

A BRIEF MEMOIR

AND

SOME REMAINS

OF THE LATE

REV. JAMES M'DOWALL.

EDITED BY THE

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P R E F A C E .

THE Memoir and Remains, that follow, are published at the request of Members of the Presbyterian Congregation of St. Vincent, Sydenham and Euphrasia, who desire to possess, in the book, a memorial of their late Pastor.

In complying with this natural request, I was not unconscious of the fact, that the *outer* life, of the Rev. Mr. McDowall, had little in it of the stirring incident that usually imparts interest to biography. But if, on the other hand, "the work done, the battle fought, the suffering endured, in the invisible domain of the human heart, have been found to possess often a great and tragic interest," then, it cannot be denied but some degree of interest,—especially to those that knew him personally—must attach to the *inner* life of a man, who,—though naturally his "heart was haughty and his eyes lofty,"—became, by the discipline of suffering, like one whose "soul was even as a weaned child."

Of another disadvantage also, I was fully conscious. Not one of the many sermons left by Mr. McDowall in manuscript, was intended by him for publication. They were written with care; but they were also evidently written with the thought ever present, that they were to be *spoken* to men, and not *read* by them. On this account the few sermons, here published, afford, as the reader can easily perceive, no fair criterion of what Mr. McDowall was, either as a writer or as a thinker: but, what is far better, they teach, in language that every one can understand, the great doctrines of God's holiness, man's misery, and Christ's mercy. The truth is, that they were selected, as their author would order were he still with us, more with a reference to the good they may do amongst the

common people—to whom their circulation will probably be confined—than with a reference to the degree to which they exhibit the talents of their writer.

Special thanks are due to Mr. Williamson, for upwards of ten years the respected teacher of the Chatsworth Common School, for his assistance in rendering from short-hand Mr. McDowall's manuscripts.

J. C.

Chatsworth, March 1st 1866.

MEMOIR.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES M^CDOWALL.

I.—HIS BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

It has been remarked, we think by Cowper, that with some men God's dealings in providence are, all, after one unvarying type of seeming severity. In the life we are here about to sketch that remark seems verified. Mr. McDowall might indeed have often said, that God was setting him as a mark for his arrows. If the life of every christian, carries in it, however humble it may have been some useful lessons, the lessons of the following life lie, it will be seen in the meekness and patience with which its heavy trials were borne, and in the spiritual fruit they, in the end, produced. And should you, kind reader, feel, at times, faint and out worn in this life's pilgrimage, the example here set may help to teach you similar patience, and to teach you also how true it is, "that grief shows us truth as night brings out the stars."

The late Rev. James McDowall was born, in 1826, a soldier's son. His father Robert McDowall, a native of Johnstone near Glasgow, served for fifteen years in the first or Royal Regiment of Dragoons commanded, at that time, by Lord Somerset. From the ranks, step by step he rose to the position of a non-commissioned officer when in 1835, in consequence of disablement by chronic rheumatism he was discharged with a pension. The description given of him in the army papers, as a man "five feet nine inches in height, with dark hair, hazel eyes, and dark complexion," might answer in each particular for his son James. The discharged soldier, with his wife and three children, returned to his native village where lived his father and brothers, all of them, we understand, men of talent, enterprise, and force of character. Soon thereafter death entered the little family circle; and one after another was smitten down till none remained but the eldest child, the subject of our memoir. The memory of this sore bereavement was undoubtedly present to him many years thereafter when he penned the following words:—

"There are conditions of human life, and suffering when one calamity follows hard upon another: when loss follows loss: woe follows woe: when our means of subsistence gradually decline, and we are left but as poor beggars in the world. And sometimes in addition to this, one dear friend is taken away and

then another, and another, and another, till no one is left but ourselves and we ourselves are paralyzed with weakness, our strength is gone, our heart is overwhelmed. In such a condition of affairs people act in many ways. One is driven to despair, another assumes the port and demeanor of the Stoic, another cries to God, cries to his Father in Heaven, cries to Him in his distress, looks to Him when his heart is overwhelmed."

To an intelligent and sensitive child a mother's death is ever a great grief. In a sermon by Mr. McDowall on the words: "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come," Heb. xiii., 14, we recognize the feelings and the words of one who knew this grief from sad experience:—

"We must be taught that here we have no continuing city. And the first steps in that teaching seem often harsh and stern. For the mother at whose foot we sat, from whose familiar face beamed on us peace and love found nowhere else, in whose lap we cast ourselves in the wantonness of affection, or in the abandonment of some childish grief, and whose kindly hand we loved to feel around us,—that mother has been smitten by ruthless death, and we have seen her lie cold and pale, and when we cried she did not chide, nor did she smile when we looked into her face. And the cold clammy touch of her corpse startled us like some electric shock and sent the blood back freezing cold into our hearts, and we then discovered that she who loved us is not there. Then, after a few days of strange fears, she was carried away from us, and the home, we loved so well, became empty and lonely, and now seems no longer *our* home. Thus we enter on life's journey, and thus we take our first of many lessons, that here we have no continuing city."

To these early sorrows was, probably, owing the sadness that underlay, so deeply, the graceful humour that played on the surface of Mr. McDowall's character.

The grief that marks our dawning youth,
To memory ever clings;
And o'er the path of future years,
A lengthened shadow flings.
The gayest hours trip lightly by,
And leave the faintest trace;
But the deep, deep track that sorrow wears
No time can e'er efface.

In his sixteenth year, or sometime in 1841, he engaged himself, as an apprentice gardener. In this calling, he manifested for a period of seven or eight years, the diligence, and uprightness, of character that distinguished him in after life. He kept a journal of each day's work in the garden, began the study of Scientific Botany, persuaded his fellow-workmen to subscribe with him for the "Gardener's Chronicle," wrote some letters to this periodical, and interested himself in the wellbeing of the people around him. Certificates from various masters, and many acts of kindness shown him by such men as Mr. Stirling of Keir, attest the esteem in which he was held by his employers.

The particular period of his life when he made deliberate choice of Jesus Christ as his Lord and Master, and submitted himself and his ways to his supreme control, it is now impossible accurately to determine. On family matters and personal religion he was always

very reserved, even with his most intimate friends. It is, however, probable that—in common with hundreds more, some scattered over the world as missionaries and ministers of the gospel, and some like himself, already gone to their rest,—he was roused to religious enquiry and quickened into spiritual life amid the awakening that ushered in, and followed the disruption, in 1843, of the Scottish National Church. In 1846, three years thereafter, we find him, in a paper formally drawn out and duly signed after the fashion recommended by old Divines, solemnly renouncing the world and its ways, and consecrating himself to God. Having thus found the Pearl of great price,—the greatest to the human heart of all discoveries,—he began to yearn after the inestimable privilege of bringing others to the possession of the same wealth. With a view, therefore, to the Christian Ministry in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, he began, in that same year the study of Latin. Toiling hard through the day he gave his evenings, very late into the night, to the work of preparing himself for College.

II.—HIS STUDENT LIFE.

With what knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, he could thus acquire after his day's labour as a working gardener was over, he set his face towards Edinburgh University. The conduct of many Scotch Students in struggling through poverty, and deficient early training towards a University Degree and an honourable place in some one of the learned professions, is worthy of admiration. The privations then endured and the habits of intense study then formed conduce largely to future success in life, as the history of many eminent men abundantly testifies. It was amid trials of no ordinary kind Mr. McDowall carried on his studies. This is apparent from the following letter addressed by him just before entering on his College Course to Mr. McDougall now Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University:—

"From nine years of age till the beginning of March 1848 I have been without intermission engaged in manual labour. For two years after I began to labour I attended during the winter evenings an evening school where I was taught writing and arithmetic. But engaging myself to a farmer I soon forgot all I had previously learned. After two years service in the country, I engaged as an apprentice gardener, when my spare time was wholly taken up in acquiring a knowledge of the business. I entered the garden of Mr. Stirling of Keir where I commenced in 1845 the study of the Latin language, and in the following year Greek and Geometry. The only assistance I received in these was from Mr. Stewart, Bridge of Allan, whom I met by accident, and who kindly invited me to his house after my labour was over, and gave me help. On my leaving Keir for Fife-shire, he introduced me to the Rev. Mr. Brodie of Monimail, who gave me much assistance, and through whose kindness and means I was enabled to enter the Normal School."

During eight years,—his term of study at the University and Divinity Hall,—he "toiled hard through the hours of the sad midnight watch, wringing but a slight sleep out of his couch" so that he

might honourably discharge the twofold duty of student and private tutor.

"Let me study," he writes in his private journal, "with resolution, perseverance, and fortitude, and let me serve my God above all things."

1852, Oct. 13.—Attempted to read Plato but was in a very confused state of mind; called twice on Dr. Allison as I wished to consult him about this severe cold, but did not see him. Got some honey which I trust will help in stopping the cough. My body nervous and the mind depressed and unhinged, so that I feel most unhappy. I can imagine nothing better for me than to have frequent recourse to my Bible and prayer.

Oct. 15.—Found Dr. Allison who ordered me some medicine, and recommended the shower-bath; he says my lungs are not affected, but commands regularity. Called on Mr. ——— and got into argument in regard to the terrible fate of the nations of Canaan; I did not feel strong enough to contest the point, and as I was conscious I had the wrong side of the question, I yielded.

Oct. 20.—Feel much agitated and excited, whether owing to these repeated examinations, or to weakness, I know not; but my health is much relaxed. Oh! that I could get back my original energy, when nothing, nor any amount of study was a labor to me, when I could do as much in one hour as I can do, now, in six."

It has been justly remarked, that the hours for study taken from needful rest—are not redeemed but borrowed, and must be paid back with double interest in future life. It was, indeed, so with Mr. McDowall; and, like many others, gladly would he in after life have parted with many of his most valuable acquirements could he thereby recover the health he had lost in their pursuit.

His favourite studies were languages and mental philosophy. And before the close of his Theological course he acquired fair skill in Hebrew, and became so far versed in Latin, Greek, French, and German that he could with little trouble read any common author in these languages. To Speculative Philosophy, however, he devoted himself with intense ardour; and good was it for him that before he had "eaten of the insane root that takes the reason prisoner," the "God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of Glory gave to him the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ." The most striking feature about him as a student was his thorough originality of thought, rising on some occasions to the boldness and brilliancy of true genius. So strongly indeed did his tendency lie in the direction of free and independent enquiry to the scorning of all human authority, that he would have been in danger of passing safe limits, had it not been for the humble reverence with which he ever bowed before the authority of the word of God. Whenever he felt satisfied that any doctrine was taught in the Bible he cordially accepted it, however much the doctrine taught might seem to transcend human reason, or to defy reconciliation with other doctrines. As long as his field of enquiry was human, and comprised only the possible and probable, he delighted in the exercise of an unwearying and subtle intellect; but whenever he entered the territory where is heard the voice of God, he ceased to question or pry,

and with child-like spirit he *believed*. From this single fact it happened that his large acquaintance with German Metaphysics and Theology—though it might have tinged with a certain hue his style of thinking and of speaking,—did not in the least unsettle the foundation of his faith, nor diminish at all his admiration for, or attachment to, the Standards of the Presbyterian Church. The Sovereignty of God was the central truth in his system of theology, and the truth also, that in its practical aspect, seemed chiefly to sustain him under the heavy trials God saw meet to send upon him. “It is God’s will; and he knows what is best for me” was an expression often on his lips. It was this child-like submissiveness to the will of God, in Revelation and Providence, that constituted his safety amid the perils of intellectual speculation, and amid the trials of a life of much bodily suffering and mental conflict.

It was his good fortune to have been the pupil,—while at Edinburgh University and New College—of such men as Professor Fraser, McDougall, Duncan and Cunningham. By all these he was respected as an able and conscientious student, as his certificates and prizes still attest. A privilege of great value fell also to his share in the companionship and friendship, while at College, of a few young men of marked ability, who have since risen in Britain to distinction in the church, and in the higher walks of literature. One of these was Mr. Downes, (working editor of the recent edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and author of the articles on Burke and John Wilson in recent numbers of the *North British Review*) who died the summer before Mr. McDowall, after having begun in London a literary career of great promise. The esteem with which Mr. Downes regarded his old friend when the waters of the Atlantic rolled between them, may be inferred from the remarks of a mutual friend of theirs: “I had a short night of Downes” writes this friend to Mr. McDowall. “He is away home on sick leave. Nothing wrong with his lungs as I once feared. You must not think any ill of him not writing you. He again and again has taken guilt and shame to himself for his negligence. Poor fellow! he has such a torpid temperament that it requires a great effort for him to write a long letter or even an ordinary one. I assure you if he does not write you it is not because he has forgotten you. He speaks of you with much affection and esteem.” To these friends he endeared himself much by his generous forgiving disposition, by his genial humour and droll eccentricities, by his honesty, by his openness of speech, and by his general goodness of heart, that “suffered long and was kind.”

Under his severe habits of study, his health, never, we believe, robust, would have sunk had it not been that his love of adventure and his passion for the country and for walking, drew him much into the open air. Each Saturday during the College session was devoted, in company with one or two friends, to ramble out by the Pentland hills or across the country to Dalkeith, or along the sea-

shore down by Granton, Portobello and Musselborough. But when Autumn brought him release for a month or two from his duties as a teacher in the great city, he made long tours, on foot, through the country. On one occasion, in company with a friend now a missionary in India, he made a pedestrian tour through the North of Ireland. He has been heard to relate, in playful humor, the straits to which he was reduced in this tour by running short of money,—not an uncommon event with Scotch students,—and the difficulty he had in deciding whether the funds remaining would be invested with more profit in travelling speedily—as far as the money would go,—by railway or in travelling slowly on foot. The decision was given in favour of the time-honoured mode of locomotion and he made out Dublin where an uncle resided. On another occasion, accompanied by the same friend and the writer of this sketch, he made a lengthened tour on foot, through the wildest districts of Ross, Inverness, and Argyle. The party made the ascent of Ben Nevis, Ben Muich Dhui, and Ben Wyvis. His journal contains very full details as to these ascents. We can make room for only one or two extracts:—

1853. August 5.—Reached Balmoral. I cannot say that it is a fit place to become extravagant about, there being much finer places on Dee-side. Arrived at Braemar I began to make arrangements for climbing Ben Muich Dhui. Gave orders for a guide.

August 6.—Rose about six o'clock. The guide appeared leading a pony to carry our knapsacks and we set out for the Ben. Our road lay by Mar Lodge and amid the ruins of cottages. As we toiled up the hill, we came in sight of snow, and were assailed by a severe hail-storm which, pelting us without pity, gave us a taste of the storms that must rage on the summit. The view from the summit is good. We settled with our guide, who now left, giving us obscure directions for our descent on the other side. In a few minutes all were gone and I was left alone on the mountain summit. I arranged my plans and began to write a letter, but my friends were so far in advance, and it was so bitterly cold that I also soon bade farewell to this abode of wind and winter.

August 10.—We arranged to proceed to Dingwall and make the ascent of Ben Wyvis. Reaching Connon Bridge, took a short cut across the hills. We passed one of the loveliest little lochs in the world—all around was as still as death. A beautiful island lies in the loch, covered with wood, and all around the loch is beautifully wooded. Such a spot one might retire to and there be a hermit. At Strathpeffer found the hotels all full.

August 11.—Got breakfast and set out for the top of Ben Wyvis. On the way up I left the party expecting to get on the top of the hill first, and see them toiling up below me: but we had not been long separated when a heavy mist came on. I pressed on, and when I reached the summit all was mist and darkness. I waited till the mist cleared away and a magnificent prospect opened up. The sun was shining brilliantly on about eight lakes in view scattered among hills, some of these broad sheets of water and others only peeping out from between lofty hills. The mountains rose one after another in gloomy grandeur, their tops now visible and now lost among the white clouds that glided across the landscape."

In such manly and ennobling exercises, did Mr. McDowall spend each returning Autumn bringing back with him to his wearing toil in Edinburgh fresh stock of much needed health. At length after

eight years of diligent preparation he presented himself as a candidate for license before one of the Country Presbyteries of the Free Church. To preach Christ was the cherished object of his desire from the time he first came to know Him. For this end he read and studied whilst his fellow-workmen slept—for this he submitted to severe privations; and when once and again his health threatened to break down, for this he wished its continuance. All was done, as far, at least, as man's motives can be unmixed, that he might be thereby the better fitted to understand the scriptures, and to declare God's mind out of them. The period to which he had long looked forward arrived, and in the summer of 1856 he received authority from the church to preach the gospel.

III.—HIS CHAPLAINCY.

During the struggle that succeeded the Revolution of 1688 the Earl of Angus enroled from the Covenanters of the West for the service of King William a body of Infantry that is still known by the name of the "Cameronian Regiment." The Regiment retains after the lapse of more than one hundred and seventy years, a large infusion of the Presbyterian element. When, in 1843 the Disruption of the Scottish Church took place, the Presbyterians of this Regiment adhered to the Free Church, and from that time they have looked to the Colonial Committee of that church for their supply of chaplains. To this post Mr. McDowall was appointed after receiving license, and in the Summer of 1856 he set sail for the Bermudas, where the regiment was then stationed. He had very superior qualifications for the office to which the Church had appointed him. Himself a soldier's son, he felt an interest in the soldiers. His courtesy of manner, and staid, manly bearing, well comported with his position as an ambassador of Christ amongst military men. His bold, outspoken declaration of the truth appears by the following extract from a sermon addressed to the regiment on that vice—drunkenness—which is the great stain on the otherwise fair fame of the British Army:—

As I pass in and out among you I see many places open for drinking. I see the military prison filled with men who have given their earnings to this vice. I see men ruining their health by this vice and on account of such things my heart is sad. Does my language offend you? Can I see men prostrated for weeks by this sin, can I look over the defaulter's book and find column upon column filled with the records of drunkenness, can I look upon ragged children and worse than motherless babes and not have cause to feel sad and to speak in plain language.—Oh! my men, if talking could redeem you I would find feeling words even to weeping. But I feel I speak to some who are too deep in this sin to reform themselves, even should an angel from heaven speak to them. Oh! is it not horrible to feel everything give way under the feet, everything yielding that is seized, every effort to sustain ourselves baffled, and then to experience the dire horror of falling, falling, falling, down, down, ever down into a dark bottomless abyss, and yet methinks this is not worse than the misery into which the poor drunkard is falling. 'O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself.' You will drink, till the strong man staggers, till the brain reels, till the fine intellect totters, till the

brave arm withers, till the noble heart breaks, and in its breaking, breaks many a heart besides. 'O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself' and where shall help be found?"

After shewing his hearers with great earnestness where help is not to be found, he leads them to the foot of the cross where alone, after all that has been tried, lies effectual power to reform, elevate, and refine the children of men.

His deep and kindly sympathy with the soldiers amid their temptations and sufferings, appears from a letter addressed to Col. Hemphill in behalf of four men then on trial for desertion. After an apology for venturing to interfere in the matter he goes on to say:— "I do not know the men, nor anything further about them than the common report of their attempt at desertion and failure. Sitting here alone I have been making their case my own, I feel for them, and I would venture to entreat your leniency towards them. It may be said that it is necessary to make an example of them; but He who knows the human heart has shown us that mercy goes further to move men than severity. That desertion is a high crime I admit, but as a plea in their behalf let us consider the dull, lifeless solitariness of this place, from which all, who can do it, eagerly hasten to escape. 'Mercy is twice blessed, it blesseth him that gives and him that takes:' but a greater than the poet has said 'Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.' I hope you will not think ill of me for writing you on this matter. I often try to teach the soldiers contentment and submission and trust it is not wrong to plead from you mercy for the erring amongst them."

One great advantage accrued to him from his residence in the Bermudas. Forced, as he was at College, to devote much of his time to earning the means of subsistence, he could in most of the branches of study that came before him, only make a beginning of breaking ground. Settled in a garrison town, the minister of a small congregation, with little demand on his time for visitation, he found ample opportunity to prosecute his studies and to mature his powers as a thinker. To what use he put these three years of comparative seclusion and leisure, was manifest to all those that knew him before and after that period. He read indeed so extensively in the German Theology, that for a time he ran no small risk of losing the simplicity of thought and language that ought ever to characterize the messengers of Christ to fallen man. But amid the solitude of that island home he acquired a large amount of varied learning, and he thought out for himself many questions that other men are content to take on trust. But more than all this, and better far, he there learned unquestioning and uncomplaining submission to the will of God. His was naturally a proud heart, an ambitious mind, and a stubborn will. The troubles through which he had already passed were not, it seems, sufficient to subdue his spirit. Heavier sufferings were in store for him. The seeds of consumption hidden in his constitution from his boy-

hood and quickened into life by his late hours as a student, began in the Bermudas under the influence of a moist and debilitating climate, to bring forth their bitter fruit. What he suffered during the three weary years he stood to his post in that trying climate none ever knew save his Father in heaven. We have seen him shudder at the simple recollection of the bodily pain and mental depression of these days. "The experience of God's people shows," an eminent author remarks, "that bodily pain has a special office to perform in the work of sanctification. In the unrenewed its tendency is to exasperate: when self-inflicted its tendency is to debase and fill the soul with grovelling ideas of God and religion and with low self-conceit. But when inflicted by God on his own children, it, more than anything, teaches them their weakness and dependence, and calls upon them to submit when submission is most difficult. Though he slay me, I will trust in him, is the expression of the highest form of faith." Before Mr. McDowall left Bermuda matters reached that blessed issue with him. The ordering of his way, the burden to be borne, the path to be trodden, the provision for the journey, the early or late coming of the final rest, all were with the simplicity of a child left by him in the hands of the Lord Jesus whose he was and whom to the last he strove to honor and please. His was now very literally, indeed, the language of the hymn, a copy of which was found among his papers :—

My God whose gracious pity I may claim,
Calling Thee Father, sweet endearing name,
The sufferings of this weak and weary frame
All, all are known to Thee.

From human eye 'tis better to conceal
Much that I suffer, much I hourly feel;
But Oh! this thought does tranquilize and heal,
All, all is known to thee.

And this continual feebleness, this state
Which seemeth to unnerve and incapacitate
Will work the cure my hopes and fears await,
That I can leave with Thee.

And welcome, *precious* can thy spirit make
My little drop of suffering for thy sake;
Father! the cup I drink, the path I take,
All, all is known to Thee.

The Rev. Mr. Thorburn, the resident Presbyterian minister of the Bermudas, thus writes of Mr. McDowall :—

"His public appearances indicated research and careful preparation and were generally appreciated. He was fond of physical exercise and made frequent excursions among and upon the different Islands. His health not improving he took first a short trip in the autumn of 1857 to the United States of America, and then finally resolved to leave the Bermudas altogether and fix his residence in Canada. This step was not generally approved by his medical advisers and

other friends. It was thought the climate of Canada would be too severe for his delicate frame, but his heart was set on going thither and although an appointment was meanwhile secured for him in Antigua, W. I., to Canada he went in May, 1859. On tendering the resignation of his chaplaincy he received from the gallant and generous Cameronians a handsome present of books as a token of personal esteem and grateful acknowledgment of service."

IV.—HIS MISSIONARY LIFE.

While at College Mr. McDowall's thoughts were often towards Canada as a place where he would like to labor for Christ. The hope that the bracing air of the Canadian winter might help to restore his shattered health revived his old desire, and on quitting his post in the Bermudas he took ship to New York for Canada. He thus speaks of the journey in writing back to a friend in May, 1859:—

"As the vessel sailed out of the Sound I looked round on all sides, sometimes wondering whether or not this was to be my last look of the Bermudas; yet I had no feeling of that kind, but felt as if I was coming back in a short time to see the place again. We had a passage of nine days with twenty-four hours of rough weather and twice we were becalmed. It is a dreary life on board ship. There is so little to occupy attention that one can be said to do little else than vegetate. But Oh! it was a rare and delicate sight to see land again. The deep green sent a thrill through me as when I have heard sweet music. Landed at New York and it being Sabbath, went to hear Dr. Cheever preach. He preached for two hours, but I did not think much of him. Took the *Isaac Newton* to Albany and thence the railroad to Niagara Falls."

As a specimen of the thoughts with which he sometimes averted sadness from himself and amused harmlessly, his friends, we quote the following from his description of the passage to Albany by the river-boat:—

"I wrapped my plaid round my throat and sat on deck and enjoyed to its fulness the beautiful banks of the Hudson. As I grew tired of this I looked round on the people about me, and as I had nothing special to occupy my mind, do what I would, their noses would take up my attention. The nose of every face I looked at seemed to invite, nay demand, my attention. I then began to institute comparisons between these noses, noses masculine, noses feminine, &c., and I always found a difference of nose on every face, for there were no two in all points alike. I then began to wonder what it was that constituted this difference. I analyzed a few of them and tried to reduce the thing to a scientific formula, and some day I may entertain, if not instruct you, with a dissertation on noses."

Of a kindred nature is the following description of an incident very characteristic of the Americans and equally characteristic of our friend,—that happened on the cars between Albany and Niagara:—

"I entered the car, chose a seat by the window, hung up my bag, laid by my umbrella, and sitting down began to eat an orange. I had scarce begun when a gentleman, with two ladies appeared at the end of my seat and asked me to vacate it for the ladies. I was doubtful whether he was addressing me or not, I looked about on all sides to make sure he was not addressing some other party. I then looked at him, a steady look, still sucking my orange. Says he 'You may as well leave at once, for if the Conductor comes you'll have to.' I said nothing.

Now you must know there were plenty of seats empty but the party wished to sit together and thought they could do so best where I sat; but, because I thought the gentleman rude and unreasonable I made up my mind to keep the seat where I had made myself so comfortable. One of the ladies made some remarks far from flattering to myself personally, but I said nothing, and looked as if I heard nothing, sucking my orange all the while. The gentleman came with the Conductor, the latter asked if I would give up my seat to the two ladies, but I quietly told him I had chosen this seat as I wished to read and be generally comfortable and I did not intend to leave it. So they went away and I saw no more of them."

After residing for a few months in Canada, preaching during that time in various places, he thus writes of his health:—

"I set off to travel on foot to Woodstock. For seven miles I kept the railway track, till I came to Princeton, and then took the plank road to my destination. I find that two miles an hour is my utmost rate of travel now instead of four—my old standard. Ah! Bermuda has taken all the strength out of me and to what extent I knew not till I tried my old habit of long walks. However I thank God I am getting better and stronger, of which I could give you proof."

In June 1859 he was appointed for a few months, by the Hamilton Presbytery, assistant to Dr. Bayne of Galt. As he had intense admiration for Dr. Bayne he was well pleased with an appointment that gave him an opportunity of seeing often, and of hearing once each Sabbath, this truly great and good man. The appointment was welcomed also as a brief rest in his wandering sort of life as a preacher.

"I am more delighted," he writes, "than I can tell you, and more thankful to God than I can express, for this prospect of rest—and a home for a few weeks. You have never wandered hither and thither without a home or a resting place. One who has, can be content, I think, with the shelter of a large tree or a great rock, if he could only look upon it as his home and the place to which he might return in his wanderings. One thing, however, I am confident of, that God in whose service I am will find me work and a rest. The work may not be ready for me yet, or I may not be ready for it—but I will wait patiently for these preparations and meanwhile I must be busy preparing myself. And, Dear Friend, do not neglect to wait upon God, and to read his book so as to make yourself acquainted with it."

One Sabbath evening while in Galt, on returning home, after conducting divine service, with his heart glowing with love to Jesus, he thus wrote to a very dear friend, then at a great distance from him:—

"I have heard people express satisfaction at the thought that they and their distant friends could look upon the same moon and the same stars. But to me it gives satisfaction that you believe in the same Jesus Christ as I do; that your prayers as well as mine are presented through the same mediator; and that we find pardon of our sins in the same grace. I draw near to Christ for a higher motive than because you draw near to him, yet Christ seems more precious to me when I remember that he is your Christ too, and you are more dear to me when I think that you are Christ's. If when I think of my Saviour I should happen to think also of you, it will be to commend you to the mercy and grace of Christ, and if when I think of you I am also led to think of Christ, it will be with thanks to him for this new bond of association. There is a joy I feel in the prospect of fellowship in heaven with the saints made perfect, and perhaps it is something akin to this I feel at the knowledge of your trust in Christ in the prospect of communion and fellowship in Christ when we meet. As to earthly possessions and earthly enjoyments I have no great anticipations, but I like sometimes to indulge the thought of the satisfaction we may yet enjoy in seeking Christ together, in

consoling and strengthening and instructing each other in Christ Jesus our Lord."

It was with regret he left Galt in October of that year, (1859) for he was much attached to not a few of the people, from whom he received considerate and unwearied kindness. With sad feelings, about a month afterwards, he paid a visit to the place.

"This day week," he writes on the 11th of Nov., "I left Woodstock for Galt, and on the way was told that Dr. Bayne was dead. It was told me by a stranger and in a casual manner. For the rest of my journey I was wrapt in deep thought. Mrs. S——, received me kindly and soon had tea ready for me, but the thought of the loss of Dr. Bayne lay heavy on my heart. Mr. Geikie asked me to preach in his place in the forenoon as he was not able to face the people. I consented, and took as my text, John xiv. 3. The Sabbath was beautiful and the large church was full, very full, a vast sea of human faces directed towards me. Had I thought of man or men, I should have failed, but I placed myself in the presence of Jesus Christ and was strengthened. I saw the corpse and it was so life-like that I expected the lips to move, but I laid my hand on his brow and that was cold as clay. I knew him only for about three months but I learned to love him and I miss him. He was very kind to me, sometimes as attentive to me as if I were a lady. Dr. Bayne was a man of great value to the church and his loss will be felt for years to come."

To judge from his letters he received but little benefit from the climate of Canada :—

"You ask me the cause of my long silence," he writes towards the end of 1859. "There is some of the Bermuda poison in my frame, and it is taking a long time to work itself out. On first coming here I strove to throw it off, but there was too much of it and it was too deeply seated. But by degrees I strove less and less, and when winter came and more effort seemed yet necessary I got discouraged, and I have retired to Galt like a fox to his hole, or rather like a bear to the hollow of his tree. Here I have nothing to do and I do nothing but mope about all the day, go soon to bed and rise late, sit over the stove in one room, then go into another room and sit over the stove in it, but it would be miserably tedious for you to hear how one could continue to be so idle and so useless. As to writing or any thing like it just catch me at that! And besides, all this I carefully abstain from all that can excite me to think much. You will hence naturally think very meanly of me for being so extravagantly idle, and were I to allow myself to think on the matter I would think very meanly of myself. Indeed there are only two things I have formed any purpose of doing, and that is reading my Bible and occasionally writing you."

Under all that playful humour there lay the sad fact—which sometimes forced itself on his friends—that his disease had obtained too deep a root to be affected by any regimen or any change of climate. Under these lay also keen suffering. It was only by ingenious devices, and in a reclining posture that at times he could carry on his writing. His depression of spirit and difficulty of breathing were often great and his nights frequently sleepless. For all this it was seldom a complaint escaped his lips, and seldom indeed did he allow his weakness and pain to interfere with his public duties. Time and again did he preach twice without being able from Saturday evening to Sabbath night to take anything but light drinks. What this sore suffering was doing for him and in him we can gather from words like these :—

"I am filled with weary thoughts and beset with deep longings. Sometimes they are transient, but sometimes they take such hold of me that I cannot shake

them off. I sometimes think I have a long and heavy probation appointed me, and again I remember it is less, very much less, than I deserve, and if it should continue thus even to the end if I am saved by Jesus Christ at last it will be well for me. I have just been meditating on this passage, 1 Cor. xiii. 1. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Charity or love is the life giving element in all gifts and in all virtues. It is with no mock humility I say, that for want of this love I am but such a tinkling cymbal, and I can look for no effect in my preaching when I lack this love. Yet I have sought for it. Perhaps not earnestly enough, or perhaps God is answering me now and by the very things I am apt to complain of. "Oh Lord," my prayer is, "give me this love." Then the Lord answers by sending me this indifferent health. Then I cry out "Oh Lord restore my health." but which am I to have—the love or the health? And then I say "Oh Lord give me love and let thy will be done." I am fully convinced that God is doing all for my good and am greatly patient though now and then I forget myself and fret—but this is soon corrected.

In 1862 he thus writes to one of his friends :—

"I am still unsettled. Every petty place rejects me, and all, as far as I can understand, for the same reason—the state of my health. My health is better than it was last year, but the difference is not great. Is it any wonder if I sometimes get dispirited and lose courage? But my Dear Mr.—God is good and he supports me. I get strength from Him and am made joyful again : and he shall yet make me to see good according to the days in which I have seen evil. In the Psalms we often find this exhortation—"Trust in the Lord." "Trust I say in the Lord." And I too join chorus in this, and I also say, Trust in the Lord. Blessed be his name. Full of many sad thoughts I have come to Galt—and here I am again encouraged, and will be patient still. I purpose to remain here over the winter to see if I can get as much strength as will keep me from leaving the good people to whom I preach."

Some five months afterwards he thus writes to the same friend :—

"I think my health is somewhat improved of late. I feel better this spring than I have done since I came to Canada, though I am still in an ambiguous state. What the will of my master Jesus is with regard to me I know not. He says "Wait," and wait I must, sometimes with impatience, yet I try to repress that and am dumb. I need correction, subduing, and I am I fear very hard, and need heavy blows. But any way He pleases. My chief desire is that at last He may admit me to His presence and society, though in ever so remote a degree. A nod of recognition from some great man would make some people feel happy for a week or more; and a smile from Jesus, King and Lord as he is now, might suffice for one's happiness for a very long while."

Having received from the writer of this memoir an invitation to visit the County of Grey in the hopes that the journey, and the change of air, might benefit him, he thus replies :—

"I have not written a letter since the last I wrote to yourself. I am indeed dead to the world almost : this in some cases might be a virtue, but alas ! I am scarce alive to anything else. The journey you planned for me was more than I could hitherto undertake. But when the winter is fairly away and the roads good I shall make an effort to reach your place and spend a few weeks with you. I am not going up to work, but to have a chat with you. I will drive my own horse and gig, and I expect to be a week on the road, for I shall not travel more than fifteen or twenty miles a day.

"Are there any glaciers in your neighbourhood. Your abode is in the higher regions, the Highlands, the Alps of Canada ! Oh ! Canada ! here are no mountains girdling the horizon, and shewing through their cleft tops ; the far sky beyond, And music there is none, no laverock singing high up among the blue.

There are big trees, though, and harsh-voiced frogs. Could I write poetry, which I doubt, I would project a poem on Canada in alternate lines of blame and praise. However, one great check to evil doing is the limited ability of evil agents. My kind regards to Mrs. ——— and thanks for her kind invitation. I am afraid I will be a great trouble to her, but if I improve in health I will become less fastidious."

This journey he accomplished, in the month of May, 1862, with manifest benefit to his health. During his sojourn in Chatsworth he preached in various places, and having been prevailed upon to give up the habit of reading his sermons, he was heard everywhere with great acceptance. Such entries as the following occur in his journal of this period :

June 8th, 1862.—Preached in St. Vincent extempore, and mean to try and do so always. Text John xv. 1—8.

July 20th.—Preached to-day at St. Vincent and Sydenham: returned home the same night. I felt tired and on the way was once asleep on horseback: am the better of coming home, for I can get a nice rest, which I cannot get when I am away from home.

July 23.—Can do nothing. Every day steeped in sadness, unable to read, write, or think. I always get sleep on lying down and still I am tired, and have not enough.

August 3rd.—The only thing I care for is to pore over a book or sleep. I used to feel light enough for a little grave music, but now I can't think of it.

August 10th.—Preached to-day in Euphrasia, at the opening of the new church, from Ephesians ii. 19—22. I tried to shew what a church is and what the conduct ought to be, of those attending it. This day rode sixteen miles and preached twice and was not very tired: thanks be to God for that strength.

For three years he continued to preach with acceptance in various places in Western Canada. Three things, however, operated against his being called during that period to the permanent charge of a congregation—the delicate state of his health, the abstract and intellectual cast of his preaching, and the habit of closely reading his sermons.

V.—HIS PASTORATE.

In the summer of 1862, Mr. McDowall received a call to the pastoral charge of the congregations of St. Vincent, Sydenham, and Euphrasia, in the Presbytery of Grey. Over these congregations he was ordained on the last day of that year, two of his old classmates at Edinburgh taking part in the ordination services, the first in connection with the Presbyterian Church that were ever witnessed in that neighbourhood. It was indeed a joyous day for those who had prayed earnestly, and waited long, for a minister to break amongst them the bread of life. For them God had prepared a pastor; and for him He had prepared a flock; and to both pastor and flock—each peculiarly tried, and both found faithful—the Lord Jesus seemed on that day to have given fulfilment of his promise to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

The district in which his parish mainly lay, overlooks in many spots the waters of the Georgian Bay—an eastern extension of Lake

Huron. From several of its heights a view is obtained of forest, flood, and island, such as seldom greets the eye of the traveller in Western Canada. To him whose love for the beauties of nature was so great, this prospect was a source of constant joy. Often would he pause in riding across these high lands to gaze out over the vast forest, broken only here and there by the settler's axe, and outward across the beautiful bay, till the eye rests on the Christian Islands, and the sandy beach of the opposite coast, seen dimly in the distance. He thus writes of his forest home in the autumn of the year :

"These old forests as they stand around us bordering the horizon or stretching away to the cold North in their deep solitude, are always grand. Sometimes their grandeur is of the stern cheerless aspect—when deep snows cover the earth, and the dark leafless branches stand between the cold white snow beneath, and the clear heavens above. But oftener their grandeur is more genial in aspect. Even in winter, if the forest is of pine trees, its dark green stands out in lively contrast with the pure white snows resting on every branch. But twice in each year these old forests are full of attractive loveliness, nor can the eye most familiar to them, forbear to gaze on them with pleasure. In spring, when the snows are almost gone and the swollen dark river is carrying away the last morsel of detached ice. Ah then, what charming beauty is in the deep green of the forests still spreading in extent, and deepening in greenness! And again, at this season, when the year, the natural year has reached its maturity, when each leaf has nearly completed its mission, and ere the trees strip themselves for their winter's conflict with snows and storms, what beauty clothes these old forests! What mellow ripe calm loveliness! What huge masses of richly colored foliage, and with what variety of tints they roll away, terrace beyond terrace! There, still linger the various shades of green that deck the summer as if the leaves were loath to put off their greenness yet. There too are the darker hues of green, of pine, of hemlock, and of cedar. There, there are all the shades of brown from light to dark—the russet of the maple, the dark brown of the beech, the mingled green and brown and red of the brave old oak, and here and there peep out the bright red of some creeping vine, or the brighter red of the sumach. Such are the colors and hues that garnish the mighty forest. Such, at present, is the chief feature in the landscape of many parts of Canada. The fields do not attract the attention now. They have become bare and unattractive. But the forest attracts. The eye falls upon it—rests upon it, and again turns to view its beauty. The eye lingers on it, even where but fragments of the old forest stand. But where the unbroken forest stretches away like an immense ocean, the eye settles upon it, and the mind lapses into an attitude of repose; vast time, vast space, and unspeakable beauty are linked together, and the soul reposes for a little in the vastness and the loneliness."

He entered on his work in that district with hope and energy. He preached twice on Sabbath, riding to fulfil these appointments on an average some ten or twelve miles each day. Never, we understand, save perhaps once, did he fail to keep his appointments. No matter how sleepless the Saturday night had been, no matter how wearied and feverish the dawn of Sabbath found him, no matter how wet or cold the weather and how muddy the roads, he was in his saddle, with military precision and in his place in the pulpit at the fixed time. He thus writes with regard to his work:—

"I have great work to do here if I could only overtake it—some of it I do overtake, viz., to preach on Sabbath and to examine the schools in the neighborhood, but as to visiting I have not done much in that way yet. At Sydenham we meet for worship in the School house, which is too small; so we go into the bush which

is close by. In the bush there is plenty of room, and the leaves make a shade from the sun. The forms are arranged for the women, the men sit on logs or round the roots of trees and I get in front of them and preach to them there. What do you think of that? This preaching in the bush prevents me from *reading* and so I have to preach now without having a scrap of paper before me, and what do you think of that?"

It is pleasant and profitable to note the instances that fall under our own personal knowledge wherein the Lord confirms the statements and promises of his Word by the events of his Providence. "A father of the fatherless is God in his holy habitation." Psalm lxxviii. 5. "The poor committeth himself unto thee: thou art the helper of the fatherless." Psalm x. 14. Such is God according to the testimony of his own word and emphatically such was he in the providence of the life we are now sketching. There was much no doubt in the circumstances of Mr. McDowall, and much in his character, well fitted to draw from feeling and noble natures, sympathy and esteem towards him. But behind all these was the eye and the arm of his Heavenly Father who so ordered it that wherever his afflicted servant's lot was cast, friends were raised to minister to his wants. We need only instance the considerate and unwearied kindness of friends in Galt, whereof on one occasion shortly after his settlement in St. Vincent he thus writes:—

"I received the box you sent. It arrived on Monday night. And your address—worth the whole. I am quite at a loss. You are much kinder than I deserve. And you have all given me so many tokens of your kindness, once and again, and again. Surely you are not weary in well doing. Though I wonder whether I should say it is well-doing seeing it is done to me. Somehow I think I have no right to receive well-doing from any one—and indeed I would never have any right to complain if people were only to abstain from doing me injury. But what ever I may expect or look for, or not expect and not look for, you mean it for good. And as such I receive it—I am grateful to you all. I receive it—not as anything done to me, but as expressive of your goodwill towards me, and not as to me altogether but rather, I believe, to what of the Lord Jesus you think you see in me. Alas! that it should be so little that you have seen. Surely I may say, I being without father, or mother, or sister, or brother, surely I may say, that He hath given to me in this life both fathers, and mothers, and sisters and brothers, and goods in abundance."

It is a law in nature, that the depths of the valleys, in any country, are generally as is the height of its hills. Where we find valleys whose gloom the mid-day sun can scarce dispel, there also we see mountains on whose top rest no clouds. And even thus, the heart that feels the deepest grief, is the heart that knows the highest joy. The grief and the joy are, indeed, the complements of each other, the light and shade of the same picture. Thus do these feelings run side by side, in contrast, and yet in harmony, through the life and the letters of our brother. At one time he seems surrounded with the gloom of the valley of the shadow of death, as may be gathered from such passages as these in his letters:

"I get very dull sometimes, and lose all interest in every living thing I can think of. My soul becomes as it were dormant, and even my Saviour hides his face, or something conceals him from me. Ah! my dear friend, I am glad and thankful that your thoughts ascend to God for me."

From similar depths he cries, thus, on another occasion :

"I am getting into a state of great indifference to most things. If on any occasion I feel a little enthusiasm about any thing, I am inclined to laugh at myself afterwards for it. And this is not confined to one thing, but it extends to every thing, even my own life. I seem at times to care little whether I live or not. I endeavour to keep up an interest in my Saviour and in my Salvation, but that too, is of a cold character. . . . I just thought I had a Father in heaven and I did not feel so lonely after that. This is one of the comforts of Christianity, for the Bible says 'when father and mother forsake me then the Lord will take me up.' Surely they are blessed who have this confidence and can appropriate this language. Yet the knowledge of that blessing comes, in all its fullness only from having felt the want of it. It is sweet from the previous bitter.

Sometimes I think this word, or something like it, may have been pronounced concerning me. 'The Lord hath rejected thee from being a pastor of his people.' I shall wait to see what the Lord will do with me. How long this waiting must be I know not, but this must soon have an end."

Thus, at times, did he walk in darkness; but by and by the day broke. And when he was himself again, instead of taking interest in nothing, he had an eye for every thing beautiful and a heart for every thing human. "Mr. S——," he writes "has a very fine family, and one child so pretty that I felt a pleasure in looking at her." And again, "I passed to-day the finest tree I have ever seen; an elm tree standing on the roadside. It was so great and graceful that I looked at it with more pleasure than on the child whereof I wrote. Its trunk was very thick, and as straight as an arrow far up, where it divided itself into two branches. These shooting up high, and spreading out wide formed a majestic head, presenting a finer appearance than any palm." The habits, gambols, and adventures of even the lower animals did not escape his notice nor fail to amuse him. Travelling through the country, he has occasion to rest for dinner, when for the amusement of a distant friend he humorously chronicles the following:—

"While waiting I was amused at seeing a cat among the pigs that were feeding on the roadside. Cats, as you know, like at times to rub themselves. This puss had discovered that a pig's snout was a charming chance for this purpose: and so she would brush along one side, and then turn round and make another pass on the other side, her tail, all the while, raised on high as if in a state of great enjoyment. Mr. Pig grazed along for a time without heeding her, but growing tired of the play, he gave her one whip with his snout that sent her flying half a dozen yards away and thus their friendship ended."

But let us hasten to graver matters.

The Presbytery of Grey, of the Canada Presbyterian church, is essentially a missionary presbytery, supplying with ordinances between twenty and thirty thousand Presbyterians scattered over a district nearly as large as the State of Connecticut. From Collingwood, and the Georgian Bay, it extends to Southampton on Lake Huron, and from the borders of the County of Wellington, to Colpoys Bay in the Indian Peninsula, a district 70 miles in length by some 60 miles in breadth. On the writer's first visit to this district in 1856 there were but three Presbyterian ministers within the wide country lying between Fergus and Owen Sound. Seven years thereafter,—the date of Mr. McDowall's settlement—the

numbers had increased, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Grey alone, to fourteen. It is very manifest, however, that even that number must be heavily burdened to meet the spiritual wants of such a district, and that, ere the matter could be attempted, each minister must perform a large amount of missionary work. Mr. McDowall never pleaded delicate health as any excuse from his share of this travel, and toil, and trying absence from home.

"I have been undergoing great labor of late," he writes on the 24th of Feb. 1863. "The week before last I was one of a Committee of Presbytery to visit some Stations. This took us two days,—Tuesday and Wednesday. After our work was done I went on Wednesday night from Meaford to Thornbury to Mr. Gauld's. On Thursday I rested and on Friday went to a place some six miles along the Lake Shore to see if a mission station could be established there. Having arranged to exchange pulpits with Mr. Gauld, I preached in Thornbury in the forenoon and after dinner set out for Meaford. The road was slippery, the wind chilly, and my pony exceedingly lively. Trying to pull my rug round my shoulders I dropped my whip. In trying to turn *Prince*, he swung quick round, upset the cutter, and away back to Thornbury he went at the gallop. I stood and watched him till a turn of the road took him out of sight. I then went after him and found him in the tavern stable at Thornbury with his right hind leg cut from the knee to the hoof—laid bare to the bone; and the cutter—my new cutter—well broken. I hired a horse to take me to Meaford and got there in time to preach to the people assembled there. I got home on Monday. On Tuesday went to Sydenham and spent the day in examining the school, drinking tea in public, and making speeches. On Wednesday set off for Chatsworth to Mr. Cameron's,—sixteen miles,—delivered a lecture, and came back the same night—getting home between two and three o'clock in the morning. Then on Sabbath I preached twice, travelling, between coming and going, some twenty miles. I am tired but it has not prostrated me as I feared it might do."

On the meetings of Presbytery he gave diligent attendance interesting himself in the details of its business. In the Synod his powers of debate were only beginning to be felt, and the unfavourable impression his self-assertion made on strangers was only beginning to be removed when his attendance there forever ceased. Time and altered circumstance have probably ere now convinced the Canada Presbyterian Church that his amendment in the College debate of 1864, though lost by a large majority—indicated the best course for that Church, for the present at least, in the matter of Theological education:—"That the Synod feel the great importance of having at least one well equipped Theological Hall, and resolve that the staff of Theological Professors in Knox College shall consist of not fewer than three Theological Professors."

VI. HIS CHARACTER AND DEATH.

It has been well remarked—"That he that would excel as a minister of Christ must unite the unction of the Mystic, the simplicity of the Moravian, and the deep clear judgment of the Calvinist." Sound judgment, clear and forcible reasoning, were, from the outset, distinguishing characteristics of Mr. McDowall as a preacher. His danger would have lain, indeed, in too extreme a cultivation of the mere understanding, did not sickness lay here an arrest upon him.

Nor was he wanting in a certain guileless simplicity,—unsuspecting and child-like,—that might be termed Moravian. For a man, indeed, that had been tossed about so much in an evil and selfish world, he remained strangely ignorant of its ways. Though a scholar of rare cultivation and acquirement,—he settled down as a backwood's minister without a murmur, nay cheerfully accepted the homely realities of that position. To the humblest of his flock he was as considerate and courteous as to the first gentleman in the land. He never, as ministers coming from the old country to the colonies too often do—foolishly sighed after the refinements and associations of home, though he often missed them. This loss he considered as a part of his sacrifice for Christ. He felt happy in his flock and work, and once and again remarked that he could scarcely find it in his heart to leave them, though called to a larger and wealthier congregation.

But Divine unction is an endowment of a higher and a rarer kind. It cometh only from close communion with God. But this communion is the special fruit, in his own people, of God's fatherly chastening. The chastisement of pain was increasingly his, and closer and still closer to God therefore did his soul draw as he,—

“Walked thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
Of that vast ocean we must sail so soon.”

“There is a character in the Bible” he remarked, a few weeks before his death, to a few friends, who were talking in his hearing of Bible characters, “there is one character, in the Bible who is my Champion and to me above these all.” To the question which character that was? He replied with emotion.—“The Lord Jesus.” And as he, driven by suffering and drawn by love, drew nearer to this Jesus, his preaching grew in fervour and divine unction. In the writer's last conversation with him we talked of the spiritual condition of many of our people, and he said that the conviction was growing on him, that henceforward his own preaching must be more simple and more directly to the heart and conscience. Jesus as the Saviour of sinners,—“He is able to save to the uttermost,” was his last theme in the Presbyterian Church at Chatsworth, where he had preached so often. As a weary man who had often pillowed his own head on the bosom of that Saviour, he magnified his power to save, his mercy, tenderness and love, and, as a dying man to dying men, besought his hearers to come to him, to come quickly, and to come often, that they might experience for themselves whereof he spoke. It was not however till Mr. McDowall had felt the solemn responsibility of a settled pastorate; till he found, from close and personal intercourse with his flock, how needful it was to be urgent with them about their salvation; till he had learned to preach as from the heart without the intervention of manuscripts,—till the peaceable fruit of chastisement was beginning to ripen on him; till towards the close, indeed, of his brief ministry, that it could be said that heavenly unction, equally with

simplicity and judgment, was a prominent feature in his character as an ambassador of Christ. Then his "profiting appeared to all." The effect produced by his emaciated appearance, his slow deliberate utterance, his striking and original thoughts, his careful choice of simple and weighty words; this effect was latterly, as God's discipline was telling on him, much intensified by the holy importunity with which he pleaded with God for the people, and the glowing fervour with which he pleaded with the people for God.

Two years had nearly elapsed from the date of Mr. McDowall's settlement. Outwardly things were beginning to look brighter for him. His congregation, intelligent above the average, appreciated his close, clear, thinking, and simple unadorned eloquence. They sympathized with him in his bodily weakness. They esteemed the conscientiousness with which he discharged amid all weathers, the duties of his ministry. And they treated him with marked kindness and consideration. He had entered on the enjoyment of a home, a comfort unknown to him from the time death bereaved him of sisters and parents. That home was pleasantly situated, commanding a wide prospect of fields and woods; it was furnished with every necessary comfort; and its library,—books gathered in college days,—contained "many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore." To this pleasant and peaceful retreat,—a genuine Scotch manse in the bosom of the forest,—came in due course of time, wife,—a true helpmate and every way worthy of him,—and little boy; and here often met a few old friends to talk of the wild tumultuating world, the roar of whose angry breakers scarcely reached this "lodge in the vast wilderness" to talk also of Jesus and to devise measures for the furtherance of his cause in that new country. But he, whose ways are often encompassed by clouds and darkness to the children of men, saw fit that this should not continue. In his providence he orders it often that the soldier falls on the eve of victory, and that the husbandman dies when the harvest for which he has toiled is about to fall before the sickle. It was so ordered for our friend. The disease that had so early marked him for its victim was constantly gaining ground albeit so noiselessly that its progress was scarcely perceived by himself or others. The good master saw that his servant was weary in his work though not weary of it and that now he needed rest; so he sent to call him home. Like Mr. Standfast,—that excellent pilgrim, "he loved to hear his Lord spoken of, and wherever he saw the print of his shoe in the earth there he coveted to set his foot too. His name was to him as a civet box: yea sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to him was most sweet, and his countenance he more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His word he did use to gather for his food and for antidotes against his faintings." But he was now near the end of his journey. His toilsome days were drawing near to a close. He was about to depart to "see that head that was crowned with thorns and that face that was spit upon

for him." The passage over the dark river was easy and very quick :—

"He had attended a meeting of Session," writes a friend in October, 1864, "held the singing class as he was wont, took supper heartily, wrote till about eleven o'clock, and retired in his usual health,—better indeed than usual. He awoke Mrs. McDowall a little after midnight with a slight fit of coughing followed by vomiting. He asked her to fetch a light.—She did so. When he saw the blood he told her he had burst a blood vessel. On her asking what she could do for him, he replied—'Nothing : pray for me. I have been an unworthy minister of Jesus Christ.' After a few words in reference to herself and the future, he ceased to speak and seemed engaged in prayer. Gradually his head fell back, and he died without a struggle, gently as if he was falling asleep, on Thursday morning."

Thus he passed away in the autumn of 1864, in the 38th year of his age, and in the second year of his pastorate. And when, time and again, the golden gates open thus to receive into the celestial city our beloved ones, much missed here, and when we "look in after them and behold the city shine like the sun, the streets paved with gold and in them walking many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands and golden harps to sing praises withal," then let us, kind reader, pray that we too, when our work here is done, may get to be among them.

The funeral service was conducted amid the tears of old and young and of not a few strong men unaccustomed to weep. He was laid in the burying ground on the 9th concession of the township of St. Vincent. A stone erected by the Congregation marks his grave. But a more enduring memorial of him exists in the fruits of his short ministry. He gave to the Presbyterian cause, in that district, form and organization ; he won completely the hearts of the people ; he comforted not a few with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God ; but more than all this, he was instrumental,—it is believed by those who know the district best—in bringing some to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. When we consider what God thus did in him and by him, then we see the wisdom of the providential discipline,—as was written of a young minister who died a few weeks after him,—which if it made him more pensive than his neighbors and more of a pilgrim than is usual with modern christians, withal purged out the ambition and the self-will and left only the saintliness. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous ; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby."

REMAINS.

ADDRESS.

[DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1861, OF THE GALT BRANCH OF THE TRACT SOCIETY.]

In treating this subject—the utility of Tracts and their distribution—isolated and by itself, one might be tempted to over-estimate the power and influence of Tracts. It is easy to over-rate a thing; when the mind is concentrated for a little upon it, one might be tempted to speak of the power and influence of Tracts as if there were nothing equal to them, nothing to be compared with them, among all the means that are employed for drawing the thoughts of men either to themselves, or away from themselves, and to God.

We might speak of, or think of the great possible results that are to arise from the distribution of Tracts; and so speak of them as to arouse great expectations in the minds of those who attend. But when the results are looked for, the large promised results, lo! none of them present themselves. When after three years of tract distribution nothing very great or very startling has been reported: and when after other three or more years of tract distribution, the same lack of great results present themselves; or it may be the lack of any result, which one could lay his hand upon, a reaction is apt to set in upon the mind; the promised results do not appear—the expected good does not show itself, and many are disappointed and are ready to say, where is the use of continuing the matter? We would, therefore, endeavour to avoid anything like exaggerating this matter; we would desire to set it in its true light—or as near to that as we can do. We would desire to look at it as it is—to look at tracts and their distribution not as a very great matter. And in comparison with other influences we are ready to concede that Tracts are but small and weak, aye, *almost* despicable, if one would wish to express it thus far.

What are the results we may expect to appear from Tracts and their distribution? Some might look for great and numerous results; for great conversions; for many conversions to God, or for some very marked cases; for some changes of life, of a very striking, or even startling character. But is not this aiming all too high? Is not this an ambition rather to be held in check, than stimulated to fervid hopes? Such conversions have indeed happened from Tracts,—and cheering it is to hear of such; but they only happen now and then, and in comparison with the number of Tracts printed, circulated and read, they are few and far between. Indeed conversions are not so easy,—they are not so frequent,—they are,

considering the number of souls that live, but rare events, even under the best and most potent influences. Yet, though Tracts may not be but rarely employed—so far as our knowledge of the matter goes, may be but rarely employed for the conversion of men, they are not without their influence, both *without the circle of those who are converted, and also within that circle.*

It takes many causes to bring about any one result. No result, or but very few results are effected by one cause or mean; but there are many means to each result. And much more is this the case in producing change upon the complicated creature that man is: and still more in producing such radical change as is implied in the conversion of the man. In the complicated creature that man is, it takes many a cause to produce in him any great result, or a one cause often repeated. And to bring about a worthy change in him, it takes all the means, all the causes, both the little and the great, to produce such a result. And when the result is brought about, one cause will appear prominent, others will appear less prominent, and others will not appear at all.

Tracts are a set of means, a set of means in themselves insignificant, we will admit; yet they have their place. And let them take their place, and they will play their part. By themselves they may not accomplish much. Let them combine with other causes, and they will, if not singly, yet in such combination produce results which may become matter of remark and wonder, and of much praise to God; sometimes in such results the Tracts appearing in the foreground, though it may be as a rare event, giving, however, grounds of confidence that such means are not totally idle and vain.

Many expect great results from Tracts, and seeing them not, they think there are no results. But they perhaps expect more than they are warranted.

If a Tract should never produce one instance of conversion, is the work therefore useless? By no means. Let us look more closely at human nature—more minutely into it.

It is sunk in wickedness, there are abounding sins, abounding temptations, there are deep griefs, there are many sorrows, there are many phases of intellectual life, many phases of feeling, many phases of moral life, that all go to form the life-existence of each day, that altogether make up the life of each individual for every day of human existence. Shall a Tract in its own quiet way, have no word to say to those who are thus passing through their day-by-day existence? Shall a Tract have nothing to say, though it were but once, to the heart that feels its wickedness? Shall a Tract have no word, though it were but once, to help those who are under temptation? Shall a Tract never have any influence to hold some sin in check, or place some passion under restraint? Shall a Tract never, by any chance, speak a word to one in grief, or cheer for a little, one in sorrow? Shall a Tract never, by any accident, as it

were, allay the tumults of a surcharged heart, or wipe away a single tear? In all the varying phases of human life, shall they never speak a word of direction, or counsel, or warning? It would be strange indeed, if even in the multitude of chances such a thing should not happen, but in such a matter we look for a little more than mere probability,—we look for the blessing of the spirit of God. But if, even under the guidance of what is called and understood as probabilities, Tracts should speak such words, at such times; then are they entirely useless? Are they to be despised and thrown aside? Much rather are they not to obtain a wider circulation? Aye, and besides this daily routine of human life, there are, in each life, epochs, when there is needed one to speak the word in season, but when there is none to speak, the patient, quiet Tract, may then fulfil its office and speak the needed word.

If a Tract then, aye, or a hundred of them, have ever been the means of checking a single sin, or helping to overcome a single temptation; of reproving the sinner in his wantonness; of making any one feel even the shame of sin; of causing a sigh for a better life; of recalling the memories of an earlier and purer period of life; of comforting any one who has been downcast; of removing from any soul its doubts and fears; of moving a single soul to a single prayer; of shewing, though for a brief period, the folly and the wretchedness of sin, and the wisdom and the beauty of holiness; of exhibiting, though it were but one brief glimpse, of the excellency and glory, and the mercy and love of Jesus Christ, then this Tract, for these hundred of them, have not been lost, have not been in vain, have not been thrown away, they have accomplished a work, and a good work too.

This may happen, it may happen repeatedly in the experience of one, or in the experience of many, and none know of it but God. All this may happen to those who are born again, and most of it to those not so renewed, and yet there may be no conversions, no decided conversion and turning to God from this alone. But yet, this is no slight matter, considering what creatures we are—creatures of sin and misery, waiting for the development of the judgments of God. For to the tender and pitiful it is not a trifle to mitigate grief in the grieved; to console the downcast, or to excite godly sorrow in the hardened. And this a Tract may do, and if one may not, a number may do it.

Tracts are fitted to do this. They are prepared to do this, and, with God's blessing, they are able to accomplish this, at least. And if they do accomplish it but now and again, and only in some few cases, let no one say it is altogether a vain work to give away a Tract.

These are small results, it is true, but combined with other results they produce great matters, matters that are of importance to many a human heart, and many a family. These are small results, it is true, yet in the sum of human happiness and human misery,

they are not to be despised by those who have a fellow feeling with the joys and sorrows of their kindred.

It may be thought to be a great waste of material, to produce such small results, for we admit still that the results in comparison with other results may seem small, yet the waste is not so much as is spent in much more trifling ways of assisting each other to pass away an hour, to remove a grief, or assuage a pain of heart and mind.

Behold the leaves of trees ; they all fall in Autumn, and any one, or hundreds of them might be taken from the plant, and it would never seem to be missed. And what has each leaf done during its brief period of existence ? At best it has but nourished a bud and caused a little sap to flow ; yet all together produce a years' growth for the tree, and gathers up nourishment for the spring of a coming year, and then they fall and die. Your Tracts are but leaves, many may be lost, blown away, torn or burned, and they do not seem to be missed ; but should they even survive their brief period and be read, they have completed their work, though they have but nourished a bud, and helped to store a little nourishment to the twig, to which they have been attached. And how many seeds in field and forest are never to take root, and never to become a plant ; yet they may afford food for some sweet-voiced bird, or some tiny, active, many-hued insect. Your Tracts contain seeds, or are seeds ; many of them may never, perhaps a very few of them may ever produce a plant, yet they may afford food for some soul, or some feeling of some soul ; may be an element to help to form some song of praise, or to raise a word of earnest prayer. Let not the little things be altogether despised therefore, 'despise not the day of small things.'

There are many drops of water in the magazines of the clouds, many in the streams that roll over the earth, many in the store-houses of the mighty ocean ; and but few of them come to great honor, yet it may be the fate of some chance drop that falls from the skies, to rise in the river's fountain ; to dance its way round rock and over pebble ; to appear now as the froth in the eddies of the current ; to arise now as the bubble on the surface of the stream, presenting the many hues of the rainbow, or reflecting the many forms of grass-leaf, and reed, and sedge, and bush and tree, that it passes in its buoyant course towards the ocean, again to subside and mingle with the many myriads that glide along with it, and in time to appear combined with other matter, as the pearl that gives its lustre to the diadem of the princes of the earth.

And among the many Tracts that have been in circulation and are now passing their rounds, many never come to any open honor, but there have been, and there will be those, which, as they pass will shed their hallowing influences, and will emerge to greater honor than any pearl of any ocean.

There are so many things that occupy the minds and attention

of people; or their minds are so occupied with a few things, that matters of moment, and of great importance to them are kept out of view or forgotten. The epochs of life are not attended to, especially those epochs and turning points that are yet to come. In health, for instance, people think not of the cures and remedies for sickness. In prosperity, they think not of the consolations for adversity. But there are many who are ready to supply the remedies for the one or the other. There are men, who, either for their own gain, and it may be, with a commingled desire to benefit mankind, proclaim far and wide the remedies for certain diseases. For every disease that has a name, and for many a pain that has no name, there are promulgations of medicine. This man and that man has made a discovery in the art of healing, or in the province of therapeutics, and intimation of it is spread through the length and breadth of the land. The art of multiplying information by means of printing becomes the resource, and advertisements abound. At a great expense it is done, agents are employed to make known their virtues, and to extend the knowledge of them. Such medicines are kept constantly before the minds of people. Should any suffering or pain be felt, or disease threaten, there is the advertisement proclaiming the means to cure, and the place to obtain it, with many testimonies to its efficacy. Some who have tested its properties, and felt benefit, are ready also to recommend to others the medicine that cured them. For health is considered a precious thing to those who feel they are losing it, and pain is thought a grievous thing to those who are suffering it. But is the world, and are quacks to monopolize all these advertisements? Are there to be means of cure promulgated in every form of print, of cure for the body, and no advertisement made concerning the disease that preys upon the soul, concerning the balm of Gilead, concerning the Prince of Physicians? Shall the virtues and efficacy of pills and salve and liniment, be announced in every form to attract, and the announcements scattered through every house and home, and no printed word given of the heavenly medicine that resides in the blood shed by Christ who was crucified? Shall roots and bark, and leaves and herbs have their promulgation and their advertisement, and shall there not be sown broadcast, the knowledge of that plant whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

It is the peculiar character of human nature and of the religion which we profess, the religion of Jesus Christ, that people do not seek after it spontaneously. It is the peculiarity of human nature, and of this religion that it has to be brought under the notice of men, and to be kept before them. It is also another peculiarity, if not in every case, then in a great many cases, that when thus kept before the mind, it comes to be attended to, and to bring about many changes in the life, changes for the better in many degrees of change, from the reformation of a single habit to the reformation of a character, the conversion of a soul, and the entire renewal of a

human heart. This knowledge and this information must be kept before the mind: and it is knowledge the most important—it is information of the highest kind. It must be kept before the mind by the living voice, by the living examples of those who profess it, and by the aid of printed matter. By one, or by all these means. If not all, then by one. If not by some one, then by some other. But this will only be done by those who know the value of this knowledge, by those who are aware of the virtues, and who have felt the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. *On them it lies to furnish the information. They must provide the means. They must undertake the little labour it involves.*

This knowledge must be kept before men; must be kept before those who care the least about knowing it, as well also before those who care a little, as well also before those who care much. And what cheaper than a few Tracts? And what more easy to employ than a few Tracts? You may lack courage to speak, a Tract may speak for you. You may lack words, fitting words to speak, a Tract may speak for you. Your words might be offensive, but the Tract may speak when there is no one present. A Tract is not the only means, it is not always the best means, yet it is a means, and let it not therefore be neglected or totally despised.

It is a mere leaf or two. It can lie aside, and will not take offence at neglect. It may be trampled under foot, and yet may not refuse to tell its little story. It can afford to wait with all patience. It can bear disrespect with all equanimity. It may be displaced by another, and yet another, and it is still ready to return to its mission again. It is but a leaf or two, and it almost invites a reader. It is there under the hand. It may be taken up, not in deep thought, but from mere want of thought or employment for the moment, and may create weighty thought and stimulate to activity. All this a Tract is fitted to do. All this it has done. All this it is doing, and yet none of these results may ever be reported on, or recorded in any earthly record.

Despise not entirely the Tract, then, though it be but little, and seem a small means. Give it your contributions. Let it circulate. Let it be read. And even if it should fall and perish, it is not altogether waste. And even in its tatters and its ruin, it may accomplish some kind work, even as the leaf that has fallen from the tree may kindly cover and shelter against exposure the eggs of the next summer's insect, or the flowerbud of the coming spring.

SERMON.

I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.—John xiv, 18.

It was a plan passing wondrous by which the Son of God brought back to his Father a lost world—a world lost, like a stray sheep on the mountains, like a lost child in the big city, like a foolish son in the haunts of vice. “I will go down” He said, “in the form of a man amongst men. I will be as one of themselves. I will choose out a few to be always with me. I will reveal to them glorious truths. I will talk to them of Heaven and of God. They will learn to love me; and their love to me will increase with their knowledge of me. I will show them that I am the Son of God, and when their hearts are bound to me, to me the Son of man, I will then leave them, and carry their hearts with me to heaven. And they will think much about me, and speak of what I told them, and tell them to the nations, and say to the people that God came amongst them and won their hearts, before ever they knew it,—and after dying for them, he passed up into Heaven. And they will say—Our hearts are with him, and these are the words he spoke to us, and these are the words and the deeds by which he won our hearts. And men shall read these words and speak of them, and shall say one to another, What think ye of Christ? He has won my heart, one will say and another, and another, Come let us worship him, let us confess him, let us serve him, for he has loved us with an unspeakable love.”

Thus the Son of God has united earth again to heaven. And we meet together here on days like this to hear of that wondrous Saviour, of this wondrous love, to hear His words explained, to be told of His deeds, to ask from Him what we need, and to sing songs of praise to His adorable name. Having our hearts stolen by Him, we delight to draw near Him, and nearer, and to keep near Him who is our heaven, who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood.

The parting of friends is often a solemn scene. The more so, if strong love has bound their hearts in one. We look back on such scenes with hallowed feelings, and find pleasure in recalling the parting look and words of the absent loved ones. Several such parting scenes we have in the Scriptures: When Jacob gathered his sons round his bed to receive his dying blessing; when Moses gathered the tribes to receive his parting advice; when Paul amid tears and sobs bade farewell to the Ephesian elders. But no parting scene we have ever seen or read of, is like that of the Son of God parting with the men he loved, and who loved him. “Let not your heart be troubled,” he says, “I will come again and receive you to myself. I will ask the Father and he will send the Comforter. Let us meditate together for a little on one or two words of this parting address.

I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS.

This promise was, no doubt, to them a matter of much consolation, but they knew of none that could console them for *His* absence. There was none had ever been to them such a Comforter as Jesus himself, and this discourse about leaving them, so strange to them and yet not new,—so difficult to realize, so trying to their spirits, was only fitted in their state of knowledge to fill them with sadness. Jesus might speak of a Comforter, but it was himself they loved, and they knew of none, could conceive of none, that could be so dear to their hearts as He was. Did their feelings at this trying moment find utterance they would say:—"Are you now to leave us? Oh, Blessed Master, leave us not. There is no comforter can supply your place. Only remain then with us and we need no Comforter. Thou hast always been our Comforter. Was it not to be always near Thee we left our boats, and forsook all we held dear on earth? Only stay with us Thyself and we will be satisfied. We have endured poverty to be near thee, to hear Thy voice. Oh! Master leave us not. We cannot see why Thou shouldst leave us. We are willing to keep close to Thee, we will not leave thee, and why shouldst thou seek to leave us. Lord why cannot we follow Thee now; we will lay down our lives for Thy sake. Speak not therefore of leaving us; for without Thee we cannot live in a world that hates us. Oh! leave us not, for we will then be orphans."

Such were the thoughts that filled the hearts of that little band of disciples. Christ read all these thoughts, knew them before they were uttered, and thus soothed their troubled spirits: "Little children, do not grieve, I will not leave you orphans, I know you love me, and I love you, love you more than your hearts can conceive, love you more than language can speak. You do not yet know my love to you, else you would be strangers to these fears. Leave you! I will not leave you at all, I will never leave you, The Comforter whom I will send will not come *in place of me*, but to bring you *nearer to me*. Ah! my little flock, you have not yet known who I am. Ye have loved me knowing but little of me. The Spirit of Truth shall come unto your hearts, and will show you who I am. I will not leave you, but come closer to you. When the Spirit teaches you that he that hath seen me hath seen the Father, then will you know that I have not left you orphans."

Let us look, however, a little closer at the exact meaning of the words of our text. At first sight it would seem that in these words Jesus tells his disciples that he would leave them for some time, and then come back to them. It is true that in one sense He did leave them, and in that sense He came back for a little, and then left again, and yet again the Church looks for Him. This is true with regard to His bodily presence. The sentence "I will come to you" is generally understood as referring to this visible going and to this visible coming again. But on such an understanding of the words one does not see well the force of these words as words

of consolation to a church sorely tried in its conflicts in this world. The words, indeed, rendered in our version, "I will come," are not exactly and clearly rendered. What our translators have put in the future tense—*I will come*, is, in the original, in the present tense,—*I come, I am coming*. What does the Redeemer mean, therefore, when He says to His sorrowing disciples, "I will not leave you orphans, I am coming to you?"

To find the full meaning of this, we might go back to the promise of a Saviour to Adam, when he fell by his transgression. From that promise, through all the dealings of God with His people Israel, down to the coming of Christ and the utterance of these words, the promised Redeemer was ever drawing nearer His people, was ever coming to them. With the first promise the Redeemer had already begun to come. Even in his day Abraham saw Him. He was ever coming, ever approaching to man, ever saying in substance "I am coming to you." But we do not intend to trace the steps of His approach to His church throughout this long period. Let us be content with glancing briefly at His approach to His own immediate disciples. He found them in their ignorance far away from Him. He began to draw them to himself, and as this drawing was slowly progressing He was ever coming to them. When the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God, Jesus was coming to them. When he prevailed on the disciples to forsake all and follow Him, He was, therein, coming to them. When Peter fell at His feet and besought Him to depart from him because he was a sinful man, Jesus, in reality, was coming to him. When the disciples were overtaken by the wild storm, and when their Master calmed the wind and the sea, He was thereby coming to them. When the three disciples saw Him transfigured on the mount, He was in that glory coming to them. In all these things He was coming to them. Every miracle He wrought, He was coming to them. Every parable he spoke, He was coming to them. Every danger from which He shielded them, He was coming to them. In every pang and suffering they endured for His sake, He was coming to them. And as yet they knew him not fully, as yet He had not come, as yet He was only in the act of coming to them. And when He uttered these words "I am coming to you," He had not even then fully come to them; He was now nearer them than He ever was before, but still He had not come in His full glory as the Son of God, the second person of the glorious Trinity, the Prince, the Saviour, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Everlasting Father, the Lamb, the Redeemer from sin and death, the Mediator between God and man, the Glory of God, and the image of His person.

What a strange way of coming this was to be. How alien from the ostentatious coming of men. In a short time He would be seized and bound a prisoner—still He says I am coming to you. From one tribunal He was hurried to another—yet then He was coming to them. Then He was to be crucified—and thus He comes nearer still to His own. In His death, He is coming, in His resurrection,

He is coming to his doubting, perplexed Church. But God's ways are not our ways; for "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not to bring to nought things that are." Yes, Christian disciples, even in this degradation, insult and death of your beloved Jesus, He is coming to you. Coming to you, not indeed as ye *expected* but as ye *needed*. And when the Comforter came, this was the comfort He brought—He took of the things of God and shewed them to their souls. He revealed to them Jesus, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and then Peter could stand up and say,—“Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;” and again, “This Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, Him hath God exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins.”

My friends you see here the manner of Christ's coming to His disciples. If ye are the disciples of Christ, to you there is the same promise, and the same consolation. Christ, though he has come into the world, and has again returned to heaven, has not yet come to all that are in the world or all that hear of Him. To each single individual of you, if ye would be Christians, Christ must come step by step as He came to these apostles. Has Christ come to you yet? Or is He now coming? Or has He at all begun to come? Can you say I am not an orphan now, I am a son, a daughter, for Christ has come to me, is near me, is with me, is in me.

Christ comes to you, just in proportion as you come to Him, and you come to Him in the degree that He comes to you. Oh! my friends attend to the steps of Christ's coming to you. He never comes but to the lowly, and humbled, and pierced, and broken, and mourning heart. And when He is wounding and breaking your heart, it is that, through this, He may come to you. In times of sore bereavement, He is coming to you. In the midst of disappointment, He is coming to you. When He robs you of the objects of your delight, He is coming to you. When He sends you to dwell in a strange land, and amongst strange faces, He is coming to you. When you feel weary and forlorn, He is then saying *I am coming to you*. Aye, and when, Christian disciple, you feel sad for your sins, and have remorse of conscience, He is then coming to you. Thus every humiliation, every sadness, every sorrow, may be, if properly used, only the coming to you of your precious Jesus.

“When wilt thou come to me O Lord,
O, come my Lord most dear,
Come nearer, nearer, nearer still,
I am well when thou art near.”

But at every step of Christ's coming you may be fleeing from him. As He approaches you may be retiring, retreating, fleeing before Him. Each affliction will, then, only harden; and oh! to

rible thought, Christ may follow you no longer. Beware, beware of this. Miserable is that soul from whom Christ is going, still going, making the distance between them greater and still greater each day. And may we not all say :—

“We are too far from thee our Saviour,
Too far from Thee.
Before our eyes
Dark mists arise
And veil the glories from the skies,
We are too far from Thee.”

Draw us more close to Thee our Saviour,
More close to Thee.
Let come what will
Of good or ill
‘Tis one to us dear Saviour knowing still,
Thou drawest us to Thee.”

“I am coming to you.” Blessed words! When the Christian’s longing soul is overwhelmed with misfortune, disappointment, bereavement, affliction and sorrow, it can through faith, rise superior to them all and say; “Blessed Jesus! now I know that Thou wilt not leave me an orphan, for I feel that Thou art coming to me, ever coming to me, coming to me the faster the more every thing else is leaving me.” Oh! ours, Christian friends! is the religion of sorrow,—the religion for sorrow,—and the religion in which is no sorrow.

Blessed Jesus! give us to see Thee as the Christ the Son of the living God, and convince us that amid all our riches we are poor indeed if Thou comest not to us, abidest not with us. Oh! teach us to see in all our sorrows that Thou art by these coming to us, and we will gladly give up all things so that we may get Thee and keep Thee in our hearts,—the hope of glory, Come quickly Lord Jesus. Amen.

SERMON.

"Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."—Heb. vii. 25.

In these words it is said of Jesus Christ that He has power or ability. "He is able to save." This ability is very great. Let us glance at a few instances where we see it manifested that, thereby, we may understand something of its greatness.

See it (1) in His multiplying a few loaves to feed many thousand people. Before we can eat, we must, in the ordinary course of things, prepare the ground, gather the harvest, beat out and winnow the grain, grind it in the mill, and bake it with fire. And were we called upon to prepare a meal for even one thousand people, what labour and toil that would cause, what weariness would attend it! But he simply blessed the few loaves and the few fishes, and gave to the vast multitude and they did all eat and were filled. What power is here!

See it (2) in His stilling the tempest and the waves. You have been, perhaps, at sea in a storm. Suddenly the tempest breaks upon the ship, the strong sails have burst into ribbons, the great ropes have snapped like a thread, the huge masts,—giant trees of the forest which grew strong in the breeze,—have broken like reeds, and the poor sea-faring men are full of terror and can do nothing, can, indeed, scarcely maintain their feet on the reeling vessel, and each one waits for and expects nothing but the foundering of the ship. But in such a storm as that Jesus comes forth, and He says, "Peace be still," and immediately there is a great calm. What power is here!

See it (3) in His raising the dead. While your beloved was sick, and while there was yet a little strength you tried every means to keep in the flickering lamp of life, by appliances of medicine, by attention, and watching, and care; but the lamp grew dimmer and dimmer, and flickered and flickered, and then went out. And now—you stay no longer, you can do no more; and your beloved is carried forth for burial and laid in the grave, already so full of the dead. So it was with Lazarus; but then comes Jesus and approaches the grave; the stone is rolled away; and He says "Lazarus come forth," and the dead man comes forth in his grave clothes. And in like manner at the last day, He shall call on the dead and they shall come forth. Every grave shall give up its dead; and the sea shall give up its dead, and they shall all, small and great, appear before God. What power again is here!

See it (4) in his creating light. You are in a dark cave or deep mine, or buried, we shall say below the earth, in cold and darkness. You are perishing for want of light and heat, and you have none of those helps of art by which light can be produced, and you grope about in darkness, in terror, in despair. But this Jesus speaks: He says, "Let there be light," and lo! light breaks forth

amid the gloom, as it broke forth in the creation, searching out with its beams and trying every recess and corner—and dark space, dispelling all darkness with its bright beams. Look at the sun, or when he has set, come forth at night and look up to the heavens, with its countless stars and you see there the work of Jesus' hands. He made them all. What power, we once more repeat, is here!

Is He not, therefore, able? Has He not power, strength, ability? And though I have selected only these few instances I might occupy your time and weary your strength, before I could enumerate to you the instances on record every where, in creation, and in providence, of the ability of Jesus. But it is none of the instances creation and providence afford that is referred to in the words of the text. The ability referred to here is the ability to save. At this "*saving power*" let us look a little more closely:—

1. To save from what?
2. To save how far?
3. To save whom?

And, *first*, let us consider *what* it is he saves from. You need scarcely be told that it is from sin. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." He saves from the consequences of sin. These are all summed up in the terrible expression *wrath of God*. So fearful a thing is the wrath of an angry God that the mind startles at the thought, and some in their folly, have hoped that the expression is a mere figure of speech and that there is no such thing in reality. But the Scriptures speak of it. The same book that tells us of the power, ability, of Jesus tells us of the terrible thing for the removal of which this ability was called into exercise. And these two things are ever found together, nay imply each other—the disease and the remedy, the wrath of God against sin, and Jesus the Saviour,—Jesus able to save from this wrath to the uttermost. Here it is, therefore, that Christ is able: this is the ability the text refers to; the ability to save from the consequences of sin even the wrath of an offended God.

But the consequences of sin are not all He saves from. The *consequences* might be removed and yet the *cause* might remain. But He, such is His ability, He saves from the cause likewise. He delivers His people,—before He ceases to put forth His ability on their behalf,—from the *being* of sin. He is able to wash as no water can wash, to purge from all vileness as no refiner's fire can purge, to cleanse until the guiltiest of His people are made whiter than the snow. But the matter that falls to be considered under this head is so familiar to you that I need not further enlarge.

Let us, in the *second* place, consider to what *extent* He is able to save. The text says,—"*To the uttermost*." The word rendered uttermost is a word of large meaning. It is an abstract word, "*He is able*,"—in the original this is the force of the word,—to save

wholly, entirely, to the entire or *total completion* and *end*, to the *uttermost*. His ability, the word implies, is without let, or hindrance, or limit, or bound, or measure, or degree. Let us look at it in two aspects:—(1) As to the quality of the sin from which he is able to save. And (2) as to the endurance and continuance of this His saving ability.

(1) As to the quality of the sins from which he can save.

There is only one sin spoken of for which there is no forgiveness, the sin against the Holy Ghost. I shall not refer to it; but apart from that sin the quality of the sin may be of the deepest dye, and yet Jesus can save from it: The sin may be most bold and defiant in its character, yet Jesus can save from it: "Where sin abounded His grace did much more abound." Is the case that where devils have taken possession of the body and its members, then look at Mary Magdalene. Jesus is able to save her. He did save her, and she stood at his cross in grief; and she came early in the morning to his sepulchre; and to her first he appeared after his resurrection; and her sad heart he made glad when he named her. Look at Peter, the rash, reckless disciple. After all his intercourse with Jesus, after all the favour shown him, after all the promises made to him, after all the warnings given to him, after all his own promises and protestations, he denied thrice that he knew Jesus. And yet Jesus is able to save Peter. And Paul too, Jesus can save. This proud Pharisee was a persecutor, even to blood and death; he was a blasphemer of the name of Jesus, but this very Paul says: "Jesus is able to save to the uttermost."

Then consider (2) how long this saving ability endures. He saves you from all past sins and their consequences, but then sin is working in you still; sin which you may not allow, but sin which at times, deceives and overcomes you; sin that causeth you grief and woe. Can His ability reach onward to the future, as it stretches backwards over the past? Yes, if you continue in His love. He is able to save you *totally*, to *completion*, to the entire *end*; for the word bears that meaning. He giveth grace for grace, grace for grace. "He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "His arm is never shortened, that it cannot save." "His mercy endureth for ever." He is able to save to the uttermost, to completion, to the end.

Let us in the *third* place consider *whom* it is, he is able to save. The text says, "Them that come through him to God." It is thus the words stand in the original, though the sense is the same in our translation. "Them that come by him." Or even more strictly still, "Them that *are coming* through him. The word 'come,' is in the participial form. The exact form is "coming." The word implies in that form, a perpetual present, coming not once for all, but always coming, ever "travelling between the fulness of Jesus and the church's necessities." It is they that were coming when

the Apostle wrote. It is they that were coming after the Apostle had departed to be with Christ. It is they that were coming in every age past. It is they that are coming now. It is they that are to come yet unborn. It is they that are coming as long as these words stand written.

See how one part of scripture answers to, fits and completes another:—Jesus said while on earth, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden:" and the Apostle says, "He is able to save to the uttermost them that are coming to Him." It is said in the Prophets;—"Ho! every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, &c.; and the Apostle backs that gracious invitation with the gracious promise,—"That He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him." John says in the Revelations,—"And the Spirit and the Bride say Come. And let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst Come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." And we have the counterpart, the answer, the echo, of the same invitation, and of all such invitations. He is able to save to the uttermost them that are coming through him to God.

Now sinner are you coming to God? Are you about to come? Is it with you, No, No! What are you coming to? Whither are you drifting? What are you living for? What is your goal, your aim, your desire, your hope, your ambition. What are you if you come short of coming to God, if you seek not to come to him, desire it not, yea rather turn away and keep away, and tear yourself away! Oh! what will become of your perishing soul, your loved, your cherished soul! "for, what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Oh! ye simple ones, how long will ye love vanity?

But do you say Yes, Yes, "I would come to God. I must come. I must be at peace with him, and find him, and come to him, and oh! would I could find him! oh, would I could be reconciled to him! oh, would I knew he would receive me! For what am I, and what shall become of me, if I am not coming to God, and coming to him through Jesus. And were this weight, this burden, this inability removed from me I would come, I would come; but wo's me! I am full of hesitation; and fears; and am so weak, woful and foolish; God have mercy upon me a sinner." Yes sinner, come thus, come thus. He is able to save you. That is the way to come. He is able to save you to the uttermost. Come thus. He here would remove your doubts and hesitations. He here would remove your fears. He here and now puts forth his ability for you. For he is able, he is able, he has ability to save to the uttermost, to the most perfect and entire completeness them that come through him to God.

And now believer, how is it with your soul? Are you one weak in the faith, yet trusting? One seeking God, yet with fear and trembling? Let me encourage you with these words, He is able to save to the uttermost them that are coming to God by him.

Are you doubtful, faltering, wavering? You must not be of doubtful heart; take courage, it is of Christ it is said, he is able to *save* to the *uttermost* them that are coming to God by him. But your sins, your backslidings, your wicked thoughts, your bad heart! you are ashamed of yourself, and cannot lift up your eyes. Ah! Yes! Your sins no doubt are many, and you do well to grieve over these, and because of these; and yet stay not away on account of these, from your gracious Redeemer. Go with all your burden and guilt to him. Prostrate your heart at his footstool, for, he is able to save, to save to the uttermost, them that are coming to God through him. He is the door, and through him you may go in and out and find pasture. So, poor sinner be encouraged to venture to him again; and take this word with you when you come and plead it with him. —“Thou art able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God through Thee.” May God help us all to come, and to his great name be all the glory now and forever, Amen.

SERMON.

“And with Him they crucify two thieves.”—Mark xv. 27.

There is no event in the life of our Lord on earth that is without significance, and no position even that He was ever in but has some meaning and place in the work He came to do on this earth.

The life of Jesus is too deep and significant for any of His acts to be without meaning—for even any position He was placed in, to be without purpose. And especially may we seek for this significance in these His last acts on earth, and very much so in this His last position on earth. For what is the position?—crucified, and that between two thieves. There was one on the right hand and another on the left, and Jesus in the midst. “With Him they crucify two thieves.” This was the society of his death, this was the company and association of His dying hours—two thieves. With these He was crucified. They did not crucify Him alone, and by Himself. They would degrade Him. He had lived a life of respectability, and they need not thus have degraded Him in His death. They might have given Him to suffer in His last moments by Himself if He must needs suffer, and not with thieves. But it was not thus they treated Him. “They crucify with Him two thieves.”

And they surrounded Him with this society. They did not place Him facing the thieves. That would have implied a distinction between Jesus and these malefactors, but these murderers did not intend that He should be in any way distinguished thus.

Nor did they place Jesus on the one side, and the thieves on the other. That would not have satisfied His murderers, so they put

Him in the midst, on each side a thief and Him in the midst. But place Him where they might, or where they would, still He was the distinguished One, still distinguished whether they put Him to death apart and by Himself, or whether they placed Him to one side, or whether they hang Him in the midst, on each side a thief; He was, and would be, and will be, the most distinguished. Place Him where they would, and in what position, and with what society they might, still he was the chief object, the chief object of their malice, the chief object of the mockers that passed by; and thus still He is the centre of many a heart, and many a land. He could not but be distinguished, place Him where they would, and how they would. There were three crosses, there were three victims; but we only speak of, and think of, one cross. We only know the name of one of the victims. His name is Jesus; the others! their names are not known. We only preach of one of these victims. The other victims are there, but we preach not them. Other crosses are there, but we notice them but little—just enough to know that they are there. All these three crosses were laden and blood-stained, and yet but one of them is distinguished. And what makes it to be so? It is because of Him who was on the cross—Him that hung there—"Him!" What was He then? Who was He! "With Him," we read, "With Him" they crucify two thieves."

"With Him." The writer of the Gospel may be regarded, in one point of view, as if he spake in deep indignation when he wrote this. With Him! Oh daring insult! Oh bold dishonor! "With Him!" "With Him" who never stole aught from any man, but was always giving, with Him they crucify two thieves. With Him who did no wickedness, who did not "cry even, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets," with Him they crucify lawless and bloody men. "Him!" who had never done evil, in whom there was no guile, whom none of them could convince of sin, with Him they crucify two thieves. "Him!" It was He that had restored sight to their blind. It was He who had healed their diseases. It was He that had raised even their dead. It was He that had spoken as never man spoke. And they had cried for His death, and they crucify him, and with Him they crucify two thieves. "Him!" of whom many had said "this is that Prophet." Is not this, many had said, our Messiah. Yes indeed He was all that and more than that, even He, with whom they crucify two thieves. For it was He who created these heavens, and that sun, and these woods, and this earth, and all its beauty of mountains, and hills, and vales, and lakes, and all that is unseen in the deep and on land. He is the Creator of them all, even He with whom they crucify two thieves. It was He who said "Let there be light, and there was light." It was He who said "Let us make man in our own image." He is the Creator of the ends of the earth; the Holy One, the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, even He, and none

else than He, with whom they now crucify two thieves. True, He had veiled His glory for a little. True, He was in the form of a servant. True, He had submitted to a low and mean estate. True, He was in the flesh; but it was God manifest in the flesh, even the Lord God, the Mighty God, the Prince of Life; and they crucify Him between two thieves, the one on the right hand and the other on the left.

And this was but a small part of the indignity they put on him, but a small portion of the insult and degradation they heaped upon Him, meek and silent, as is the sheep before the shearers.

Let us look a little at the series of indignities they put upon Him.

They brought a great band of men to apprehend Him. These were surely able to bring Him safely to a place of security and imprisonment; but they would degrade Him, and so they *bound* Him. We have heard of prisoners,—violent men,—who pleaded not to be bound, and promised they would proceed peaceably with the officers of justice; they felt it degrading to be bound; and men always do. And they wish to degrade Jesus, and so they lead Him away bound to Caiaphas. There was no need for it. He was not violent. He had counselled peace. He had followed peace, but they would insult Him and so they bound Him.

Then, in the house of the Priest, the servants of the Priest gathered around Him and made Him their mock and scorn. They spat upon Him. What deep insult was this! But this did not satisfy them. They were cruel too; for we read that they buffeted Him. They struck Him with their fists; and with their open palms they smote Him on the face.

It was not to try Him merely they had bound Him; it was not to give Him justice merely that they brought Him to judgment; they wished to wreak their hate and their wrath upon Him, and “they compassed Him like bees.” When brought into the court of Pilate, the soldiers gathered round Him—and they set themselves to make sport of Him. He is a king! they said, Yes, let us make a king of Him. And so they got some old purple garments and they robe Him in them. But they lack a crown to set on His head. They might have made a crown of straw, and placed it on His head. There would have been insult and mockery enough in that, one would think; but that would not satisfy them. With their mockery they were cruel. While mocking they would torture, and so they made a crown; but it was a crown of thorns, and they laid it on His head, and drove it into His temples. They had thus crowned Him, and made Him a king; but the mockery was not yet completed; they would procure a sceptre for Him; and they brought a reed, and placed it in His hands. Oh! meek and uncomplaining Saviour, that bore it all in silence. And then they enthroned Him. But the jest and the play ended not here. They would obey Him and do Him homage. And they came and bowed before Him. They kneeled down, and then rising, spat in His

face; and the levity and mirth was loud and boisterous, and the jest was terse and biting. They mocked Him, they tortured Him, till they were weary with their rude and cruel sport, and then they stripped off the mock regalia, dethroning, despoiling, and uncovering Him again.

And when sentence had been passed upon Him, and they hurried Him away to Calvary—all weak, weary, and ready to faint as He was—they laid His own cross on His shoulders that He might carry it Himself. None, not even the meanest and most degraded amongst them, was mean enough to carry it for Him. But when they saw Him faint with His load, they feared lest their victim might expire in their hands, ere they reached the place of crucifixion, and they seized upon some passer by from the country and made him follow close behind Jesus bearing His cross. And when they had hung Him there to die that horrid death, that slow, lingering, racking death, they placed Him between two thieves, on the right hand, and the other on the left. They might have allowed Him to hang there in peace, to die in quiet; there might have been some magnanimity shown Him now, some slight forbearance. They need not have persecuted Him to the very death, to the very last breath, with their mockery and insult; but their hate was deep, their wrath was cruel. Oh! how cruel they were, how full of bitter hatred! In His agony, at each quiver of the straining muscles, at each drooping of the heavy head, at each heaving of the laboring chest, at each sighing of the fainting broken heart, at each groan with racking pain, they gave forth their loud laughter. They wagged their heads in scorn; “If thou be such an one—the Christ,—come down from the cross,” “He saved others; He cannot save Himself.” “This is He that would destroy the temple and build it in three days.” Was not their hate dire and fierce, was not their wrath relentless and cruel! Nor did they cease to mock Him till His life had ebbcd, and His spirit fled.

Why were they thus angry? What had He done to them? Why all this wrath, and why all this cruelty,—this wild fierce wrath, this insatiable cruelty? What provoked them so? What was it that brought out all this malignity and wickedness, and savage fury? What had He done to offend them so deeply? What cause had He given for this constant persecution and torture? His death even would not have satisfied them. Had He been removed from their sight; or had He been taken from the earth in some other way; or had He died in their hands when they first apprehended him, their grief and disappointment would have been great; for their hearts were full of wrath and wickedness; and nought would content them but to wreak their cruel wrath and vengeance to the full on His Head.

And why was this, what stirred them, what provoked them? If I apprehend the matter aright, it was because he had deeply *offended their pride.*

They had spent many years in the acquisition of learning. They

had studied much, and long, and hard. They had searched with care, the meaning of the Old Testament for the marks of their great Messiah, the Hope of Israel, the Saviour of the chosen people. They had spoken of Him who was thus to come. They had boasted of His coming. They had waited for Him with great eagerness and much impatience. One of earth's mighty ones would He be; a man of prowess in war; of wisdom in the court; a leader of the Hosts of Israel; a gatherer of the people; a subduer of every foe; a breaker of every yoke; an expeller of every oppressor. And, in place of such an one, there came this Jesus, this mild and meek man, preaching peace, teaching humility, teaching mercy, teaching forgiveness of injuries. No ruler of embattled hosts was He; no companion, was He, of the rich and the princess of the people; no outward preparation did He make for the subjugation of the oppressor. And they were offended in Him.

If He had been a mere common man, who had claimed to be this Deliverer, they would have left Him alone to go where He would. But they felt He was no common man. His words were mighty and wonderful words. There was in His face, and tone and manner, in His words and acts and conduct, something influential, savouring of effect and power and resolution, which men must either hold to or oppose—something in Him which men must be either attracted to in admiration and affection, or be repelled from, in disgust and hate.

He came with might and power and influence, came indeed as the Messiah, and yet He was so humble, so mean, a friend of publicans and sinners, His chosen friends, not the learned and just men of the nation, but beggars and fishermen, His followers, not large armies of stalwart soldiers, but crowds of the poor, the maimed, the blind and even the lepers. And so He offended their pride deeply. They could not brook a Saviour like Him. They could not brook teaching such as His. They could not endure virtues such as He practised. And He told themselves that their teaching was wrong, and that their acts were worse. Should they not be offended in Him? Did they not well to be offended? And He taught them humility, and reproved them for being proud, and again taught them humility. Did they not well to be angry; and to say of Him "this fellow, we know not whence He is?" Offended pride, wounded pride! This stirred their hostility, this roused their passion, this nurtured their hate, this inflamed their wrath, this goaded them on to all these acts of cruelty, and this fierce savagery which they exhibited towards Him. Yes, my friends, *offended pride*. That is the strong passion. And what passion is like unto it. *Offended pride, offended dignity!* I cannot stop to describe all its workings to you; I presume you know it. I may therefore take for granted that you know what it is, what it can do; what wrath it can stir up, what cruelty, what dire revenge.

And see here what their offended pride caused them to do. And on the other hand see what the humility of Christ gave Him to

suffer, and to suffer without reproach or complaint. A man might have been excused if, in all this mocking and scorning and jesting and gibing, he too had said bitter things. A man like Jesus might have been allowed, at least, to speak some truthful words to them. But He was silent.

And now let me call again to your remembrance the fact, that he whom they thus mocked was not a mere man. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." It was God, the Almighty God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He who was from eternity. It was God who had offended their pride, it was God against whom all this malice and malignity was vented. It was God they rudely bound. It was God in whose face they spat. It was God whom they smote with their fists. It was God whom they slapped with their hands. It was God whom they made a mock king of, crowned with thorns, and made a jest of. It was God manifest in the flesh. As far as it was possible for them to reach God, they vented their hate upon Him in mockery and taunt and cruelty. As far as they could reach man they oppressed and struck Him; struck Him with their fists, struck Him with their palms, struck Him with a rod, smote the thorns into His temples, and all present broke forth into savage laughter. Oh! here is their sin brought out into visibility. Here their deep enmity makes itself manifest. Here the intense malignity of their hearts *against God* becomes palpably plain and visible.

"Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me." Behold, ye blessed angels, who stand in the presence of God, who are ministering spirits to do His pleasure; behold here your God, struck at, spat at, mocked at. Oh! ye burning servants, that are near to the throne of God, see here how mortals of earth jeer, and taunt, and mock, at your adorable and loved One. Will not they feel this indignity done to their God? Will not they too burn with a holy resentment for the insult and the wrong done to their Master? Can they ever forgive it, and be true in their allegiance to God? Can they ever meet as friends within the pearly gates of heaven, those who have thus dared to lift their impious hands against their most holy and most just One, their God? Even though God himself should not feel offended, even though He should take no notice of it, and treat those who did it, if that were possible, as if they had not done it, can those holy beings, and public servants of God forgive it, and yet remain true in their allegiance to God? Oh no; there must be an atonement made for such great wrong, there must be suitable reparation made for such gross insults offered to their glorious God, else these pure and holy spirits would conspire to drive the mockers and murderers of their God from heaven, should they ever enter there.

How, my friends, do you regard these, the mockers and murderers of God? What think you of those who thus spat on Him, blindfolded Him, smote, laughed and gaped upon Him with their mouths?

Think you not that they were cruel, that their wrath was fierce, that their malignity was bitter and terrible? You even are offended at them too, wonder how there can be forgiveness for them. You too think that some reparation must be made to God, and His Majesty ere such insulters can be admitted to His favor and forgiveness.

But these, my friends, are only *representative* men. They alone are not the wicked ones of the human race. They, in this act of theirs, in this malignity of theirs, in this hate of theirs, in this savage outburst of offended pride, they are not alone. they are but representatives of the whole human race. What they did, others, had they been there, would have done. What they did, you, sinner, had you been there, would have done,—you would have spat as contemptuously, struck as fiercely, laughed as loudly, at the smiting of the Lord of Glory, as any there present. This very thing you have already done, and are doing, in your rebellion against God. True in your case it has not come to the same visibility; your malignity, your sin and hatred, and fierce enmity have not been thus brought forth in palpable form and manifestation; yet not the less does it exist, and not the less has it been practised; not the less have you mocked God, struck at God, insulted, dared Him, and as far as in you lay, done that to God these men did. Ah! but you cannot see that.

But come sinner! and come too, O believer! and here, at the foot of the cross of Christ, behold the malignity, and hatred of the human heart,—its hatred of God,—its deep and fierce enmity towards Him,—“for the carnal mind is enmity against God,”—its savage enmity, persecuting the Lord of Glory even to the very gates of death, with suffering, taunt and mockery unparalleled! You see this hatred here, at the foot of the cross, you see it coming forth into visible shape, taking form and substance.

But now some will plead these mockers and murderers of the Lord did not know it was God they were thus mocking. Nor, did you believer, know that you were mocking and insulting and smiting with your fist at God. And alas! that it should be so, that such excellence appeared on earth—such a glorious Being as God manifest in the flesh, and yet men knew him not. And will it avail to say they knew Him not? This is adding crime to crime; “that light came into the world, and that the world should not know it.” And you know not, you say, that it was God you were smiting at, that you hated, that you were wroth against. Ah! but that will avail you nothing. It only adds to your sin.

And you too, in your rebellion, were in the same offence. You too were in the same condemnation. True indeed, Christ cannot be coming in human form to every sinner, to bring out in to visible form and shape the malignity of each sinner in particular. It was enough that He has shown it to exist in the human heart; not in some solitary breast, not in the breasts of an isolated and unknown people, but in the breasts of the most favoured of nations. He has

shown it to exist in the breasts of the wise and the prudent ; in the brave officers of the Roman Army ; in the self-righteous Pharisee and in the sceptical Sadducee. It exists deep down in every human heart, and will needs, must needs, show itself. Yes, you, believer, were in the same condemnation, in the same malignity. And did God but so offend your pride, but so bring down your imaginary dignity, your rage also would be great, your wrath would be implacable : though it is only here at the foot of the Cross of Christ that such rage can, on this earth, come into full and visible and palpable form and fashion.

Oh ! but the sinner thinks better of himself than that. He would not smite at God surely ; he would not spit at God surely. Alas ! Alas ! that the deceit and power of sin should make you think so ; for already, to the extent of your opportunity you have done so. The pride is there, and were your wrath but kindled, then would the evil of evils manifest itself in you as in them.

Thus, with these mockers of God, and murderers of the Just One would I place you, O believers, that you may see yourselves, what you were, and what you have been proved to be. I place you, on this Communion, Sabbath at the foot of this Cross, and I desire you to consider yourselves not as spectators, but as actors, as participators in these scenes ; as yourselves, haters, and mockers of God, as those who were filled with all possible malignity against him. Thus you can see yourselves. Thus you can see the deep depths of sin,—a little of its intense malignity.

But why did God permit all this ? Why has He permitted it ? Why does He still permit it ? Why was it that, when they seized Him in the garden and made Him their prisoner, He did not command the myriads of angels that surrounded Him, to come forth and seize in His behalf all His enemies, and drive them into outer darkness ? Why was it, that when they spat upon Him, every drop of moisture in their bodies was not changed into liquid fire ? Why, when they mocked Him and scoffed at Him, were they not struck with drivelling idiocy ? Why did He permit all this ? Oh ! my friends, my fellow-believers in Christ Jesus our blessed Lord and Saviour, see here, in the Cross, the wondrous wisdom, the wondrous condescension, and wondrous love of God. How shall I speak of it ? Of what shall I speak first, and of what last.

Behold His *wisdom*. Here He would bring forth to visibility before heaven and earth and hell, the deep malignity of sin against Himself—as boldly, fiercely, wrathfully against Him and Him only.

And here too, in the very face and front of this the malignity of sin, here, where sin had expended itself in its climax, here, where it showed itself in its culminating point ; here, He shows His *love* ; His deep love ; His love passing wondrous ; in length and breadth and height and depth, love which none can measure.

Here at the foot of the Cross of Christ, behold sinner, behold O believer ! the deep malignity of sin, and see too the great and

wondrous wisdom, and love of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Both are seen, and both, only here, reach their climax.

Yes, come near, and see again and again the wondrous love of God. "Father, he says, forgive them, for they know not what they do." His very prayer is for them who thus mock Him with their bitter jests. But how can this be? How can they possibly be forgiven? Will not all the Holy Ones of heaven be in arms against them? And though they should be forgiven by God, can those holy beings forgive the insulters of their Lord and God? And here again I say believer, behold the wondrous wisdom and love of God. Draw near and look at this, look long and earnestly. It was thus, in the flesh and on the Cross, that He drew forth the full malignity of the human heart against Himself. And when He had brought it forth to full manifestation; when it had come to visibility, when it had reached its culminating point against Himself, He did not then come down from the cross and appear in His glory, and in His vengeance. He did not appear in flames of fire in judgment. No. He was then ready to die, to die as an atonement for this very malignity of sin, *to die for His people's sin*. Sin had reached its climax. His love had reached a higher climax. And He cried "*It is finished*," and gave up the Ghost. Never before or since did sin appear so exceeding sinful as around the cross. The very coming of Christ caused "the offence to abound." "But where sin abounded grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." For this let glory be to God. Amen.



