plain it is, that all is mercy from first to last! and that sweetens the blessing, my child. Are you not willing to give Christ all the honour of your salvation, and to take all the blame of your sins on your own self?"

"Yes, indeed, Sir, I am. My hymn says,

"Blest be the Lord that sent his Son,
To take our flesh and blood:
He for our lives gave up his own,
To make our peace with God.

He honour'd all his Father's law
Which we have disobey'd;
He bore our sins upon the cross,
And our full ransom paid.'"

"I am glad you remember your hymns so well, Jenny."

"Sir, you don't know what pleasure they give me. I am very glad you gave me that little book of Hymns for Children."

A severe fit of coughing interrupted her speech for a while. The woman held her head. It was distressing to observe her struggle for breath, and almost, as it were, for life.

"Poor dear!" said the woman, "I wish I could help thee, and ease thy pains: but they will not last for ever."

"God helps me," said the girl, recovering her breath: "God helps me; he will carry me through.—Sir, you look frightened—*I* am not afraid—this is nothing—I am better now. Thank you, dame, thank you. I am very troublesome; but the Lord will bless you for this

and all your kindness to me: yes, Sir, and yours too. Now talk to me again about the sacrament."

"What is required, Jenny, of them who come to the Lord's supper? There are five things named in the Catechism—do you remember what is the first?"

She paused; and then said, with a solemn and intelligent look,

"To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins."

"I hope and think that you know what this means, Jenny: the Lord has given you the spirit of repentance."

"No one knows, Sir, what the thoughts of past sin have been to me. Yes, the Lord knows, and that is enough: and I hope he forgives me for Christ's sake. His blood cleanseth from all sin. Sir, I sometimes think of my sins till I tremble, and it makes me cry to think that I have offended such a God; and then he comforts me again with sweet thoughts about Christ."

"It is well, my child—be it so. The next thing mentioned in that answer of your Catechism, what is it?"

"Steadfastly purposing to lead a new life."

"And what do you think of that?"

"My life, Sir, will be a short one; and I wish it had been a better one. But from my heart I desire that it may be a *new* one, for the time to come. I want to forsake all my evil ways and thoughts, and evil words, and evil companions; and to do what God bids me, and what you tell me is right, Sir, and what I read of in my Bible. But I am afraid I do not, my heart is so full of sin. However, Sir, I pray to God to help me. My days will be few; but I wish they may be spent to the glory of God."

"The blessing of the Lord be upon you, Jane; so that, whether you live, you may live to the Lord: or whether you die, you may die unto the Lord; and that, living

or dying, you may be the Lord's.—What is the next thing mentioned?"

"To have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, Sir."

"Do you believe that God is merciful to you in the pardon of your sins?"

"I do, Sir," said the child, earnestly.

"And if he pardons you, is it for your own sake, Jenny?"

"No, Sir, no; it is for Christ's sake, for my Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, and that only—Christ is all."

"Can you trust him?"

"Sir, I must not mistrust him; nor would I, if I might."

"Right, child; he is worthy of all your trust."

"And then, Sir, I am to have a thankful remembrance of his death. I can never think of his dying, but I think also what a poor unworthy creature I am; and yet he is so good to me. I wish I *could* thank him.—Sir, I have been reading about his death. How could the people do as they did to him?—but it was all for our salvation. And then the thief on the cross—That is beautiful. I hope he will remember me too, and that I shall always remember him and his death most thankfully."

"And lastly, Jenny, are you in charity with all men? Do you forgive all that have offended you? Do you bear ill-will in your heart to any body?"

"Dear Sir! no; how can I? If God is so good to me, if he forgives me, how can I help forgiving others? There is not a person in all the world, I think, Sir, that I do not wish well to for Christ's sake, and that from the bottom of my heart."

"How do you feel towards those bold, wanton, ill-tempered girls at the next door, who jeer and mock you so about your religion?"

"Sir, the worst thing I wish them is, that God may give them grace to repent; that he may change their hearts, and pardon all their wicked ways and words. May he forgive them as I do with all my soul!"

She ceased—I wished to ask no more. My heart was full. "Can this be the religion of a child?" thought I; "O that we were all children like her!"

"Reach me that prayer-book, and the cup and plate. My dear friends, I will now, with God's blessing, partake with you in the holy communion of our Lord's body and blood."

The time was sweet and solemn. I went through the sacramental service.

The countenance and manner of the child evinced powerful feelings. Tears mingled with smiles; resignation brightened by hope; humility animated by faith; child-like modesty adorned with the understanding of a riper age; gratitude, peace, devotion, patience,—all these were visible. I thought I distinctly saw them all—and did *I* alone see them? Is it too much to say that other created beings, whom I could not behold with my natural eyes, were witnesses of the scene?

If ministering angels do ascend and descend with glad tidings between earth and heaven, I think they did so then.

When I had concluded the service, I said,

"Now, my dear Jane, you are indeed become a sister in the church of Christ. May his Spirit and blessing rest upon you,—strengthen and refresh you!"

"My mercies are great, very great, Sir; greater than I can express—I thank you for this favour—I thought I was too young—it seemed too much for me to think of: but I am now sure the Lord is good to me, and I hope I have done right."

"Yes, Jenny; and I trust you are both outwardly and

inwardly *sealed* by the Holy Ghost to the day of redemption."

"Sir, I shall never forget this day."

"Neither, I think, shall I."

"Nor I," said the good old woman: "sure the Lord has been in the midst of us three to-day, while we have been gathered together in his name."

"Sir," said the child, "I wish you could speak to my mother, when you come again. But she keeps out of your sight. I am so grieved about her soul; and I am afraid she cares nothing at all about it herself."

"I hope I shall have an opportunity the next time I come. Farewell, my child."

"Good bye, Sir, and I thank you for all your kindness to me."

"Surely," I thought within myself, as I left the cottage, "this young bud of grace will bloom beauteously in Paradise. The Lord transplant her thither in his own good time! Yet, if it be his will, may she live a little longer, that I may further profit by her conversation and example."

Possibly, some who peruse these simple records of poor little Jane, may wish the same. If it be so, we will visit her again before she departs hence, and is no more seen.

PART V.

JANE was hastening fast to her dissolution. She still, however, preserved sufficient strength to converse with much satisfaction to herself and those who visited her. Such as could truly estimate the value of her spiritual state of mind were but few; yet the most careless could not help being struck with her affectionate seriousness,

her knowledge of the Scriptures, and her happy application of them to her own case.

"The holy spark divine,"

which regenerating grace had implanted in her heart, brightened as she drew near the close of life, and kindled into a flame, which warmed and animated the beholder. To *some*, I am persuaded, her example and conversation were made a blessing. Memory reflects with gratitude, whilst I write, on the profit and consolation which I individually derived from her society. Nor I alone. The last day will, if I err not, disclose further fruits, resulting from the love of God to this little child; and, through her, to others that saw her. And may not hope indulge the prospect, that this simple memorial of her history shall be as one arrow drawn from the quiver of the Almighty to reach the heart of the young and the thoughtless? Direct its course, O my God! May the eye that reads and the ear that hears, the record of little Jane, through the power of the Spirit of the Most Highest, each become a witness for the truth as it is in Jesus!

I remembered the tender solicitude of this dear child for her mother. I well knew what an awful contrast the dispositions and conduct of her parents exhibited, when compared with her own.

I resolved to avail myself of the first opportunity I could seize to speak to the mother in the child's presence. The woman had latterly avoided me, conscious of deserving, and fearful of receiving, reproof. The road by which I usually approached the house, lay, for some little distance, sufficiently in sight of its windows, to enable the woman to retire out of the way before I arrived. There was, however, another path, through fields at the back of the village, which, owing to the situation of the ground, allowed of an approach unperceived, till a visitor reached the very cottage itself.

One morning, soon after the sacramental interview related in my last paper, I chose *this* road for my visit. It was preferable to me on every account. The distance was not quite half a mile from my house. The path was retired. I hereby avoided the noise and interruption which even a village street will sometimes present to disturb the calmness of interesting meditation.

As I passed through the churchyard, and cast my eye on the memorable epitaph; "Soon," I thought within me, "will my poor little Jane mingle her mouldering remains with this dust, and sleep with her fathers! Soon will the youthful tongue, which now lisps Hosannas to the Son of David, and delights my heart with the evidences of early piety and grace, be silent in the earth! Soon shall I be called to commit her 'body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' But O! what a glorious change! Her spirit shall have then returned to God, which gave it. Her soul will be joining the hallelujahs of Paradise, while we sing her requiem at the grave. And her very dust shall here wait, 'in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection from the dead.'"

I went through the fields without meeting a single individual. I enjoyed the retirement of my solitary walk: various surrounding objects contributed to excite useful meditation, connected with the great subjects of time and eternity. Here and there a drooping flower reminded me of the fleeting nature of mortal life. Sometimes a shady spot taught me to look to Him, who is "a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." If a worm crept across my path, I saw an emblem of myself as I am *now:* and the winged insects, fluttering in the sunbeams, led me comparatively to reflect on what I hoped to be *hereafter.*

The capacious mansion of a rich neighbour appeared

on the right hand, as I walked: on my left were the cottages of the poor. The church spire pointing to heaven a little beyond, seemed to say to both the rich and the poor, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

All these objects afforded me useful meditation; and all obtained an increased value, as such, because they lay in my road to the house of little Jane.

I was now arrived at the stile nearly adjoining her dwelling. The upper window was open, and I soon distinguished the sound of voices: I was glad to hear that of the mother. I entered the house door unperceived by those above stairs, and sat down below, not wishing as yet to interrupt a conversation, which quickly caught my ear.

"Mother! mother! I have not long to live. My time will be very short. But I must, indeed I must, say something for your sake, before I die. O mother! you have a soul—you have a soul; and what will become of it when you die? O my mother! I am so uneasy about your soul—"

"O dear! I shall lose my child—she will die—and what shall I do when you are gone, my Jenny?"—She sobbed aloud.

"Mother, think about your soul. Have not you neglected that?"

"Yes, I have been a wicked creature, and hated all that was good. What can I do?"

"Mother, you must pray to God to pardon you for Christ's sake. You *must* pray."

"Jenny, my child, I cannot pray; I never did pray in all my life. I am too wicked to pray."

"Mother, I have been wanting to speak to you a long time. But I was afraid to do it. You did not like me to say any thing about religion, and I did not know how to begin. But indeed, mother, I must speak now, or it

may be too late. I wish Mr. —— was here, for he could talk to you better than I can. But, perhaps, you will think of what I say, poor as it is, when I am dead. I am but a young child, and not fit to speak about such things to any body. But, mother, you belong to me, and I cannot bear to think of your perishing for ever. My Lord and Saviour has shown me my own sin and corruptions: he loved me and gave himself for me: he died and he rose again: I want to praise him for it for ever and ever. I hope I shall see him in heaven; but I want to see you there too, mother. Do, pray do, leave off swearing and other bad ways: go to church, and hear our Minister speak about Jesus Christ, and what he has done for wicked sinners. He wishes well to souls. He taught me the way, and he will teach you, mother. Why did you always go out of the house when you knew he was coming? Do not be angry with me, mother; I only speak for your good. I was once as careless as you are about the things of God. But I have seen my error. I was in the broad road leading to destruction, like many other children in the parish; and the Lord saw me and had mercy upon me."

"Yes, my child, you was always a good girl, and minded your book."

"No, mother, no; not always. I cared nothing about goodness, nor my Bible, till the Minister came and sent for us, as you know, on Saturday afternoons. Don't you remember, mother, that at first you did not like me to go, and said you would have no such *godly pious* doings about *your* house; and that I had better play about the street and fields than be laughed at and made game of for pretending to be so good? Ah, mother! you did not know what I went for, and what God designed for me and my poor sinful soul. But, thank God, I did go, and there learned the way of salvation. Mother, I wish you had learned it too."

As I listened to this affecting conversation, it appeared to me, from the tone and manner of the mother's voice, that she was more under the influence of temporary grief, on account of her child's extreme illness, than sincere sorrow from any real sense of her sins. I however hoped the best, and rejoiced to hear such weighty and important exhortation dropping from her daughter's lips. I felt that present circumstances rendered it far more valuable than my own could have been.

I have often, since that time, seen the wicked and careless much affected, while sitting by the dying bed of a near relative: I have witnessed their temporary acknowledgments of sin, and heard their professions of amendment. But, after a short season, all has passed away like the morning dew. The friend has been buried out of sight. The world and its cares, the flesh and its sins, have returned with new temptations, and the eloquence of iniquity has prevailed over the voice of truth. "The dog has returned to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire."

On the other hand, how frequently have the death-beds of true believers been blessed to the eye-witnesses of the triumphs of grace over sin, death, and hell! Often has the careless bystander received the first saving impression of divine truth, whilst the dying Christian has experienced and testified the supports of love and mercy, in the trying hour. At such seasons, faith wields a bright and burning torch, which occasionally softens the hardest, and warms the coldest heart. The expressions of that heavenly consolation and devout solicitude, which the Holy Spirit vouchsafes to some, thus become the happy means of grace and blessing for the conversion and edification of others.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!"

At this moment the house-door opened, and a younger

child, a brother of Jane's, came in. The mother asked from above who it was: the boy replied, and, without further enquiry, she remained in the chamber. I beckoned to the lad to sit down quietly; and thus it still remained unknown that I was below.

"Mother," continued Jane, "that is my brother, and will soon be your only remaining child. Do, pray, encourage him to follow good ways. Send him to Mr. ——, and he will be kind to him, as he has been to me. He is a wild boy, but I hope he will be brought to think about his soul in time. Those naughty wicked boys teach him to swear and fight, and run after all manner of evil. Lord help him to flee from the wrath to come!"

I made a sign to the boy to listen to what his sister said concerning him. He seemed to hear with attention, and a tear dropped down his cheek.

"Aye, Jenny, it is to be hoped he will, and that we all shall likewise."

"Mother, then you must flee to Christ. Nothing you can do will save you without that. You must repent and turn from sin—without the grace of God you cannot do it; but seek, and you shall find it.—Do, for your own sake, and for my sake, and my little brother's sake."

The woman wept and sobbed without replying. I now thought it time to appear; went to the bottom of the stairs, and said, "May a friend come up?"

"Mercy on me!" said the mother, "there is Mr. ——."

"Come in, Sir," said Jane; "I am very glad you are come *now*. Mother, set a chair."

The woman looked confused. Jane smiled as I entered, and welcomed me as usual.

"I hope I shall be forgiven, both by mother and daughter, for having remained so long below stairs, during the conversation which has just taken place. I came in the hope of finding you together, as I have had a wish for some time past to speak to you, Sarah, on the

same subjects, about which I am happy to say your daughter is so anxious. You have long neglected these things, and I wished to warn you of the danger of your state—but Jenny has said all I could desire, and I now solemnly ask you, whether you are not much affected by your poor child's faithful conversation? You ought to have been *her* teacher and instructer in the ways of righteousness; whereas now she has become *yours*. Happy, however, will it be for you if you are wise, and consider your latter end, and the things which belong to your peace, before they are hidden from your eyes! Look at your dying child, and think of your other and only remaining one, and say whether this sight does not call aloud upon you to hear and fear."

Jane's eyes were filled with tears whilst I spoke. The woman hung her head down, but betrayed some emotions of dislike at the plain dealing used towards her.

"My child Jenny," said I, "how are you to-day?"

"Sir, I have been talking a good deal, and feel rather faint and weary, but my mind has been very easy and happy since I last saw you. I am quite willing to die, when the Lord sees fit. I have no wish to live, except it be to see my friends in a better way before I depart. Sir, I used to be afraid to speak to them; but I feel to-day as if I could hold my peace no longer, and I must tell them what the Lord has done for my soul, and what I feel for theirs."

There was a firmness, I may say a dignity, with which this was uttered, that surprised me. The character of the child seemed to be lost in that of the Christian: her natural timidity yielded to a holy assurance of manner, resulting from her own inward consolations, mingled with spiritual desire for her mother's welfare. This produced a flush upon her otherwise pallid countenance, which in no small degree added to her interesting appearance. The Bible lay open before her as she sat up in

the bed. With her right hand she enclosed her mother's. —"Mother, this book *you* cannot read: you should therefore go constantly to church, that you may hear it explained. It is God's book, and tells us the way to heaven; I hope you will learn and mind it; with God's blessing it may save your soul. Do think of that, mother, pray do. I am soon going to die. Give this Bible to my brother: and will you be so kind, Sir, to instruct him? Mother, remember what I say, and this gentleman is witness: there is no salvation for sinners like you and me but in the blood of Christ; he is able to save to the uttermost; he will save all that come to him; he waits to be gracious; cast yourself upon his mercy. I wish—I wish—I—I—I—"

She was quite overcome, and sunk away in a kind of fainting fit.

Her mother observed, that she would now probably remain insensible for some time, before she recovered.

I improved this interval in a serious address to the woman, and then prepared to take my departure, perceiving that Jane was too much exhausted for further conversation at that time.

As I was leaving the room, the child said, faintly, "Come again soon, Sir; my time is very short."

I returned home by the same retired road which I had before chosen. I silently meditated on the eminent proofs of piety and faith which were just afforded me in the scene I had witnessed.

Surely, I thought, this is an extraordinary child! What cannot grace accomplish? Is it possible to doubt, after this, *who* is the alone Author and Finisher of salvation? or from *whom* cometh every good and perfect gift? How rich and free is the mercy of Jehovah! Hath not he "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty? Let no flesh glory in his presence: but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

PART VI.

THE truth and excellence of the religion of Jesus Christ appears to be remarkably established by the union of similarity with variety, in the effect which it produces on the hearts and lives of true believers. In the grand and essential features of Christian experience, the whole household of God possess an universal sameness of character, a family likeness, which distinguishes them from all the world besides: yet, in numerous particulars, there also exists a beautiful variety.

On the one hand, in the aged and the young, in the wise and the unlearned, in the rich and the poor; in those of stronger and weaker degrees of mental capacity, in more sanguine or more sedate dispositions; and in a multitude of otherwise varying circumstances, there is a striking conformity of principles and feeling to Christ, and to each other. Like the flowers of the field and the garden, they are "all rooted and grounded" in the soil of the same earth; they are warmed by the same sun, refreshed by the same air, and watered by the same dews. They each derive nourishment, growth, and increase from the same life-giving Source. As the flower puts forth its leaves and petals, adorns the place which it inhabits with its beauty, and possesses an internal system of qualities, whereby it is enabled to bring forth its seed or fruit, in the appointed season; so does the Christian.

But, on the other hand, like the flowers also, some Christians may be said to grow on the mountain tops, some in valleys, some in the waters, and others in dry ground. Different colours, forms, and sizes distinguish them from each other, and produce a diversity of character and appearance, which affords a delightful variety.

both for the purposes of use and beauty. Yet is that variety perfectly consistent with their essential unity of nature in the vegetable kingdom, to which they all equally belong.

In another particular they likewise resemble. They both die a natural death. The Lord ever preserves "a seed to serve him," from generation to generation; for, as one disappears, another springs up to supply his place. But "it is appointed unto all men once to die." —"Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not."—"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."

In the midst of such diversity of Christian characters there is much to love and admire. I have selected the case of little Jane, as one not undeserving of notice.

It is true, she was only a child—a very poor child—but a child saved by divine grace, enlightened with the purest knowledge, and adorned with unaffected holiness; —she was a child, humble, meek, and lowly. She "found grace in the eyes of the Lord," while she was on earth; and, I doubt not, will be seen on his right hand at the last day. As such, there is preciousness in the character, which will account for my attempting once more to write concerning her, and describe her last moments before she went to her final rest.

At a very early hour on the morning of the following day, I was awoke by the arrival of a messenger, bringing an earnest request that I would immediately go to the child, as her end appeared to be just approaching.

It was not yet day, when I left my house to obey the summons. The morning star shone conspicuously clear. The moon cast a mild light over the prospect, but gradually diminished in brightness, as the eastern sky became enlightened. The birds were beginning their

song, and seemed ready to welcome the sun's approach. The dew plentifully covered the field, and hung suspended in drops from the trees and hedges. A few early labourers appeared in the lanes, travelling towards the scene of their daily occupations.

All besides was still and calm. My mind, as I proceeded, was deeply exercised by thoughts concerning the affecting events which I expected soon to witness.

The rays of the morning star were not so beautiful in my sight, as the spiritual lustre of this young Christian's character. Her "night was far spent;" the morning of a "better day was at hand." The sun of eternal blessedness was ready to break upon her soul with rising glory. Like the moon, which I saw above me, this child's exemplary deportment had gently cast a useful light over the neighbourhood where she dwelt. Like this moon, she had for a season been permitted to shine amidst the surrounding darkness: and her rays were also reflected from a luminary, in whose native splendour her own would quickly be blended and lost.

The air was cool, but the breezes of the morning were refreshing, and seemed to foretell the approach of a beautiful day. Being accustomed, in my walks, to look for subjects of improving thought and association, I found them in every direction around me, as I hastened onwards to the house where Jane lay, waiting for a dismissal from her earthly dwelling.

I felt that the twilight gravity of nature was, at that hour, peculiarly appropriate to the circumstances of the case: and the more so, because that twilight was significantly adorned with the brilliant sparklings of the star on one hand, and the clear pale lustre of the waning moon on the other.

When I arrived at the house, I found no one below; I paused a few minutes, and heard the girl's voice very

faintly saying, "Do you think he will come? I should be so glad—so very glad to see him before I die."

I ascended the stairs—her father, mother, and brother, together with the elderly woman before spoken of, were in the chamber. Jane's countenance bore the marks of speedy dissolution. Yet, although death was manifest in the languid features, there was something more than ever interesting in the whole of her external aspect. The moment she saw me, a renewed vigour beamed in her eyes—grateful affection sparkled in her dying face.

Although she had spoken just before I entered, yet for some time afterwards she was silent, but never took her eyes off me. There was animation in her look—there was more—something like a foretaste of heaven seemed to be felt, and gave an inexpressible character of spiritual beauty, even in death.

At length she said, "This is very kind, Sir—I am going fast—I was afraid I should never see you again in this world."

I said, "My child, are you resigned to die."

"Quite."

"Where is your hope?"

She lifted up her finger, pointing to heaven, and then directed the same downward to her own heart, saying successively as she did so, "Christ *there*, and Christ *here*."

These words, accompanied by the action, spoke her meaning more solemnly than can easily be conceived.

A momentary spasm took place—Looking towards her weeping mother, she said, "I am very cold—but it is no matter—it will soon be over——"

She closed her eyes for about a minute, and, on open ing them again, said, "I wish Sir, when I am gone, you would tell the other children of the parish, how good the Lord has been to me, a poor sinner—tell them, that they who seek him early will find him—tell them, that the ways of sin and ignorance are the ways to ruin and hell

—and pray tell them, Sir, from me, that Christ is indeed the Way, the Truth, and the Life—he will in no wise cast out any that come.—Tell them that I, a poor girl——"

She was quite exhausted, and sunk for awhile into a torpid state, from which, however, she recovered gradually, uttering these expressions: "Where am I?—I thought I was going—Lord, save me."

"My dear child, you will soon be for ever in *his* arms, who is now guiding you by his rod and staff through the valley of the shadow of death."

"I believe so, indeed I do," said she; "I long to be with him!—O how good, how great, how merciful!—Jesus, save me, help me through this last trial."

She then gave one hand to her father, the other to her mother, and said, "God bless you, God bless you—seek the Lord—think of me, when I am gone—it may be for your good—remember your souls—O! for Christ's sake remember your souls—then all may be well—you cannot think what I have felt for both of you—Lord, pardon and save my dear father and mother."

She then took hold of her brother's hand, saying, "Thomas, I beg of you to leave off your bad ways—read the Bible—I give you mine—I have found it a precious book. Do you not remember our little brother, who died some years since?—he was praying to the last moment of his life. Learn to pray, while you are in health, and you will find the comfort and power of it when you come to die; but, first of all, pray for a new heart—without it you will never see God in heaven—your present ways lead to misery and ruin—may the Lord turn your heart to love and follow him!"

To the other woman she said, "I thank you, Dame K——, for all your kindness since I have been ill—you have been a Christian friend to me, and I hope the Lord will remember you for it, according to his rich mercy:—

you and I have many a time talked together about death; and though I am the youngest, he calls me first to pass through it; but, blessed be his name, I am not terrified. I once thought I never could die without fear; but indeed I feel quite happy, now it is come; and so will you, if you trust him—he is the God both of the old and the young."

"Ah, my child!" said the woman, "I wish I was as fit to die as you are; but I fear that will never be—my sins have been many, very many."

"Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin," said the child

At this moment, instead of growing weaker, through the fatigue of so much speaking, she seemed to gather fresh strength. She turned to me with a look of surprising earnestness and animation, saying,

"You, Sir, have been my best friend on earth—you have taught me the way to heaven, and I love and thank you for it—you have borne with my weakness and my ignorance—you have spoken to me of the love of Christ, and he has made me to feel it in my heart—I shall see him face to face—he will never leave me nor forsake me—he is the same, and changes not. Dear Sir, God bless you."

The child suddenly rose up, with an unexpected exertion, threw her livid, wasted arms around me, as I sat on the bedside, laid her head on my shoulder, and said distinctly, "God bless and reward you—give thanks for me to Him—my soul is saved—Christ is every thing to me. Sir, we shall meet in heaven, shall we not?—O yes, yes—then all will be peace—peace—peace—"

She sunk back on the bed, and spoke no more—fetched a deep sigh—smiled—and died.

At this affecting moment the first rays of the morning sun darted into the room, and filled my imagination with the significant emblem of "the tender mercy of God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited

us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

It was a beam of light, that seemed at once to describe the glorious change which her soul had now already experienced; and, at the same time, to shed the promised consolations of hope over the minds of those who witnessed her departure.

This was an incident obviously arising from a natural cause; but one which irresistibly connected itself with the spiritual circumstances of the case.

For some time I remained silently gazing on the breathless corpse, and could hardly persuade myself that Jane was indeed no longer there.

As I returned homeward, I found it difficult to repress the strong feelings of affection, which such a scene had excited. Neither did I wish it. Religion, reason, and experience, rather bid us indulge, in due place and season, those tender emotions, which keep the heart alive to its most valuable sensibilities. To check them serves but to harden the mind, and close the avenues which lead to the sources of our best principles of action.

Jesus himself *wept* over the foreseen sorrows of Jerusalem. He *wept* also at the grave of his friend Lazarus. Such an example consecrates the tear of affection, while it teaches us, "concerning them which are asleep, not to sorrow, as those which have no hope."

I soon fell into meditation on the mysterious subject of the flight of a soul from this world to that of departed spirits.

"Swifter than an arrow from the bow or than the rays of light from the sun, has this child's spirit hastened, in obedience to its summons from God, to appear in his immediate presence. How solemn a truth is this for universal consideration! But, 'washed in the blood of the Lamb that was slain,' and happily made partaker of its purifyiug efficacy, she meets her welcome at the

throne of God. She has nothing to fear from the frowns of divine justice. Sin, death, and hell are all vanquished through the power of Him who hath made her more than conqueror. He will himself present her to his Father, as one of the purchased lambs of his flock—as one whom the Spirit of God 'has sealed unto the day of redemption.'

"What a change for her! from that poor tattered chamber to the regions of Paradise! from a bed of straw to the bosom of Abraham! from poverty, sickness, and pain, to eternal riches, health, and joy! from the condition of a decayed, weary pilgrim in this valley of tears, to that of a happy traveller safely arrived at home, in the rest that remaineth to the people of God!

"I have lost a young disciple, endeared to me by a truly parental tie. Yet how can I complain of that as lost, which God has found? Her willing and welcome voice no longer seeks or imparts instruction here. But it is far better employed. The angels, who rejoiced over her when her soul first turned to God, who watched the progress of her short pilgrimage, and who have now carried her triumphantly to the heavenly hills, have already taught her to join

'In holy song, their own immortal strains.

Why then should I mourn? The whole prospect, as it concerns her, is filled with joy and immortality. 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

As I looked upon the dew-drops which rested on the grass and hung from the branches of the trees, I observed that the sun's rays first filled them with beautiful and varied colours; then dried them up, and they were seen no longer.

Thus it was with myself. The tears which I neither would nor could restrain, when I first began thus to reflect on the image of the dying chamber of little Jane,

were speedily brightened by the vivid sunshine of hope and confidence. They then gradually yielded to the influence of that divine principle which shall finally wipe the tear from every eye, and banish all sorrow and sighing for evermore.

On the fourth day from thence, Jane was buried. I had never before committed a parishioner to the ground with similar affections. The attendants were not many, but I was glad to perceive among them some of the children who had been accustomed to receive my weekly private instruction along with her.

I wished that the scene might usefully impress their young hearts, and that God would bless it to their edification.

As I stood at the head of the grave, during the service, I connected past events, which had occurred in the churchyard, with the present. In this spot Jane first learned the value of that gospel which saved her soul. Not many yards from her own burial-place, was the epitaph which has already been described as the first means of affecting her mind with serious and solemn conviction. It seemed to stand at *this* moment as a peculiar witness for those truths which its lines proclaimed to every passing reader. Such an association of objects produced a powerful effect on my thoughts.

The evening was serene—nothing occurred to interrupt the quiet solemnity of the occasion.

"Peace" was the last word little Jane uttered, while living; and peace seemed to be inscribed on the farewell scene at the grave, where she was laid. A grateful remembrance of that peace revives in my own mind, as I write these memorials of it; and, O! may that peace which passeth all understanding, be in its most perfect exercise, when I shall meet her again at the last day.

Attachment to the spot where this young Christian lay, induced me to plant a yew-tree, close by the head

of her grave, adjoining the eastern wall of the church. I designed it as an evergreen monument of one who was dear to memory. The young plant appeared healthy for a while, and promised by its outward vigour long to retain its station. But it withered soon afterwards, and, like the child whose grave it pointed out to notice, early faded away and died.

The yew-tree proved a frail and short-lived monument. But a more lasting one dwells in my own heart. And perhaps this narrative may be permitted to transmit her memory to other generations, when the hand and heart of the writer shall be cold in the dust.

Perchance some, into whose hands these pages may fall, will be led to cultivate their spiritual young plants with increased hope of success, in so arduous an endeavour. May the tender blossoms reward their care, and bring forth early and acceptable fruit!

Some, who have perhaps been accustomed to undervalue the character of *very* youthful religion, may hereby see that the Lord of grace and glory is not limited in the exercise of his power by age or circumstance. It sometimes appears in the displays of God's love to sinners, as it does in the manifestation of his works in the heavens, that the *least* of the planets moves in the nearest course to the sun; and there enjoys the most powerful influence of his light, heat, and attraction.

The story of this Young Cottager involves a clear evidence of the freeness of the operations of divine grace on the heart of man; of the inseparable connexion between true faith and holiness of disposition; and of the simplicity of character which a real love of Christ transfuses into the soul.

How many of the household of faith, in every age,

"Alike unknown to fortune and to fame,"

have journeyed and are now travelling to their "city of

habitation," through the paths of modest obscurity and almost unheeded piety! It is one of the most interesting employments of the Christian Minister to search out these spiritual lilies of the valley, whose beauty and fragrance are nearly concealed in their shady retreats. To rear the flower, to assist in unfolding its excellencies, and bring forth its fruit in due season, is a work that delightfully recompenses the toil of the cultivator.

While he is occupied in this grateful task of labouring in his heavenly Master's garden, some blight, some tempest may chance to take away a favourite young blossom, in a premature stage of its growth.

If such a case should befall him, he will then, perhaps, as I have often done, when standing in pensive recollection at little Jane's grave, make an application of these lines, which are inscribed on a grave-stone erected in the same churchyard, and say,

> "This lovely bud, so young and fair,
> Call'd hence by early doom,
> Just came to show how sweet a flower
> In Paradise would bloom."