

THE
WORKS

OF

THE REVEREND

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT

PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE,

COMPLETED

TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR MDCCCVI.

IN TWENTY VOLUMES.

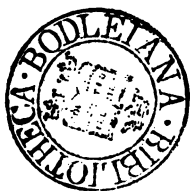
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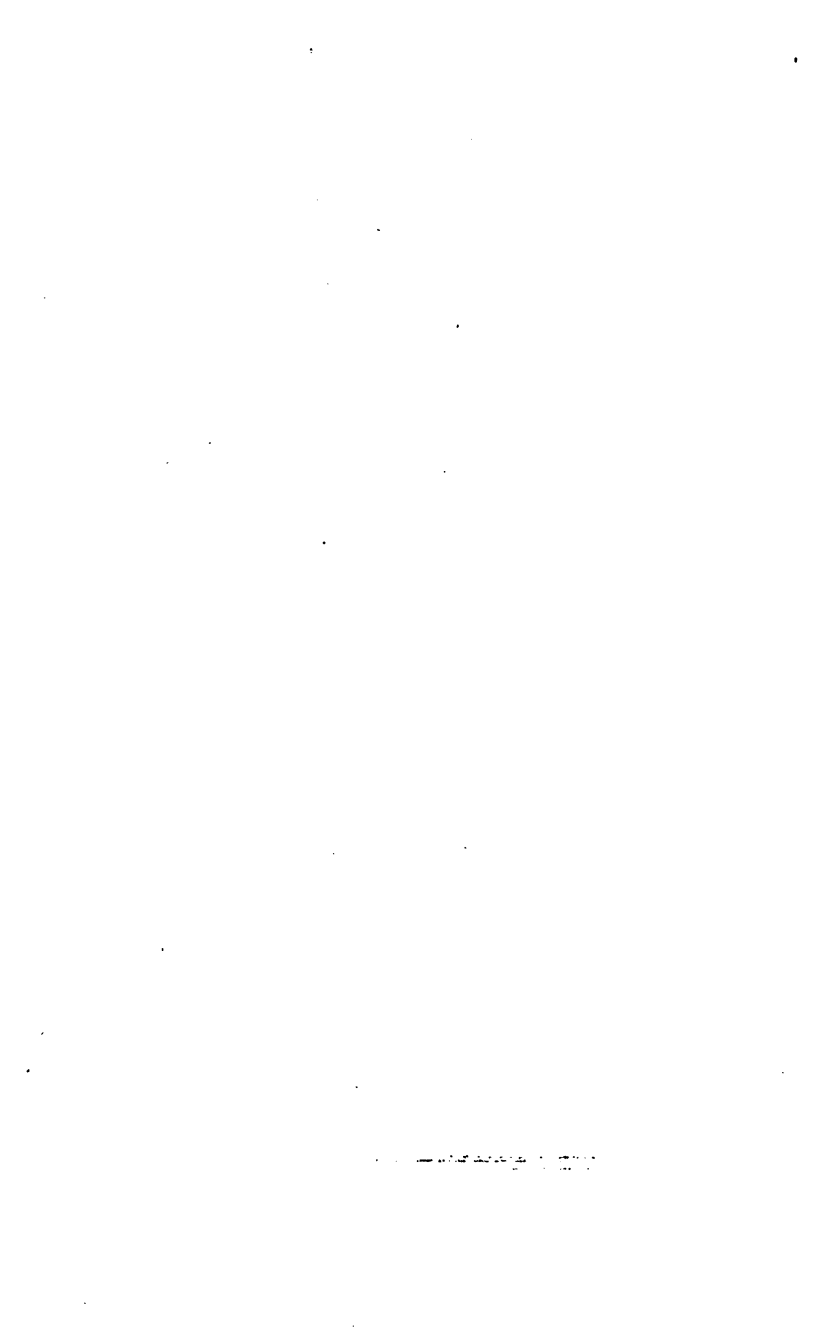
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VOL XIV.

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LIVING TESTIMONIES;

OR

SPIRITUAL LETTERS

ON

DIVINE SUBJECTS.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.

**YE ARE OUR EPISTLE, WRITTEN IN OUR HEARTS, KNOWN AND READ
OF ALL MEN. 2 COR. III. 2.**



LIVING TESTIMONIES,

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

As I called upon you when I was sinking in the horrible pit, I thought it but meet and right, now the Lord hath proclaimed my enlargement, to inform you of it; and as I am persuaded you love to hear of the works of the Lord, and of the power and glory of his kingdom, I am encouraged to write the following account,

I was born of dissenting parents, who brought me up, as it is commonly called, in a religious way, therefore I kept close to my meeting from my youth up. When I came to the age of eighteen, I began to be very desirous of understanding the doctrines I had formerly heard preached when I

was in the country: and being now an apprentice in London, I had an opportunity of hearing various preachers, and generally went to hear those that were called sound Calvinists, believing such to be the ministers of Christ; but I was often confused in my judgment by some who were not clear, for I could see no harmony in their doctrines.

About three years ago, by the good providence of God, I was brought under you, where I soon got clear views of the doctrines of the gospel: but I found your preaching to be very contrary to flesh and blood; however, as it was agreeable to divine revelation, I know it was right.

About this time it pleased God to impress my mind with a full persuasion that I must be born again, and that if I died in my present state I could not be saved; this caused me to seek much to God in prayer, that he would bring about this good work. I was convinced of the vanity of my natural religion, and made sensible of my blindness and ignorance, and that all my knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, without the power, was vain. I wished to be a weary and heavy laden sinner; for then, I thought, there might be great hopes of my salvation: but vainly thought that I had not been wicked enough ever to be loaded with guilt and bondage as some are.

I understood by your preaching, that I must pass under the rod before I could be brought into the bond of the covenant; from hence I expected

to have some great affliction of body, and likewise to see myself lost, and then God would reveal his Son in me, and all would be well; and thus I attended your ministry for a long time, earnestly begging the Lord to apply his word with power. And when you held forth encouragement to seeking souls, I found myself very happy, believing that I was one; but, alas! I was still a stranger to the rebellion of my nature, nor could I believe that I was such an enemy to God as you declared we all were, until about the month of April last, when it pleased God to begin a deep work on my soul. At first I was seized with a dismal gloominess of mind all day long, and at night with fearfulness and trembling, insomuch that it was often three or four hours before I could get my eyes to sleep after I went to bed. The Lord began to make manifest the thoughts of my heart, and to set my secret sins in order before me.

I had not been long in this state before a man, who had formerly made a profession of religion for many years, came into the room where I was at work, and he was in madness and black despair. Seeing such an awful sight added not a little to my heavy affliction: the threatenings and curses in the Bible began to wound me deeply, and my sin to appear exceeding sinful. Having Mr. Romaine's *Life of Faith* by me at that time, I frequently read it; one part of which in particular cut me to the quick, where he mentions many characters who have no faith, and amongst the

rest he brings in the formal professor, with gospel notions in his head, but no grace in his heart; and says it is a dangerous state, and confirms it by this passage, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins;" from this I concluded I had been guilty of the great transgression.

One Monday evening, about that time, you was speaking of spiritual, and likewise of formal, prayer, and you said a person might take a form of prayer and read it by one who was given up to black despair, but it would be of no use; for, said you, there is a sin unto death, and no prayer will do for that. These words, a sin unto death, struck me with such horror that I went out of the chapel shaking like a leaf.

On the Thursday morning following, before I was up, I really thought I was in hell; all was black despair; I kept crying out, Is there no hope? Is there no hope? Something within answered as fast, No; no hope, no. How long I lay in that fit I cannot tell; but in the course of my trouble I had four or five more such, but none so bad as the first. Indeed I believe that these were the snares of death and the pains of hell, and I then believed that I was reserved in blackness of darkness unto the judgment of the great day; and Satan suggested, that if ever I went to hear you again, the sentence of condemnation would be so sealed home upon my conscience,

that I should immediately go distracted. The next morning I called upon you, and you told me, that I was in the strong hand of God, and mentioned many passages of scripture descriptive of my state, and said I should go deeper yet, and that the Lord would bring me out in his own time, which gave me some encouragement for the present; but I soon thought that you was deceived in me, for my load of guilt and bondage grew heavier than ever, and Satan began to buffet and accuse me in a cruel manner, and persuaded me that I had told you many lies, and that I could expect no blessing under your ministry, insomuch that I was ashamed to go into your chapel; and when I was there, I was in such terror, that I was forced to hold fast by the seats, lest I should be driven out distracted. My body, also, sometimes has been worked up into such strange feelings, as though it would burst. I have sometimes thought that I was dumb, and wished the sermon to be ended, that I might try whether I could speak or not. At other times my neck has appeared to be so stiff that I could not turn my head, and often I felt as though the use of my limbs was taken away. Indeed I feared I was entirely given up to the devil, for I could receive nothing from your mouth but condemnation; I saw myself to be one of the vilest wretches that ever crawled upon the earth, and, as I had sat under the gospel so long, I looked on myself fully

ripe for ruin and destruction, and sunk deeper and deeper in despair.

One sabbath morning I took a walk; and while I was walking and pondering over the sad state I was in, never expecting to be any better, I thought I would not go to hear you any more, but would wander about all the day; when these words came powerfully to my mind, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him;" what to do I knew not, for I expected if I went to hear that I should only be made worse. However I was forced to go; and in your sermon you was speaking of the power that God displays in holding all things in existence, and of devils and damned souls being kept in their misery, while his incensed justice, flashing on them, stirred up the flames; I had such a view of their state that I was almost distracted; my throat was so hot through the terrors I felt, that I set off directly you ended your sermon to get some small beer to cool it, but expected soon to be where I should not be allowed a drop of water. My friends strove to comfort me; but I was desperate, and would not hear them. However, in the evening, I came to hear you again; and, after wrestling hard with God in prayer for his blessing, I heard you from these words in Romans, "The Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities," &c. Here you spoke of the difference between one who was given up to the devil as Judas was, and one who was under

convictions by the Spirit of God; and before the sermon was ended I lost all my load, and went away rejoicing in hope. O! what a change was this! But this lasted but a short time, for on Monday evening you cut me down again; Tuesday evening, at Monkwell street, I got a little comfort; but, on Wednesday evening, down I went again, for, indeed, the words have come with such amazing power from your mouth, as to make my heart sink like a stone. I got no more such comfort again for five or six months, but thought I was given up to hardness of heart; during which time my sleep was almost taken from me, so that I thought it pretty well if I could get one night's rest out of three; but sometimes I had not a minute's sleep for three nights and days together, which made my head so bad, that I thought I should have lost my rationality; and being by trade a journeyman shoemaker, it was hard for me to keep my seat, and for many months I did not do a day's work in a week, and for a whole fortnight none at all; but my good and gracious God would not suffer me to starve.

While I was in this state, one evening you preached from these words, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." O! what an evening was this to me! I thought the Lord had sent you to preach this discourse, that I might receive my sentence first from your mouth; and then I expected that my soul would soon be separated from my body, in order to receive the sen-

tence from a consuming fire, or an angry judge, which is no less. You appeared to be the worst enemy I had in this world, because I thought that your ministry was made a savour of death unto death to me; and I thought that every one that looked at me would be a witness against me. All the following night I had no rest, but expected to be cut off every moment; hell seemed to be open to receive me, the terror of my mind was so great, and the enmity of my heart was so stirred up, that I was like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury and rebuke of God, Isaiah li. 20. And the anger of God was so reflected on me, that I thought I heard Satan rushing behind the wainscot in order to seize my soul. I generally had four such nights as this out of seven, inso-much that I would have given a world, if I had had it, for one hour's peace, before I sunk into endless misery; I sometimes tried to harden myself against it, but the more I strove, the worse I was; and, to add to my affliction, there was a great dog in a yard near to where I lodged, howling and jumping up in his chains all night long; this was having the law sent home indeed; and it was well for me that my friends were people that feared God, for if I had lived with some folks I should have been put into bedlam. My having so much terror brought my body so very low, that I felt continually as if I were dying; and I have got out of my bed five or six times in a night to make my escape from death, and have

run into my brother's room with whom I lodged, telling him and my sister that I knew I was dying, till I wore out the patience of all who were about me; I have often stood by their bed-side in all the horrors of the damned, telling them these were the happiest moments I should ever know. After going on some time in this manner, they advised me to come and see you again. After much persuasion I consented; but you, being very busy, could not see me: I therefore thought God had impressed it on your mind that I was a reprobate, and so you would not see me; and, though I generally heard you preach four or five sermons in a week, I was so swallowed up with despair that they were of no use to me. One day I heard you say, a man in black despair is a hell upon earth; indeed I thought you was right, for if ever there was a creature that carried hell about with him, I did; my distress caused such a burning heat in my face, that I thought it was some of the fire and brimstone already kindled within me: and so dreadful was my rebellion, that I told my friends I expected to make an awful end; and had such conceptions of the dreadful blasphemy there was in the bottomless pit, that made me cry to God, that when I got there he would not permit Satan to make me blaspheme, but wished to bear my punishment without murmuring. And as I had no hope of ever being saved, I began to pray God to give me health and strength to get my bread; but could not pray in faith: for I

knew, as I was shut up in unbelief, I should run worse into sin than ever I did.

One night I had such an awful view of the terrible majesty of God, that I felt as though I were lifted up in the bed, my head seemed swelled as big as a large corn measure, and I expected to be crushed every moment like a moth; at times I have felt as though my head was fastened down to the pillow. O! what an awful distance there is betwixt a holy God and fallen sinners before they are brought nigh by the precious blood of Christ! My friends advised me to come once more to see if I could have an opportunity of speaking to you; but I objected, saying you could be of no use to me, for I was given up to despair; at this time I could not pray, and for many days dared not approach God even upon my knees; if at any time I lisped out a petition, it was when my head was smothered up in the bed-clothes, and then I expected, as soon as it was out of my mouth, that the sword of justice would cut me down. After much persuasion I came to your house, but Mrs. Huntington told me I could not see you, nor indeed did I wish to see you; however I plucked up my courage, and asked her, whether the reason you would not see me the last time I came, was that you had no hope of me? She seemed to be in a great agitation, and faintly answered, No: but I thought she said so lest she should distress me. I asked further, Whether she ever knew one who had no hope, and who could not pray,

ever be delivered? She replied, It was a sad state; but told me I must look to the Lord, for there was no help to be had any where else. And, indeed, I could only look, sigh, and groan, I could not pray nor cry; my heart was so hard I could not shed a tear if it would have saved my soul. As I thought you had no hope of me, when I was at chapel I was forced to get where you could not see me, fearing you would call out to me, and tell me I had no business there, for I was a reprobate. Soon after this I thought I was seized with death, and began to talk to my sister about the state of her soul, telling her to see that she made her calling and election sure, to examine herself whether she was in the faith, &c. I told her I expected to be gone in a short time; that I was a son of perdition, a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction, and that I must go to my own place, whereunto I was appointed; I told her she would remember me as long as she lived, and no doubt it would give great distress to her, but wished her to be resigned to the will of God; saying, "He doth according to his own will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand," &c. &c. I took my leave of her, telling her she would see me no more, but I would run to my brother's, who lived in the next street, thinking to die there. I began to talk to him after the same manner, expecting every minute to be my last; which made him cry mightily to God, in this time of

trouble, for me. I had not been there long before I grew better. This being Wednesday evening I went to chapel, but to no purpose, my thoughts were swallowed up with the fears of death and hell; for every time I went to chapel I heard nothing but my condemnation over and over again; and thinking it was great presumption in me to dare to go, expecting to die while I was there, I resolved many times never to go again; and indeed I was quite weary of my life, and wished I could end in annihilation.

One night I went into the city, but durst not go into the meeting; I often used to walk round about your chapel a long time before I could venture to go in, and often thought I would not have gone, had it not been for hurting the minds of my friends. At length, having no hope of being saved, I began to contrive which would be the best way to save my life. Satan's advice was to leave off hearing, and I should soon get better and stronger, and, when I could earn money enough to maintain myself, then to leave all my professing friends, and go into the country: so I strove to put all thoughts of futurity far from me; and, as I could not beat off the hopes my friends had of me, by telling them I knew I was given up to a fearful looking for of judgment, I began to laugh and jeer at them, and would laugh and talk about any thing but the state of my soul. Surely it is of the Lord's mercy I am not consumed. I had not been long in this desperate

state before a man that was ill in the house died: this roused my stubborn soul, the fears of death seized me afresh, and the wrath of God seemed more hot than ever against me; Satan turned accuser, and I was as if were hanging over the belly of hell, and yet I had something that caught hold of the godhead of my Saviour: and indeed this was all I had to hold me up; my load of guilt was so great, and my iniquities were so infinite, that had I not believed in the godhead of Christ, I must have sunk to all eternity.

Although at this time my heavenly Father chastened me sore with the terrors of his righteous law, yet the blessed Spirit often helped my infirmities at a throne of grace, and at this time in such a manner as he had not done for some months before; and now, all on a sudden, hope began to spring up, and I had a strong faith in the immutability of God, and in the promises of the gospel; and, in a few weeks, I had light given me to see that it was God's work on my soul; and when you was describing his work from these words, "Behold ye, and wonder: for I will work a work in your days," &c. among the heathen: I could see, as you went on, the way that God had brought me; though at other times I got into the dark again, and feared I should be lost after all; and thus, up and down, I went on till the 14th of February last, which was nigh four months after I was raised to hope; a day much to be remembered. It was on the sabbath-day morning, and a sabbath it was to my soul. I awoke out of sleep about six o'clock, and think-

ing of the dubious state I was in, not seeing clearly my interest in Christ, I was led out in prayer to God, after the following manner. . ‘ Oh! thou almighty and eternal God, who didst condescend to take on thee my nature, in order to redeem lost, perishing sinners! I pray thee that thou wouldest be pleased to make known thy salvation to my soul; that I may be satisfied with thy mercy; that the tongue of the dumb may sing for joy; and that this may be a sabbath of rest to my soul,’ &c. I had not been at prayer long before these words came powerfully into my mind, The set time to favour Zion is fully come. I wist not that the vision was so nigh; but I had such longing desires after Christ, which nothing but Christ’s coming himself could satisfy, and I began to pray with such fervour and faith, that I told the Lord I knew he would answer me; my heart began to melt, the tears ran down my face like rain, and I had such a view of Christ crucified for me, that my heart felt as though it would burst with grief. I kept crying out, What! didst thou die for me? Didst thou bleed for me? Oh! make me love thee! Make me honour thee! Never let me, never let me, sin against thee again, &c. The sight of my dying Saviour made me weep so loud, as to wake two people out of their sleep who were in the next room. When I had been weeping over and blessing my dear Saviour about five minutes, I was filled with such amazing love, joy, and peace, in believing, which made me break out into sing-

ing or shouting, as loud and as fast as I could, in these words:

Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
I'll sing thy praise to harps of gold,
Because thou shed'st thy blood for me.

These words I shouted over and over near twenty times; my soul was so filled with the glory of heaven, that my poor body felt as though it would be shattered to pieces. This was some of the good old wine of the kingdom, which made me forget my poverty, and remember my misery no more. What an almighty power operated on my soul as soon as my Saviour came! I knew it was that God that made heaven and earth; and when I saw him by faith, bleeding in my nature for me, his condescension and love seemed so great, that I could not bear the sight; indeed it broke my heart: and soon after, when I began to rejoice, I had such a blessed view of him in his beauty and glory, and of that land which is very far off, that I shall never forget.

When I was in my distress, like David I often said all men are liars; but now it is, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?" After the Lord had raised me to hope, I expected (as I had lain so long in bondage to the law), that my deliverance would be conspicuous, and I thought I could not be satisfied concerning my state unless it was; and, I bless the Lord for it, so it is come

to pass, and I think Satan will not easily baffle me out of the reality of it.

I hope, Sir, you will excuse my intruding so long upon your time; but I have such a sight of what the Lord has done for me, that I could not help mentioning some of the particulars to you. I am a single man, in the 22d year of my age. I must conclude with begging an interest in your prayers, that, as I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, I may so walk in him; whilst I remain,

Your's affectionately,

A. W.

LETTER II.

To Mr. A. W.

BELOVED OF GOD,

“SOME on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship, and so it came to pass that all got safe to land;” nor hath this voyage been attended either with harm or loss. Good it is, my son, for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, as Jeremiah did, whose remembrance of the wormwood and gall hung long upon his memory, and humbled

his soul within him. Thou hast been pretty sharply handled, and I am glad of it, for it has bruised and broken thy spirit, which must make it sore and tender; and a daily cross, with a little additional furnace-work by the way, will keep it soft, humble, and contrite; and if armed with a filial fear, and this fear observed, cherished, and attended to, these will be a tolerable fence against the wiles of Satan, and will make thee tremble at the thoughts of nibbling at those lascivious baits, with which he plies those awful professors whom God hath given up to work all uncleanness with greediness. This fear, and a tender conscience, always go together; and so sure as we scale this fence, or break through this hedge, the serpent will bite, and hardness of heart is sure to follow, and it is ten to one if ever such a soul gets his armour so close and compact upon him again while he is under the sun. Thou hast felt what an evil and bitter thing sin is, and what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God; and thou hast had a clear view of that just one in whom God can be propitious, and in whose face thou hast seen the light of the knowledge of his glory. Let that glorious and open vision be still in view, let thy mind be staid there, and perfect peace will ensue; and while thou thus lookest through that glass, though but darkly, thou wilt be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord; for we are predestinated to be conformed to that blessed image, and the trans-

porting views of faith will effect it more and more, nor will the glory of heaven itself wholly escape thy sight.

O! what condescension, what humiliation, is this in God, to behold the things that are done on earth! And will God, in very deed, dwell with men? Yes: though he be high, yet hath he respect to the lowly; for a sinner created anew in Christ Jesus is the masterpiece of divine workmanship, and from such the King of kings receives his greatest revenue; "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." They shall celebrate the illustrious perfections of his nature, his counsels of old, which are faithfulness and truth, the wondrous works of his hands, the innumerable folds of his wisdom, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

I bless my God for thee, my son, and on thine account, because the glorious work prospers in the hand of Zion's King; he shares a portion with the great, and divides the spoil with the strong; the travail of his soul, and the fruits of his labour creep forth from the lions' den, and from the mountains of the leopards. By the blood of the covenant the prisoners still go forth from their cells, and those that sit in darkness shew themselves, and shine under the spring of eternal day; and ere long the remains of the vail which now too often intervenes shall be done away, and we shall know as we are known; and all these sad and dangerous allurements, with the whole of this gross matter

which is now in view, shall dissolve and vanish, and we shall awake in his likeness, and be satisfied therewith; " For he that hath shewed us great and sore troubles shall quicken us again, and bring us up again from the depths of the earth; he shall increase our greatness, and comfort us on every side." Then shall we see him as he is, and be filled with all his fulness.

But I must counsel thee a little, and tell thee what will befall thee, more or less, in the course of thy pilgrimage. Thou art now in the banqueting house, in perfect friendship, and in sweet union with the best beloved, and his voice to us at such times is, " Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This is the language of the heavenly wooer in the day of espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart. But look up, and see; what is that which hangs over thy head? " His banner over me is love." True; but a banner is a sign of war, and the Shulamite is a company of two armies; time will tell thee what that means. The new wine, of which thou speakest, is in general poured forth plentifully on the day of espousals; " But the time will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." Yea, the time will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. Weaning days are terrible days to the little heirs of promise, and days of absence and spiritual desertion are no less dismal to a wife of youth; but the God of Israel,

the Saviour, is verily a God that hideth himself; and when he does so, who then can behold him? At these times his wonders in the land are obscured, and his commandment is hid. The hills of Judah flow neither with wine, nor with milk. Wisdom refuses to sleep with us, and even to talk with us; we seek him, but he is not to be found; we call him, but he gives us no answer. Looking up, recoils with grief; and looking to months past, is attended with aggravation. We have been driven, yea, wooed and won from all earthly enjoyments and wholly absorbed in divine and heavenly realities; and now dead to the one, and bereft of the other. But faith must be tried. The adversary salutes us with the old taunt, "Where is now thy God?" The old man, which we thought to be crucified, dead, buried, and for ever gone, rises again in a worse appearance than in Samuel's mantle; for he appears with seven heads and ten horns, and all his members more clearly and more distinctly seen than ever they were before, and if possible more desperate, and all against the empire of grace, with Satan at the head of them; a true emblem of the Gog and Magog army encompassing the camp of the saints; and the worst of all is, Jesus is not to be found. But we must have an engagement in the wilderness, before we return in the power of the Spirit, in order that our sonship may be confirmed in us, and that we may know, by blessed experience, that his grace is sufficient for us. In these trying times every bait that can possibly

gratify flesh and blood will be hung upon Satan's hook, and all our former pleasurable sins will be presented to view, and the natural enmity and rebellion of the heart not a little stirred up; which, to a soul reconciled to God, appears a strange thing. But this is the time for the believer to quit himself like a man; to be constant in prayer, though no answer is given; to be diligent in the means, though nothing appears to be gained by trading; to be much in private, though followed up by the worst of company; still to seek him, though it appears to be labour in vain; to read, although every thing runs against us; and to watch his hand, though we see not our signs, nor one token for good. When we have laboured through this fiery trial, faith appears more precious than gold, the way more clearly cast up, and our feet to stand in a more even place. I now commit thee to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build thee up, and to give thee an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, by faith that is in Christ Jesus; and remain, in the best of bonds, your friend and servant for his sake,

Church Street, Paddington.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER III.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY dear friend, where shall I find you; and where am I to look for you? I have been now a whole month or more seeking you, and my thoughts roving from shore to shore in pursuit of you; often saying, O! that I had the wings of a dove, I would find him out wherever he is, even if he is gone over the Atlantic ocean! I do believe I must soon go out in search of you; not lest peradventure you have been cast upon some mountain, or into some valley, for I am persuaded the everlasting arm will never let you drop down, nor will the good Shepherd ever let you slip out of his hand; but what I fear is, lest you should get into the fiery chariot before I see you. The Lord knows how much I have longed for you, my heart has been with you wherever you have been; and seldom or ever do I go on my knees but you come in my mind: I know not why; for I cannot think you want my poor prayers, though I so much need yours. I am at present poor enough, and seem contented in my poverty; this I do not like; I dread carnal ease, which I often find is ready to creep in. Since I saw you last I have at times been more comfortable in my soul than ever I

have been in my life. The scriptures seem to open to me with more ease than usual, not only those you hinted at, but others besides; and my spirit is more sweet, less wrath and bitterness in delivering my discourses; I cannot fetch that on my soul again if I try at it, nor can I bring it into my discourses if I was to attempt it. But this is only growing in knowledge; I am afraid of it at times, it does not please nor satisfy me; I contend with the Lord about the way, and am still for having my own, and sometimes choose strangling rather than life, because I cannot get it. This is the way I go on. If there is a little enlargement, and an appearance of coming out, then I fear I have not been long enough nor deep enough in; and when the dark day comes again, then I conclude that I have now been so long in, that I never shall come out to see light. What would I give if I could continue in the same frame as I delivered a few discourses in soon after I saw you last; the savour of them seems to abide still, but have not been able since to enter so largely into the field. No, no, my barrenness has again returned, and I cannot see that I am yet successful; the inhabitants of the world have not yet fallen, nor have I wrought any deliverance on the earth. I do not know that I am good for any thing, except it is to murder, and that I do not like at all; I wish to communicate life to dead sinners, this I would like. There is now a person at T. on the borders of Kent, who, I am told,

used to rave most desperately against God's sovereignty, and having heard much about me, came to hear me, whom God struck with an arrow. He went home and got to bed, but has never been out of it to this day; he is in black despair, and his flesh wasted from his bones; he cannot endure to be alone one moment, and talks of nothing but the sermon he heard, and of strange things going on at Lewes. There is a talk of more forces being raised to root out all the errors from this place; but I know what the sword of all those can do. What I want is to see the dead raised, and made to stand on their feet.

God Almighty bless you.

J. J.

LETTER IV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

REV. SIR,

I AM now in my old hut, but not in a peaceable dwelling, nor in a quiet resting-place; for it begins to hail, coming down on the forest, and the city (at present) is low, in a low place; and blessed are they that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.

A kind and pressing invitation hath caused

me to stray from my Father's house, in order to scatter a little of the good seed of the kingdom in a soil where I had not been before; and in my absence the enemy hath sowed tares among the wheat, and is gone his way. I listened to the good report and popular applause that was given to me, by my kind solicitors, of a preacher whom I had never known; and being much put to it for a supply in my absence, I readily exchanged with an incarnate devil, in the counterfeited rays of an angel of light, and so left my charge with one of the lewd hirelings, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock. He is one of the children of base men, he is viler than the earth; I have brayed after him as after a thief, for he hath attempted to exclude them all from Christ, that they might affect him. To some he hath been a very lovely song, to others a builder up without a foundation, and the itching ears of others have been scratched; another, (who, like Doeg, hath been long detained as a prisoner before the Lord; or, like Peter, his soul has been in chains between two soldiers, I mean the flesh and the devil,) was set at liberty by a wonderful definition of the two stone figures at the front of Bethlehem Hospital; which definition was applied to Jonah and Hezekiah, the former, the preacher said, was raving mad; and the latter, melancholy mad. But this is no wonder, the scribes called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and this gentleman says the same of his household; but the

preacher must go this strange way through Jericho, in order to bring the aforesaid gentleman into what he calls liberty, though to this day he is bound, and among the tombs, and seeking the living among the dead. Those that have longed for prophecies upon smooth things and upon deceits, have been greatly blessed; the painted sepulchres have all been touched over twice; the whited walls have had the brush upon them, and the tower of Babel hath been raised two stories; the chambers of imagery have been cleaned and fresh painted, but none of the high places have been taken away, the people still sacrifice upon them. Some who were never so low as the pots, have been like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and their feathers with yellow gold. Others are in the highest seats, who, so far from being delivered, like the Hebrew women, were never so much as upon the stools. However, I am determined to make no leagues with these Gibeonites; nor will I treat with such ambassadors; their clouted shoes, mouldy bread, and old leather bottles, are none of the things which bring glory to God in the highest, nor peace upon earth, much less good will toward men. Such wretches pretend to come to us because of the name of the Lord our God, but they bring none of those things with them that accompany salvation. I have shewed my determination to make no leagues with these hewers of wood and drawers of water; and in this matter I am brought into the sad pre-

dicament of Nehemiah. Some praise the good deeds of this Sanballat, and repeat them to me, who are in alliance with him; but I am for no confederacy, nor do I dare to walk in the way of them that are confederate. This I have resolved in my mind, and I have no doubt but the God of Israel will be with me in this determination; for I know that by this man the devil is come down among us, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time; and I know that Satan hates me with perfect hatred, for my dear Master's sake. The old serpent seems to be very fiery, and some of his crooked generation begin to hiss not a little; but I have not broke through the hedge, therefore I do not think that he or they can bite me. The sun at noon day doth not appear more conspicuous to me, than the spirit of the devil communicated by this man; and as God hath discovered this to me, and brought me to be a man of strife and contention, I shall be emboldened as I go on.

I shall be a hind let loose. Many who have long fawned in feigned humility, begin to grin like dogs, and go round about the city; and some who have, in the general, been dumb, begin to open now. I know God hath set me as a tower and a fortress, to try and know their ways, and I am sure that they will have neither dew nor rain but according to my word, for the Lord Jesus Christ hath spoken by me. But at this time I had need be an iron pillar and a brazen wall; for

I am sure that they will fight against me with a high hand and stretched out arm, and in great wrath; for they are zealously affected, but not well. But nothing but their cruel treatment to me will ever drive or wean my affections from them. When once the sounding of my bowels is stopped, he will order me to take the sword, and teach me the use of the bow. Farewell; be of good cheer, and pray for him who hath so often and so long prayed for thee. God bless thee.

Church Street, Paddington.

W. H.

LETTER V.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REVEREND AND DEAR FATHER IN THE FAITH
OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR,

MAY the peace of God rule and reign in your heart so long as you are in your earthly tabernacle, and enable you to speak to others as an instrument in the Lord's hand, as you have done to me. O! bless his holy name for bringing me under your ministry! Not but he could have blessed me equally the same one hundred and seventy miles off, had it been his good pleasure; but, Sir, you must have the honour of speaking

his word to me as his mouth, and praised be his holy name for it.

To give you a particular account of the Lord's dealings with me is more than I can do, for I am what I always was, that is, a poor hand at writing; but, for about a year and three quarters, I was in dreadful bondage, and I thought that, instead of the Lord's blessing me, he was going to destroy me; and you, whom I formerly took to be my friend, became my enemy, but it was for telling me the truth. O! the enmity and rebellion that worked in my wicked heart! none can tell but them that feel it; and all against so good and gracious a God, whose thoughts are as far above my thoughts as the heavens are above the earth; bless his precious name, for his name is an ointment poured forth.

It was in the month of April last the Lord, by his Spirit, was pleased to visit me in so wonderful a manner, that I think I never shall forget it, at least I hope I shall not. I was about my work, and suddenly I felt such an inward change, that I never shall be able to describe. I said, What is it? What can it be? I went upon my knees to pray, but prayer was turned into rejoicing and thanksgiving; for the blessed Spirit operated so powerfully upon my soul, that he made me call God my Father, which I felt a reluctance to do, and withstood it as long as I could; being conscious of my guilt, like the poor publican, durst not look up; but these words

came with such power to my soul, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" which words broke my heart. These lines in Mr. Hart's Hymns followed,

Sinners are high in his esteem,
And sinners highly value him.

Never can there be a more cordial meeting with the nearest friends in the flesh, than there was betwixt Jesus Christ and me a poor sinner; my joys were so very great, that I cried out, It is enough! It is enough! And had it continued so, I could no more have done any business; but he was pleased to withdraw, and the sensible loss of the presence of my Lord was almost death to my soul; no one then was company for me, but poor Mary Magdalene in her deserted state, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him;" which were the very feelings of my soul; at which time I begged him to do it over again, which he did, time after time, from Thursday till Sunday.

I was not at the chapel on Sunday morning, which I was not sorry for, for I could not have contained myself, my heart was so broken; not with terror, but with grief that I should crucify the Lord of glory. In the evening I went to hear you, but I had lost my peace, and I do not remember your text, but I thought the whole discourse went against me; I thought that the new

wine had been put into an old bottle, and that the bottle would burst, and the wine be spilled, and that I had not got the righteousness of Christ upon me, which drove me almost to desperation. In this condition I came home, and continued begging the Lord to come again; and on the next day, which was Monday, bless him, he did come. I then was grieved that it had not been done under your ministry. I went to chapel, begging that he would be pleased to speak to me by you. The hymn that was given out was composed from, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" I had lost my Comforter, and said to myself, This is very suitable, but it is not for me; there I sat fretting and mourning for my Lord to come. You took your text out of John; "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." In opening it you spoke much upon the Trinity, which was a grief to me, for I wanted comfort; but when you began to explain the operation of the Spirit upon the soul, had I told you all that I had experienced, you could not have laid it down more plain than you did. You told me it was not me, but the Spirit in me witnessing my adoption 'and that made me cry, Abba, Father! You treated of the Spirit's being an earnest of the heavenly glory, and made a comparison, that a person engaging a servant for twenty guineas a year, and giving one as an earnest to bind the bargain, but at the year's end the other nineteen

were to be received; so you told me from the pulpit that it was the case with me. I cried out, It is enough! and went home rejoicing, and told them in the house what God had done for my soul.

In a day or two after, a person called on me and asked me how I was for clothing; it rather struck me, but I replied, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes; they told me there was a mystery in that, and I must go down to the bottom of the garden to get at it. I replied, The effect of righteousness is peace, and I have got it. But this gave me no small shake, and made me to beg hard of the Lord to perfect the work he had begun on my soul, as it was all his own; and bless him, he makes us pray for things which he designs to give; for in every sermon you preached afterwards you brought forth the righteousness of Christ, and made it appear plain that I had got it, and that I was safe in it.

I shall tire you with reading my scribble, but must go a little further. In a few days after, when upon my knees begging to God to guide me and keep me humble at his feet, and telling him that I was not fit to be trusted by myself alone, these words flowed into my mind, I will instruct thee and lead thee in the way everlasting; which then was, and has been many times since, a great support to me in times of trouble, and when under the hidings of the Lord's countenance.

Sir, I live among many who have a form of

godliness, but I fear they are destitute of the power; nay, I believe in my heart that some of them hate it and them that speak of it. Sometimes I have found gratitude and thankfulness flow out to the Lord for choosing such an one as me out from among them, who am so vile and ignorant, and while he hath left so many behind that are so wise and prudent; but they read the Bible to us, and put their own constructions on it, and speak against the doctrine that you preach, though I know it is the truth; this puzzles and frets me so that I can scarce bear to sit to hear it; but this I do know, that the Lord opened this door to me, and has blessed me in it, so that I am afraid of doing any thing without seeing his hand going before me.

I have desired often to speak to you, but have been afraid to come. When I first began to write this, I was very happy in my soul, which comfort came under a discourse which you had preached. Then I thought I would tell you what the Lord had done for me under your ministry, but a fear of pride and presumption seized me, so that I gave over, and locked the scraps up; but finding the Lord precious to me soon after, I could not be satisfied without letting you know it. I thought I would send a few lines, but none of that which I had written before; but these words came to my mind, "What I have written, I have written;" so then I began to join more to the old piece, and have blundered on thus far, but I fear in such

manner that you will not be able to read it; but it is the truth, and I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken; and may the Lord bless you and yours. So prays

Your humble servant and sincere follower,

L. A.

LETTER VI.

To L. A.

MY SISTER AND DAUGHTER IN CHRIST JESUS,

THINE epistle came safe to hand, & love letter written under the influence of divine love, and is the blessed effects of a love-visit, and the comfortable and sure tokens of the divine Wooer and everlasting Lover of poor perishing sinners. Thou art in covenant with God, within the bonds of it, in eternal union with him. Upon the servant, upon the handmaid, he hath poured out his Spirit. Say, Amen, and put thy seal to this, that he is true; and I say God shall confirm it, that the Coalheaver hath one more seal to his commission, one more fruit to his labour, one more jewel to his future crown of joy and rejoicing, and God shall add

to me another daughter. Labour and travail in soul and body I do; and not a few children appear in the world as the blessed effects of my labour in this miserable age of empty profession, abounding error, and super-abounding iniquity. I have, by the good hand of my God upon me, met thee in the covenant head, in the unity of faith; and by the ties of love I am one with thee in the chief corner stone; and, if I never see thee in the flesh, I shall meet thee with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. Every member of the old man will annoy thee; many snares, traps, and nets, will be set and spread for thee by Satan. Beware of these, beware of men; but, above all, beware of the ministers of Satan, and of presumptuous, arrogant, lascivious, and wanton professors, who are the filth of Zion, the chaff in the floor, the spots in our feasts, the hypocrites in the family, the allies of Satan, and the fuel of hell. From all these may the Lord of all lords deliver thee; Amen, and amen, says

Thy willing servant in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

Church Street, Paddington.

LETTER VII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your last favour, and kindly thank you for it. I beg you would put yourself to no inconveniency on my account, though I much long to see you, in hope of receiving a second benefit, yet I know the Lord's time is the best. It is the greatest satisfaction to me to hear from you, as I know not of any other friend and helper in the world besides; and truly glad am I to hear that you overcome and tread down their strength. Could I as clearly see, and be as fully persuaded, that the Lord's hand will be seen towards me, as I am that it works for you, and will to the end, I should then be very happy; but unbelief makes me stagger, and doubting the desired end brings me at times nearly to the point of giving all up, and to run away somewhere, I know not where. But still here I am, moving on so slowly that I cannot see that I go at all; yet I can see, by your writings, that I know more and more, and that I learn something daily. But surely it is light given to one whose way is hid, and whom the Lord hedges in. I have seen a deal of the Lord's good-

ness, much long-suffering he has exercised towards me, and I know he has heard my prayer in many things: he heard me and helped me when I was brought low, and none but himself could: he shewed me my awful state by nature and by practice, and the mystery of iniquity that was in my heart, together with my daring and bold presumption on him without any warrant or leave from him, at the sight of which I thought there was no mercy for me: but he was pleased to give hope, and hope supported me, and has to this day; and I believe too, that he has put his truth in my heart and in my mouth, and you would hardly believe with what ease, light, and liberty, I can of late deliver it; but after all, barren I am, barren are my thoughts, barren is my heart, unfruitful and unsuccessful; yet there is a secret something that tells me it will not be so always; but I cannot believe it, because I can see no prospect of it, nor the least appearance of it; looking for the word to prevail among the people, but no sign of it; the inhabitants of the world do not fall, nor are they likely to it, as I can see; and indeed how can I expect it, whilst I am so barren myself. I have been more pestered, of late, with vain and evil thoughts, than I can well tell you. I have cried to the Lord against them, and he is pleased to remove them for a season, but they return again. I know Satan tries to entangle me, but he has not been able to succeed yet, and I hope he never will. There is such a deal of iniquity in my heart, and

such fretfulness and rebellion at the sight of it, that makes me fear that the Lord must lay sorer troubles on me yet. I am afraid that the worst is yet to come; this I dread, and wish to know it too. And indeed I can hardly believe the Lord will let me go free with so light a punishment; for I can see very clear, that it was but little in comparison with my deserts. The Lord bless you, and teach you, that I may be taught; for I know that it is from your mouth I am to receive it. I believe the Lord's kind providence directed me at first to look there, nor have I looked in vain; for every step I have moved, and do move, is either by a word from your mouth or from your writings: and may God bless you, and reward you for it, is the prayer of

J. JENKINS.

LETTER VIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THE next scrap is safely arrived, and it is very perceptible to me that we gain ground; the outer man gets out of favour, and the old man gets out of office; he is not now the chief speaker, faith and hope are almost as loud, and as distinctly

heard, as he is; he now and then puts in a word in this epistle, which I do not so much wonder at, knowing that every fool will be meddling; especially when sovereign grace is going to put an end to all strife in the court of conscience. Thou knowest, my son, that thou art always welcome to me, until the cruse of oil fails, and the barrel of meal wastes; which will not be the case, till God sends rain upon the earth; until the cloud of witnesses distil such showers of grace, as shall fill the earth with the knowledge and glory of God, as the waters cover the sea; till then the cruse and barrel will spring in some poor sinner's heart or other. We are both in one hand, my son; the same power that leads me on, holds you up; the sensible, self-despairing, seeking sinner, has got as many promises as the standing saint. As to running away, that is the old story over again; there is no such thing as running away from God, there is no going from his Spirit, there is no fleeing from his presence; if we go into heaven, he is there; and if we make our bed in hell, he is there also. It is not he that runs the fastest that wins the prize; the race is not to the swift; he that moves slow often treads sure, because he pondereth the path of his feet, and is the less liable to stumble in his walk; he that believes shall not make haste. The captive exile is not to go out with haste, nor go forth by flight; the chief Shepherd will go before him, and the glory of the Lord will be his rereward; he shall reflect upon the

glory of the Lord in his happy deliverance, and see the leadings of his providence, and the light of his countenance directing his ways. The way of every coming sinner is hid, for he is led in a way that he knoweth not, and in paths that he hath not known; and if his way is hedged up with thorns, these thorns are intended to prick his conscience, that he may not pursue the old paths of the destroyer. The long-suffering of God toward us, when reflected upon with the buddings of hope, and the expectations of pardon, lead us to repentance; we begin to loathe ourselves, and to feel for, and mourn over, a much-abused Saviour. This influence is pure and truly evangelical, and not legal; for legal operations lead us wholly to pity self, and to rebel against God. The former is drawn forth by believing views of a reconciled father, the latter springs up from the conceptions of an inexorable judge. Whatever discoveries thou hast had of the sinfulness of thy nature, thy past life, and of thy assumption of the ministerial office, without either call to it, or qualifications for it, it is light that hath made it manifest, for, "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light;" wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and come to Christ, and he shall give thee light. God hath done great things for thee; how many poor, blinded, presumptuous, young coxcombs, have run into the sacred office, blinded and puffed up by Satan, with no other sanction than that of old women. They may well be called, My Lady's

men, for they know nothing of, My Lord; but God hath arrested thee, and undeceived thee, and convinced thee of the need of a better patron, while numbers of them are left to run on, deceiving and being deceived, and darkening counsel by words without knowledge. All fruitfulness, my son, depends upon union with the living Vine; God doth not expect grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles, any more than we do. All that are in Christ by the Father's choice, and that are preserved in Christ and called, must be purged before they can bring forth fruit; every branch in that covenant Head the Father takes in hand, and thou must be purged, not only from thy old sins, but from the whole of thy former profession, from thy former ministry, and from all thy false confidence in it: and these purging draughts are not palatable, though they are profitable; bitter herbs must be eaten with the passover-offering, and we must drink of the wine that Wisdom hath mingled, as well as of the new wine of the kingdom. The work goes sweetly on; God works, and thou canst not let it. He hath long worked in thee to will, and he is beginning to work in thee to do also; faith is struggling, hope is abounding, and the captive exile is hastening that he may be loosed, that he may not die in the pit, and that his bread may not fail. God bless him.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER IX.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

I CANNOT but return many and sincere thanks to my best of friends for the savoury and sweet morsel he sent me in his last. There I found it, and I eat it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Some hints dropped in it led me into a large field; and the matter was so suitable and applicable to my own case, that I am persuaded none but he who knows our thoughts, and wants too, could direct you to send it. O! how sweet is the light! and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun. But I am unworthy of the least of his mercies. O! what a heaven it is to enjoy his presence, though it is but a little! I cannot describe unto you what a comfortable, sweet, and glorious season I had last Sunday night, in delivering a discourse from that portion; "In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack." I could not but be astonished at my light, the power I felt, my readiness to speak, and the home-strokes I could give the conscience of the sinner, and then go away without stopping to belabour him for half an hour together with the terrors of God, which, I believe, only confounds,

darkens, and hardens him. Nor was I elated or carried away with glee; but a sweet, humbling, melting frame, followed, such as I feel at certain seasons, particularly of late, in private with the Lord. O! how I do like such seasons of weeping and mourning at his feet! But oh! such as these come but seldom! I wish they were oftener. I delight much in them; nor do I wish, at present, to be raised higher, nor aspire to high things. It is my wish that the Almighty would humble me as much as he pleases; and that his blessed Spirit would give me much of this godly sorrow: godly sorrow I hope it is, for I find my spirit much meekened under it, more resigned to the Lord's will and way; and it is my desire that he would not suffer me any more to contend with him for my own way, for he has never come in that yet. When I have prayed him to remove my pain, my troubles, distresses, and darkness, and to make me easy and comfortable, I have not succeeded; but when I have asked for patience to bear, and resignation to his will, he has hearkened to me, and I find he gives it me. Why should he take the yoke from the neck of such an untoward, restless, stubborn bullock, that was never accustomed to it before, and was so loth to bow his neck under it? and why should he let a proud aspiring rebel into the highest room, before he has sat in the lowest place? He never will do so. We must first sit alone and keep silence. Indeed I find the lowest place a sweet situation; I never

thought it was so. I had formed an idea of a dreadful hole; I looked for and expected greater punishment; I lived in expectation of more wrath revealed, and my chains to be yet made heavier, and can hardly believe somehow that the Lord will let me escape so light. I have long feared and dreaded greater torments; but, instead of that, quietness and peace I feel, and hope and joy springing up within. I cannot tell you now that I can see my life secured; but I can tell you that I am at present quiet, happy, and comfortable, come what will of me. O! my friend, and dearly beloved, go on! no enemy shall ever prevail against you; every one that contradicts shall be found a liar: what they shall say or do stands for nothing; but what God hath said will stand for ever. My cold is something better. God bless you.

J. JENKINS.

LETTER X.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

I AM thankful to my God, my son, that any morsel of savoury meat should be communicated to thee through the instrumentality of so unworthy a servant. There are very few whom

God hath quickened, and to whom he hath given a keen appetite after spiritual provision, but what can eat of the dishes of my cooking: "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet;" even reproofs, rebukes, burdens, fears, terrors, wrath, and bondage, to such a soul, are better than nothing; and if the heart be made honest, he had rather have these than be at ease in Zion. I am much delighted at thy admission into so large a field; I hope shortly to hear of thy getting out of that strait into a large place, where there shall be no straitness, and that he will set thy feet in a large room. Light is sweet only to those who have been in the dark regions of the shadow of death; all others hate the light, nor will they come to it. The wonders that you performed in the pulpit do not in the least surprise me; I expect shortly to hear the old report repeated, namely, That John is risen again from the dead, and that mighty works do shew forth themselves in him, Matt. xiv. 9. It is true, the terrors of God, and the flames of wrath, cannot woo nor win the heart, in the present state that man is in through the fall. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and the law worketh wrath. The more the terrors of the law operate on the sinner's heart, the more the enmity and rebellion of the sinner is stirred up against it, till the very gulf itself appears to be open between God and the soul; and, until

Christ appears, there can be no way of reconciliation open, nor any hope of nearness and access, much less of communion and fellowship, and an eternal enjoyment of his presence in heaven. The carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God, but will rebel and fight against it, as long as the law discharges one curse at the sinner, even if this war should continue to all eternity; for there is no word of reconciliation, nor mediator, in the dismal regions of hopeless prisoners. Most seeking sinners are much out in their expectations of the first glorious appearance of Christ to them; they expect submission, meekness, contrition, godly sorrow, patience, repentance, humility, &c. &c. to operate previous to his coming, as so many preparatory operations, either to engage him, allure him, or else to pave the way for him; but for my part I had none of these harbingers or forerunners. There was nothing in me but guilt, shame, fear, rebellion, desperation, and downright madness, and a determination to seek his face and sue for mercy no more. At this time he came; and he brought all that was good along with him. His reward was with him, and his work before him; and the first view that ever my faith had of him, was that of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and out of his fulness I received, and that grace for grace; for the law came to me with the accusations of Moses, but grace and truth came to my soul by Jesus Christ, who

silenced Moses as my Advocate, and answered all his demands as my Surety, and sent him off from the mount of transfiguration, while Jesus and his poor disciple were left alone, admiring and wondering at each other. He seemed pleased that he had caught the lost sheep, and I wept for joy that I had found the chief Shepherd. I believe that the ministering angels attended on me before Jesus came, and that it was they who articulated the word that God spoke to me; but I believe that there were none standing near when the first glorious visit was paid, and the marriage knot tied. It was something like the marriage of our first parents; God the Father draws us to the second Adam, as Eve was brought to the first, or else we should never come; the Spirit reveals the wedding garment to faith, and faith puts it on, and Christ immediately embraces the soul in his own robe, and becomes one spirit with it, and the sole and whole possessor of it. Thy present sensations under the operation of the Spirit of God will humble thee, strip thee, and empty thee, more than all the terrors that have gone before; nothing can stand before the rushing mighty wind that fills the house, and that proclaims the great Deliverer, and the year of jubilee at hand. Thy expectations of more wrath spring from a consciousness of thy just deserts; but God exacts of us far less than our iniquities deserve; he hath never dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded according to our iniquities. He stays

the rough wind in the day of the east wind, lest, like Jonah, we faint, and choose death rather than life.

God bless thee, &c.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR AND BELOVED FRIEND,

I HAVE been long expecting the favour of a few lines from you, and sometimes wondering what can be the cause of the delay. Satan cannot persuade me that you either neglect me or forget me, but that it is a multiplicity of concerns that occupy your time, head, and hands, and I doubt not but that they are all full enough; yet none upon earth would be more glad to hear of your welfare, success, and prosperity, than myself. It is true I have lost your burden for some time now, and perhaps before you lost it, or at least about the same time. I bore a part of it for a while, and I had strength for the time to do it, and to plead the righteous cause of his servant with God; but this was given me for your sake, and a debtor I am to you, and that of more than I ever shall be able to pay. When I was with

you last, I saw clear enough that God was on your side, and that none of them that had risen up against you would prevail; that he had given you the necks of all your enemies; and that you would pinch them and gall them, till confusion, division, contradiction, distraction, and madness, would scatter them over the face of the whole earth. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that rises up in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn; this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. God sent you on that journey to discover the hypocrite, that he might no longer reign, lest the people should be ensnared. This is a part of the work which the Lord has called you to, and you must be content.

And now, my dear friend, my thoughts have returned much to their old channel; I am gone again, like the shadow that declineth, and am tossed up and down like the locusts, and have been sadly so for some weeks back, without light, life, or power, moping about in darkness that might be felt; often concluding to give all up, and to try at it no longer; and what prevents me sometimes from doing it I cannot tell. One day last week Mrs. H. shewed me two letters she had lately received from you; in one of them you touch on this passage, Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse: as soon as I glanced upon it, a ray appeared, and I saw where I was, and what I

wanted; but it went out of my thoughts, nor did it recur all day Saturday, though I had purposed to preach from it. I laboured all day with another text, but with little success, and went to bed at night, as dark, peevish, fretful, rebellious, and miserable as a mortal could be, and continued all night so in my sleep; but after I got up in the morning, and sat down in my study, the passage came all at once to my mind, with such sweet light and power, that I cried out, Draw me, and I will run after thee. I had matter enough to preach that day, and I believe I never preached so before. Thus I am, but I cannot understand this work. Sometimes the beloved Friend seems to be coming, but it is but just a distant sight, and he is soon gone again; and when I get to the old hole, it appears, I think, clear to me that all is nothing, nothing but legal pain, legal comfort, and legal hope. What! to be always cutting, tearing, rooting, rebuking, and reprovng sin! this is beggarly work, and I am really tired of it; to be always at the dung-gate, and to have nothing to eat or drink, is poor encouragement.

God bless thee.

J. J.

LETTER XII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS,

I HAVE been out for five weeks running, visiting the brethren in the little adjacent towns, to see how they do; and I find that they which have followed the Lord are all alive to this day. I have got a cold upon me, which I am very subject to, either in my heart or in my head; the former is by far the worst, as nothing but a fresh sense of divine love will ever remove it.

This last burden bowed me a little for about a fortnight; I felt the weight, and I was sure that that burden would shortly go from me, or I should go from it; which, were it not for two entanglements that hung fast by my skirts, and brought me into a strait, I should not have hesitated one moment about that end of the balance which proves all flesh to be vanity.

But heavy as it was, fervent and unremitted prayer made it vanish in an hour, and it returned no more; since which day I have gone upright. I call this the burden of the word of the Lord, because it is a strict adherence to that which brought it on; and as God knew this, he suffered me to cast it upon him, and he sustained me; he

interwove his compassion with my tender feelings for his honour, and mingled his resentment and threatenings with my indignation at his enemies; he let me know that I, and my cause too, were his own, and that he would plead it, and avenge himself of those hypocrites: and on whomsoever those threatenings of the Lord fall, they will grind that enemy to powder; I may not see it, but others shall, and confess that there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

I have not the least doubt but the hand of God is in all this; for, shall there be evil in the city, especially in the city of our solemnities, and the Lord hath not done it? My antagonist is the devil himself in the heart and mouth of a damnable impostor, and to try such, and prove them liars, is one branch of the ministerial work, and a work which is highly commended by Christ himself; this I know, but it is grievous to flesh and blood; however, self must be denied daily by those that would follow the Lamb through evil report and good report.

The pool of Bethesda has five porches: the first is God's irrevocable decree; the second, is the bowels of his eternal love; the third, is the covenant head in which they were chosen; the fourth, is the promises of God in which they are all included; and the fifth, is the guardianship of divine Providence, by which they are all preserved in Christ Jesus till called. These five porches at the door of the house of mercy screen the elect

from the inclemency of the weather, and from the winds of destructive error; "All that came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them:" in these porches they are secured from the floods of temptation, from the rain, hail, and winds of desolating judgments; from all the storms and tempests of mount Sinai; and from the destruction of sin, the sentence of damnation, and the wrath to come.

In these porches lay a great many sick and impotent folk, even to this day, which want a cure, and wait for the angel of the covenant to come down and move the waters. By waters is meant not the love of God, for that is a river, not a pool, a river that makes glad the city of our God; nor doth it mean the Spirit or grace of God, for these are called springs of living water, not pools; much less can it mean God, who is a fountain of living waters; nor Christ, who is a well of salvation, for who can trouble these? The church, indeed, is called a pool; "The parched ground shall become a pool," Isaiah xxxv. 7. "I will make the wilderness a pool of water," &c. Isa. xli. 18. The church often wants stirring up, especially when, like the pool, she settles too much on her old earthly sediment; a little stirring troubles the people, which are often in scripture called waters, and then fresh life and vigour, zeal and fervour, are felt; prayer goes up, and life and light come down, and the power, which at such a time attends the word, often heals the soul of

whatever disease it hath: three poor invalids have been healed since the last descent of the angel; and how many more have experienced the same efficacy I cannot tell, for they are not found to return to give glory to God, save these strangers; these are sent away in peace, and certain I am that their faith has made them whole. I hear the noisy and predominant clamours of unbelief, in this thine epistle, which is loud enough to drown every other voice. Unbelief is, I know, an eternal bar, even in the mind of Satan himself, which confines every thought of that wicked spirit which may at any time break loose in vain search after a door of hope; and, at certain seasons, when he is allowed to have access to my soul (strange as it may seem), I can even feel my own spirit influenced, confined, and shut up at times in unbelief, and attended with every rebellious, desperate, envious, and malignant thought, that rankles in the very devil himself.

Dated from Mizpeh, the watch-tower, near to Galeed, bound to Mahanaim; where I hope to meet with the Lord's host, and to reject all the assistance of Esau, and all his company. Ever thine.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

IT hath long been on my mind to tell you the dealings of God with my soul, which I beg you to peruse.

I was born of poor, but hard working parents in the town of Tewksbury, in Gloucestershire; my father died when I was very young, and my mother strove hard for a living for us. When I was about seven or eight years old I was put to what we call in the country a Free School, to read and write, and was there till I was about thirteen; we used to be kept close to church, and at particular times, after the service was over, we used to stand up on forms, or stools to be asked our catechism by the parson. I only relate this to make room for a dream I had at this time: as Elihu says to Job, "For God speaketh once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not; in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men in slumbering upon the bed." I dreamt all us school-boys were standing in a row as aforetime, and God Almighty came and took one from here, and another from there, and I trembled very much with fear lest he should not take me; but at last he came, took me by the hand, and put me amongst

the rest of his choice. I have thought on that dream in a state of nature many times, though I had no knowledge of God's choice, or his electing love. But to proceed. When I was about thirteen years of age I was put apprentice to a wheelwright; but being of a roving mind, and not used very well, I ran away, and came up to London; where I worked at several employments, such as sawing, gardening, footman, brewer's servant, and at last went to sea; and, as God the Spirit shall bring it to my remembrance, I will tell a little of my sea voyage, for now begin my troubles.

At the beginning of the American war I entered on board the Carysfort frigate, in his Majesty's service, commanded by Captain Fanshaw; we sailed from Chatham to Quebec, where, having staid some time, we sailed for New York, and, arriving there at the time our fleet were about to besiege the town, the admiral sent our ship, with two more, to pass the town up the river to land troops; in passing, we had to receive the constant fire of five or six forts, during which I was under great fear in my mind, not having seen any thing of the kind before, though I harboured such a thought as this, that if I was killed in battle I should go to heaven; but vain was that thought: but here the Lord saved me from the stroke, while others fell. Our captain being a very severe man, having flogged six men for a trifling fault, I thought I would run away the very first opportunity, and accordingly did, with two others, a few months

after the town of New York was taken; but with great difficulty we reached the town, being stopt several times to give an account of ourselves, being upwards of thirty miles up the country when we set off; however we arrived safe, and went on board merchant vessels. The ship I went on board of was bound for London; there I altered my name to Hodges, that being my mother's maiden name, for fear of being discovered, as the men of war searched all the merchant ships that went out for deserters. I got safe from hence, and was bound for London; but in a heavy gale of wind, we sprung a leak, and were obliged to make the best of our way to the West Indies, toiling night and day at the pumps to keep the ship above water; we at last reached St. John's, in Antigua.

Now begin my troubles. Our captain would not fulfil his promise of paying us our wages; in consequence I, among some others, left him; but it being a very dead time of the year, the shipping were not come out, so that we were obliged to enter on board a man of war again; but I went, with great reluctance, some time after the others; nor would I have gone then, could I have got any thing else to do. At last, through necessity, I went on board the Portland, Admiral Young; we sailed on a cruise, and put into Prince Rupert's bay, in the island of Dominica, to get wood and water for the cruise. I and two more agreed to run away the day before the ship sailed and contrived to get our things on shore, ready to start. On

the day appointed we ascended each one a tree till night. John Moor and Tom Jones, my two companions, had been to the town of Rosseau, on this island, which was the resort of the merchant vessels; and, as we were bound for that place, we had about forty miles to travel by land.

By this time I began to be very much hardened in sin, and the Lord knows, was he to leave us to ourselves, we should soon run to destruction.

To proceed. We had got a river to cross, and on the bridge over which we must pass, as we could go no other way, there had been a sentinel set from the ship to intercept deserters; yet, as night came on, we descended from the trees, and drew towards the bridge, with each of us a stout stick in our hands, having agreed to stand true to each other, and to rush upon the sentinel and knock him down, saying he could only kill one of us suppose he fired; but as the Lord would have it, he was not there, and we got over unmolested. We travelled till the next morning, when, descrying a few little houses in a valley, we went to them to get some refreshment, which we did, and paid for it, though we could not understand the people, who were French. We agreed to stop till the heat of the day was over, which we did; and about four o'clock, beginning to set forward on our journey again, five or six of them came out from other houses and stopt us, and made us understand they suspected we were deserters from a man of war, and they would take us up, well knowing they would

get forty shillings for each of us; but we set to with our bludgeons, and cleared them off for some time; however they alarmed the place, and we were each of us surrounded in a ring. How the other two fared I know not, but as they told me afterwards. By this time there was a great number of blacks come down to assist them, and beginning to throw stones; at length one struck me on the forehead and knocked me down; they then ran upon me, tied my hands behind me, and beat me cruelly, like men threshing corn. I can just remember when they had left me, I suppose, to serve my companions in the like manner, that a woman came to me with a stone, seemingly as much as she could lift, and threw it on me, so that I remember no more at that time. When I began to revive a little (I suppose it to be about one or two o'clock in the morning) I heard somebody groaning, and found myself tied with cords; I began to think what was the matter; my companions finding me move, asked me if I was alive? I told them yes, but could not stand: and it was so dark we could not see each other; but they had carried us down on the beach by the sea-side, for the surf to wash us away, supposing we were dead: my companions told me they had been tied also, but a little child that was at the house had just come down and cut them loose. O! the tender mercy and lovingkindness of the Lord our God! As to the child coming to cut them loose, I could never make out from that day to this, for the child the

they spoke of was not, to appearance, above five years old, and I believe we were near a mile from the houses: the Lord knows best how it was; but they were loosed, and they got me loose with a great deal of trouble, they being so weak. We crawled on our hands and knees to get as far from that place as we could, for fear they should come and throw us quite in. It was a long time before we could get on our feet, and when we did, we could not stoop even to wash the blood off each other for fear of falling. They had taken all that we had from us, even our shoes and hats, leaving us nothing but a shirt and trowsers. In this distressed state we begged, but none relieved us, for they could not understand us, nor we them; but through God's protecting hand, we got to Rosseau in that condition, but thought nothing about God at that time, though in such distress, for our hearts were hardened. Now there was a rendezvous opened there for privateers, an open house for all sailors, and a joe advance to go out for two months; so, having no clothes, we wanted money, accordingly entered and went on board, and I believe that was a hell upon the sea, for they were like devils, without any order, and would not mind cutting you down with their swords if they were angry; captain and men all alike. We had been out about a month or five weeks, and taken one prize. I was then seized with the bloody-flux, and very ill I was, having no hopes of recovery; but soon after we put into Montserrat to sell our prize, and the captain, knowing I was ill, desired

me to go on shore with him to a doctor, which I did; but, as he stopped at one place and another, I went by myself, and having found a doctor, asked him to bleed me: he asked what was the matter with me? I told him it was no matter, if he would bleed me I would pay him for it; it came in my mind to be blooded, so he bled me. I then told him what was the matter with me; he replied, it was the worst thing I could have done; but he would let me have some stuff which would settle the matter (he meant kill or cure), which I agreed to take, for in those places they don't care much about a man's life. I got the stuff, gave him all the money I had, and went on board and took some of it, which operated in so violent a manner that my shipmate was obliged to hold me, and in a few hours put me in bed; though I had not slept for some nights before, I now fell into a dose. They that were sitting under my hammock drinking grog felt something drop on them, which on looking at they found to be blood, which proceeded from my arm, that, through violent straining, now bled afresh through bed and all, with the loss of which I was just gone: but from that time I recovered. This is the second time the Lord, in his infinite mercy, saved me from death, not cutting me off in my sins: and now for the third time.

Before we left this place, one of my companions, Tom Jones, ran away, and I never saw him afterwards; so that I and John Moor were the only two deserters from the Portland that

returned to Rosseau at the expiration of our cruise. Having got the better of my illness, and the merchant ships being ready to sail for various parts of England, John and I were not settled in our minds which to choose, for they all wanted men; so having staid on shore a few days, I went on board a ship which I intended in my mind to come home in, and going the next morning to seek for my companion at his lodgings, they told me a man of war had come into the bay the day before, and they feared he was pressed; at the same time in came the press-gang and took hold of me and several more: I begged hard to get from them, but in vain; I strove to run from them, but they knocked me down, and took me on board the frigate. As soon as I got on board, to my great surprise an officer, who belonged to the Portland when I left her, saluted me with a 'How do you do, Mr. S. T——?' informing the captain that I ran away from the Portland a few months ago. I thought I should have dropped at the salutation; but I could not deny it. The orders were, Put him in irons along with John Moor; which was a greater surprise. When I got alone I could not help weeping; thought I, hard is my lot! I had strange views of God, though my mind went after him when in trouble, but no hope that he would deliver me; and my conclusion was this, I have brought all on myself, and suffer I must. The next day we sailed, when John Moor and I were sent for on the quarter deck to the captain, who

said it would be some months before they went to Antigua, where the ship was from which we deserted; and asked whether we would do our duty on deck, or be kept in irons till we went there? we made choice of the former, and I, being young and somewhat expert, got in favour with the captain; he sent for me, and asked if I would sail with him? I answered, Yes, if he would save me from being flogged when I came to the ship from which I deserted, for I was as sure of it as I was born: he told me he would do what he could, but I was persuaded he could not get me off; nevertheless he would often cheer me up, and bid me not fear; but I was sure of it, in my own mind, if ever I went there.

In our passage to Barbadoes we took a prize, brought her in with us, sold her, and shared the money. We lay in the midst of a number of merchant ships bound for England, and I began to contrive how to escape the flogging, knowing we were going to Antigua from hence. Thought I, I will get a gallon of rum, and make the sentinels drunk in the night when all are gone to bed, and make a rope fast to an empty arm-chest that lay there, let it go to the ship's stern, then get down the stern into it, drift down to the merchantmen, and so get away. The thought had no sooner struck my mind than I began to provide. At night I put it in force, and all things seemed to bid fair; but, just as I had completed the affair, the wind began to blow, it rained very heavy,

and such a sea arose that I was afraid to venture, so cut the rope and let the chest go by itself; I tried the same scheme the next night, but without effect, and I believe the next day we sailed for Antigua. Then I began to fear, having no God to trust in, and believing I should die under it; I wished that God would forgive my sins, and take me out of my misery; this was only for fear of the scourge. At length we arrived in English Harbour, Antigua, where the Portland lay; then my fears began to come on, and I was quite cast down. To explain my feelings is impossible.

A boat was sent to fetch us, when, after a few compliments from the captain, we were ordered to be put in irons, and, a day or two after, ordered to prepare for a court-martial; which shortly took place, when we were sentenced to receive one hundred and fifty lashes each. When I had heard my sentence, I asked them to grant me a favour; upon being asked what that was? I replied, To hang me. On which I was ordered to be put with both legs in irons, and a sentinel placed over me with a drawn cutlass, and that I should drink nothing but water till I was punished. The day arrived; John Moor, my old companion, was taken ill, and sent to the hospital for recovery, when he was to receive his punishment; my ship-mates had provided a dose for me enough to kill a horse; it was rum and gunpowder mixed together, which they tell you is to deaden the flesh, but I felt it sharp enough; I drank some of it,

and then received one hundred lashes, at the end of which I died away, being cut so bad, and they all, even the doctor, thought I was dead; when I came to I was naked, in a large tub of warm water, and they bathing me. Here the Lord wonderfully spared me to praise his holy name, for when I am brought to look back to see what my God has saved me from, it melts my heart in love to him; for I little thought, when I blasphemed his name, that he had respect unto me in the covenant; but bless his holy name, who hath brought me to loath myself in my own sight for my iniquities.

It would be tedious to tell of all the battles I have been in: I have seen many fall, yea, close to me, in several engagements, but the Lord never suffered one shot even to wound me, though I was in it from the beginning of the American war to the end, which I believe was near ten years. Oh! the faithfulness of God to his chosen! I have often thought, if I had suffered these things for Christ's sake, as the apostle Paul did, I should have somewhat to glory in before the Lord, that I was counted worthy to suffer for him; but these words strike me, "Hast thou not procured all these things to thyself?" Yes, Lord; with shame I own it.

Now, as the Lord the Spirit shall bring to my remembrance, I will relate my call and conversion in my simple way; for I knew nothing about religion of any kind, neither did I know even what

the name of Jesus Christ meant; but God, in his infinite mercy, was determined I should know him whom I had so grossly abused.

The first convictions I can remember to have had concerning my soul, was the last voyage I went, which brought me to look at the wicked life I had lived and was then living; this brought me on my knees to God, vowing, that if he would be pleased to bring me safe home, and provide me something to do on shore, I would amend my life and go to church; this I had a hope he would do, because I prayed. In the space of a year he brought me home, and, agreeable to my request, found me employment. I set about to perform my vow in going to church, but the devil was too strong for me; for I soon fell into the old track of sabbath-breaking and sinning, and carried it on to as high a pitch as ever. The Lord suffered me to go on here a little time, to shew me what man is by nature; but I perceived it not. I believe I went on in the old way of sinning for two years, and when any checks of conscience troubled me, I strove to smother them by going to clubs to sing and drink. I remember I was learning some new songs, when the Lord was pleased, at my work, to bring all my sins to my remembrance, which spoiled all my singing; for I was so wrought upon, that I thought I should as surely be damned as I was born: it continued, and I could not shake it off; my companions, they came, but all would not do, I could not go

with them; my wife, then being in a natural state, seeing that I was distressed in my mind, cried over me, begging to know what was the matter; yea, told me she would go on her knees to me if I would but tell her. I said I could not tell her what was the matter with me; but I believed I should go to hell. These words came on my mind, and I could not get rid of them: "What woman is there having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle and sweep the house diligently till she find it?" Thought I, this is something of scripture; for the Bible was a book I had not looked into for many years before, but now I did, and it brought me on my knees to God, hoping that, if I confessed and prayed to God, read my Bible, and went to church, that God would have mercy upon me; however I set to, with a resolution to get no further in debt, but if possible to pay some off the old score. I inquired into those people called methodists, for being away so many years I was ignorant of the meaning of the word, methodist; I was informed they were a good set of people, such as Wesley's and Whitefield's. The first I found out was Wesley's, in the City Road; I thought surely they were angels come down from heaven, and began to think, if I went according to my resolution, God would look over what was past, and I should soon be fit for heaven; but, oh! the goodness, mercy, and lovingkindness of God! he did not let me rest here; for when I was getting up to

that pinnacle, he threw me down and broke all my bones, by sending his law home to my heart: then I saw myself in a dreadful state; not only that I had been a sinner, but now was, and could do nothing good. In reading the Bible, what gained my greatest attention was, God's anger against sin, and his commands to sanctify myself holy unto the Lord. Well, I inquired how a man might sanctify himself to the Lord; and was informed, the people who frequented the tabernacle went there on Saturday evening to sanctify themselves against Sunday. When Saturday evening came I set off and went; but when I came out, found myself more like a devil than a saint. At this time I was quite ignorant of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ: what makes me say so is, because there are many who, to my knowledge, never had a change of heart, that know it is through the merits of Jesus Christ they must be saved; but then, say they, Jesus Christ died for all: but I was quite ignorant even of the name of Jesus Christ. These workmongers set me many tasks to do; I began to read the Bible and pray to God, as I called it. and worked hard too; till at last I began to feel such enmity spring up in my heart, that I said on this wise, Surely God is a hard God! for he sets man to do more than he is able. Why should he be so hard with a creature that he has made? I laboured under this a long time, yet durst not utter the hard thoughts and enmity I had against him.

I became acquainted with one man in particular, and would have given the world if I had been as good as him: said I, if I tell that man what I feel, he will doubtless condemn me, and then I will give it all up. Accordingly, when we met again, I told him what I felt, what enmity I had against God and his word. He seemed surprised; and, upon my asking him if he ever felt any thing of the kind, he answered me very sternly, No! God forbid that I should have enmity against God or his word. He left me wounded. Well, thought I, damned I shall be, do what I will; then began to quarrel with myself for living such a wicked life, and with my mother for not correcting me when I ran away from my master: had I staid with him, I might have went to church, and lived a better life than I have done; but it is too late now. I shall be damned! I cannot repent: well, I will give it up, and think no more about it. I did set off once to get drunk, but surely I felt a hell in my conscience at the same time. I laboured here a great while, frequenting a chapel in Nightingale-lane, East Smithfield, called the Mulberry Gardens, in the Countess of Huntingdon's connection; at this time so ignorant was I, that I did not know they would grant me a ticket for a seat, so skulked about like a thief. Messrs. W—— and Jenkins preached there at that time, but I was afraid to speak to any one about my state. However, one evening, I shall never forget it, a woman, who attended there, would force her

conversation upon me, and drew from me many things concerning my distress, which I did not think to speak of; but I had no sooner left her, than I was seized with such violent temptations as I never felt; it was to run down Tower-hill, right into the Thames, and drown myself. And I really thought that the devil ran away with me, for I ran against several people, and have no doubt but I knocked them down. I have viewed the spot many a time since where I stopt. I ran against a large post, and clung fast hold of it, as if any body had drove me, and believe I foamed at the mouth like a mad dog till I had vent. I then burst into tears, went up a little passage, and suppose I cried for a quarter of an hour, after which I found some composure of mind. I set off viewing my sad state, and washed my face at a pump, that my wife might not perceive I had been weeping; for at this time the devil set her on to persecute me, and sometimes we would quarrel, yea fight; but, notwithstanding I was in this state, there were seasons that I preached closely to her what I felt, read the Bible to her, and also the Prayer Book, though I did not believe she was so bad as I was, yet I never could get her to bend the knee to God; but, blessed be God for ever, he made use of me as an instrument to bring her on her knees not many months after, when she found herself in as bad a pickle as I was; and then the devil did make a hand of us with a witness, for there is nobody but the Lord

knows the snares, gins, and traps he laid for us. Here I a long time laboured under the law, without having the least view of Jesus Christ. The Lord next led me to meditate what Jesus Christ was: my attention at chapel was to hear what was said about Jesus Christ; and where I could find his name in the Bible, I pondered it over, for it seemed something new to me: I was led, step by step, to see that he came to save sinners; then, thought I, I am a sinner, but then I am too bad. After much labour here I heard somebody speaking about a new birth; I could not make this out at all, thinking we must be so changed by the Holy Ghost as to be perfect in thought, word, and deed. However, one summer evening, I went into Moorfields, where a man had been preaching, and, finding two men arguing with each other, I drew near, like a condemned criminal, to hear what they had to say, and whether they touched my case. One of them observed, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." To which the other replied, the words run thus: 'If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and the truth is not in us.' Intimating that they had been sinners, but now freed from sin in the flesh; that they which had received the grace of God were perfectly holy. They loaded me pretty well, agreeable to the Lord's words: "They bind heavy burdens on men's shoulders, which are grievous to be borne." Thought I, if it be possible for

men to arrive at a state of perfection, they certainly must be the people, and I am far enough from that. Well, I strove hard, prayed oftener, went to chapel oftener, read the Bible oftener, and thought, if this will not do I will give it up ; and I declare that I found enmity in my heart all the time I was at it; but shortly the Lord would frustrate the whole of it. I would fall into some sin, and then I came to my old conclusion, I shall be damned after all.

I often say what a peculiar blessing it is from God to be placed under a pastor that can point out the way to a poor entangled creature, but the Lord knows I never met with any that ever spoke to my feelings till he placed me under you; for if they did at any time touch upon it, they pulled it all to pieces before they had done. However, the Lord carried on his work, and, after this toiling and fretting, the blessed Spirit was pleased to open the eyes of my understanding to discern in some measure the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, and that he came to seek and to save sinners, and I felt myself one of the blackest cast; but then it was, "He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned." And I could not believe that Christ would save me; I could believe that he would damn me, this I could believe. The common cry among my associates was, Why do you not believe? Only believe, say they, and the work is done. Well, I strove to believe, and would with all my soul, if I could; and when I found I could not,

enmity began to work afresh. After the Lord had disciplined me here a little, I learnt that faith in Jesus Christ was the gift of God, and that he gave it to a people of his choice; that he had a people formed for himself. The bitterness that worked in my heart at this is beyond expression. Oh! said I, it ought not to be preached! But, blessed be God, it is now my sweetest morsel, when I can feel in my soul his great love from everlasting to me. I laboured here near four years, and then the Lord was pleased to enable me to see more and more of the suitableness of Jesus Christ; that God was holy and I unholy; that justice must have satisfaction on me the sinner, or on Jesus Christ the Surety. I could discern him coming down from heaven in love to his people, taking our nature into union with himself, and dying the just for the unjust, that sinners might, through his satisfaction, come near to God. My prayers were then altered, and my views quite different to what they were; there was a kind of going out after him. It was no use to set me to work then; my cry was, Oh! that I knew him for myself! and there was such a desire stirred up in my soul, that, night and day, my language was, O! that he would but make known his love to me! such longing desires had I after him at that time. For, viewing myself on the brink of hell, I wanted a manifestation of him to me, that I might know whether he had loved me from everlasting; and being assured of this I could believe on him, and love him with all my

heart and soul: nothing but this would do; after this I sought, and for this I prayed; indeed it was the whole tenor of my prayers. But the Lord appeared to delay his coming, I began to be reluctant, unbelief began to work again, and I came to my old conclusion, I believe it is only a delusion after all! I have had a little hope for some time, but I have been deceiving myself; if he had ever loved me, he would let me know it. I cannot look at my well-spent life, for of sinners I am the blackest; I know I deserve hell, and he would be just in sending me there, but know where I belong to I must, and shall never rest till I do know. These were my meditations. But, bless him for evermore, one morning as I was upon my knees at the bed-side, to describe what I felt I cannot; but, what with sweat and tears, and the agony I was in, I believe my hair stood upright on my head while I was praying: in that condition these words came to me, like a voice through my soul; "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." I turned myself round, as if the Lord had been behind me, and said, Lord, what! my sins that are past? I am a sinner yet. And immediately these words were applied to my soul; "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." What I felt none can express with the tongue; but, oh! the joy, love, and peace, that flowed into my soul! I could hardly believe I was the same person; I was full of nothing but praises and thanksgiving to Jesus, for I believed assuredly then that he loved me from everlasting, and bore

all my sins in his own body on the tree. This continued promise upon promise, night and day, sleeping and waking, my soul was with him; yea, I claimed every promise in the Bible, I feared nothing, nor cared for nothing but the Lord Jesus Christ; he was my song night and day. The Lord did so abundantly bless my soul at times, that I have told him, though in ignorance, Lord, this is more than ever I asked for, and more than ever I expected; this is sufficient, I shall doubt no more, for this is beyond all that ever man could expect or desire. But still the lord continued it; for I was, I believe, near a twelvemonth in this state; and, bless the Lord for ever, he has not left me without a feeling sense of it to this day; for whenever the Lord the Spirit is pleased to lead my views to the atonement, and I can view Jesus suffering for me, my heart is broke; and I cannot help it, whether it be under the word preached, or reading the Bible, or on my knees, or at my work, I am often wondered at. But to see what he has saved me from, the vilest of all wretches living: oh! that I could live more to the honour and glory of his blessed name! A little before the Lord was pleased to bring me into trial of that faith he had given me, I had a vision, which I never shall forget while in the flesh, and I will endeavour, as the Lord shall enable me, to describe it. I went on my knees one morning, according to custom, before I went about my daily employ, and found great nearness to the Lord in prayer; but all on a

sudden I was caught away in my mind, forgetting I was on my knees, and viewed myself in a bright shining cloud that the sun was ready to shine through; I lay on my side in the cloud with my eyes fixed on some writing which lay at the bottom of it. At this time I was pleading with the Lord his promises; telling him of his promised blessings, his faithfulness, goodness, mercy, and love; my eyes were fixed on the writing as if they had been these words applied, "Believest thou this?" I would break out and say, Yes, Lord, I do believe that thou wilt be faithful to all that thou hast promised. I would plead again. The word was the same in my mind, "Believest thou this?" I still told him I did believe it. This was applied several times. I was then led to see my vileness, and this passage of scripture was brought to my mind; "I am a man of unclean lips; my eyes have seen the king, the Lord of Hosts." But when I came to myself I was in a comical posture, for my head was turned round on my shoulder, and I was very wet, I suppose with tears; but this did not work a slavish fear in my heart, for as yet my soul was alive to the Lord Jesus. But I considered what it all could mean; and, soon after this, the Lord by little and little began to withdraw his comfortable presence; I could not have communion with him as usual; I sought him with all my soul, but could not find his comfortable presence: I then began to find such blasphemous thoughts, and the corruptions

of my heart began to ferment, no God apparently at hand, and unbelief stepping in, I began to call all in question, whether the work was of God or not? for this was what I never more expected to find. I then sat under Mr. W. whose chapel is near to Lincoln's Inn Fields; and, when I could not find the Lord, I sought to some of the established Christians, as I thought, who belonged to that church. Some told me, if they had experienced the love they had heard me speak of, they should never be in the state I was in: others said, I had forsaken their company, and I certainly must keep bad company. I then went to Mr. W. the minister, and he really laughed at me, and said I must look to Jesus. I told him I could not find him; and, said I, if I could but look to him I would not have come to you.

In this state I laboured for I believe near six months, and nobody knows what I suffered but God and myself, except those that have felt the same. At times I have found my rebellion so stirred up, that I have secretly wished, as I have gone along the street, that somebody would come and stab me, and kill me out of my misery. I have jumped out of bed in the night when these blasphemous thoughts were hurled through me, gone on my knees, and prayed God, if I was not in the bond of the covenant, never to suffer me to get off my knees again, but send me to hell, where I deserved to go; but no answer. Sometimes I would get into a private place, go on my

knees with humbleness of heart, and cry thus; 'Lord, decide this matter once more between Satan and me.' I have broke out sometimes, 'I do know the Lord, I am sure I do.' I have argued with the devil an hour or two on a stretch. I have given all up to him of my experience, till I have come to my deliverance, where the Lord spoke peace to my soul; but I never could give up that, for, blessed be the Lord, he kept me, or Satan would have had his ends. Well, I was brought at last to this conclusion, now I will never speak to any person more about my experience, for I believe there is nobody in the world knows any thing about it. 'No,' says the devil, 'you was never yet delivered, nor can you find any one person that was delivered from the bondage of the law ever brought into such a state as you are in.' Upon which I thus concluded: Well, if I belong to God, he will keep me from these evils; but if not, the devil will have his ends, for I am certain I cannot keep myself.

In this forlorn state I went on; sometimes my heart as hard as a flint, and full of the fury of the devil; at intervals, some humblings, that I could in some measure pour it out to the Lord for a moment; then I was shut up again, and as hard as a stone. Well, thought I, I shall go mourning all my days. But one Sunday morning as I was going to chapel, for I could not keep away, though I was under great temptations to do it, I was meditating on my state; Thought I, is there

nobody can sympathize with me, is there none that can point out my case? When these words were applied with power to my soul; "I will give you pastors after my own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding," I was persuaded in my own mind that it came from the Lord, and cried out, 'Lord, where are they? I can find none that know any thing of my experience.' These words were fixed on my mind, and I used often to say, 'Lord, where are they?' However, soon after I saw a man and his wife, whom I had been acquainted with, coming from your chapel in Titchfield-street; I would have shunned them, but they called me; I thought they should get nothing out of me. They asked me how I got on? I answered, Middling! But I believe they saw by my countenance where I was, and asked me why I did not go to hear Mr. Huntington? I replied, I did not know who to hear, nor where to go. They told me where you preached; I answered them lightly, but it was greatly impressed on my mind all the week; and when Sunday morning came I set off and found the chapel. I remember getting into one of the free seats, up in one corner, like a thief, that nobody might know me. I do not recollect the text you then preached from; but I heard attentively, which I had not done for some time before. I got away as soon as you had done, that I might not be seen by any one that knew me; for I had heard very evil things said of you, which I soon

found they could not prove. As I went home meditating on the discourse, I said, 'This man seems to know something of what I feel; I will go and hear him again.' When I got home, I said thus to my wife; I believe the Lord has directed me to a man that knows something about my distress, for he seemed to speak a little about it. She asked, Where is it, and who is he? I said his name is Huntington, and it is as far as Oxford Market, and I should go again in the evening; she was in a pet about it, and said, You shall not drag me so far to hear I do not know who. However I was determined to go; and come I did, bringing her with me; and, blessed be the Lord, he never let us go back; he was pleased to give me a hearing ear, so that I perceived I was not harassed with those temptations under the word preached as I had been. I thought for some weeks that you preached to none but me, describing my state so, that at last it all came out; the Lord blessed it to my soul, I was set at liberty again, peace was proclaimed, you was made manifest in my conscience, and I rejoiced again in the light of God's countenance. I blessed the Lord, that ever he brought me under your ministry, I thanked him night and day; I could then see you was the pastor the Lord had promised to give me.

Now began persecution: but, bless the Lord, I have often admired his tender goodness in this thing. He would not suffer them to speak to me

till he was pleased to speak peace to my soul again: and those of Mr. W——'s chapel not only persecuted me openly, but imagined lies in their heart; for they told me I left his chapel on purpose to live in sin. Mr. W. himself told me I was got into the Huntingtonian's easy chair, but I should find a difference on a death bed. I sent them word, I would meet the church at any time to prove all they said was false; but they never sent for me, so gave me up, watching for my fall: but, blessed be the Lord, he has kept me by his mighty power to this day, and has given me to see some of those that were counted pillars among them turn their back on Jesus; but I know it is by his grace I am kept to the present moment, as one of the vilest of poor sinners saved. This experience brought me to know God's faithfulness to his chosen, for I proved him so in that furnace.

Soon after this my love waxed cold, and I began to crave after this world's goods; I thought, if I could get a little beforehand by honest industry, it was no more than right. I set to with a willing mind, as I thought, and not without prayer to God neither. I went in search for something: a chandler's shop offered, and money to be lent me to set up. My mind was set upon it. I went to the Lord, and prayed, if it was not his will, by no means to let me have it; and went to him often too: but I must confess, though I prayed against it if it was not his will, yet my heart was for it; and the Lord, who is the searcher

of all hearts, knew that I desired to have it, and he let me have it to my sorrow; for I strove hard, and meant well, but the Lord's hand went out against me in all that I undertook; and I wondered at it, for I did not, as yet, see the snare; but experience brings us to a knowledge of these things; and I thank my dear Redeemer that ever he brought me in a way of experience, in anywise to know the cunning of Satan, and the proneness of my own heart to stray from the best of friends. I went on here, hoping things would be better; but I had lost my God, there was no communion, things got worse and worse; I was in debt and nothing to pay with; in that sense my prayers were shut out, no answer to my petitions, still all things going against us. Sometimes my wife and I would quarrel whose fault it was for coming there, for we were both in the mess; then would we fret one against the other: we would pray, but to no purpose. And here the Lord kept us till he made us as sensibly sick of it as ever poor creatures were in this world. Then he was pleased to humble us in the dust, and shewed us we had backslidden from him through covetousness and the ensnarement of the riches of this world, for my heart was after it; but his tender love to us would not let us go. Though he kept me close at his dear footstool a good while, confessing and praying for deliverance before it came, and would say to my poor soul, "Hast thou not procured these things to thyself?" Yes, Lord, I would cry,

I have, and beg thy pardoning mercy only to forgive thy poor worms, and deliver us but of this place; being ready to say, I never would be entangled in this way again: but the Lord knows how weak we are, and I see he will let us know it too; for, I believe, in less than a twelvemonth I was entangled in the same way again. But, after this deliverance, I went comfortably on for some time; the Lord blessed me under the word often, and many precious promises he was pleased to give me.

At this time there were three or four friends, as they were pleased to style themselves, came from the Mulberry Gardens chapel to spend the afternoon with me, to inquire into my profession, and what doctrines I held since I heard Mr. Huntington. They seemed greatly to pity me, and asked a great many questions, which the Lord enabled me to answer in a measure. I insisted on the Spirit's work, they upon free will. I told them of God's everlasting love to his chosen, and being kept by his mighty power. They said I must take the law, that is, the ten commandments, as my rule to walk by, though I was called by grace, or else I was an Antinomian (the meaning of the word Antinomian I was at this time ignorant of). Upon asking how I must go on in this way? They answered, I must walk in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ as near as I could. I told them, a man was a mere machine, for no longer than he is wrought upon by the Holy

Ghost can he do aught that is well-pleasing to God, for if it is God must work in him to will and to do. This affronted my guests, and they persecuted me sadly; and one of their confederates wherreted me continually, till I hated her; she used to waylay me in the street as I came home at night from my work, till at last I looked to see if she was coming, and would have gone a mile out of the way rather than meet her. These words were brought to my mind, "The law worketh wrath." Ah, Lord! I would cry, there is no love; we cannot unite: but the devil (who is never backward to distress the poor creature that desires to be brought on in God's way) sets in, and would fain have represented these people to me as taught of God. Well, thought I, if they are right I must be wrong. But, bless the Lord, I was enabled to tell him all about it; and he soon set you to preach on it, and gave me to see I was right and they were wrong. However, the Lord was pleased to speak very comfortably to my soul before he put me into the furnace, and there the Lord shewed me what the law was. One day, at my work, he was pleased to lead my mind out in meditation about it, from what you preached the Sunday before. The Lord broke in upon my soul, and threw such light upon it, that I discovered where they all were that contended for the law as a rule for the believer to walk by: I could see they were all in bondage under it. And the Lord said to me, "Such like pastors, such like

people.' I thanked him from my soul for opening the eyes of my understanding to see it so clearly: my soul was so full I was obliged to leave my work. I went into the back yard, into my master's coal-house, and poured out my soul to the Lord in praises and thanksgiving for his gracious goodness; and, while I was praising him, these words came with power, "Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, for the Lord delighteth in thee." I thought I should have dropt down; I cried out, 'Lord, what me! the unworthiest of all wretches!' But the Lord, the Spirit, turned my mind in a moment to the Lord Jesus, who had atoned for all my sins. Here I was interrupted by somebody coming that way, so I left that place and betook me to another, shut myself up, and prayed the Lord to keep me, telling him of my weakness and helplessness; when these words came with power: "May my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if ever I forget thee." Well, said I, then here is my vow to the Lord, 'May my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if ever I forget to praise thy holy name.' Which I afterwards asked the Lord a thousand pardons for, but it could not be recalled; for I knew it was him alone that must work in me to will and to do: but I often think of my vow.

Now my wife had, at this time, got another shop, and sold greens, and she seemed to go on

prosperously; but I would have no hand in this, having had full enough of the other: so she had all the management of it herself, and was as barren in soul as she well could be.

Soon after this the Lord laid me on a sick-bed; I lost the use of all my limbs, and, what was worse, I lost the best of friends, the Lord Jesus: I then murmured and fretted till my old rebellion began to shew itself; for I can assuredly say this scripture was fulfilled in me at that time; "With the perverse man I will shew myself perverse." I was in great bodily pain, and had medicines from several doctors, but all to no purpose, for I remained in this condition about a month or five weeks; and then the Lord eased me of my pain, and I seemed to be somewhat better, with which my old man was very much pleased: but, blessed be the Lord, he would not let me come out that way, for I can see it now; but in he throws me again, makes it hotter than it was before, humbled my hard heart under it, and made me willing to submit. Then my dear Redeemer came again, indulged me with sweet manifestations of his everlasting love to me, making me willing to leave this sinful world: and, having thus humbled my flinty heart by his power, he healed my body, and set me on my legs again. Oh! what pains the Lord takes with such sinful wretches as we are. The Lord after this sent us out from that shop of dependance, and then my wife was not to escape, for he threw her

into the same way, and kept her there till I had hardly a thing left in the house. The Lord's hand seemed to go against me in all I took in hand; I prayed and cried to the Lord, and often had communion with him, and many precious promises too I received. I would watch his hand, expecting deliverance; but no answer: yet I would catch at every thing that came in the way. Well, thought I, this is the Lord, this is his way: but no, not yet. And I worked hard at my business, but all would not do. The Lord kept me here, and my wife ill, expecting every time I came home not to find her alive, till I had hardly the necessaries of life. I thought this was hard trusting to God; but, bless him for ever, he hath since that shewed me what it is to trust in him, for all that I stand in need of. My blessed Father was obliged to scourge me a great deal before he brought down my stubborn will to his for temporal necessaries: nay, he would not so much as let me keep my benefit-club on, that I belonged to, before he called me by his grace; I gave it up at last with much reluctance: but the Lord was determined I should have no dependance but on him. And a blessed life this living upon the Lord is! It keeps our fear in exercise, so that I fear to offend him that supplies all my wants. Bless him, I can tell when he hears me too; and I know when I offend, to my sorrow. I am not without my doubts, fears, and trials, in the way; for I carry about me a body of sin, which is the

heaviest burden I have to carry: and, in reality, it is a heavy burden to all God's children that are brought to hate sin. I find it hard fighting against the world, sin, and Satan, when the Lord Jesus hides his face. I pass through much persecution from the world, for I labour among many enemies for my bread. I have many watching for my halting; many snares, traps, and gins, the devil lays for me; but out of them all the Lord hath delivered me, and I trust he will yet deliver. He hath made me quite sick of the world; I long to be with him; there is nothing here that can satisfy my soul, if the Lord Jesus is absent. You, as a pastor sent of God, are made a great blessing to my soul; for often, when I cannot pray for myself, I can for you, and shall come away somewhat satisfied that the Lord hath heard me. And may the Lord bless you, and keep you, and lift up the light of his countenance upon you for his own name's sake, through Jesus Christ, and for his dear children's sake, is the prayer of a poor sinful worm saved.

Your wellwisher,
and faithful son in the faith,

T. S.

LETTER XIV.

To Mr. T. S.

BELOVED OF GOD,

Peace and truth be with thee.

THY simple narrative arrived safe, and in the perusal of it I found a medley of sweets in it, and a medley of feelings in my own soul which accompanied the reading of it. I wondered, I admired, I grieved, I wept, and at times laughed quite out; I said, in my heart, this vessel hath made many tacks, spent much time in sailing, and for ten years did not run one knot toward the desired haven, which is so commodious to winter in. However, we are glad to find that Jonah is got safe to land: you and I, my son, are subject to many epidemical disorders which require many bitter potions, and much physic. Stiff necks, and stony hearts; perverse wills, and obstinate minds; the leprosy in the blood, and the plague in the heart: these require much probing, and a deal of medicine, and all little enough to restore us to health and keep us alive. Thou hast got a large track to look back upon, plenty of room for reflection, and a vast compass of this world to explore; one continued scene of preservation, and

the innumerable deliverances of an unknown God, must at times be a soul-humbling consideration to thee, and is a confirmation of that wonderful passage; "Preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." However, I will be bold to say, that thou hast been more roughly handled on shore than ever thou wert at sea; no captain, that ever thou sailedst with, ever treated thee with that cruelty that thou hast experienced from the buffetings of thy old master, the devil; all the lashes of the cat were but flea-bites, when compared to the chastisements and scourges of God; nor any dangers at sea so perilous as that of hovering upon the brink of the bottomless pit, with a guilty conscience, and under the curse of God: I know thou wilt agree with me in this. What pains, what patience, what long-suffering and long-forebearance, what watchfulness and tender care, does the Almighty exercise in behalf of poor crawling worms of the dust, who are such enemies to him, such infamous rebels against him! But his decree is sure, his eternal love is fixt, and the price of our redemption is paid, and we must be brought to know it, to feel it, and to enjoy it, that we may be melted, purified, and humbled, and that our God may be glorified.

It is true, had all these thy sufferings been in defence of the gospel, it had been an honour, and thou wouldest have borne, even on thy back, the marks of the Lord Jesus; but, alas, thou wast buffeted for thy faults; but even this hath worked

for good, for we have had our fill of this vain and miserable world, and, whatever opportunity we may have to return, I believe we shall never desire to go back.

Worldly prosperity is seldom a furtherance of the good work within; if it was, God would not keep the generality of his people so poor as he does: a state of absolute dependance on him is best for us, though proud nature doth not like to submit to it. It makes us industrious, watchful, and furnishes us with many petitions at the throne of grace; it makes his mercies sweet, and excites gratitude for the least favour; and, while the Almighty causes his goodness to pass before us, we see our signs, and many tokens for good, which encourage faith, and cause us to abound in hope; and, as he hath promised us every needful supply, and hath put temporal as well as spiritual blessings into his covenant and in his promise, and hath appointed Christ heir of all things pertaining to this life and to that which is to come, our portion is safest in his hand, and he shall choose our inheritance for us: he hath not intended to give us our good things in this life, he hath provided some better thing for us, a treasure in the heavens, where no moth corrupts, where no thief approaches; therefore, "Having food and raiment, be therewith content; for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

Be not entangled with acquaintances, nor suf-

fer thyself to be brought into bondage by any one that makes a profession of religion, let him be who he may. There are but few, comparatively speaking, who know either law or gospel in the power of them; they know neither the goodness nor the severity of God; they can neither sing of mercy nor of judgment. It hath often been a grief to me to see a young believer, just verged out of darkness, running after every one he can find that makes a profession: one robs him, another wounds him, another stumbles him. If such were to be still and quiet, keep themselves to themselves, and observe the Lord's work with them, and what passes between their own souls and him, pay attention to his voice and watch his visitations, compare spiritual things with spiritual, his word with his work, and give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, we should not have so many halting and doubting believers as we have; but they let the best opportunity slip, and then the time comes, when they desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and they shall not see it. Such simple souls are often ensnared by the worst of hypocrites, they look up to one who appears to have great light, and they see with his eyes, and go by his light, and what he says is sure to be gospel; another appears to be all faith and fervour, and they rest upon his arm; by and by this shining light falls into error, and the supposed strong believer discovers nothing but rash presumption; and then

their right eyes must be plucked out, and their right hands cut off: and how halt and maimed does such a poor soul feel himself to be; how is he staggered and stumbled; how enfeebled and discouraged is he, and how strongly do his natural affections bias him. Thus poor David fared when Ahithophel, his counsellor and companion, was given up to Satan; and Paul, when Alexander and Demas turned their backs upon him; but God never forsook them. And truly our fellowship is with the Father and the Son Christ Jesus, who will be with us through evil report and good report, and to hoary hairs and old age will he carry us. O that we may walk humbly with him! walk with him in peace and equity, and he shall shine upon our path, direct our steps, and pluck our feet out of every net. There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in our help, and in his excellency on the skies. The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; he shall thrust out every enemy from before us, and shall say, Destroy them. To his protection I commit thee, and under his shadow may thy trust be, till every calamity be overpast. Amen and amen, says thy willing servant in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XV.

To D. M. New-York.

Dear brother in the faith, and companion in travail ; meekness, submission, and resignation to the will of God, be ever with thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A CHOSEN vessel, an elected brother, is born for adversity; chosen in the furnace, and ordained to afflictions. It is given in our behalf, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his name, Phil. i. 49; hence we are commanded to look to him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning. This shadow of death very much resembles the substance; the sting of death is severely felt, the ministration of death is set home upon the heart, the awful sentence passes, and the soul sinks under it, the execution of it is both felt and feared, and the worst part, the pains of hell and eternal death, are imagined, which are attended with as much terror and torment as if real.

But it is but the shadow, not the substance ; it is the dark valley, not the bottomless pit. The Spirit of life quickens the soul, creates a thirst for Jesus, dictates prayer, opens the word of truth to the soul, and allures it to hope and expectation ;

all which counteract the terrible artillery of Sinai, and maintain a door of hope, and hope expects a refuge, even under the heaviest discharges of that awful storm. Dreadful are the threatenings of God's profound judgments, and the verdict of the sinner's own conscience; but our own heart, when we are even in the horrible pit, will commend the righteousness of God; thus deep calls unto deep, and why is not the just sentence executed? Because a voice before the throne forbids it: it calls upon God for justice in the forgiveness of sins, and in cleansing us from all unrighteousness; and, in the sinner's conscience, there is an expectation of a voice that speaks better things than that of Abel, and the poor trembling sinner eagerly and impatiently waits for it. Yea, though heaven, earth, and hell, appear to combine against the sinner, though all refuge fail, and both heart and flesh fail, yet this hope in atoning blood banter the devil, weathers the storm, surmounts the gloomy regions, resists despair, and expects no less than the manifestation of the sons of God, and the inheritance with the saints in light.

This is the path that God leads his blind ones in, this is the path they know not; though they know they are in his powerful hand, and he compels them to follow him; though in chains, and with supplication and bitter weeping he leads them, looking through the dark cloud at him whom they have pierced, and mourning for him; though ashamed

and confounded at the thought, even of expecting such an undeserved mercy at the hands of a long slighted, much neglected, and justly incensed God and Saviour. This is something of the appearance, and some of the effects of the Saviour's first visit to the heart of a rebel. He comes as the most mighty, with his sword upon his thigh, and rides in his glory and in his majesty, while the heart of the enemy feels his arrows, and falls under him. Trembling attends his first approach, life works with his arrow, health attends his sword, and conquest waits on his bow; while truth, meekness, and righteousness, are the lasting, or eternal effects of his victory; "I will bend Judah for me, and fill my bow with Ephraim."

The vessel of mercy that makes the desired haven, must know God's path in the mighty waters, he that wins the field in the fight of faith, must watch the sound of his goings in the tops of the mulberry trees; and those who enter the holy of holies shall first learn to know the goings of their God and their King in the sanctuary. None, my dear brother, teaches like him; his lessons baffle carnal reason, and expose the folly of our wisest schemes; but when he hath taught us to know our wants, he will teach us to know the banquet that he has provided, and to distinguish between the bread of saints and the husks of hypocrites. Christ is anointed and appointed, not to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoking flax; not to throw the lambs to the wolf,

nor to leave them that are great with young; he is the chief, the faithful, and the good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, and who received the sheep as the Father's gift to him, nor shall one sheep of his fold be lost, or one hoof of his flock be left behind. I have of late, according to custom, had a little furnace-work, to which I have been long in seasoning, and to which I am in some degree inured. And since that time of trial no small share of Satan's presence, aid, and assistance, which he lends to the old man, has fell to my share; and now I am keeping this sabbath, or day of rest, at home, laid aside through a long cold and hoarseness; as a dumb dog that cannot bark, or a dumb man in whose mouth are no re-proofs; but whether at home or abroad, noisy or silent, I have you in remembrance, and subscribe myself ever yours in Christ Jesus,

Church Street, Paddington.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your kind letter, and it gave me some comfort. You call me your brother in Christ. O! how happy should I be, could I with confi-

dence write to you as such. Yet, Sir, was I to say I thought I had no part in him, I should do violence to my own conscience. The Comforter is far from me, for I am in prison and cannot come forth; although in this prison sometimes light and truth in the word is with me, which encourages hope; I do not feel so much terror as formerly, yet Satan does not like to give me up. O, Sir, he is a terrible deceiver! he often insinuates I am given into his hands to be deceived, which causes heavy work within; but I trust Jesus will appear, and say to the prisoner, Go forth. The Lord works in a mysterious way to our comprehension, yet it is all right: who, by searching, can find him out? How sure am I of what you say, 'His lessons baffle carnal reason, and expose the folly of our wisest schemes.' I am sure God's judgments are abroad in the earth; O! that he would be pleased to grant me an application of the atonement which causes a godly sorrow, and a repentance that needs never to be repented of, that I may be hid in the day of his fierce anger.

You, Sir, know more about me, I believe, than any man living, and I often think mine is a very singular case; but I know nothing is too hard for the Lord. I am very sure not one of Christ's sheep shall be lost; no, nor one hoof left behind: not all the art of Satan, nor all his legions combined together, shall finally deceive one of his sheep. I feel myself a leper, a miserable sinner, in great need of being cleansed, very much hun-

gering and thirsting after Jesus, knowing none but he can do me good. O! that he would see me again (for I think I have had a distant view of him), that my heart may rejoice! I go to no place of worship here, for I am in great doubt of all the ministers that I know; I am more and more convinced that they can beget only their own likeness: it was the false apostles that bewitched the Galatians, and I verily believe the false ministers bewitch all their hearers; little do they suppose that they receive Satan by the man. This I believe, which causes me to stay at home, though I am kept wrestling and pleading night and day, and searching the scriptures, for which I desire to thank God. I am in good hopes my wife will be a comfort to me; I think I can see something in her for good: my conversation leads to the awful end every one must make that dies out of Christ, and the need of knowing for ourselves pardon and peace; indeed she herself is sure of it. I am thankful to God you bear me on your mind; if it should be so that I can get from this Mount Sinai, I never desire to come here again. I am at times in very great distress and heavy affliction; when it is well with me you will soon hear of it. The Lord is good to me in providence, and has been pleased to take my mind in a great measure off from this world.

May the good Lord bless you in your family, and crown your labours with success, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate friend.

LETTER XVII.

To B. J.

As a correspondent, my dear friend, I am somewhat like a horse that fetches his work, I can only move by fits and starts. Sometimes I have a heart to will, but no time; and again, plenty of time, but no heart. When the matter contained in a letter is pressed, squeezed, and forced, it is but poor dry fare; but when it runs and flows freely, the pen moves with pleasure, and a little moisture attends it. Various are the changes and different operations of the Spirit upon an awakened sinner. Darkness, deadness, and confusion, will more or less attend him, till the book of God becomes a puzzle, and the sinner himself a riddle; but this serves to stain the pride of his glory, it proves his wisdom to be folly, and his knowledge to be consummate ignorance: hence the paradox, "If any man will be wise, let him become a fool that he may be wise."

God, saith the prophet, goes forth with whirlwinds of the south; which he did when a mighty wind shook the house where the apostles were assembled, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost; they then went forth and wrought, and the Lord worked with them, confirming their word with signs. This wind does all the execution on the hearts of poor sinners to this day.

“The voice said, Cry. What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of God bloweth upon it.” Under this operation all our glorying in our own strength, valour, wisdom, knowledge, pleasure, carnal delights, withers: we cannot flourish, thrive, grow, or appear alive to any of these things; convictions, guilt, shame, fear, torment, and a dread of damnation, make us sick of such entertainments. When sin was dead, and we alive without the law, these things were our glory; but now sin is revived, and we are dead, and cannot feed upon foolishness, nor fill our belly with the east wind any longer.

Prophecy, son of man, to the wind, that the wind may blow upon these dry bones, that they may live, Ezek. xxxvii. 9. This gale makes us feel ourselves sick, sore, tender, poor, and needy; we hunger, thirst, long, desire, crave, cry, confess, pray, seek, search, watch, hope, expect, and catch at every thing heard, seen, felt, or found, that will give us the least encouragement. But unbelief, hardness of heart, rebellion, enmity, Satan’s assaults, fear and torment, shame and confusion, all militate against the poor soul in this labour and travail.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” When this

mystical birth is to be produced, the clouds of divine displeasure begin to disperse, the dismal gloom, terrors, and horrors, begin to subside, the old veil of darkness, blindness, confusion, and ignorance, disappear; the storms of Sinai cease to roll, and divine vengeance ceases to lower, the dark regions of the shadow of death vanish and appear more remote, the gates of hell closed, the darts of Satan are more broken, blunt, and less piercing; our thoughts all assemble and hover over Jesus, the heart enlarges, hope rises, faith moves towards him and embraces him, when love by the Spirit flows in, when fear and torment flee out.

“So is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Now faith, hope, love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, gentleness, goodness, temperance, all shew themselves as so many jewels to deck the soul, which, with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, together with the best robe, makes the poor sinner a perfection of beauty; but after a few months of this feasting and banquetting comes the furnace to try every grace, and especially that of faith. Here Christ withdraws, heaven frowns, Providence runs counter to the promise; corruptions move; Satan comes, fear rises, prayer flags, the breasts of consolation dry up, and the sanctuary yields no refreshing; jealousy, suspicions, and evil surmisings, begin to work, fretfulness, peevishness, murmurings, and complainings are both felt and feared; we struggle, seek, knock,

call, watch, feel, hunt, look, and long, but nothing comes. Then we begin to seek for a morsel of the old fare, and the devil then shews us all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them; lust, beauty, pleasure, profit, mirth, and the delights of the sons of men, such as musical instruments, and that of all sorts: and now we call the proud happy, and the service of God wearisome; when another unexpected gale arises.

“Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.” The first motion is attended with some terrors, fear, and trembling; this drives us with some fervour and earnestness to God in prayer: the heart soon relents, melts, and moves, with love toward him: the work is revived; his faithfulness appears; truth, kindness, and love, seem firm, immutable, and everlasting; himself shines more sweetly and precious, his work appears more plain, faith more strong, hope abounds, and love is more abundant. Now let my beloved come, and eat his pleasant fruits; let him regale himself with the exercise of that grace which he hath planted in my soul. It was this heavenly wind which shook all corruption, sin, and mortality out of the body of Elijah; “He went up by a whirlwind into heaven.” Watch the motions and operations of these cooling and comforting breezes; for it is under their operations that faith and affections, desires and

prayers, will flow out. Whether our old friend is on Windmill Hill, or in Ninfield Stocks, I know not; but I reckon he is in the latter. Pray tender my kind respects to your father and mother, and, should the Lord permit, I hope to see them as soon as the weather will admit, such an Hebrew as I am, to come forth out of my hole: as yet I must abide, as a bottle in the smoke. Pray, my dear friend, take heed not to give offence to my true yoke-fellow, my companion in travail, who is so profitable both to thee and to me, I mean conscience; for his praise is in all the churches; he is next to the Spirit, the third in office from the King of kings; a magistrate that will ever punish an evil doer, but will ever praise them that do well. The Lord be with thee, bless thee, and keep thee, is the prayer of,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XVIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,

I THANK you, from my very heart, for your kind and affectionate letter; it came to me under the unction of the blessed Spirit of God, and was

truly made a blessing to my soul: all that I can do is to acknowledge myself your debtor, and may the Lord return an hundred-fold into your bosom for this kindness shewn to one of the weakest and most unworthy of the lambs of his flock. It rejoiced my heart to hear that it had pleased the Lord to restore you again to your labour.

You say, in your letter, that the faith which the Lord has been pleased to work in my heart will shortly work by love, and cast out all fear and torment; I feel my want of it, and nothing short of union with the dear Redeemer, who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely, can satisfy my soul. At present I have but little of the joy of faith, but the Lord gives me to possess a sweet confidence in my soul, that he will never leave me till he has done all that he has spoken to me of. Never did he before take such a stubborn rebel in his hand. O the depth of electing love! I tried to get from under his hand, but he still held me fast. Viewing him as a sovereign God, as being just in damning me, raised in my heart such rebellion, that I felt as if I could have *** from his throne. What infinite mercy that Christ received gifts for the rebellious! If he had not, mercy never could have reached me. It was a sharp conflict at the last; I felt myself just dropping into hell, and was then brought to know this, that it all depended on one single act of his sovereign will,

whether to save or damn me: but I lay not long in this place, ere the Lord appeared for me, and wrought faith in my heart to believe in him.

I was in the sharpest conflict when I received your first letter; indeed I was in such a situation, that I could not have read it if you had given me a thousand worlds, and was almost induced to throw it on the ground; but dear M. S. took it from me, and read it to me. Pardon my freedom, dear Sir, I cannot help being open with you, and telling you what my God has done; I cannot do so to every one; and should I ever be favoured with your company in this world, I shall tell you more than I shall ever write. I pray you ever to remember me before the Lord: I feel myself a creature full of wants; I am so empty, that I want all that God has to bestow, that I may be filled with all his fulness, that I may rise up to the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ.

And now, my dear friend, I should be glad to hear from you as often as you believe you have a word from the Lord to send, not regarding times and seasons, and believe every favour will be cordially received by,

Your sincere friend in the gospel of Christ,

R. M.

LETTER XIX.

To Mr. R. M.

THE Shunamite is come again, and it seems to be well with her. The next of kin hath married the widow, and raised up the name of the dead upon the inheritance; redeemed the mortgaged property, and done every thing that can be required or expected of a brother in Israel. She forgets the shame of her youth, and remembers the reproach of her widowhood no more; her Maker is her husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. She now sets to her seal that God is true; a father of the fatherless, and a husband of the widow, is God in his holy habitation. No deserted, divorced, desolate soul in a state of widowhood and solitude, bemoaning and bewailing its barrenness, its desolation, and forlorn estate, shall ever find this brother, this kinsman in Israel, refuse to do the kinsman's part; nor shall his house ever be called, the house of him that hath his shoe loosed. He did worthily in Ephratah, in the days of his flesh; and his name was famous in Bethlehem, where he was brought up. But that patient, submissive, and humble act of throwing my letter on the ground, well becomes a good wife, whose desires are to be to her husband, and

who is to rule over her. This consequential and tyrannical behaviour will cause thee in future many a spiritual desertion, many a night's lodging alone, many a bitter sigh and silent sob, many weeping hours and blubbered cheeks; for he will rule over thee be as stubborn as thou wilt: he will provoke thee to jealousy till thy flesh will crawl on thy bones; he will pass by thee, and take no notice of thee, but go down to the beds of spices, to the more simple, humble, savory, and unctuous souls: this will break thy proud spirit, and soften thy stout heart, and make thy soul more mild, meek, sympathetic, and tender; which will teach thee to submit to his frowns, and more highly to prize his presence, till thou art willing to put thy mouth in the dust, to obtain a hope in his mercy. That old man of thine will procure thee many a broken bone, and the more he is countenanced, the more will thy conduct be resented; but I spare thee: however at some future period thou wilt remember me, and, instead of saying in thy haste that all men are liars, thou wilt confess that this prophecy is true. Stubbornness and pride call for furnace-work; contention calls for stripes; peevishness calls for desertion; and a hasty spirit for a long and lingering cross: and it is well for such as you and I, that he hath proclaimed his name long-suffering, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness and truth; or else we might justly expect the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. But we are in the rock, in the

secret place of the Most High, and therefore must abide under the shadow of the Almighty. O blessed hiding-place, blessed refuge, blessed covert from the storm and tempest! No sword lays at us here, no arrow enters our reins, no billow rolls over our heads here; no storm nor hurricane, no snares of fire, brimstone, or an horrible tempest, shall ever be the portion of our cup. The Lord hath shut us in; he covers us with his feathers, under his wings we shall trust, and truth shall be our shield and buckler; the rainbow of the covenant encompasses the head of our faithful and true witness, and our nest is made in the heart of his everlasting love; nor shall height or depth, life or death, things present or things to come, ever separate us from the love of our heavenly Father displayed in the Son of his love. What is all the religion in the world short of this? Only a name to live! A shew, a web, the skin of a sheep. I am glad that my God hath unmasked thee, undeceived thee, uncased thy carnally secure heart; and shewn thee what better preaching can do, and how their work stands when it comes to be tried with fire. Where is all the wood, hay, stubble? What is become of the daubing, and the cry of Peace! Peace! the healing that was applied by them to thy wounds, and the smooth things which they prophesied? Nothing of all this armour was sufficient to repel, or ward off, the curses of a broken law, or the wrath of God. And how do such labourers appear in thine eyes now? As

Satan's best friends, and sinners' worst enemies; the hypocrite's shining light, and the saint's wandering star. But thine eyes see thy teachers: they that sat in darkness shew themselves; and may she ever walk in the light, as he is in the light. Amen.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XX.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

DEAR SIR,

As you have known my soul in adversity, I think it is my duty to give you some of the Lord's dealings which have lately passed upon my soul. You know, Sir, that I have been for a long time much distressed about my dubious state. Your preaching has tried me, and stripped me of all my supposed goodness, God knows; but it made me as rebellious as a devil. I got so wearied with my distress that my very life was a burden to me, and yet I was afraid of death. I have at times had such awful views of the tremendous judgments of God, which has sunk me so low, that I concluded I must give up all hope in him, and claim on him. But to say, let him hasten his work, will never do; for he is of one mind, and

who can turn him? O! blessed be God for a faithful preacher, who would not suffer my soul to remain plastered up in a false peace. When you preached from the troubles of Hezekiah, much comfort flowed in; you touched my case, and I found the discourse to be the life of my spirit. I had such joy and peace in believing that I cannot describe; I felt myself so humbled under a sense of my own unworthiness, that I was ashamed even to look up; until I felt a power greater than ever I had felt before, which made me cry out, "My Lord, and my God." I believe, Sir, that this is some of the wine and oil which you so often treat of; for it rejoiced my heart, and I quite lost all my burden for some time. But, alas! before ever I was aware, I lost all my joy; and never, sure, did my soul mourn after any thing in this world, as after that secret something which I had lost. And this continued until I heard you preach from that mysterious text in Ecclesiastes. As soon as you gave out the words, my mind fled to the dear Redeemer, and you described my feelings in that discourse so clearly, that I had no doubt but the Lord was leading me by his Spirit into all truth. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his goodness and mercy to me who am so unworthy of it. God is confirming the word of his servant, and I can clearly see, my dear Sir, that you have not laboured in vain.

When the Rev. W. H. preached out of Isaiah xlii. I believe no poor sinner ever had so much

of his experience turned up as I had. The crosses, roughs, and crooks, were made plain as fast as that man of God delivered his discourse. I received it, and I found it all written on the tables of my heart: and things which I had entirely forgotten were brought afresh to my mind; and my heart said, "Come and see a man that hath told me all that ever I did." I am sure the Lord sent him to confirm his good work upon my soul; for I am sure if he had not the Spirit of God upon him, he could never have searched my heart as he did; and had I not had the Spirit, I should never have had such a light cast upon my state, and upon the way that I have come. I heard as though there were no other person to hear; and I thought within myself, so we go on, from heart to heart. O, my dear Sir, this is sweet work! for, indeed, I found such enlargement of soul as I cannot express. I thought I was fixed firm on the Rock; surely, said I, there will be no more doubting on my mind about my state. I seemed to have nothing to do but to bless and praise God for his wonderful love to such a poor sinner, who had formerly boasted of great things, and yet knew nothing of the way of salvation in the experience and power of it, only by the letter of scripture. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name! Being rather infirm, I am much troubled to write; but having a desire to acquaint you of the Lord's goodness to me, I presume, being fully persuaded

that your goodness will excuse all my imperfections. And may the best of blessings rest upon your own soul, and on your labours, is the earnest prayer and desire of,

Dear Sir,

Affectionately yours,

H. T.

LETTER XXI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I HAVE taken the liberty of writing a few simple things to you concerning my soul, having had a desire to do it for between four and five years. I wrote one letter to send to you, Sir, about four years ago, but being all that time in great distress, I was afraid to send it; for Satan told me that I was a hypocrite, and I thought so too; and if you, Sir, should have, in your answer to me, one single doubt of my state, I should have utterly sunk in despair. About four or five years ago, I had my profession torn up by the roots by Mr. J. and I now thank the Lord for it.

For the two first years I was in great horror of soul, for I had made a profession of religion

for some time, such a one as it was, and the Lord, by Mr. J's. preaching, shewed me where I stood, and dreadful work it made; for, instead of love to God, which I once thought I had, I found such dreadful hatred to him and his word, and to Mr. J's. preaching, that I thought I should go to hell in my rebellion, with my eyes open; and Satan filled me with bitter blasphemies against God himself, and such an hatred to Mr. J. that I wished some judgment to fall on him, and take him out of the world; for I thought he had a spite against me, and preached on purpose to distress me: and I used to think he preached more distressing to me than he did to any of the rest. One night I heard him at E. and I thought I would not be distressed let him preach how he would; but, O Sir! I felt as if I was sure of going to endless misery; and I expressed these words to a friend when I came out, that I was as sure of being damned as I was alive, if Mr. J's preaching was true. But now, Sir, these are not my thoughts, for I think the Lord did all for the good of my soul; for even in that tempest I have found, at seasons, a strong confidence that the Lord would bring me through, after he had sufficiently humbled me. But, after two years, as near as I can remember, this great distress of soul abated, inso-much that I did not feel the keenness of it to that degree I had done: but I found myself in a worse state, for I sunk into a dark, lifeless, and dead frame of soul. And, O Sir! though I knew

at the same time that living and dying so I must perish, yet lightness of spirit, and hardness of heart, that could not relent, beset me, and yet I used to mourn and grieve at my hard fate, for I could see no ground for hope; for when I went on my knees to try to pray, I could scarce get a word from my mouth, much less from my heart; and then I used to neglect it, for I thought I should never be heard: then gloomy dejections overwhelmed me, for I found no faith to believe that I ever should be heard; but when I did neglect prayer, conscience would so condemn me, that at times I was almost distracted. There are two things which have distressed me not a little; the one is, when I was under such horror of soul I could not endure to read any book that was alarming; for when I did, Sir, I found such dreadful malice against it, that I could have thrown it into the fire, or have torn it in a thousand pieces. And can you believe it, that after these horrors wore off, I have had less ground for hope than I had in the midst of the storm; for when I read in that lifeless state, I have been so confused that I have been forced to read one thing over two or three times before I could tell the meaning of it; and had such a natural dislike to it, that grieved me more than all my distress. I have been, Sir, just like a child that hated his book, and wanted whipping to it; and as I could find no person that had been exercised with these things, I concluded it was singular, and was ready to give up

all hopes of ever coming forth, till within a few months back, when I begged of God to deliver me from this dreadful lifeless state; and, blessed be his glorious name, he has done it; for I found my doubts and fears removed a little under Mr. J. the sabbath-day before you preached at L. last; but, O Sir! when you preached your last sermon on Thursday evening, a day much to be remembered by me: oh, my dear Sir! I could see eye to eye with you, for I could see that it was God that had cast me down, and not man, for I felt a lively hope, and a strong persuasion that the Lord would bring me through, for my doubts and fears were all removed, and a great calm came into my soul, and my conscience left off to accuse me, and I have felt God's blessed Spirit speaking to me ever since. This day I heard that dear man of God, Mr. J. and the best discourse to me that ever I heard from his mouth, for the Lord shined sweetly into my heart: I could not help saying, My Lord, and my Saviour. Oh, Sir! I could write ten times more, was my paper larger. And now, Sir, I beg an answer as soon as it suits you, for I shall wait with impatience. So farewell, dear Sir; and may God bless you, is the prayer of,

S. Y.

P. S. I make no doubt but you will laugh at my long scrawl.

LETTER XXII.

To S. Y.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST JESUS,

THY simple epistle came safe to me, and I thank my God for his kindness to thee. Wonderful, various, and intricate, are the ways and works of God with poor sinners; and we are too blind and ignorant to make them out, until the Comforter comes to testify of Christ to us, to lead us into all truth, and to glorify Jesus in the discoveries of his dying love, and in his great salvation made known to our souls; then the blessed Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, searches out the deep things of our hearts, and shews us the way we have come, and what he hath been doing within; the hand of God upon us, and the blessed end that God had in view, namely, to make us feel the need of a precious Christ; and that he might lead us to him, and reveal him in us, even when there is no eye to pity, no hand to help.

Light and life have entered into thy heart, my daughter; the Sun is risen upon thee, and the promised healing in his beams hath been communicated to thee: the Lord is thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. O! what debtors are such poor, blind, rebellious souls as we to the

God of all grace, mercy, and peace! who saves the chiefest of all sinners, owns and gives testimony to the word of his grace by the mouth of the most despicable of all instruments, and pours out his Spirit even upon servants and upon handmaids; but his own sheep must know their own shepherd, they must hear his voice and live. All that ever came to thy heart before him, were thieves and robbers; friends to Satan, rivals to the Son of God, debauchers of the Lord's bride, and secret enemies to the bridegroom: they espouse souls to themselves, and zealously affect them, that they may exclude their affections from Christ; they had drest thee up in a sheep's skin, in order to betray thee into the hand of Satan, that thou mightest be damned as an hypocrite in Zion. Mr. Jenkins has acted the honest and faithful part, as a real friend of the Bridegroom should do: he has plucked off thy well-set hair, thy curious girdle, thy stomacher, thy beautiful ornaments, the ornaments of thy legs, the wimples, crising-pins, and nose jewels, and has sent thee in thy true colours to the heir of all things, to the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, that he may display the riches of his grace in thee, and draw all the affections of thy heart and soul to himself; and he that seeks the honour of him that sent him, and not his own, is a true and faithful servant of the King of kings and Lord of lords. I bless my God that he hath raised me up so faithful a fellow-servant, and that

he should condescend to own and honour him in the glorious work; and may the Lord make thee an ornament to his cause, a living stone in his building, an honour to Zion, and a crown of joy and rejoicing to the pastor that God hath set over thee, is the prayer and desire of,

Dear Sister,

Thy faithful and affectionate

brother in Christ Jesus,

Church Street, Paddington.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MANY and sincere thanks to my most beloved friend for his epistle, which I received this morning; fraught with power, light, wisdom, knowledge, love, experience, truth, and condescension to them of low degree. How powerful and savoury I found it! Indeed it is such as this my soul loveth. How much does such as this differ from the noisy, flimsy, and flourishing harangues of the day! O, my father, you know there are but few in the secret; and I am sure of it. The mystery is hid from them: but it is revealed unto babes;

and out of their mouths hath the Saviour ordained strength, that he might perfect praise, and still the enemy and the avenger. I find no fault in this letter, except that you are too hasty in your expectation of me. I believe, and that from my heart, that what you say in it is the truth; I see it clear enough, and it agrees exactly with what I have, in some measure, felt.

There is nothing in this world that rejoices my heart so much as to see the Redeemer triumphing, and the people falling under him; this does indeed afford fresh matter for the pulpit, and matter for thanks, gratitude, and love to him. This has so melted and humbled me, that I have abased myself, and have been so ashamed, confounded, and confused before him, to think that he should condescend so low as to use such a vile, base, and nothing-worth instrument to convey the knowledge of himself to the souls of any of his children. And, indeed, it is the wonder of all wonders, and it makes me often stand astonished at it, and can hardly credit such a thing. I have had some comfortable days of late, a very pleasant frame, and led in a sweet channel, with rays of light on the word and on my path; but, alas! alas! it is departed. It wore off by degrees, and I am left with all my old companions about me; fretfulness, rebellion, contention, and all evils. It really is shocking to relate it, but I know to whom I speak, that I have contended with the Almighty face to face, and have told him to kill me out-

right; that it would be better, than plaguing me so, to make an end of me at once; and that, of all that I knew in the world, none fared worse than those who wished to serve him best, and those who were faithful and diligent for him to the utmost of their power; that these were always burdened, oppressed, slighted, mocked, and disregarded, whilst he honoured and rewarded those whom he knew degraded and debased him, perverted his word, and marred the paths of his children, and betrayed them, as far as in their power lay, into the hands of the devil himself. I know he is long-suffering, or else he would never bear with me. But is it not hard to see vile and base-born slaves honoured for telling lies, while others are hated for telling the truth? I believe nothing in this world is so much hated and opposed as truth and conscience; and those that hold both are most slighted. This makes me wish that I was in some wilderness. But, oh! let them call them by what names they please, they shall find them beyond the grave. You have surely said the truth, and I set my seal to it.

I wrote the above on Saturday. This is Sunday afternoon; I am going immediately to Mr. B.'s house to preach to-night, and leave the L. people to live on their wisdom. To-morrow we set off, and get to Providence at night. I shall send this to Mr. B.'s lest you come out before the post.

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

BELOVED OF GOD,

THOU hast refreshed my bowels in the Lord. He who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted me by the coming of Titus. The contents are good news from a far country. God hath visited and redeemed his people. I fell more than once or twice on my knees, with many tears of thankfulness and joy. Satan hath a captive lost, and Christ a subject born. There hath been joy this week in heaven among the angels of God, over that poor sinner that now repenteth. I told her when she opened her case to me, that she would not die in the pit; I added, 'As thou livest, I shall see thee in the kingdom of heaven.' My boasting before thee is found a truth. God hath confirmed the word of his servant, and performed the counsel of his messenger, and hath made thee the happy instrument. Thou art now a midwife and a nurse, if not a father, in Israel. Go on, the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. It is not thundering hell and damnation that do the execution, my dear son. The powerful, life-giving, and all-conquering voice that brings the sinner from death to life, is the voice of the Son of God; it is a voice that is not lift up, nor is it

heard in the street; it is the small still voice that silences all the noise of the earthquake, the wind, and the fire; it is the voice of the Advocate in the sinner's conscience, saying, Loose him, and let him go. No soul hears this voice but the poor sinner in whose heart it speaks; God in this way gives testimony to the word of his grace; and the more pure the gospel, the more will the power of God attend it. "They that honour me I will honour;" and to preach the pure gospel, and declare his whole counsel faithfully, is spreading the savour of his name; and God will make such a sweet savour unto himself, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. The children are certainly come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. But as it hath pleased God, by the last visit of his poor unworthy servant, to put a little of the spirit of life both in the cherub and in the wheels, so that the living creature, and the chariot of his willing people, begin to move in consort, should matters begin to deaden or get flat, and the shaking among the dry bones begin to go off, and the present rushing of the mighty wind subside; if any thing like Paul's dream should appear, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us;" I will, if God incline and permit, come again, that you may have a second benefit. Behold I shew you a mystery, which will much puzzle and perplex thee in thy present work of proclaiming liberty; Dost thou know that the spiritual birth of every

soul that is brought forth under thee will be attended with previous labour and travail in thine own soul; and, if their deliverance should not be attended with godly sorrow and repentance, self-loathing, pardon of sin, and those essential things that accompany salvation, that thou wilt travail again and again in birth till Christ be formed in them? When this comes on thee thou wilt wonder, and think some strange thing hath happened unto thee; but so thou wilt find it. About twenty-two years ago this puzzled me not a little. No preachers know any thing of this, but those who are in the spiritual bonds of the gospel, and whom God owns in begetting others in those bonds. I have been so much accustomed to this exercise, as to be enabled nearly to tell what is going on in the church, by the operations of the Spirit on my own soul; but the Lord will reveal even this unto thee.

God bless thee,

Feb. 16, 1797.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

GOD brings down, and lifts up, my dear friend; he wounds, and his hands make whole. I believe that this present complaint will be one of the

best, yea, the very best, that ever befell thee. A very present help is my God in times of trouble; when their strength is all gone he will appear, and to them that have no might he will increase strength; nor shall all the devils in hell, nor all the infernal infidelity of thy heart, ever make my God unfaithful to his word, or God's poor servant a liar to thee. J. shall see that just One, and hear words from the life-giving voice of the only begotten Son of God. Thou shalt not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; thou shalt not sow, and another reap; thou shalt not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my servants, and they shall long enjoy the work of their hands. Thou shalt shortly know what almighty power can effect, and what eternal love can perform. Thou wast born to make full proof and trial of the foundation that God hath laid in Zion; God hath founded that city, and thou art one of the poor of his people that shall trust in it; nor shalt thou ever be moved, the Highest himself shall establish thee. Thou hast acknowledged me already in part, and thou shalt acknowledge me to the end; and even in this also, "His salvation is near to them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land," and it is now even at thy door. The Lord hath long stood and knocked there in the way of reproof and rebuke, and thou hast heard his voice; and earnest desires after him, a deep sense of the need of him, and earnest expectations and longings for him, have

opened the door; and into such he hath promised to go, and with such to sup, and such shall sup with him; and thou shalt have a taste of that sweet banquet even in reading this epistle, for I know who dictated it, and who sends it to thee; and therefore hear thou what the Spirit saith to thee, and be not rebellious, be not faithless, but believing; nor turn a deaf ear to him that speaketh to thee from heaven. Truth is the girdle of our divine Prophet; faithfulness girds him as a priest, and righteousness girds him as a king; and all this shall be discovered when he manifests himself to thee; for he shall satiate the weary, and replenish the sorrowful soul; he will not contend for ever, nor will he be always wroth, lest the Spirit fail from before him, and the souls that he hath made. It is for thine iniquity that he hath smote thee and hid himself, and thou hast gone on frowardly in rebellion, murmuring, and giving way to, yea, in encouraging unbelief; but he hath seen thy ways, and will heal thee. The work of Jeremiah and Ezekiel was chiefly that of sounding an alarm, of awakening the dead, and, as personating God, they came near to sinners' hearts in judgment; as it is written, "Wilt thou judge them, Son of Man? Wilt thou judge them?" and again, "I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their ways," Jer. vi. 27. And you know that the New Testament hath its sons of thunder as well as sons of lightning: some to sound an alarm,

others to gather the assemblies; some to remove, and others to water; some to root up, and others to plant; some to wound, and some to heal; some to strip, and others to clothe; some to condemn, and some to justify; some to bring down, and some to lift up. But whether I work at the dung-gate, or square the stones; whether I carry the hod, or handle the trowel; whether I use the plummet, or bring the stones, matters not, if we are but building in the temple of the Lord, and seeking his honour, and not our own. This is the main point; and the pure, unadulterated, and uncorrupted language of all the builders must be, not self, but grace, grace unto it.

God bless thee. Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY EVER BELOVED FRIEND,

YOUR epistle is now before me. God Almighty bless you and reward you. How could you tell what effect it would have upon me, and that I should have a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in reading it? But, as the Lord liveth, it is true. I have read it over with thousands of tears, and

secretly blessed God in my soul for it, and still hope for his great salvation. I can feel that your epistle meets with acceptance in my very conscience, and draws and encourages my heart to look out, and passionately to long for, his coming. If I could see his blessed face but once, I think I should ask for no more in this world. He knows that he has crucified me to all but himself; and if he denies me the favour of his presence, I must remain in my love-sickness, despair, and die in it. Thine epistle I know is the word of his servant, and the counsel of his messenger; yea, a servant whose word I have always found to be true, and I declare that it almost puts unbelief itself to silence; but it is a hard matter to arm so close as to repel the attacks of Satan and unbelief. O! that I were free from these! But there is one thing in your letter that neither of them object to, nor dare they, for I am too well grounded in that to be shaken: namely, 'That it is for mine iniquity that he hath smote me and hid himself.' This my soul knows full well, and I loathe myself in my own sight for it. O! how he hath spared me! none knows, but himself, what a heart I have. Sometimes it appears to be too much for him ever to save such a sinner as I have been. He hath damned millions who were never half so vile and rebellious as I am; and why should I expect his mercy? Nay, how can I expect eternal love to stoop so low? O, my faithful brother! if I may venture to call you so, you are, according

to my thoughts, the highest in the divine favour; but I am, and ever shall be, the deepest in debt. God for ever bless you. I have a strong persuasion that whatever you shall ask of your heavenly Father, he will give it you.

Your charge is true, I have gone on frowardly in the way of my heart; I have rebelled, murmured, and even invited unbelief; and that besetting sin appears so strong, that nothing but divine power and eternal love can ever remove the bar. But I must have done, and go out after some of the lost, scattered, scabbed sheep, that are left in the wilderness. God bless you and reward you, must ever be the prayer of,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXVII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

DEAR SIR,

IT is of necessity I send these lines. I am like Elihu, my belly is as new wine which hath no vent; I must speak, that I may be refreshed. I know not how to give flattering titles, yet I think I may call you my spiritual father, as Paul was to the Galatians. I once heard you deliver your master's message at a village near Gainsborough.

in Lincolnshire, about fifteen years ago, when I first set out in religion. Since that time I have past through various changes, and for the most part have dwelt in dreary deserts, on parched ground, yea, in a wilderness; till it pleased God to send you once more after me, where you found me, at C. Bucks, a little more than a year since; when your Father and my Father sent you with these words: "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him; his seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." These were the blessed words in the hand of the Spirit that brought me back to my Father's house in peace. I conferred no longer with flesh and blood, but set to searching my Bible, my Father's last will, for my portion, made over to me in that covenant made with David's Lord; and I have found it, blessed be his holy name! It came at an acceptable time, for I had spent my all, and got no better, but rather worse. I found it was an ancient promise; "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper; he shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight." It is a free gift, it is pure gold; and since it is gold, I hope, through grace, to be thrifty over it, and not lose a dust. But, Sir, it has cost me the loss of all my friends; but the loss of their favour I count my gain, since my wealth is concealed in the cross. Within these!

last twelve months I have had the sorest trials from the temptations of the devil, and from the professing world; my whole frame, at times, was as though it was set on fire of hell; the enemies of my Lord, and his free grace, have beset me on every side; but, blessed be God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect, he hath enabled me to pray with David: "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. O! visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance!" Sir, since the Lord sent you with the joyful sound I never could sit any longer under any of the letter ministers; and because of this they harass me with the names of Antinomian, and a narrow soul; but, blessed be God, I know whom I serve in the Spirit of his Son, for he enables me, at times, to cry, Abba Father. I came to hear you at A. on Thursday evening, with a good appetite, and I had as good a supper as ever I had in my life; I was made drunk, but not with wine; my cup ran over. I had not one wink of sleep that night; I was very certain I had got Jacob's blessing, and run away with it; and I could not help subscribing with my hand to the Lord, and calling myself by the name of Israel. Before meeting I called at a house of one of Moses' disciples, there was S. M. with some more; I being like a speckled bird, they began to shoot at me, wondering that I could

find no preacher to suit me, asking me some foolish questions; I answered them in Solomon's words, which seemed to make their faces red. I thought of his fool, pestle, and mortar; but forbore speaking, for fear of losing my supper. The greatest crime was, I had left the means, and all God's people. I asked them where they thought God was worshipped? they said at M.; I brought this passage: "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?" but they seemed to me neither to know Zion, nor Zion's God. You, Sir, coming soon after to describe Zion literally, and then spiritually; that God had broke up house-keeping, and dwelt in the hearts of believers; and that she was redeemed with judgment and righteousness; judgment to satisfy divine justice, and righteousness to put on this comely woman; my heart was filled with joy and gladness, and I have been feeding on it ever since, and my soul says, What hath the Lord wrought? After meeting, I had a great desire to speak to my father; I came to the inn; it was I that took hold of your hand before that young man with light bushy hair; but seeing S. M. with whom I had been disputing, my courage failed, and, you not knowing me, I could hardly speak, but set off home, for fear of company, for I wanted to go alone. I was determined to send a few lines; I hope you, Sir, will excuse my freedom, as it is the first letter I ever

sent to a religious friend in all my life. May God bless you, and send you to M. again, with some more good news from heaven. God willing, I hope to spend one half hour with my father. I hope I shall not shame you, Sir; my outer dress is as good as any of Moses' disciples in M. though I count it but dung and dross.

I am,

Yours in the Lord,

and in the bond of the everlasting covenant,

J. F.

LETTER XXVIII.

To Mr. J. F.

DEAR BROTHER,

I REJOICED at the reception of yours. I knew that I had been pursuing, but I knew not what; for sometimes we hunt a fox, sometimes a wolf, sometimes a roe, and sometimes a sheep; the two former to the wilderness, to their own covert, the latter to the King's dale and the good fold. Verily I say unto you, that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God when the lost sheep is found. If thou hast lost one earthly friend, my son, thou hast gained a thousand heavenly ones, which are

more precious and valuable. Those that come to mount Zion are never friendless nor desolate. Love unites us with the church of the firstborn, and with the spirits of just men made perfect: we come under the ministry of an innumerable company of angels, to God the judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel; and who can be friendless that is united to such a blessed company, and who have their conversation in heaven among them? O! how sensibly have I felt and enjoyed the presence of those, when my affections have been with my treasure, and when the visitations of God have preserved my spirit; when the glory of God hath been fresh in me, and his secret upon my tabernacle. These are pledges, earnest, and foretastes of the great reward; yea, the firstfruits of the Spirit, which ensure the whole harvest.

Seek the Lord, and thou shalt live; seek his face evermore: and, if Jesus is not to be found among thy acquaintance, quit them; if he is not to be found in the means, leave them also. Many congregation● are like the Saviour's sepulchre after his resurrection, nothing is to be found but the grave-clothes and the napkin; I mean the external garb and the old vail; no light, no life. Seek not the living among the dead. To your closet, to your Bible, and to the fields to meditate: the soul that prays in secret shall be rewarded openly; the scriptures testify of Jesus; and, while

Isaac was meditating in the field, the camels arrived; his thoughts went out to meet his God, and God met him with a choice gift, a woman that feared the Lord. Never was there more profession and less possession than now; never did this island swarm with hypocrites as at this time. A name to live, and that is all. The soul that sits down contented under the ministration of death is a quiet member; and he that opposes the power of godliness is a zealous man: but God will have a remnant, and there are a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with him in white raiment, for he accounts them worthy. The Lord make and keep thee of this highly favoured and happy number, is the prayer and desire of,

Yours in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received and read your last favour, and some more that have come to L. and cannot help thinking that you must speak, that you may be eased, the bottle seems to be so full. I wish I

could say so; but if I speak I am not eased, for my little pitcher is soon emptied, and I am like a dry tree. I came home last week from my journey very poorly; I preached in three places, and in the two first had very comfortable seasons; but before I got to the last, I was shut up, dark, and bound; and so I have continued ever since, and am now very poorly and low with a bad cold, which is the cause of your not seeing me in town this week. I think I can never be made to stand. There is no strength in me, and I am much afraid that I never yet had the true light. Those that believe in the Saviour shall no longer walk in darkness; and this shews that I cannot believe in the light that I may be a child of light. How happy would I be if I could but continue in the enjoyment of the little that I have at times tasted! I think the Lord, at times, hath clothed me with power; and that his presence, in a measure, has been with me: but I am not certain it is he; yet, in this sweet letter of yours, there are many things applicable to my case, and many things that my soul earnestly hopes and prays for. I trust my inward conflicts are not altogether for sin, though I ought to suffer a deal for that; and if I did but know that I had an interest in the Redeemer's love, I think I would willingly suffer to the day of my death. There are certainly doors opening for me to preach, notwithstanding all the oppositions made by men; and that men, who have for so many years professed the gospel, should set

themselves against me, is astonishing; neither can I see why they should be so exasperated as to vilify my character, except it be for the truth's sake; for when I was presuming in sin and false confidence, no tongue was moved against me. I cannot now expect to have the pleasure of seeing you till the fast-day is over. Do you think there is yet a prospect of our nation being saved? Sometimes, you know, that a Noah, Daniel, and Job, shall only save themselves; and, at other times, one Moses shall stand in the gap, and make up the breach. The French have been the lovers that this nation has doted upon, whom they have admired for years: their fashions, language, manners, and customs, have been adopted; and is it not likely that we shall have enough of them? Many, many from this town and country desire and wish their best respects to you, and are in great expectation of seeing the summer coming on, in hope then of seeing you in the country again. God bless you, is the desire and prayer of

Your much obliged friend,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXX.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

Grace and peace be with thee.

BELOVED OF GOD,

IF there is any new wine in my bottle, it is for thy use; all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, life or death. They that water shall be watered themselves, and they that scatter shall increase; God will dry up the green tree, and cause the dry tree to flourish. For every comfortable season; my son, be thankful; knowing that we have, by sin, forfeited all claim upon God for any mercy, whether in providence or grace. Enlargement and contraction, liberty and bondage, love and fear, will all work in turn more or less; and those that have none of these changes fear not God.

God will make thee stand, and put strength in thee too when thy strength is all gone; but this is not thy happy case yet. There is a good deal of stiffness in the iron sinew of thy neck, it cannot bow to the yoke; there is strength in thy free will; you cannot accept the punishment of your iniquity, nor yield to bear the indignation of the Lord, although thou hast sinned against him. Nor hast thou lost all the power of thine arm:

thou art still working, tugging, and striving, in thine own strength, in order to subdue sin, please God, and recommend thyself to his favour; and thou expectest his approbation, his smiles, his blessings, and his working power, to attend thee on the footing of these things; and when he withdraws, or refuses to meet thee in this way, and cuts thine expectations off, then thine heart fretteth against him; this thy way is thy folly; what God does for us is not for our sake, but for his own name's sake, and for his dear Son's sake; Christ will be all to thee when thou art nothing. The true light that shines into God's elect, my son, discovers various things besides the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When the Lord shined round about Paul and into his heart, it was no less to him than the light of life; and the commandment, with all its unlimited demands, immediately followed; now sin revived, now concupiscence appeared, now the carnal enmity, pride, wrath, and the web of human righteousness, shewed itself; and all fruits brought forth unto death were discovered; "All things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light which doth appear, for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." In this light we discover the spirituality of God's law; the wrath, the bondage, and fear that it works; the demands of it, and the poor help and encouragement that it gives to the poor sinner. It was in the Lord's light that David

saw this: "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." In this light we see this world in its true colours, and the state of all men in it; "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." In this light we see the dumb dog, the foolish shepherd, and the blind guide; for, "Though the Lord give you the bread and water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." It is in God's light that we see the vanity of all natural religion, the insufficiency of a form of godliness, the vanity of human traditions, doctrines, commandments, and precepts, of men. "Whatsoever I counted gain here, I count loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but dung and dross, that I may win Christ." Furthermore, in the light of God we see the prophecies, and Christ the substance of them, who is the light that shines in a dark place, or in all the prophets' dark sayings, until the day-dawn and day-star arise in our hearts. Once more, it is this light that leads us to see that just One, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person: "God hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" this is seeing him who is invisible; that is, it is seeing the Lord in his own light, who is invisible to all natural men. It is in this light that we see

Christ to be the only way to the Father, who himself is the only path of the just, and who leads us from one discovery to another, till we come to perfect day. Now when my son comes to read this, can he say that the god of this world hath blinded his eyes, that the light of the gospel shines not to him, that the old vail is still upon his heart, and that he walks in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth? I trow not.

Whatsoever blessing comes from God leads the heart in faith, in affection, in gratitude, and thankfulness to God; which faith and affection is attended with an inward witness for God, and which witness silences every accuser for that time, for faith is never without a witness. Pay no regard to opposition; soldiers of Christ must endure hardness, and fight the good fight of faith.

Old men are not always wise, nor do the aged understand judgment.

An over fondness of reputation and character caused Jonah his perilous voyage. To be opposed, persecuted, reviled, and slandered for truth and conscience sake, is the badge of a real disciple of Jesus, and the certain lot of all his faithful followers. When the devil loses a willing captive, or a letter preacher, which is one of the nets of that artful fowler, he is sure to resent it, by forestalling the market of those who buy the truth and sell it not; but let that serpent go on, and fill up his measure; he shall be trampled under

our feet, and we shall judge him, and sure I am that he will have judgment without mercy, for he has shewed no mercy upon Christ's lambs and doves. If God sets before thee an open door, none can shut it; nor can the word of God be bound; the word that he sends shall accomplish the end, the candle that he lights shall neither be put under a bed nor under a bushel, the Lord's city cannot be hid, nor shall Haman himself ever prevail against the seed of the Jews; we fight no enemy but what is already conquered or slain, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" I have fought the field, and won the day, and therefore be of good cheer, for both the victory and the spoil are yours: "Then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey." The word of the Lord shall sound out, and the fame of his servants shall be spread abroad; not only by the recipients of truth, but from the lips of envy; "These are the servants of the Most High God," says the poor girl possessed with the devils, when she followed Barnabas and Paul. That thou mayest minister as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; that thou mayest hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and by these war a good warfare; and that every member of Christ may fill and magnify his office, so that he that prophesieth may wait on his prophecies, he that teacheth on teaching, he that exhorteth

on exhortation; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that prayeth, with cheerfulness; is the hearty, unfeigned, and undissembled desire and prayer of,

Dear Son,

Thine affectionately

in the kingdom and patience of Christ,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

MY letters never stand long unanswered with you; the answer seems to be ready to what I wish to know, though I can but express it in a very blundering manner. I received your last favour in due time, and, if I had wrote then, I could say it was savoury meat, such as my soul loveth; it was all that was in my heart, but you tell it far better than I can describe it; I know it when it is shewn, but can find neither light nor words to set it forth, and this is the truth of the matter; so dark, stupid, dull, and ignorant I am. I know that legal strivings, together with the hurrying and terrifying influence of Satan, drive into the wilderness; drive from God, but never to him;

and when it is night all the beasts of prey creep out of their dens, corruptions I feel then swarming, and on the back of that I rebel awfully against God, because it is not better with me; and when I have cried in this distress, and have obtained an answer, and sometimes I have found a letter from you to be the answer, but soon after legal pride will begin to work, self-sufficiency, carnal ease, take place, and this calls for the scourge again, and down I go as miserable as ever, till I feel my heart heaving with rebellion; and surely this is the foolishness of a man perverting his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord. It suffices nothing that I am not tempted to gross acts of sin, while these evils haunt my soul, and bring me into captivity to their power so easy. Pride, unbelief, murmuring, unclean thoughts, and rebellion, are the sins which alternately worry me and make my life bitter; and yet I often think not bitter enough, otherwise I might be delivered from them. I know they have been all at times dispersed by one little ray of light from the Saviour's blessed countenance; but this has been but of a very short duration, and when it is gone, I fall again to question the whole, whether it was from him or not. And when I have received a letter from you, which has been attended with a comfortable seal, my state and my feelings so clearly described, that I could venture my life it was true, my heart broken, and the darkness dis-

pelled in reading it; yet I have called all in question again, and feared that I had applied to myself what did not belong to me.

I have reason to hope that two women who belonged to us died lately happy in the Lord. When I first visited them, they were in great distress; but before they died, they were raised to a sweet hope.

The Lord himself bless you, and guide both tongue and pen, is the prayer of,

Your very affectionate friend,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

IT is an easy matter with me, my dear friend, to send you an account of legal pride, self-righteousness, infidelity, rebellion, and the evil workings of concupiscence, for my poor heart (according to the flesh) is stuffed with nothing else, therefore it is out of the abundance of the heart that my mouth speaketh; however it is he that hateth his life in this world, that shall keep it to life eternal; for God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; "He that exalteth himself shall be

abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted;" that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God; while those who look at him whom they have pierced shall be in bitterness for him, and those that receive a new heart and a new spirit shall loathe themselves in their own sight for their iniquity. If you want any description of evil, or of the workings of it, I am never at a loss for that, for when I would do good, evil is always present with me; but if you want any thing that is good you puzzle me, for how to perform that which is good I find not. If my heart is warm with the Lord's love, and I am heaping a thousand blessings on his name for his goodness to me, I can feel, perceive, yea, hear with something of an ear which is within me, a thousand curses go through my mind in a minute; where they come from God knows, but there they be, and there they come and go; but they leave no sting of guilt, no fear of death, nor any dread of damnation, behind them; nor does God frown, rebuke, reprove, or hide his face from me, on the account of them; while this infernal flame goes hissing, like a red-hot shot, through the ear and mind of the vessel of mercy, I shudder, suck up my breath, watch their departure, and keep my mouth as it were with a bridle, till they are gone, and then go on again with the delightful trade of blessing him that blesses me. Formerly I used to view these fiery darts to be my own sin, and tremble

at their dreadful effects; but the killing force of them is now gone, Christ is the shield of faith, and his blood quenches all the fiery darts of this wicked one; for they leave no guilt behind them, nor do they cause any distance or separation between me and my God; because the Mediator and his fountain opened is the mercy-seat between my God and my soul: the breach is closed, and Satan cannot open it again, therefore I am not afraid of the terrors by night, nor of the arrows that flee by day; because the guilt of my sins, and the wrath of my God, do not meet and work in my conscience together as before. Perfect love did once cast out all fear, and torment too; and, though I do not always enjoy that love in the heat and flame of it, yet, it having cast out fear and wrath, it keeps them out; love keeps its ground, and the devil cannot make me believe that God hates me, nor can he rank me among the classes of his enemies; for he that knoweth all things, knows that I love him dearly. But that which puzzles me most of all is, when I have been remiss in duty, cold, indifferent, carnal, lifeless, unbelieving, rebellious as a devil; full of murmuring, cavilling, disputing the point; determined to have my own way, come life or come death; cursing my hard fate, the day of my birth, and the man that brought tidings of it; wishing myself a beast, not a beast instead of a sinner, but a beast instead of a saint. When, after this, I have been debased, and forced to bow, and ex-

pected, that if there was any holiness in God, any truth, any justice, or any resentment left in him, that he would shew it, and ease himself of such an adversary, and be avenged of such a rebel as I; but here I could get no answer. All I could gather from his conduct appeared to me to be this: I will talk to you by and by. And when I have kept watching for the rod, knowing that my fool's back called for strokes, there has come a smile, a temporal present, great energy in prayer, much pardon, access, nearness, familiarity, the deepest humility, and an account of good done in the pulpit; this, above all things under heaven, makes the Rev. Mr. Huntington nothing, and Jesus all in all; this has bled my soul to death a thousand times over. Don't send the subscribers yet, a month's time will do. I trust it will be one of the most profitable works that I have ever sent out, but the blessing depends upon Him. God bless thee.

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE received and read your last favour, and the Lord knows that it came in season. You

know not how sweet it proved to me, and how thankful my soul was for it; and though, I believe, you designed no more than to give me some account of the Lord's kind dealings under the present dispensation with your own soul, yet there was something for me too. I said, after I had read it, that I knew the voice that was in it; and indeed there is a voice, as well in your letters as your ministry, that I cannot hear any where else; and I am sure, at times, that I have heard it, and that I know it when I hear it again; and I have secretly said, 'Is it not the voice of my beloved coming?' But you seem to intimate that there is a deal of the noisy clamour of unbelief in mine; then it is no wonder that I understand it so well, for my heart is stuffed with nothing else; and I feel the influence of that desperaté spirit, which you mention, so strong on my poor soul, that at times it makes me devilish, like himself. Next to my own salvation, there is nothing in this world that affords me greater satisfaction than to see the hand of the Lord with you; your soul has been delivered from the battle, and you shall return in triumph. If you had been worsted in this conflict, I knew I must fall, and fall for ever; if the foundations can be destroyed, then what shall the righteous do! But this shall never be, nor will he ever suffer a servant of his, whom he knows contends for his cause, and for his truth, to be confounded in the presence of fools. I knew, from the beginning, that you were encoun-

tering Satan in the garb of an angel of light, and a servant of his, whom he had transformed into the likeness of a minister of righteousness. I never had a single doubt on my mind about the lawfulness or the necessity of the war; no, nor of the event of it neither: and I now find that my faith was the substance of what I hoped for, and the evidence of what I did not then see. But how grievous such things are to nature, none can tell but those who feel them. Far less than what you have met with makes me more like a devil than any thing else; every thing that touches me, or goes contrary to me, makes me rebel like a tiger; and, what is very strange, I find that all severities cannot tame me, nothing but kindness humbles me: and how can this be expected under so much rebellion! But unexpectedly it comes at times. The account I had of the P. of B. was sweetened; I cannot tell you what comfortable and sweet views I had of its contents, and with what power they abode upon me for some few days; and I thought, if I could lie in them, with the feelings and sensations I had then, I should be contented to wait for health to the last moment of my life. But O! they are gone! nothing continues with me long. I am like a broken vessel, in whom there is no pleasure. And where am I to look for more? Let me look where I may, I know that it will never come but from one object; it must come from Jesus, and no where else. It grieves me to say, Give, give, when I know there

are so many things that call besides. The good Lord be with your Spirit is the desire and prayer of

Your real friend,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

I THANKFULLY received the epistle of my friend, and bless my God for owning, or attending with his blessing, any thing written or spoken by so unlikely and unworthy an instrument; but he knows his poor servant, and I know my kind, dear, and ever blessed Master; this bears me up, and helps me on. He has put the helmet of salvation on my head, he has clad me with zeal as with a cloak, he has girded me with strength for the battle, and has filled me with power and might by his Spirit, that I may shew Jacob his transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins; he has told me in my study, that he will avenge his own elect, and deal treacherously with them that have dealt treacherously with me; and this reckoning will shortly be brought in, and they that hate me shall pay it, and those that favour my righteous cause shall see it, and iniquity shall stop her mouth. Judgment may appear at times

to linger, and because it is not speedily executed, the hearts of sinners are fully set in them to do evil; but when God is known by the judgments which he executes, and he avenges the cause of his servants, many a halting soul comes to be at a point, judgment shall return unto righteousness, and the upright in heart shall follow it. When the sticks of the eleven tribes appeared dry and barren, after being laid before the testimony, and only Aaron's rod budded, it stopped the murmuring of the children of Israel; and this minister of Satan, being set up in opposition to thy friend, will make the simple look both ways, and in time see for themselves, whether God prospers the calf-worshippers at Bethel, or his own institution at Jerusalem; or whether the throne of iniquity can have fellowship with God, who frame mischief by a law. The house of David will increase, and the house of Saul shall decrease. And I must tell thee, that the things which happened unto me have fell out rather to the furtherance of the gospel: the newspapers, hand-bills, and pamphlets, have been of the same use; as the voice of the devil Pithon, in the young witch, mentioned in the Acts, who proclaimed Paul and Barnabas as servants of the Most High God, who shew us the way of salvation. Curiosity hath led many to hear what sort of a monster I am, and not a few, like Doeg the Edomite, are detained before the Lord. Mr. Fenton, by his book, hath acted the part of those accusers of the adulteress woman,

who brought her to Christ, and left her there, when they themselves were sent off under the accusations and curses of their own conscience; and his scribble may be the means of sending some to hear, who shall hear to profit, though the word hath never profited him. Howbeit he meaneth no good, nor doth his heart think it; but God may mean, think, and intend all this, for his thoughts are not as our thoughts.

The bondsmen who are to be responsible, if report be true, are six in number. They have begun to build without counting the cost; but the top of this tower will not reach unto heaven, for God hath bound himself, in honour to his great name, to confound their language, and to scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he will pull down the mighty from their seats, in order to exalt them that are of low degree and of light esteem.

The majority of his audience, if report be true, are females; these smell a sweet savour under him, and are very much benefited, especially those that have waxed wanton and kicked against Christ, and such as have already turned aside after Satan: the ewes great with young, and those that feel the cloudy and dark day, abide by the old tents; these cannot feed themselves with their own deceivings, because of the terrible famine. The former class of those honourable women require a peculiar sort of class-leaders; to be bishop of these, a man must first be proved whether he be,

like Eli's sons, a real child of Belial, one that is fond of creeping into houses, apt to feel for, and sympathize with, the weaker vessels; moreover, he must have a good report amongst these daughters of Zion, as one that can allure through the lust of the flesh, and be touched with the feelings of their infirmities, and not only spread his skirt over them who creep to his feet in the barn floor, but he must have a mantle of love, of such dimensions as will cover all their works of darkness; he must hear confessions, say mass, and be sure to visit when the good man is not at home; he must receive peace-offerings, and be present when Mrs. Piety wipes her mouth and pays her vows. Most of this stamp who herded with us, are now led captive, being zealously affected; and, I believe, some of them will, ere long, be made more fruitful under the present pastor than they have been with us; for, I believe, he is a pastor after their own hearts, whether he feeds them with knowledge and understanding, or not. The Almighty seems to make me a sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; and, as he uses me to beat them off, this wind of doctrine which blows to and fro carries them away, and when I have taken the vile from the precious I shall be as God's mouth.

Another sort which God hath cut off from us, are the wise, the fat, and the strong, which he has promised to feed with judgment; these have long loathed the manna, and pined after the garlic, cucumbers, and melons, of Egypt; they have

been pecking at the king in Jeshurun a good while, and have at last appointed a captain over them, having for some time, in heart, returned into the land of Ham. These, for a few weeks, have reigned as kings without us, for we were quite a dead weight upon their aspiring excellency; but better is a young and wise child, than one of these old and foolish kings, who know not to be admonished; but these crowned locusts are gone, and since the Lord hath scattered these kings in it, it hath been as white as the snow in Salmon.

“In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour:”

God hath in mercy purged us from some of these; and, indeed, we have too long lain among these pots; but when this old furniture is purged out, we shall be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold, having more of the heavenly Dove, and his grace, descending upon us. Since the departure of these smoking firebrands, the live coals from the altar have revived and glowed, and brought the children of light a little more together. Many confess they can feel a difference in the climate, and are struggling hard for the torrid zone. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, and lift the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, is the prayer of thine to serve,

W. H. S. S.

P. S. I am told, by a person who had lately the curiosity to count them, that the audience of a certain preacher amounted to twenty-three ladies, and eleven gentlemen.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been much indisposed through a cold, almost ever since you left L. and am now indeed very ill with it, but this is not the worst; I am very much distressed in soul. Such darkness and bondage have gathered over me, as I think never did before. I have much wondered why it should be thus, especially as I have had lately the sweetest frame, and the most comfortable prospect, I ever experienced. Under your preaching I know I felt the power; I found it suitable, sweet, and comfortable; but now all is gone, and I am in a worse state than ever. I have presumed in believing that any good that I have ever heard belongs to me. I have always been forward and bold from my youth up, and this will be my destruction. You have endeavoured to bring me on by encouragements, and I have taken them at times, but they could not belong to me; nor do I know what can do me good, since the truth can-

not; but, notwithstanding all, I know your labour will not be in vain, you will receive the reward, though I may not be the fruit; and your ministry has been blessed at L. though some speak evil of it, many have been revived, and begin to look out of obscurity; this I can plainly see: but the worst of it is, that I envy them, and I think hate them. This is awful; and I believe this has brought me into this bondage. I thought, shall I serve as a drudge to hunt them from their false coverts, and drive them out of their refuges of lies; and will they come out before me at last? I determined, in my heart, to strip them of every morsel they had received, and make them as black as the devil, and as miserable as myself. I was angry with you for comforting them, and with them for receiving it when they had no business with it. And now all the corruptions of my heart boil like a pot, and there is not a sin that can be named but what is alive in me, and sure I am to fall by some of them. This is the miserable state I am in, pray I cannot, neither can I think or meditate, and my heart is as hard as a stone; filled with darkness, confusion, evil thoughts, hard thoughts of God, envy, hatred, obstinacy, and as rebellious as the devil himself; and it appears to me as if it would be perpetual. I know not where to go. I wish, in my soul, I could run from this work. If I had but the opportunity of hearing you, I would not mention these things even to you, but would watch and wait what the Lord should say to me,

without troubling you with such stuff; but this seems to be the only remedy left, therefore I hope you will forgive me, and pray for me; and God Almighty bless you, is the earnest desire of,

Your affectionate friend,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

I WAS just going to say, that I have received the last dying speech and confession of my dearly beloved son in the faith. He dies daily, and yet believes that he shall never die at all; he is chastened, but not killed; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: for I shall see him again, bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Christ was once a bond servant, so were we; he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must we; he was despised by the world and deserted by friends, so shall we; he died under the curse of the law, the commandment comes, sin revives, and we die also; he was nailed to the cross, and our old man must be crucified with him. The sword of justice was drawn against him, and the sword of the Spirit must pierce us; an horrible dread overwhelms him, and we must meditate terror; he

drinks the bitter cup of divine wrath, and we must taste the cup of fatherly anger, for in a little wrath he smites us; he is deserted of his Father, and for a small moment have I forsaken thee, saith the Lord; he was bruised for our iniquities, and he will set at liberty them that are bruised; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and all the Lord loves he chastens. They that are planted together in the likeness of his death, shall be planted together in the likeness of his resurrection; they that partake of the sufferings of Christ, shall partake also of the consolations; for as he was, so are we in this world; the world knows us not, because it knew him not.

Those sweet frames and comfortable prospects, my son, are all earnest pennies of the rich grace that shall follow; every cordial is a forerunner of a fainting fit, and every fit a prelude to the cup of consolation. This is the day of adversity, in which thou must consider; the day of prosperity will succeed it, in which thou shalt be joyful. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy; they that mourn shall be comforted; they that weep shall laugh; and they that hunger shall be filled.

If you felt power under my ministry; if it was suitable, sweet, and comfortable, the Spirit must apply it, the excellency of the power is of God; if suitable, it was as nails fastened by the Master of assemblies; if sweet, it came from him whose mouth is most sweet; if comfortable, it

was from the consolation of Israel. 'But now all is gone, and you are in a worse state than ever.' No, my son, this is the best change that ever rolled over thee yet; the next visit sets thee upon the second round of Jacob's ladder; every future embrace will be attended with a sweet flow of godly sorrow, which will lead on to a cordial reception into the divine favour, and into the happy enjoyment of pardon, peace, and love, and then comes repentance that needs never to be repented of.

'But thou art too bold.' Not at all, my son; the self-lost, self-despairing sinner, who sues for hope in Christ, and puts his mouth in the dust to get it, may come boldly to the throne of grace; the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence to such, and the violent take it by force.

'For thee to be the drudge to hunt them out of their refuges, and then for them to come forth before thee,' is, doubtless, enough to provoke thee to jealousy, considering that thou art the shepherd, pastor, and leader of the flock. However, there must certainly be some discoveries of the beauty, comeliness, and excellency of Christ, or there never would be these debates, contentions, and scuffles, to know who shall step in first at the moving of the waters. Go on, my son, strive, run, wrestle, any how, so as thou canst but win Christ, and be found in him; and if thou canst not get first out, act Jacob's part, catch hold of

the heel of every one that aims at the blessing, and tell them, that if they strive for mastery, they shall not be crowned except they strive lawfully.

‘ But thou wast angry with me for comforting them.’ Pray forgive me this wrong, for I was only the voice of one crying in the wilderness; Jehovah is the God of all comfort, as well as the Father of all mercies. There are many more grievous things in thine epistle, but they are all briefly comprehended in this saying, “ Jealousy is the rage of a man.” My hope of thee, my son, is steadfast; none of these things move me; I have thee in my heart, to live and die with. I shall counsel thee to shew a little lenity; that is, after thou hast pulled their hair, smitten, wounded, and stript them, that thou wilt endeavour to make restitution to them as soon as the Lord shall comfort thee again, that they may receive damage by thee in nothing; and you can take this text, “ If we are comforted, it is for your edification.”

&c.

God bless thee, my son; ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY VERY DEAR AND REVEREND SIR,

IT is an unspeakable blessing that ever your works fell into my hand, and more particularly that I have had the opportunity of hearing you preach; for I have been in bondage more than six years through the fear of death, and not knowing whether I should be saved or lost; but, blessed be God, when you was at G——, it pleased the searcher of hearts to give you a text to suit my case, both in the first and second sermon, on the prodigal son. I heard a discourse from the same text a little more than seven years since, but as the preacher did not appear to know either the prodigal or his Father, he could only preach to please men. I heard him again, but did not like him, for he was an Arminian; but my wife used to attend such men, and I used to go with her now and then, till at length we entered into some contention about religion, and I told her that my father knew the scriptures; but she said she hated to hear him talk about them, which staggered me greatly. Upon this I found that I was ignorant of the right way, and secretly prayed to God to teach me what was right, and I diligently read my Bible; but at

length I got hold of an old book, written by a tinker, the title of it is 'The Sighs and Groans of the Damned.' In reading that book and my Bible, and praying to God, I got into a desperate state; and the author, speaking in the person of Dives, came so home to me, that I thought I was the very man; and it stirred up my conscience, and set me to work, to do something for Christ; and I used to say to myself, O, if I did but know what I might do for Christ! And, in this fruitless toil, I got worse and worse; for the wickedness of my own heart, the blasphemies of the devil, and vile representations of the Saviour, that were presented to my view, made me hang down my head like one melancholy, not knowing from whence these evils came; and in this labour I got farther and farther from God, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Some time after this, I was at work in the capacity of a mason's clerk, and suffered many hardships on that account, for I fled from my own business for conscience sake, because I could not work on the Lord's day; and one day, as I was ruminating on my state, and pondering over these things, it appeared as if a dim cloud dropt from off my face, or, as Paul says, scales fell from my eyes, and then I saw where I was, and on what ground I stood, for God was come near to me to judgment; and an awful figure I cut before him, for all my sins stood in battle array before me, which brought this scripture to my mind, "Men shall give account

for every idle word; this I found was true, for I had often questioned the truth of that word before, thinking God could not remember them all, for I thought him to be such an one as myself. But, alas! all my actual transgressions stared me in the face, first one came up, and then another, yea, all my sins from my childhood; then I saw the Bible with new eyes, and I had a hell in my conscience because of the sins I had committed, for they were done so willingly, and with such delight, that I had not one excuse to make, but begged for mercy; and, blessed be his name, he did shew me mercy; for, in a few days after, as I was at my work, all on a sudden Jesus Christ came into my soul, like the rising sun, and brought such love, joy, and peace, as I can never describe, for it was unspeakable, and full of glory. Then I had rest in my soul, for I knew that my sins were pardoned; and I had quietness and confidence, yea, a full assurance as long as it lasted; and this scripture came into my mind, I am found of them that sought me not. Now my heart and affections were drawn up into heaven in a wonderful manner, but I have since had as hard work to get them from earth to heaven. These things I had; but, alas! I soon took my journey into a far country, and there wasted my substance with riotous living. And I will tell you the way by which I lost sight of these things. There was a man in our town who appeared to be very godly and circumspect in his life, which secretly drew

my affections over to him, and being wonderful in wisdom and grace, as I thought, he attached me closely to him, and I was very fond of him, for whatsoever he bound on earth, was bound in heaven with me, for I used to look upon him as an angel of light; for he used to speak so wonderfully of the perfections of our God, and the glorious attributes of Deity, that I have been very joyful to hear him. Sometimes I have mentioned the sweet communion that I have had with Jesus Christ, but he always cut at that, persuading me that it was nothing but the workings of my passions; and he being so wonderful in talk, he acted the part of a thief, stript me of my comfort, and stole my heart from Jesus; but I was so bound to him that this did not shake me off; though we had many ups and downs by the way, yet it was some time before we separated, although he used openly and wantonly to laugh at me on account of my experience; sometimes I was in his favour, and sometimes out. In his smiles was life with me, and in his frowns death, for I was always ready to take blame and shame to myself; but God has separated us, and we never came together since, and I believe we never shall, for he has mounted the scorner's chair.

After this I attended a little prayer-meeting in our town, where there are many professors. From these I have received many a wound: but, blessed be God, it was not fatal; for it used to

send me to a throne of grace to beg of God to teach me according to his promise.

It came to pass, on a time, that I met with my dearly beloved friend A. and I saluted him in the street, which surprised him, not knowing much of me since I have been in God's ways; but we have been bosom friends ever since, and we have often read your works together, and have rejoiced in the goodness of God to you-ward, and have been companions with you in tribulation. Your works have been a great support to us, both in spiritual and temporal trials, and we have great reason to pray for your prosperity while so many wish for your halting; but all that watch for iniquity shall be cut off. Some time ago I got hold of your book called 'The Child of Liberty in Legal Bondage,' and read it, and I saw myself described in it, and my situation, and the means that brought me into it; then I knew what was the matter with me, which led me to cry for liberty, and I have secretly longed to come at it by reading your works; but, blessed be God, he hath done it by your ministry, for he hath had respect to the desire of his poor extravagant son. I had some workings in my mind about the law; it was on the Wednesday before you came down, when this text was brought to me, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law;" and this word, whatsoever, dwelt much on my mind, therefore I saw, from

that time, a believer is not under the law, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. The Friday following this scripture came to my mind, "But what went you out for to see? a reed shaken with the wind;" which I took to be a reproof for my over anxiety to see you, for the devil pressed me so in the week with the supposed crowd that I thought it would be impossible to get to hear you; but, blessed be God, I did, and greatly to my satisfaction; and when you came to the prodigal son, it tallied exactly with my experience, and I firmly believed that there was something more in it for me, notwithstanding all that the devil could do to hinder my coming. When I came to G. I retired to a friend's apartment, and prayed to God that his word might come with power to my soul: and in very deed it did; for I never had experienced it in that way before. I have often longed and prayed to have a believing view of Jesus Christ in the garden, but I never could. Now, when you began to describe a true son of God, the light came into my heart like the twinkling of a little star, and got brighter and brighter, and I found the devil pecking at it, and you said, 'The enemy will come to take away the seed sown, and you will become unfruitful;' and that very word, unfruitful, was like a dagger to my heart, for I thought I had been unfruitful enough before. Then the word came again with such power to my soul, that I could not contain

myself; and when you said, "This, my son, was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found; and they began to be merry;" these endearing words, from so loving a father, filled my very heart, till I dropt down upon my seat, and thought my heart would burst with a mixture of joy and grief; this is what I never felt before, though I have often longed for it.

This holy mourning over him came on me again the day you left G. and I was obliged to turn aside to give it vent. This spiritual meekness does not consist in a gloomy and downcast countenance, which is highly esteemed by some, who know nothing about it, though they try to mimic it; but the love, joy, and peace, that comes by believing, is more to me than my necessary food, it makes me stand in full confidence of my eternal safety. O that the simplicity of Christ may never be withdrawn from me! But, truly, if I had continued in that frame of soul that I was in, I could not have done my business; for my heart and affections were so drawn up into heaven, that I really forgot what I was about. One morning, as I awoke early, this passage came to my mind, "I sleep, but my heart awaketh, it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." This came with such power, and with such delight, as I cannot describe; but still I fear, because I have such

a natural propensity to get into the old legal way again, which causes me to cry to God that he would not let me be bereft of the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus; for I protest, before God, I would sooner lose my life than lose it: but the Lord has given me a tender conscience, and a filial fear, and in some measure the discerning of spirits, which I hope will be of use to me. Pray for me, for you are in my heart to live and die with you; therefore I hope you will excuse my familiarity with you, for I cannot help making free, seeing God hath shined through you, and spoken by you, to my heart, which I shall never forget. The fruits and effects of the spirit of bondage I have left out, seeing they are so fully described in your above-mentioned book. And now, Sir, I know your goodness will excuse my boldness with you, seeing it is intended to God's glory, and to strengthen your hands in the work. So I remain your very affectionate and loving son,

T. W.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To T. W.

I RECEIVED my dear friend's epistle. The contents are, that his name is still great among the Gentiles, and an ointment poured forth to all that

feel their need of him. He must increase, and Moses shall decrease; though he hath in every city those that preach him, the servant shall not share his Master's glory, nor stand in competition with him. When we get upon the holy mount, Moses and Elias are sure to withdraw; but the former will accuse us all the time we are in the wilderness, for it is the rebellious that dwell in a dry land. There are few that go from Jerusalem to Jericho but what fall among thieves: their great light and swelling words are wonderously enchanting to those who live only upon their inward joys; the former is a wandering star, and the latter a tinkling cymbal, and it is no unusual thing to see a child catch at a lighted candle, and be charmed with the sound of a fiddle. Such are pimps for Satan. We, like fools, give up ourselves to their guidance, viewing them as eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and as hands to the paralytic; but when these offend, we must cut off these feet, pluck out these right eyes, and cast these offensive hands from us, and appear halt, lame, and maimed, rather than accompany them to hell-fire. Here we go mourning back again to the chief Shepherd, with only two fragments, for these are all that are taken out of the mouth of the lion, a leg and a piece of an ear. There is a grain of faith left for Jesus, and a little attention to what he shall be pleased to say to us, and that is all that is perceptible, and sometimes hardly that. Congregations of hypocrites and heretics

are the devil's brothels, and the work of these fiddlers is to procure fresh provisions, and no morsel so sweet as the poor man's ewe-lamb; they rejoice more at the wounding and laming a lamb of the Lord's fold, than they do in the slaughter of a thousand goats, or ten thousand bulls of Bashan.

There is, my son, a twofold repentance; the one legal, the other evangelical. Judas had the former, the prodigal the latter. The first is forced, or extorted, when the wrath of God and the guilt of men meet together in the sinner's conscience; this is attended with no hatred to sin, but to the punishment; it is always attended with self-pity and enmity against God; this may be seen in a sullen, desperate wretch going to the gallows; the law works no other than this. Evangelical repentance springs from the joyful meeting of the Saviour's dying love and man's misery in the sinner's heart, and is the blessed effect of pardon, peace, and reconciliation; this is attended with an hatred to sin and self, and a loving, sympathizing with, and mourning over, the Son of God in his dolorous sufferings for sinful worms like us; this is not extorted, but poured forth, and the more the love of Jesus operates, the more it flows; this is repentance unto life, for the living God is the object of it, and he is alive from the dead that exercises it: and something like it may be seen in a young seduced transgressor, who hath received his sentence, and who faints away at the

sight of the fatal tree, and little better than half dead when the cap is drawn over his face; but, to his astonishment, his pardon is proclaimed while the halter is about his neck. The former sight drank up his spirits, but his pardon dissolves him quite. But what is this, when compared to a soul in the fearful hands of the living God, and who receives his pardon over the belly of hell, and is at once plucked as a brand from the burning, and wrapped up in the bosom of divine and everlasting love? Let the sons of God rehearse these his mighty acts in the places of drawing water, when the streams from the wells of salvation overflow all their banks, and the glorious God appears to be a place of broad rivers and streams wherein shall go no galley with oars.

No fruitfulness, my son, wilt thou ever find, but by virtue of union with the living Vine. In him is our fruit found; the closer we cleave to him, the more virtue comes from him; and the more we receive from his fulness, the more we shall savour of his name. All his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; abide under his skirt, and thou shalt be a sweet savour of Christ to them that love him, and a sweet savour of God in Christ to them that hate him. The Holy Spirit is a sweet leader, and an inward dictator: observe the inclinations which he gives to prayer, and obey them; likewise the aid and assistance that he grants to us while engaged in it: the passages he brings for us to plead, the arguments he gives

us to use; the fervour, the faith, the expectation also, as well as the enlargement of heart, the boldness, the nearness of access, the freedom and familiarity; in all these things he helps our infirmities, and makes sensible intercession for us, according to the will of God: besides the melting and humbling sensations, the powerful motions of love, the sight that he gives us of our wants, and of the fulness of Christ to supply them; the various views that he gives us of his sufferings, and the discoveries he gives us of the mysteries of his kingdom; the future views and sweet thoughts which his wonderful operations produce in the heaven-born soul. He that is led by this infallible guide is a child of God; therefore what he dictates observe, what he points out do, and where he leads go: "And he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Beware also of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy; and let them not entangle thee with the yoke of bondage. The spirit of bondage is nothing else but the wrath of God: the law worketh wrath, and nothing else; it can curse us to death, and that is all. And when they tell you that we are delivered from the curse, but are under the precept, tell them the law is not divided. He that labours to keep the precept is under the sentence; "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse;" and he that goes to it, Christ shall profit him nothing; he is inverting the order of God, and frustrating

his grace: he that toils at the precept of the law rejects the Saviour's active obedience as insufficient, and he that relies upon his own performances despises his blood. And when they tell you we are under the law to Christ, ask them what law; and if they say the moral law, tell them that is not the new covenant, that is not the law God writes on the mind and puts in the heart by his Spirit; for God ministers not the Spirit by the works of the law. The law of faith and the Spirit always go together: "The day you believed, you were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise." The isles are to wait for the Saviour's law, and his testimony is to be bound up, and his law sealed, among his disciples; to this law and testimony we are to go, and if they speak not according to this word of life, there is no light in them; we are under the law of faith to Christ, and God ministers the Spirit by the hearing of faith. Their last refuge is, that the law in the hand of Christ is the believer's rule of life; but tell them that the moral law is not the Saviour's sceptre, that it is not the rod of his strength that came out of Zion, that came from Sinai. Nor is the law the strength of grace, but the strength of sin; for, "The strength of sin is the law." The rod of the Lord's strength is his gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; with this he smites the earth, and with the breath of his lips he slays the wicked, by making his servants, who are ministers of the

Spirit, a savour of life unto life to them that believe, and a savour of death unto death to them that believe not. This is the rod of Christ's strength which is come out of Zion, and by which he rules in the midst of Jerusalem. "Mind what I say, and God give thee understanding in all things;" and walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. The Lord be with thy spirit. Amen.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REVEREND AND HONOURED FATHER,

THE concern, the tenderness, the sympathy, and the compassion, which you shewed me when I was sinking under the terrors of the Lord; when there was none, though I had looked on the right hand and on the left, that knew me, nor seemed to care for my soul; the light I received, and the power I felt from your ministry; the many wrestlings with God in prayer with me and for me; the many kind instructions you communicated in private, and which the good Lord was pleased to bless, have for ever united my soul to you. I know God is in you, and with you; I have felt his power and sweet influence from you; and all

the attacks of open enemies have never shaken me in this confidence, nor do all the insinuations of pretended friends now move me: I know that Satan works by them, for his suggestions are the same as their insinuations; but he can find no place; no, my faith stands in the power I have felt, and God hath given me light to see both him and them. Nor can I see, in the light of God's word, wherein you have acted wrong in any thing. ..

The contents of this letter are as clear as they are true. I know that where these joints and bands are wanting, that, sooner or latter, such members will either drop off, or be cut off. Such communications as these are profitable to my soul, and I thank you (under God) for what I have received, and I still hope for more. I know to whom God sent me at first to be taught and fed, and by that crib I mean by his help, to abide; I know as well as Elihu, and I have seen it in the same light as he did, that an interpreter is a rare thing; one among a thousand Job found that shewed him God's uprightness in chastening of him, and told him that he should be delivered from going down to the pit, for God had found a ransom.

I can see, now, wherefore the Lord kept me above a year under a sore spirit of despondency, and sent me from place to place over a deal of England, and Wales too; and every where. I went I searched for gospel preachers, and looked to

their pulpits for a little light and some hope; but in vain. Some preached the law, and holiness in the flesh, in such a manner, that I despaired of ever being saved; my very flesh moved on my bones at the hearing of it, and I cursed the day wherein I was born. Others preached the doctrines of the gospel with such a carnal glee, attempting to move the affections, and with such bold and presumptive expressions, tending to raise carnal confidence, that my soul was disgusted at the hearing of it; for I knew that I had been there long enough myself, and that it was from them I had fallen. All that they could advance was nothing but the ruins of a hypocrite's house, upon which he had leaned, but it would not bear him up. Some appeared to me to preach the word very clearly, and seemed to enjoy what they preached; but they did not come near my case, nor could they shew that any in my circumstances, and with my feelings, were ever saved; and therefore I concluded, at times, that I was cast away for ever, and expected every day my body would drop into the grave, and my soul into hell. But when I had read Hart's Preface, and your 'Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer,' which books I had never read before, I found a gleam of hope now and then rising within me; this led me to search for more of your books, and the books led me to you.

If I am not mistaken in my conjectures, the ring-leaders of the party that now rise up had

before this conceived a prejudice either against you or your ministry, if not against both; and the devil was permitted to send this preacher only to bring forward the birth; for I believe it works some time in them before we see it brought forth. But when lust to envy is conceived, it will bring forth sin; and when this is finished, it bringeth forth death; death on all their comforts for a while, if not on their souls for ever.

I believe the Lord shewed me something of this affair, as soon as you communicated ** to me: I saw that many would now be discovered, and some purged from you; there must be heresies, that these who are approved may be made manifest; that you would have some sorrow and grief for a while, but that you would come forth clothed with double power; and that new work would go forward, and many fresh volunteers come to the standard, is what I really believed. And now I find that some have a little joy, expecting the church will be rent to pieces; but we know that the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, and whilst it lasts it can hardly counterbalance the accusations within. Some weak ones seem to be staggered, but they will see ere long where the hand of the Lord will rest.

Your's most affectionately,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XL.

To the Rev. Mr. JEWELLS.

DEAR SIR,

THIS being a cloudy and dark morning, and finding myself inclined not to go abroad till the time of labour comes on, I thought I would employ myself, for an hour, in letting you know that I still gain by trading. The dealings of God with my soul, under this last burden of the word of the Lord, has been rather unusual to me. When the ungodly triumphed I went heavily, as one that ate the bread of mourners, and grieved for the honour of my Lord and my God; and this he let me feel severely, till at length he deigned to mingle his pity with my concern for his honour, which made my bowels yearn over him, and I felt the sounding of his bowels towards me; this dissolved me, and encouraged freedom and fervour in prayer, which I then gave myself wholly up to; and, as this familiarity went on, grief of course went off. In about a fortnight the whole burden was cast upon the Lord, and he sustained me. From that day I was equipt with might by his Spirit in the inner man, and clad with zeal as with a cloak; he furnished me with text upon text, truth upon truth, and argument upon argument; he mingled his jealousy with my cause,

his resentment with my zeal, and his displeasure in my quarrel; he sent his rebukes and reproofs with power to their consciences; and when they spurned at his truth, he made the fall of their countenance proclaim the rise of their rebellion. Now, of late, in private I have been indulged with much meekness, contrition, godly sorrow, and mourning, over his unparalleled goodness to the most unworthy of all his creatures; and this with faith in her fullest exercise, and hope in her greatest expectations.

How strange are the goings of God upon the soul, and how different and wonderful the sensations under the operations of the various perfections of his nature! When he humbles himself to behold the things done on earth, and visits the soul with his presence, what compunction and humility of heart is felt! When love operates, all is heaven, joy, peace and comfort.

When mercy moves on us, meekness, godly sorrow, repentance, and self-abasement follow.

If power be put forth, how bold, strong, undaunted, courageous; how valiant for the truth, how fearless of men, and how resolute and determined, is the mind! "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

If justice impress the soul, "Fearfulness and trembling have taken hold upon me, and I am afraid of thy judgments." "O! that I had wings like a dove! I would hasten my escape from this stormy wind and tempest!"

If the life of God is manifested, how lively, active, diligent, cheerful, earnest, fervent, and devout; up in the morning to prayer, then to business, away to the means, longing for every appointed opportunity; all the wheels are in motion, and the spirit of the living creature is in the wheels: this makes the church the chariot of Aminadab, the chariot of my willing people. The living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day; the fathers to the children shall make known thy truth.

But when the ineffable beams of eternal light break forth, when the light of his countenance is lifted up, when he shines into the heart to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, then we are children of light indeed, this is the brightness of Zion's rising; in thy light we shall see light, wonders appear in his law, wonders appear in his gospel, sweetness in his face, vanity in the world, and wisdom in all the works of creation; his glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.

When holiness discovers itself to a sinner, then, "Wo is me, I am undone; all my comeliness is turned into corruption, and I retain no strength." "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

When a mouth and wisdom are given to a

fool, how sound the speech; how well guarded the subject; how is every avenue of infidelity stopped up, and no way left open for an ill designing hypocrite to creep out at. Every occasion is cut off from those that seek occasion; the wise in their own conceit are confounded, and appear mere idiots before the doctrine of the Lord. Divine wisdom displayed in a fool, brings to nought the wisdom of the wise, and makes their understanding foolishness.

If he is angry with a people, he will influence his servants with it, and set them to fight his battles. Samson's father and mother knew not that Samson's marriage with the Philistine damsel was of the Lord, and that he sought a quarrel with the Philistines.

If God is provoked to jealousy by his own people, he will pour his jealousy upon those who personate him. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, lest your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

And if he is pleased with a humble, teachable, tractable people, then, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem;" and if we are comforted, it is for your sakes, that we may comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God, 2 Cor. i. 4.

O, my dear friends, how great and wonderful

have these things appeared to me! And oh, how little understood in our day! Truly this is fulfilling the greatest promise, "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them."

This is the chariot in which the Lord rides and transacts his gracious dealings, and carries on the affairs of his kingdom; out of Zion he shines, and sounds out the trumpet of his mercy: "The law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." O, happy Zion, the city of the great King! God is known in her palaces for a refuge; "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes will I now say, Peace be within thee; because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good." But what an awful character is an hypocrite in Zion; what feigned faith and dissembled love; what smooth behaviour, and words softer than oil, while seven abominations are in their hearts. I know that the arrows of God have stuck fast in the hearts of many of them, and they have long resented it, and grudged and grinned like a dog, and gone round about the city. They wished to wrench the bow from my hand, but it abode in strength, and my hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob: they shot at me, they grieved me, and hated me for the truth, and for the truth's sake; but he covered me with his feathers, under his wings he enabled me to trust, while truth was both my shield and buckler,

And can you believe it, that no more than two persons deserted that were not prejudged? When I first came to London, if I got hold of an old professor, who had long been admitted to other societies, and who appeared circumspect, and who was well recommended, it was enough for me. I, through mock modesty, thought it presumption in me (who was so much younger in Christ) to inquire diligently into their conversion, when such great men had received them; but, alas! I found some of these to be the vilest hypocrites that ever my eyes beheld. And I am effectually cured of this disease; no man's light or judgment will now do for me. However, I am made manifest in the conscience of them all, nor shall they ever get out of the reach of my testimony: if they are saved, they will acknowledge me to the end; and, if they are damned, I shall in my testimony exist in their conscience, as a witness against them to all eternity, as sure as Moses accuses them that trust in him and reject his testimony of Christ. I bless my God that he hath purged the floor; never was a text of holy writ more conspicuously fulfilled than this: "I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and make the hills as chaff; thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel," Isai. xli. 15, 16. As I threshed

and beat the mountains that opposed our Zerubabel, and the hills in their towering profession, you would have stood astonished to see how those were scattered and blowed to and fro with this wind of doctrine. I used the flail, and my Master used the fan; and the devil, by divine permission, raised the wind; till you would have thought that the house had been smitten at all the four corners. But they are separated, blessed be God, from us; and God hath barred and bolted them out of my heart, and confirmed me that my former private judgment, of those I allude to, was the judgment of truth: and this word abode long with me; "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain, but according to my word." And this confirmed it. "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will," Rev. xj. 6. I have some understanding in this mystery, and have seen it fulfilled in part; some have no dew, and others are unmasked and appear in their sin and in their blood, while others are utterly unclean, with the plague in their head.

God for ever bless thee,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XLI.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

THE two last favours, of the best of all friends, have safely arrived, and really they were welcome; and I pray that such as they may often find their way to my little hut, for they never come empty; and I do not know what to compare them to, unless they are like the feet of those that bring good tidings. When I read them there is a sweet savour in them, and I trust it is of life to life. I know they are endited under the influence of the living Spirit, and I find life and power in them; they always bring me to a frame that I much like, of melting, mourning, humbling, weeping, hoping, and expecting, and work gratitude in my heart to God, and many secret thanks to the instrument of all this under him; they are the only means that have been of any use to me, nor can I expect any help, comfort, support, or refreshment, from any other quarter. The sweet and comfortable frame, which I mentioned to you lately, continued with me for a week, or more; but now I have lost it, it went off gradually, and I am left again barren and dry. I wished much to keep it while I had it, for I was comfortable day and night; my sleep was so unusually refreshing; and when I awoke, as I did then often, the first thing I

thought on was the Lord; my thoughts went after him, nor were there such bars and hinderances in the way as there used to be. O, how I have longed for it again! I thought, and think still, that if I could live in such a frame, that nothing could hurt me in life or death. But it is not so now with me; and yet I am not left so miserable in my mind: I find something of the sweetness of it on my spirit now and then, nor is it so hard to preach as it was; it appears as if I had shifted my ground a little, but I look and long for more yet to come. At times I am very restless, disappointed in my expectations, doubting whether it was of God; and then again full of hope and expectation, waiting, looking, and confessing my vileness and unworthiness of any favour or mercy from his hands. I have found and felt that the description you have given of the way, from time to time, are all true and exact; but I have been slow of heart to believe, and still am. You say, 'That every hinderance in the way will be attended with jealousy, love-sickness, &c.' and so I find it; and can understand a little of the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon; and I had a comfortable season lately in preaching from this passage: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, to tell him that I am sick of love."

You may be sure of it that I shall have no such engagements as the last, when I come to see you again; I had enough of it then. I had a great desire to see my old friend, as I esteemed

him once very highly; I looked upon him to be the first that I knew, and held him the last in my affections. I went to hear him that night; and so far from what they call being prejudiced, that I had the greatest desire to find him in the truth; but, alas, alas! I had a deal of pro and con in my mind whilst I sat and heard, between my judgment and natural affections. In my judgment I saw where he was; but yet I wished to set him down; I was sorry and grieved, I repined, and the devil set in, and told me to beware of presumption, and not think of myself highly, and despise others; I began to listen to him, till I was confounded and bewildered, and conceived hard thoughts of God, and that myself and others were too narrow. You cannot think in what a frame I came away. This is the first minister, as I thought, in the P——, and there are some scores in connection; but what must they all be? Such profession and such zeal I never saw in any country, nor never read of; and after all what is it? But it turns on my mind thus: how can the Almighty suffer such a professing body of people to be deluded? and how can I believe that the Lord should choose me out, the poorest, vilest, and most ignorant of them all? I have often wondered how I came into this part of the earth; I loved my native country as much as any man ever did, but a variety of intricate providences tumbled me out of it, and set me down in this place, though I strove hard not to

come here; but I have reason to bless God for putting me down here, far enough from all connections, as I can see what entanglements they would be unto me. God knows that I know of but few in the ministry that I wish for any fellowship, correspondence, or connection with; and I believe the Lord shewed me this at his first onset with me, if I could but have understood him. And this one I hope and pray the Lord to continue long in life, and favour me with a portion of the Spirit that he has pleased to put upon him. I believe, before the Lord, that it is a hard matter to obtain a double portion of it. God Almighty bless you in soul, body, and in your ministerial labours, is the earnest prayer of your affectionate friend,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XLII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

LONG looked for is come at last, and it is better late than never. Every epistle loses more the stinking savour of distrust and unbelief; and they emit the odoriferous scents of the bed of spices, and the choice perfumes of a sweet-smelling savour of Christ. Love and wrath, peace and torment, guilt and pardoning mercy, have for

some time gone up and down, and sometimes stood at a poise. In the balance of the sanctuary God weigheth the spirits, and by him actions are weighed also; and in both these matters we are found wanting: but as faith increases and Christ approaches, the opposite scale, in which we were lighter than vanity, mounts and kicks the beam; union with him and the possession of him blots tekem from the wall, and we are no more found wanting; being complete in him, and having the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us. Love and wrath struggled hard upon the cross, till mercy and truth met together; and they will contest in the coming sinner's soul, till righteousness and peace kiss each other: here the benign parent meets the self-despairing, rebellious son, at the sacrifice of the fatted calf, and in the robe of the elder brother embraces him with the kiss of paternal love; the effect of which is peace, and a hearty welcome both to grace and glory. The effect of thy last vision will last for ever, the Spirit will witness it; it hath laid a foundation in thy soul for a believing plea, and for a claim of faith upon God, as thy Father, and thy God in covenant; and which plea and claim thou wilt make in the most perilous hour that may ever befall thee in this world. The Spirit, at the time of that visitation, honoured Christ, and sent forth thy faith, thy affection, and praise to him: and Christ, in the worst hour, will honour the Spirit, both in his operations and in his testimony. My

soul is joyful, my hope of thee is stedfast, my mouth is opened unto thee; thou never wast straitened in me, but only in thine own bowels. Many that watch for iniquity are waiting, not only for thy halting, but for an untimely birth, expecting that thou wilt labour and bring forth wind, and appear at last an infant that never sees light; they say to God, in their hearts, "Let him hasten his work, that we may see it;" they ask him of things to come concerning his sons: what, command ye me? They say that my son has been so long in the dark that his labour will come to nothing, and W. H. S. S. will be deceived in him. But these know not the thoughts of the Lord, nor do they understand his counsels; these have been too quick in their own labour; like Ishmael they are come forth before the promise, and before the appointed time, and therefore are sometimes found and proved to be bastards, and not sons. I still hold fast mine integrity, nor doth my heart reproach me for it, that my boasting of this Timothy will be found a truth. And then the enemies and mockers of the heir of promise will find their expectations cut off, and their joys wither, and they will hate both the free woman, the legitimate offspring, and the sovereignty of the sire; but, "Wo to him that saith to his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" These are the elder sons, who never transgress the commandment, and covet the kid as a reward for eye-

service, and despise both the Prodigal and the Father, for his regenerating and saving a predestinated son by grace. Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved, and be always abounding in the work of him; stick to him in private prayer, and he shall reward thee openly, and all thine enemies shall see it, and gnash their teeth at it, and melt away; "The desire of the wicked shall perish." Thou hast been long at work at the dung gate, but those that are far off shall come and build in the temple; rooting up and throwing down will be exchanged for building and planting. Divorcing and killing to the law is not all the work, there will be a publishing the banns of marriage, an espousing, and presenting them as chaste virgins to Christ; the marriage feasts and the best wines are kept till last: then the friend of the bridegroom shall rejoice to hear his voice, and to see the increase of his household. The winter shall soon pass away, the rains shall blow over and be gone, the singing of birds shall then come, and the voice of the turtle be heard and understood, even at L. Great is my hope of you, great is my boldness towards you, great is my glorying of the good work in you: I am filled with comfort; my soul weeps and blesses him for every visit, or love-token, to you; I have bowed my head and thanked him for a stedfast hope of thee, and my pen never drags like Pharaoh's wheels when I write to thee; and, in every epistle, I expect that the answer will be,

Thou prisoner, go forth; thou that sittest in darkness, shew thyself; publish through the city what great things Jesus hath done for thee: sure I am that thou wilt not be sent out the second time, by man, with a false vision and causes of banishment; not with a lying divination, nor be left to speak a vision out of thine own heart, when thou hast seen nothing, either of sin, self, law, or Christ. An unctuous knowledge of these things makes a workman, a workman that needs not to be ashamed; such must divide rightly the word of truth, and do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of his ministry. God bless thee: "A wise son maketh a glad father;" "and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him."

Ever thine, in Christ Jesus,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XLIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR,

NOTHING in the world would give me more pleasure and satisfaction than your company for a few days, and I had my mare shod on Saturday for that purpose; but the weather altering yesterday discouraged me, and now I am very uneasy

all day that I did not set off this morning. I think the weather is against me. If I determine on a day to go to town, I am sure to have bad weather to go over the forest; and if I stay at home, it clears up. However, I hope it will not be long before I enjoy that pleasure. Next week I cannot, as I am under an engagement to go to some distant places.

I long in my heart to see you; I really am a mystery to myself, though it does not seem that I puzzle you much, for you always see where I am, and know what I am about, though at a distance from me. Your last letter but one, I think, contains all that can be said of me, and I believe you can have nothing more to write to me, nor do I believe that a mortal can set forth greater and clearer truths, and I often wonder from what spring they can flow. My soul earnestly covets them, and I do humbly pray the Almighty to make me a partaker of them; and I am not altogether without hope, at times, that I shall yet prevail with his divine Majesty to grant them. These last letters of yours have again revived my hope, somehow unawares to me; though I thought, in reading them, that their contents were too good to be true of me: yet they have, I trust, communicated some light and power to my soul; and this I judge from some comfortable seasons I have had of late. At times I can see a little glimmering light, just at a distance, on my state, but it will not come near; I try to get at it, but

it goes off, yet at such times I am sure to get a little light in the word of God, and when that is the case I can preach boldly; and at such seasons I seem to be as happy, and as much satisfied, though up to my knees at the dung-gate, as you are when you have accomplished the most curious piece of workmanship within the walls of the house. But now you shall know the whole truth. I do not find these seasons humble me so much as I could wish, and lead me to admire God's goodness towards me; instead of that, I find such foolish thoughts as these filling my head, What a great *** I shall be some day, and what work I have to do, &c. &c. until again I am soul-tied and tongue-tied in the pulpit for four or five times running, and this, I think, is enough to make any man mad, and at times it has made me nearly so.

How awfully has my heart rebelled against the Almighty, when I have seen carnal professors sitting to judge me, and to criticise my words. I used to be as expert as any of them at doctrines and phrases, but now I have neither understanding nor memory at command; and that they can find any thing to cavil at has made me ready to curse my day. But still I know that I am never wrong in the main. I am sure that I do not mistake the state of the people. I may, at times, misapply a scripture, for want of some more applicable to my purpose; but then I am not out in the material point. And however curious they

may weave their systems, I know that they are destitute of the power; and you know the kingdom stands in power: and when I insist on this, they cry out that I slight and set aside the word of God. Upon the whole, what a poor unstable creature you must needs judge me to be, and I much fear, through all, that I never shall excel. I often think too, that if the Lord is pleased to continue to lay my case on your mind, and make you pray for me, and write to me, and your patience hold out to bear with me, that I shall yet come forth. I have not the least inclination to look to any other instrument but yourself, and this makes me to conclude that it is the means which God hath appointed.

May God abundantly reward and bless you for what is past, and I shall live in expectation of more yet to come. As for Moses' club, I have enough of that daily; but I believe I must have more of it before I can be made to forsake him. I know in my judgment that Christ is better, but my secret attachment indeed is to him. This is truly my error, but I cannot mend it.

Witness,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XLIV.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

How pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! But, as it is with the human, so it is, and must be, with the mystical body of Christ; there must be joints and bands, or the members cannot move in concert, cannot have the same care one of another, cannot weep with them that weep, nor rejoice with them that rejoice.

Those who never felt the cords of their sins, nor what it is to be bound with them, are not included in our Lord's commission, which is to open the prison doors to them that are bound; for this work he was appointed, anointed, and sent.

Those who never were in bondage to the fear of death and wrath, are excluded also; for he came to deliver them, who, through the fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage; nor is it possible that such should be the genuine offspring of God; "For he that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belongs the issues from death;" and both the offspring and the issue hang, as vessels of mercy, on the nail fastened in a sure place.

Where no pardon has been sealed, no saving

knowledge of salvation can be found: Such must be strangers to the covenant that God makes with his people, which is, to be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. Where this experience is not found, their faith is vain; such are yet in their sin, and strangers to peace, which is the blessed effect of pardon; "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace." Such never had peace, and of course never could hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of it.

Where fear and torment never were felt, there perfect love never entered; and where love was never shed abroad in the heart, there never was any saving knowledge of God, nor any spiritual birth, in order to an admission into the kingdom; for it is only he that loveth that is born of God, and knoweth God; for he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love; such never could put on charity, the bond of all perfection. Once more, that faith which never purified the heart, which never apprehended an imputed righteousness, and which never put that robe on, which never led the sinner to Christ to cast his cares and burdens there, and by faith to enter into his rest; that faith never gave Christ an existence in the heart, nor the sinner an existence in Christ. "Believe," saith the Lord, "that I am in you, and you in me." And where this union never took place, communion with him was never enjoyed, and of course such souls never could meet

together in the unity of faith; that is, they never did meet together in the covenant head, in the unity of the faith of God's elect: and such souls are destitute of every joint peculiar to the body of Christ, and of every hand that holds that body together; and to purge out such, is denying all concord between Christ and Belial; it is separating the children of light from those of darkness, believers from infidels, saints from sinners, the vile from the precious, the chaff from the wheat—My hand finds this to do, and we intend to do it with all our might; for there is no work or device in the grave, whither all are hastening. I expect Jannes and Jambres, Korah and Dathan, to withstand me in this business; but I know he is cursed of God that doth his work deceitfully, and I know I am well armed, and well equipped, by the great Captain who stands by me in the field. You see I am in all things, and by all means instructed; every anonymous letter that comes, and every observation that I make abroad, are brought forth to me in my study, while every thing is opened up, expounded, and explained to me by the Lord, whilst I sit at his foot and receive of his word: and he sweetly leads me to judge all things; but tells me in his word, that, in these secret matters which he shews to me, I can be judged of none. What the good Lord shews me I shall communicate to you, as you have long known my manner of life, doctrine, purpose, faith, &c.

I am determined to have no fellowship with

the unfruitful works of darkness. For sure I am that such preachers are in the condemnation of the devil; they are lifted up with pride when they intrude themselves into the sacred office, and in the gall of bitterness while they execute it. If Eli breaks his neck, the priests fall by the sword, and their widows make no lamentation for their loss; if the ark goes into captivity, and the glory of God into the enemy's hand; if Ichabod comes upon Shiloh, and the house of Eli is never to be purged by sacrifice nor offering for ever, for the vileness of Hophni and Phinehas under that dispensation; what must the end of them be, who carry on the works of Belial under the light and heat of life and immortality brought to light by the gospel? I know what flesh and blood is, and the different lustings and continual war between flesh and spirit. But to hold the bonds of iniquity in a seared conscience, and under unpardoned guilt to appear with a brazen brow as God's ambassador, and to enforce daring and damnable presumption under the name of the assurance of faith; these are as evident tokens of perdition as ever was found upon the arch-leader of the rebel angels; but I have done. I pity my dear Lord and Master, and I know he pities me, and I truly feel for his poor flock. Adieu; thine in the best of bonds.

Pray for me.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XLV.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR last kind favour has been safely received, and thankfully too. I believe that none of them has ever come without bringing me something that I am the better for receiving; and if I do not find it at the first reading, I am sure to meet with it at the second, or the third; they never get dry by lying in my house. I remember it was said of one, that his letters were weighty and powerful; yea, and I can say that his speech and his bodily presence are acceptable to me, and I wish I could both see and hear him oftener. Nothing in this world, I am persuaded, can ever make me forget you; I feel such heartfelt friendship with you as I never did with any other living person. I do not know whether I may call it by any other name than friendship; I know it is that, and more than that, but I should rejoice for ever if it should prove at last to be spiritual union. I have often wondered why I should be laid so much upon your heart, when I know that I am so unworthy of it. I hope, at times, that the Lord puts me there, and am thankful to him, and that he puts it in your heart to care for me; for this gentleness of yours, I can tell you, has often

been very sweet to me, when I could find no such treatment from any other quarter. At other times I have attributed the whole of it to your natural tenderness, and at some seasons I have trembled for you as well as for myself, and have been sorry in my heart that you should have exposed your judgment to the rage and contempt of all the fools that would see my destruction at last. I never have been angry with you in my life, but for one thing; and that is, that you have exposed me so much; that you did not conceal me, pray for me, and write privately to me, and say nothing more about me, but let me be hid until the indignation be overpast.

I am, at present, just where you mention in your letter; in the balance, between hope and despair: sometimes hope turns it, then I wait and expect; but that which is hoped for not coming, doubts arise, fear, and unbelief; then to fretting and murmuring I fall, and darkness and bondage gather fast, and despondency then weighs me down, and I give up all for lost. If I could but see that the Lord, by these things, is teaching me things profitable for me to know, I should be more patient and more resigned; sometimes I can see a glimmering light, but it soon goes off.

I see you can well describe the preparations for the pulpit, and the operations in it, and it is some comfort to me that you have known and felt them as you have described. Indeed I know that the second sermon is a preparation for the

third; and though I am loath to go at it the third time, and wish not to meddle with it any more, yet I can soon feel, when I begin, that I have been taught something by my last disappointment. But, above all, I think, the mocking of the Philistines is the worst; I can see it in their countenances, but have no strength to cut at them; I am sensible then that quietness behoves me best, and pass over my tale as well as I can; and I have wished that the people would build me a little vestry behind the pulpit, and cut a door to go into it, that I might lock up myself immediately, and see no face at all. I hope, when the days get a little longer, that I shall be able to come and see you. I have been very poorly all this winter, with gouty and rheumatic pains all over me, which make me unable to ride much. The Lord bless you, and give you power to pray for me, and my poor prayers shall mix with yours.

J. JENKINS

LETTER XLVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

MY hope of thee, dear brother, is steadfast; knowing this, that as thou art a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, so shalt thou be also of the consolations. Thy internal conflicts are doubtless

the chastening rod of God upon thee for thy sin, but not altogether so. One part is divine teaching in order to future usefulness, and that which comes upon thee from fools, for truth and conscience sake, is the sufferings of Christ. The first cutting rebuke given to Paul was for his madness in persecuting; but what came afterwards was for the sake of Christ: "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name sake." From the authority of that text Paul calls all his sufferings the sufferings of Christ, which he suffered for his body's sake, which is the church. I perceive, by your invitations to fresh places, that God sets before you an open door, and none shall shut it; he will spread your fame, and the word will sound out from L. and bear down all opposition, insomuch as Christ will make manifest the savour of his name in a fresh line of things not made ready to your hand, a line to reach unto many who have never yet heard the fame of Jesus. That light which shines upon thy state of mind is the day-dawn which breaks out upon them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; thou wilt not always grope for the wall like the blind at noon-day. After thou hast had a proper view of thyself, of the law, and of the holiness and justice of God, thou shalt see the mysteries of the kingdom, and a covenant God in the face of Jesus shining into thy heart, and changing thee into the same image from glory to glory, and all this by looking through a

glass darkly. This, my son, is the hope set before thee; "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and will give him the morning star," the harbinger of endless glory. Then, my son, shall old things pass away, and all things shall become new. The Spirit shall bring all things to your remembrance that the Lord hath spoken to thee and done for thee; and the quickening power put forth in thy present experience, will be a guide to thee in a thousand future difficulties, called by the prophet, "A voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left." When once the Lord makes darkness light before thee, he will make thy present crooked things straight; then the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the now sensible prisoner shall shew himself, and the light of his countenance, as well as the words of his mouth, shall proclaim the triumphs of his soul: the inward glory of grace will appear to gild the whole creation. When every thing is viewed in the light of the Lord, his glory will visibly cover the heavens, and the earth will be full of his praise, and thy heart in concert (when tuned with love) will be in the chorus. Pay no regard to those that watch for thy halting, nor to those that make thee an offender for a word, for all that watch for iniquity shall be cut off; and for your present shame you shall have double, double joy; and for

your present confusion you shall, in future, rejoice in your portion; in this land thou shalt possess double, everlasting joy shall be upon thee, Isai. lxi. 7. Thou art not the first that scorers have derided, saying, "Where is the word of the Lord, let it come now;" but there is a wo to them that laugh now, for they shall weep. The Lord's countenance is already lifted up, and that was the light of it which thou sawest at a distance, and it will ere long reflect gracious smiles, much peace, joy, and reconciliation; it will disperse the veil, the dismal gloom and horrible cloud of displeasure, and bring life and immortality to light; and then thou wilt say, "Thou wast angry with me, but thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Bless God for every refreshing season, for every respite, and every token for good; and as for those vain thoughts about future greatness, confess them as evil, as the root of pride, and pray God to subdue them by his grace; and if the Lord gives thee eyes to see them hateful and humbling dispensations, they will wither when the Spirit of God blows upon thee: "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." It is this, my dear brother, and not legal strivings, that will blast vain thoughts, wither human glory, and make all the

comeliness of the brightest saint turn into corruption.

God hath two ways of shining upon his people: the one is, when he comforts their hearts, and gives them the light of his knowledge in the face of Jesus, attended with the faith of interest; the other is, when he shines into our hearts to discover our imperfections; and veils his throne with a cloud; then, Why is light given to them that are in bitterness? The former view will make thee appear not a whit behind the chiefest saint, and the latter will make thee appear the chief of sinners; and thus, "His eye-lids try the children of men."

I have no doubt but thy aims are right, for I am sure that that preacher that exposes the vile-ness of human nature, and preaches the purity, and spirituality, and unlimited demands of the law; that sets forth the sinner's need of a Saviour, the suitableness, the worth of him; and that debases the creature to the level of criminals in chains; and who enforces the necessity of regeneration, spiritual fruitfulness, spiritual service, and a life and walk in faith; shall not err in these things: "The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err in this way." Whatever encouragement you may have received from the instrumentality of thy poor servant in Christ, thou art indebted to Christ for, and to him all glory, praise, and thanksgiving is due, and to another he will never grant it; and, for my part, I am the greatest

debtor to him, and therefore ought to be the last that should ever attempt to rob him.

Tender my kind love to Mr. Morris and family, and to all that love the altogether lovely, not forgetting your former host and family.

The Lord be with thee. Amen and amen.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XLVII.

To the Rev. Mr. JENKINS.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

YOU know not with what heart-felt satisfaction I beheld you last; thy meditations of terror are nearly exhausted, the horrible pit will soon be exchanged for the Rock, and thou wilt quit the dark cells and the dismal regions. Tell me, did not the good Shepherd give thee a token for good the last visit at M.? was it not a Bethel? did he not almost break thy yoke, and burst thy bands? When these are gone, thy health shall spring up speedily; thy mind is reclining and resting on the discoveries and manifestations of dying love, hope abounds, and thy heart enlarges; budding hope terminates in open love: "Israel shall bud and blossom as the rose, and fill the face of the world with fruit."

You see, my dear brother, the fruits and effects of your present ministry. Some of the Hebrews are crawling out of their holes, some have broken forth, and others are come to the birth, but want the strength of all-subduing love; but, "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?" No, saith the Lord, "as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." A spirit of jealousy will be spread at the report of Zion's delivery, which will provoke very many, and add fervour to their prayers, so that thou wilt see the spirit of the living creature in the wheels, as well as in the cherub; for jealousy is one part of the coals of fire which go up and down among the wheels, "The Lord shall stir up jealousy like a man of war;" and under these burning influences, every one that is truly affected will be catching at the skirt of the Jew.

I believe in my heart that there hath been more power displayed, and more execution done, in that part of the world within these two years, than hath been done for the space of thirty years before; and what seems very remarkable is, that those who are brought forth, and those who are still labouring, are, to an individual, those that have been daubed up with untempered mortar, and healed slightly by a cry of, Peace, Peace. O! the goodness of God in undeceiving them; and stripping them of the sheep-skin; but no rival, no enemy to the bridegroom, shall ever finally seduce the objects of his love. "Judgment

will he lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places; and your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand." This line and plummet try the foundation, and the storm drives us to seek for shelter: the bed of carnal security appears too short to stretch ourselves on it, and the scanty covering too narrow to hide our sin and shame. How visibly do you see the apostle's assertion; "If any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." All the king of Israel's spoils must go through the fire, and nothing will stand the fire but gold, silver, and precious stones; the wood, hay, and stubble, are all consumed. Pray, what is left of all the former work? Just nothing; the wall is down, and where is the daubing? All the wounds slightly healed have been laid open again; and the cry of Peace, Peace, has been no defence against the curses of a broken law. However, this shall work together for their good; for they will be the better able to discover the delusive heat of strange fire; they have been long encompassed about with the sparks of head notions, and with that light which stirs up the fleshly affections of nature, which has caused many, to

their grief, to go to bed, and lie down in sorrow. Nothing can stand but the power of God; in this his kingdom stands, for his gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and he that is destitute of this power is an utter stranger to the gospel of Christ. The devil is aware of this, and therefore to counterfeit it is the masterpiece of all his works: and the academies are the forges, where he fits his apes for his business, who are taught to play upon the passions of poor senseless sinners with empty oratory, affected speeches, great swelling words, counterfeited joy, and dissembled love; such glory in appearance, but not in heart. God hath led thee to discover, detect, and spit upon this strange fire; and under God thou hast put it out; and thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of truth and of sound doctrine. And those who have opposed thee, and abused thee, will, by the bar of prejudice, and by that envy which rests in the bosom of fools, be kept at a distance; while those who have been grieved for the afflictions of Joseph will now share in the goodness which God procures to Israel: but the others will burn with rage, and feel vexation in their souls, when they hear the report. "He bringeth out those that are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land." Those that love the power, and make the Lord their trust, shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that sendeth forth its roots

by the rivers; its leaf shall be green, nor shall they cease from yielding fruit. But those that despise the power, and make flesh their arm, shall be as the dreary desert and barren heath, and shall not know when good cometh: and thou wilt see these things made manifest before thine eyes. And do thou observe these things minutely, and they will furnish thee with many a suitable subject; for daily, in the church, and among the enemies of it, as well as in thy own soul, wilt thou see the Lord in his goodness pass before thee, and his word opening and fulfilling, yea, all the day long.

God bless thee, and keep thee, is the earnest prayer of thy fellow-labourer and companion in the kingdom and patience of Christ,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XLVIII.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

MY MOST BELOVED FRIEND,

THIS morning I received your epistle, and have read it over, and truly it has been a sweet repast to me; the matter of it, without contradiction, is truth; and the spirit of it exceeding sweet to my taste, sweeter than the honey, yea, than the honey-comb. Thine epistles, I can say in truth, are

weighty and powerful, and so I have found the bodily presence of this servant of Christ likewise; thy word is not weak, nor thy speech in any sense contemptible. For truly such as I have found him in word by letters, being absent, such also have I found him in deed, when he has been present. Our last interviews have been exceeding comfortable to my soul, and more establishing, I think, than ever.

The last discourse I heard from you at Monkwell Street was truly sweet and savoury; I was more strengthened and established that night than ever I was in my life. A sweet light broke into my soul, and I could see the path the Lord hath been leading me in, and follow you in all you said upon regeneration; there was nothing in your account of that way that offended me, staggered me, or was a cause of stumbling to me; I was enabled to mix faith with the word as you went on, and the light seemed to increase more and more; I found my seat so comfortable and easy, that I believe if you had preached till morning light, I should have found myself neither weary, sleepy, nor hungry. It is delightful to sit under his shadow, when his fruit is so sweet to our taste; and I know that what dropped that night was from the tree of life; for it is said, that his leaves shall be for healing, and his fruit for meat, and I found both.

Our season at B. was nothing less precious. I believe Mr, B——'s old barn is now consecrated

ground, for you well know that the chief Bishop himself deigned to be there, and made that old storehouse a Bethel indeed; and I believe many will be looking for the return of the year, and will be wishing the farmer to thresh out his corn as soon as possible, for they will remember your promise of visiting them again, if God spares your life.

I am fully persuaded in my soul that your observation is just and true. The Lord certainly is doing a work that has not been done in this country for many years back, and the despisers wonder at it, and to all appearance will perish, for they will not believe, though it is declared unto them. I think it may be said, in one sense, to be the Lord's strange work; for all that I found in this part of the world, as well as myself, were entire strangers to it, and totally ignorant of it, till it pleased the Lord to awaken me, and send me to alarm others. And your other observation is no less true; for I believe all that are awakened, or in travail, or are come forth, are such as were once set down with a form of godliness; most of them very high in carnal confidence, resting in a knowledge of the letter, understanding in the theory some mysteries, but not the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, puffed up with their fleshly wisdom; but all of us strangers to that power in which the kingdom of Christ stands. O the goodness of God indeed! to visit such a parcel of wretches, and not to suffer us to perish

in our own deceivings. But, above all, how deep, how unfathomable are his counsels! To choose such a poor, despicable, vile, and dunghill devil as me, to be an instrument in his hands of doing any good to his children; this astonishes me more than any thing: and when I have met with, or heard of, any that have been blessed through my ministry, I have wept at his feet, and humbled myself in dust and ashes before him, and gave all the praise of it to him, as I know it is most due. Under my first alarm, you well know, I left my congregation, having then no suspicion that they were in the same state as myself, but viewed myself to be the only apostate. I left them then with a determination never more to come back to this country; for my false cable was cut by this scripture: "The Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them." I fled, and conscience pursued me. I travelled into my native country for the benefit of the air, and rambled about for many months in England and Wales; but alas, alas! neither air nor seawater could afford me any relief. The congregation at L. tried to settle another minister over them, concluding I was gone for ever; but they could not. I wanted some place in the ends of the earth where I might flee to, but could find none. I endeavoured all that I could not to come back here again; but Providence forced me back, though sorely against my will. It was not long after this that the Lord was pleased to bring me

acquainted with you, after I had first seen and read your books; here I received the first ground of hope, as my letters shew. After I had conversed with you, heard you several times, and had been a month at your house, I returned home, with both light and hope in my soul; and with that little light I had, I began to separate the precious from the vile: some ran away from me, others cleaved to me; some cursed me, others have since blessed me; some said I was mad, others thought I was coming to my right mind; and this was the truth, for I had been not much better than mad for upwards of thirty years. I now began to preach what I felt, and I soon found the Lord stood by me in it and helped me. I saw clear that all of them were in the same state as myself; yea, when I was most miserable, I was sure that they must feel, in some degree, as I did, or be damned; and I used to tell them so: and God knows they were heavy tidings that I carried to them for a long time. I cannot but see now, as you observe, the effects of my poor ministry; and cannot but think often of what you used to tell me in time past, though then I could not believe you. I know the Lord hath, in a measure, fulfilled the word of his servant, and performed the counsel which his messenger gave me. I have seen, of late, some brought forth under my ministry; yea, they have escaped before I expected them, and I am ready to tell them, at times, this breach be upon you. Others have

been brought out to light and liberty through the assistance of your ministry among us. Many more I can discover in soul-travail; and one I have seen, and more I have heard of, since I saw you last. I do believe the Lord holds me back with these cords of affliction that I may feel, and that I may speak to such; but it is sorely against my will; I want to shine forth and flourish in the face of mine enemies. However, I have a few arrows in my quiver which they have not, therefore I am not ashamed when I speak with them in the gates.

God bless you, and reward you for your labour of love, will ever be the prayer of,

J. JENKINS.

LETTER XLIX.

To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

FROM a desire that the condescending goodness of God to one of his most unworthy creatures, may not pass unacknowledged, I take the liberty of addressing you on this subject; and, knowing, as I do, in sincerity and truth, that my aim is not to seek human applause, nor merely a name in his church, but to speak to the praise of Him who

hath called me out of darkness into his marvellous light, I follow the example of David, in declaring to those that fear God what he hath done for my soul.

The Lord has promised to send his people pastors after his own heart, to feed them with knowledge and understanding; by whose means the Holy Spirit of all grace and truth makes manifest to the heirs of promise, and to them only, the love of our heavenly Father, which in his dear Son was set upon them from everlasting: and that blessed Spirit having condescended to make use of you, Sir, in furthering this gracious manifestation in my soul, I hope that my addressing these particulars to you will tend still further to encourage you in the ministry which you have received of the Lord Jesus; the efficacy of whose promised blessing, Matt. xxviii. 20, is to this day verified in every soul that is quickened by his word, and to whom his gospel is made the wisdom of God, and the power of God, to salvation. Thus those who are sent of God to preach, and those to whom their preaching is made profitable, may rejoice in the behalf of each other, as well as of themselves; and, together with all his church, the spiritual Zion, will have abundant cause to bless him for his faithfulness and truth to his covenant promises and engagements, and for his loving-kindness and tender mercies, displayed in the salvation of sinners freely by grace in Christ Jesus our Lord and only Saviour.

Were I to attempt to describe all that has passed within me, both before and since it pleased the blessed Spirit to give me an experience of his quickening power, it would only be taking up your time in endeavouring to do that which you have often done for me with ten times greater exactness than I could do it for myself; and which, while it proves you to be a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of heaven, has also been blessed to my encouragement, seeing I was thus led in the footsteps of the flock. Suffice it therefore to say, that I had been in a profession of religion for upwards of ten years before I knew any thing of what true religion was, but it was altogether a fleshly profession; for on leaving my friends in the country, by whom I had been brought up in a very regular manner, and coming to London, where already I had a brother, my desires so yearned after my relatives (than whom I believe none were ever more affectionate), that I gladly took every opportunity of being with him; and as he, with a companion of his, were earnestly seeking the way of salvation (and have not sought in vain), I readily associated with, and accompanied them to places of public worship, and I soon began to entertain a superstitious reverence for those places, often walking bare-headed by them, especially the place where I received the sacrament of bread and wine. The doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, as a mediator, when first unfolded to my natural understanding, charmed me as a novelty; as such I

adopted it into my opinions, and this passed with me for conversion. I attended the preaching of those who mingled the law with the letter of the gospel, and this often stirred up my legal conscience against me; then my aim was to appease it; and when conscience was quieted, either by the sense of guilt wearing off, or by performing dead works, or by any other means, no matter how, I was satisfied. I attended prayer and experience meetings, but never knew what it was to have access to God in prayer, nor ever expected any answer to my petitions, further than hoping all would be well at last. I could talk fluently on the doctrines of the gospel, and this served to nurse my pride. Nay, I remember I once went so far at one of these meetings as to say that I could as soon be brought to believe that there was no Holy Ghost, as that I had not found him present with me, when, alas! I knew nothing of that blessed Spirit's quickening influence; nothing of the power of the kingdom of heaven; nothing of the covenant of grace, nor of the love of God in Christ Jesus. I was bolstered up in self-confidence, daubed with untempered mortar, and vainly puffed up in my fleshly mind. After some years I heard Mr. Romaine preach, and then you, and sat under both for some time; but, though I had light enough to see that this preaching was different from what I had before attended, and believed it to be the truth, yet, as the excellency of the power is all of God, and not of man, I still remained a whole-

hearted sinner. Thus I went on for years, conscience at times still reproving me; but, as I had only jumped into a profession at first in the bonds of natural affection, and as the charms of novelty had worn off, at length these bonds became weaker and weaker, I began to grow more remiss, religion became wearisome to me, and then, for want of root, my profession withered; and as I had received no benefit from it, it could not hold me. I returned into the world and its pleasures again, and became as a tree twice dead, plucked up by the roots. Yet, as conscience would never be entirely quiet, I sometimes used to come to the chapel when the sermon was more than half over, and then crept in behind, ashamed to shew my face; nor could I altogether leave off prayer, or at least attempting to pray; and there is one thought that would sometimes strike my mind, even in this dead season, which I have since considered as an indication that God had not altogether given me up to a reprobate mind; it was, that if my brother, or any other person whom I really believed to be a child of God, should backslide, or leave God's ways and worship, it would have grieved me to the very heart to see it, both for his own sake, and for the honour and cause of God. In this dreary state I continued for, I believe, more than five years, and never knew what real peace was all the time. Add to this, my backsliding would cause all religion to stink in the nostrils of those who knew not God, and had seen

my former high profession, for a backslider I was, and still consider myself to have been, from the light and knowledge I had received, although there was nothing of a saving nature in it. I do not mean to say that my profession has been of no service at all, for I believe it has since pleased the blessed Spirit of God so far to make use of it, as to shew me, experimentally, the difference between a form of godliness and the power thereof, and, by the contrast, to make his own work more manifest. Also, having learnt that salvation was only in Christ, I did not, when afterwards seeking it earnestly, fly to the letter of commandments to earn life by my own endeavours to keep them, though I have found that this sort of knowledge never destroyed the dominion of sin, nor that legal spirit that was within me, and for which I have often had occasion to loathe myself, as well as for my sinful nature. But herein appears the long suffering of God in preserving me through this state of ignorance and sin to a future calling; and I have often thought it was, if I may use the expression, a double stretch of his great power to rescue me from the strong bands of sin and Satan, since it is declared that such as were in my case were further from the kingdom of heaven than publicans and harlots.

About four or five years ago it pleased the Lord to lay the guilt of sin upon my conscience as a burden too heavy for me to bear, so that I earnestly desired to flee from the wrath to come; at other

times I felt my spirit drawn out in secret desires and breathings after God: and this burden and these desires continued, so that I was led to wait upon the Lord in the public means of grace, in hope that I might get something that would satisfy my soul. About this time I heard you preach a sermon at Providence Chapel from these words, "The full soul loathes the honeycomb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." This, I believe, was the first sermon that I ever heard to real profit. The bitter things you described were such as my soul then felt; and, bitter as they were, I could truly say they were sweeter than all the pleasures of sin, inasmuch as I was led to hope this was the way of God's dealing with his children: and my desire was that the Lord would be pleased to search and try me; and, rather than suffer me to fall back again into the way of the world, that he would still further prove me, and know my thoughts; and, however sharp his chastisements might be, that he would still carry on this searching work, and bring me forth to the light, that I might praise his name. And I do bless the Lord that from that time he has never suffered me to say, "Prophecy smooth things, prophecy deceits;" nor to desire the cry of 'Peace, peace,' to my soul, when God has not spoken peace; but that every refuge of lies may be swept away; that my conscience may be exposed to the glass of his word; and that I may know by experience the truth of his own declaration, "I wound, and I

heal." And God knows that I have since seen so much of the evil and the deceitfulness of my own heart, and my utter inability to think or do the least thing of myself that can be acceptable to him, as for ever to stain the pride of all human glory, and cut off all hope from an arm of flesh. I think I have been so exercised and disciplined in this way, and so foiled in matters apparently the most easy in themselves, that scarcely any creature can have a lower idea, or be more fully convinced than I am, of the wretched weakness of free-will or human power. But the Lord saw the necessity of thus dealing with my deceitful heart and corrupt nature; and I bless his name that he has not left me ignorant of it, though I often, to my sorrow, find it still clinging to me. About the same time a sermon by Mr. Brook, from these words in Isaiah, "O Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou hast wrought all our works in us," afforded me encouragement, from the hope that there was a set time of peace ordained for me. And here I will also note another sermon that he preached some considerable time afterwards, from Psalm lxxviii. 20, "He that is our God is the God of salvation: and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death;" which was blessed to my refreshment. But to return: From the period above-mentioned it has pleased the Lord to carry on his work by degrees in my soul; and, though I have been very dark, ignorant, and confused, yet at times the blessed Spirit has shone upon this his

work, and has given me a little understanding in his word, where that work has been described, to make it more manifest, so that I could say, "In thy light we see light." At other times, what has been passing within has been so sweetly described and brought forth from the pulpit, that although I had not sufficient judgment nor understanding in the word to make it out myself, yet it has been all so clearly set before me, and the power of it so exactly experienced in my soul, that it has greatly comforted and established me, and I have gone on my way rejoicing in hope. And, though my memory could scarcely carry away ten words of what had been said, yet this did not, after a time, so much trouble me as before, knowing that I felt the substance of these things, and that the kingdom of God standeth not in word, but in power. And here I cannot help noticing, that formerly, when in a dead profession, I could talk readily upon any subject in religion, and at any season; but now that seems to be taken from me, so that sometimes I am so childish that I can hardly express my own meaning, or describe my own feelings. Yet, to the praise of free grace, I can say I have been enlightened to see that in Christ Jesus is perfect and complete salvation, and that the blessed Redeemer, with all his saving benefits, is the free gift of God. I have been quickened to feel my own need, and find that in him there is every thing that my necessities, or the glory of God, can require. To this rock the Holy Spirit

has led me; on this only my hopes of salvation are fixed, and hereto by faith I have been enabled to run for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before me. And though my faith is weak, and my unbelief great, yet for my encouragement it is declared, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and he that cometh to him shall in no wise be cast out; this is the foundation that God has laid in Zion, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, and that those who build thereon shall never be ashamed or confounded world without end. Therefore, though faint, I am still kept pursuing, and am persuaded God will never suffer me to rest until I receive the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul. And, as the daily warfare continues, and strength is administered accordingly, I do at times find that by these means my soul has grown in stability, even when the sensible enjoyment of comfort is withheld; so that, as the apostle declares, though these things, for the present, are not joyous, but grievous, yet they work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby, Heb. xii. 11.

Before I conclude, I wish to mention a few more particulars, which are as follow. I have sometimes been very dead and barren in soul, both in private and in public ordinances. The influences of the blessed Spirit seemed to have been withdrawn; the light of God's countenance hid; no faith in exercise, nor evidence of my interest

in the better covenant; I have gone on mourning and heavily crying, "My leanness, my leanness, wo unto me." Then unbelief; carnal reasonings, and hard thoughts of God, have succeeded, until it appeared as if all hope must give up the ghost, and confidence be rooted out; my footsteps had well nigh slipped, and the enemy would carry all before him. And so I know he would if it was left to my management; but, when the north wind has awoke, and the south wind blown upon the garden, the spices thereof have again flown forth. Then hope has revived, faith has received new strength, and my heart has been drawn forth into thankfulness and praise. Then I have found sweet access to God in the faith of the great Mediator; and have even been enabled to claim him as my covenant God and Father, being manifested to be his child by faith in Christ Jesus; and if a son, then an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ. And, however short or seldom these seasons, yet, when I have enjoyed them, I could truly say I would not have exchanged them for all the world, if it could have been offered to me. Often has my waiting soul been supplied, my hungry soul fed, my dead soul quickened, my weary soul refreshed, my tried soul established, my weak soul strengthened, by the preaching of the word of grace; and one particular occasion, a few months back, I must more especially relate. I had been for several weeks in great bondage of spirit and darkness of mind, so that I was much cast down

and tossed with doubts, and troubled with fears, lest I should never again be brought up from the horrible pit and miry clay. It was on a Tuesday evening, when, setting off to the city chapel, I could not help saying, though almost in a desponding way, 'I hope I shall get something this evening, for the Lord knows I stand in need of it.' After being seated a few minutes in the chapel, before the public worship began, suddenly the scales, as it were, fell from my eyes; I saw that I had been looking for fruits in myself instead of him in whom alone our fruit is found; that a legal spirit had entwined itself around me, and that I had been nursing this cursed frame until the dear Redeemer was thrust into the back ground, and scarcely noticed; as sensibly as a porter can feel his burden thrown from his shoulders, so sensibly did I feel my soul lightened, and spring upwards in faith and affection to Jesus sitting at the right hand of God. Then the service of the evening commenced, and I was enabled to worship in spirit and in truth. Your text was, Psalm xlv. 13, "The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold." And O! what did my soul experience that evening! I never can describe it fully. It seemed as if every word was intended for me, and for me only. It came in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. The inward glory was described from the word; I felt it within. The best robe, the clothing of wrought gold, the righteousness of the Redeemer, was

brought forth, and by faith I laid hold of it, and put him on as my surety. The king's daughter, the bride, the Lamb's wife, was the object of this grace; and, as a member of that mystical body, I had joy and peace in believing. Not that I could actually say I found my sins then purged away, and pardon sealed home upon my conscience; but, my soul having been long barred from access to God, a door of hope was now opened, into which I joyfully entered. I believed in hope, I rejoiced in hope; and truly did you then observe, that those who had experienced these things would not be left in the dark as to what you had been saying, but would be able to follow and keep pace with you in the same; and so I found it indeed. Nay, so wonderfully did the blessed Spirit then strengthen me, that I was enabled in many things to run before, and you followed with a powerful unction, and sweetly confirmed them. I wished the service to continue, lest in leaving the place I should lose what I had received; but the Lord the Spirit gave me a sweet savour and fresh revivals of the same kind, though not to the same degree, for many days after; yea, even to this day I often find both pleasure and profit in looking back, with David, to the hill Mizar; though these occasions, it is true, chiefly occur when it is a kind of fasting time and mourning with my soul, and when, for want of the green pastures being opened to me, or of faith and hope being exercised in looking out for a fresh supply, I am obliged to gather all

the comfort I can from past tokens: but though, as before observed, this sometimes affords both pleasure and profit, yet I find the hungry soul cannot be satisfied without an experience of the truth of that declaration, "He filleth the hungry with good things." And I have often had to acknowledge the faithfulness of my God to his promise, that "they that wait upon him shall renew their strength." It is a barren season indeed when I have not found the word in some degree profitable, either for doctrine, or reproof, or correction, or instruction, or consolation; though sometimes even this has been the case, and I have come away as dead and unsatisfied as I went.

I have several times known, when staggered with some adverse circumstance in providence, or some knotty and apparently contradictory point in my experience, which I could not for a time reconcile to the good-will of God towards me, nor clear up from the word, nor my former feelings, nor indeed see what was the end and aim of God therein; that it hath pleased the Lord the Spirit, after exercising me for some time, to unravel the mystery, to shew me what was his will, and to make me know that his thus dealing with me was suitable to something then relating to my case; and by this means he has enabled me to sit down at his feet in humble acquiescence, and my soul has received fresh comfort and establishment from the dispensation. And here is what I have particularly to admire, namely, that you have been

afterwards led to treat upon the very same subjects, have given the very same description, and have come to the very same conclusions, to the no small confirmation of my faith and hope, seeing God hath declared that he gives his people one heart and one way, and that they are led by one Spirit.

I have sometimes been tempted to doubt of the work in my soul, and to fear it was not of God, because it was not effected in that sudden, that outward manner, or with those violent operations that some persons have described and felt. But, after some time, this temptation was effectually answered to my comfort by the parables of the grain of mustard seed and the little leaven hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. And, blessed be God, I have been enabled to see that this living principle of his grace implanted within me has sprung up and increased; and I have not a doubt but it will grow up to life everlasting. I have also, ere now, entertained great jealousy of my state on account of not having then shared much of the furnace of affliction, knowing that it was the common lot of the elect, and that they were bastards only that escaped it. But I remember an observation of yours, that has since been verified in me, viz. that it would not be much to the credit of a soldier to shew his back scarred with stripes, since it would be a strong indication that his faults had called for them; and I know, and have seen in some instances, at the

very same time, that my perverseness, carelessness, and rebellion, have been the procuring cause of those crosses, spiritual and temporal, that have since been laid upon me, and which have been neither few nor small; for, besides sore conflicts in soul, in which I have sometimes walked in darkness and had no light, and found it hard work to stay myself upon my God, I have also met with some very severe trials in temporal affairs, at which times carnal reason has set before my eyes my family to be provided for, and unbelief has represented the improbability of my being able to do so; yet under this I have found that my chief concern has been lest the cause of God and his honour should suffer reproach through me, or that I should be a stumblingblock to others. But hitherto my God has supplied all my need, and my faith has been led to believe that, having given me his dear Son, he will with him also freely give me all things. And on one occasion especially, the heaviest I ever met with of this kind, through a loss in trade, I was so greatly supported by access to God, communion with him in public and private means, and a sense of his love to me in the covenant head, that I was constrained to acknowledge, that if such dispensations were always to be attended with such manifestations, I could joyfully submit to them, and think myself richly repaid; for, as afflictions abounded, consolations did much more abound also. When this is the

case, the things of earth sit lightly. I could trust him, in covenant faithfulness, to supply me with every thing needful, both for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. But afterwards, on another occasion of the same nature, though not to a fifth part of the same extent, I found the trial sit much heavier on my soul, for now I was under great spiritual darkness, my evidences were obscured, I saw not my signs; doubt and despondency gathered upon my mind; added to this, the hand of God seemed to be gone out against me in providence; and though I knew him to be just in his dealings with me, yet I did not see his fatherly chastisement, but feared his wrathful indignation; and therefore I could not, as before, receive his correction with humility, till, after long contention, during which the calamity was still further increased, he was pleased to humble my proud spirit, and endue me with submission. Then by degrees my hope was strengthened, my confidence restored, and I was enabled to cast my burden upon the Lord, and he sustained me. In this conflict I remarked that a light shone into my understanding upon several passages of scripture in an extraordinary manner; but as I did not find them applicable to my case, and as it reached my understanding only, without producing comfort, humility, submission, or re-establishment of soul, I could derive no satisfaction from them, and was, if possible, more than ever convinced that it is

only by drinking of the streams of the river of life that the city of God can be made glad.

In my avocations in life I have sometimes found it necessary to take long journeys into the country, which has deprived me for weeks together of the green pastures in public ordinances; for wherever I have attended I never found any thing, either in preachers or professors, that was accompanied with a divine unction, or upon which my soul could feed. Not but there may be some of the Lord's sheep scattered in the darkest corners of the earth; and it has often struck me, when I have been in some of these dark corners, that many of our missionaries, if they were good workmen, might find ample room for employment among those who, I should think, have quite as strong a claim upon them as others who live thousands of miles off. To be sure, when a man leaves his home and native land, and voluntarily makes his field of action lie at such a distance, he may perhaps, at the great day, think he can plead, with a better grace, his having done such wonderful works. But that is a subject for their own consideration; and it must be allowed they have left the work in hands that will not be idle, and perhaps with this they are satisfied, for in every place Arminianism is spreading its damnably-erroneous influence, and making its converts two-fold more the children of hell than before. I only notice what has passed under my own obser-

vation; and as to the dryness of those pastures, I do but speak for myself. Sometimes I have had reason to cry, "Wo is me that I sojourn in Meshech, and have my habitation among the tents of Kedar!" At other times I have found that the Lord is not confined to outward means, but that, under the sweet influences of the blessed Spirit, my soul has been refreshed with the feast of fat things, and of wine on the lees well refined. Again: when temptations and difficulties have assailed me, strength has been given according to my day; my soul has been sustained in life; the power of Christ has been manifested; and his grace has been sufficient for me. And, on the other hand, when corruptions have appeared for a little time to be subdued, when the enemy has not much molested me, and all things went smoothly on, I have found my soul drop into a kind of dry, unfruitful, lethargic frame; and though no particular, no more than ordinary sin, to accuse myself of, yet I have become barren, and almost lifeless; so that hereby I have sometimes found that these tares, growing among the wheat, have been the cause of greater prosperity of soul, by exciting the strugglings of spiritual life to oppose, and, by fresh strength being communicated, to obtain the victory over them.

In the month of May last I was on one of these journeys in Wales, and was much blessed with the presence of God. A sweet calm, a heavenly serenity of mind, passed upon me. Fear,

guilt, and condemnation, were removed, and my conscience bathed, as it were, in peace. Happy as I was, yet, lest I should be resting in a delusion, I questioned, I examined from whence this proceeded, and was enabled distinctly to trace it up to the reconciliation between God and man, made by the blessed Jesus on the cross. My soul was humbled to the dust, while I adored the riches of free, undeserved mercy and dying love, communicated by the quickening grace of the Holy Spirit. A few weeks after my return this heavenly visitation was repeated with much increase; and upon again scrutinizing, that I might not be deceived, I could again trace it most distinctly to the same blessed source, and it was accompanied with a sweet assurance that I was made accepted in the Beloved. Christ was formed in my heart the hope of glory, and I had joy and peace in believing. Now I found what it was to have my conscience purged from sin, and to feel the blood of sprinkling speaking better things than that of Abel. Now I found that the Lord had not only brought to the birth, but had given strength to bring forth. Now I found that my prayer was answered, and that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint," for that God would indeed avenge his own elect that cry day and night unto him; that he would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, until he bring forth judgment unto victory. Now a new song was put into my mouth, and I could

triumph over my enemy, and give thanks to him whose "own right hand and holy arm had gotten himself the victory." Now I could say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his;" "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Here I had access with boldness into the Holy of Holies, sin being put away by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; and the nearer I was brought, the more was my soul melted down into humility, gratitude, and love. Here I found that a soft answer breaketh the bones, though grievous words had often stirred up strife. And, having found the blood of Christ efficacious to cleanse from all sin, my faith also laid hold of his glorious righteousness for justification in the sight of God the Father, which was sweetly confirmed to me by a powerful application of these words, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Nor did my Lord and Saviour stop here with me; for the blessed Spirit having thus testified of Christ to my soul, he went on to shew that he had loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness he had drawn me, and thus it was made clear. The Saviour says, "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out:" I found I had come, and had not been cast out. Again: "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me:" then those that do come are such as the Father hath given to the Son from eternity. Ar

again: none but such shall come; nor even would they, if not made willing in the day of God's power; for "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Having then been made willing, under a sense of need, and drawn to Christ, and having experienced pardon and peace by the blood of atonement, applied and witnessed by the ever-blessed Spirit of truth, I was enabled to say, "My Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation;" and could not but wonder at the sovereign, discriminating grace of God, that he could ever have fixed his love upon one so unfruitful, and so utterly unworthy in every respect, that in sincerity and truth I can say, that I look upon myself, and ought to be looked upon by others, as less than the least of all saints. But, blessed be his name, it is well for his people that he does not make worth or worthiness of ours any condition of his love: no, it is free, unmerited, and everlasting; otherwise I am sure I should have failed and come short of it.

For these few weeks past these heavenly influences have been in some measure withdrawn, though my soul still rests on the foundation laid in Zion. For several days, however, in this interval, it appeared that the enemy was determined to take his revenge for the happiness I had enjoyed. He endeavoured to lull me into security, then to drive me into despondency; then he tempted me to lie against my right, and to dispute against God in the dispensations of his pro-

vidence; he stirred up natural corruptions and evil tempers, so that I was amazed to find these things, especially upon the back of what I had but so lately been blessed with, and even now acknowledge them with shame and confusion of face. This text exactly expressed my state, "For peace I had great bitterness." But it hath pleased the Lord, in a good degree, to restore to me the joys of his salvation, and to uphold me with his free Spirit. I bless him that the one oblation, once made, has for ever perfected all that believe; but a fresh application of it I find I stand in need of day by day, agreeable to our Saviour's words, "He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet." I desire to be kept waiting upon him to direct my way both in grace and in providence; for in both respects I find him fulfilling his word. I want to experience more of his love shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, and to live more under its filial and fruitful constraints to his glory. I want to have my unbelief quite subdued, which is so dishonoring to my merciful and faithful God and Saviour, and so disquieting to my own soul. I never knew what this sin was till it pleased the Lord the Spirit to work true faith in me, and since then it has pestered me in all that concerns spiritual life and everlasting salvation, even from the highest to the lowest matters. But I see this to have been a part of the Spirit's work: "He shall convince of sin, because they believe not on me." And, thanks be to God, it has received some se-

vere rubs, for I have seen, in some measure, the things that faith hath credited already come to pass; darkness has been made light before me, and crooked things straight; and I trust to find my path shining more and more unto perfect day. Sometimes in private prayer, when darkness, bondage, and unbelief, have been so strong that I have scarcely had a word to say, I have found that faith has at length began to struggle, till, like a fountain bubbling up through the earth, it has in the end gloriously prevailed, and I have left my burden behind, and gone away rejoicing in the full expectation of being heard and answered.

I was in the happy state a little before described when you lately preached from these words, "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." There you set forth the proofs of a real work of grace in the heart; and every proof you mentioned, even to the highest, I could then come up to; the whole was gloriously confirmed with power from on high, and I could set to my seal that God was true; and, having before found my conscience reproach me with ingratitude to the Father of mercies for not declaring the former instances wherein his visitations had refreshed my spirit (especially that at Grub Street, mentioned in this letter), I was determined to make this known to you; but, finding the vestry crowded, I judged you was much engaged, and

therefore concluded to defer it to a more convenient opportunity. The subject, however, still lay on my mind; and, after making it a matter of prayer, I found encouragement to lay it before you in this manner. When I began to write it was far from my intention to 'continue it to this length. As occurrences were brought to my recollection I have endeavoured to compress them as much as possible; but, as these are only such as are the most material in the genuine experience of my soul, I do not feel inclined to omit any part of what I have written. It was begun some weeks back; but while I was in bitterness of spirit I laid it by. When the light of God's countenance was again lifted up upon me I resumed it, intending you should have had it before now, and had written to within a few lines of this on Tuesday, when I left it off to go to the City Chapel. In your sermon from Isaiah lx. 20, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself," you will readily perceive how much of this you went over again; and the savoury unction that attended your discourse to my soul I better know than I can express. My Beloved came into his garden, and ate his pleasant fruits; and I again fed upon him by faith, with thanksgiving. I could sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also,

Eternal are thy mercies, Lord,
 Eternal truth attends thy word;
 Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore.

My soul delights in having to acknowledge whatever appears as an answer to prayer, or as the fulfilment of a promise; and the words of the sweet singer of Israel, Psalms cxvi. cxviii. I find exactly suitable and applicable to me.

Adieu, dear Sir! The Lord be with you, and prosper you in your own soul, and in the work he has given you to do. And may it please the great Shepherd long to continue you here for his church's sake! Such is the sincere desire and hearty prayer of, Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate Son, in the gospel
of our Lord Jesus Christ,

22, Lower Belgrave Place,
Pimlico, Sept. 2, 1809.

JOHN EEDES.

LETTER L.

To Mr. JOHN EEDES, Pimlico.

Dearly beloved in the one Mediator, grace and truth be with thee through our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of the Father in truth and love.

YOUR epistle is very acceptable to me, as the contents serve to weaken a temptation which has often beset me; namely, that old age would be attended with a barrenness in the ministry; that,

as youthful vigour decayed, and the faculties of the soul got impaired, so the life and power of godliness would abate also. And this temptation came upon me by observing so many great and learned men, who had come forth with brilliant gifts and abilities, light and knowledge, and who seemed to soar very high, and to flourish like a cedar in Lebanon, and afterwards sink and wither like the green herb. This I concluded must be my case at some future period. But it is in Christ Jesus that God our father accepts us, in his atonement he receives us as clean, and in his righteousness we are received as just; and, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, we are complete in him. And it is in Christ Jesus that we enjoy and share, as joint heirs with him, in God the Father's love; and this love is the fruit and effect of pardon; it is the bond of the covenant, the root of the righteous, the marriage ring, and the indissoluble bond of union between the bridegroom and the bride. Could this divine love, which is fixed upon us in Christ Jesus, be taken from him, the bond of the covenant would be broken, the thing that is gone out of God's lips would be altered, the promise would pass away unfulfilled, the covenant of peace would be removed, and the faithfulness of God would be suffered to fail; for, if the root be removed, both leaf and fruit must fail from the heirs of promise.

. But we are safe and well secured upon this ground; and every revival, renewing, and refresh-

ing, is a confirmation of it; for these are the fresh declarations of God's covenant name and character; I mean, that of his being gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Read Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, which is what our Lord alludes to when he says, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them," John xvii. 26. Compare these two passages together, and you will see what is meant by Christ being in us; and it is by God's faithfulness to his covenant name; which name, in all its fulness, and in all its meaning, is now as it always was, in Christ Jesus; and it is declared again and again by a discovery of fresh truth, by receiving fresh grace, and by new enjoyments of pardoning love. This name is declared, and shall be declared, that the love wherewith the Father hath loved Christ may be in us, and he in us. Where a sin-pardoning God is not proclaimed to the sinner, that sinner has no love to God. God's circumcising our heart to love him is putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; and where much is forgiven, the same loveth much.

These things, my dear friend, standing fast, and our fruitfulness depending upon the righteousness, truth, and faithfulness of God in Christ Jesus, the root must abide, its waterings cannot

fail, the leaf must be green; and we shall bring forth fruit in old age, to shew that the Lord is upright, Psalm xcii. 14, 15.

My fears, therefore, from the above temptation, have for some years abated, about barrenness in my old age; for I verily believe that I have had more success these ten years past than I ever had in any ten years that have gone before since I have been in the ministry. Nor do I find God's workmanship by me inferior to others, but contrariwise; for, go where I will, or get into company with what professors I may, I find them in penetration superficial, in experience shallow, in judgment confused, in conversation muddy, fleshly, and unsavoury; they have a little momentary glee under the word, and this is left behind when the sermon is over, and all the rest of the week is spent in bondage, doubting and fearing, murmuring and complaining; and these are dead works, the fruits of a legal and self-righteous spirit kept under the power of unbelief. The way-side, the thorny, and the stony-ground hearers, are too common and too apparent every where: it is as our Lord says, "They have no root," no deepness of earth nor moisture, and therefore are soon scorched, and then wither away. A broken and contrite heart is the deep earth; with such God dwells; and this is the good ground also. Pardonings love shed abroad in the heart is the root, and the holy Spirit of life and his grace is the

moisture: and what is the most splendid profession without these things?

The highest stage, my dear son, and the surest standing in a militant state, is that of holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience. The mystery, which is the most sublime, and which is the object of spiritual faith, is the mystery of the three persons in the one God of Israel, or a trinity of persons in the godhead. And, as these three are distinct in personality, so is their voice and testimony distinct in the consciences of all true believers.

Paul tells us that by faith we come to the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 24. This voice speaks pardon, and perfect cleansing, from all sin; it speaks peace with God and conscience; it speaks reconciliation and friendship with the Almighty; and it speaks nearness and access to God with boldness, freedom, and familiarity. "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God;" being made nigh by the blood of Christ, who were far from God by wicked works. Now faith is a coming to this Mediator, and to this blood of sprinkling, which sprinkles the heart from an evil conscience, and purges the conscience from dead works; for God purifies the heart by faith.

The voice of the Spirit, and his testimony in the conscience, are distinct also. To every one that receives Christ in faith and affection, to them gives he power to become the sons of God. And this power is the Holy Spirit, which produceth a birth that is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and, when this regenerating and renewing work is performed, the Spirit proclaims our sonship, and claims the parentage of heaven upon it; for, being predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ Jesus, we are called Christ's seed, Isa. xliv. 3; yea, we are called sons and daughters, Isa. xliii. 6, previous to our conversion by virtue of God's choice of us, and of his decree of predestinating us to the adoption of sons: "And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, father," Gal. iv. 6. This is the voice of the Holy Spirit, who is our inward helper, and an intercessor in our hearts, and whose cry is not from a foul stomach, nor does it savour of a stinking breath; not from an evil conscience, nor from a mind blinded by Satan and hardened in pride, like that of Balaam, Numb. xxii. 18; or like that of the pharisees, who said, "We have one father, even God," John viii. 41. All such claims spring from ignorance and arrogance, from insensibility and rash presumption, and therefore our Lord palms them upon another parent, being the seed of the serpent, and a generation of vipers; for

they were haters of Christ and of all his followers, which is the characteristic of the serpent's seed, the image of Satan, and the evident token of perdition.

A graceless profession generally stirs up the carnal enmity of the sinner's mind against the righteous; and where this works guilt sticks fast, and where sin remains the sentence of God falls; such are condemned already, John iii. 18; and where the sentence falls there the wrath of God abides, John iii. 36; and the shew of the countenances of such doth witness against them, Isa. iii. 9.

A fallen countenance is a sure sign of guilt and condemnation, Gen. iv. 6; and a desperate countenance an infallible index of a hard heart, a ruined state, and an inward war with the Almighty, Isa. xiii. 8; and it is easy to discern, even in the law, what is meant by the tokens of perdition and of salvation; and what is meant by the image of God, and the image that God despises; for the ten commandments know of no other classes of men than haters and lovers of God: "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me," Exod. xx. 5, 6.

But our cry and claim upon God is not our own; the Holy Spirit is the spirit of promise to us, and the spirit of adoption in us, and is the fruit and effect of Christ's mediation, and of his

being accepted of the Father in his office of mediator, and in every other office he sustains, and is secured to us by an everlasting covenant; and as a comforter, and as the spirit of grace and of glory, he is to abide with us for evermore.

The cry of Abba, Father, by the Spirit is always owned and honoured, and is attended to both in heaven and earth. God owns it, and honours it, as in the case of the prodigal: "I will arise, and go to my father," says he: "This is my son," says God: "Thou art the Lord my God," says Ephraim: "Is Ephraim my dear son?" says God; "is he a pleasant child?" &c. God honours the faith that makes our sonship manifest, and he attends to the prayers that are put up to him in the name of a father, and under the Spirit's influence: and this by answering them. The Spirit not only cries, Abba, Father, but he witnesses to our adoption, and makes our own conscience do the same; "He bears witness with our spirit," says Paul, "that we are the children of God;" and, by the sentence of justification passed in the conscience by the Spirit, he bears witness to the righteousness of Christ being imputed to us; and this righteousness without the law is witnessed both by the law and the prophets, Rom. iii. 21. This is justification in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. vi. 11.

The cry and testimony of the Spirit is acknowledged upon earth also; the accusations and reproaches of Satan are silenced by the Spirit of

God; and all his charges, whether true or false, are sapped at the foundation; and our adoption of sons is manifest in the consciences both of saints and sinners, as the scriptures witness: "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed," Isa. lxi. 9. My dear friend sees here how our adoption, and the witness of it, are spread and made known abroad in the world: "All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."

The voice of God the Father is the voice of love; he promises to circumcise our heart to love him with all the heart and with all the soul, that we may live. This love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us; and its voice is, "Yea, I have loved thee," Jer. xxxi. 3; and this is a cleansing us from all idols; for, when the whole heart and whole soul loves God, there is no room left for them. The Father's voice of love in the heart gives the finishing stroke to spiritual death; God circumcises the heart to love him, that we may live; the blood of Christ removes the sting of death, and his righteousness imputed takes away the sentence of death; but nothing but love will cast out the fear of death. This is our enlargement and our freedom, being now drawn and not driven; running with delight, and not dragging in chains;

constrained by divine goodness, and not pursued by wrath. The mean, low, servile spirit peculiar to slaves, servants, and the base-born, gives way to this noble and princely spirit when this love comes into the hearts of the heirs of promise; and what our Lord says of his works is true of this work of God our Father in us: "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me," John v. 36. And so does this work of love in us; it cleanses us from all idols, and gives us possession of the one God; for, "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." It gives us enlargement, and glorious liberty from bondage. It is the bond of the everlasting covenant, the church's wedding ring, the image of God, and Zion's inward glory. These things make us God's husbandry, and God's building, as it is charity that edifieth and buildeth up Zion, and in which God appears in his glory; and thus are we circumcised by God the Father, baptized by God the Son, with God the Holy Ghost: "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

Upon these things, my son, I have long kept a watchful eye, believing these to be the summit and the blessings of Zion's hill; and the promise is, "Upon the mount it shall be seen;" namely, the provision that God has made for us. And he that dwells on high shall see all this when he sees

the King in his beauty, whose glory covers the heavens, and fills the earth with his praise.

These deep things were ordained of God before the world for our glory, and God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit; "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." And these deep things, when experienced in the power of them, and enjoyed in their sweetness, establish the heart, and baffle the attacks and attempts of heretics; they undermine the ministry of the letter, and repel the cold chills of the sons of death, and discover the withered impostor upon the house-top, defying all to gain admittance to the affections, or to obtain the approbation of the judgment, or the testimony of conscience, unless Christ speaks by them. If these things were more observed and attended to, there would be more establishment in the minds of many than now there is; and to settle a soul short of these things is no less than confirming it in the sleep of death.

According to my son's account, he has been long spending money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not, Isa. lv. 2; and of this God complains, "My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray; they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting place." These shepherds have caused Christ's flock to go astray; for all that are against Christ are sure to

scatter from him. This work was done on the mountains by the blind watchmen of Zion, who are shepherds that cannot understand; and by following their directions they went from mountain to hill. Some sent them to the worship of idols on the high places; these burnt incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed God upon the hills, Isa. lxxv. 7. Others were sent to Sinai and Horeb for life and salvation; the scribes called the law life itself. And others led them to trust in local Zion, because of the holiness of the place, and so brought them to trust in lying words, and then they cried, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these," Jer. vii. 4; and this puffed them up, and made them haughty, because of the holy mountain. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel," Jer. iii. 23. Christ is the mountain of the Lord's house, and the stone cut out without hands, which will one day become such a mountain, in the setting up and establishing of his kingdom, as shall fill the whole earth. My son, farewell. Grace and peace be with thee through Jesus Christ our Lord. So prays

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER LI.

To Mrs. MASON, No. 152, Fleet Street, London.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Leicester, Sept. 25, 1809.

MY sister wishes me to write to you, as she herself at this time is not able. About three weeks ago she returned from Matlock bath, but was not in the least benefited by her journey. Since her return home she has got much worse, and within this last week has gone off very fast; she is so extremely weak that she cannot do the least thing towards dressing herself, nor walk in her room without leaning upon some one. Many things have been tried, but nothing seems to do her any good, so as to give any hope of her recovery. What she takes sometimes seems to give her ease, and for a little time she appears better. Last week she suffered much from a violent pain in her bowels, and also in her head, that at times she was not herself; but, thank the good Lord, she is rather better, and the pain is a good deal removed since she has had two blisters. This morning she is very weak, having had an indifferent night. She does not keep her bed at present. The physician told me on Saturday he had no hope he could do her any good. She herself does not expect to recover, nor do I think myself she ever

will, though she may perhaps continue some time. At times I feel much, and have a great desire, (if it was the will of God) that she might be continued with me: but I have no just ground for grief or sorrow, only I feel loath to part with her. But O what a comfort it is to see one in her situation, approaching apparently so near their end, in so happy and blessed a frame as she is at times, rejoicing in the prospect of another and better world. Her outward man perishes, but the inward man is renewed; and though her strength fails her, yet she feels that God is her portion. I had some conversation with her last Saturday afternoon, and many sweet things did she mention. I felt myself exceeding happy with her; her mind was composed, quiet, and peaceable, though at times her exercises are exceeding sharp; yet again she is calm and serene. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his goodness to her, and to myself also! It was under a discourse Mr. Huntington preached at Newark, from these words, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," that the Lord was pleased first to reveal himself to her, and bring her into a state of pardon, peace, and friendship with himself. She bid me this morning, when talking about him, tell you to give her kind love to him. She desires her love to yourself and Mr. Mason, also to Mr. and Mrs. Bensley, with each of your families. Miss Cort is with

her, and begs her love. I have not time to say more, as I am just called away. My kind regard to all.

Yours affectionately,

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

LETTER LII:

To Mr. MORGAN, at the Timber Yard,
Bunhill Row, London.

Lazonby, Sept. 8, 1809.

Beloved for Christ and truth's sake,

YOU have, no doubt, expected a letter from me before this, which must have tried what patience you have in possession; and, if you are like me, you have not any to boast of. We had a prosperous journey down by the will of God. When we arrived at Stamford, where we meant to stop all night, and go to G. the next day, it was singular that the Justice and Mr. B. should both be on the top of the coach, and we within, and not know it till the coach drove into the inn-yard. They were on their return from meeting the Doctor in the isle of Ely, who I understand they left very well. We stopped at G. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; and, as the Justice had parted with his house, nothing would do but we must stop at Mr. B—'s, whose civility and attention

were such as we shall ever bear an affectionate remembrance of. Mrs. B. was very ill, confined to her room; but I have had a letter from Mr. B. since, and he informs me she is something better. Nothing would be heard but our stopping there a day or two on our return; and indeed it is greatly in favour of my little weak wife, as I should be afraid of undertaking the journey without stopping somewhere. During my stay with these choice friends a young lady was telling a circumstance of a poor woman in that neighbourhood, whose husband works for the Justice, that was among the Arminians; and when the Doctor was down (it is now about two years ago) she found in her heart a strong desire to go and hear him; but, when she got to the chapel door, these words of Paul came to her mind, "Heaping to themselves teachers, having itching ears." This caused her to lose this opportunity. Still she was determined to go, and she got in, and heard the next discourse, which was so blessed to her soul that she declared she could have fallen down on her knees in the chapel and blessed the Doctor in the name of the Lord; for he was so made manifest in her conscience by God's truth entering her heart with power, that, when she got out, she declared that the Arminians were altogether in a delusion, and she left them from that day forward; and, though they compass her about like bees, it is to no purpose, nor of course ever can be; for all the elect, when turned from darkness to light

by a divine power, are kept by the same power through faith unto salvation. God grant she may be found to stand as a pillar in the temple of God, and go no more out for ever. O how this people are longing for a visit from the Doctor! They are waiting as the thirsty land does for the rain. But the Father of all our mercies has the total direction of his people's hearts; and when there is work for him to do there, then the Lord will send him thither. There called at M. B—'s on the Sunday that we were there, two or three very nice people, who seemed to be sweetly bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. From G. we went to York, and thence to Leeds, where we stopped five days. The night before we left this bustling place a tradesman, who often visits my friend, got to talking upon different things, and my mentioning somewhat about the Bible, I forget what, I suppose he thought I had got a little bit of religion of some sort or other like himself, and, knowing I was from London, he looked me in the face, and said, 'Did you ever hear old Huntington preach in London?' 'Hear old Huntington,' says I; 'Yes, that I have; I have sat under his ministry upwards of seventeen years.' 'Aye; have you?' and replied, 'I have seen two or three pieces, that a man has in this place, wrote by him, and I like them so much that I would go with a deal of pleasure thirty or forty miles to hear him.' I put my hand in my pocket, and gave him the two last pieces of the

Doctor's, and I was to go with him the next day to hear the man they attend. We called on a friend by the way, and a precious soul he appears; looks and talks like an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. It is this man that has half a dozen of the Doctor's pieces, a list of which I made him give me. We went to hear the man. But, alas! there was nothing but great swelling words of vanity, not Jesus Christ, in all the sermon. They asked me how I liked him. I told them I believed that he was in a dismal state of blindness and ignorance; at least he had not let his light shine before men at that time. And he does not appear to furnish the head much; and as for the heart, I am sure he is not wise enough yet to understand that, either as deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, or as the palace of the king of grace, much less as having Christ in it the hope of glory. When we parted the next day I thought they would have shook my arm off; and the old gentleman with much sincerity said, 'Though I never saw you before I love you, and I love Mr. Huntington dearly too.' Blessed be God for every door that he has set before me for the spread of his servant's works; for I have lived to see them blessed; and they shall be blessed, because God will ever give testimony to the word of his own grace. When I mentioned my purpose of sending them some, they seemed to be afraid of divisions, as Mr. Huntington is

hated by most of the preachers, if not all, in L. I told them they wanted divisions, and should have them too, before ever there would be any real conversion to God. The poor creatures cannot hear any one that can touch their case, or describe their state; they have been long seeking water, but find none. Oh that the good Lord would condescend to send some waters into the wilderness, and cause streams to run in the desert, to give drink to his people, his chosen; for Zion is low, and in a low place. Ah, Mr. M. how highly is the city of London favoured! From L. we went direct to Cumberland, where we arrived safe, and found our friends as well as we could expect. My father is very well for an old man in his seventy-eighth year. There are a few sheep scattered up and down here that appear to love the Lord, and were very glad to see me; and all ask how the Doctor does. Last Sunday I spent mostly with my friend, who is very well, and I have no doubt, in my own mind, will be of that number who shall never draw back unto perdition, but of those that believe to the salvation of the soul. He made me laugh about Dr. M. Dean of C. As we were walking past his door the circumstance came fresh to his mind, which he related to me. He wrote a letter to the Dean, and sent him 'Barry on Election' to peruse, and told him he would call in a week. When he called, a servant in livery came to the door, and

led him through a long passage into a drawing-room, into which he entered with his great ploughman's shoes on, and there was the Dean seated, and seemed much disappointed to see such a poor fellow as S. call upon him. He asked him if he was the author of the letter, and the person that sent the book. S. answered, 'Yes, Sir.' 'Well,' said the Dean, 'I have read the book you sent me; but where people get this election into their heads there is then an end of all good living; it leads them to licentiousness; they may then live as they list.' To which S. replied, 'What! are ye a master in Israel, and knows nea better than that? For if a child of God could live as he list, he would live to the glory and praise of God always, and never sin in thought, word, or deed, more. This vain fancy is contrary to all the word of God, as well as to the experience of every saint; for God's electing grace in them all teaches them to deny ungodliness, not to commit all uncleanness with greediness.' Remarks of this kind brought the Dean to wave all further discourse, saying he was going to dinner, and S. might call again. But he never went more, having seen enough of the blindness of human wisdom in the things of God. We went to hear a person lately come to C. in the evening, who attempted to prove, from the eighth chapter of Romans, what was meant by being predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ,

that he might be the first-born among many brethren. But I could not understand him further than I was sure that he could not explain his text; for I think I should have understood something of it, if he had given a real sound account of the image of God in man, as he appears in it when created anew in Christ Jesus. I have received four books of the Doctor's by the coach from London, the last published; but I do not know who sent me them. I once thought you; then I thought again that you would never do that without a few lines. The glorious accounts rejoice my heart; and the desire and prayer of my soul is, that Zion's cords may be lengthened more and more, and that there may be an abundant influx of poor sensible sinners to the feast of fat things, where they may find everlasting entertainment, peace and rest for their souls.

Remember me to the Doctor, who I hope is well. I go to Penrith to-morrow, God willing, for a letter I expect from Cheapside, and to meet an old lady who I have sometimes written and sent the Doctor's books to, but never saw her till last Tuesday. How are the people of God sifted up and down; yea, as corn is sifted in a sieve. But God's promise is that not one grain shall ever fall to the earth, so as to perish with the earthly-minded ones in the great day. But to be excluded the public means of God's appointment is a great trial to a thirsty soul. That the God of all grace

may be with and bless you and yours, water you every moment, keep you night and day, be the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever, is the desire of,

Dear Sir,

Yours most affectionately in the best bonds,

C. GOULDING.

LETTER LIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Paddington, March 5, 1796.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, true yokefellow, and companion in tribulation; grace and peace be with thee through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I MUST confess that the works of God are wonderful, and as all things work together for good to them that love him, so all things work together for evil to them that hate him. I no sooner hear of a damnable heresy sent by a heretic to entangle the simple, but as soon as I find out what it is, my cruse springs like an overflowing fountain, and twenty texts flow in harmony against their confusion. Two scriptures have been on my mind through all the late scuffle, and against all the heap of penny-post squibs that have been sent to me upon the subjects of Arianism, Socinianism, and Sabellianism. The first text convinced me

that the Holy Ghost had no hand in the writing of any of them, for he is not the author of confusion, and their letters are nothing else; and the second is, that the true light never once shined into them, for God's words are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge; there is nothing froward or perverse in them, Prov. viii. 8, 9.

These men serve to stir up the Lord's watchmen to vigilance and watchfulness; and their lies, under the teaching of God, drive us further into the truth, and the good Spirit of God shews the consistency of his teaching in the false mirror of their self-contradictions; and by these means draws forth gratitude and thankfulness to God for the little we do know, and for not leaving us thus to stumble and take offence at the greatest truths in the Bible. But so it is written, and so it must be; "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," while "The path of the just shall shine more and more, even to perfect day;" but who makes us to differ? To God only wise be glory and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and ever, amen. I have this testimony in my conscience, that I shall be a saviour of death unto death, or of life unto life; but it is astonishing to see the pains they take to damn themselves and others; and the more success they have in seduction, the more increased will be their torment, until, as Milton says of the majesty of Satan, he is only 'supreme

in misery;’ may my God reward them according to their works. One that has pursued me these five years, Benjamin Byng by name, he even followed me one cold evening to Brentford, and has circulated some of Elliot’s books there among the simple. By these things I learn that the devil suffered some loss through the instrumentality of the Coalheaver, or else he would never send so many of his body-guards to attempt a recapture of his lost subjects: and I take comfort in this, that Christ’s sheep shall never be plucked out of his hands; that the deceivableness of unrighteousness shall never work effectually in any but in them that perish: and I bless my God that I shall meet these face to face in the great day. I see, more clear than ever, what Peter means by damnable heresies, or by errors that accompany eternal damnation; for the confusion of such men, their implacable hatred at the Trinity, their effrontery, self-conceit, and infallibility, are evident tokens of perdition. I can see clear enough where they are, but they cannot see where I am; I know their standing, and who fixed them there, but they know not mine: “The spiritual man judgeth all things, but he himself is judged of no man;” and here we have the advantage.

I wonder not at God keeping thee from exercising thyself in that high matter which is too wonderful for men, for I believe, nor have I a single doubt of, thine eternal election, and that of God; and upon the neck of such God lays

a secret rein, to keep them from the sin unto death. "All that ever came before me," saith Christ, "were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them;" you know what I mean.

I believe my dear friend will have his wish; for they seem to push me at every corner to drive me into a controversy upon this great and glorious truth. I know that Christ is able to use the weakest instrument, and he hath promised both a mouth and wisdom; and I know he is faithful, and that the lip of truth shall be established for ever, and the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped sooner or later; and what the Lord hath enabled me to preach, I believe he will enable me to defend: yet as I am getting old, I prefer peace to war. But my dear brother 'knows nothing as he ought to know;' if he knows his sinful self, and his own ignorance, he knows two great lessons, two branches of knowledge which are essential to the ministry, for God hath chosen the base and the foolish to confound the honourable and the wise. 'You cannot despair, nor feel the guilt and terrors you used to feel:' no, my son, nor thou never wilt feel them again; where the dying love of Jesus once enters and operates, where peace is once felt and enjoyed, and faith drawn out to Christ, and made to work by love to him, the die is cast, the lot is in the lap, the lines are fallen to thee in a fair ground, and the chosen one is a pillar of the truth, and such have a goodly heritage. Vindictive wrath and un-

atoned guilt, never meet and work there again; fatherly anger may, or what is called a little wrath; "In a little wrath I hid myself from thee for a moment," &c.: and again, "I smote him and was wroth;" yet the anchor of hope now counteracts the workings of despair, and one feeling sense of the operations of the dying love of Jesus shews the non-imputation of sin; what was finished upon the cross is impressed upon the soul; the first was done for us, and this is known by the latter, which is done in us. Thou wilt never bring thy guilt and terrors back again, my son, and therefore do not try at it; "The sins of Israel and Judah shall be sought for, but they shall not be found, for there shall be none: for I will pardon them whom I reserve." The knowledge of wisdom has been sweet to thy soul, and there is a reward, and thine expectation shall not be cut off, Prov. xxiv. 14. Power in the pulpit, and chains out of it, were my exercise for three years; this is going in and out and finding pasture. The pulpit lifts us up, the chains pull us down; the latter keeps us weak, the former is the Lord's strength made perfect in our weakness. When God wings us for flight, the devil's aim is to exalt us above measure; God loads us with chains to keep us humble, and to hide pride from our eyes. If God but for one week unchained thee thou wouldest stink of self, and the devil would swell thee with pride, until you would find yourself bordering upon presumption, and you

would be ready to curse every ear that is not attentive; to this unreined fury is the damnable heretic given up to, and it is plain enough which course he steers. God bless thee.

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Paddington.

I AM glad to hear of my dear friend, and had wondered what was become of him; and indeed I suspected that he was either ill, or else intending to visit me. I have a bad cold on me, which hath held me during the frost, but I was laid aside through hoarseness only one week; am still troubled with a very bad cough, but we must have a something. I am still in the furnace, though the opposition sinks apace, and those who support it are almost desperate at me. I have an attorney's letter, and a copy of a writ, both in my house at this time; this is about a pew in the chapel, which those will engage and keep empty, who are the most staunch in the opposition. I am sometimes ready to wonder whereunto this will grow. Now for a morsel of savoury meat which came seasoned to me. Zephaniah iii. 14;

"Sing, O Zion," the redeemed of the Lord;
 "shout, O Israel;" Israelites indeed, prevalent
 with God in prayer: "One shall surname himself
 by the name of Israel." "Rejoice, &c. O Jeru-
 salem;" which is the gospel church which hath
 an husband, when local Jerusalem is in bondage,
 &c. "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments;"
 both sin, and the curse due to sin. "He hath
 cast out thine enemy;" "Now shall the prince
 of this world be cast out." "Thou shalt not see
 evil any more;" not trouble, persecution, tempt-
 ation, distress, &c. these we must see; but un-
 atoned guilt, the eternal curse, and the destroying
 power of Satan, these thou shalt see no more in
 that day; namely, when the day-star, day-spring,
 and sun of righteousness arise; when Jewish sha-
 dows and Gentile glooms flee; when the night
 shall be far spent, and the day appear at hand;
 when children of the day, and of light shall shine
 forth. "Fear thou not;" not them that are in
 security, and no fear of God before their eyes, for
 these have no fears to rebuke; but such as fear
 wrath, death, and every thing else. "And to
 Zion let not thine hands be slack," or faint; not
 hands of the body, but the hands of the soul,
 namely, faith; "Cast not away thy confidence."
 "Lay hold on eternal life;" hold the skirt of the
 Jew; hold him fast. "Remember how thou hast
 heard, and received, and hold fast;" "I will put
 on you none other burthen, but that which thou
 hast, hold fast till I come." Hold the form of

sound words; hold fast thine attainments, the faithful word, and the profession of faith without wavering, &c. Let not thine hands faint; strengthen them by prayer, reading, meditation, and looking to him who is our strength.

“The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.” The Lord who subdues all other of our lords, human and infernal, who would lord it over conscience; “Other lords have had dominion over us,” &c. Thy God; here we see the deity of the Lord God and Saviour, which are manifest by his works of creation, of providence, of grace and glory. . He is, in the midst of thee; that is, preaching in the days of his flesh, and afterwards by his Spirit and presence, and in his disciples’ hearts by faith, and the hope of glory. He is mighty; he will save from sin, guilt, death and wrath. “He will rejoice over thee, as the bridegroom doth over the bride;” “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom,” &c. Or like the joy of harvest, I have sowed, and ye have reaped, and both rejoice together, John iv. 36. “Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast revealed these things unto babes;” “Rejoice with me, friends and neighbours,” angels and saints, “for I have found my sheep which was lost.” “He will rest in his love;” not in Shiloh, nor in the tabernacle of David, nor in the house of Solomon. “What house will ye build me? or where is the place of my rest?” “Zion is my rest for ever,” &c. I will win their hearts,

and discover my love; unite them to me, and rest in my own love shed abroad in their hearts. "He will joy over thee with singing;" "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you." "Drink ye all of this." I will not drink of it until it is fulfilled in my Father's kingdom. When my humanity is in the fulness of joy, and you are filled with the Holy Ghost, then we shall drink together the new wine in my Father's kingdom; I in glory, and you in glorious grace. And he sung a hymn and went out, and so rejoiced over them with singing. We looked for Mr. M. and Mr. B. according to promise, but all in vain.

God bless thee, and pray for

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I RECEIVED my dear brother's epistle, and said in my heart, I wish he was with me, that I might doctor him, and nurse him myself, as I have bought him a new bed, blankets, mattress, bolster, and pillows, &c. for his reception. He did not tell me whether he received my last letter.

No small stir is in London about my last discourse; two men are about to answer it. Hand-

bills are stuck up at every corner about the subject to be debated at the Westminster Forum, viz. 'Which hath done most injury to Christianity by preaching and writing, W. H. S. S. or Tom Paine?' the entrance money, sixpence per head, which amounts to fifteen pounds per night. Last Lord's day morning I laboured from 2 Peter ii. 9, 10; on Sunday evening from Jeremiah xviii. 7, 8; and last night from Isaiah xxvi. 9, 10. On Tuesday night from the 91st Psalm, 4th verse; that Psalm hath many excellent texts in it: it sets forth our dwelling-place, and calls it a secret one; it was the ark formerly, but it is Christ now, and God says they shall abide and not go out; abide under the shadow, the wings of the cherub formerly, but the shadow of a great rock now, and so on. I have had my health charmingly this winter compared with what it used to be; blessed be God for his undeserved and unexpected goodness. The things which you complain of are the members of old Adam, which are the constant inhabitants and constant attendants on one; every evil which you find and feel are in my heart as well as in yours; for though I never let lodgings, and detest the thought of it, yet these occupy at times every room in my house. If I hire a coach they all get in with me; I am never free from them, but when preaching in the pulpit, and not always then; they often follow me to the door, and sit with me till I begin, and then at times they disappear, but not always. Thou wilt find

these, my son, on thy death-bed; a believer is never alone; if the good man is not at home the bad man is, and if the new man be put off the old man is put on. No, my son, though I believe thou hast got in thee that faith that is born of God, and overcomes the world; and that hope that God begets his children to, and which grace is born of the Spirit also; and this new man hath been produced in thee since thou hast been in England, and may therefore with propriety be called an Englishman, yet the old Welshman will plague him, and call him a Saeson, or a Saxon, and bear a pique and a grudge against him. I wish he was in his own country among the black cattle; but, alas! though he will pursue thee, under God he may be of great use to thee; he is a weight to keep us down, a check to keep us back, a cord to prevent us from swelling too big, a shaver to discover our baldness, and a troubler to make us cry and pray: yea, he hath a great hand with our hearers; it is often through his policy they get an appetite, and long for Sunday; if free from him they would get idle, get full, and get whole, and the pews would be empty. When this devil has plagued me the most he leaves no guilt, God will not impute it; and after the hardest battle with him, I expect the best times in the pulpit, and so it generally happens. "By these things men live, and in all these is the life of our spirit; so wilt thou revive us, and cause us to live," for without these we should be dead.

These make us cry, watch, wait, tremble, examine, fear, faint, despair of self, and of every thing else but Christ; and the more we are plagued with these, the more power we have, by which we are kept; these things make us live out of self, and upon Christ and his righteousness; they make us sick of all besides, and dead to all but himself. I have heard lately of the awful confession of one of Winchester's converts, who died some time ago, namely, that there was a hell, and he knew that he was going into it, and that he was as sure that there would be no coming out of it. But who makes us to differ? O what debtors to grace! Should you continue hoarse long I wish you would come up in the stage, and spend a few days with me.

Ever yours,

W. H.

LETTER LVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

BEFORE my dear brother's letter came, for some few days I had been indulged in a very peculiar way; the King of kings humbled himself indeed, not only to behold the things done in heaven, but even to the greatest familiarity with the meanest on earth. I continually felt for him, and there

he was; my gratitude flowed out as his love flowed in; he shined, and I saw his glory, faithfulness, and truth. Every thought went into sweet captivity to the obedience of him, and he met them, encouraged them, entertained them, and they sucked a sweetness from him, and returned with his thoughts towards me. When I lay down, there he was; if I awaked in the night, my heart fled to him, and he met it; a few sweet tears and silent blessings went up, and down I went again into beloved sleep; and in the morning early, when I awaked, he was still with me, and his language was, "Arise, my fair one, and come away;" and up I got, and longed for prayer to ease the bottle that wanted vent; and thus I continued for near a week, until no company suited me; the melting sense of his love, and a spirit of meekness, made me long for the hermit's cell. I was rather surprised at these indulgences, knowing that my weaning time has been over for some years, and the delightful bosom of the great Shepherd hath been left by me to hold the younger lambs. I went from the bosom many years ago to the knee, where, after a little dandling and shaking, I lost some of my pleasing heat; from the knee I went lower, and was set down at his feet to receive of his words; and this led my faith into the green pastures, where I fed on knowledge and understanding, and every fresh discovery was a new walk: but though this food was sweet, establishing, and satisfying, yet it was

a long time before I could cease craving after the breasts of consolation. From the green pastures I was turned adrift among the sheep, to go behind, to hear his voice, and follow him. But this last visit was much resembling the first; I could not tell what the visitation could mean, whether I was to set my house in order, or to prepare for another attack of the enemy; but I soon found it to be the latter, and do expect worse is coming on: however, I was sweetly composed and becalmed through the little trial, notwithstanding a few blustering winds whirled through my mind to disquiet me. I am now in my old post again, which is, holding fast what I have received, fighting against thieves that would rob me, and looking out for fresh attainments; but, above all, hoping for the glory that is to be revealed in us.

My eyesight gets very dim, my natural strength much abates, and many bodily infirmities creep on; nor do I expect to serve out my fourth apprenticeship; but I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded that our glorious day of visitation is going away; the sun is setting; the power of godliness is cut at, and ridiculed, by novices who are lifted up with pride; and full of hatred towards those who dare not say a confederacy. When this day goes, the major part of the children of light will go with it, and a dark night will succeed; and the hour of temptation will come on all the world to try them: and I am much mistaken if our present graceless professors,

who hate the power, and the preachers, and lovers of it, are not left to sustain this shock, in which God will make them manifest; "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation;" this is the Lord's watchword to us. I believe these words to be spoken even to us, to the small remnant in this our Sardis, who have not defiled their garments with heresy, popery, Arminianism, or any open sins, or scandal; who have not been left to go naked, so as for the enemies of the truth to see their shame; these, saith the Lord, "Shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy."

These last tidings of my son have rejoiced my heart: a little of the sweetness of thy visit reached me; the savour of his name will soon begin to spread itself, the power of the Spirit will go forth, the fame will go abroad, and the joyful sound will be known and obeyed. Every love-token will raise thine expectations, inflame thy desires, and increase thy longings, until every thought will be busy, every faculty of the soul in expectation, and the heart will be wide open to receive the King of kings; and every let, hinderance, or disappointment, will be attended with jealousy, love-sickness, and fainting-fits; for when once he begins to tell thee all that is in thine heart towards him, and to shew thee his glory, there will be no more spirit left in thee; thou wilt be a dove without a heart, a creature without strength, a riddle without a meaning, a machine without a prin-

ciple; for he will so swallow thee up in his glorious light and love, as nothing will be left thee but a blank or a dream. And thus I am come beforehand to anoint thee to this mystical burial and resurrection, under the operation of the Holy Ghost; under which change, old things will pass away, and all things will become new; thou wilt return to the days of thy youth, and thy flesh will be fresher than a child's; time will shew thee whether I am a liar or not. I wept over thine epistle with many tears, and blessed him for his mercy to thee, because he hath not cast off his kindness to the poor and needy; and because he hath confirmed the word of his servant, and performed the counsel of his unworthy messenger. I have long stood alone, not daring to come into the secret, into the assembly, which is so confused as to cry some one thing, and some another, the greater part not knowing wherefore they are come together; but now I expect a companion in travel, a true yokefellow, speaking the same things, treading in the same steps; a fellow-helper unto the kingdom of God, which stands in power; none but these, none but these. May the candle of God shine bright on thy head, and the dew of heaven lay on thy branch; may his glory be fresh in thee, and his secret upon thy tabernacle, is the prayer of,

Ever thine,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LVII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Beloved of God, true Yokefellow, and faithful Companion.

I HAVE just received the favour of thy last epistle, and thought it was long in coming; I was ready to say, Why tarry the wheels of his chariot, hath he not sped? But Cushi is come at last with good tidings, and has not run by the way of the plain, but is come in the safe and good old way of truth and tribulation; he looks not back, nor tarries in all the plain. To the mountain, my son, to the mountain where the King of kings keeps his court, and embraces every royalist that submits to his standard, sues for his favour, and accepts of the punishment of his rebellion. Ziba, the servant of Saul, hath belied thy servant; forget thee I do not, hate thee I cannot; he is one of them that sows discord among brethren: however, if he speaks fair believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart: he is the father of lies, and this is a child of his own, and I will not father his bastards, for I never conceived it nor brought it forth. No, my son, I have travailed again and again in birth till Christ be formed in thee; nor do I believe that I shall labour in vain, or bring forth for trouble, for I believe that I am one of the blessed of the Lord, and thou mine off-

spring with me. The parting, and thy pre-engagement to dine at thy last visit, was not so agreeable to me; I could not send thee away with pipe and tabret, as usual; I hope it will not be so the next time. However, this thy sickness hath not been unto death, but for the glory of God, and the good of his servant; and thou hast now seen one text fulfilled. He is a very present help in trouble. The day-star is risen in thine heart, yea, call it the morning-star, for it is the fore-runner of perfect day: the sun will soon rise upon thee with healing in his beams, and then thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning. The sweet sensations that thou hast lately felt, is the Comforter, my son; it is the myrrh that drops on the handles of the lock, and makes the bar of unbelief give way; "The Lord whom ye seek will suddenly come to his temple." It was a distant view of him skipping upon the mountains, and leaping upon the hills, that kept the spouse looking from the lion's den, from the mountains of the leopards, and from the land of Shenir; and I hope the Lewes Downs will become the hill Mizar. It is a heavenly wooing; the courtship is going on, and the union will follow; it is a sight, a discovery of the only, and best beloved; a view of his beauty, worth, and superexcellency: this is the life, the soul of real religion, and the whole body of divinity, for all without it is only a name to live; to fetch the rake and the hoe will be the greatest difficulty. 'But no text was applied:' never mind

the shell if thou get the kernel; it is not the written word—life, but the Spirit's quickening operations; not the written words—pardon, peace, light, and love, but forgiveness obtained, peace applied, God shining into the heart, and the love of God shed abroad there, that are the things that accompany salvation: "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power;" nothing else will ever subdue sin, or maintain the soul's standing in faith and hope. Thou hast acknowledged me in part, and I have no doubt thou wilt acknowledge me to the end, that my predictions and boasting of thee will be found a truth. I will not say that a few more accounts of these love-visits will not provoke the old weather-beaten Coalheaver to jealousy; it is not always so agreeable to one that bears the heat and burthen of the day, to see him get the penny who has wrought but one hour, although I know it is right for the master of the house to do as he will with his own; and I hope mine eye will not be evil because he is good. Go on, my son, and get out if possible, I will not hold thee by the heel, but hope ever to remain a fellow-helper of thy joy. Grace and peace be with thee.

Ever thine,

W. H.

LETTER LVIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THE Lord God of heaven be for ever blessed for his goodness to thee, and the Lord God for ever bless thee, and teach thy hands to war and thy fingers to fight, so that a bow of steel may be broken by thine arms; that thou mayest run through a troop, and by the help of thy God leap over the wall, and scale the city of the mighty, and cast down the strength of the confidence thereof; for, "The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit:" and may the high priest bless him every time that he returns from the slaughter of these old and foolish kings, who will no more be admonished. But what hath my son been at? for I must interrogate him; is not this the fulfilment of my ancient prediction? is it not heaps upon heaps? Behold I, by my abominable wickedness, slew my own master, but who slew all these? The riders on horses are confounded, while those that ride upon white asses rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord; even the daughters of Zion celebrate thy victories, yea, in the places of drawing water, shall they who are delivered from the noise of archers rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord toward the inhabitants of the villages in Israel; then shall the people go down, and possess the

gates of their enemies. Besiege, my son; arise, and anoint the shield, for the stout-hearted are spoiled, and none of the men of might have found their hand. The Lord God, and the most mighty, hath mounted his white horse; King of kings, and Lord of lords, appear both on his vesture and on his thigh; his power proclaims his majesty, and the slaughter the dint of his sword. He hath raised thee up that thou mayest requite them, therefore pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them that have blasted thy reputation, and without doubt recover all. Send no ambassage, desire no conditions of peace, and beware of their old bottles, their clouted shoes and mouldy bread; make no league with these; old bottles are not fit for new wine, clouted shoes are not those which the gospel prepares, nor is the bread which came down from heaven ever mouldy. They pretend to come because of the name of the Lord, but by the life of Pharaoh they are nothing but spies, therefore contend with them, smite them, and pluck off their hair, for baldness shall come upon all their heads, and they shall walk naked, and the just shall see their shame. The sister, and spouse, of my Lord and master begins to appear in her cultivated state; digging, manuring, sowing, and planting, is sweetly going on; the wall of salvation, the bond of the covenant, and the hedge of thorns which is promised to Zion, and which was such a blessing to Job, that even the serpent could not bite him till he was permitted

by the divine husbandman; joy, peace, praise, love, and life, will spring up abundantly to the honour of God, and thine eyes will see it. But the fountain of all this is sealed, and when unsealed it will spring up, and flow out; but all this depends upon the Holy Spirit's operations, who opens and shuts both the heart and the mouth; and who disposes his gifts and grace as he will. That the Lord bless and keep thee, is the daily prayer of,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LIX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I HAVE received my brother's epistle, and he is still occupying business in deep waters, and through fire and water we must go before we come out into the wealthy place. All the spoils that Israel took under the law were to be purified; that which would stand the fire must go through the fire, and all the rest through the water; and so must all the spoils taken from the great, and from the strong man armed; you know what to do with that text. There is no getting into the bond of the covenant without passing under the rod; you are not deeper in the path of tribulation

than Job, nor than poor S. S. therefore all the time you can find one bleating sheep or lowing ox before you, it is the footsteps of the flock, and is holy and consecrated ground: and our Jacob will not overdrive the cattle, nor let Esau help him, lest he should. Quit yourself like a man, stand your ground; plead guilty, plead the atonement, plead the promise, the covenant, and the invitations of God, and confess all that is amiss; "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." We are to pray, and not to faint; to beg the three loaves at midnight, and importune till the master arises and gives us for the poor friend that is on his way, that is, the poor starving soul that calls for the bread of life. The importunate widow fainted not, and the elect cry day and night, and shall not God avenge them? yea, surely. Various are the changes that pass over a soul in your case, sometimes hoping and then hopeless, active, and then dead, earnest and then indifferent, submissive and then rebellious, melting and then callous, shining and then begloomed, talkative and then dumb, at the door of hope and then in the belly of hell; and this is all furnace-work, tribulation-work, paddling in the pit of horror, and mire of corruption. Go on, my son, go on, and never give it up. I have just got another shower of paper kites raining upon my head, and have been these three weeks describing in a sermon the

workings of legal bondage; it will be published next Saturday, and I will send you ten or a dozen.

God bless thee.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

NOT unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. It is enough for me that God regards the son of my vows, and not for our sakes, but for his own covenant name's sake, and for his dear Son's sake in whom that name is manifested; that he hears the cries of poor worms, and humbles himself to grant their requests. I have done as thou hast desired me, I have thanked the best and most benign of all parents in thy behalf, and blessed him, and praised him for thee, and on thy account; and if heart and conscience, if feelings and affections can speak, God cordially accepted it, and it was more pleasing unto him than a bullock that has horns and hoofs. I cannot help weeping and laughing while I write this, thinking what a poor, blind, beggarly mass of ignorance, filth, and scum they are who now do the

service of the sanctuary, and minister to the Lord in the priest's office: one came from the swine-herd, another from the coal-barge, to take orders; but still it is Aaron and his sons, the everlasting Father and his family; and our anointing is that of an everlasting priesthood. But there is such a disparity between the high-priest in the holy of holies, and we who wait at the altar, that, if our faith was not from above, we should have just right to conclude that our approaches to the mercy-seat, would be as dangerous as that of Korah. But the anointing oil is upon us, and God has taken us from among the Gentiles to be priests and Levites, and to minister in the holy place; and we know that we are accepted, and our enemies know it as well as we, and not a small number are contending, and would even fight for the office: and there are not a few that thrust themselves into it whom God thrusts out again, as he did the king with his leprosy in his forehead. The blood of sprinkling upon the conscience is the atonement, and the fine linen of an imputed righteousness is the ephod, and truth in the mind and heart, this is the curious girdle; hope of salvation, this is the bonnet, and a heavenly countenance is the mitre; love to the brethren, this is the breastplate; gospel knowledge and perfect love are the Urim and Thummim; the joy of faith is the anointing oil; a believing heart is the golden censer; the graces of God's Spirit are the odoriferous spices; the

Spirit is the fire that kindles the incense; and earnest desires of being accepted is the cloud of smoke that ascends up before the throne. This is the furniture of the priests with which they are furnished for all the service of the sanctuary. A few days ago I was obliged all at once to send a few lines to your excellency, not knowing how low you might be, but I know of none who make more noise about little matters than you do; and if I had thought that my letter would have lain two days unopened, I should not have taken the pains to send it. Adieu.

W. H.

LETTER LXI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THIS day is Thursday, and I have just received yours. Thou wilt not go out with haste, nor go by flight; the Lord goes before thee, and will gather thee up behind; so that the leadings of his kind providence, and the energy of his grace shall lead the van, and all the faithfulness and truth that he has shewed shall bring up the rear. The greatest cause of my dear son's grief springs from the want of information of the Spirit's work; I must interrogate my beloved. "We are saved by hope," this therefore is one of the things that accom-

pany salvation; and in this thou hast stood firm and fast for ten years at least, nor has it ever lost ground or lost strength; nay, you have abounded in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost. The principal work of God's Spirit is that of purging us from our filthiness, and from our idols; you labour not under the guilt, nor under the weight of either of these; this you dare not disown, but must confess the truth of my assertions.

2. The quickening operations of the Spirit are the most blessed, and the most invaluable influences from God that ever the offspring of Adam knew or enjoyed; and this is manifest in thee by illumination, affection, motion, and sensations, which give you an appetite; and what we eat we love, and what we love we crave and covet, seek and follow after. The kingdom stands in power; this has made thee willing in every sense, and has sensibly, evidently, and conspicuously fortified, emboldened, equipped, and furnished thee, and supported thee in every time of trouble; yea more, it hath lifted thee up when secretly fallen, more than seven times, or than seventy times seven. As thy days so has thy strength been; you have been filled with power and might by the Spirit to shew Jacob his transgressions. And this has sensibly risen up in thee—sometimes at home, before you went forth to the pulpit; sometimes in the vestry, just before you entered; and sometimes you found it as soon as you began, though it went not in with you; and sometimes

it came in and taught thee in the midst of the feast. To confine the Holy Spirit's work to joy, love, and enlargement, is limiting the Holy One of Israel. Those that are superficially drawn, as they tell us, have their passions moved, and the affections of nature stirred, and the way-side hearers were all glee: but the Spirit's quickening, alarming, and furnishing conscience to do its office, is above all these; life lies in feeling, in tenderness, in appetite, in the food, in fear, in hope, and in faith; in imputed righteousness, in the removal of sin, and in the sentence of justification. And you are in possession of all these, yea and of love too. Now, was there to come one into thy presence to speak slightly or lightly of our Lord Jesus, of his word, or of his family, you would consider yourself highly offended: nay, more; you would not suffer the things to come out of their lips which a little before were muttered in secret from your own mouth: the things I do I allow not, neither in myself, nor in others. There are sons of thunder in the work, as well as sons of consolation. But the saving point with us is, whether we are ministers of the Spirit or of the letter; and the grand difference of this is, the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Death unto death is ministered to infidels by good men, who are a sweet savour unto God. But life and power have attended the word of God from thy mouth; and this is the seal of confirmation to the ambassador's mission, and in the consciences of

all these thou art made manifest. And what shall I say more? Shall I turn Jewish orator, and say, that very worthy deeds have been done to our nation by thy providence, and that we accept it at all times, most noble Felix? God bless the son of my vows, so prays the

COALHEAVER.

It is a sad fault in thee, and I see it in the account of poor M——, that you measure God by yourself: when you are in the most sweet frames, then God loves you; but when in the reverse of these, then he hates you. The reverse of this is the truth; the language of the covenant is, that you shall remember your own evil way that was not good, and loath yourselves for your iniquity when I am pacified towards you. And this may be seen in Job's experience, and in God's visit to Daniel, when all his comeliness was turned into corruption, though he was greatly beloved. You do vex the Holy Spirit in these things, and dishonour him by such a carriage: leave off this folly, I have long since learned this in myself.

LETTER LXII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THIS minute I received the epistle of my son; the son of my faith, and the son of my vows.

The archers have sorely shot at him, hated him, and grieved him; but his bow abides in strength, and the arms of his hands are made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. Surely there is no enchantment against my son, nor divination against him that can prevail. He has never lost one battle yet; he has never given up one truth; he has never turned his back, lost one inch of ground, or quitted the field of action; he stands and withstands in the evil day; nor can the devil get an advantage of him, though he plies all his devices, both of fraud and force. Falling from first love, falling from our own steadfastness, falling into trouble, or even into sin, or into despondency, or even falling down, or falling back, is by no means losing the day; the professor must fall finally away, and return and renew the attack no more, ere the devil can shout victory, or keep the field. I wonder at the power of God in thee; thou art in the same warfare as thy poor old father; and the first word of promise and of comfort, that ever came to me in the world was brought to me in the field of battle. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." And it is remarkable, that every blessing of grace and of glory, which are held out to the seven churches, are all promised to the overcomers. The panoply of heaven is upon thee; the Lord is the sword of thine excellency, the shield of thy faith, thy breastplate of righteousness, and thy helmet of salvation: nor hast thou lost one piece of armour,

one grace of the Spirit, not one beam of life, nor one grain of strength, nor sent one embassy, to desire conditions of peace. My son stands his ground, and the Lord his God is with him. For although he is old, lame, feeble, and has no human might, yet the lame take the prey, the weak say they are strong, and to them that have no might the Lord increases strength: thou art in league with a good ally; and though one prevail, yet two shall withstand him, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Had not God been in thee as a mighty and terrible one, thou hadst been in black despair, and in a madhouse, or in hell, long ago. But God dwells with the broken and with the contrite heart; and it is the almighty Spirit of God that leads thee forth, shields thy head, and brings thee off, and makes thee more than a conqueror through his undeserved love. And of this be assured, that whatsoever is born of God must overcome the world; not one fruit of the Spirit; not one grace, no, not even meekness, humility, or fear, can be sullied, lost, destroyed, or be overcome, even though all the powers of hell unite against it; grace must and shall reign over hellish hate and infernal rage, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Quit thyself like a man of God, and be strong, for God will make him at times keep silence, that thou mayest renew thy strength; he will never follow thee with more violence than I had. Wherefore, have at him again; he is more foiled, more desperate at being baffled by such

poor worms, than we are at his rage: remember how God bantered the devil in praise of his servant Job. God for ever bless thee; I am poorly, and at home.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I GREATLY admire the wisdom, or rather the cunning, of his excellency. He gives me to understand that he has been favoured with some good cheer this Christmas; and all the time the cellar door is open, and the feast of wisdom continues, all is silent; he is sure to eat up his morsel alone, and the stranger to have no part with him; he warms himself with his own fleece, and shuts his doors against the travellers; the whole lamb he keeps to himself, without inviting his neighbour; all his labour is for his mouth, for his belly craveth it of him, and thus he brings forth fruit unto himself. But as soon as the famine comes on, then he sends forth his begging petition, sounds out his complaints, lays out the lark-lines, baits his hooks, trims his nets, hangs out his purse, and calls upon every passenger to remember the poor debtor. By his last epistle his grief

is far from being very great; for abundant grief is always abundant in words, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; but here are but two pages, thinly filled, in his last epistle, and he had hard work to pump up even these small contents. But he tells me that he will leave his complaint upon himself, which I believe he may do, without being much burdened or bowed down. I am quite charmed to see him go on so well; "By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." The continual plague of the heart keepeth us from confidence in the flesh; it makes the mind cleave to the Saviour alone; it keeps our language pure from fleshly savour; it makes us speak evangelically; while the steadfastness of God's covenant, and his abundant mercy in keeping our souls in hope, serves to exalt the power of God, which appears all-sufficient in human weakness, and grace to reign, even when sin and Satan both combine against it. And, moreover, the Spirit at such times makes continual intercession for us, which appears by the deep sighs, the holy breathings, the fervent desires, the earnest cries, the pious longing, and blessed appetite that craves after the enjoyment of the bridegroom's presence, and at which times the new man and the renewed conscience, loath the deceitful baits and delusive morsels that Satan, or flesh and blood, can present to the mind. At the bottom of all, even in desertions, there is a pure love to the Lord, a confidence that even this

shall work for good, and a hope of revivals and refreshings from the Lord's presence when he returns again; union with him is the groundwork, main-spring, and the root of all real and spiritual devotion, and all the beauties of holiness spring from this root, and the streams of heavenly adoration rise from this source.

The DOCTOR.

LETTER LXIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I HAVE often thought, and am now persuaded, that single men and old maids are strangers to paternal affections; or to that love, care, and concern that is so weighty to fathers and mothers in Israel. Yours informs me that it is now two months since you heard from me, which I believe is true, but one of those months elapsed before I received an answer to, (or rather an acknowledgment of your fault in not answering) my kind and indulgent epistle. And when this formal scrap came, it only irritated me; I therefore resolved on the golden rule, to mete as you had measured: that is, to stay a whole month before I put pen to paper. And what tutor can condemn the pupil? What example can condemn the copier, if he treads in the leader's steps? Had I been answered under the influence that God conveyed by mine,

I had received some fruits from you, or at least mine own with usury. But I am put off with husks; there is no cluster to eat, when my soul desireth the first ripe fruits: and indeed, had you been within reach, I should have put off the Saxon and put on the ancient Briton, and have given you either the scourge of the tongue, or the onset of the Welchman: or else have proved what the law of Moses can do with an application. But enough of this. Had I, or should I have, a thousand sons, the scrap of excellence stands as my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength; the right of the firstborn, and a double portion of all I have, is his; other sons have done wisely, but he excels them all. My God of late has been most kind, tender, and good to me; I have had much on my hands, my head, and my heart, but he brings me through with an high hand, mingling all my pleasing portions with a mixture of aloes, that the sweet taste of the little book may not lift me up above measure.

Adieu!

W. H.

LETTER LXV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

No suffering fleet in a storm, no disabled vessel at tow, nay, Job's body in sore boils, with his

broken skin, and loathsome stench, was ever more visibly shattered, and rent, and torn, than this little part of the mystical body of Christ at Providence Chapel hath been by the instrumentality of a minister of Satan. I was jealous over them with a godly jealousy, but this turned to my reproach; I was then for a little while left to feel a spirit of heaviness, but meekness attended, and counteracted that: since which time no small share of spiritual might hath been afforded to the inner man, for which I bless and adore the best of friends. I stand my ground, and from my station they will not pull me down; God maintains my lot, which is to be as his mouth, and to burn incense. The tables are turned; my spirit of jealousy which operated upon me, is poured into their bosom who have hated me for telling the truth; they sit with leanness in their souls, dismay in their faces, and envy in their hearts; while those who abide by the old crib, and love clean provender, feed in all high places; and how the feast of these agrees with the fast of others, I will leave you to guess, who have so often read of their grudging who are not satisfied. The real wheat begins to fall together in the heap, and the chaff is gathered by the whirlwind out of the floor, and I am determined to purge out the old leaven that is left, if I have not a baker's dozen remaining; I mean thirteen. The name of Antinomian seems now to be wiped off; the pulpits call for candour and mantles of love; ministers

are called to suffer the loss of all things but their character; but that must be spared—yes, as God spared the reputation of Eli's sons. There hath been one awful stroke among us, and I call it Gad, for I think a troop will follow. Pray come up next Monday; and I think if you were to set off on the Sunday evening, you might come fifteen or twenty miles, which would help both your horse and you. But this I must leave; farewell. Ever thine, in fire and water,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER LXVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM sorry to find that my friend is ill again. Some such flying reports have reached my ears, but from whence they originated I know not. I have been this week pondering on a fresh line of things, some new thoughts which came to me, on making some observations on the sudden changes of my frames; and how I felt myself when indulged, and how matters stood with me when these indulgences were denied me. I considered what Elihu called matter; "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." This he calls wine in his belly that wanted vent, that it was ready to burst

like new bottles. "I am full of matter," says he; "the spirit within me constraineth me." This matter, therefore, is inspiration, or the divine influences of the Holy Spirit in the souls of the regenerate.

2. I considered what is called by Job, "The root of the matter;" which is love, the most excellent fruit of the whole work of grace in the soul, which is shed abroad or infused, at the time of our regeneration. I considered, also, that life is the active principle in every grace, which gives us all our sensations, impressions, affections, and motions. Hence the charge, "Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy work perfect," &c. And again, "Strengthen the weak hands," &c. I considered, also, that grace, as a principle, ever remains, though not always in motion; we have the root, though the fruit doth not always appear. I considered the different influences that are felt when grace is in exercise, and when it lies dormant.

3. I then pondered over what I felt of the fruits under the life of grace, or under our most lively frames; and how I felt myself when the Spirit suspended his quickening, attracting, and invigorating operations.

4. Then I considered the difference between faith when acting, and faith inactive: "Where is your faith," saith the Lord? And what were the fruits of faith when in exercise; and I found them

to be joy and peace: "God fill you with joy and peace in believing;" hence called the joy of faith. But this joy attends believing, and believing is faith in exercise. But when self, which is daily to be denied, comes on with her cursed requests; which is nothing else but the workings of the old man, with his deceitful lusts, and which is daily to be denied; daily denial shews that he will daily war against the soul; then faith stays at home to counteract unbelief, to prop up the heart, and to keep the soul standing, and upon its watch tower; here is no joy, but some strength; "Your strength is to stand still." But when this conflict is over, faith goes out again to meet the Lord, and joy comes in.

So hope, when in exercise, has got what is called the aboundings of hope through the power of the Holy Ghost; and these aboundings are enough, and to spare, and are attended with much assurance, called the full assurance of hope. But in the worst conflicts with the devil and sin hope abides at home to counteract despair; hence the cry, "Why art thou cast down, oh, my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him:" he will return again, and grace will go forth to meet him, and then praise will fill my mouth. So also, peace: "In me you shall have peace;" and every time the Lord visits us we have peace; but tribulation in the world disturbs it, but never destroys it. So you read of the comfort of love; but in war,

and when corruptions abound, it waxes cold, enmity damps it; but who can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?

The Doctor.

LETTER LXVII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

BELOVED of God, where art thou? Art thou lifting up thy axe among the thick trees? He that could do this used to be famous, and so is he now who can lay the axe to the root. But if the iron be blunt, and he does not whet the edge, then must he put forth more strength; but wisdom is profitable to direct. Methinks he is busy at it; he is sent to root up, to throw down, to build, and to plant; and I hope he will do it with his might; for, whether the tree falleth toward the north, or toward the south, where the tree falleth there it shall be. A brazen wall and an iron pillar must the Lord's servants be, in this day of apostacy, hypocrisy, heresy, rebuke, blasphemy, and open profanity. I bless my God, who hath given me a son after my own heart, my own son in the faith, and a dearly beloved son in Christ Jesus; who will naturally care for the state of perishing sinners, and dare to be singular and faithful, when time-serving, men-pleasing, crafty

walking, and deceitful dealing, with precious souls, is become so fashionable and so universal. Go on, the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour: you begin now to make full proof of your ministry; the blessed effects and fruits appear in the world; "The rain is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." The wilderness and solitary places will be glad for thee, and the desert will blossom like the rose; the desert and barren soul shall be like Eden, like the very garden of the Lord: "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." God will not contend for ever, he will not be always wroth; but will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies; and thou shalt see of the travail of thy Redeemer's soul, and shalt rejoice at the enlargement and increase of his kingdom. This will be thy meat and drink, to do his sovereign will; every one that falls before thee will be a banquet; "Arise, Peter, kill and eat;" and those who find the breast of consolation will retail it out to you again: this will help to fill the cruse; it will inflame thy zeal, excite gratitude, and serve as a spur to thy diligence; insomuch, that thou wilt think by night, and speak by day, and never have worse success than when you expect to do the greatest exploits: thou wilt see them melting, weeping, and rejoicing, when thou art standing in the pillory; and hanging down their heads like a bulrush, when Naphtali

is a hind let loose: and this will bring thee into a strait betwixt two; whether as a father thou wouldest have thy children fed, while every morsel goes by thy mouth; or eat thy morsel alone, when they are sent empty away. To see them enlarged when thou art bound, will have some appearance of cruelty; and to see them grieve when thou art shouting, will be considered as perverseness; but so it will be where the work of an evangelist is done, and where the Spirit operates, and the word of God grows and prevails; and no where else. And I must tell thee, that I have got another little man of war in tow: he proceeds with great caution, but now and then opens his mouth in private, and great execution is done; he goes from house to house, but in the synagogue says nothing. There is a great shaking among the dry bones; many have conceived, and not a few are near their time of labour: but if the doctor offers any assistance, the devil belabours him in such a manner going home, that he is afraid to exercise his skill. Not less than twenty have got their hands upon their loins, but there is not strength to bring forth: and there is a whole drove of the king of Spain's trumpeters round the neighbourhood, which continually repeat the sound—gospel; but not a breath of that power which is so essential to salvation. However, the poor and distressed in soul, those that are discontented and in debt, have got that fellow, that Huntington's books among them; against these

some trumpeters sound to arms, and others sound the alarms of danger; and the sounds are so uncertain, that none who are in the camp of David have repaired to this battle; but, on the contrary, their trumpets rather further the cause than hinder it; because these young recruits dare not take up arms against their own king and country. I believe I once mentioned to you a certain matron, who received an uncommon inflammation under the late strange fire which burnt among us, which was long since kindled by the gainsaying of Korah: that this flame might never go out, but be kept continually burning on her altar, she generously made a tender of her heart, her hand, and her purse; had the carcass been included, it had been a whole burnt offering. However, the heart and the hand are both now in the grave, and not so much left behind as Jezebel had; for all that remains is the purse: a funeral sermon has been adopted instead of a fiery chariot, and she has been sent to heaven by one who is under the sentence of death; and who so fit to go to the house of mourning as those who are going to be executed? She had of late been not a little comforted because she had got rid of the hacking and cutting of parson Sack, and was determined to have no more of it. But the worst of it is, that there is a prophet, an axe, a sword, a bow, and a whole quiver of arrows beyond the grave; but not one dauber, not one to prophesy smooth things, not one to heal the wound slightly, not

one to cry Peace, Peace, nor one to play on the corrupted passions of nature, much less to provoke the lust of a wanton professor. We must reprove and rebuke with all authority, and so separate the vile from the precious, the chaff from the wheat, whatever names of pride, bigotry, narrowness, rancour, bad spirit, censorious, conceited, we may bear, knowing that the promised pronounciation of "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," will make amends for all. My son, go on; and thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after faith, charity, righteousness, peace with them that call upon God out of a pure heart. My heart, my hand, and my purse, are at thy service.

God bless thee.

W. H. S. S.

P. S. Send me an account of your dream.

LETTER LXVIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Jan. 30, 1796.

I RECEIVED my dear brother's epistle, and am thankful to God and to him for it. I am not in a frame at present to come to thee with a rod, but in love, and in the spirit of meekness.

I have at times, for these six months past, been exercised in my soul in a very singular manner; my temptations have been great, and my conflicts severe beyond description; I have gone much bound in spirit, sorely beset by Satan, and with a continual sense of my own natural weakness, ignorance, and depravity: not about my eternal state; this has been cleared to me, and settled in the court of conscience for many years, and it terminated in the justification of my soul, and in a happy departure from death to life, and into that state of condemnation I shall not come any more. I view this last awakening sound to be an alarm; a call to arms and to prepare for the battle. "But who is sufficient for these things?" I trust my sufficiency is of God. I have sat down and counted the cost; I am humbled and meekened, but not intimidated, not terrified, for, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Therefore, though twenty thousand are expected against those who have but ten thousand, yet more are with the just than with the wicked. A person, whom it pleased God to discover to me the first moment that I saw him, and whom he discovered to you the first time that you heard him, has opened his mouth against the incomprehensible mystery of God, by which he has confirmed me in my judgment, and you in yours, that presumption was visible there. And were I to tell you

of some that are drinking into these stolen waters, you would repeat the unanswerable question; What is man? I know that the deceivableness of unrighteousness cannot work effectually only in them that perish; and that false Christs and false prophets shall come, and shall deceive many, is true; yet not the elect, they shall never be finally deceived. Nor am I afraid of being deceived myself in these things, because Satan the father of lies, has tried me with all these heresies himself; and God kept me, even then, when I was weaker than all common weakness; more blind than a bat, and more ignorant than a brute; and upheld me with his hand, and led me safely, even by a way that I knew not.

I tremble for the weak in faith, for the little ones of the household, knowing that Satan is come down to them in great wrath; with nothing less than damnable heresies, or those errors that are evident tokens of perdition, and accompanying damnation. I wish I was a little more purged from universal charity; but a nurse must have skill, tenderness, and nourishment, to minister. I know that magicians can counterfeit divine miracles; but where the honour of God is concerned, his wisdom, power, and presence, are promised; and sure I am that he will plead their cause who have pleaded the cause of truth, and who for his sake have suffered reproach. I have often said, 'Take me, Lord, it is enough!' and have longed for the grave. But, alas! other battles, I

believe, are yet to be fought. I am now getting old, and my eyes are dim, my nervous system weak, and my intellects and memory much fail me; but I must stand my ground: God's lines are fallen to me in it, and I hope he will maintain my lot. Some truths are plain and obvious, others more mysterious, dark, and obscure; but the mystery of the ever blessed, and ever adorable Trinity, is infinite, inconceivable, and incomprehensible; and to be pushed or driven into a controversy on this point, is not pleasing, especially in the decline of life. Not that I have any consciousness of wrong in the doctrine, for it is deeply rooted in my soul; but I know that Satan can equip, where it becomes the man of God to put the harness off: and such can ascend the scorner's chair, when a child of God dares not sit in the seat of Moses. I know that God is furnishing me for some fight of faith; for, at my study, provide or get whatever I may in the week, it is all taken from me on the Lord's day morning; and this subject is sure to be set before me, with a "Go and speak thus." Some cavil, dispute, rage, storm, and have wrote to me, but all in vain: the more they say against it, the firmer I am fixed in it. And it is these things that comfort me, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom." While seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, the path of the just shall shine more and more, even to the perfect day, Prov. iv. 18. A divine testimony from God is

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LETTER LXX

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Beard of God

*Yours I received, and in answer
 nothing new: the whole amount I
 raise the body of the sin of the flesh: and
 time that hope and faith maintain their
 their trial, and their place, nothing can hinder
 humbling dispensations, which always work
 gether for good to those that love God, to the
 degree, that nothing short of him can sustain
 And as for praying for the destruction of the
 enemy to the Sinner, it is all in vain, he will live
 as long as thou wilt live in this world; and there-*

believe, are yet to be fought. I know you
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 e fallen to me in it, and I have
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g words, for thy heart will
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 y and the ancient Briton will
 the custom of his country, up
 end of the chapter. Nor will
 fight fair, but hit the hardest
 ist is at the lowest, and fly as
 creature is up and ready to face
 will often gall thee, to think that
 and couch in his den, as soon as
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 ater when thou art sick, tired, feeble,
 the Lord not felt, nor faith in exer-
 malek did so, and therefore the Lord
 he would have war with him for ever,
 ar is not over yet. Saul spared Agag,
 many others, but Samuel hewed him to
 efore the Lord. However, Haman, the
 , the Jews' enemy, and of the seed royal
 lek, rose up again in the court of Babylon;
 ordec'ai would not bow to him, nor give
 to him by subjection, no, not for an hour,
 Mordec'ai was of the seed of the Jews, and
 g must fall before him. All the time thou
 warring and toiling for that which is not at-
 nable, thou wilt of course fret, and fume, and
 t into sad entanglements, while the devil, and
 he old Welchman together, will be sure to over-
 drive thee when this is the case; for he is fond of
 hurrying them that are with young.

Several strangers at times attend: their curio-

armour proof against all the artillery of Satan. For this I will say, that I never have found as yet an Atheist, Deist, Socinian, Sabellian, or Arian, that ever could describe regeneration, or a work of grace upon his own soul; nor do I believe that I ever shall. The Lord of all lords bless thee; pray for me, and my prayer shall be in thy calamity.

Ever yours,

W. H.

P. S. I long to see thee; pray come soon.

LETTER LXIX.

To the Rev J. JENKINS.

Beloved of God,

Yours I received, and the contents of it are nothing new; the whole amounts to what Paul calls the body of the sins of the flesh; but all the time that hope and faith maintain their claim, their hold, and their pleas, nothing can follow but humbling dispensations, which always work together for good to them that love God, to that degree, that nothing short of him can satisfy. And as for praying for the destruction of that enemy to the Saeson, it is all in vain, he will live as long as thou wilt live in this world; and there-

fore regard not lying words, for thy heart will appear worse seven years hence than it doth now; his Excellency and the ancient Briton will fight, according to the custom of his country, up and down, to the end of the chapter. Nor will the old man ever fight fair, but hit the hardest when his antagonist is at the lowest, and fly as soon as the new creature is up and ready to face him: and this will often gall thee, to think that he should fly and couch in his den, as soon as thou art ready for the onset, and always approach thee with banter when thou art sick, tired, feeble, or unarmed, the Lord not felt, nor faith in exercise; but Amalek did so, and therefore the Lord swore that he would have war with him for ever, and this war is not over yet. Saul spared Agag, and so do many others, but Samuel hewed him to pieces before the Lord. However, Haman, the Agagite, the Jews' enemy, and of the seed royal of Amalek, rose up again in the court of Babylon; but Mordecai would not bow to him, nor give place to him by subjection, no, not for an hour, for Mordecai was of the seed of the Jews, and Agag must fall before him. All the time thou art warring and toiling for that which is not attainable, thou wilt of course fret, and fume, and get into sad entanglements, while the devil, and the old Welchman together, will be sure to overdrive thee when this is the case; for he is fond of hurrying them that are with young.

Several strangers at times attend: their curio-

sity is raised, I suppose, by the innumerable quantity of hand-bills that are stuck up all over the town; and to be sure none but my old master could ever compile them; but it doth not answer their expectation, but rather falls out to the furtherance of the gospel, and makes it the savour of life unto life, and of death unto death. I am still happy in the work, knowing in whom I have believed. God bless thee.

Ever thine in faith and love,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Dearly Beloved,

I AM now at the feet of my dearly beloved, faithful, unchangeable friend and father, God and Lord, receiving of his words. I know and feel that he mingles his cause with my own, and that it is in his warfare that I engage, and that all my controversies are in defence of the great mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh." God is highly provoked when idols are set up as rivals to him; and I know that his jealousy burns no less when impostors and infernal mimicks are received as his ambassadors, whom he never com-

missioned nor sent to personate him, and to be as
 his mouth. But wild fire or strange fire is often
 rejoiced in, before or instead of that holy, heavenly
 flame from the altar of burnt-offerings. The jea-
 lousy of my Lord influenced me, and the provoca-
 tions that were given to him were mingled with
 my spirit, and I was jealous over them with godly
 jealousy. And why? because they suffered fools
 gladly, seeing they themselves were wise. But
 being crafty I caught them with guile, rejoicing
 in one who was worse than he that kept his fa-
 ther's wife, and they were puffed up, and had
 reigned as kings without us. I would to God
 they did reign, that we also might reign with
 them; but they were wise in Christ; while I
 am a fool; they are honourable, I am despised;
 they know their own wisdom, and I bless my
 God that I know my own folly. God is jealous
 over me, jealous of my heart and affections, and I
 bless him for ever for it. How strange, and how
 heavenly, and purely simple, is the Most High,
 to be pleased and ravished with the love and af-
 fections of a poor worm of the dust. We must
 be weaned, not only from self, sin, and the world,
 but from the church also: "Trust ye not in a
 friend, put no confidence in a guide; the most
 upright is sharper than a thorn hedge." About
 ten days ago, at the eleventh hour, the raging
 fever left me, and I knew it was the same hour in
 which Jesus said, Thy soul liveth; and I believed
 it with all my heart. My warmest love hath met

with so heavy a damp, that some have lost what they will never regain, and Christ hath reaped what they have lost. My heart is not divided now, he is all in all who is most deserving; who will never provoke to jealousy without a cause, nor send any love-sick sinner away, as an injured lover. "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." My eye is now single; one object in view, and one lover in heart, whose constancy, at the time of others' inconstancy, and whose faithfulness to the faithless is transcendant, unparalleled, inconceivable, and unutterable. However, many lessons are to be learned by this unusual task, for by all means, and in all things, I must be instructed; I must see more of God's mysteries, more of Satan's depths, and more of hypocrite-attainments. Several doors of hope are set before me in this valley of vision, when God shall discover deep things out of darkness, and bring out to light the shadow of death. Many of them in Asia shall turn away from me. Those that count me an enemy for telling the truth shall conceive envy against me that shall slay the silly one. Furnace-work shall come on the hay, straw, and stubble, and consume it, instead of being revived and refreshed under me; but the other materials, their care shall flourish for me again, when it will be least regarded by me. The axe will be laid closer to the root, and then rooting up, cutting down, building and planting, will go on again, and fresh materials

will be brought to the house of God. My bosom has been open to many of them, but now I shall be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear, and they shall be utterly burnt with fire in the same place, 2 Sam. xxiii. 7. Alluring, through the lust of the flesh, operates on the fifth sense, and discovers wanton professors; and silly ones are soon led away with divers lusts and pleasures.

Farewell,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXXI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I WAS very glad at the arrival of my friend's letter. God blessed the visit, I have no doubt. When he intends to thaw a frozen heart, or dissolve a stubborn mind, the oil of joy shall attend the word; it shall carry its salt, its savour, its unction, and its confidence with it, and so produce the obedience of faith, and draw forth the bowels of gratitude to attend the confidence that is produced by the word, and exercised by the recipient, until every desire and sensation of the soul move in concert: this unction makes the word, or saying, sink down deep into the sinner's ears, and heart too, so that it becomes the in-

grafted word that is able to save the soul. The little journey I took last week cast another deplorable case in my way; just such another as we saw at the G——; he is shut up in the strong hold, and sorely bruised by Satan; he was bound, but the word of God, in the mouth of thy servant, was not bound. A deal of work is going on in this private way; the kingdom is only known in the hearts of a few individuals whom the world knows nothing of, nor cares for; it comes not with observation in our days, nor have the whole bulk of professors the least idea of it: so far from it, that the real subjects of this kingdom are deemed the worst of men; restless, dissatisfied, nice, critical, troublers of society, and men who affect singularity, &c. But, alas! alas! it will be found at last, that these, and only these, will appear to have oil in their vessels, with their lamps. The lamp of the real saint is the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, as it is written: "Give him no rest till he send forth his righteousness as the light, and his salvation as a lamp that burneth." Under the sweet operations of pardoning love the heart melts, and becomes broken and contrite: this is the vessel which the wise virgin goes forth with; and the oil which such a soul takes, is called the oil of gladness, golden oil, and the oil of joy, with which Christ was anointed above his fellows; but upon the believer it is a measure to profit withal, which is given in exchange for mourning. The soul

mourns under the burden of sins, and mourns after Christ, after his pardoning blood, and justifying righteousness: at last, righteousness comes to him as the light, and salvation from sin like a lamp that burneth. Salvation is applied, and light comes to the poor sinner with it, that he may see it, and the love of God attends it like a fire that melts the soul; and this fire burns and inflames the heart; then the oil of joy flows in, love, joy, and peace, abound. Here is the lamp, here is the vessel; and here is the oil of joy, the joy of the Lord, which springs from the love of God shed abroad in the heart; and now he having entered into the joy of the Lord, into his love, liberty, grace, and favour, off he goes to meet the bridegroom, and meet him he shall, and into the wedding-chamber he shall enter at last. The foolish virgin feels some few light convictions, and lashes of natural conscience, which gripes the sinner; but such an one comes and hears the word till his natural affections are moved and stirred up, and anon with joy he receives the word; his joy springs from nature's passions, or affections, and off he sets; his light terrors subside, and conscience is composed, but neither fear nor torment are cast out by the love of God; but the law is still in him, and is called a light to his feet and a lamp to his path. As for the vessel, a new heart, or a broken heart is what he never had. His lamp is the law, and his light is natural joy, which springs from the motion of his passions. Here is

the difference betwixt two, the fool and the wise! By and by the sun waxes hot, temptation and persecution rise, because of the word; this withers natural joy. The apostles go from the council, rejoicing that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for his name: here this oil of joy blazes, the other is offended; terror and torment, which were never cast out by pardoning love, begin to operate, and all his joy is dried up. "Joy," says Joel, "is withered away from the sons of men," because it has no root; the heart is not rooted in love to Christ, nor built up in him, as Paul speaks. Hence the joy of the Lord, which springs from his love, flourishes, when the joy of nature withers away. The love of God in the wise emboldens him, when the other is offended and falls away. The oil of the wise flames, when the light of the fool is smothered. In short, "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the foolish is put out." The Lord's appearing stirs up terrors, and the enmity of the carnal mind: and, for this reason, the wise expect the Saviour to appear, to be admired by him, and by all that love the truth; the other expects an angry judge to appear to condemn him for a hypocrite. Hence arises the joy of the one, and the enmity of the other. "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked shall be put out." The one is a believer, the other an infidel; the one righteous, or a justified person, the other wicked, or a condemned infidel. The one has the joy of the

Lord with which he was anointed; the other the joy of nature, by which he was deceived. The light of the one rejoiceth, which light and joy are an earnest of endless day and eternal happiness; the lamp of the wicked goes out, which is a prelude to eternal darkness. But God's supplicants must follow where he leads; with supplications and bitter weeping he leads them; and one path in which they are led may truly be called a path in the deep waters; and here his footsteps are not known. If God answers the prayers of his supplicant in the joy of his heart, or gives him an answer of peace; or if he enlarges him and comforts him while on his knees, it is fulfilling his word: "Before they speak I will hear, and while they are yet speaking I will answer." All this is easily understood; but not so the reverse. I have heard the groanings of the children of Israel, and am come down to deliver them. But this is followed with a double tale of brick, no straw is to be allowed; the old men are beaten, and the young men faint; no audience at the court, nor diminishing the impossible task; what cannot be done, must be done, or the back must smart for it: such a deliverance as this puzzles one. It is a little like Job's case: God owns he was perfect and upright, and Job fears God with all his heart, and wishes to do it with all his house, and therefore rises early every morning, sends and sanctifies all his ten children, and offers a sacrifice for every one of them, lest they should have sinned

against God; and he continues at this till a wind from the four corners of heaven smites the house, and kills them altogether. And here we may repeat, "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation."

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXXII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM sorry to hear of my dearly beloved friend's increasing weakness; but I am more than sure that the inward man will revive and be renewed day by day. I am more than sure of this, for, "Your heart shall live that seek God." Their heart, or conscience that is alarmed, awakened, and quickened, shall live; their convictions, their awakenings, their feelings, their sensations, their appetites, their cravings, longing desires, and struggles, shall never die away, as the alarms of Ahab and Judas did, who sought not to God, but to Satan. Their heart shall live; they shall never get into carnal ease, so as to abide in it; nor into dead insensibility; nor shall they ever settle on their legal lees of self-righteousness; nor shall they rest in their own performances; nor shall the devil ever regain his palace and keep his goods in

a false peace. "Your heart shall live that seek God." If faith be weak, and hope low; if joys abate, and love cools; if meekness fails, and patience gives up the ghost; if fears abound, and heart and flesh fail, yet life shall abide; their conscience shall live that seek God. The holy spouse, who felt every power of the soul cold and indifferent, and every grace dormant and inactive, felt her heart, her conscience alive and upon the watch: "I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh." She had life, and felt his reproofs, and knew where the voice came from, and calls him her beloved, though cold, and in a deep sleep. It is life, my beloved, that gives us our longing appetites, and nothing else; and you know that the Lord has pronounced them blessed that hunger and thirst after righteousness, and promises that they shall be filled. It is life that gives us all our spiritual relish to savour, taste, and approve, of the death and satisfaction of Christ, and that animates us to crave and feast upon that savoury meat, which all the heirs of promise are so doatingly fond of. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." "Your heart shall live that seek God;" and so shall my dearly beloved, and I shall live with him.

Ever yours,

W. H.

LETTER LXXIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

November 19, 1808.

LAST night my dear friend's letter came by Dinah Stock to Monkwell; in which I find he is still indisposed, weak, and low; doubting, fearing, staggering, and halting, limping, and wavering. However, this I believe, that the Spirit of all grace is the fruit and effect of Christ's death, and of his mediation; and is received by the Mediator, and comes from him, and from God through him; and that every grace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, even from the first implantation of fear to the perfection of love: and that every grace has a secondary fruit, which is called the revival of the good work. Activity, which keeps the soul on the wing, or on the stretch for God, springs from the life of grace; when these are languid, we hear complaints: "Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found thy works perfect before God." Thus activity and vigour spring from life; joy from faith; comfort from love; quietude from peace; patience from hope; and humility, or lowly mindedness, from meekness. But the thief upon the cross could enjoy none of these supernumeraries. And some are saved and delivered at last, who, through

the fear of death, were, all the time they lived, subject to bondage; and some have received the word with joy who were never saved at all. But no one that ever received the word in faith, or that was broken and made contrite by it, and who was brought to tremble at it, was ever cast away. Nor is faith to be proved by joy, nor is the strength of it to be measured by love. The faith of Job never appeared so strong as when Satan lay hard at him, actual transgressions beset him, inbred corruptions made him desperate, providence stripped him, bondage seized him, God's wrath lowered over him, and his arrows stuck fast in him; enemies reviled him, and friends condemned him; yet, says he, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; and maintain my own ways before him:" he knew the integrity, honesty, and the uprightness of his soul, however perverse his nature might be. And many that you and I know, who have much more joy, peace, quietude, and apparent assurance, than ever you have had, were they stripped of this, and their souls put in thy soul's stead, would sink and not stand, lay down and not fight, give up and not hold fast: and say with Hezekiah, I shall see man no more in this world, nor God in the next; "As a lion so will he break all my bones; from morning even to night wilt thou make an end of me." It is easy to believe when love burns, joy flames, the glory of grace is fresh in us, the light shining on the path, the bow renewed in

our hand, and God's secret choice of us uppermost in our frail tabernacle, and God blessing the work of our hands; when peace and prosperity are attending the house, and all that is in it. But my poor faith has sometimes stood in sore trials as undaunted, even when the reverse of all the above has attended me; when fears were on every side, and no prospects but worse troubles. We never read of the joy or peace of Elijah, but of the spirit and power of him. Nor do I believe that Jeremiah, for a whole forty years, enjoyed much; at least it doth not appear: only what is found in his 31st chapter; all the rest are zeal, anger, sorrow, fortitude, and courage; and we may be assured, that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Nor does God search, try, chasten, and scourge sinners; they are not in these troubles, nor do they ever see sin, nor feel sin, being destitute of light and life; God will not search these till the great day, when the heavens shall reveal their iniquity, and the earth shall rise in judgment against them. It is Christ searches and tries the churches. "All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts." And such, and only such, are sinners in God's sense of the word; and he has sworn that he has no pleasure in the death of such sinners, nor shall they ever die. If you had not stood by faith, you must ere now have fallen into apostasy; and, if you had no hope, you must have despaired; and, if no trust in the Lord, you could

never have been as mount Zion that cannot be moved, under all these storms above, and inundations beneath. This is your portion, take it: "Thou hast been a help to the poor in his distress, a strength to the needy, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Every saving effect of life has been and is in the soul of my beloved. Sin is his grief, and corruption his plague, which cannot be the case where only one nature reigns. He feels the frowns of God and his smiles; his near approaches and departures; his enlarging presence and contracting absence; he gets callous at his anger, and melts in his love; he has an appetite for all the promises, and greedily snaps at every crumb that falls, and feeds upon bitter stripes more than on carnal ease; and if this be not life, I am an utter stranger to Zion's choicest blessing.

Remember the poor

W. H.

LETTER LXXIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM coming once more to inquire after my dear friend's welfare. He is so straitened, and so narrow in soul; he is so delicate and nice in his

choice of food, that nothing but honey and butter, as Isaiah speaks, or else milk, oil, or the new wine of the kingdom, will keep him from casting away his confidence. He limits the whole of the Spirit's operations and fruits to love, joy, and meekness. He takes no notice of the Spirit's power and might in the inner man; no notice is taken of the life of hope, salvation from guilt and filth, deliverance from shame and fear, from bondage and wrath, from terror and torment; all these are overlooked in his examinations. He doth not labour under the burden of unpardoned sin, the black scroll is not set in battle array before his eyes, the sting of death doth not rankle in his conscience, nor do the arrows of wrath stick in his reins: you are not chained down to the meditations of terror, nor are you shut up in unbelief, nor confined (like a state prisoner) in the dismal regions of the shadow of death; nor given up to a reprobate mind, nor to a fearful looking for of judgment; all of which you have as just a right to expect as the many that I know who appear plain to be in such perilous circumstances. Look back, and remember your long hypocritical profession; your assumption of the ministerial office, without any call to it, or qualifications for it. The high speculative notions of divine things, in which you dealt; the pride, the arrogant claims you made upon God, without the least awe, reverence, or fear of him; and without the least knowledge of yourself, of God, or of his ways. Much

hardness of heart, unhallowed boldness, and daring presumption, were by you communicated to the hardening of many insensible and unhumiliated sinners, and to the establishment of numbers in their hypocrisy. In this hard way what swarms do you see, who sprung from the same nest that you did; hatched, not under the hen, nor under the dove, but under the vulture? You read of such ungodly preachers and professors, called sensual, having not the Spirit, Jude 19; and who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. But the Almighty has undeceived thee; he has sent the storm beforehand, when it was not expected, and thy sandy foundation has been carried away with the flood, and yet the house is not destroyed; it fell into trouble, into distress, into cutting convictions, into self-despair, into legal bondage, and into the horrible pit, and into the miry clay, but not into hell. God gave you, from the first lesson of his divine and incomparable teaching, an honest heart, or an honest conscience, for that is what is meant by an honest heart: and when the Holy Spirit entered the heart, the heart was made good by his entrance, and honest by his influence. Conscience, receiving authority, light, and information, by the Spirit, magnified his office, and did his duty. He condemned your sinful life and sinful nature, your false profession and your superficial preaching; and you confessed all these both to God and man; and you forsook all these things, and such shall find mercy. All this I discerned

in you at the first interview, and our Lord's parable convinced me, and assured me, that the ground was made good; and in this confidence I have continued to this day. Nor did the Almighty leave thee here; he gave you repentance for all the above things, and to the utmost of your power you made restitution, in labouring to undeceive others; and though your success in this did not succeed according to your wishes, yet you may rest upon this, that the elect of God will neither be finally deceived nor destroyed: and as for the contrary part, no means, either human or divine, will ever lessen their number or alter their state.

Ever yours,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXXV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

MY silence to my best beloved was in obedience to his own orders, as I concluded he was weary of so many scraps, and therefore I waited till I had further orders. No man goes on better than my son; he is not dead, but quickened; "And unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." He is begotten to a lively hope, and that hope is exhilarating, and goes forth in watching, waiting,

and expecting, and will not suffer despondency, when thy peevishness would give all up, sink, and even try to despond; yea, when thy mind is bent upon it, heart and conscience both forbid it, counteract it, and stand firm and unmoved, even when thou temptest them to give way. And all this thou canst not deny. Learn to distinguish between head and heart, and between mind and conscience; and thou wilt find the heart firm when the mind is moved. The nearer the birth, the sharper the pains, and the longer the intervals; and the sharper the pains, the sweeter the cordials; and when these are withheld, the greater the loss, and the more severe the disappointment; but a daily cross is allotted, and we are sure to be in the way while the cross abides. My son comes behind in no gift; every blessing, every grace, and all truth, are in my son. He could never war with the world, the flesh, and the devil, if he had no faith. He could never persevere in prayer, when heaven and earth appear to combine against him, without strong faith: my son takes no denial, nor will he restrain prayer; the kingdom suffers violence, and the violent take it by force; nor will my son cease besieging, withdraw his forces, or raise the siege. And, if he be blind, how comes he to see such comeliness in the beauty of Israel? and if no love to the Holy One, why all this labour and toil to gain him? and if no hope of reaching the haven, why all this unabated, unwearied sailing against wind and tide? My son

will reply, I know that I shall perish without him; and so do thousands more know this as well as you; but, being destitute of every divine and heavenly influence, God's presence, and even heaven itself, would give them more pain than the company of hell; because there is in them no meetness, nothing that will join or unite with the powers above. And if no life, why all this tenderness, this craving appetite; and how comes my son to relish all the sweet, the choice, the fat, the savoury morsels? Life divine is fed, nourished, strengthened, supported, entertained, and delighted, by the bread of God, by the word of God, by the satisfaction and sacrifice of Christ, by the presence of God: the children of the bridechamber never fast in the bridegroom's presence; they feed upon the Lord's visits, upon every influence of the Holy Spirit, upon his delivering mercies, upon the smiles of his providence; and the reverse of these is their fasts and their famine. This house of mine is to be sold in May next. Every habitation that I have had since I have been in town has been sold over my head. Thus the god of this world is suffered to disturb me in all my dwellings; but the house that is from above is out of his reach. God bless my son.

W. H.

LETTER LXXVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

MY beloved's epistle came to hand; and I find from all quarters that he is weak, and yet strong; faint, yet pursuing; a reed shaken by the wind, yet more than man. But the grand object is not obtained, namely, this: he wants to be meekened, softened, humbled, and melted down, under the influence of regenerating, renewing, and all sin-subduing mercy; and to continue under the weeping willow many days; and then to have the sun, with all his healing rays, shining in his full strength; and this to be attended with such love as to cast out all fear and torment for evermore; and for all these rays of light, flames of heat, and firstfruits of glory, to attend and appear upon him in the pulpit, and that for many months together, ten at least; and that those that hate him might see these tokens for good, and be ashamed; because the Lord upholds him and comforts him. These are the things which he has imagined, and he reaches out after these things which are before; not that he has already attained, or is already perfect, but he presses forward. I have my doubts whether all this furniture would suit every sheep in the Lord's fold; a few discourses upon these discoveries might do for a lamb in the bosom, but not for those that are with young. They might

suit a bride just espoused, but it would not be to each of the household a portion of meat in due season. There is a difference between a private and a public character; between a rural shepherd and a chamberlain of a city; and between a saint in private life and one in the public ministry. All that the private saint gets, he marks, learns, and inwardly digests for himself; and one visit with the bridegroom's presence may feed and feast him for many days; for all that he gets he keeps; having none to feed but his own soul. This is the case with private believers, but not with public preachers; this is the case with children, but not with fathers. Officers must care for the public, fathers must lay up for the children. All the above stock of heavenly treasure, though in all its fulness, would be exhaled by a thirsty flock in two full discourses; whereas it might entertain our own hearts a whole month, were there no public expenditures. But our light must shine to others; we must feed, keep, watch over, and water; and the freer we receive, the freer we must give. Thine office, my son, will forbid what thou hast long imagined; and let it be so, since blessed are those servants whom their Lord hath made rulers over his household, to give to each a portion of meat in due season; "Blessed is that servant, whom, when the Lord cometh, he shall find so doing." Envy not the private believer; he brings forth fruit, but it turns chiefly to his own account. However, we see the en-

Commiums that are put upon them who in this way occupy till the Lord comes; witness the applause given to the men of five and of two talents; we are a sweet savour unto God; whether of life or of death, the bearer of this will tell his own tale.

Ever thine,

W. H.

LETTER LXXVII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

LAST night I arrived safe at Cricklewood, through a dismal, dark, windy, and rainy night; God being my only protector. And this morning I found a letter from my dear friend, the sight of which always does me good; for my love to him has never abated, nor my confidence of his salvation ever yet sunk or failed: he is still in my heart to live and die with him; and he is the first man in my heart, and the highest in my affections of any man living in all the world. But this muttering and repining, murmuring and complaining, I hate, both in him and in myself also. My own conflicts, both without and within, have far exceeded yours, and yet I believe they have been wisely ordered to answer some good purpose, and have been overruled for my good in the end. If thou wast not a branch of the Lord, and if thou

wast not in the true vine, why all this purging? God sends no rods upon the wicked; bastards are not chastened; they are not in trouble as other men. God often destroys the false hopes of such sinners, and he makes them relinquish all their claims upon him; he exposes their deception and arrogance, and lets them see his rejection of them; and they seeking self in their profession, their pride is hurt, and they hate the Almighty, and his choice of his people. God makes them contemptible and base before all his family, and they contemn him and his counsel both. He takes off all the restraints of his providence, and they get past feeling in sin; and if he fills them, and consumes them with terrors, their desperation and rebellion rise the more against him, and aim at counteracting him in all his designs and works of mercy, which is doing despite to his Holy Spirit. He throws them out of the faith, hope, prayers, and affections of all his saints, and suffers them no more to lift up a cry or prayer for them, declaring that he will not answer them; these were his orders to Jeremiah against the Jews. To Samuel, against Saul. To John, against those that sinned unto death, in fighting against Christ the life. I ask, in the name of God, if this is your state? God has purged you; and if great fruits in the ministry have not been produced, the fruits of the Spirit have appeared in you, by which it is plain yours are purging, and not hardening trials. Humility, self-abase-

ment, compunction, meekness, contrition, faith, hope, love, joy, and peace, have all appeared at times; and you cannot deny it, without belying both God and conscience. You tell me your hope is almost gone. Job's hope was removed like a tree; and there is no removing a tree without grubbing it up, and carrying it away. Yea, Job adds, "Thou destroyest the hope of man." You are in the steps of the flock, upon consecrated ground; and you must not limit nor restrain God's love to fondling, swaddling, and comforting; nor the whole work of his Spirit to meekness and joy. His power upholds you now, or you would have been in black despair, or in hell, long ago.

Adieu,

W. H.

LETTER LXXVIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

Cricklewood.

To the dear son of my vows, thine affectionate father sendeth greeting, with perfect peace, and at such a time.

OF this, my beloved, be assured, that God does nothing in vain; he gives us grace to be exer-

cised: and he will try every grace that he plants in the heart. When he hath performed the good pleasure of his will in us, and the work of faith with power, he will then try that faith with fire: the fiery darts of Satan, and his infernal rage, the wrath of enemies, the hot displeasure of God in the fiery law, and the bondage of it, the flames of inbred lusts and corruptions, shall all combine and conspire to try the faith of the saint. And the plain language of Providence at such times is, fight or flee: believe, or faint; "I had utterly fainted unless I had believed." So, long denials to prayer, postponed deliverances, hope desired, delaying to avenge us of our enemies, sorely try hope; all which suggest, take part with corruption, or with grace; join with the enemies, or with God; hope, or despond; cast away your confidence, or muster up all your courage: between which we at times halt; but after a while come to a point, as David did at the burning of Ziklag; he strengthened himself in his God; "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him." Indigence trieth humility and submission, and leads to self-denial; but Paul's lesson is not easily learnt, namely, in whatever state I am to be therewith content: this, indeed, is walking humbly with God; but these peaceable fruits are not produced but by the Spirit's influence, who sanctifies the affliction; and then experience tells us that the heart is made better by them, and that all things

do work for our good. Affluence will try temperance, and the infirmities of old age will try patience; and when this grace has had her perfect work, we are to be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. And this seems to be the perfecting counsel of the apostle Paul, and which he prays the Holy Ghost to perform. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ," 2 Thess. iii. 5. I believe that I am nine years older than you, and have long been exercised with rheumatic pains, nor do I expect to get better of these, but of course worse and worse, because the outward man must perish; but the inward man shall be renewed day by day: There has no temptation befell thee but what is common to men. The chambers of imagery were exhibited before my mind, and impressed upon my imagination also, two or three and thirty years ago; and within these three weeks I have had the same. Sometimes an innumerable multitude, then diminished to few; then magnified to an enormous size, and then reduced to dwarfs; and anon transformed into a thousand different and ghastly forms: but this is one of the devil's old exhibitions, which took place in the heart of Ninus, son of Nimrod, in the country of Chaldea, for God himself calls that country the basis of it, Zech. v. 11. But my son will find that Satan's masterpiece is yet to come. Thou hast been long since begotten to a lively hope, and we are saved by

hope: but the perfecting of love, or the enjoyment of perfect love, which casts out all fear, has not as yet taken place: though thou hast often been brought to the place of the breaking forth of children, yet there has not been strength to bring forth; hence the continual relapse into legal labour. Charity edifieth, or raises up the edifice: and when God, by perfect love, builds up Zion, he will appear in his glory, and the hope of glory succeeds; and this gives the Lord full possession of his temple, for God's mystery among the Gentiles is Christ in us the hope of glory. When this day of thy espousals takes place, Satan will then transform himself; his black garb, his deep and dark designs, will disappear; and he will shine, but in false rays. He will truckle and fawn; he will congratulate you upon your happy deliverance, and appear to confirm you in the purposes and decrees of God, but at the end he will work in your corrupt affections to such a degree as to set your bowels to sounding like a harp for Moab, Edom, and the children of Ammon. Every corrupt affection and passion will melt and move towards the enemies of God; but as Satan is never divided against himself, so he makes these influences terminate in hard thoughts and rebellion against God. And this is the root, the life, and soul of Arminianism, namely, the devil transformed into an angel of light, and as such working in the corrupt affections of mankind. Lay

this scroll up by thee, and in some future period thou mayest understand it.

Ever thine in the best of bonds,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXXIX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I KNOW not what to say, I know not how to express myself, either in thanks and praises to my God, or in my rejoicing with thee. How hast thou broken forth? Neither bars nor bolts, gins nor chains; not the strong holds of Satan, nor the doors of the shadow of death, can detain or confine this prisoner of hope. The jubilee trump has sounded the release, and the Spirit of the Lord God is upon my son; the decree is gone forth, the word is spoken, and all the infernal legions must tremble at the voice, "Loose him, and let him go." O the wonders of sovereign and all-subduing grace! The kingdom of God, begins with a single word; one live coal from off the altar imperceptibly reaches the soul, and conveys divine life through all her powers; the illumined understanding discerns the influences, pursues its progress, while faith, small as a grain of mustard seed, suggests, Surely it is supernatural! who can

it may be a divine work. This small beginning greatly increases, at which Satan bestirs himself: the Holy Ghost searches the heart and lays the usurper open, who shuns the light, and feels the power, for the sword lies at him; this fills him with wrath, it awakens his despair, and inflames him with indignation. He is banished heaven, and he carries his hell within him, and is bound and cast out of the hearts of poor sinners, whose misery is his ease, whose sin is his food, and whose salvation is his destruction. The will is soon gained over, and becomes loyal; God makes us willing, and to will is present with us. The understanding sees the subtleness of the object which the will hath chosen; but the mind, the affections, and the conscience must settle the account. When these meet with their unction, which completes the whole anointing (for this ointment must go from the head to the beard, and down to the skirts of the clothing), then the royalty begins to appear. The mind must be fully persuaded ere it can be fixed so as to exclude perplexing doubts. The affections must be influenced and attracted by love, and the conscience must join with faith, and reap the peaceful benefits of an imputed righteousness, before the lawful captive can be persuaded that he is delivered. "I will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me." "With the heart," or conscience, "man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made;" for when conscience bears

her undoubted testimony, the mouth proclaims the confidence, sentence, and testimony of conscience, while the Holy Ghost fixes the heart. The affections feeling the peace, the tranquillity, the serenity of conscience, embraces with redoubled love the King of Zion; and from that time there is a beauty in the feet of them who publish salvation, and who say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. This! this! my beloved, crowns the whole work, raises the empire of Zion's King, and fixes the loyalty of the subject. "The lot [of eternal life] causeth contention to cease, and parteth between the mighty;" the Lord divides the portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong; and when the soul is conquered, captured, and gained, enmity subsides, the gift of life in secret appeaseth anger, and the reward of love in the bosom, strong wrath. Every pain of my son appears stronger, the intervals more sharp, and the old man at these desertions appears more and more enraged, and the unexpected changes seem more intolerable. But every visit, revival, refreshing, renewal, or enlargement, expands the door, inspires the prisoner, brightens the dismal regions, and brings the King in his beauty, the land of delights, and the realities of invisibilities nearer home. The Coalheaver rejoiceth in his son: "A wise son maketh a glad father;" "And he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him." "The Lord bless and keep thee, be gracious unto

thee, and lift the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace," is the prayer of

W. H.

LETTER LXXX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THE DOCTOR still holds his integrity, and will by no means change his voice; but assert that my boasting before Titus is found a truth, that my poor little one is the most excellent of all my scraps; and, like Samson, he will kill more at his death, than he has in all his life. Paul begat many in his bonds, but my scrap has begotten an old woman in the pains of death; heaps upon heaps. But he complains that his sweet frames of meekness and contrition are short-lived. Not so, if he was a private believer. God not only stores the mind of his servants with fresh views of things, new and old; he not only discovers fresh ground of standing, and fires the mind with energy, and fills the mouth with utterance; but there is a secret dew, a moisture that attends meekness and godly sorrow; this is to refresh the bowels of the saints. Speaking the words of life is thus expressed, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth;" this is sowing the word; but

moisture is needed, and that is thus expressed, "He that watereth, shall be watered also himself." Now in preaching, not only do the words go from the memory, but all the dew from the soul. When pastor and flock are in union, and in the bond of the covenant, the dew of Hermon goes even to the skirt: that which would keep your soul a whole week, like a watered garden, will not last one hour in a pulpit. "I will water them every moment;" this is done chiefly by preaching the word. An old bachelor, who has none to feed but himself, a half-peck loaf may serve him for a week; but the father of a family in Israel will consume it in an hour: this is our case, all our incomes are for the good of the public. I have often gone to work for more than myself, and bold as a lion; but when I had done, so shorn and drained, that I have been ashamed to look any one in the face; and at these times saints often flock round you with their joys, smiles, and fluent words, triumphing in the treasure they have got from your heart, for your cruse is emptied to fill them. And when meditation has been sweet, views many, and dew much, I have longed for the pulpit as much as a cow at grass longs for the milk-maid. But I have been at such times among a barren set; the sincere milk went not down, there being no mouth of faith to draw it; but those that go forth, and grow up like calves of the stall, will fetch it down, and out too. God save my son.

W. H.

LETTER LXXXI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM now all alive with hopes and expectations of seeing the Vicar once more. I have of late had some dead hours, some barren times, which are not fit to come into the days of the week, or to be joined with the number of the months. But, "He will not always chide, he will not be always wroth; he will not keep his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." But in his own time he came again with fresh life, with seasonable support, and with sensible relief. At which the heart expanded, the affections glowed, the mind was exhilarated, conscience charmed, and himself more sweet, more precious, more dear, more blessed than ever. What poor creatures we are, and yet what love, what kindness, tenderness, faithfulness, and truth, does he shew and confirm to us! And how does the heart enlarge and close, rise and fall; take courage or faint, fix or waver, according as he goes or comes, frowns or smiles, shines or eclipses, shows his pleasure or his displeasure. This, my dearly beloved, is our union, communion, and fellowship, both with the Father and with his Son Christ Jesus; and surely they must have life in him who have their souls so quick, so sensible, so tender, so soft, so susceptible as this. By love we come to God, the Judge of all; by faith we come to the Mediator of the new

covenant; and by the witness of adoption we come to the cry of Abba, Father: this, my beloved, is the life and soul of our profession, and this profession will never cast its leaves, nor cease from yielding fruit; for they are grafted, bound up, joined to, and made one spirit, with the Lord our God, and in God is all our fruit found. And by virtue of our union with him fresh life and heat, support and power, are communicated to us; hence it is that the heart is led to trust in him for, and hope to expect, all promised help in time of need. The life he gives animates us, encourages us in the fight, strengthens us, and promotes appetite; and as we feed we are more and more satisfied that we shall not perish; and sometimes more than satisfied on this head, and then we are said to be full and abound.

Yours in him,

W. H.

LETTER LXXXII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

To my dearly beloved fellow-soldier and fellow-servant,
true yokefellow and companion in tribulation.

THOU art now a living witness that God's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem. God's

eternal choice of us is to be made manifest in the furnace; here God brings us to teach us the use of the sword, the shield, the helmet, and the bow. But the whole armour of God is put on us, and the incorruptible seed is put into us, before we go into this fiery trial. "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." But of this be assured, that unhallowed fires do not work but under the management of the spirit of judgement, and the spirit of burning; nor yet without the fire of divine love: these latter are both with us in the furnace, or else the vessels must be either wood or earth; and both these would consume in a moment. Nothing but the immortal Spirit, and his incorruptible seed of grace, can stand this furnace. Gold and silver abide the fire, but not wood; and both these take possession of us before the fire is kindled. But the most blessed Comforter, with his innocent dove-like nature, works so calmly as not to be perceptible but by his fruits and effects. He is unmoved, undisturbed, calm, serene, and unconcerned, at all the opposition made against him, having nothing to fear from Satan, nor from all the army of inbred corruption. He keeps his throne in the heart, protects his own temple, and supports and strengthens his own empire, in the midst of all this hurry, bustle, and confusion. And under all this violent oppression of the enemy and the avenger, righte-

ousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, keep working at the bottom; and though at first they are unperceived or invisible to us, yet the holy empire rises up through all this confused chaos, and at last appears in all its lustre, glory, power, and majesty. "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire; for unto us a child is born." When the Holy Ghost enters and conquers the will, the mind, the affections, and the conscience, and bends them to himself, then the war begins; the devil sets all the briars and thorns against him in battle, and he goes through them, and burns them altogether, when grace rises, and reigns triumphant through Jesus Christ unto eternal life. This is the way that the King of Zion obtains his spoils; "I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors;" and all the many whose sins he bore, and for whom he made intercession, he will have; they are his Father's choice in him, and the Father's gift to him, and are the purchase of his own blood, and must be the trophies of his victory. And although they are all fallen off from him, and are fallen under the treble dominion of Satan, sin, and death, yet the prey must be taken from the mighty, the lawful captives must be delivered.

The Saviour mounts the triumphal chariot of his willing people, girds his sword upon his thigh as the most mighty, and goes forth as a mighty man, stirring up jealousy like a man of war, and rides prosperously, dispensing the word of truth, the grace of meekness and righteousness, and discharging his arrows in all directions; which, piercing the hearts of sinners, they fall under him, submit, and yield, to his irresistible artillery, Psal. xlv. 3—5. This wounds the infernal head over divers countries; and as numbers of sinners enlist under Satan's banner against him, he fills the places with the dead bodies of these, by making his word the savour of death unto death; while such as feel the contents of his quiver, yield obedience to him; and obtaining the blessed Spirit of truth, meekness, and righteousness, the council of deep waters rise in their hearts, and words of wisdom, like a flowing brook, issue from their mouths: these libations of praise are poured forth to honour their lawful sovereign and irresistible conqueror; he drinks of this brook in the way, well pleased with the willing captives; and then lifts up his head, and pursues his victories. This, my well-beloved, is the way that this holy and heavenly warfare is carried on. It is on our side faith fights; faith wields her shield, and handles her sword; for even the word of God, the sword of the Spirit, is put into the hand of faith, and we overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. The Captain of our sal-

vation is always at the head of his forces; he is both a commander and a leader of the people. He leads us forth, and brings us off; he gives strength equal to the day, inspires with fresh courage, animates to fresh vigour, gives hope of better success, makes us renew the attack; he displays the ensign staff, waves the banner of love, and makes us fight or die, resist or give way; and sets both the prize and the blank before us; glory and a crown if we fight, hell and eternal disgrace if we flinch: and both these spur us on. God bless thee!

The COALHEAVER.

LETTER LXXXIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

YOURS came to hand last night, and I like it well; and doubt not but, through undeserved mercy and the merits of Christ, we shall prevail. Remember what I wrote to you in the winter, when I begged of the Almighty to remove my cough; what energy I found in prayer, and what bondage and misery followed. By terrible things in righteousness will God answer us. This is the dark side; the sun breaks out when this blows over: even to this day, and this morning, I found great liberty for my dearly beloved brother: the

devil may well lay about him; he feels the lash, and must and shall give way; Resist him, says God, and he will flee; he cannot stand before the Spirit's supplication and the intercession of Christ; he cannot stand before the faith of God's elect, and the Spirit's sword. I expected no less than what you write; I was sure he would labour hard, and use violence; but, "I will give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you," saith the Lord; and what think you of that? Never give it up: pursue it ten times a day, and beg these two things as I do, a satisfactory token for good; this is for the soul, and deliverance from a sleepy devil; this is for the body. Depend upon it that, by God's leave, I will meet you daily at the throne: nothing under heaven that is against God can stand before us; this I know, for God is for us and with us. Persevere, my dearly beloved; quit yourself like a man, that you be not a servant and slave to the worst of tyrants. You see how the lion can change into the serpent, and the serpent into the fox, in order to mar the vines; and into an angel of light, by moving in our corrupt affections, to make us favour the things of men more than the things of God. And now from being the strong man armed in defence of his own palace, he is become a rocker, to attend the cradle, and lull thee to sleep; and how has he foiled thee in this? Fight, flinch not, but at him, and he will soon flee, and

you will see it. I expected a damp from the quarter you mention. If we provoke others to jealousy, our own locks must and shall be shorn. God will deal as we deal. But this, yea even this, shall work for thy good. "The needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever." The orders will come, Friend, go up higher; then shalt thou shine, and many shall see it; for those that cry in secret shall be rewarded openly. You know not how confident I write this; and who gives confidence? he that owns it and honours it. The heaven of heavens bless the scrap of excellence, so prays his faithful affectionate friend,

W. H.

LETTER LXXXIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM coming once more to visit the invalid. His outward man gets feeble, and his old man is as strong as ever. But neither of these can injure the new man: what God does is done for ever, nothing can be added to it, or taken from it; and God doth it that men should fear before him. The effect of this work on the souls of men is fear, and, "The fear of the Lord is his treasure:" a

treasure from the Saviour's fulness, and is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, who is called the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. And this grace is in my beloved. Nor is this all; for he is light in the Lord. He can see himself, his sinful nature, the old man and all his members, the devil and all his wiles; and you may depend upon this, that whatsoever makes sin and sinners vile in their own sight, and at the same time makes Christ the most lovely, and the most desirable of all objects, this, this is the true light: and it now shines in my beloved, and it is attended with unfeigned love to the brethren, and such dwell in the light, and there is no real or just occasion of stumbling in such; such being the children of light, and God is the father of these lights, and the father of glory, as Paul calls him; being the father of lights; for light is glory. Moreover, my beloved is not without love to Christ Jesus; for what does he make all this ado about him for; what is all this hunger and thirst after him; what is all this love, joy, meekness, weeping, crying, sorrowing, and sobbing over him when he comes; and all this fear and dread; this bitterness, this misery, and trembling; this hell and distraction within when he is gone? Surely he must be the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely; lovely in the eyes of poor sinners that make so much of him, esteem him so highly, and who count themselves, and all things else, but dung and dross, when compared to him. Can such lovers and admirers of Christ be among

that number who say unto him, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?" or among them who say there is no beauty in him; no form or comeliness, whereby he should be desired or admired? &c. And of this, my dear friend, be assured, that the law will never allow wrath to be executed, either upon fathers or upon children, unless they hate God. And sure I am, that those who have nothing but a hell without Christ, and who desire nothing else but him, must love him; and even the law itself shews mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his commandments; and love to God keeps every commandment that ever came from God. And I am sure that I love my friend with an unfeigned, undissembled, and unadulterated love in Christ Jesus; and this love is not in the flesh, nor in nature. For I once saw my friend in the state of nature, and he took me by the hand at Ash-down; and so far from loving him, a toad, a dog, or a devil, would have been just as acceptable to me as he was. My soul loathed him as a senseless hardened sinner, a rebel, and a deceiver, a hypocrite, and a presumptuous invader of the priest's office. But it is not so now; he is a lost sinner, and he knows it, and such the Lord came to seek and save; and as such I love him in Christ Jesus and as such I shall ever hold him as one dear to me, dear to the Lord, and dear to all humble souls who know him. God bless thee!

LETTER LXXXV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

MY best beloved seems quite in the dark about his own head. My views and firm opinion of him is, that a very gentle stroke of the paralytic kind has gone imperceptibly through his whole frame; of this I have been long assured in my own mind; and when you was last with me, I watched you narrowly, and compared what I saw in you with what I have seen in others, and was confirmed in my own private opinion. And this seems to me a most easy, gentle, and gradual way of gathering lilies, Song vi. 2. This relaxing, enfeebling, and debilitating complaint, not only weakens the joints and limbs, but the brain, eyes, ears, and even the speech. It also affects the memory and the recollection, by confusing and disturbing the head; so that the power of thinking, of recollecting, and even of attending, observing, and that also of looking and hearing, is at times much disturbed, disordered, or impaired. But all cannot alter or injure the noble powers or faculties of the soul; such as the will, the mind, the understanding, the affections, and the conscience, in all which the Holy Ghost works, and which are the proper receptacles of his presence, his power, and of his grace. Bodily afflictions are

bodily afflictions; nothing shall ever damn a soul but a mind armed with enmity against God, a will furnished with rebellion against Christ, a conscience defiled with unpardoned sin and guilt, and the affections alienated from the life of him, and fixed upon pleasures, sin, Satan, and the world. The work of regeneration is begun, carried on, and will be perfected on the mental powers above described. Hence he is called the Spirit of power in the will, making the sinner willing. The Spirit of a sound mind, putting the law of faith into the mind, and making it sound in the faith. The Spirit of revelation in the understanding. The Spirit of love in the affections; and the Spirit of peace and sanctification in the conscience. And this his work is perfect; and it is done for ever; nothing can be added to it, or taken from it.

Ever yours,

W. H.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

THIS is Thursday morning: the double letter was written yesterday. But, having just been to prayer, and finding some nearness and freedom in that glorious privilege, I laboured hard to make intercession for my poor afflicted friend; and, if

kind indulgence can speak; if meekness and humility are any proofs; if the assistance of the Spirit and divine energy have a voice, and if faith and conscience are admitted as witnesses in this business; then I tell my friend that God has heard my prayer in his behalf, and he himself will own and acknowledge it; and I write this in confidence, and with gratitude to my God, for giving me this persuasion—that God will revive the soul of my much esteemed brother in Christ Jesus. How wonderful are the operations of the most Holy Spirit of God. What lifeless lumps are we in and of ourselves before the throne: how dead and barren of every divine influence, affection, or devotional frame, unless this sovereign wind blow and move his own crop; no grace in exercise, nothing seen or felt but our own inherent corruptions; but grace shall reign over sin, and divine love shall destroy hellish hate. God has known our souls in adversity, and has acknowledged us in many trying hours; nor has he suffered our enemies to triumph over us above their allotted time; “The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment,” and our light afflictions bear the same date. The sweet operations from above which my soul is so doatingly fond of, are very changeable and transient with me, seldom of long duration; but they are always welcome to the soul that sits solitary and in widowhood. I appear but a mere machine when my Lord is gone. God receives no sacrifices, he reaps no fruits, his sub-

jects pay no revenues, but from his own implanted grace, and from the operations of his own most Holy Spirit upon that grace. There is no one thing in men that can ascend to God; our ascension and descension is under the influences of God's Spirit, and through the mediation of Christ Jesus. Farewell! Grace, mercy, and peace, be with thee!

W. H. S. S.

LETTER LXXXVII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I HAVE only time to send my beloved a scrap, as I am at this time much engaged, in making provision for the pulpit. I am very dark, yet am ordered to sow light for the righteous. I am in much want myself, but I must feed the sheep. I am as weak as water, but my work is to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. I am often in the worst confusion, but I am to be an ambassador of peace; I am stuffed with enmity, but I must preach the gospel of reconciliation to others; I often cavil and murmur at God himself, but I must find fault with all murmurers: and thus I am like a man that rows in a boat, I look one way, and go another. But even this hypocritical dealing shall not prove my ruin; why not?

“Because the things which I do, I allow not.” My will is bent God-ward, and in this will is a divine power. My mind serves the law of God, because God has given me the Spirit of love and of a sound mind; and this, also, is the mind of Christ. “I delight in the law of God after the inner man;” why? because that says, “I will shew mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments;” and love keeps them all, and “Love is of God;” or the real affections of the new man come from God. Accept these fragments, for I have written much this day; but am always the same to his Excellence.

W. H

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

A DAILY cross is the common lot of all the family; and a daily cross falls to my share: for, when I have preached Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, and get home dry, barren, and weary, then Wednesday and Thursday are spent in writing letters. And if, by Thursday evening, I have written twelve or fifteen letters, I then conclude I have done, and look out for Sunday; then come in more demands, which keep me on till Saturday noon, and then I go barren to feed my hungry

flock. This is sure to be my cross; and a cross every one must have that follows Christ in the regeneration; and this the scriptures witness, and conscience says the same. And were you delivered from all temptations, and the risings of corruption, and free from the rod, the cross, and the furnace, there would be an end to your preaching in one week; pride would not suffer you to speak; you would stink of self, and of fleshly savour, to all the heirs of promise. If it is by afflictions men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits; how can you expect divine life to flourish, but in the death of the body of sin? "By these things men live; and in all these things is the life of our spirit." If this be true, then all our energy, fervour, earnestness, life, power, struggles, appetite, longings, hungerings, thirstings, strivings, and importunities, lie in our soul's conflicts; and if God be a present, yea, a very present help in times of trouble; and if the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us when we cannot speak or utter our complaints, then it is plain to me that my friend complains of his greatest privileges; he complains of the life of his soul, and of all the purging draughts that belong to the branches of the living vine, and of all the energy of the Holy Spirit; of all the exercise of grace, of the power of God, and of all the self-emptying flames of the soul-renewing furnace. But enough of this; for there can be no greater curse dropped upon our heads than that of giving us over to our own way, and leaving us to our own will. I am going next Wed-

nesday to C, if God permit, where I am to preach five times. My success is not small, blessed be God, but I get old, and withering day by day; and the sooner dried up the better for me.

Ever yours,

W. H.

LETTER LXXXIX.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I HAVE at last obtained a line from the excellent one. His outward man decays: this I feel, and doubt not but it is true in him: but the inner man is renewed day by day; this I see in him, nor is it otherwise in me also, in a small measure. Death now will work in him, but life in the flock, and he will build them up, as God pulls him down. The infirmities of the body, and the revivals of the soul, will keep pace: and the house above will appear clearer and clearer, as the earthly house of this tabernacle decays; I mean the building not made with hands. Every grace, from faith to fear, has the promise of glory annexed; and this is no small encouragement to old weather-beaten, and invalid soldiers, who live in expectation of a discharge. I always thought, and have often said, that you would be the best man, when at the worst; the strongest man, when most weak; and the most lively in death. That

health would appear in your sickness, the swiftest pace would be at the goal, and you the most robust on the bed of languishing. Your hardest birth throes have been in imagination, and your sharpest pains in the midst of health; and what has been feared and imagined will appear ten times worse than what will be felt when it comes in reality. No lepers were pronounced clean but those covered with scurf; and sure I am that they are most alive who die daily. Communion with God is always attended with self-loathing; the more self is exalted, the farthest from God: lovers of God, and lovers of themselves, divide the world. Every one of God's family cannot bear enlargement; too much new wine would burst the bottle unless well softened, meekened, and supplied by affections; nor will trials do without godly sorrow and contrition to sanctify them: Paul's sharp thorn was to prick the bladder that was puffed up, that it should not swell. The best of men have a fleshly mind: and this, above measure overblown, must burst. Many that have be-moaned, lamented, and pitied his Excellency in his former conflicts, will envy him on his death-bed. The best wine of the marriage feast will come forth at last, and perhaps the groaning caudle at the hour of death. You are nothing but a riddle, and so I have sent you a paradox.

Ever yours,

W. H.

LETTER XC.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM glad at my heart that any help or support should be conveyed by any scrap from me. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" God has not, nor should we. The bruised reed is as near to him as the well-tuned harps of Zion, filled with thanksgiving and the voice of melody. The lambs in the arms and bosom, and the rams of Nebaioth, that minister, are both alike to the good Shepherd. There is joy in heaven over one penitent, more than over ninety and nine who need no repentance. If there was not much dross, there would not be so much fire; but remember this, his fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem, not in the world. The body and the soul are the work of the Saviour's own hands, and every grace, life, and light are his own treasure; so that he only purifies his own property; and he is the strength of the heart, the life of our grace, and the length of our days: our times are in his hands. Christ is Lord both of life and death; he can lengthen out his work, or cut it short. Death shall not invade till the people, of old prepared, be made ready for the Lord, Luke i. 17. It is not the furnace of affliction, nor the fiery trial, that can take away or purge our sins, our dross, our tin; nor is it intended so to do, but to discover all these. It is by

mercy and truth iniquity is purged; the mercy of God in regeneration is that which washes us: this is the clean water that cleanses us from filth and from idols. And truth respects the covenant of promise, in which God promises forgiveness, and Christ is the truth, being the fulfiller and the fulfilment of the promise, for in his crucifixion the fountain is opened, and the best robe is brought in. This is the mercy and truth by which iniquity is purged. The furnace is to search, to try, to stir up, and to make manifest the counsel of the heart, that we may see it and feel it, and be sensible of the need of Christ; seek him, call upon him, and trust in him, and be thankful for him. Meekness, patience, submission, humility, and love, are all by the Spirit alone; and whenever these are produced in us, the work is done at once. But we are not to go unpunished; for if we are ignorant of our fearful fall, we shall not prize the great salvation, nor give all the glory of it to God. Besides, God will be waited on, and waited for; nor is a stubborn mind, and a hard heart, a proper soil to receive seed, nor a good stock to graft upon: hence the word is called a hammer, a fire, a sword, an axe, a plummet, to cut, to wound, to break, &c. and "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken;" and this God will have. I have no doubt of your salvation, for I have you still in my heart, and in all my prayers. I have of late been indulged with a praying frame, and for a few days past been much engaged; for

God has bent my mind, and fixed a full purpose in my heart, to cleave close to him, and to press forward, though it be through many discouragements. And I am fully persuaded that you are chastened for your good; and though you kick at it, yet I am sure that if the Lord was to take away his rod, and all afflictions from you, and give you up to dead sloth and carnal ease, and to a judicial hardness of heart, so as to have no more pain, sorrow, or concern, you would be glad to get back again into the same furnace where you are now. The Lord knows that you are a Welchman, and no small man, and so do I; and he is at no loss for power, nor ways, nor means, to pull thee down. Give my love to all friends; and be assured that you will share in my petitions.

W. H.

LETTER XCI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

May 11.

MY dear friend's is just come: he is in the balance of the sanctuary; in which all ranks of men are a lie, and lighter than vanity. God puts us all into the scales, and weighs us, as Job says, in an even balance. In which there are two things God aims at, man's spirit, and man's actions. "Every way of a man is clean in his own eyes,

but God weigheth the spirits." Secondly, God weighs actions, or works; "God is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." God's balances of justice are his laws. Love to God, to Christ, to truth, and to the saints, is standing weight by the standard of Jerusalem, according to the law of Moses, which requires a just weight and a just balance.

Faith in Christ, and in God through Christ, in the righteousness of Christ, in the word of God, and in the promises of the gospel; this, this is a just weight in the balance of the sanctuary: for if the just are to live by faith, then the believer is just and righteous in his surety, according to the law of faith, and the proclamation of the gospel, which asserts the believer to be complete in him; and if so, then of full weight.

I have long seen my friend in this balance, ascending and descending, as I once was for a long space of time myself; but at a long run, I saw even then, blind as I was, that my scale gained, and its opposite mounted. And I as clearly see the scale of sin rise higher and higher, and will in time kick the beam; when my friend in hope, and in Christ the substance of that hope, will come down into the hand of justice full weight. Every conflict adds to the weight of thy scale, but thou wilt find the anchor of hope to hold fast, and abide firm, in all the possession she gains; and when this is the case, Satan's darts will be like straws, his accusations without ground,

and his charges without foundation, and then he will incur another damnation for condemning the just, and moving God against him without cause. Mr Hart, in mentioning three steps of faith, calls the first, believing the record God gives of his Son; this is divine revelation believed in. Secondly, as Christ is the sum and substance of the gospel, he speaks of believing on the Son, as the only object set forth in the gospel record. And, thirdly, he treats of believing in the Son, by which he means a sensible in-being, or in-dwelling, in Christ, so as to see one's interest clear in him. The curious distinction of being safe, and not sound, I must leave. I know of no safety but in Christ; and if in him, we must be sound in the faith and perfect too; for Paul says we are complete in him, and Christ says without spot. God bless you! So prays the Coalheaver.

W. H.

LETTER XCII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM still permitted to remember my friend before God with confidence, freedom, and boldness. I evidently see in yours the struggles, the vigour, and the life of hope. This anchor may

lay dormant, and be covered with hurry, bustle, and confusion; but the principle, the habit, cannot be lost, being a grace or fruit of the Spirit, and coupled with everlasting consolation, which is the attendant on a good hope through grace. This hope is the smoking flax that shall not be quenched, because it pants, longs, looks out, and expects the love of God to cast out fear; love being the fire, and hope the smoke, that keeps ascending and aspiring after it. The bruised reed is the frail man, wounded in spirit. The flax is the faculties of the soul, chafed, tried, wounded, and sore broken, ready every moment to take fire, and often fearing the fire of hell. Love divine is what the soul longs for; and hope, attended with intense desires after that which we hope for, is the smoke that keeps ascending after it; and this love being in hope, though not in the enjoyment of it, is that little heat which feeds the smoke and keeps it ascending. This is the smoke by day, as love is the flaming fire by night, Isaiah iv. 5. Moreover, hope gets more firm, and gains a stronger hold by trials; it is an anchor of the soul, which the floods of temptation, and the overwhelming billows of corruption cannot break. Keep your eye upon hope, watch it, observe the workings of it, and the strength of it, the firmness of it, and its vigorous efforts; and depend upon this, that God is in it; he is the God of hope. It is experience that worketh hope; but then, mind what that experience is that produceth hope. It is the ex-

perience of comfort that works hope. "Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." And I know that you have experienced comfort enough to produce hope. Faith springs from power, hope from comfort, and love from itself; we love, because we are loved. I thank you for the tidings of those two persons you mentioned; the account furnished me for a thank-offering to God, who regards the prayer of the destitute, and does not despise their prayer. And let my dear friend acknowledge every respite, revival, refreshing, and renewing, and not be unmindful of his benefit: thousands in this world would give a thousand worlds for the hope that he has:

Farewell,

W. H.

LETTER XCIII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

I AM more and more convinced of the faithfulness of God to the word of his grace, and especially this promise, which more immediately respects myself at this time, and is descriptive of my present engagements: "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the

seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them," Isaiah lxxv. 23. The whole crop of incorruptible seed comes into the heart at once; the Holy Spirit descends as the spirit of all grace and of supplication, and quickens the soul at once. This makes our feelings keen, the soul conceives life and immortality at once, and this brings on the labour, and others are set to travail for such souls. Soon after this operation, however imperceptible to us, grace appears; God, and the things of God, engage the mind, employ our thoughts, and will be uppermost; and awe, reverence, and fear of God, discover themselves. Faith in the truth, justice, holiness, immutability, and terrible majesty of God, works strongly in us, though as yet we cannot claim his love, his mercy, or his promised salvation; future trials are to discover that. And when the fiery trial comes on, then is grace to maintain the fight, while the dross and tin consume in the flames. In this furnace God tries us to the quick, that we may know what that treasure is, and what that grace can do that he has put into our hearts; and we at the same time prove him, and try the tried stone, and sure foundation, that he has laid in Zion, and watch narrowly to see if he is faithful and true to his promises, and to us poor needy, perishing sinners, whose cases the scriptures describe, to whom the invitations are proclaimed, and to whom the promises are made; and if we can find the least failure here, or the least short-coming, or if we

are left to sink without hope, or are in the least danger of the great transgression, or are permitted in the least degree to exceed the bounds that God has prescribed in his word to such cases, we are sure to wax bold, to reason, argue, plead, and dispute the point; and the good, the holy, the adored, and the ever-blessed Comforter, makes us so wise, so cunning, so subtle, as to improve every slight, neglect, or disregard that God shews to us in our own behalf and defence, and the Spirit fills our mouths with arguments to plead these things. He is our advocate on earth, our intercessor; he comes for that purpose, to make intercession for us according to the will of God: and he does it effectually, and to purpose; and, bless his dear and precious name, we know him, love him, admire him, and adore him, as the sweetest of all teachers, and the surest of all guides. And what is to be the result of this fiery trial? why our dross and tin, by which I understand fleshly affections, legal influences, natural faith and hope, universal charity, and the savour of nature: these are to be purged off, and we are to come forth more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. Faith in this fire is to shew herself, and do her office; she is to claim her parentage, and God is to acknowledge the fraternity. "I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God." This is the end God aims at, and the end that shall be accomplished; this is impressed on the soul by the Holy Ghost, and of this faith prophesies; and this end

hope expects; "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." And so it must be, if it be true that all things do work for good to them that love God, as every soul does who craves his favour and his presence above all things else; for all that hate him say, Depart from us, and cause the Holy One to cease from before us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; as the Jews, who saw and hated both Christ and his Father, and therefore said to Pilate, "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him." I believe in my heart that I have had the aid, assistance, presence, and instruction of the Holy Comforter, in writing this: the devil is almost at the end of his chain, his darts do not stick, their fire is much cooled, and they fly only through the head; they do not pierce the heart as heretofore. It is almost over with him, he loses ground, and will gain it no more. He must quit the strong-hold shortly. The stronger than he pursues him; half his armour is gone, wherein he trusted. And you may expect him to beat a parley, hang out his white flag transformed, treat of terms about a surrender, or wish to capitulate. Listen to no offers, or terms: believe nothing that he says, for there are seven abominations in his heart. Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come; then thou shalt most assuredly see that Just One, and hear the voice of his mouth; the Holy Spirit will put the best robe in the hand of faith, and faith will put it on: the sentence of justification will then be

passed in the court of conscience; and the Spirit will bear his witness to it, and set the fair mitre on thy head; an ornament of grace, proclaimed by the light of God's countenance, shining on thy face; as the health of thy countenance, and thy God. And although thou hast often said, I shall not see him, yet this judgment is before him, therefore trust thou in him. I am still in labour, and under no common influence even at this time. God bless thee! my kind love to all that love him.

Ever yours,

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XCIV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS.

BELOVED in the Lord, I have not written to you for some time, because it was hinted in a letter to my dame, that my last was too much for you, by which I conceived that it had caused grief; but since, I understand that it only meant that the matter was too profound for my friend's confused judgment, and too great for one so unworthy: misunderstanding, therefore, has been the cause of my long silence. I still continue lame, but my blessed one is kind, and very indulgent to me.

Nothing can move our Rock, and there is no shaking or unsettling the building till the foundation be destroyed. The living stone is a risen Saviour, and the lively stones are quickened sinners; the two coming together, and being united in the bond of peace, constitute that wonderful fabric called Mount Zion, in which God will for ever dwell. A broken heart is the door by which the Saviour enters, and the sore, tender, or contrite spirit, is his residence in which he dwells. Here he first displays his powerful work: first in cleansing; secondly, in healing, curing, and binding up; then he goes on in reviving, in raising up a new crop, such as faith, hope, love, joy, peace, quietness, meekness, humility, self-abasement, godly sorrow, repentance, glorious liberty, and rest; and making us to rest contented, satisfied, and fully assured that death is abolished, and that life and immortality are brought to light in us. This is the wonderful work that God performs on Mount Zion when he enters, and when he comes to take up his eternal abode. You may, Nancy, tell your uncle of what has befallen my chapel: it has not caused me one moment's concern, nor deprived me of one minute's sleep; my heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, and this shall work for my good. Bless the Lord, O my soul! and God bless you all!

THE COALHEAVER.

LETTER. XCV.

To the Rev. W. HUNTINGTON,
Cricklewood House.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I HOPE you will excuse my troubling you again, but the very great satisfaction and lively hope I experienced under your discourse on these words, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant," constrains me. The fear you so beautifully and powerfully described, I have a firm persuasion that God in mercy has put into my soul, and that not for any worth or worthiness in me, but through his own sovereign grace. And again on Sunday last from these words, "For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels;" and indeed it is with the greatest gratitude to Almighty God, that I confess I am at a point in this, that my spirit was in the wheels as you described it, for I feel such a change wrought in my whole soul, and inclinations, and such a hatred to sin, and a desire continually running after God, that I believe nothing short of an Almighty power could have accomplished this. It is now more than three years since I was directed to your chapel in Titchfield Street in a most wonderful manner, and no creature could be more ignorant of the Lord, and of his people, and of his

ways than I was; but this I know, that my ways had been evil from my youth up, and that continually. And this desire God had given me, to seek the salvation of my soul, for which I ever hope to bless and praise his holy name; nor have I since that time had a desire to hear any one else when I could possibly get to hear you; for I soon began to have a persuasion which has gradually increased that your ministry and my soul were under the influence of the same Spirit, insomuch that I have often wondered at the condescension of God when you have brought forth the desires of my soul, that had you have heard me express them you could not have done it with greater exactness: and this has been the case when I have heard you mention the different trials God's people are subject to, and experience. Sometimes I have said, I know nothing about them; this has often caused fears that all was not right within; I have then gone to the Lord and begged of him to make it more manifest to me that I was his child, and that I was serving him in spirit and in truth; and it has been after this that you have mentioned the very fears that I had experienced, and from what quarter they came, and that all unbelief was of the devil. These, I trust, Dear Sir, are tokens for good, and these cause me to believe that I have a good hope through grace; and I will pray the Lord to give you such a view of them, as I have a great desire to become a member of the church, that I may make a public acknowledgment of what I believe

God has done for my soul: and God, who only knows the hearts of all his creatures, knows that my only motive in this is the honour and glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, one God, and the good of my own soul. With your permission I will wait upon you on Wednesday next in the vestry: with a hope that you will comply with my desire,

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours with reverence and sincerity,

ANN G.

LETTER XCVI.

To Mrs. ANN G——.

Dear Friend,

THE good work goes on among us, blessed be God. This world is God's stage, the conversion of souls is God's work, and preaching the gospel is bringing men under their great trial for eternity; and as this decides the fate of men, so will the day of judgment confirm it: God takes one of a city and two of a tribe and brings them to Zion. As far as I can judge, thou hast got the earnest which secures the prize of the high calling; the greatest of all great benefits. The lot is cast into the lap, the whole disposing thereof is of the

Spirit, who is our part and lot in this matter, Acts viii. 21; and does condescend to manifest himself by the instrumentality of the living creature, who gives divine motions to the wheels, so as to keep them in perpetual motion. All the externals of the church's devotions, such as open profession and confession, attending the means and treading the Lord's courts, hearing, reading, praying, watching and waiting, bearing the cross and keeping up a close walk with God, is the work of the outward or external wheels, which are said to be full of eyes, because fresh light and new discoveries are daily made to the soul by a diligent attendance on the means, by which we obtain the light of love, the light of joy, the light of knowledge; besides the eye of faith that sees things that are invisible, and the eyes of the understanding which comprehend something of the heights and depths of divine love: thus, "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

But then there is another wheel in the middle of this, which is the life and spring of the outward wheels' motions, and that is the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit giving exercise to his own implanted grace; he descends from the Father through the Mediator to us, and enters the soul with all his heavenly crop of divine fruits: these spring up in our spiritual sacrifices to God, while the returns of prayer furnish us for fresh offerings; and in these things the soul ascends and

descends. At times the cup overflows, and then barren and thirsty sinners catch the streams, as our Lord speaks; "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water:" thus the grace of the Holy Spirit ascends and descends in a continual round or revolution; and this work is a wheel in the middle of a wheel. I wish you had sent me word how you came to hear me at the first. I would not have you to call upon me until the new chapel is built, as we have no place to minister in.

Adieu.

W. H. S. S.

LETTER XCVII.

To the Rev. W. HUNTINGTON.

My dear and invaluable Friend,

I CAN scarcely think it right to be troubling you with a letter, knowing that all the time you have to spare is so much filled up with your numerous friends' correspondence; yet I beg you will excuse my intruding, as I do most sincerely love you, and highly esteem you for your work's sake. God has been pleased to bless your preaching and writing to my soul's eternal comfort I do believe. I never heard the word of life till I heard it from

your mouth, and a word of life it was, for such sweetness, power, and love attended it, that I could truly say, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." I gave some account of the dealings of God with me in a letter I sent to you in March 1810, but I suppose you never received it, as you did not recollect the name when I called upon you the 7th of January last, which rather pleased me, as I was very dark when I wrote it. I should have written to you some years ago, but my mind was continually perplexed with this idea, that my religion was only the effects of natural passion, and that it would soon wear off, and then I should be ashamed of such things, and be a disgrace to others; or if I wrote to you I should only expose myself to contempt, and bring down the judgments of God upon me for such presumption: but, blessed be God, I am upheld to the present time; and for many sweet refreshing seasons, and soul-establishing blessings, I am indebted to you (as the instrument;) for, being in a very barren country, where there is scarcely one minister that knows either law or gospel, consequently cannot describe the path of the just, I am obliged to attend to what passeth within, and compare it with the word of God; but at times that is a sealed book, and such confusion and darkness overwhelm my soul that, like David, my cry is, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?" &c.

When in such a state, God knows, I have many times taken some of your writings to see if you have described the state I was in; and I as often find, let me be in ever so perplexed a condition, some of them have so exactly described it, and thrown such a light on my path, that I could not help exclaiming; God bless the man, God bless the man! Blessed be the Lord for raising up such an able minister of the New Testament! O Lord, if it be consistent with thy heavenly will, send forth many more such, that shall be able to take up the stumblingblocks out of the way of thy people. Your 'Saints' Seedtime' has been much blessed to me, and also 'The Heavenly Workfolks;' your description of their daily pay is very precious. The sermon I heard you preach from these words, "Ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you; abide in me and I in you," was very delicious fare indeed to me; but was I to attempt to describe it I should come far short; it is better felt; but the apostle Peter sweetly describes it in his first chapter.

It is but seldom that I hear any of the ministers in this neighbourhood, except the one I told you of that was intimate with Mr. Tanner of Exeter, for I have found by experience that I lose by them; for if I have any savour of divine things on my mind when I go, I am sure to lose it all under such, so that I have avoided them for some years. It is now about thirteen or fourteen years ago that I first heard you, at which time I tra-

velled to London on purpose, having previously read some of your writings; and, blessed be God, I have more or less found a sweet union to you ever since, which I never felt towards any other person living except Mr. T. who is now at Sunderland; at which time you was an interpreter to me indeed, having preached from these words, "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand," &c. &c. the sweet effects were as mentioned at the beginning of this, which I often want to enjoy; but the day of prosperity and the day of adversity are set one against the other. When I observe the presumptuous confidence of professors in general, how sweet does every humbling dispensation appear; and I can truly bless the Lord for his chastening rod, finding it to have been so much for my good, for it may be truly said of me that I was rushing with haste to eternal destruction when the Lord was pleased to stop me; and though I fought against it, yet he did not leave me until I was brought as an humble suppliant to his feet, and received of his word.

I beg you will excuse the length of this, and grant me an interest in your prayers; and if you can spare a few minutes, a line or two would be most thankfully received. If a kind Providence should direct your way into these parts again, there are a few I believe starving for the bread of life, and would be very glad to hear you. I hope my dear friend T—'s visit was not in vain; there

are some in this town that long to hear him again. May the Lord bless you indeed, and preserve you in health and strength of body for many years. That you may in the face of all your enemies stand in his strength, spread forth the savour of his name, and be still increasingly useful in calling poor sinners out of darkness into God's marvellous light, is the earnest prayer of,

Dear Friend,

Your much obliged and affectionate

P. B.

LETTER XCVIII.

To P. B.

Dear Friend,

THE contents of yours rejoiced my heart, and strengthened my hands; evil report and good report falls to my share daily; the former counteracts my consequence, the latter animates my hope. "The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart," when faith discovers invisible realities; "and a good report maketh the bones fat," when attended with the witness of conscience. I find by daily experience that Satan and his adherents are no enemies to blind zeal, to feigned faith, to a form of godliness, nor to external reformation; they have

no objection to the ministry of the letter, nor to a splendid profession under it. Satan's spoiler, and the hypocrite's vexation, is the spirit of life in the soul; and this we know, that man is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart. The Spirit of life is the springing well and the flowing brook which works the sting of death and the sentence of it out of the conscience, and the fear of death and its appendages out of the mind; and is the fountain of life, and of all blessings, and all blessedness that ever came down from the father of lights to the children of men. All heat from natural affections, however moved and stirred up by gifts, fluency, zeal, or oratory, is nothing else but sparks of our own kindling; every spiritual gift that is not fed with spiritual life, must die, being nothing but a sound. Life keeps the conscience tender, and makes it susceptible of every injury offered to it, either by sin or by error. It is the quickening operations of the Spirit that kills us to the vanities of this world, and gives us all our appetites, cravings, longings, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, after the bread and water of life, and after communion and fellowship with the Son of God. Without life the appetite of man is vitiated; he cannot relish or savour the things of God, but those that be of men. We see not a few that fade and wither away, who once looked green and flourishing; and this must be the case where there is no union with

the true vine, for the branch cannot bear fruit of itself. There is in this union momentary support, the Lord is our strength; there is a continual communication of all sorts of grace from the Lord's fulness; there is a repeated anointing with fresh oil from the unction of the Holy One, who is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; and there is a being watered every moment with the quickening streams of the fountain of life: these, my dear friend, are the things that must keep our leaves green; and under these influences we shall bring forth fruit in old age, to shew that God is upright.

W. H. S. S.

END OF THE FOURTEENTH VOLUME.



