

LETTERS
OF
A MAN OF GOD.

1879.

G. R. COCKHEAD,
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PREFACE.

In the Divine ordering the letters which follow have come into the Editor's hands; and under a sense of the Divine requirings, they are sent forth for their appointed work.

They may not be welcomed by the many who throng the broad religious way. They that are whole may despise them; the wise and prudent may reject them; the full may loathe them. And how hardly will the zealous professor, or the busy worker, be drawn away from his feasting upon shadows to seek after the Enduring Substance, or to wait for the opening of that eye which alone can discern the Truth. But some among the few, who are poor in spirit, and who hunger and thirst, not after any of the religions of the day, but after the Source of all Good, will be helped by them along the path of life, and warned by them of dangers on the right hand and on the left; and from the spirits of these, thanksgiving and praise will arise on their account to Him whose guiding voice they will hear in them.

H. N.

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1.

DIVINE TRUTH.

3. 1. 69.

SUFFER the word of exhortation. Pure unmixed truth is not to be found in anything which has passed through the hands of man, or is visible or tangible to his senses: not in the Scriptures of "the Old and New Testaments," nor in any other book or writing whatever. These can only speak of, or bear a testimony to, the truth; but are not the truth, neither can they give it.

The truth is a living, quickening Spirit; a divine Life; a reality and substance which is of, from, and in, God; not separable from Him. It is His Son, the life of the world, the out-beaming of His glory, and express image of His substance.

As man is one with this Spirit, being joined to it, he is a temple of God, a child of the Father; and has life in himself. He is of the truth, and the truth is in him: so he has not to look without.

It is a knowledge of Christ after the flesh—out of us, and for us only, to the exclusion of Christ in us, and with us, as a quickening Spirit—and taking the Scriptures as the truth, and rule of life, that has brought Protestant Christendom, so called, into that thick darkness of which you complain.

The "miserable garments" you have cast off were all woven in this loom; and if you do not mind, you will take to yourself others of a seemingly much higher quality, but in reality of the same substance.

To be filled with the Spirit is enough. The sons of God are led by His Spirit.

The "Letter" was sent, because it bore witness to the truth; not that it was the truth itself.

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2.

THE SALVATION OF THE GOSPEL.

To the same.

13. 1. 69.

YOU are written to without fear. You are not a child. You do not want to resist truth. Error shall not be taught: what has been handled of the word of life, the bread of God—Christ Jesus—shall once more be declared unto you.

You say, "If people followed out the principles and laws of God, as set forth in His written word, they would be different from what they are." They would; but they would not be Christians, in the true sense of that term. If they did this conscientiously, they would be a compound of Jew and Christian, and might make a fair show in the flesh; but they would never get beyond "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Outwardly they might be better; but inwardly substantially the same.

Seven hours' reading the Scriptures, added to seven hours' prayer, so called, daily, won't eradicate a single lust, take away one idol, or remove the root or body of sin.

The Gospel, the power of God, the grace of God, the Christ of God, the Light sent into the world, the blessed Spirit—these alone, (and they are essentially one), can do this.

I say unto you again, as man is joined to the Lord, he becomes one Spirit. This is the salvation of the Gospel, the dispensation of the Spirit, the mystery hid from the ages, till the day of Pentecost; and since that time lost again, and known only to one here and there, who are, and must be, esteemed as blind, and the off-scouring of the earth, because the world cannot know them, as it could not know Him.

The time will come when you will say, Amen, to all that has been written by —. —. —. May it come quickly.

We are saved by grace through faith, which is the gift of God ; not only as children, but as young men, and fathers, in Christ.

Christ is our life and salvation, really and truly, only so far as His Spirit is our life.

To be filled with the Spirit is enough. What would you have more than to be full of God—to be filled with a measure of that fulness which our elder Brother and King had without measure. He is the head ; we the members : but the seed is *one* ; the life is *one* ; the Spirit is *one*. God in Him ; God in us. The Father in Him ; the Father in us : each in his measure.

—. —. —.

3.

THE SCRIPTURES.

To the same.

FOR twenty years your notions of the Scriptures were, in measure, held ; and comfort, very often false and self-willed, was received by them.

It pleased the Divine Goodness, however, about a dozen years ago, by His Spirit, without the aid of books, to show that trusting and loving the Scriptures was not trusting and loving Himself.

It is now known that these by-gone notions were a part of the mystery of iniquity, taught by man.

The Scriptures are now known to be, not the Word of God, but words, spoken by different parties—by the Lord, the Almighty God, Immanuel, by angels, true prophets,

false prophets, good men, bad men, wise men, fools, apostates, devils, Satan, and an ass. The WORD, which liveth and abideth for ever, judgeth all these words ; and by His unction, ever present with His own, gives a true judgment of them to those who are born of Him.

If the Divine Spirit does not bring you to this, there is no great desire to force it upon you. It is my life, and will be for ever.

As to "Baptism," &c., William Dell, who wrote about 1650, has cleared that matter beyond all controversy. Dell was not a Quaker.

There is little doubt left on the mind here, that there is but one faith, and one baptism, in the present dispensation ; and that the one baptism is of the Holy Ghost, and of fire.

Water-baptism, as practised at the present time, is part of the mystery of iniquity ; and at the earliest ages of the church, was one of those Jewish rites, which some of the Apostles, out of weakness and prejudice, left untouched.

You refer me to Cruden on this subject. It is right to be frank. Any book or author whatever is held in light esteem, if the Divine Spirit does not support their testimony in the heart.

Even if you could show that David did call the Law "the Word of God" in his day, we are now taught better by his Roor. There be a few who have passed through the Law into Christ : would you drive them out of Him, and back again to the Law, by throwing Cruden and David at their heads ?

A CARNAL FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

To the same.

THERE is a faith which overcometh the world : and there is a faith which is overcome by the world. The former is the gift of God, and Christ is the Author and Finisher of it ; not as He was at Jerusalem only, but as He is now at the right hand of God. The latter is generated, by the natural spirit of man, from the letter of the Scriptures.

You are shamefully drunken with the wine of this latter fornication. If ever it should please the Almighty God with a strong arm to redeem you from this state, the Tract you have sent will be one of your most painful remembrances.

It is a question whether all the sins of your youth will weigh more than a drop of the bucket compared with this. To be a fool and blind is bad enough ; but to make others the same is worse.

It is not said that it equals the productions of John Walker in bitterness and venom. He was a very murderer, when in his cups : you say and unsay, while in yours ; and are of that kind of spiritual vagabonds who would do nobody any harm, if they could help it. But ye are true brethren in spirit : your root and life is one. You know and preach Christ after the flesh only ; not as He is in Spirit at the right hand of God, and in the hearts of his brethren, who are raised from the dead. You preach not from Christ, but from anti-Christ. You acknowledge the living Word of God in the letter, because you find this in the Scriptures ; but you know little, or nothing, of Him as yet in your heart.

When He takes to Himself His sword and shield, alas for you : your anguish and cry will be bitter indeed.

Your interpretations of Scripture, and your faith also, will vanish like smoke before a mighty wind; and you will then find that your religious performances have been your greatest sins.

May the Divine Goodness have mercy upon you, and bring you to your senses before it be too late. You have shown a disposition to be kind in natural things: take this faithful return in spiritual from

— . — . — .

5.

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE WORD.

To the same.

DON'T dishonour yourself by calumny. He does not necessarily think lightly of the Scriptures, who has been taught of the blessed Spirit that the living Word of God *in the heart* can more effectually lead, and guide, and save, than the letter of Scripture *out of it*.

The Scriptures are *words* from God, useful to bring us to 'THE WORD. The Word is God. When the blessed God dwells in us of a truth, He is everything, every day, every hour, every moment, without many words about it.

If you don't know this, don't spit upon those who do. As He becomes our salvation, light, and love, so He takes our hearts out of everything that is not Himself.

It is hoped that you will even yet allow that God, the Blessed and Adorable God is one thing, and the Scriptures another.

Your zeal about God's truthfulness is quite out of place. The Scriptures are liable to change, loss, and error. The Lord Jehovah neither to one nor the other.

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6.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE TEACHER ; NOT THE LETTER.

To the same.

AVOID false accusations and hypocrisy. You were not called a “spiritual vagabond” on the score of “baptism,” or the “breaking of bread.” You were distinctly told, in a note sent for that purpose, that the subject of the Scriptures would not be left at present, to enter into the “watery dispensation.”

It was said that you were of a kind of “spiritual vagabonds,” &c., &c., from a sense of your dark spiritual state ; wandering up and down the Scriptures, and giving out the commandments and truths of one dispensation, when you ought to have come under the blessed teaching promised in another, of which you are clearly ignorant.

He shall lead you into all truth, is the promise : the state, after the promise is fulfilled—ye have an unction of the Holy One, and know all things. The spiritual man judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. Now you are a vagabond to this state—a wanderer from it, and an opposer of it. You have got the *words* about it, but are out of the substance. Not feeling any power or strength from God to help you in your present condition, you seek to make your dark course good by insinuating that there is no higher teaching than the letter of the Scriptures, and that those who know that there is are “under a delusion of Satan,” &c.

Alas, what a pitiable figure you present to the opened eye. I say unto you again, that the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit is the highest and surest teaching of the present dispensation, and the safest too. He that is a young man in Christ hath overcome the wicked one, and

the Word of God abideth in him. He that is a father in Christ knows Him that is from the beginning. The Law is fulfilled, the prophecies are ended, where Christ dwells and reigns, and the Father is loved with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength.

As to Baptism and the Supper, you have Dell. If you won't hear him, you won't hear —. —. —. So he will not enter upon a waste of time in doing over again what, if it is rightly remembered, Dell has done so well.

It is one thing to have the Scriptures ; and another to have the life, spirit, and power, of those who gave them forth.

The Law is a schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ : when we are married to Christ, we are dead to the Law.

The Scriptures are words of God, which may help to bring us to Christ : when we are really joined to Christ, the words have done their service ; though they remain profitable every way to the wise of heart, but a cause of destruction to fools.

— . — . — .

P.S. You hinted in one of your former letters that Joanna Southcott and James Prince became what they were by following the Blessed Spirit. Alas for you : you will commit a sin that will not be forgiven you, if you do not mind. They came to what they are by false interpretations of the Scriptures, and setting themselves up above their fellows—the one as “the woman clothed with the sun,” and the other, as he told me with his own mouth, as “the man whose name is the Branch,” and that his body would neither see death nor corruption. “Behold he cometh,” “Behold he cometh,” was the cry that Prince took up, in common with those besotted drunkards and false prophets, the Plymouth Brethren ; and finding out that he had believed a lie, he set about to make it true by himself becoming a new Saviour.

In endeavouring to terrify the sons of God from being led by His Spirit, you are doing the Devil's work. What has been said is in favor of the substance, in the heart, of what you are continually talking about, and professing to pray for, in words.

Spiritual anti-Christ is known to the truly begotten of God, by always, in good words and other hypocrisies, seeking, but never coming to a knowledge of the truth.

You will have to pass through something more than accepting propositions, and saying Amen to the words of truth, before you enter into the kingdom of God.

So remember, you are faithfully warned, and your hypocrisy reproved, not in doubtful phrases, but in the words of truth and soberness. Cease therefore from words, and if by any means you can, obtain the power: then your folly will soon dry up.

7.

PERVERSION OF SCRIPTURE.

To the same.

EVERY time that you have made use of Isa. viii. 20, in your letters—and it has been frequently—you have placed a fresh label upon your spiritual state, vivid as a sunbeam to the eye that is opened of God.

This is the writing thereon—Drunkard, Fool, Liar, and False Prophet. For the present it will be left to the Holy Spirit to bring the spiritual truth of this home to your heart.

Farewell.

THE LAW AND CHRIST.

To the same.

THE passage which you quote, and throw at my head, about hell-fire, &c., has to do with anger, passion, and bad words: but has no relation whatever to the term "fool" by itself, in its common acceptation, which our Saviour used innocently to His disciples and others. The matter of the last was left with you, hoping that you might ponder over it, and by the Spirit's help find out the truth: but alas! alas! good words and hastiness of spirit are your ruin.

However, a word or two now, in the cool of the day, after your threat of hell, may, with the divine blessing, give your mind a right direction.

The Law was given through Moses: grace and truth through Jesus Christ. Now he that would drive the grace and truth away, because it agreed not with Moses (the Law and the testimony in Isaiah's time) is what was said; and much more, if he teaches others so to do. Under the present dispensation the Law is light, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; and the testimony of Jesus the Spirit of prophecy. Therefore, if we be in the light—Christ—and abiding there, keep His words, something good will follow. But if we carry His words and other Scripture words, as it were, in a bag, and without light, grace, or truth, hurl them about, and at other peoples' heads, the end will be misery, if not death.

The "blood of Christ" is a propitiation for past sins, and the ground of confidence to a sinner in his approach to God: but it was not given to justify the retention of sin, folly, and hypocrisy, in the heart and mind.

I say unto you again—without anger; without pride; without vain-glory; and without fear—cease from words,

and, if possible, obtain the power; and your folly will soon dry up.

To be filled with the Spirit is enough; and nothing else will do in its place.

If it should please the Divine Goodness, at some future time, to bring you under the power of the dispensation of the Spirit, you will not find a word that has been written too strong. On the contrary, something like the following will come from you:—"Alas! alas! what a fool I was, and more than a fool. You tried to bring me to the heavenly Solomon, to be filled with the Spirit; but I would not have it. I was drunk and blind, in common with my brethren, the Plymouths; and so, taking you to be a false prophet, I had no other remedy but to bring you 'to the Law and to the testimony,' and to keep you off with passages of Scripture, though I really knew not what I affirmed."

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9.

THE SCRIPTURES GOOD, BUT NOT GOD: AND CANNOT MAKE GOOD.

To the same.

THERE is no quarrel with the Scriptures here. They are good, and beyond all other books upon the face of the earth. But they are not God, nor Christ, nor the Spirit. When kept in their place, they are well; but in the present day they are made a stalking-horse for carnality and hypocrisy. A man must become a new creature and spiritual, before he can understand the experience of those who gave them forth. No man can try the spirit of

another by the letter of the Scriptures, however learned he may be in them. The Spirit alone is sufficient for this, though the Scriptures may corroborate what the Spirit has wrought, when read by the wise of heart—that is, one in whose heart the heavenly Solomon dwells.

The Scriptures, like the Law, cannot make good : they can only show in a measure what is bad. True goodness is of and from the blessed God, immediately, by the Spirit ; and has no more need to come through the Scriptures to us, than it had to Enoch or Abraham. These men walked with God in the Spirit, without the Scriptures. Are we worse off than they ? What is true Christianity ? It is being born again of the Spirit. It is being brought by Christ to a reconciliation, and by the Spirit to partake of the Divine nature.

There never was an age of the world, when the Scriptures were made more of than in “Wm. Dell’s” time (1640): but hear what he says :—“This generation is rooted and built up in the doctrines of men. I therefore appeal to the next generation, but especially to that people whom God hath and shall form by His Spirit for Himself, for they only will be able to make just and righteous judgment in this matter, seeing they have the anointing to be their teacher, and the Lamb to be their Light.”

What is the drunkenness, fornication, and hypocrisy of the Plymouths, and those of their generation ? It is a spurious sanctity, generated between their own spirits and the letter of the Scriptures. They take hold of the Scriptures, and then, by their own natural powers and reason, make themselves as much like them as they can ; and when detected in this, they bite and snarl, like a fox in a trap : so he that would release them must do it at the peril of blood, or the loss of a finger. The dog is uppermost ; though he growls and bites in Scripture phrase.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, the true children see through this hypocrisy, just as a tender lamb discerns between its mother and a wolf—not by texts of Scripture,

chapter and verse, but by the living Word of God in them, the light of Christ, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the life of God in the spirit and soul.

Come therefore to the voice of the blessed Spirit—the true Shepherd—within yourself. Till you do this, you will only be a vagabond, more or less, upon the face of the earth.

Blessed be the Lord God Almighty, and blessed be His glorious name for ever. I say again to you—to be filled with the Spirit is enough: to be led by the Spirit is enough.

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10.

CHRIST—NOT THE SCRIPTURES—THE WORD, AND LIGHT, AND GUIDE.

11. 8. 69.

YOUR tract “Cease to do evil,” &c., has been looked through; and a concern of mind is felt to open in a measure to you that knowledge of the mystery of Christ, corresponding to the stature or measure of Christ, in which I stand. I am the more pressed in spirit to do this, as the mixture of darkness and light, which you have put forth into the world, is unworthy of the sincerity and simplicity of character professed.

In the first place, then, you make a sad muddle about “the Word of God,” by which it is evident that you mean the Scriptures. Now, the Scriptures are not “the Word of God,” properly and distinctly taken, but *words* from God about *the Word*, spoken by men who were moved

thereto by the Holy Ghost. Christ is “the Word of God,” which liveth and abideth for ever. He is the true Light, by which the sons of God are guided, and helped forward in the paths of righteousness, holiness, and truth—a quickening Spirit, the Spirit promised and spoken of by Him to His disciples, “*He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*” This divine light, life, and Spirit, is the Christian’s “rule of faith,” if such an expression were allowable.

True faith is a mystery, and the gift of God. Christ is the author and finisher of it. It is a divine principle, not generated between the understanding and the Scriptures—this is only belief, not a divine substance—but immediately and directly from Father, Son, and Spirit, in the heart. It is a holy, divine, and heavenly light from the Father of lights; which, in the true and faithful child of God, grows brighter and brighter to the perfect day. As Christ is brought forth in a believer’s heart, not only as a child, but to the stature of a man, this blessed unction teaches all things: and it is known, not in word only, but in very truth, that the sons of God are led by His Spirit.

Now it is from the general want of this true faith and leading of the Spirit, that you “Plymouth Brethren,” though you be great sticklers for the Scriptures, are really at root the same as the other sects, and the “Church of England,” so called: your mystical and spiritual generation being much more from man’s understanding and the letter of Scripture, than from Christ in the heart, generated by the Father, through the Holy Ghost.

In true love,

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11.

TO ONE HEARD PREACHING AT A STREET CORNER.

Captain ———.

1869.

ALLOW me to direct your attention to the mystery of Christ in you, the hope of glory.

It is an easy matter to preach Christ for us, and out of us ; and to excite a faith and hope which have more of man than of the Holy Ghost in them. Of such preaching this nation is full : but neither it nor its fruits are acceptable to God. It is another thing however to minister Christ to and into the hearts of those we address, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Where Christ dwells and reigns, the faith and hope generated are fruits of His Spirit, and the workmanship of God.

It is one thing to convert people to an outward and soulish* belief of the "gospel," with its corresponding natural faith, love and hope : but another to bring them into that unity and oneness of Spirit which is the life of that holy body, of which the Father is the Root, Christ is the Head, and every faithful regenerate saint a real part and member.

Christ's bodily presence did comparatively little for the internal benefit of His disciples. After His teaching and miracles, when the time of sifting came, there was a shameful manifestation that they were still under the weakness of the flesh. But after they were baptized in the Holy Ghost and with fire, the divine life in them was sufficient to support them under all trials, and to keep them from evil, hypocrisy, and sin.

* Respecting this term, see Letter No. 33.

See to it that you are well grounded in the Spirit of truth, and in power ; or you will find that your preaching, and other religious doings, will be your heaviest burden, when the reckoning day comes.

There are plenty of blind guides and hypocrites who are impelled to preach an outward " Gospel," as a profession by which to live, and supply their natural wants ; or by other motives : be sure that you have not joined that number, without having the lame excuse of having been trained to it, and continuing therein of necessity.

In true love,

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12.

TO A

LEADER AMONG THE "PLYMOUTH BRETHREN."

1869.

WITHIN the compass of the last ten years many communications have been had with members of your profession, which have impressed the mind with the absence of that solid spiritual knowledge and heavenly wisdom, which invariably accompany those who have truly received the Holy Spirit, and who, under His power, are growing up to the stature of a man in Christ. In the place of this, there have been observed strong and reiterated evidences of a merely natural belief, generated between the understanding and the letter of Scripture, under the influence of man-made and man-sent preachers ; who themselves, while speaking of the liberty and privileges of the Gospel, are evidently ignorant of its divine nature and spiritual power—substituting the deductions of reason

from the Scriptures, embellished with the produce of sentiment and imagination, for the work of God and Christ in the heart.

Many letters have been written to lessen this ignorance and carnality. There have been also in other cases lengthy conversations: but these efforts have mostly been met by a disposition to abide in that natural and soulish faith, which throws the work of our redemption and regeneration altogether on the back of Christ, as He was and is without us; and expects little more, as the result of such trust in Him, than a change of pursuits, professions, and faith. At the same time the new birth from above, and the being made a partaker of the divine nature, with the indwelling of God and Christ in the heart, have been rejected, or spoken of with that superstitious ignorant wonder, common to the natural man, when mixing and meddling with divine and spiritual things.

In July last a friend from America, who had been spoken to on the prevalence of this state of things in England, and in your society, put into my hand a copy of "Things New and Old" for that month, in which is to be found a piece called "The Work of God in the Soul." It was agreed that nothing could have been more opportune as an illustration or proof of the truth of the conversation, and the numbers were received from him to the end of that article.

There is no ability in me in an adequate manner to speak of the pain and sickness of heart caused by that piece. Such an utter want of experience and knowledge of the kingdom of God: such a mixing up of things that differ: such a spinning out and embellishing of a few elementary and erroneous notions about the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, the scope of which is to make the believer one in spirit with God and Christ, and to be moved by the same divine life and power,—I say, such want of knowledge, such mixing up and spinning out, is rarely to be met with, and certainly not to be surpassed

in spiritual wickedness and hypocrisy, by any of those sects which have come out from communion with the Beast, Whore, and False Prophet.

It would be vain to enter into more particulars within the compass of a letter. I shall be clear in bearing a testimony against the lying false spirit which runs through that piece; and by simply stating that we are no further really and truly saved by the work of Christ for us, than we are made one in spirit with the Father, Son, and Spirit in us.

That the Scriptures are not "*the Word of God*:" but *words* about *the Word*, written by men in whom *the Word* lived and dwelt.

That he is a foolish and lying shepherd, who sets "Peter" for an example, as he was under the influence of Christ's outward teaching only, before the day of Pentecost, in the weak, unsettled state: without at all declaring what he—Peter—was after that time, kept and guided by the living Word within; or what he was as a good man filled with the Holy Spirit and faith, and living continually under the holy power, life, and presence, of the Father, Son, and Spirit *within* him.

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13.

BEARING THE CROSS.

[Feb. 1870.]

THE most fiery darts that *all Hell* can send are *quenched*, infallibly quenched, in *Not my will, but Thine, be done*—besides its being a cup of wine, rejoicing the heart of the heavenly Bridegroom.

Set it down, my brother, as a truth, equally certain as that God is true, that, to a certain point of the Christian's journey, all divine blessing comes more or less through the Cross, sharp, heavy, painful: not as it was borne by our Mediator only—divinely borne—but as we bear our measure of it with Him.

Cordials are for sickly children, or for weakly persons of greater age. Men and women in God—or rather, men—are called to the scourge, the crown of thorns, the nails, and the Cross—mitigated though they be.

No man can truly say—that is, from a solid, unshakeable ground—glory be to God and the Lamb, who cannot in measure glory in tribulation also. The transfiguration on Tabor gave a mighty shake to the kingdom of darkness: but it was the piercing cry from the Cross that caused the mountains of Hell to heave to and fro, as a tree when shaken by a mighty wind.

So the sweet ravishments of divine love give gladness of heart: but it is tribulation that, under God, brings firmness of spirit.

14.

DARBYISM.

29. 6. 70.

J. N. D.'s book has been read. It is a strange collection of "spiritual" nicknacks, conjured up from the letter of Scripture, and strung together by an ingenious, but sadly muddled, mind. The drift of it is to generate a confidence in the heart of a bastard, in imitation of that which is the work of the Holy Spirit alone, by Christ Jesus, in the heart of a true son. It is a work of man: not of God. The holy mystery of the generation of Christ

in man, from a child to the full stature and strength of manhood, from imperfection to perfection, is unknown to the writer. Such books, however, carry their own antidote, or destruction with them: begetting not to God, they generate confusion, wrangling, deceit, and vanity; and will, like everything else, in a religious way, not of Him, soon pass away.

Some of the first Methodists were much nearer the truth than this. The first "Quakers" surpassed it altogether. Blessed be the Lord God Almighty, and blessed be His glorious name for ever; the Elect, whom He hath chosen and sealed, cannot be deceived by such stuff as this: though, if it were possible, they very well might be. So far as the root of life is concerned there is little difference between Darby and Newton, whose works were read some years ago. They may jangle to a different tune, but are only "sect-masters" at best, drawing people to their own windy notions, instead of the bread of life—the living bread.

Thus it always has been, and will be: till a man is brought to know the Shepherd's voice from that of a stranger, he not only goes astray himself, but leads others into the same path. There is only one safe way in this day of multiplicity; that is, to receive the Spirit, to be led by it, joined to it, and *to become one with it*. This path grows brighter and brighter to the perfect day, and is of God; and there is no other. The whole mystery of God is in it, and as much of that mystery as corresponds to the good pleasure of His will, will there be found by us—revealed in us. In walking here, humbly, patiently, and watchfully, we follow Christ, and walk as He also walked. In no other way whatever can the right thing be done, at the right time, and in the right spirit. Nothing but this—however good it may appear—is acceptable to God. It is His will to rule; not to be ruled by any. His rule becomes absolute, only as we are swallowed up of His Life and Spirit. This is the true love of God, and eternal life.

TO J. N. DARBY,

[WITH COPY OF THE PRECEDING.]

HAVING had the loan of one of your books, "Notes and Expositions," from an ex-Plymouth, and having written to him on the subject; it is believed to be best to send you a copy of the letter, without any alteration whatever.

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15.

CARNAL BELIEVERS, WEAK BABES, AND
FAITHFUL SAINTS.

6. 8. 70.

IT becomes those who hold forth the things of the Spirit to maintain the form of sound words.

Now I should no more think of printing, preaching, or writing "*the sinlessness of the believer's flesh,*" than "*sin indeed dwelleth in the flesh of a saint:*" because they are both ambiguous and unscriptural expressions, and in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases of every thousand, would be misunderstood, if not abused. A few thoughts will show this. All believers are not *saints*. There may be carnal believers, those who hold the truth in unrighteousness; or weak believers, who are liable to sin: but if there be any meaning in words, one can hardly say, carnal saints.

Babes in Christ are not strong men and fathers. The agony, bloody sweat, and terrible cross, of our ever-to-be-loved Redeemer did not correspond to the weakness of His youth.

Sin, under the Law, was and is the transgression of it. Sin, in a believer, is when any unholy object of desire, originating in whatever it may, is conceived or brought forth by his consent, or joining to it. It then becomes sin: not before.

Now, to say that sin, in this view of it, dwells in the "*flesh of a saint*," is untrue: for, although there may exist in his body those propensities, or in his mind, those objects, which propel to, or would generate lust; yet these are not his, till he yields the assent of his will to them, thus making them his own.

Now, while in a weak or childish state, a believer may be overcome, and join to the temptation, and it become sin to him. But a saint, or one in whom the body of sin (not the body of flesh and blood) is destroyed, or being destroyed, by crucifixion and death, through the grace and power of Christ in him, does not thus fall, nor come under darkness and condemnation: because, being filled with the Spirit, he has power and will not to fulfil the desires of the flesh, or the mind, except so far as they are innocent, and necessary to life and godliness while in the body. There are many states between a man living in sin and the flesh, and enjoying himself, as it is called; and being dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God.

If we keep confusing and mixing up these different states and growths with Scriptures which correspond to other states and growths in the divine life, there will be no end to the disorder and misery generated. Nevertheless the truth is, that there is a passage from sin to holiness of both heart and life, as clear and simple as there is a description given of our Saviour's life, death and resurrection. If you, I, or any other man, have grace from above to follow in this painful path, we shall find it so: but if we become faint-hearted because of the difficulties of the way, there will be confusion, deceit, and foolery enough. Let us, however, honestly put the saddle on the right horse, giving man his due, and the devil his: but clearing the Lord God Almighty, the Spirit, and the Lamb; and giving them their honourable right, as able to save to the uttermost all those that believe fully, not drawing back to perdition.

16.

SCRIPTURES AND LIFE.

12. 8. 70.

THE Scriptures give a testimony that whosoever believeth shall be saved; and affirm that God will justify those who believe, &c. Yet at the same time they fully support the conclusion, that a faith which does not bring to reconciliation and union, by the reception of the Holy Ghost, however it may seem to accord with the letter of Scripture, is vain.

The true life of a Christian is neither mysticism, nor dogma, nor doctrine, nor the Scriptures; but the Comforter, the Spirit, the holy Life of God flowing from His divine and infinite heart through the Head, and each individual member of His glorious body, in time and to all eternity.

A wise man of God—not to say a prudent child—has enough in God alone, who is the only true good. Yet he can, and will, appreciate the Scriptures and other helps in their place, more than bastards and the “foolishly wise,” though he speak not vain words about them.

The Scriptures are, in the will of God, good as a means to point to God and our Redeemer: but when by Christ Jesus we are brought to Him, either with or without them; born of Him; and by divine grace and love abide in Him; we have the Life itself, which is that from which they were written, and which constitutes the glory and beauty of Christ and the Saints, and all that is glorious in the world to come.

17.

TRUE AND FALSE FAITH.

11. 9. 70.

My Brother,

SINCE I wrote my last to you, there has been brought to my mind frequently a sort of sliding-scale of Faith, which is two or three times repeated in your correspondence. When it was first read, I felt its untrustworthy and dangerous character, as also when it was repeated. The repetition proves it to be one of the corner-stones of your religious edifice ; as it is of thousands upon thousands in this day of paper-faith and logic in the head, in the place of God and Christ in the heart.

I have, I believe, in everything else been faithful with you, and spoken the truth in love ; and would willingly pass this by : but from past experience have learned that it is safest and best to do as I am bid, leaving the result with Him whose love is better than wine. This sliding-scale of yours runs somewhat in the following style, though slightly varied :—“ He that believes ‘ the Word of God ’ (Scriptures, I suppose you mean) believeth God’s testimony : he that receiveth His testimony believeth in Christ : he that believeth in Christ receiveth Christ : he that receiveth Christ receiveth life, and by it power to mortify the deeds of the flesh ; in short, to cease to do evil, and learn to do well.”

I believe this to be fairly put. Now, my brother, I feel in my heart assured that though this may appear theoretically and logically correct, it is not of God, nor from Him, nor will it lead to Him.

It is just making the letter of Gospel axioms a new Law, by which, if a man do and fulfil, he shall be saved.

* * * * *

The same.

23. 10. 70.

* * * But now to your sliding-scale. Let us work out one instance. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is, or has been, born of God. Now take a man under some soul troubles, or convictions of sin; and let him read your writings and sliding-scale. Being anxious for light and deliverance, he catches up the foregoing words, which, by your help, will be thus rendered—Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, &c., &c. But *I* believe: therefore *I* am born of God; “for this is the state or standing of every one that believes in Jesus, and in the moment that he does so believe, whether realized in power and comfort or not. For says our blessed Lord,” &c., &c. “So the Apostle,” &c., &c.

So everything that might show whether the faith be of God or not is taken away: and he is told that, whether he knows or feels it or not, he has passed from death unto life; and that from thence he must reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God.

Alas, alas! could Satan himself wish for a more soul-deceiving, man-mocking, and Christ-dishonouring doctrine than this? If it be not a trap of the Devil, what is it? Should not the mighty arm of the Deliverer be put forth, such a one may go down to the grave a “Zealous Christian” Jew, puffed up in imagination, according to “the Word,” but utterly a stranger to the power of the new birth and regeneration by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

18.

FROM FLESH TO SPIRIT.

26. 10. 70.

My Brother,

SUFFER the word of exhortation. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow *rivers of living water*. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Are these Scriptures fulfilled in you—without straining, or torture? No. But have you not believed? *Yes*. Then how is this? It is because they refer to a state in the divine life in which you are not; but in which you may be, and are called to be.

There is a conversation in one of the Gospels between our Lord and Peter, in which you will find something like the following:—But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Our Lord said, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Peter had had a revelation from the Father of Christ, which constituted him blessed: but after this he was told by his Master, When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

This brings me to one point in your letter which requires a word or two. I had said, a “*babe in the Spirit*” was so and so: you take it up, and say, it is self-evident that a “*babe in Christ*” is this and that.

Now these terms apply to two different states of the same work in the soul and spirit of man.

That Peter, having Christ revealed unto him by the Father, was beyond the Scribes and unbelievers is clear: but that he was not the Peter he was after being endued

with the Spirit and power from on high, at the day of Pentecost, is equally clear.

There are thousands of babes in Christ, if every one is to be so considered who has had such a revelation of Christ as led them, at a remote period of their lives, to trust in Christ as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. But such become the mighty men in Babel; against whom a "babe in the Spirit" will find himself called to act with wisdom, prudence, and caution.

When the princes are babes, the people go astray. Such are Spurgeon and others: but even you would not say that out of their bellies flow rivers of *living water*, and that they by the Spirit know all things.

No, my brother: they, with you, have settled in their own minds that this first work was more or less the fulfilment of the promises of the Spirit; and not finding in themselves what corresponds to the true "evangelical" state, are endeavouring to squeeze out of the letter of the Scripture those prerogatives and glorious blessings, which are the gift of God in the Spirit, by Christ Jesus. This is the great falling away, and Babel.

Christ is with you now, my brother, more or less: but you are called to *know* Him in you, and you in Him, every moment—where abiding, you cannot sin. This corresponds to you in watching and a loving regard towards Him whom you will find *nearer* to you in Spirit, [He that is with you shall be *in you*] and more powerful, than the world, the flesh, and the devil—and this with a steady increase continually, being changed from glory into glory. Storms and thunder may occur; but the Plant of Renown, of His right hand's planting, will be found always a-growing, increasing with the increase of God. Amen.

19.

SUBMISSION TO THE GREAT REFINER.

29. 10. 70.

My Brother,

ABIDE under His judgments, with patience, and, as much as lieth in you, in peace. He who dwells with you, as mighty in battle, does really wound to heal. If you suffer the purging flame, the end of it will be that the Holy One will take up His abode in you, with Love and Peace—there to abide for ever.

He may yet use against His enemies much that you have been getting these last “twenty years.” This however is *His business, not yours*. A patient surrender at discretion continually, with a watchfulness towards obedience to His Word in your heart, is all that is required at present. When the fire is very hot, cordials will be administered.

Tribulation worketh *patience*.

In true love,

— . — . — .

When you have really given up all to God, and He has truly taken up His abode in you, you will find the world, flesh, and devil, as powerless for evil as a man fast nailed to a cross, and in his last gasp—to be pitied, not spoken ill of.

20.

“HOLINESS” OF THE FLESH.

30. 10. 70.

My Brother,

DON'T judge anything before the time. There is none good but *one*, that is, God. No lie is of the Truth. True prayer is in the Holy Ghost. Acceptable worship is in the Spirit.

Now to call men “holy,” who preach, pray, and sing, not from the Spirit, is not good. These things are, at this day, the sheep’s clothing which hides the wolf—not known by those even who wear it; thus making them earnest and resolute in that which is not of God.

If you should ever be moved to call some of these out of their spiritual lies and vanity, you will find that most of them will bite as serpents, and treat you as their forefathers, the Pharisees, did our Saviour of old.

It is one thing to cry, Hosanna! after Him who is to do everything for us; but another to behave decently while He destroys the works of the flesh and the devil in us.

One of the most earnest men of this age was “*Bro.*” Prince. With what power and fascination he carried out his false holiness, and high-flying hypocrisy, is known to comparatively few. But though zealous and resolute after his conversion, where is he now? On a pinnacle of the temple: to come down no more, it is to be feared, for ever. Taking things after the letter, he thought that he had a power, by faith and prayer, to put himself in the highest seat of the House of God: and, behold, he has thrust himself through the roof altogether.

He was put on the wheel by the great Potter: but after a few turns found unfit for use, and thrown to one side for ever.

These examples show the absolute necessity of making *God alone and His Love* the only object of our concern ; leaving matters outside of this, however good in appearance, to the deceived and deceivers.

To walk in TRUTH and LOVE is alone acceptable to the Father. When the time comes, He will find something for you to do, the faithful doing of which will bring increase and fatness. Till this appears, devote yourself absolutely to His love, and abide in it for ever.

When you are visited with great interior tribulation (great it will appear) patiently abide under it. Gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of affliction (adversity).

Laying the foundations of a building is sometimes slow, dreary, and painful work. The most Blessed will lay them ; but you must suffer them to be laid.

21.

ON SPIRITUAL VISITATIONS.

1. 11. 70.

My Brother,

IF you should be rapt, or taken up in Spirit, rising as it were into God, seeing, feeling, or knowing, in an ineffable manner, what is unutterable ; don't mistake this for your daily bread.

Such visitations as these sometimes precede long-continued trials, or sharp temptations and troubles ; and are to be considered by us rather as banquets of wine, than those sober eatings and drinkings of the bread of life, upon which we must become robust and strong.

Above all, my brother, be steady under such favours, keeping a strong guard, in the love of God, on your soulish part and tongue : or you may entail upon yourself remorse, painful to bear, if not unbearable.

When a glorious Prince embraces one of low degree, it is a sign of lightness to whisper or chatter.

You will also have to take care that you don't interpret anything of this kind to be a growth in the truth. This might be a fatal mistake, leading to pride, or the condemnation of the devil, and such a roll over in misery as might well cause a desire that the favour had never been granted.

Powerful visitations are quite consistent with a weak infantile state: but, if received with prudence, make an impression upon the spirit hardly to be forgotten, and fatal to a high estimate of the world and its glory—not as of themselves effecting this change in the heart, but by the way of motive in the mind, giving a reality and grandeur to spiritual things; which, by the grace of God in Christ, enamours the soul, and cheers her on in suffering and trial, till she is brought through it, and, by her union with Christ, sanctified in it.

It is hard to believe, while under tribulation, that we can in any way be profited by it: yet afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those that are exercised thereby.

There is a pulling from under it by false prayer, and robbery of passages of Scripture, taken in the way of consolation to the wrong part: but this is highly grievous to Him, whose sweet, gentle, and pure love is better than wine.

If persisted in, this drunkenness will bring heavy stripes; which, failing to bring to a right mind, will be followed by a maudlin, diseased, state of soul, tending to death.

In true love,

— . — . — .

22.

ON FAITHFULNESS.

My Brother,

3. 11. 70.

NOW that the scales have fallen from your eyes, and the fetters from your limbs; be not entangled with the yoke of bondage.

Plough not with an ox and ass: wear not a mixed garment. Shake yourself loose from Babel, and get from under her trammels. That fleshly thing, therein called charity, would lead you, while spiritual in yourself, to connive at what is carnal there.

In this you will have to contend with spiritual wickedness, or wicked spirits, in high places.

As you receive the Word of the Lord, so speak, and act faithfully by it: or you will lose it, and others be raised up by Him to it.

If you are faithful in little, your store will soon increase, and the little will gradually become much. You will have a sense of words, and things, and men, beyond what is natural: and the most Blessed will become in very deed your lover and friend.

Don't support anything in Babel, either with your money, interest, friendship, or intelligence. The more holy and religious it appears, the more to be avoided, when Babel is at the root.

That is really the most spurious coin that *looks* the best, though it be the worst.

Of you and me it may be said—time is short.

In true love,

— . — . — .

P.S. I sent the Tract yesterday. Many will say—Yes: it is good—I go—but go not, and stick to their hypocrisies through thick and thin.

To be saved by grace through faith requires a *self-denial* broader and deeper than is known.

As the new man lives and grows, the old man droops and dies.

Few people there be but believe that the divine Goodness may be wheedled out of heaven, by ten, twenty, forty, or sixty years of "*prayers*," made acceptable to Him by a faith that Christ died for them, and rose again.

This applies much more to the very religious than can be believed.

Those that receive not the word of the Lord, when plainly spoken, may seem to take it when sugared; but will vomit it up again.

Woe be to him that sugars. His light will soon go out.

23.

THE SCRIPTURES, AND DIVINE LIFE.

10. 11. 70.

* * You also remark that in this day of atheistical assault on the Scriptures, there is special need that we should not *seem* to depreciate them.

On this subject I can speak from experience and observation. About three miles from here, during the summer months, there are, on many first days, large gatherings of men, who come to hear the Atheistical (Secular) Prophets from London; and also a celebrated Unitarian, living about here, who has devoted himself for many years to public discussion, which, in his hands, generally takes a turn against the divine nature of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Now, frequently I have been called, in the order of Providence, single-handed to attend these gatherings: and have observed that the great Scripture-men are, of all, the most helpless and worthless defenders of the Truth against the subtle power of these Atheists and Unitarians.

Taking up positions, as you do, which are not part of the holy faith of God's Elect, but human excrescences, I have seen them fastened hold of by these sore and tender places, and brought to shameful grief—Christianity, for the time being, suffering with their discomfiture in the face of the enemy. No, my brother, it is not any straining about narrow points of Scripture that will turn to advantage in the time of close fight with Atheism; but being possessed of that living power, which was the life of those that wrote the Scriptures. This is enough for *all emergencies*.

In these contentions for the faith, I have seen both Atheists and Unitarian put to shame before the multitude, not by a parade of words used by the Holy Ghost above a thousand years ago, but by a simple and hearty utterance of those which flowed from Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God, in the heart, there and then, under the pressure of war. The glory of Christianity, where it is truly possessed, is that it commands its possessor to take no thought of what he shall say in the time of trial; but implicitly trust in the Eternal Spirit, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

I have found this true, my brother, unutterably true, to the astonishment of myself, as well as the enemy.

In these meetings, Christ's "*friends*" are much more to be feared than his enemies.

There is another of your doubtful "*beliefs*," which I will name, and then close. "I believe that what the Holy Ghost teaches any one may be better expressed in the words of Scripture than in our own words."

Words are only so far true and good as they represent a living substance in the heart. Now, if the Holy Ghost does truly teach now, it is through, by, and in, Christ Jesus: and, according to their stature in Him, every member of His body ought to speak.

But your proposition puts it out of the power of man to speak truly by the Holy Ghost at all, by bringing in a complex action foreign to the subject.

If we are taught of God, we know what He teaches, or has taught us ; and may, if called upon, express it with meekness and fear. But if your plan is to be adopted, we must know, not only what we have been taught, but that what has been taught to another is precisely the same thing, before we can use his language—a task utterly out of man's reach, and far too foolish to ask help from above about. But this is putting on a mixed garment : an infant imitating the voice of a man : gendering confusion in the body. For each individual member of Christ, though actuated by the one Life and Spirit, has a tincture and figure peculiar to himself ; easily to be seen in the writings of the Apostles, and manifesting forth the wisdom and greatness of Him who is blessed for ever.

My brother, it is our stupidity that generates atheism and infidelity—not putting the Scriptures into their right place—which stupidity will not be made better, but worse, by giving an undue importance to the letter which killeth ; which cannot be done without underrating the Spirit that giveth Life. I am sure that if Paul, or any other of our worthy brethren who have gone before, were called again to sojourn here for a few days, their own writings would be the very last things that they would dwell on, though you might call them by what names you would.

They would be driven, if it were possible, to despair, by such madness and folly ; and say—It is not words—It is not words—*It is the Life itself that burns as an oven in my heart*, beyond all words. Alas ! alas ! how carnal, drunken, and besotted are you. Yes, my beloved Paul ; so we are : but some of us see and feel better things, and are endeavouring to open the eyes and hearts of our brethren. Amen.

24.

HOLY SCRIPTURES.

12. 11. 70.

My Brother,

HOW a man will hold on by his first love. “Now that the Scriptures are *finished*.” How so? Who told you that they were finished?

If you, by the grace of God, wrote to a friend in such a way that he entered into a new life in God, becoming spiritual and strong, where before he had been carnal and weak,—although reading the Scriptures, as it were, night and day; perhaps taking a copy of them with him to bed, lying with them under his head, or in his arms; in short, making an idol of them, playing the fool over them, and talking about them, as though they were a second Rod of Moses, or God, or a new-found Urim and Thummim—which, in this case, was to your friend the true “*Word of the Lord*”; that written two thousand years ago, which left him carnal and weak; or that of only yesterday, which made him spiritual and strong?

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?

Is He grown old? gone into dotage? Has the sweetness of His love, wisdom, and power, become disagreeable and sour? Can't He see? Can't He hear? Can't He feel? *Can't He speak?*

Alas! alas! my brother. Holy Scripture will cease only when pen and ink shall be no more, or when the prince of the power of the air shall rule in every heart of man. John wrote his part of the Scriptures that they might *believe*, and have *life*. Whoever writes so that others *believe*, and have *life*, doing what John's writings had failed to do, will, when every word is reckoned up, have his reward.

25.

THE SINGLE EYE.

19. 11. 70.

“ **I** WAITED NOT on God therein.” The sum of the whole matter is here, my brother. Be it your lot in future to do this fully and constantly, not being “*religious*” in any other way: then you will soon know the difference between the holy war of God, and the confusion and hypocrisy of Babel.

I am not insensible that some hits straight from the shoulder must have been bad to bear: the more so from your education, early surroundings, etc., etc. Samson was a wayward child of grace, and his knocks were terribly sharp and hard; but they were for death. What have been dealt out to you are to life and love. And let me say that the way you have received and sustained them speaks quite as loudly in favour of your royal birth and blood, as the strength of nerve that delivered them.

On the other hand, had I not cleared my soul, my state would have been very painful. You may be sure that, in more ways than one, faithfulness is exacted from me with great precision.

Having coveted to be a right-hand man of the Most High—a true lover, son, servant, and friend—now that He has brought me into a position where none but Himself can help, what else can be done?

For many years the desire has arisen that the world, and all that is in it, might incline my heart no more than the dust of the balance. Now that this is being accomplished, what can be said?

That is a broad and deep saying—Eye single: body full of light. With this, my brother, there is great freedom—a magnificent greatness, and unutterable love.

Be this your lot. Amen.

Don't peddle and tinker with the goods of Babylon, nor be ensnared by the fascinating arts and wiles of the children of Babel.

Let the unknown be blessed. Say in my name, if you will, The sweetest of all sweets is the Love of the Spirit.

Seek the Love, but not the sweetness. Nothing surpasses it for illumination. It is very pure and unutterable. God and Christ are with it—in it. Glory to God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

26.

CHRIST IN THE HEART THE TRUE ORACLE.

7. 12. 70.

THE “oracles” that you speak of were the Law and its appendages, which Law was given to work from the outward to the inward; and in all its operations tended to condemnation. We are now divorced from the Law by the coming of Christ, the Substance of it: that is, if we have received Him. But He works from the inward to the outward. So just in proportion as we tamper and tinker with the “oracles,” we reverse the new covenant, and, with the Galatians, come under the ministration of condemnation.

Christ lived without sin: so will you when you are one with Him—not by any prime power which you can, as it were, eliminate from the Scriptures about Him, (working thus upon the understanding, and other faculties of the soul, in a way of reverence, or fear, or adoration,) but by a laying hold of Him as your Saviour, and the receiving all that *the Father gives with Him in Him*.

The oracles—words—may help to patch an old garment: The Word makes all things new. * * *

Any love of God but the love of the Spirit is more or less hypocrisy. The Gospel of God makes a new creature; gives divine and holy love—or is intended to do so: does not gild a rotten post.

It is a real, vital union between God and man by Christ—an operation of God by the Spirit, growing brighter and brighter to the perfect day, and more certain and infallible in its action than the growth of corn, or a tree, or a child; if we *abide in Christ*. But this operation is impeded by man's willings, doings, and runnings—working from the outward to the inward: but strengthened by abiding in Christ.

If you would cast all your religious doings and knowledge from you into the depths of the sea, and place yourself in spirit under a gibbet, with a rope round your neck, clinging only to Christ for you, and doing nothing but from His Spirit in you; two years might make you forget your bondage: before the end of the third you might be free indeed, having dominion over every living thing: and ere the fourth had waned, you would possibly enter into the oneness, from which falling is impossible, and where God is *all in all*. * * * *

It is well that those who have been for some years manufacturing by the oracles a religion for God, themselves, and others, on rather an imposing scale—instead of having God by Christ for their religion—should break down, and turn over a new leaf altogether. May power be given, is the desire of

27.

RELIGIOUS MAN TAKING SALVATION OUT OF
GOD'S HANDS.

1870.

THE great snare of Satan in the Christian world, so called, and in the hearts of professors who are most sincere and earnest, is to bring about a false application of a generally true view of the death and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ : so that he may effect a total miscarriage in all that appertains to the new birth, and its fruits, a godly and holy life, spirit and conversation.

So far as the outward and general belief in the work of the Redeemer for man is concerned, the great mass of what are called orthodox Christians have a sufficiently correct view. But in the application of it, both preachers and people are over head and ears in the toils of the enemy, with hardly any exceptions. To explain to you this mystery of iniquity in its present working : The first step towards God is repentance : a sensibility of and sorrow for sin, produced in the heart by the Holy Spirit. This, when genuine, is heavy to bear ; sometimes almost intolerable, did not a gracious hand keep from despair. A true deliverance from this burden is by Christ Jesus, as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, being revealed by the Father in His own will and time. Now just at this point it is that the enemy and false teachers mar the work of God, and, with drunken familiarity and violence, take the sceptre out of His hand. Instead of encouraging the penitents to bear the burden till the Lord shall appear, as evidently crucified for them, and God by the Spirit seal home to the heart the blessed truth of redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of past sins—the Spirit at the same time giving a new life, and power to feel, see, and taste, that the kingdom of

heaven is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—they are called upon, and pressed, to believe, trust, and *take comfort to themselves*, in His blood and righteousness. And in most cases they do so : *taking the matter of pardoning out of the Father's hand*. But it is a belief and trust only of man ; generated in the understanding by the letter, or the voice of the false prophet, and bringing a comfort, not of God by the Spirit, in the heart. This is the old man feeding upon that which belongs only to the new.

The difference between this false faith and the true, which is of God, is much greater than appears at first sight. This false faith has to be supported by constant strainings of the Scriptures, applying promises and passages to the wrong nature, or to one state of Christian experience that which belongs to another : trumping up by false prayers and excitement, something to correspond with the Scriptures ; and, in short, generating all those lying blasphemous hypocrisies which more or less overrun the so-called churches of the day, who know and preach Christ after the flesh only, not in the Spirit. And this of necessity : because the Son of God is not truly brought forth in them ; the seed of God, which is mighty to salvation, is not felt or known ; and sin has dominion more or less. The natural man is kept alive, and made merry ; rejoicing in that which, if truly known, would be for his crucifixion and death. For as the new man lives and grows, the old man is crucified and slain.

The true faith waits till God opens the door of immediate communication of spirit with Spirit, in and by Christ Jesus, bringing to life the dead. The child, being born, is led by the Spirit, in holy loving fear, from glory to glory, through sufferings, tribulations, and death : and knows by experience the weakness of the child, the strength of the young man, and the wisdom, equanimity, and perfect love, of a father in Christ Jesus. Here the same life and power, which were in the writers of the Scriptures, are, in their measure, known. For each son of God partakes of

that nature which knows all things, and is neither blind, asleep, nor dead : by which the world is judged, hypocrisy condemned, and the Law fulfilled—the Father being loved in and by Christ Jesus, with all the heart, mind, soul, and strength. This is the love of God, and eternal life.

In true love,

— . — . — .

P.S. When you added “*by the Word,*” you doubtless referred in your own mind to the Scriptures. But the extract which you give from Romans 10th does not justify this. The Apostle there speaks of a living, *sent*, preacher of the Word or Gospel.

Now those who are sent of God to preach his Word, do so with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. But a living man speaking by the Holy Ghost, under a clear sense of a call from God, as did Paul and others, preaches the Word of the Lord truly and livingly. This is one thing, and the Scriptures another. They may give a testimony of, or reference to, the substance of his preaching, but are not the preaching itself.

The one is a living emanation from the Living Word and Spirit of God : the other only a notice about such a transaction.

The Gospel or Word of God cannot be preached without the Living Word and Spirit of God. Where the Living Word and Spirit is absent, (not the Scriptures) there is no Bread of Life, or Gospel of God.

There may be a Christian Judaism, with the “Gospels” and Epistles in the place of the Law of Moses. But this is no more the true Gospel than a *moral, soulish, or natural* man “praying” is a *divine spiritual man loving*.

How shall they preach EXCEPT THEY BE SENT ?

28.

CHRIST AFTER THE FLESH, AND CHRIST IN SPIRIT.

29. 1. 71.

My Brother,

THERE is a knowledge of Christ after the flesh, as He appeared in the body prepared at Jerusalem, and made an offering for sin once for all: and there is a possession of Him in spirit, as He is God with, and in us for ever. All the world preach up the former. I don't know a dozen persons in the world at the present time (though there may be many) who know anything of the latter, except mainly in imagination or supposition, from a ground in the understanding, upon the letter of the Scriptures of the New Testament, so called, or other books.

They who must stick to Him as a "*person*"—after the flesh—and know Him only in this figure, experience little of His power. They believe in Him as their sin-offering; and so go on, if sincere, sinning and believing, with little or no variation, but for the worse, to their lives' end.

There is a knowledge or possession of Him, however, which swallows up the first; though it does not supersede or despise it, as a thing of little price. This is that knowledge of God in Spirit, possessed by a son of God, which is the same in nature, (though differing in measure) as that possessed by the Man Christ Jesus, as He was at Jerusalem: and which was experienced by John and others of the first disciples, before the mystery was hid again, and the apostacy set in.

Here the oneness with the Father and the Son is known; which makes God, Christ, and the saints one, as the Root, the Vine, and the branches are one. The knowledge of Christ as He was Man is one thing; and the knowledge,

or possession, of Him, as the Eternal God, another. The latter swallows up the former, and is that for which He suffered, and which, when brought about—speaking after the manner of men—gives satisfaction to His soul.

Christ came into the world that He might draw all men unto Himself, not as He was Man, but God. And when He has done this, He delivers the kingdom to the Father : and God, whose name be eternally blessed, becomes all in all.

29.

READING THE SCRIPTURES.—THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

3. 2. 71.

* * * As to the Scriptures being the warrant, etc., you say that there are things there which you could not, and would not, believe, if they were not there. As your inward man grows stronger, you will leave off this sort of thing.

Anything that you believe simply because it is in the Scriptures, WITHOUT the voice, or Spirit, of Christ in your heart, is not a sweet offering to God, being only of the flesh.

I will give you my experience in this matter. I take the Bible and Apocrypha, as the book of books; when led thereto, read them with a humble and teachable mind : anything that sticks in its passage through, I don't either *believe* or *disbelieve*, but look to the Father of lights. He sees the difficulty : if relief comes, I receive it thankfully ; if not, let it pass, till it please Him to give wisdom—never thinking of forcing myself to believe this, that, or the other, because it is in the Scriptures ; lest, by hasty

interpretation or misapplication, I should be resisting the Divine Word in my heart. I have found this waiting posture of mind a sure path: for when, in the order of Providence, I have been called upon to judge on hard points, such a measure of Divine light has been given, as to enable me to come out of the difficulty with a quiet mind, or else to hold my peace.

Ignorance on these subjects, with a humble mind, is more acceptable than much knowledge that puffeth up.

About the "Blood of Christ," circumstances and times alter cases. In Paul's time the blood of bulls and goats, etc., was being shed continually to make atonement for sin: he had to show that Christ, by His own blood, once for all, had finished such offerings. In this case, he was at perpetual war with all other blood but that of Christ; so, as you say, never let it rest. But, in our day, false views of the blood of Christ are, by the Devil, made to support Anti-Christ through all difficulties: no wonder that the Holy Spirit should lead His people to show that it is by the work of the Spirit, through the blood once offered, that salvation is wrought, by taking away sin, root and branch—laying the axe to the root of the tree. Where this last work is least known, there, generally, is most made of Christ's blood shed on the Cross, not to salvation from sin, but to condemnation by a continuance in it. Where it is most known, there is a lively sense that to do and suffer the will of God is better than any talk of the lips about an offering, which, though of *infinite* value to us, can be rightly *understood* by Him only, who received it for man's redemption; and by us, in our measure, as we become one spirit with Him, who died and rose again.

30.

To the same.

13. 2. 71.

“ I LIKE your way of reading the Bible,” &c., &c.
 Are you sure that you noted one principal feature of it—“ *When led thereto?*” Have you spent three days—three weeks—or three months—with the Living Word only, not being called to meddle during that time with the letter?

When you so far know the Shepherd’s voice as to be able to do this, it will be a happy day indeed.

You will then know, not in word, but in power, the difference between words about the Word, and the Living Word Himself.

In true love,

— . — . — .

31.

NO ELECTION WITHOUT INWARD DEATH.

22. 4. 71.

* * * As to that great truth, “the Light which lighteth every man,” &c.—the real knowledge and assurance of this becomes stronger and stronger, as the bondage of corruption and darkness is taken away by the internal presence and power of the Living Word. When He is joined to by an entire forsaking of self and self-ends, a holy tincture of light, power, and love, passes from the inner Temple through the spirit and soul of man, till he becomes one spirit with the Lord. And then, *feeling* the real *omnipresence* of Him, in whom we live, and move,

and have our being ; and knowing that He is Love, by a constantly growing participation in this His nature ; it hardly requires the Scriptures to tell, that universal man will, more or less, be opposed, while living in sin, by His manifestation given to the conscience for conviction, instruction, and profit. That this manifestation should differ in degree—as it does—alters not the universality of it ; which will make clear work for the justice of the most Blessed, when every man shall be judged according to what he has received from God, and the use that he has made of it—his works.

Christ died upon the cross for us, that we should die by the cross in us. One of the master-strokes of the Devil, through Augustin, Calvin, and others of these latter ages, is so to play off the doctrine of Election by the outward cross, as to lead believers to avoid, and put away, the inward—the power of God, which brings to present death. In doing this, he keeps them from that resurrection, which is accompanied with clear light, and a constantly increasing love—the full possession of the new nature, which corresponds to a new name.

There may be some enjoyment of God, some light and love, while this resurrection is not yet attained : but it will be always accompanied with painful heavings to and fro, and much anti-christian stuff, and worthless trash, both in words and works—forcing an artificial confidence, from the bottom of doctrines (Election), promises, etc., etc., and the old nature : instead of that divine confidence, which can truly exist only as the seed of God comes into dominion, and lives in constant power over all. This is always the case where men live and work below, or above, the **PRESENT EXISTING MEASURE OF GOD** in their own selves.

No man, since the fall, ever was, or ever will be, so elected, as to pass again into paradise—or the Saints' true rest in God—without death. As we die, the most Blessed lives in us. If we be dead, Christ is our Life—not if we

be hypothetically dead, imputatively dead, dead in imagination, notion, whim, or fancy : but veritably dead ; so that in the face of scorn, contempt, poverty, misery, hunger, nakedness, fire, water, and sword, no movement of our own will really outruns the MEASURE OF GOD IN US. When men are thus dead, then Christ is their Life—not hypothetically, imputatively, or by imagination, notion, whim, or fancy ; but really and truly so : and out of their bellies will flow, easily, freely, fully, rivers of living water. The key of David is with them, and in them : and according to the good pleasure of the most blessed and adorable God they bind and loose, prophesy, pray, preach, write, rejoice, WALK HUMBLY, and fight, with all the ease and power, in their measure, of Him, the Beloved, who has gone before.

In true love,

— . — . — .

32.

SURRENDER OF SELF THE WAY TO REST.

22. 5. 71.

UNDERSTAND me aright. It is not meant that, by any one step that *you* can take, you will enter into the fruition of the blessings described, there and then, exactly or precisely taken. This may, or may not be, according to the will of the most Blessed.

What is understood is—If you “give up all,” die to all but God in your own mind and will, not holding anything back from Him, however dear or pleasant it may appear to the flesh ; from that moment of full and free surrender the burden and responsibility is taken from *your* back, and you will, according to His wisdom and power, be

brought into the rest of perfect love. It may be there and then, or it may not, so far as your sense of the change is concerned : but this is not very material.

When you, by this act of your mind and will, in divine strength, follow the example of Caleb and Joshua of old, and abide therein, the result will follow as certainly as seed-time and harvest. Everything like uncertainty will be taken away : and sooner or later, or immediately, if He wills, full rest and peace in Him will be your portion.

When you have placed yourself before Him in this position of self-surrender, the work, so far as you are concerned, is done—the step is taken : by patiently abiding in this posture, you will find without fail that He will accomplish in you, in His own way and time, all the good pleasure of His goodness. Without something like this, there will be a heaving backward and forward, like a pendulum, to your dying day. When this strait gate is passed, He will, by His blessed Spirit,

“Write upon you the Name divine,
And make you in His nature shine.”

Amen.

33.

“SOULISH.”

To a member of the Society of “Friends.”

17. 6. 71.

I HAVE corrected the two Tracts, adding a word or two to that on Faith, and altering the other to make it as little objectionable to serious people as possible. That “Soulish” I could not drop, as it lies at the root of all the false religion of the day; and must, with the divine

blessing, be brought before the understandings and consciences of those who are active in the service of turning wanderers to the only good.

It is clearly and strongly Scriptural; as 1 Cor. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 46; James iii. 15; Jude 19. True it is, our translators have rendered the word "natural" in the first two cases, and "sensual" in the two last; but this is an erroneous, not to say, *false*, translation: for if either of these things had been meant, there are proper words in the original to correspond thereto: but the word there used is clearly "*of the soul*," or as that "ancient worthy," Samuel Fisher, says, "soully," which might have been put in the tract, had I not bent a little, to suit the taste of this "soulish" generation. The Vulgate has it "animal;" which, having an eye to the Latin word "*anima*" (soul), is a correct translation: but here again is a difficulty not to be got over, as the ideas attached at present to the word "animal" in the English language miss altogether the meaning of the original, and would make the tract more offensive to sticklers than it is, or than the truth requires. The true state of the case is that "religious" men of this day don't believe themselves to be "animal" men, or "natural," or "sensual" men; because, they say, these men, or men answering to their ideas of these words, despise all religion, and are evidently of the earth and world—not suspecting for a moment that a man may be most religious *from a soulish bottom or ground* only, planted with all the particular shades of doctrine and belief, which each sect claims as its peculiar excellence above others. And—the whole truth must be told—even "Friends" are not exempt from this general delusion and mystery of iniquity. For it is just as easy for a man to be taken captive by the voice of the Whore and False Prophet while waiting in a silent meeting in a way of worship, as it is to be carried captive by the "*sweet songs*," and other "*religious solemnities*," of the present day.

For whatever plant is set in the ground of the soul will

bud, and blossom, and grow; and in many cases come up so much like the genuine lily of the valley, or Rose of Sharon, that none but the *One* and His own children, who are begotten by Him, can discern the difference. Even these, sometimes, when off the holy watch, have taken hold of fruit most lovely to look upon, growing in this garden, and thoughtlessly eaten: but, alas, it is found only an apple of Sodom, or something worse; which, getting down into the inward parts, produces drunkenness, folly, and delusion, if not incurable disorder and death.

Now this kind of thing is not to be put down by half measures. Delicate hints, and gentle kind looks, are suitable only for *living* wise men; but operate only as wine and strong drink to the fool.

When David rose up against the lion and bear in the wilderness, had he allowed his mind to have been softened by one grain of pity, he would never have been King of Israel. God was with him: he saw the emergency; laid to with a right good will, and tore them in pieces—saving his own soul, and ridding the land of a plague.

But in our case everybody is so soft and prudent, gentle and kind, that it seems as though the lions were all become lambs, and there were hardly any bears left in the land. Alas! but is it so? No: it is not! The wise men are fools: the strong men are weak as infants: the prophets are liars: and there is no clear vision in the land. So wolves are taken for sheep, lions for heifers, and bears for useful goats. Thus the people perish for lack of knowledge.

Men are godly without God: believers, but not saints. Above thirty years' travail, with the divine blessing, has brought a measure of clear vision to my mind on these points: so I am constrained to speak out, looking to the most Blessed alone for help. Being “*nobody*,” and having no pleasure in being known, is a great advantage.

In true love,

— . — . — .

* * * The drift of the remarks of these Apostles [Paul, James, and Jude,] being to show that the men they spoke of were men "*of the soul*" only, it being their highest principle and power of action : they not having been brought under the power and direction of the divine Spirit, by being born of Him, and becoming one with Him—consequently ψυχικοί, soulical, soully, or soulish, men "*of the soul*" only ; not spiritual men, divine men, men of the Spirit.

34.

THE NATURAL BELIEVER, AND THE DIVINE.

MAN is a trinity of body, soul, and spirit. The body is that part nearest earth, and connate with it. The spirit, on the other hand, is that which is nearest heaven, and connatural with it : that is to say, as to its nature—it being spiritual, though not necessarily divinely so.

It is in, or through, this part of man that divine intimations come ; and in it the seed of eternal life is sown, and the witness for God is found.

As the soul of man is instantly captivated by what is agreeable to the earthly part, through the senses ; so, on the other hand, God, the blessed God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, is ready, or present, with or in the spirit of man, to give it bias, or instruction ; and so to incline it, that the will may be turned God-ward, which is the first step towards conquering soul and body to God.

Now, when a Son, or Prophet, of God speaks by the Spirit of God, there is a true and living word of God being spoken, and that living word agrees in essence and power with the knocking at the door, or striving of the Spirit, going on, more or less, with all men : and so God and

man are, there and then, united in laying pressure upon the spiritual part, or spirit, in man—the voice of the spiritual man giving the form of the message, and the present Spirit of God adding to its divine power.

A soulish man or preacher reaches not this ground, because, though he preaches a death of Christ, and blood of Christ, and salvation by Christ; the word of that salvation, as it comes from him, is carnal, soulish, corrupt.

A divine man, or rather a spiritual man, says, God is Love. If he says this by the Spirit of God, and in the order of God, the truth goes with and in the words. There is true life and power at the back of them: so the blessed One joins with them, and increases their power, if He wills.

A soulish man says the same words, but out of his mouth, in the hidden mystery of life, they are a lie; because the idea, notion, and animus at the back of them, is a lie. So the blessed One joins not with them, and they bring forth soulish, natural, and carnal believers—liars and deceivers, though outwardly they speak the same words. This is a mystery.

He that hath an ear, let him hear.

35.

CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.

17. 7. 71.

* * * Is not *Christ, the LIFE* and Substance, beyond all words whatever? Don't you see this proposition, my brother? You must know it inwardly, not outwardly only.

You are called to be one with Him—of His flesh, and of His bone—ONE SPIRIT. The Law and the Prophets

were till John. John outshone them. But the true LIFE, CHRIST, is God with us, in us, in very deed; and far beyond them all.

I say unto you—the words of Scripture are good only as they bring you into *Christ the Life*. Here, with John, their ministration ends. Alas, my brother, how is it that you stick to the very heart's blood of Babel?

If you are still in the measure of the Prophets, or John, or a babe in Christ—let it be so; but do not shut yourself up against the testimony of the blessed truth. I say unto you—the Son is beyond the Prophets and John, and if you are yet mumbling over their words, thus making an idol of them, instead of passing into the *true life*, you are foolish and blind.

Also, you must pass through *His words* into HIS LIFE: and then go on from strength to strength, from glory to glory. “He that is with you shall be in you.”

The Son, my brother, the Son—don't you see the glory of the Son, not out of you only, but in you?

As He was, or is, so ought you to be—not you one, and He another; but one Spirit. This is the holy mystery of the Gospel of God.

Would you like your children to be mumbling over the words of the elder ones everlastingly? This is contrary to nature and God.

My brother—my brother—my brother—the half-hearted in Babel don't want your help. They are fast enough where they are already.

Your uneasiness for them is in reality, in a measure, for yourself IN THEM.

This also is a mystery of Babel.

In true love

— . — . — .

36.

ON DYING TO ALL BUT GOD.

7. 8. 71.

My brother,

DON'T stumble at that about giving up all. By giving up all is not meant any indiscriminate yielding up of goods or property, or in any way giving to others what belongs to your wife and children : or, in short, any giving up which has its origination in man's will or suggestion, either your own, or that of another.

What is meant is simply a dying to all and everything but the blessed God, that may be living in the heart and mind, in the way of enjoyment, or trust, or rest—either man, woman, child, silver, gold, or any other creature. Any treasure whatever takes the heart and life from God—respectability, learning, good books, the Bible, or anything or everything saving only the present, blessed, and eternal, ever-living God.

He is the joy and life of the spirit ; and in proportion as we get any joy from any treasure whatever save Him, we rob Him and ourselves, and hinder that flow of heavenly and divine love, which is the true rest of the people of God. It is wonderful, and unknowable to those who have it not, how, when He is truly the life of the spirit and soul, prudence, wisdom, gentleness, love, courage, and everything worthy of a child of God, are brought forth without thought, care, or effort.

But this can be the case only as idols are slain ; precious things, in which is bound up in degree our life, are cast overboard ; and we come to a perfect disengagement of heart and mind.

By a thoroughly conscientious mind the last thing that is sacrificed is generally some holy hypocrisy, with which

God has been served, and self-confidence sustained, from our religious youth up. All other things may go, some of them making us wince badly enough; but when this constitutionally sacred idol is to be slain, the end of the world does indeed seem to have come. But, ah! my brother, at the other side there are liberty, dignity, sweetness, love, severity, power, holiness, judgment, discernment, and a thousand other God-rooted graces, rising up out of His eternal fulness, the very flow of which through the soul is of more price than the glory and pomp of many worlds. * * *

37.

ON STILLNESS.

21. 8. 71.

TELL — — to be still. Things are come to such a pass that if there were twenty-one thousand, such as he, galloping up and down the country, with unlimited means and talents, nothing would come of it in the long run. When God does really dwell in a man, such a one will chase a thousand, and two of them put ten thousand to flight: though it will be by my Spirit, saith the Lord God of battles. All that ever Christ has done, and will do, in a way of salvation, is to the end that God may thus dwell in His people, and that they may become one spirit with Him.

Tell him to be still, and let the world alone for a year or two; till he knows the Master's voice. He that does the will of God has glory enough.

A dying Saint, a rough gem of the first water, said, when asked how things were with him—"not a leaf do wag." Does ——— know this? Does he fathom it?

Is his inner sanctuary brought to this state of rest? It is not. Ten men who are *here*, in very deed, will, under God, move England and the world.

Oh, never rest till you can say, with a true and solid ring, "Not a leaf do wag." To be hung, ground to powder, made like milk, or water, or oil, is all little, if only it comes to this. If Christ has a cheek in glory which can show a brightening up; if the heart of the Eternal Father can be in any way moved with joy, beyond that wonderful abyss of mighty Love, of which He is the only Fountain; it is when man comes to be passive in His hand—runs not, talks not, fights not, but only as He wills.

Tell him to be still. It will be more acceptable to God than though every man, woman, and child, in England were at this day such as he.

38.

To the same.

23. 8. 71.

YOU say, " 'Not a leaf *will* wag' when the heart is stayed on Him whose blood has a continual and prevailing voice for him in the ear of God, for it speaketh (is speaking) better things than that of Abel."

When speaking of the whereabouts of ———, in reference to the experiences of that rough worthy who said, "not a leaf **DO** wag," I was looking at what is, or was: not what "will," or may be.

There are hundreds of thousands of "believers" in England and America who would at once write, think, or speak something like the above, in the face of this blessed proposition; but not ten in the whole lot be in it, or, really, as an abiding experience, know anything about it.

As for our friend ———, he would at once write a Tract about it (or would have done some time back) in the true Scriptural, Evangelical, and Fraternal style ; but at the same time he walking, as to his internal state and experience, as with a gale of twenty miles an hour—or heaving as a tree when shaken with a mighty wind.

My brother, it is time that all this was brought to an end. I shall not cut this quotation from yours up, and show you that it is only a bit of evangelical fustian, in comparison with the genuine article referred to in “not a leaf DO wag ;” because I believe that you have a heart and mind to see this yourself: but let it pass, merely saying that this, and ten thousand other fine and foolish things, may be said, in the region of Babylon, by those who are looking towards Jerusalem ; though the magnitude and beauty of “not a leaf do wag” can be truly felt and seen by those only who, by the *mighty power and love of God*, have passed into Salem, the City of Peace.

39.

GOD AND CHRIST.—THE FORM AND THE LIFE.

26. 8. 71.

* * * In answer to all this, in the first place, I will give another quotation from the same Letter. “Herein is love—that God sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins.”

If you would weigh over well in your mind these last few words, you would find a sufficient answer.

All that Christ did, all that He suffered, was the fruit of God’s Love; not the procuring cause thereof. There is not now, never was, and never will be to all eternity, one jot of good in Christ, or the saints, angels, principalities and powers, but what was, and is, in and of God.

Christ is a Channel of God's good to the saints, the world, and all things; not the Fountain from whence that good doth originate and spring. And for all that He has done and suffered, He will receive *an abundant reward*.

Now, if in the working of the mystery of iniquity, men so take up with the Channel as to forget the Fountain, so misuse the streams as to make them a source of corruption rather than purity, He who is Christ's Master, as well as yours and mine, has a right by His Spirit, to modify the living testimony of His servants now, as He has ever done.

The Priests, Levites, and people, under the Law and Prophets, did what professing Christians do now. What then became the living testimony? He that killeth an ox is as though he slew a man. He that sacrificeth a lamb as though he twisted a dog's neck. He that offereth an oblation as though it were swine's blood. He that burneth incense as though he blessed an idol.

They took their own ways, and did their own works, and were always ready to wash away all with the blood. So that which was given to keep from sin was made by them an instrument to easy sinning. They had their reward.

So in our day the same thing is being played over again; but in a mystery of iniquity.

* * * * *

Your mode of reasoning would bring the life and present working of God virtually to an end, or make it an unintelligible jargon, compelling the servants of the blessed God to convey His present mind to the present state and condition of men, through words and ideas which corresponded rightly to those only to whom they were originally addressed ages ago. Alas, my brother, you do not see the vastness and importance of being a present mouthpiece to the Eternal God.

You, in your prudent wisdom, would make His music to be an everlasting "God save the King," or "old hundredth" psalm—His present Will to be something that

could not be expressed but in the words and ideas that were uttered in another language some two thousand years ago.

* * * *

God is the Living God, and is to be known now just as well as ever; His voice is to be heard as well as ever; His love to be felt as well as ever.

40.

THE FIGHT OF FAITH.

5. 9. 71.

“**B**UT it is easy” [you write] “to turn out of the way. A hair’s breadth, that is scarcely perceptible, is often just that practical departure from the Life, which is nevertheless a departure that, unperceived, and so unchecked, may lead just where the Devil pleases.”

Love, love, love: all is easy to love! As the love grows, so the peace flows. There’s little hair-splitting or bad walking in love.

Well, well, you may say, he’s at it again! Yes, so he is, my brother; but he may truly say, it’s all love, anyhow, this time.

Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, comes from a solid bottom. But if we see one likely to get into, or to work from, an uneasy conscience rather than the Divine Power, making difficulties where they do not really exist, a word or two is not amiss.

Now he that would walk over a wide chasm on a narrow plank, must do so with a good heart, or he is most likely to come to grief. Doubtfulness increases the danger tenfold; a holy, easy boldness lessens it in the same proportion.

“Fear not,” is sound philosophy, and blessed and holy divinity, when it strikes against a sincere and loving heart—a “*good heart.*”

Going forward, growing in love, having faith in God, or *the faith of God*—He will guide with His eye, and, when necessary, whisper a caution in the ear.

We must, if possible, live or walk from Life, rather than to live, or walk for Life. It is the Devil who represents the most Blessed as a hard master: he however is a liar, and the father of it. The more of the Life, the stronger the love; the easier the walking. When God is all in all, it is easy to run through a troop, and leap over a wall.

As no bride, with a heart full of love, ever doubts for a moment an every-way able and competent bridegroom, so neither ought we to doubt Him, who is the Fountain of a Love infinitely beyond the utmost longing and capacity of all created beings whatever; the full tide of whose sweetness, if let loose, would, of pure joy and ecstasy, suffocate the whole of the higher creation of God. “Have the faith of God, and verily thou shalt say unto this mountain, be thou plucked up, and cast into the sea; and it shall come to pass.” Yes, it will come to this at last. The Devil will bring his sneering unbelieving crew up to such a pitch of impudence and assurance that he and they, even in these degenerate days, shall again be shamefully broken against the Power of Elijah’s God. Principalities and powers, and wicked spirits in high places, will find that the sword of the Lion of the tribe of Judah is sharper and more terrible than that of either Moses or the Prophets. Take it as a certain truth, my brother, that formality and hypocrisy, with infidelity and atheism, on which they operate as meat and spiced wine, will never hoodwink the Wisdom, or overcome the Power, of God in those who have a testimony for God and the Lamb.

There is an internal and unseen Prophetic and Apostolic succession, which is of God, that will exist, growing stronger and stronger, till time shall be no more. For

as the growing impiety, hypocrisy, and anti-Christian subtlety shall increase and abound, there will always be those who will have to lay these things bare, and give a sound testimony, not by the prudence of man, but in the wisdom and power of God.

Be patient, my brother: be patient. As the love grows, so the peace flows. When soldiers are going into battle, they generally brighten one another up a little.

41.

SONS, SERVANTS, AND LETTER-MADE SAINTS.

9. 9. 71.

* * * You are desired not to take everything as meant for, or rather against you, in the letters which leave here for ———.

When anything has to be said directly to you, —. —. —. would not hold it back, though the day following a fiery furnace were his lot. So there is no need of your thinking that all those general remarks, which bear upon things as they are found near at hand and far off, are left-handed tips meant for your head. No man could write as you do, if God were not with him in measure: and I feel assured that if you *keep your place*, and walk with Him as much as lieth in you, according to your light and measure in Him, there are not three men in England who will ever be allowed to put you to grief or shame. It is only when going out of or beyond your measure, or hanging back, that you will come to the rod, or loss.

When it was said in a letter the other day, “my brother, I preach to you the mystery of the Son, which is hid again, without, despising the servant’s state;” it was not meant as a personal thing principally, but simply giving utterance to a great fact, which is rigidly true, taking the general state of “believers” into account.

There is a mystery in our sonship to God, and brotherhood to Christ, as He was God and man, which is hid again. It is this that leads sincere "Christians" to be continually quoting from the Psalms and Prophets, and dwelling upon these quotations till they become blended with their spirits; and so, as much as lieth in them, becoming one with the servants of God, in the place of *going forward* by faith, and in power, and becoming, in very deed, one spirit with Christ, the Son of the living God.

It is admitted at once that faithful servants and loving sons have much in common towards the Great Master; but this can never, at the root of things, overleap the difference between a servant and a son. It is possible that a servant may fall away for ever: it is probable that a son may not.

When God makes a son, by giving the spirit of adoption, He means to be a Father to him, and looks for a child's return; and sooner or later will make him rich in love, and the good things of Himself and His house.

Whatever bread is broken to you in the meantime, eat it with meekness and patience; though it be bitter and dry, it is much more than you—we—deserve. In doing so, the heart of the great Father will some day relent, and He will so break in upon you by His Spirit, as to make you altogether ashamed. Ashamed, because of His sweetness, justice, and beauty; and none the less so because of your own littleness; for we are all as nothing, and, without Him, vanity and a lie: with Him an honourable plant and precious vine. Blessed be His holy and glorious name for ever.

When all is made right within, any injustice done to your standing before God will only make the spices give out a pleasant smell, and cause a freshening up of that holy fire which is not intended to go out for ever.

But if you don't feel this, still be patient, and cry unto Him from beneath the altar—How long? Stick to Him,

anyhow; though you be for a time, spiritually, what Job was temporally. At the end of the matter you will come out more beautiful than a morning without clouds, if you keep nothing back.

I have not, that I know of, seen your face in the flesh, or had one word from any person who has, either in one way or another, and have no particular desire at present so to do; but your heart and spirit are with me, and I hope to see the day when they shall be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

I had a smile in my heart when I saw * * *
The truth is, my brother, that letter-made saints are not to be tickled into the true gospel state.

Men won't generally, of their own free will, leave a table of four or five courses, with champagne, sherry, and Bordeaux, and take up with homely, simple fare, and a glass of pure water, till made sensible that their lives are at stake.

So neither will those who believe that, by having "faith" in all that is written, they have got the substance of it, and ought to make merry accordingly, come down from this banquet in the clouds, and sit at God's table, ready and willing to catch a few of the crumbs of the bread of life, the bread of God—much less wait there with patience, till ordered to appear as a son and a brother.

But whether they will or not, it is the duty of the children of the kingdom to maintain the truth in its integrity. If they do so in God's will and time, it will reach some, and stand as a true testimony to others: and—what is more than all this—is pleasant to the blessed Lord God, and will be so for ever. He never forsakes those who put their trust in Him. He never has done so: He never will do so for ever.

Blessed be His most holy and glorious name for ever and ever. Amen.

42.

FALSE PRAYER AND TRUE COMFORT.

19. 9. 71.

BE careful for nothing but to please the most blessed God.

You have been taught to believe from your youth up, that Christ has made a full and sufficient atonement for the sins of the whole world ; that God is in Him reconciling the world unto Himself. This is true ; so you have nothing to hinder you from coming to God by Him. What He has done for you you cannot hinder ; you may however impede His work in you. The former was necessary to the latter, in the will of God. He died for us, that we should no longer live unto ourselves, but to Him who died for us, and rose again.

To succeed in obtaining the fruit of Christ's passion and death, *cease from false "prayer."* All prayer not having its root in the present will of God is false. The publican's prayer was answered, because it was just what he needed, and he was made to feel that he needed it by the grace of the Spirit.

We are what the most blessed God sees us to be ; not what we would, by our religious doings, make ourselves. The way then is to let *the Spirit* convince us of our wants, and then lift up the heart to God, and groan out a longing desire for what we are made to feel that we need. This is enough, and will bring into the kingdom of joy and peace ; and is by far the shortest way. All other "prayer" beside this is superfluous, and wicked folly, arising from unbelief and self-righteous hypocrisy, having its root in the will of the creature, not of the Creator, the Blessed and mighty God. No matter how beautiful the words, and sanctimonious the tones of it : if it be not the voice of the Spirit, so much the more is it of the wicked one.

If you adopt this prayer, and follow it out in the strength of grace, you will become a loving saint of God, by a resurrection unto life.

What would you more? Christ Himself is your sacrifice; the Spirit is ready with all comfort and suitable blessings, according to the will of God. Cease then from vain babblings before God; and as one of your own infants, in years gone by, looked with an inexpressible trust and gentleness into your eyes, before it could use its tongue, so do you settle yourself into an infancy of the Spirit, and, speechless, cry, groan, and moan towards Him, *if needful*, till the Beloved come.

Don't comfort yourself: let the Comforter comfort you. All self-comfort is more or less a lie. The comfort of the Comforter springs up from the heart of God, which is an ineffable abyss of Love, and does not need meddling with. When He visits you, don't be careless; but turn to Him, and offer Him all your heart's love. He knows better than you what a state it is in, and how much fire and tribulation will be necessary to make it right, bringing it, through death with Christ Jesus, into a new and blessed life.

43.

INTERIOR TRIAL.—THE WORK OF THE GREAT POTTER.

27. 9. 71.

* * * This ceaseless prayer, and the chattering "prayers," are incompatible. I believe that, when you *come into these things by the help of divine love*, you will perhaps, now and then, have to call your family together, and give them a word or two on anything which the Spirit of Truth may show you is going wrong: and if a further exercise should be called for, it will be made known. Of course there will be times, when passing through great trials, that you will seek to get alone with the Beloved,

and desire to know whether He does really intend to give you over to His and your enemies ; and sometimes He will let things go so far as almost to seem to justify you in saying to His face that you have loved Him, and Him alone, in vain. But this is only preparatory to some fresh discovery of His beauty, which will make you willing and glad to sit down at His feet, and anoint your face with dung.

A high edifice requires a good foundation. If God has called you to honour, you must be grounded upon a rock. Before He can pour into your spirit the precious things of His kingdom—of His love—you must not only be well worked as clay, but put on the wheel, then dried, fired, and afterwards glazed and beautified—all of which processes are a sore vexation and misery to the soulish part, which is always ready for pleasure and honour, and would, from being a great sinner in November, like to rise to the right hand of Christ, as a saint of the first water, by April at the farthest.

But he that is wise in heart sees not things so ; but while receiving the delvings which correspond to the state of clay, endeavours to console himself by some sight of the beauty, and taste of the sweetness, of Him who seems to lay on more as a fearful Man of war, than a gentle Potter, or a true Lover. And so through all—the wheel, the oven, the fire—it is the place of those who have really chosen Him (or whom He, the mighty Potter, has chosen) for their Lover, their everlasting Friend, to let Him have it all His own way, being assured, by a secret persuasion, that at the end something good and pleasant will come out of that work, which to nature—the soulish man—seems so cruel and long.

And so there will. When all is made secure and right, there will be no intermission of love, and the kingdom of Heaven will be on earth begun—Jerusalem, Salem, or the City of Peace.

44.

TO ONE WHO WANTED "MORE ABOUT THE
BLOOD."

10. 10. 71.

* * * It is as clear to my mind as $2 \times 2 = 4$ that this "central doctrine," as *handled and preached* by the "Protestants," "Evangelicals," etc., etc., etc., is as fatal to the holy mystery of the Gospel of God as that terrible delusion of the Devil, amongst the Papists of both Rome and England, that the priests and "sacraments" are effectual to pardon, dissolve, and put away sin. * *

My brother, I have, I believe, said to you before, that infinitely great as is the propitiation which Christ made, the ministration of it remains in the hands of the Father by the Holy Ghost: and that we are now under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost.

The reason why the Apostles dwelt so much upon the atonement of Christ in their day was because they had to contend with, and bring to naught, the old atonements by the blood of bulls and goats.

Now the question is not one of *atonement principally*,—(that has been settled once for all, with and by God, for ever; and is received by the great mass of professing Christians)—but of *power and the Holy Ghost*. He that is with you shall be in you, is the grand central truth of the Gospel now—Immanuel, God with us. It is God in very deed that we want; not doctrine, not "the blood." That transaction is *finished*: we want the fruit of it, the fire of God, the very out-beaming of His glory, and express image of His substance in our hearts—living, speaking, and working in us: taking us into Himself; making us one spirit. This is the true God, and eternal life. Alas, alas, my brother, he who has this knows better the value of the atonement than a hundred millions of those who have the word and figure of it only, in their imaginations,

heads, and tongues—but not the Divine Substance in their hearts—though all their knowledge were condensed into one.

A thousand men may preach about the “blood,” and propitiation, with the eloquence of angels; and inflame the minds of men with a soulish faith, till they cry out in raptures, as when the floods clap their hands, and the mountains are shaken to their centres: but this is all of no real value whatever, the fire of God not being in it. Only God is good: and we are good only as we are made one with Him, and in Him. That faith which in the slightest degree makes us independent of His dispensing will, either as it regards Christ’s blood or atonement, or the gift of the Spirit, or any other blessing whatever—though it be only of the value of a pin’s head—is a lie, and comes from the father of lies, and is contrary to the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.

This is the mystery hid from the wise and prudent of all generations, but revealed unto babes. The one faith is of man: the other of God. The first is of the flesh: the last is of the Spirit. That is human: *this is Divine.*

45.

PAPAL AND PROTESTANT ANTICHRIST.

12. 10. 71.

THERE is something about such men as Spurgeon, Darby, and many others of the same status, which is on my mind, and shall be named, though you may have thought of it—viz.: their popularity, and the power that they have by their position to resist all opposition to their errors. Having attained this power, masses of people all over the country are led by the spirit of it; so that it is not fighting against them only, but great numbers of

deceived souls, who are united to them in spirit, making their position almost impregnable. So it is with the different bodies of professing Christians. Take the Methodists, for instance, who just in proportion as they lose hold of God, endeavour to keep hold of the people by "learning," eloquence, good singing, respectability, committees, combinations, fine chapels, "churches," etc., etc.; all of which proceedings and workings are impregnated with the spirit of the age.

Many of these men know and build upon this power; some of them in ignorance submit to it, and are ruined by it.

The support that these different men and bodies have, as they become popular, from the men of this world, is hardly to be summed up. Newspaper editors, reviewers, publishers, and statesmen, all conspire together in their favour, and with them, to give force, popularity, and power, to a soulish worship and religion, in which Man—Man—Man—is almost everything, and the most blessed God substantially, and in reality, little or nothing.

Now there is one thing that has impressed itself upon my mind in reference to this—that the hottest vials of divine wrath are of necessity treasured up for, and will fall upon, those who thus lead captive, and hold in delusion, such great masses of people. The Popish anti-Christ has for some ages been understood to be the just object of the divine vengeance; and its murders and violence are held in remembrance against it by historians and Protestant writers: but these bear a very small proportion to the mighty power for evil which it exercises over the consciences of millions, who are being made drunken continually by the wine of its adulteries and spiritual whoredoms. But how few there be who look to the Protestant anti-Christ; which, though less political and cruel, as effectually leads to a worship and religion which stand not in the Power and Spirit of God, and which, being in the flesh, cannot please Him.

And fewer still are those who can discern that between the mummeries of Popery and the rational decency of Protestantism, as modified by the spirit of this age, there is little essential difference at the root—the intellect and spirit of rational, soulish man having, in both, the position which ought to be occupied by the omnipresent and ever-blessed Spirit of God.

My brother, don't lose heart. One shall yet chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. He of the rams' horns and pitchers is neither dead, nor old, nor sleepeth.

46.

PASSING INTO GOD SOLVES ALL MYSTERIES, AND ALONE FITS TO SERVE HIM.

16. 10. 71.

I HAVE not answered that of yours in which you throw together the principal passages bearing on Christ's death, etc., etc., in any formal or decided way ; because it is not becoming for men who know a little, by the grace of God, to say everything that can be said on any *one side* of Christian doctrine. No man knoweth the Father but the Son ; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father. To know from the Scriptures a little bit about what the Son has done for man, is common to thousands : but to know Him, the blessed Jesus, is particular to a very few. None do this really, substantially, and truly, except as they know the Father by the Holy Ghost.

Christ's generation, and the eternal and ever-blessed One's nature and existence, are known only in proportion as we are made like the Son : and then we see Him as He is, and the Father, in our measure, as He is also. God Himself, the eternal most holy God, cannot either

write or speak, in human language, a knowledge of Himself to any. Christ Jesus was a living expression of His glory, given, not principally that we should follow in His steps as an outward pattern (though this will lead to results favourable to man's well being), but that we should come by the Divine Spirit into the same nature and life, from which we may work easily and sweetly the same works, in the same wisdom and power, and from the same blessed Root. As this is the case, all mysteries become no mysteries: all difficulties become no difficulties: mountains of darkness and death vanish into thin air. Don't spend your strength in anything but getting into God: all is comprehended in this. The sweetest relative joy that stirs the countenance, or can by any possibility move the heart, of the glorified man Christ Jesus, arises there, when men become truly divine, and, if it were possible, equal to Himself in love and power. The love that He has for the Father knows nothing figured out by jealousy. His passion and death were for this—that through the rent veil of His flesh we might pass into God, and under the powerful influence of the divine glory, be changed from glory into glory, till we see Him as He is. All strength, wisdom, patience, love, joy, peace—peace—peace—is wrapped up in this: outside of this all is flesh, soul, and natural; not spiritual, heavenly, and divine.

Mind what you are about with your pen. You are not a natural fool; so can cut a decent figure from a soulish bottom, and hold your own against most comers, giving from that ground as good as, or better than, what you receive. Now it does seem a good thing to do this for a good cause, and to be able to throw light on the dark and terrible muddles of the day; but this seeming goodness may be only "of the soul," and being such, will only add to the smoke, stench, and turmoil, which the Devil is stirring up in the temple, or rather in the outer courts thereof; where God and Christ are bawled out by the year from a wrong bottom.

One holy sigh, one heavenly pull, which has its origin in the heart of God, will do more good than a bit of the best and most spirited writing that has seen the light of day for an age, if not of God.

At any rate there is no light, but that which is divine, that will penetrate this abyss of misery. And here let me tell you a secret—no man can really write or speak truly and effectually beyond his own tincture and measure : so wherever you go, and whatever is heard and read, the true value of it all is in the real condition of the writer or speaker. You have not perhaps often thought that, if you had a thousand people to-morrow, who would say with a true heart—you shall rule over us, and guide us, as pastor, in the way of peace ; the first thing which would stare you in the face would be your own nakedness of heavenly good, the letter-made quality of your “divine knowledge,” the shadowy character of the heavenly substance in yourself.

In this case let me be your prophet, and say—it is so : it would be so : and therefore you ought to act as though that were to be your position to-morrow.

Well, you say, and pray, Sir, what am I to do in this case? In answer to which question I say, Let us no longer live unto ourselves, but to *Him*, *in Him*, and with *Him*, who died for us, and rose again.

Yes, my brother, *in Him* who is risen—not by a farcical imputation, but by a living, sensible, and real union and life from His Root.

In true love,

— . — . — .

47.

WORDS OF TRUTH ABUSED.

20. 10. 71.

* * * I have no hesitation in saying, sweetly, but firmly and strongly, that he, whoever he may be, that says that Christ is "*eliminated*" from them [certain tracts] is a "*liar.*"

Christ, as He is our Saviour, is recognised in them as the medium through which *all blessings* come, fully as much, in proportion to their size, as in the "New Testament," taken as a whole, if not more so.

I admit that some particular forms of expression on the subject of our blessed Lord's passion and death, which have become, as it were, the slang of universal Christendom, and with which its hypocrisy and iniquities are covered, first, from or in themselves, and then from others—in preaching and conversation nearly always, in books without number, in tracts by the millions—are not to be found in them, because they have no business there, and could not have been put there *without lies and sin.*

For, although, as the Apostles used them, they were holy, true, and good; as they are stereotyped in the mind of universal Christendom, they are unholy, lies, and bad: and would therefore require more "printed matter" than the whole Tract to explain them. This would have brought about jangling without end, altogether foreign to the testimony. God did not pull me out of the pit of corruption, by setting me to find fault with this, that, and the other principally, but by opening my eyes and heart to His Spirit and Love, and the holy mystery of the Gospel, which is in very deed Christ in you. This He has laid on me to set before others; which I have done, in my measure, not from the Apostles' writings, but from an internal and real possession, which, blessed be God, I find to grow stronger and stronger day by day. * * *

48.

CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.

29. 10. 71.

YOU say, “I often forbear an objection, more careful to get the good, than to stand up for this or that, which I may yet be assured is the *very truth of God.*”

When the disciples of Jesus took Him down from the cross (speaking after the manner of men), they did not handle the very Christ of God, but His body. The out-beaming of the Father’s glory and express image of His substance, for the time being had left that body. The life, the *very truth of God*, was not there.

So of the Law of Moses. If the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites, had known—graciously known—that the Law of Moses was the very truth of God, only so long as His good pleasure and will were in it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Life and Glory as a Sabbath-breaker and blasphemer.

So of the Scriptures. All of them, given forth from the Spirit, at the time were the very word of the Lord to those to whom they came; being, there and then, an outward expression of His internal feeling towards them. But when the occasion passed, they did not remain the very truth of God, strictly and fully taken, but simply a form of sound words—the outward shell of that which once contained, and directed towards those to whom they were sent, the very mind and power of God.

Now Christ, the *very truth of God*, is a quickening Spirit, and dwells not in these sound words (some of which have been sadly tinkered, and are yet being so, by carnal “saints”): though sometimes, in mercy to the prejudices begotten by false teachers, He may have appeared in power through them. But this is, as the rule and law, contrary to the will of God, and the genius of the blessed

Gospel and Kingdom, which is a ministration of the Spirit, the present will and mind of God by the Spirit—He dwelling in the hearts of His saints, and giving them wisdom for every occasion, without the help of the Scriptures, or any other book or books whatever; though the Scriptures principally, and other books subordinately, may be profitable, *in the will of God*.

The very essence of Babel is generated through this Still: man, and that which, when rightly handled, is profitable bringing forth a spirit which makes drunken and merry—but not with that joy and gladness in which God, the most blessed God, in very deed, by His Spirit, lives and dwells.

Or, in other words, brings an interior illumination, which, though demonstrable by man to be in unison with the sense of the letter and drift of Scripture, is not the present, living, *very truth of God*.

I say unto you, my brother, draw in—draw in—draw in—from this truth which may be demonstrated from the letter—these husks which the swine do mostly eat; and live alone upon the bread of life, the very truth of God, which, by the Spirit, in Christ Jesus, is given in light, love, and power. Or, while you are dwelling on, or contending for, the one, you will be fighting against the other.

It was this spirit that crucified Christ of old: and it is this that hinders His coming forth in the saints, His body, in spirit and power, at the present day.

He could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief.

49.

GIVING THAT WHICH IS HOLY TO DOGS.

31. 10. 71.

THAT paper of ————— is indeed “worse than rubbish;” it is downright wickedness and hypocrisy in a mystery—a “saint” made up of the words of Scripture, and the carnal mind; in the “heavenlies” of imagination and vanity.

In the bowels of Jesus Christ I beseech you to take care how you deal with such as these. Don’t you see, my brother, that just in proportion as truly enlightened and tender men feed these with their knowledge of Christ, they make them more and more instruments of Satan, to bring thick darkness over the minds of men, and confusion into the household of faith.

Men must not first be taught to talk right, and understand the mysteries of the kingdom from a soulish, intellectual bottom; but to *be* right, by becoming one spirit with Christ in God, in humility, meekness, and charity, by the Holy Ghost. All short of this helps forward the mystery of iniquity, when it writes or preaches. I could not help fearing, while reading his letter over, that he had been made more subtle in the mystery of iniquity by what he had learned from you within the last twelve months.

I have been prodigal towards you, because of the real sincerity towards God which I have felt in you from the beginning.

Don’t bring upon me the rod by your indiscretion. Be a faithful minister of God, without any reference to your own reputation. You have just that excellent natural judgment and discretion, which will make you to be respected, more or less, wherever you go, or whatever you do. But this, though pleasant from the side of earth,

is not the safest qualification Godward. It enables you so to deal with His enemies as not to offend them: but at the same time does not give you an entire freedom from the guilt of their sin. It leaves them with the impression that it is only an error of judgment after all—not a radical defect in the inner man: that their “standing in Christ” is all right, though they have made a few mistakes as to the gospel plan. My brother, it is not so. Man is what he is in God, according to the measure, growth, and stature, of Christ in him—not as floating capital in the head, but as a real, living, divine, substance in the heart, the root of which is in God.

This new man has as real a birth, substance, and growth, as had our Saviour while upon the earth. Their geniture is equally divine.

That “terrible rebuke” is made up and stamped. As it appears “terrible,” it is allowed to wait, to see if anything less terrible can be done in faithfulness to God and the creature; or nothing done at all.

You see by that letter of ————— what a wicked and really lying spirit the Scriptures and the natural mind can be made to generate.

50.

ON BEARING INWARD SUFFERING; AND ITS FRUITS.

4. 11. 71.

* * * In all cases of misadventure and wounding of soul by unwatchfulness, over much talk, or any other act whatever—what is to be done to bring *again* forgiveness and peace? Simply bear the penalty of chastisement, which the *grieved Spirit* there and then inflicts; by suffering it patiently, till He that wounds heals: not

seeking to be relieved, or to relieve yourself, from it by any appeals to the blood, or cross of Christ, (or if so, only to deepen, rather than heal, the pain,) or lively talk about the mercy of God—which, in other words, means taking the matter out of His hands, and settling the business ourselves. This is spiritual anti-Christ, which reigns universally in Christendom, and brings false healing—false faith—false experience—false peace.

In all cases of depression, trial, and temptation, never by any means deliver yourself by seeking diversion in good books, or any other religious doings whatever, inconsistent with patiently waiting, and bearing the burden laid on.

There may be no harm done at these times in silently beating the breast, or casting a longing moan towards the Beloved, or telling Him a word or two about the greatness of our folly and misery; if such can be done without violence to the exercise which is on the mind.

These troubles, if rightly borne, almost invariably precede manifestations of divine love and power, which give strength and vigour to the new man. It is a "law" of our spiritual growth, that in proportion as we bear patiently spiritual trials, hunger, thirst, and nakedness, or violent and protracted temptation, so will the Deliverer appear in us, and impart His strength, virtue, and beauty to us.

Great lettings into God in this world are always attended with severe trials. Divine wisdom is never imparted but to those who are, or have been, proved and sharply tried. And let no man deceive himself or another. They who will not bear the one, will rarely, if ever, experience the other. When you thoroughly understand this principle in itself and its workings, living near to God, and giving up all, you will hail with meekness, if not with joy, the setting in of trials, troubles, and difficulties, when they come in the natural order of Providence and grace. Our blessed and ever-to-be-loved Lord forced

His way meekly through infinite difficulties, humiliations, torments and miseries, into a weight of glory which cannot be told, by patiently bearing what the adorable Father suffered to be brought upon Him.

There is as real a connection, in the kingdom of God upon the earth, between suffering patiently, giving up freely, and believing constantly, on the one hand; and receiving more and more of the divine Love, with minor gifts and graces continually, on the other—as there is between cause and effect in any of the operations of the natural world.

There is a striving and believing, which does little or nothing in the kingdom, because it is of man: but there is a suffering, striving, and believing, which, though it merits nothing, strictly speaking, wins everything, because the Spirit is in it. The kingdom, with its blessings, beauties, and glories, may not be given in exchange for these, nor because of them; but it is given, by ROYAL BOUNTY, according to the measure of them, mostly—for in very truth, these are part and parcel of it, in the nature of things, as at present existing.

This, when rightly and GRACIOUSLY understood, gives power, in God, to glory in tribulation, rejoice in suffering, and count it joy to meet with temptation: knowing that we are more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us, and that His infinite and adorable strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Farewell. In that love which changeth not.

— . — . — .

51.

TRUE AND FALSE WORSHIP.

12. 11. 71.

IN one of your last letters you drew a comparison between your position and that of ——, in which you overstepped the mark in his favour. True it is that he is younger than you, and so may not have so much to undo as you have had; but there is one great point of difference in your favour, and most strongly against him, which you seem to have overlooked. You have not—as he has done—built a chapel, and entered on a course of false worship, and other wrong proceedings, which will do little or nothing, in the long run, but generate anti-Christ, confusion, and deceit, both in preacher and people. Christianity, pure Christianity—true religion under the present dispensation—is nothing more or less than a reconciliation to God by Christ Jesus in the reception of the Holy Ghost, a unity and conformity therewith, and growth therein, which is principally the workmanship of God.

Now what can be more opposed to this, while professing to help it forward, than a man calling people together from time to time continually, and in one “service” reiterating no less than four formal “prayers,” leaving out other formalities and things, which become, on continued repetition, hypocrisies? This lies at the very root of anti-Christ—men getting a wrong notion of religion, and then, by the force of “praying,” preaching, and singing, delving it into others, taking at the same time any little enlargement of soul as an evidence of the co-operation and good pleasure of the Holy Ghost. Anti-Christ, as in Popery and Ritualism, may not be there; but though the outward form is not to be discerned as in them, the very soul and spirit of it is present, and in full operation—man’s spirit and soulish activities taking the place of the

blessed Spirit of God, and drawing the mind from a sense of true communion with Him, who said that where two or three were gathered together in His name, He would be in their midst: and doing things also which are altogether foreign to that state of relationship which exists between the divine Father and His children.

If a natural child were to proceed with half the drunken formality and hypocrisy, which is practised by those who pretend to be spiritually born of God, nothing but separation or a lunatic asylum could follow. When a Father has such confidence in his son as to say, all that I have is thine, under what pretence could such a one pull a long face three or four times in the course of two or three hours, and reiterate a lot of petitions, which, however good in themselves, are utterly and entirely out of time and place; and make a provision to continue this performance during term of life?

He that is born of God is one with God—of God, and in God—and could no more do these things, and retain that holy relationship and union therein, than one who should fall into uncleanness and lies, and continue therein.

The very essence of Christianity is bound up in the holy truth that the Father and the Son are one, and that there is no liberty of prayer in this relationship—in fact cannot be—out of the Holy Ghost: and that when the Son is called to prayer, the Spirit is to help his infirmities with unutterable groanings and longings. Now consider the position of one who has entered into an engagement with the public to continue this anti-Christian, Jewish, and Popish, exhibition of singing, praying, preaching, etc., in man's will and time, from his own spirit only, for an indefinite duration: and then—remembering that the end of these things is always worse than the beginning, generating anything and everything but genuine Christianity, both in preacher and people—you may with me believe that your position is far less dangerous (this is only a weak term, and falls infinitely short of the truth) than his,

How can the Holy Ghost dwell in, and shine from, the hearts of such “scripturally” drunken ranters as these? How can the divine Son be brought forth in all His lovely proportions and heavenly sweetness, where man, the old hypocritical man, a little tinkered up with Scripture, reading, prayer, and other (compared with the right thing) hypocrisies, constitutes himself the priest of the congregation, and forces continually, through singing, preaching, and praying, his own spirit into the people; in the place of bringing them to, and throwing them upon, the Spirit of God, the most blessed God, through the blood of the immaculate Lamb, and telling them to wait upon Him in awe and silence, that the holy oil of His divine sweetness and love, in the Spirit, may permeate every power and faculty of the body, soul, and spirit; that they may thus become moving temples for God upon the earth?

— From which temples He may shine out upon others, and bring to bear upon them the divine unction and power, which, as the fire and oil of God in the Spirit, dwell in their hearts. These, these are the sons of His love: the others are bastards, not sons; full of talk, but *living in their own wills*, and doing their own works; trumpeting forth the music of their own brain and fleshly mind.

THE WORLD NEEDS GOD, NOT MAN: the out-beaming of the Father’s glory, and express image of His substance, not the continual talk and noise of the lips.

—The Spirit of Wisdom, Love, and Power: not reiterated hymns and soulish prayers.

—Gladness of heart, which has God in very deed in it: not soulish, deceitful, and rotten.

He that hath not power from above to baptize through the Spirit into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, let him hold his peace.

52.

THE DIVINE IN-DWELLING.

17. 12. 71.

YES: prayer, constant prayer *in the Holy Ghost*, is best. Without it there may be the outline and beauty of Canova, with the coldness of his marble.

Where the constant, holy, power of Life Divine is wanting, religion dwindles into the veriest twinkle—a spiritual Will-o'-the-wisp, of no value. But with the most Blessed living in the heart, and the new man waxing stronger and stronger, the kingdom of heaven is known, the divine love and heavenly power are felt, which lighted up the spirits of the worthies of old, and have lived in the saints in all generations.

Blessed be God and the Lamb for ever. In the knowledge, by the Spirit, of the Father and Son, are obtained, in measure, all the treasures of wisdom and understanding hidden in them.

In these days we are called to a constant sense of the divine presence, overcoming all impediments to faith and love. Not as the Prophets, left, in degree, to struggle on with passion and darkness, except when the divine light and power brought all to stillness. We, as sons, are called to walk in the light all the day long; to love with an ever-increasing steadiness and fervour; to bear with patience fiery trials, troubles, and presented fears: till at last all shall be swallowed up of God. Hold on, my brother, through thick and thin—fire and water—light and darkness.

His word has gone forth—They that trust shall never be confounded. His words are firmer than rocks, mountains, or heavens: sweeter than honey, and more to be desired than riches and honour. Of Himself what shall be said? Alas! alas! here man's tongue, though it be

like sweet music, or the pen of a ready writer, is vain. How shall he describe that which is beyond all words? how tell of a sweetness, a little letting out of which ravishes away his senses, and causes earthly joys and loves, in comparison, to be reckoned as rags and tatters—things that have no real good and warmth in them, where the soul and spirit are concerned?

If the beams of His goodness and sweetness defy all language, rhetoric, and figures of speech—what of Himself? Here we will be speechless: nay, not will be, but must be, for the best of reasons—we have nothing to say but, Blessed be His holy and glorious name for ever and ever. He is worthy. Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let all the Angels of God, that excel in strength, bless Him: Cherubim, Seraphim, and all the mighty ones, in all places of His dominion, give out one ceaseless, holy, flood of loving praise:

Or, when stillness reigns in heaven, one great deep of unutterable strong desire towards Him who is infinitely holy and good, whom my soul loveth, and shall for ever love—yea, for ever and ever.

53.

“CHRISTIAN WORKERS.”

27. 12. 71.

* * * Now B. and Co. [philanthropic “Christian workers”] work not from this principle, *not having come to it in themselves*; and so run not being sent. They are only a sort of moral policemen, not true servants of the spiritual kingdom of God. If they would do what they are doing, as the police and schoolmaster do, simply from a moral and social bottom, they might be equally successful, and would avoid that nauseous and painful practice

of pulling in their religion by the ears, so to speak, and mixing it with whatever they do.

No: there is only one way of serving God, and that is the true one—*coming to know and do His present will in ourselves, and then to do what HE wants doing for others.*

A nice figure you would make, were you served by a posse of servants, who, having got hold of the doings of some of your helpers of years back, set about going through their work in their own will and time, calling for you, and your help, only to carry out what appeared to them to be the right thing—thus, in reality, making *you to serve* their officious hypocrisy and offensive familiarity—a sort of all-powerful dummy, whose business was to supply the needful—to pay the piper, but not to choose the tune.

No, my brother: B. and Co., with Popery, Ritualism, etc., etc., are all in their measure enemies to the Kingdom of God; and must be dealt with in that wisdom which is from above, which is peaceable and pure, and manifests itself in gentleness, meekness, and charity, if their conduct will admit: if not, with firmness and severity.

54.

TRUE CHARITY AND BROTHERLY KINDNESS.

30. 12. 71.

YES: “Wilkinson” [*i.e.*, “The Saint’s Travel to the Land of Canaan,”] in the way of printer’s ink, is an opener of the eyes indeed to the simple, and those who are, in very deed, pressing into the kingdom of God. Fear not: “Flashes” are among the all things that work together for good to them that love Him. They whet the appetite for better things, and may be as the streaks of light before the opening day.

That passage, "hotbed of corruption," some time back called forth the remark from you, that it needed explanation, though you were fully convinced of its truth. Perhaps you will think over this again. If you look at our Lord's conduct in these matters, you may find that He was not so nice or exact in this line of things, as *these times* and your remark seem to call for. The Pharisees were the religious men of His day; and surely some of them, according to their low dispensation, feared God and wrought righteousness. When such came before Him, the wisdom of God in Him taught Him to treat them as their state and condition required: but this did not prevent Him from speaking of them, as a whole, in strong and well-marked terms, without appearing to make any allowance in His denunciations for the few, here and there, in that sect, who were, by humility of heart, in their measure, acceptable to the most blessed God. You will, by this time, have seen that a fleshly knowledge of Christ, and opposition to His inward appearance in Spirit and power, leave those who only thus know Him, under the influence and dominion of the flesh in some of its works and fruits. But any system that in the main keeps its votaries thus under the power of the flesh, must be provocative of corruption: and as the "Brethren" do this clearly and strongly, as much as, or more than, any other body of the leading "Christian" men of this day, it appears from *analogy*, that to tell the naked truth, without palliation or comment, may be (and, I believe, is) most for the glory of God. Perhaps you are liable to err on this point, from having been too much accustomed to suppose that salvation follows head-conviction: it does not; or philosophy and logic would have been spoken of, as kindly auxiliaries, in spreading the truth.

But the fact is that men are saved only as they are made willing to die, or are, in the first instance, pricked to the heart, and made to groan for help and deliverance; and then, after they have tasted a little of the divine

sweetness, and seen a little of His comely beauty, do, under the power of the Spirit, voluntarily yield *themselves* up to the gibbet or cross—their old man, in their measure, to the nails and tribulating pains of death. This is the secret, my brother, where the Angels may almost be inclined to envy man: they see that as he will voluntarily suffer crucifixion and death, the Power and Glory of God will arise in him, almost without limit or measure.

They are not so circumstanced, yet are happy: but cannot help wondering, it may well be thought, what fools we are, in keeping ourselves so “prudently” and “wisely” out of a little misery and fire. As men are wise—or unwise—thus, for themselves, so are they inclined to be discreet and tender towards all others: but as they have found the advantage of tribulation and death, so they will be nerved to send the sword of truth, with a right good will and vigour, into the vitals of that universal caitiff, the fleshly, pleasure-loving heart of unrenewed man.

What can they do otherwise? There is a point when a man can get no farther on his road without passing a river—sink or swim. He that does pass must do it in spite of fears and risk, at the cost perhaps of his treasure boxes and costly burdens. When once on the other side, surely he knows best how and what is necessary to be done by another in passing over. But no: your cowardly, money- world- or pleasure-loving, half-hearted “Brother,” or any other, sees not this; and wanders up and down on the wrong side, in sore dudgeon, when told, with the best of will, that he is a “fool,” a caitiff, or a “thief” and “robber.”

He who is over, mixing his indignation with tears and loving sorrow, says, Ah! alas! alas! what would I have given to have had any one to harden or spur me on, and call me from the other side! years would have been saved, and many foolish bitter things have had no existence, had I but passed before. But no: he has to leave his “Brother” calling or waiting upon “the Lord,” to “come upon a cloud,” and ferry him over.

So in the first place, don't let us be too tender of ourselves ; and in the next, faint-hearted in stirring up one another. You had nearly cast me off once or twice, as an almost abusive sinner ; but now your eyes are too wide open, and you have felt too much—though little—of His love, to draw your sword or pistols hastily against faithfulness again.

Perhaps you may from this time never, never, forget that it is literally and almost infinitely true, that as a man dies voluntarily, freely dies, takes kindly to tribulation and fiery trial, inwardly or otherwise, as the Father wills, so the heavenly treasure rises and swells in his earthly vessel. * * *

He, whoever he be, who pants not after Love and Perfection, though he preach like an Angel, and “pray” never so long and loud, is a generater of corruption.

Christ must be all, and that in all, really, potentially ; or He is made a cover for sin and corruption in one way or another. If a man or woman, whoever they be, and whatever their gifts, have not a power over all sin ; or, lacking this, are not seeking it—*or rather Him with whom it is*—as men seek silver or gold, they are fomenters of corruption in the world, no matter what they say to the contrary ; and will be by all truly enlightened men thought of, and felt towards, as such. This is not, “Stand by : I am holier than thou.” No : but simply, Christ is made of God, by the Holy Ghost, present Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption ; not by imputation only, nor for past sins only, but as a present Living, Spiritual, Divine, Power in the heart, saving from all corruption—giving power, as long as abode in, to walk without condemnation, and as He also walked ; without pride, without fear, without self-exaltation, but on the contrary, in the very heart of hearts, rather as an infant, drawing supplies, life, light, and strength, from the heart and Love of God alone. Amen.

55.

FIGHTERS AGAINST GOD.

1871.

* * * When they contend for "the Faith," it is something of their own, or stolen from others, and belonging to *their* religion (not from God, or that which is of Him by Christ Jesus in them), that they contend for: so a shadow, not the substance; words, not Life; flesh, not spirit; earthly, not heavenly; human, not DIVINE.

This—the Divine—is lost, or never has been found: and, where met with in others, is fought against, as enthusiasm, mysticism, or some other heresy, or that which leads thereto. To such the Kingdom is a burdensome stone, because they know not the meaning of those Scriptures—He that loveth father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter, houses or lands, silver or gold, honour or fame, or any other creature, more than Me, is *not worthy of me*: and he that taketh not up his cross daily cannot be my disciple. Or they know it only by an interpretation after the flesh; and resting on this, they cannot attain to the "resurrection of the dead," the stature of a man in Christ, or declare His generation, having received a new name.

56.

TO A RELIGIOUS WRITER.

AH, you are over head and ears in thick darkness, a blind leader of the blind; and tell lies, not knowing that you are doing so.

"None," you say, "will be condemned who take the Scriptures as the rule of their life, and the source of their

knowledge." Yes, hundreds and thousands of blasphemous Socinians and sentimental Universalists will.

The Scriptures were not given to *us* for either of these purposes. The sons of God are led by His Spirit. All their springs of wisdom, joy, and knowledge, are in God. The Scriptures testify of Christ, and point to Him: but they are not the Life, nor the Source of it; neither can they give it.

You say, "I believe it is because men have not studied them aright, that the erroneous views respecting God have been entertained."

Thou blind Pharisee: the Scriptures cannot be understood by study at all. They must be known by, in, and through, the Spirit which gave them forth.

"I am one of those who like to know the *grounds* of my belief, and must therefore examine for myself."

There is only one true ground of all right faith, that is, the Spirit, light, and grace of God in the heart: but this does not come by "examination," or by "study."

Do look well where you are going, and what spirit you are of. You can't write three sides of note paper without filling them with spiritual lies. If a man thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing.

No wise man writes tracts to illuminate others, who is still praying that his eyes may be opened.

God opened Paul's eyes, and then sent him to open other people's. You confess that you are blind; and truly so. By what authority do you go about in God's world, as an opener of the eyes of the blind? Burn your tracts: mind your business: and ask God's forgiveness: or, as sure as you are a living man, the fiery indignation of the Blessed One will overtake you, and you will be sent to hell for playing the fool.

57.

TRIBULATION AND ITS FRUIT.

15. 1. 72.

THERE is one thing upon my mind about Wilkinson [the Saints' Travel], which I ought to have named to you two or three weeks ago; but passing over it without being very distinct, I have—to keep all clear—to refer to it again.

It is that there is a danger of Wilkinson's putting the thing in so fascinating a light, and in such a way, as to lead a truly earnest soul to want to step into the "Rest" in his own will and time, rather than with patience to bear the fire and tribulation, which *it may please* the Great Master to bring the traveller through. I would never counsel lukewarmness, or half-heartedness, in pressing into the Kingdom, because I feel assured that such a course wins not the full glory, possible to be met with while in the body. On the other hand, humble and patient submission, under all the turnings of the Divine Hand, gives double value to earnest sincerity. Why these different states of mind should be necessarily passed through, to the reception of that which is of itself a gift of free grace and favour, can in some measure be seen by you, as well as myself; but can be known perfectly to the Most Blessed God alone.

However, I should not scruple to affirm, with humility and certainty, that in the great majority of cases, if not in every one, the measure of anxious desire, and solid constant earnestness after God, will bear a near proportion to the richness of the harvest, when the reaping time really sets in.

It is therefore no sign of things going on badly because the fire burns hotly, and matters *seem* to progress slowly. This has always been the way of Divine Goodness with

the most favoured of men. You will find hardly any exception to this rule amongst the ancient worthies, who have been called by the Master to cut a notch upon the stick of time, or experience a more than ordinary degree of His favour and love. I know what a master you are at quoting Scripture, when precedents are needed; so will leave this in your hands. One thing however may be named—that is, that in His dealings with such, *the wants of the surrounding multitudes* of His professed followers enter deeply into the matter. No man liveth unto himself, if he truly lives to God.

58.

DAILY SINNING.

18. 1. 72.

THE first Adam fell; Christ, the second Adam, fell not. He neither did sin, nor was guile found in His mouth.

If we be truly members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, it must follow that the Life and Power in Him will save us from daily sinning.

Please think of this, which will, if you look right into it, clearly show the difference between the dispensation of *probation*, and that of *restoration*; and justify a saint in refusing to bear a testimony embodying the proposition—I live without sin: while at the same time, *on fitting occasions*, he may have liberty to say—by Christ I am kept from sin.

59.

SIN HOW OVERCOME.

To the same.

25. 1. 72.

SIN is not overcome by any strong resolutions or power, having their root in the will of man only. The Power that overcomes is from Christ, the Wisdom of God and Power of God, as He is brought forth in us by the Holy Ghost. No study of Scripture, or reading of books, will bring the Power. It comes through the daily cross, patiently, lovingly, and constantly taken up.

Knowledge without this ends in vanity.

Not the, or a, cross of our own making ; but simply what is made known to the conscience by the Holy Ghost, little or big.

If you take up a cross most painful, not imposed by the Spirit, no good, but evil, comes from it. On the other hand, take up that which is pointed out to you, however little or insignificant it may appear, and the smile and comfort of the Spirit will follow.

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Faith unites the soul to Christ. Christ, as He saves the soul, is a Quickening Spirit, and the God of Power.

60.

CHRIST OUTWARDLY, AND CHRIST WITHIN.

30. 1. 72.

I DESIRE on your behalf that you may be taught by the Spirit to discern between what is of the soul, and what is of the Spirit: and also the difference between the dispensation of Christ outwardly, and Christ inwardly. When you come, by the Spirit, to a clear sense of Christ within you, and know His voice from that of a stranger, you will then feel, as it were intuitively, what is from the flesh, and what is from the Spirit.

In this is wrapped up the mystery of CHRIST, of godliness—the ministration of the Spirit, under the dispensation of which we live. God in Him; God in us. The Spirit in Him; the Spirit in us. The Life in Him; the Life in us.

Living, abiding, loving, acting, walking, from this—only this—is the true knowledge of God and eternal Life.

A finely balanced mind may draw from the Scriptures beautiful sentiments, and “heavenly” meditations, which may bring tears, and excite emotions of religious awe and delight—and these of all kinds: yet this is not, or may not be, the fire of God, the holy incense, which alone His soul loveth—the voice of His only and well-beloved Son.

Look well to this point. When you have this, you have all; for all is wrapped up in it.

If you *abide in the measure of God imparted*, not speaking or acting below, above, or beyond it, you will soon come into an experience, which will cause the shadows to fly away, and the True Light to shine.

This key will unlock all Scriptures and Apostolic expressions, so far as it is God’s will that we should know them.

It is not the knowledge of this alone (which may be attained through the intellect and natural reason) but its

possession, or rather its possessing us, which avails. A LITTLE ONE in this is more than many mighty ones in Scripture, reason, doctrine, outward works, and religion—just as our Saviour in the child Jesus was more than the Scribes, Pharisees, and Doctors with whom He reasoned.

In love,

61.

CHRIST SAVES FROM SIN.

2. 2. 72.

“**S**EEING” [you say] “that I have been saved, not to sin, but to be one with Christ in His holy life.”

Do look at this to its root. In so far as a man is saved, he sins not: when he sins, for the time being he goes out of Christ, his salvation, and has to enter again by repentance and faith. Salvation from sin comes not from correct walking, radically and principally, but from divine union; which divine union increases in proportion to faith. Divine union with Christ will always bring correct walking, and to that state in which the believer can say—I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

The element which you introduce into the subject, vitiates the question, and is sufficient of itself to keep you sinning all your days.

Here is the charter of our salvation in a few words—He that believeth shall be saved. According to your faith it shall be done unto you. He will give the Spirit to those that ask Him.

Now to look to one side of these axioms, and begin to criticise Apostles and other men, is the very life’s blood of

hypocrisy and unbelief. God has said these things: they are just the things that the very God would say, according to His witness within us. What have I then to do with Jonah being snaggy and short-tempered; or an Apostle, under the peculiar temptation of out-going Judaism and in-coming Christianity, becoming rather confused in his mind? Are any or all of these things put together to compare for a moment with the plain and open declarations, which the Witness for God in your own mind will at once endorse as the right thing? Not at all.

It is a certainty with me that there be different members of Christ's body on the earth, now living, who have lived for years together with Christ in heavenly places, without losing the light of God's countenance for a moment, either night or day.

But if there were not one such to be found or heard of, it would not, or ought not to, influence the mind of a true seeker; who would look for this as confidently as he would believe that God is holy, and that he that is born of Him, and abideth in Christ, sinneth not.

In love,

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This letter *is not* written in my own will: so you will do well to ponder it in the Light of God.

62.

RELIGIOUS "PRUDENCE."

3. 2. 72.

* * * Don't you see, my brother—well, *weak* brother, if it must be so—that all the lettings out of the Divine Life and Power, that we almost ever heard of, are

consequent upon treading under foot what is called prudence. Stephen, in running through the history of the Fathers, trotted on very prudently, till he came to the latter part of his story; and then, having lost his prudence, he became personal, calling his hearers stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, resisters of the Holy Ghost, sons of those who shed the blood of the prophets, and themselves murderers of the Holy One, and breakers of the Law. Well, what followed on this "intemperate" speech? They were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their teeth. What about the intemperate man? Why, he was so filled with the Holy Ghost, that he went out of one principle into another, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Surely he might have kept this to himself. Not he: out it came, and with it an excuse for his death.

Now if Stephen had so tempered his zeal, just at the last, as to have a little more coolly stated the facts, he might not have pushed matters so hard as to have seen into heaven; and might thus have saved his own life, and kept his murderers from shedding innocent blood. But in not doing so, he did well; and took a swift passage to a place of honour and renown, which, if he had been a little more prudent, might have been reserved for another man.

It is just this prudence which spoils all. It keeps people from giving up all to God; it keeps the battle from becoming hot: so neither God, the most blessed God, nor even the Devil, think it worth while, speaking after the manner of men, to put themselves out of the way. When the Devil comes out with malice and lies against God's true lovers, then He, the blessed God, lays on His hand a little; and we see things that are worth seeing and feeling. But no: your prudent men so speak of God's enemies, so fence their own speech and statement of Truth, so take away all causes of offence, and opportunities of being misunderstood, that flesh and spirit are made one—the

difference between Jew in talk and Jew in very deed is unknown.

Thank GOD, I know one man who sees through this stuff, and has determined to fight against it: and that determination is renewed at this day. In this he believes that he will become the *most prudent of men*.

63.

ONENESS WITH GOD.

22. 2. 72.

* * This is not a war of talents against talents; reasons against reasons; man against man. It is the war of God against the Devil. Now, the blessed God can see the Devil in a passage of Scripture, a "holy" "prayer," an orthodox statement, as well as in drunkenness, riotous living, and blasphemy: and He is no more reconciled to him in the one position than in the other. The Devil can stand "fire and brimstone," rhetoric and logic, introduction—firstly—secondly—lastly—and peroration—of any quality. He can stand moral teaching, legal teaching, scriptural teaching, Gospel teaching, or any other teaching from a soulish bottom. In short, he can stand anything or everything that has not the most blessed God, and His Spirit, in it, as its principal and ruling element.

Now God is known, on earth, only in loving hearts; that is, hearts on fire by the Holy Ghost. These only are the place of His rest, and carry Him about with them—in them—and they in Him. And wherever they go, the Devil and his angels give them a wide berth. The holy sweetness of God, as Love, living in them, is tenfold more fatal to him than anything beside on earth. * *

This is a deep subject: but you will see it at once. Now, when God in Christ says of anyone, he is a viper; there is God in the word. It is round, full, sweet, holy, good, loving, and kind; and will stand for ever.

When man only says of another that he is a viper, though it be true, yet it being man's word only, it is one-sided, empty, sour, not holy, not good, not loving, not kind.

It is, in a sense, true; but it is not from the God of Truth. So He is not in it, or joined to it: and will not go with it.

Now this is what is meant, when I say that we must trust more to God's love and power than to strong reasons.

Love, Love, Love: all is easy to Love. GOD IS LOVE.

Love is measured by *quality*, not quantity. One perfect Lover altogether outweighs many millions of imperfect ones. A million pounds of tainted fish are of little value for the table of a king.

When a man writes under a divine covering, though in the cross to his own will and understanding, it is sure to come out well, and will stand for ever.

Oh, the mystery, sweetness, and glory, of being one with God. Amen.

64.

TRUE AND FALSE FAITH.

27. 2. 72.

“FOR after all,” [you say] “if it be true that with *all their hearts* they believe, what more does any one, by God's grace, unto victory over the world?”

That faith which gives victory over the world is something more than a man may possess who says that he

believes with all his heart. Hundreds of the Brethren and others say the last, but are as far as Hell from Heaven from the first.

The belief of facts, truths, doctrines, is within the power of man's will ; but that faith which overcomes the world is a fruit of the Spirit—is the gift of God.

You put it down in a way of doing and securing what is desired, just as though so much " faith " must of necessity bring so much of God : whereas, in fact, it is otherwise ; so much of God—of Christ—brings so much faith that overcomes.

It is admitted, at once, that this belief, and natural inclination of the will to receive gospel truth, may precede, and in many cases does precede, the faith which is of the operation of God : but it is not necessarily it ; neither is it absolutely necessary to it. He that does as He wills sometimes gives those whose minds are affected in a contrary direction, such a turn over by His powerful hand, in a way of spiritual manifestations, with or without afflictive dispensation, as to send an arrow right through the heart of their unbelief, and at the same time leave such a spiritual sense of things as lies at the root of true faith.

He that supposes that he can take heavenly treasure, at will, by simply believing this, that, or the other, knows nothing as yet as he ought to know. If there be sincerity in this, it is well, so far as the sincerity reaches : but the value of the sincerity is lessened in proportion to this false and presumptuous faith, so-called.

Christ is our Salvation. Absolutely, and really, we are no farther saved than we partake of Him.

One pencil ray of His light and heat brings its corresponding effect, though it may be small, and not of much account, compared with the full blaze of the midday sun. But when from Him, it is the harbinger of perfect day, if abode in, and lived by.

How is it that there is so much confusion, deceit, and lies, in this matter ? Simply thus. When men are in soul-

trouble, and get a little relief from a right source, they are led by false teaching to take hold of “dispensational truth,” “scriptural truth,” “imputation,” “perfection in Christ,” and a thousand other gilded lies, as understood carnally, in the place of abiding, in meekness and humility, in that measure of the true light imparted, till it shall please the Master to uncover His face more and more; or till that light which He has given shall grow brighter and brighter. So, leaving the true light; and by Scripture, reason, and false teaching, generating a false one; they rise into a false faith, a false Christ, a false light, a false heat, a false life. And not finding these spurious nostrums to bring the health, vigour, and strength, which Christ, the true bread and water of life, yields to those who are nourished thereby; the true, divine, heavenly, Life is ignored, because unknown, and the “Gospel of God” is turned into confusion, deceit, and lies—made a covering for sin, instead of Salvation from it: leaving man soulish and in the flesh, in the place of divine and in the Spirit.

In love,

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65.

DIVINE ELDERSHIP.

GOD DISPLACED BY THE SCRIPTURES.

I. 4. 72.

“**I**F I were—or say, if you were—in the position of one who had stately a number of Christian members to shepherd, would you never expound the Scriptures,” etc., etc. ?

This is a position impossible for — . — — . to come to: all his efforts, under God, are, and have been for years, to turn people from everything but God—to bring them so

into Christ, that they shall not need expositions or stated shepherding; but coming up into a state of brotherhood in God, should meet as friends and equals in the Faith—the Life.

Of course, in this case there would be an Eldership in God, which would, in an undefinable way, give precedence to those whose gifts and graces were most ample, and whose Spirits were most divine: but this might not lead to—probably rather from—expositions of the Scriptures. To meet together, now and 'again, and break heavenly bread one to another, would be enough.

As God is really known and felt, there is less and less a disposition to enter into disputes and arguments on those things which will, in due time, clear up themselves, and which have no immediate relation to a life in God.

There is one thing which you often name, and never, it may be said, without bringing to the mind a sense that you place too much confidence in the proposition. The following extract from one of your letters will give you its import as near as is necessary:—"But when it comes to a question of what the Apostles did write and say, I shall stick to a tense, or preposition, as found in the Greek," etc., etc.

Now, what presents itself to the mind, when you give out these thoroughly straightforward, intelligible, and English, expressions of your sentiments is this. Alas! alas! for that, when we consider the manipulations, etc., etc., to which the MSS. have been subject: and also that that jargon begun by "divines," so-called, of the John Owen School, about the extraordinary Providence over the Scriptures, so that they might be kept pure, is altogether hypothetical, and based upon a supposition that the Scriptures are the chief means and guide to Salvation; and that upon their correctness we are to depend for guidance, and purity of life. I say, when the folly and falsehood of all this, as understood by such writers, is considered, and that the Scriptures were made by these, have been and are being made, the great Idol, and Supplanter of God, the

blessed God, Christ, and the Spirit, there are more than doubts in my mind about anything really good coming from the most perfect and complete critical use made of the materials left to the world, which are applicable in any way to this subject. They that have the Life of the Scriptures have all. The very fact that this Supernatural Life is, and has been from the beginning, hidden from those who have had most to do with the Scriptures, gives one an inward assurance that a many turns of different expressions, which were of Apostolic origin, had been altogether misunderstood and misconstrued long before the existence of the Texts of Scripture, which have come down to us in the present Greek copies, as of the highest name and repute.

If Christ in the flesh could not impart the Life, or teach the truth, as the blessed God has determined that it shall be taught by the Spirit, what folly or madness it is to suppose that any other man or book can do more than He.

And what gratuitous hypocrisy, for men who are out of the Life and Power of God, to assert that God has been bound in His providence to keep perfect that which they, in their darkness and anti-christian perversity, have set up to rule and guide in His place.

Not knowing God Himself, as the oracle of His people, they have impudently (led captive by the prince of darkness) endeavoured to supplant Him from that His rightful position; and to conjure themselves into His place, by giving out, as His present mind, what they say that He said by the Apostles, and which their lying tongues have dared to declare is to serve to the end of the world.

The plain English of all which is—the Blessed God spoke in and through His children in the Apostolic age; but now they are all born deaf and dumb, so can neither hear Him, nor speak of Him; and being idiots also, cannot feel Him in their hearts in an intelligible manner.

O! ye drunken, lying, fatted, Swine. This is a nice pass to bring things to. To shut the Most Blessed out of

the world, and raise yourselves to the position of "learned pigs," who exhibit for money, and grunt out, now and again, from the Hebrew or Greek, some scrap of hidden wisdom, with which your dupes are led to walk off, as though they had got some hidden charm against the world, the flesh, and the Devil—but lo! they find that all you give, or say, or do, leaves them, as yourselves, a prey to the Enemy: ignorant of God Present: without power over sin: always learning, but never coming to a knowledge of the Truth.

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66.

GOOD BOOKS, FAITH, ETC.

29. 4. 72.

THE danger of "good books," is that, in earnest souls, *if not carefully dealt with*, they raise up a "good feeling," and give a tincture, which are not of God immediately and directly. Who cares to be reading about his lover, if he may have her by his side? We are married to Christ in Spirit. And so it is with God. *He will make you feel it*, if you are faithful in love. Every flower has its own beauty, scent, and bloom.

Yes: Wm. Law says some "excellent things," though he seemed ignorant of the fact that there is a work which is sometimes accomplished in a comparatively short time, and which brings the believer into a state of spiritual power, that he thought was to be obtained only by special doings of a legal, or rather Popish, character.

So, however, it was in primitive Christianity, and so it sometimes happens now, through faith: though this happy restoration into the state of Adam before the fall is soon lost again, by those who are thus favoured being led,

through false teaching, to doing something in a way of purchasing the divine favour, or a continuance thereof, (though He has already received them into liberty and power) instead of simply abiding in Christ, and growing with or in Him to the stature of a man.

In this day of confusion, however, there is nothing that will do, but simply taking what is given, in grace or favour, of the Life and Power, irrespective of its measure or peculiar character; and therein abiding under the tryings, tribulations, and provings, which will always be the portion, more or less, of those who are engaged in the holy war of God.

The experience of no two new men will be alike as to particulars; though there are general principles which, as they are understood and lived out, in the Spirit of God, make the family and spirit to be one, even in outward things.

Just in proportion as man is not—does not—wills not—cares not—loves not—except in and for God; in the same proportion, and much more abundantly, will God, sooner or later, appear *in him*—to him—and *become one with him* in a perfectly satisfactory manner and degree.

There will not, or may not, be a corresponding outward show and dignity, to be seen by every eye; but there will be an internal quietness, and divine beauty, unutterable; and, as it grows more and more, immovable.

There needs no sharp practice, or cleverness, or great depth, or mighty intellect to accomplish this. It follows as certainly as the tree grows, and, in the order of nature, fruit appears, by simply abiding in Christ in all conditions, with patience; *following* the Spirit; and being obedient to what is made known *in the Cross*.

Be of good courage.

In love,

—, —, —.

67.

“ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.”

11. 5. 72.

* * * * *

I see you have taken hold of the view which he gives of “eternal punishment.”

This makes it binding upon me to say a word or two on that subject, which has been looked into pretty deeply in times past, *and not with an evil eye.*

I have invariably found that, in proportion as men are *really living in God*, they avoid questioning the plain Scriptural teaching on this subject.

At the first blush of things, when the mind is relieved from the trammels of blind dogmatic teaching, there is a tendency to suppose that something will be gained for God by objections being offered to the generally received impressions. This however is a mistake. Everything which has *man* only for its bottom, however clear and mighty his intellect, or well-meaning his heart, will always be found to be sand in the long run.

So the rule is—what is not *known in God* SOLIDLY should not be touched; especially when it comes into opposition to Scripture teaching, though only in appearance.

68.

MOLINOS. THE DIVINE LIFE.

14. 5. 72.

FIRST, about Molinos (dates given somewhere about the truth by memory): I need hardly name to you that he was a Roman C——c of good ability; by birth, if I remember right, a Spaniard, and of great repute as a Priest at Rome or Venice about 1670—on friendly terms with Cardinals, if not the Pope; and had an extensive correspondence, for that time, with people scattered here and there, on the Inner Life. His views were principally based on those of the Mystics of the Romish Church, who make pure love to God the principal object of their aim.

Being a man of experience, as well as talents, he had a way of bringing well educated people quickly into the possession of that degree of mystical “prayer,” called the “prayer of quiet;” and had a vast quantity of followers, for a single man, in Rome, Venice, and other places.

About 1676 he wrote his “Spiritual Guide,” which brought him into collision with the “*Authorities*” of the Church—the Jesuits, or others of the monks, observing that, as his system came into force upon the consciences of the people, a great mass of the mummeries, so profitable to “Mother Church,” were dropped, as of little account. Of course, this soon opened the way for some of the Italian Doctors to draw forth from his little books propositions, which they declared to be erroneous, if not heretical.

Then that mighty engine, which has now lost most of its force, called him to answer for himself, at its tribunal. He was made of material which they could not mould into their form, nor subject to their wills: so was sent to prison—to be kept out of mischief, as they would say; but really to suffer for the truth, as most people then and since, whose eyes have been anointed with heavenly eye-salve, do most firmly believe.

There he remained till his *change came*: faithful, I believe, to the last.

There was a translation of the “Spiritual Guide” from the Italian into English about 1688. About 1700 the Quakers translated it; and for many years it was one of their stock books.

About 1760 there was a worthy man, of the “better class” in London, called Cornelius Cayley, who, by divine favour, got a dip below the surface of things; and when raised again, began to look around him a little. He printed a few strange books, bearing upon a higher view of things than was then common: and amongst the rest, “Molinos’ Spiritual Guide.” This, I believe, was done in Leeds.

Since then there have been abridgments, and perhaps faithful reprints; which will doubtless—one or the other of them—be forthcoming at the right time.

I need hardly say anything to you about these things: you won’t rest till you *see for yourself*. I can, nevertheless, tell you beforehand what will come to pass, if you prove a faithful Lover.

You will have to give them all up without exception, and come under the Divine Hand immediately, that He may make you what He wants you to be; and, above all, fill you with His Spirit—His Love.

You won’t get this in proportion as you become well-read, or knowing, on all the subjects, and different views, bearing upon the matter, which have been put forth by this, that, or the other person: but just in proportion as you are faithful to the manifestations of His Love to yourself.

Molinos, for instance, will be very grateful to your particular mould and tincture. Well-balanced, grave, correct, and inclined by moral bias to help forward the work of beautifying God’s temple—he is sure to set you a-doing some excellent things, so that you may become like Him who spake, as never man spake.

But this is a great mistake. One grand view of the Truth is worth a thousand of these things, ten times told,

The Christhood of Christ is God: not by anything that can be put into words or propositions, but simply by a unity and oneness of nature, imparted by a perpetual generation, or outbeaming of the Father's glory in and through Him—and this in a manner suitable to the office, work, and position, which it pleased His divine Majesty that Christ Jesus should occupy, as Lord and Head of all things.

You, as a member of His body, have a position to fill, marked out in the divine counsels. Your business is so to press into God, through Christ, by a simple act of faith, night and day, as to be let through any fleshly principle, which may hold you captive, and hinder you from enjoying the full force of that divine life and power, which is necessary to a **ONENESS OF SPIRIT** with God and Christ.

Now, this is something which will be imparted in a way of Baptisms of the Holy Ghost, or lettings into God by the Spirit; and which you must look for as a matter of pure grace and favour, not as something which you will bring forth by the exercise of splendid or unsplendid virtues—though, while waiting for it, you will be called by the Spirit to walk as a wise man, not as a fool: yet this, even, not as though by this wisdom you would win favour of Him, who is infinitely Princely and glorious in all His doings and givings to His sincere-hearted followers and children.

One Baptism of the Holy Ghost is infinitely superior to twenty years of “godly living,” as an improver and new-creator of man. It is the Life that is wanted: not saintly doings and sayings, by which to wheedle into, or obtain, the divine grace or favour.

This divine Life comes by and through faith, when God wills, and how He wills, as most suitable to His eternal purposes, and to that vastness of Love, which He has in store for those who, with a faithful and loving heart, *seek*, **HOLD ON TO**, and **TRUST** in Him

There—in the wisdom of God, a few words have been said, which, if you are called to be a true Lover, may open

your eyes wider than any book that you will get hold of these next twenty years. And though you live and strive till the age of Methuselah, were you spared as long, you will have to come to what is here marked out for you at last.

In the mean time hold this, and all other truth, in meekness, *patience*, and cross-bearing charity.

In true love,

— . — . — .

Mind that you don't cast pearls before swine, or give what is holy to dogs: or they will repay you for it in a strange way.

69.

HEAVENLY TREASURE NOT OFTEN THE LOT OF THE RICH.

20. 6. 72.

To the Author of "—————,"

ALLOW a plain man to say a few words in love, which may be of service to you, with the divine blessing, during the remainder of your sojourn upon earth.

Think it not strange that the most High hath chosen the foolish and weak things of the earth to confound the wise and mighty. When looked into, the reasonableness of this appears at once.

He is ignorant indeed who knows not that power and riches have a tendency to beget in the heart of their possessor independence and self-will, which is impatient of control, and as naturally inclines to rule as the sparks fly upwards.

If it were possible even that divine grace and love could dwell in a good degree with this disposition of heart and mind, the consequence would be that men would become more and more independent, and spiritually wicked, under the influence of it; the grace of God enabling them to hold their own self-will and independence against all comers; since heavenly wisdom, wherever it dwells, gives a divine power that is fatal to the pretensions of all opponents. If this then were possessed by those whose earthly status fitted them to domineer over their fellow creatures, who would be able to stand? Such men would be a compound worse than the earth ever saw—Angel above, and Devil below: common humanity would not be able to stand, except in the position of cringing slaves. But God, the blessed God, who is wise in counsel, and loving towards the work of His hands, has put His veto upon this. So the rule is, that heavenly wisdom, for the most part, dwells in humbled and poor hearts; and rich “believers” are as scant of divine treasure, generally, as their poorer brethen are of earthly wisdom, goods, learning and polish.

Now, my brother, permit one who has eyes to see, and who is not ignorant of your ability, to tell you the truth in this matter. There is only one way to God for all men, high or low, rich or poor. That way was finely drawn by Him who spoke as never man spake. The head down, beating upon the breast, and crying from the very bottom of the heart, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” is a spiritual facsimile of every man of God, in his heart of hearts, to the end of time. Not that the immediate dejection and misery, connected with the first sense of this, is not removed from the saints: it is; but there remains, under all the joys given, and blessings imparted, a child-like meekness and tenderness Godwards, which makes the exercise of the Publican, in essence, a holy joy of heart at any time.

I see by your “———” that your holiness and humility yet float in your head—that you are a kind of spiritual Dundreary, a sort of religious exquisite, whose delicacy of mind and taste leads him at once to see through anything mean and vulgar, and whose abilities enable him with little trouble to hold his own—yea, more than his own—superciliously, against all comers.

Permit me to tell you that this will not do. You must become a fool, that Christ, the wisdom of God, may dwell in you : poor, that He may make you rich : nothing, that in Him you may find all things : a hater of yourself, that by the Divine Spirit you may become a *lover*—a true lover—of God.

* * In a word, my brother, to live, burn your books, and throw overboard your self-righteousness, and that “beautiful” religion, wherewith you think to overreach the Almighty God, through the blood of His Son : and in place of all this rubbish, yea, worse than rubbish—spiritual poison—let nothing pass your lips, in a religious way, for the next month, but the Publican’s prayer ; that in the mercy of God, peradventure you may find grace and life ; unless indeed before that time He should break in upon you, and cause you, whether or not, to say, O Lord, I must and will praise Thee : for although Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away ; and, wretch that I am, or was, Thou comfortest me.

There is little time left : not more than a span.

In true love,

— . — . — .

By “true Lover” is meant one who as naturally and easily loves God above all creatures and things, and in all conditions, as he breathes : which Love—the Love of the Spirit—grows brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

70.

THE CONDITION OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.
 HOW THOSE ONCE TOUCHED BY THE SPIRIT
 MOSTLY TURN AGAIN TO THE FLESH.

12. 7. 72.

* * Now these "religious" people, whom you speak of as "humble Christians," are bottomed upon themselves, their religion, and the Scriptures. At some time of their religious experience, they may have been made sensible of some little manifestation of divine love; and they make that, or the remembrance of it, the life of the system which they have been taught by others, or have themselves elicited from "*the word*." The result is that, after ten or a dozen years of this kind of thing, they are thorough self-righteous bigots, whose sole humility consists in calling themselves poor sinners, (which they really are) speaking against the flesh, and magnifying in words the great love of God to them, in giving them a "standing in Christ amongst the saints," though in themselves there is no real growth in Light, Life, or Power. In truth, they are not saints at all, if by that term are meant those who walk well-pleasing to God, being led by His Spirit.

You call these good men: but to me no man is good except in so far as he is united to God, really and truly, in the Love of the Spirit; and is kept from evil in religion by the in-dwelling Comforter in his heart. Long faces, "dear brothers," "bless the Lord," "breaking bread," making very grave and measured "prayers," and walking with all seeming gravity and solidity, go for little or nothing, where there is *darkness of mind*, want of love to God, and an absence of the Holy Ghost.

There are numbers of Jews in the world, Mohammedans in Turkey, and Hindoos in India, who in this line of things are without fault: nevertheless, with our irritable

“brothers,” they are making a religion for God; they have not Him for their religion. No, my brother; if there be any sign of truth in the testimony which the most Blessed has given me to bear, this is one part of it—that it ruffles the hypocrisy of these self-made Saints.

The very sound of their voices, and form of their gestures, bespeak to the opened eye a gravity and sanctity, which have their root *principally in man*—which do not spring from the present indwelling Spirit and Life of God.

There is a holy indignation raised in the mind of a true lover of God by that which is contrary to the Truth: but this, springing from the Spirit of God in the heart, does not show itself in temper, but brings forth strong reasons, which no man can gainsay, for its justification: and strikes out with power against Satan and false prophets, in the wisdom, not of man, but of God; reaching to the Witness for God in every unprejudiced mind. But this “irritability” and self-confidence are of Satan and the flesh, and mostly unreasonable.

You quote my statement that “their moral and religious doings come *mostly* from a first-birth source”: and add “but they would not be first-birth sinners, if their religion proceeded *at all—in any degree*—from a divine source.”

This follows not. Behold I stand at the door and knock. The Spirit of God, through Christ, strives with the children of men, in all states; and brings an influence over their minds, which cannot be measured, or strictly defined. True, there are the conditions of a servant and a son sometimes spoken of, and there is a foundation for them in the Truth: but the exact point where a sinner becomes a servant, or where a servant passes into the adoption and enjoyment of the Son, may in many cases be known to the blessed God alone. There are well marked “conversions” which seem to give a ground for what you say; but it will not do to confine spiritual things within the limits of earthly speech and figures, or definite rules or doctrines.

Lydia's heart, and many others, have been gradually opened by the Lord ; and as they continued faithful to the measure of grace imparted, some unexpected—or it may be, much expected—day, the sweet, holy, irresistible, power of the Spirit has enabled them to realise the Love and Faith of the Son in continuous Life and Power. But hundreds, yea thousands, in the present day of profession, after coming under the convincing influence of Christ at the door, or the Spirit's judgments, in some degree, in the heart ; adding thereto the doctrines and practices of some "ism," change their mode of life, and becoming "religious men," preach, pray, and sing ; but remain entangled, and continuous transgressors after all : so, as to the *Root of the matter*, are *first-birth sinners*, though much changed in life and practice.

Now to say that these—or rather, their religion—did never spring from a divine source "at all, in any degree," is not the truth, therefore not good, and arises from being misled by figures of speech, not the substance of things : dogmas and doctrines—sharp definitions—not Life, Light, and Power.

A man is, in reality, no further a Son of God, than he is led by the Spirit of God. God has only One well-beloved : we are beloved, as we are of and in Him—not by reckoning and imputation only, nor by what was in days gone by, nor by beliefs which are within the compass of man's own will ; but by a real Divine Union, and Oneness of Life and Spirit, now, this moment, and continuously.

Many are called : few are chosen. Few will abide judgment, till it is brought forth unto victory ; so remain, *however religious*, under their natural spirit, to the end of their days.

"Is it good to single out the Brethren, or any sect ? I believe that they are open to all you say ; *but many good men amongst them are utterly unable to see this.*"

My Brother, here you in measure err—"good men amongst them utterly unable to see," etc., etc. There is

none good but One, that is God. As men are made one, by Christ, with Him, they become good also; *the true light shines*, and they know all things necessary to be known. To say that a man is good, while he walks in darkness, is not the truth, and therefore not good. Here it is that the Puritans, to the opened eye, proved their high pretensions to religion to be principally of the flesh—Popery in another form: the Papist believing himself right and safe, by his faith in the “Church” and “Sacraments”; the Protestant, by his belief of dogmas and doctrines: yet both doing things, under the pretence or cover of religion, which are contrary to the Spirit of Christ. Now, that religion, however fair to look upon, which is not a fruit, or the fruit, of the Spirit—no matter how Scriptural or orthodox, according to the letter—is, for the substance and root of it, a lie; or in other words, it is from the flesh or first birth: and though the *remembrance* of some spiritual manifestation may, in a mysterious manner, form the life of it, yet the real active, present, working power is of man.

This is one phase of the mystery of iniquity, as it now works universally, but more especially amongst “Brethren.”

“The greatest of all Antichrists.” What is said in the Tract refers to what is known up to the present time, and has no reference to what is in the womb of futurity—the *Anti-Christ* of the future.

Up to the present time history confirms the statement: for although it has been the civil powers that have shed the blood of the saints, they have done it, *led on thereto by “the Whore.”* Papists may deny this; but it is only ignorance, or something worse, that allows any of them to make this excuse.

The bloody laws, in reference to religion, were made by men full of her life and doctrine, and led by her spirit.

Even at this day, *from a spiritual point of view*, there is not a greater Antichrist than “she.” The numbers that are deluded by, or impregnated with, her false worship and spirit, are greater perhaps than you have

thought of. Wherever Christ is named—even amongst the most Protestant—the wine of her cup is, more or less, drunk continually.

Though the nations have thrown her off, yet her spirit remains uppermost, in their religious element, as yet.

In true love,

— . — . — .

71.

SCRIPTURES AND GOD.—DEATH AND LIFE.

15. 7. 72.

My Brother,

HE who is born from above, having given himself up, at the call of God, to judgment, till it has been brought forth unto victory, has an unction from the Holy One, which will teach him many things, not to be found in the Scriptures, with the same certainty that it taught those who wrote the Scriptures.

Being caught up into heaven is not necessary to being taught of God, though not to be lightly esteemed; and would be comparatively useless to that end, if it brought not to a closer union with God in Spirit. To walk in the Spirit is enough, when once a man is made one with Him—united to Him—led by Him.

The blessed God may have many things to say to the “religious world” in 1872, that are not to be found in the Epistles of the New, or the Prophecies of the Old “Testament.”

Pray tell me from the Scriptures the quality of the doings of the Methodists, Brethren, Spurgeon, Barnardo,

“The Christian,” yourself, —— and —— : where they be in spiritual life : what is the quality of their pretensions : how far they are safe guides : how much of man, and how little of God there is in them ?

The things *most important* for a man to know are not to be found in the Scriptures. They are in God, and are His gift, in and by Christ Jesus ; and were imparted to thousands before the Scriptures were written, and to those who never saw them.

To walk in the Light, as He is in the Light : to be free from corruption : to love God, the blessed God, perfectly : to be filled with the Holy Ghost : to lose all love for everything but God, and to love all other persons and things for His sake, and *in Him* only ; and to do this as easily and naturally as breathe the vital air—are things in and of God and Christ ; and no more, really, in the Scriptures, than great riches are in £1,000,000,000,000,000 17s. 4d. The Life gives Scripture, not the Scripture the Life. They who wrote the Scriptures had nothing more than the Life. He, or they, that WON'T DIE, can't *live*. Be sure there is nothing (as the rule) in all Scripture, more certain than this. Skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for HIS LIFE : Fight : Talk : *Preach* : *Pray* : *Expound* : give alms : and a thousand other religious things—but, if you please, NOT DIE. This is rather too much of a good thing !

72.

DIVINE TESTIMONY.

17. 7. 72.

* * A divine testimony is not at all strengthened by any arguments which have their root in man's wit only ; neither is it weakened by the same number against it from the same bottom.

What you have said about the Scriptures is true in one sense, and false in another. Our Lord said in substance the same thing, before much of what is Scripture was written—the whole Law and the Prophets, for substance, being summed up in two commandments; which may now, *at this day*, be reaffirmed. But this alters not the necessity of men being raised up into the same life, to give a present testimony to the truth, which all are out of, though possessing the Scriptures.

It has always been a characteristic of the hypocrites, who have the words, but not the power, that, though great sticklers for the things of God, they reject His servants, and their present message. They can reconcile their lusts and shortcomings with what is written: but do not find it so easy to put to one side a living testimony.

Nathan said to David something more than what was written in the Law. So did our Lord to the Pharisees. Though for the substance of the thing this might be denied.

73.

ADORNING BABEL.

19. 7. 72.

* * * Most people who are in earnest, in a false faith, *hate their life* because they find that it hinders them from making themselves as good as they think they ought to be. But between this hating of life, and cutting off the hand, or plucking out the eye, there is a distance which none can tell but those, who by the grace of God, have traversed it, and known something of the shifts in religious hypocrisy, which mostly are slipped into, before taking really to the cutting and plucking work—the Cross—the Sword and Fire—DEATH.

As to what you propose doing with "The Christian," ask yourself this question: Is he a friend to the true Shepherd, who, when a wolf comes in sheep's clothing, with his tail and ears inadvertently in sight, causes him to hide what might otherwise be a safeguard to the flock?

I say unto you, Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also. You have neither grace, courage, nor wisdom, as yet, to do for *these people what they require*.

The more corrected, the worse they will become. They will only graft your knowledge upon their fleshly stock. This is what you have been doing all along. You bring some of them to a stand with your arguments, but still leave the Root standing—a fleshly belief in the Propitiation of Christ, as the spring of consolation. Whereas true consolation is from God, through and in Christ, by the Spirit—is not generated by or from a consideration of Christ's passion and death; though this is reverently and thankfully held, and defended when necessary. It is this false fleshly ground of consolation that makes Ranters on all hands; enabling its possessor to ride rough-shod over the Spirit in the heart. Thus that precious blood which was shed to bruise the Serpent's head, and bring the true life into the spirit and soul, is made to fatten the viper, and raise a false spirit in the heart.

You are keeping yourself alive by thus doing, because working without due authority and power.

And Nathan said unto David, thou art the man.

In true love,

— . — . — .

74.

THE RELIGION OF THE DAY, AND UNION
WITH CHRIST.

24. 7. 72.

My Brother,

YOU were brought to my mind a day or two ago, as needing a word or two of exhortation.

Don't be led astray by the half-and-half doings in religion of this day. If once they get hold of you, there is no knowing when you will get away.

The great testimony for God at this day is Power, not Words : Life and Spirit, by divine union, through faith ; not dogmas, doctrines, and semi-civil doings, mixed up with a religious acknowledgment of God, and Christ, and the Scriptures.

“ All the World ” is for the one : not one of a thousand for the other.

If you have a call that way, hearken to it, and go after it—at any sacrifice. It will bring you into God, and to be one with Christ in a way unutterable ; and cause you to speak as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

In true love,

— . — . —

—————

75.

SCRIPTURES HOW KNOWN AND TESTIFIED TO.

25. 7. 72.

* * What can you write about the Scriptures, in the form of a divine testimony, who know no principle in yourself, above or beyond them? *That is no divine testimony to a thing, which is drawn from it by the deductions of natural reason.* It remains natural from beginning to end. As no man can truly say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; so no man can say, demonstratively, what is Scripture, but by a power in himself independent of them, and equal to the power that wrote them.

This the Father giveth to whomsoever He will. They who have this power judge all, but are judged by none. They are as the apple of His eye upon the earth.

76.

DIVINE LOVE.

2. 8. 72.

LOVE is the gift of God, and with this gift, all else is given, according to the will of God; because as Love unites to the most Blessed, and brings to a Oneness of Spirit and Life, the most perfect excellence that any member of the body of Christ is susceptible of, is wrapped up in it. We don't want, principally, to reason, but to love. But we can love truly, only as we RECEIVE THE SPIRIT; and we can receive the Spirit increasingly, only as we die to every other thing. It is all here, my brother: die to live; or if you will, die to love.

This is the key for this day. It is the Life that is wanted; not reasons and religious talk. It is to become one with God in the unity of the eternal Spirit.

This is the mystery hid from all generations, which the Apostles preached under the power of the Holy Ghost, and which cannot be preached or written under any other power or guidance whatever. You may get hold of books full of light, seemingly; but it is all of no use, unless it drives or draws more and more to that death, which is the precursor of the Resurrection, of the Love,—the unity of the Life. All living truth, or true life, comes through anguish and death.

In true love,

— . — . — .

—————

77.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

29. 8. 72.

Dear ———,

DO sink down into quietness and divine Love. This is the first and most important thing upon the earth. The stream of Life ought to flow deeper and deeper continually, so that when the Devil cometh, he findeth nothing. When this is the case, there is no more going out.

When any exercise of mind about doing this, that, or the other, is brought upon you, *don't make haste*: God is never angry at those who conscientiously try the fleece, both wet and dry, so that they may do the thing which is right. It is the Devil that drives things forward while the mind is in an unsettled state. Stand to your position, till the cloud is taken off the Tabernacle: then do what

you are bid, with meekness and humility; or you will find that you will be pushed into doing things which will take away what little strength you have.

Surely the Love of God is enough. Let the Quakers, and every other living soul, take what course they will, No. 1 ought to be growing sweeter, and stronger, in Love continually; or we are being befooled by the Devil.

You will make little out with ——. His day is passed or passing: he has gone out into strong measures before finding the true Rest. How can a man bring others to that which he knows not within himself? Don't misunderstand: he sees men as trees walking, and what is wrong; and must be prudently dealt with: but what is right—the true Rest—he neither knows, nor yet has heard of by the hearing of the ear. Take a year or two, dear ——, to become stronger in God: then you will not be so ready to fight; and when you do fight, you will not be so much weakened by the wear and tear of battle.

Everything is wrapped up in constant, perfect, Love: never think that you have got anything, till you feel night and day that you love God, and Him only, as easily as you breathe. Those who thus love Him will love His creatures in Him.

This *Love of the Spirit*—the Life of the soul—when fully possessed, is all in all. Die out of everything, through and by the Cross; and rise into everything by Faith and Love.

* * * * *

We do the most good to and for others, just in proportion as God by His Spirit is all and all in ourselves.

78.

HUMBLE SEEKERS, AND WILFUL PHARISEES.

8. 9. 72.

P.S.—The great point about the characters you describe is this—how far are they so in ignorance or wilfulness? If with the Plymouth Brethren they fight for their spiritual position as genuine Christianity, they require shot and shell. If, with the writer of the “Letter,” they are *humble seekers*, then too much forbearance and love can hardly be extended towards them. Ignorant, honest, tenderness is one thing: wise, carnal, stiff, wilfulness another. The characters most held up for reprobation in the Scriptures were religious men, therefore not without God—Cain, Balaam, Corah, and Judas.

In these matters, nothing but tenderness of mind *and the divine anointing* will do to keep right.

79.

“GOOD BOOKS.”

11. 9. 72.

YES: there is great danger connected with “good books,” especially in these days of so much wrongdoing in Spiritual things.

Nothing is easier than to be entertained pleasantly with the entrance of light, bearing upon the true thing, as it may be contemplated through the understanding: to say nothing of mistaking this entrance of light for the operation and working of the Spirit, or the growing of the New Man of the heart.

The true bread of God is the constant operation of God, in and through the Son, not on or through the understanding principally, but immediately and directly upon the heart.

Under this *Life*, influence, power, or glory, or whatever else it may be called, all treasures of wisdom, holiness, and power, compatible with the divine purpose, and the saint's capacity, do grow.

Heavy storms, gentle breezes, cold nights, and the beams of the sun, with rains and dews, in different proportions, may help to a speedier issue: but the radical generation and movement of divine life is in, of, and from, God—not, I say again, through the understanding or intellect, but into and on the Heart of the “New Creation” or New Man.

In true Love,

— . — . — .

80.

BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.

15. 9. 72.

HAVE ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? Have ye been baptized with the Holy Ghost?

To the first question it is answered—Yes. First, in a measure, when Christ was set forth before my eyes, as crucified for me. And more clearly, when the Spirit of adoption first cried in my heart—my Father. And again, fixedly, when sealed as His for ever.

To the second question—Yes, many times: sometimes with unexpected, and unutterable effects. This, however, only seldom.

In a general way, frequently: constantly for the last fifteen years, as giving peace and consolation in trial, or

renewings of peace which passeth understanding. Also as premonitory that some public service is required, as praying, preaching, etc., etc.

The first of these last visitations, though above thirty years ago, is remembered as only yesterday. The last was the last first-day evening in the ———, while hearing an old blasphemous Socinian preaching.

How do you recognize Him in the heart, continually? By a sense of God's presence there; and a constant, ever-increasing, love of Him; with an equality of mind, night and day, not materially affected, in the Will, by any circumstances whatever, though the soul, by fiery trial, sensibilities, or other persons, may be moved in some degree.

How does this operate upon you in a religious way? Simply by keeping the mind towards Him continually, and doing His will every moment, without reference to circumstances or futurity.

How in a public way, as with the Socinian last week? By waiting tremblingly for an opportunity, and then interrupting him in his discourse; contending for the truth, till he was put to flight; and speaking with liberty and power till the roughs were made as quiet as Lambs: when the clever ones were told that the most difficult question they could put would be answered, if asked in a reasonable spirit: after which returned home full of heavenly joy.

Can one baptize another with the Holy Ghost? Not in his own will: but when called by, and preaching in, the Holy Ghost, this effect follows, in the will of God.

How do you know this? By experience.

81.

BAPTISMS BY FIRE.

28. 9. 72.

THERE is one thing which is on my mind to name to you, on the subject of being baptized with the Holy Ghost; which, as it is not so pleasant as is generally supposed, ought not to be omitted.

The operations of the Holy Ghost are spoken of as a baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. Now, this is equal to love and severity. The general renewings of the Holy Ghost are in love, sensible and sweet, either as love, or as unutterable peace. The baptism of fire is when the operation takes another line of working, and brings upon the soul such a weight of suffering and torment, as is comparable only to fire.

When a follower of God, as a loving bride, presses near to Him in Spirit, and with ardent and unutterable longings breathes for closer and closer union, it will in most cases happen that, before the love-union is made stronger and closer, there may be hours, or days, or sometimes weeks, (not often weeks) of anguish. Now, if you should meet with a fiery trial of this kind, think it not strange. These baptisms of fire are usually as numerous as those of Love —of the Holy Ghost; as indeed they also are of Him, only as a purifier by fire.

82.

THE SOURCE OF TRUE TESTIMONY.

9. 11. 72.

WHEN those remarks were made on a copy of “————,” sent by a friend of yours, it was not known that you had sent one to me.

I have looked it over once or twice since, and beg of you, in the tender bowels of God's Love, to mind how you write on these matters. If you have received the power of God in Christ to salvation from sin, write from that power, and within the limits of your experience of it, not going beyond your measure in Christ; or you will involve yourself, and the measure of the truth which you have received, in perplexity and darkness, and be led into contentions about questions, and interpretations, which will not profit the outsiders, and will be injurious to your own soul.

No man, walking in the light, can read your Tract without pleasure and pain: pleasure, because of the plain truths so boldly put; pain, because of the sharp-edged definitions and wire-drawn sentiments expressed.

You write as though the Kingdom was to be entered only by an ingeniously made key of faith, so exact in the wards that, if wanting in a single point, the door will forever remain shut. Nothing can be more erroneous, and—what is worse—more dangerous.

The only thing on man's part, necessary to enter the Kingdom, is a simple, heartfelt, sense of utter helplessness, misery, and guilt; with a belief that God can, and will, save to the uttermost those that come unto Him by Christ Jesus. Man can go no farther than this. Here he must wait, and cry, and pray, or groan, till the power from above is given, to open the door, and enter in. If, in the place of this, he, by the Scriptures, or any other testimony, works himself up into the notion that he can secure this, that, or the other, in his own will and time, by a belief in any particular propositions or sentiments, the door is opened for all manner of deceit and lies, bringing presumption and the Devil into the heart, as an angel of light, in the place of Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

All dangers whatever, of this kind, are avoided by simply walking humbly in the measure of grace imparted, and, from that measure only, writing and speaking to others.

If Christ be in you in very deed, you will grow in Him continually, and He in you: and from that growth you will be enabled to profit the true seed in the will of God. To go beyond this, either in your own wisdom, or by the help of Scripture interpretation, leads into spiritual confusion, darkness, and sin; besides giving a handle to gainsayers. Whereas if you write and speak from the measure of Christ in you, not going beyond that, and walking in true humility of heart before God therein, all the Devils in Hell, or wise men or wicked spirits upon the earth, will be unable to touch you to your hurt, or gainsay really or truly your testimony; which will be a word from God there and then—a living word, that will always accomplish that for which it was sent.

In true love,

— . — . — .

83.

THE MYSTERY OF THE RELIGIOUS
“PHILANTHROPIC” OPERATIONS OF THIS DAY.

6. 12. 72.

My Brother,

DO mind what you are about. You have formed some friendships with or for those, whose religion is a compound of Self, Moses, and Christ; and, of course, you get “tarred with the same brush.” What a miserable, dirty, compound this is, is clear; for Self and Moses make nothing clean; and *the* Christ, though rested upon in words, in reality is not known by these.

Do throw all your righteousness and doings to one side, and if you know a cleansing of the conscience by Christ, abide by it, and in it, not going out. And if you

do not, do not fall to kissing Moses, and feeding the "swine," to recommend yourself to yourself, and the Father : but sink out of everything, into the death of Christ ; and neither will, nor do, anything, in a religious way, till you come into a perfect cleansing and peace.

You write more in the spirit of a Poor Law Commissioner, or a Major-General to his Commissary, or a Scholar freshening his memory in Euclid, preparatory to going in for the head-mastership in mathematics at a first-class school, than one who is resting quietly on the bosom of God, in Christ, and living on the milk of the Divine Word. The Divine wisdom, love, and Spirit, dwells with babes, plebeians, and wayfaring men, though fools ; rather than with the wise and prudent ones, exact reasoners, and such as are fitted for the highest stations among men, or the principal seats at the schools.

One would think that a mind like yours would see at once, that what is wanted at this time for the world, or the Church in the world, is the true supernatural in religion, which purifies the heart, filling the soul with peace and love : and not a mixing of the Church, which is in God, with the world, by doing those things which the "dead" can do as well as you, and some of them better.

You little think that the fine hypocritical talk, so common with what are called religious men, about the "Arabs," and other miseries of London, casts a reflection upon the Government of God : and that when the Devil gets you, or any other religious man, into this line of business, he knows that you are effectually shut out of that course of usefulness, which alone can bring light, life, and salvation to the world.

Don't you see that the great workers in these things are those who make religion a tool for their own "philanthropic" purposes ; and that the religion of those whom they profess to have been the means of converting is, like their own, not worth having ? They work their own oracle, and in the meantime talk of, and pray to, God, in

the same spirit as the Papists, Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Chinese : keeping at work the mill of carnal prayer ; and then everything that turns up favourably is made to be an answer thereto : while in themselves they are as dark, comparatively, as the heathen, whose prayers they imitate ; and as carnal as the “swine” they feed ; though, by the aid of the Scriptures, and church dogmas, making a fair show in the flesh. Carnal, and walking as men, themselves, they seek to bring every other person, of a religious turn, under the domination of the same spirit. If they, in a flurry, now and then, make a move towards something substantial, and truly divine, it is really, at root, from a desire to become better preachers, or more successful actors in that “religious work,” which, in the beginning—before they really knew Christ in Spirit—they laid hold of, and are, or have been, prosecuting, in their own wills, ever since.

O this mystery of iniquity in a high figure ! What a twining, beautiful, serpent it is : but the venom of Hell is under its lips. It seeks in everything to do something FOR God—crying, Lord, Lord, with the constancy of a clock—but knows nothing of waiting, and working, only from and in Him.

Being ignorant of the true reconciliation—the liberty, rest, and power, of those who are one Spirit with the Lord of Life, and live in God with Him—this spirit is driving at this, that, and the other ; the end of which is an increase of false Christianity, and a hindering of its principal actors from understanding, or getting possession of, the true.

It is the supernatural that is wanted : not false charity, fine sentiments, and first-birth philanthropy. What do the Devil and his angels care about you, me, or a thousand other men, with fifty Peabodys to boot, giving all we have to feed the poor, and making a fair show in the flesh—if in the mean time the Divine Life, and supernatural Power of God, is dwindling to nothing, and vanishing little by

little, from the face of the earth? It is only men in whom the Blessed One really dwells, and through whom He works and speaks, that will carry even a mob out of the reach of Bradlaugh, when the Spirit wills. Devils are not driven out of "swine," by filling their bellies, but rather kept in.

You may mix this kind of stuff up with fine sentiment and poetry, and mumble over it a thousand "prayers;" but it will only stick to your soul like pitch, as does every man-begotten thing.

My brother, shake yourself, and, if you can, these saintly friends of yours; and, by the help of God, jump out of this muddy, manly, mystical stuff; and sink down right to the feet of Christ; and there hold on to His lowest appearance in Spirit with both hands, till He takes you clearly into His heart, and, by marrying you to Himself, makes you as lovely, spiritually, as an Angel, and as innocent as a Lamb.

P.S. By "swine" are meant those who have no disposition towards heavenly things, except in hypocrisy; but are hungry continually after the things of earth.

Whoever takes upon himself the office of meddling with the wants of mankind, and makes it a part of true Christianity to do so, by rule and prudential law, does, in the very nature of things, become a feeder of swine.

84.

GOD, CHRIST, AND THE SAINTS, ONE.

1872.

THERE is an apostrophe in yours, one clause of which you will perhaps reconsider :—

“ O, the mystery of Godliness: God remains ever God, in *eternal distinction* from, and exaltation above man; yet has He ” etc., etc.

Now this is safe writing; and, with the exception of *eternal distinction*, rigidly true.

The immensity of God, as He exists in that blessedness which is truly infinite, so raises Him beyond any other being in particular, and all in general, as to justify the expression of “ infinite exaltation ” in yours. Yet that other phrase will hardly bear the light of day. As God and Christ are one, so the Father and the Saints are one also, as you intimate, by union. How then can there be an *eternal distinction*, when it is from the fulness of His life, that we, as Sons, shall live to all eternity? God, the very God, is the true *life* of His children; not by the impartation of a life, beauty, and glory, of which it may be said that He is one thing, and this life and glory another: but He is so, because they do, in very deed, as did Christ, partake of the *divine nature*; which divine nature, being one in all who are born of Him, does, to a close scrutiny and clear sense of things, forbid the idea or reality of an *eternal distinction*.

The term “ Son of God,” when well looked into, will bear this out: for he is no true Son, who does not partake of the very *Life* and Nature of the Father that begot him.

85.

TRUE FAITH, AND THE FAITH WHICH MAN
GENERATES BY THE SCRIPTURES.

21. 1. 73.

NOW, then, first, as to faith. Faith, true faith, as an *abiding substance*, is always found in the same proportion as Christ is brought forth in us. The exceptions to this are—when it may please the Blessed One on particular occasions, by the Spirit, to infuse a superabounding degree of it for some special purpose: but this is what no Christian can build upon, being altogether locked up in the sovereign pleasure of God. But as Christ is brought forth in us, own-will and self-direction die, and the man becomes weaker and weaker, and Christ becomes stronger and stronger. But as He becomes stronger and stronger, there is felt more and more helplessness, and inability to walk without heavenly guidance—Of my own self I can do nothing. When you come into this—not intellectually only, but by a real participation—you will find that you have no power to control your own path, which may be changed from the extremes of conscious safety and joy to great and painful trial—as great, in proportion to our strength, as the difference between Job in prosperity, and on the dunghill; or Christ on Tabor, and then on the Cross: and this all within the space of a few hours or days.

He knows little of the substance of the Scriptures, who does not see this in the experience of every saint there, whose life is given with any amplitude of detail.

Let us put this within the limits of a few words. As we have Christ, we have true faith; and no further: but as we have true faith, and walk in the mystery of it, own-will becomes nil, and the will of the Blessed One All in all.

This faith is precious: therefore as man receives it, he must pass through trial and tribulation by fire. Or in other words, as God and man become one, it will be through the cross, tribulation, and death of own-will: the principal Agent being the Holy Ghost and fire.

This being the case, all axioms deduced from the Scriptures fail in the time of need, the present Presence and Power of God not being manifest and felt. In truth, before man can be brought to walk as Christ also walked, not only has a false faith towards Him to be taken away, but also (that which is equally prevalent, and in fact is a principal factor at the root of this false faith) a wrong taking hold of, and application of, the Scriptures.

There is nothing, at this day, which more effectually works against God, Christ, and the Saints, than this. All are up to the eyes in it. The "best preachers," here, are the greatest liars and deceivers; the whole tenor of their sermons being to encourage the *old man*—the first birth—to take hold of and appropriate that which belongs to the *new*, but which the true child of God cannot take hold of and apply, in his own will.

As any of the Elect pass through these things, and became really united to God, they have a clear sense of the taste and meaning of words written on these subjects; and feel, by a divine intuition, the state of the mind of the writer: or, speaking more exactly, they discern whether it is the old man putting forth a religious appearance through the medium of Scripture words and knowledge, or the *new* speaking with openness and freedom, from the Life of God, that which pertains to the business of the King.

Of course, there is some difference between being altogether in this false position, and only comparatively so: yet it is necessary that those who are called of God to lift up a standard against this modern Antichrist, so universally prevalent in power and reign, should be practical, and not merely empirical, helpers of the sick and blind, who are wasting all their time and goods in following anti-

christian pretenders—of little use in the divine art of giving spiritual health to the sick, and divine eye-sight to the blind.

In true love,

— . — . — .

86.

RELIGIOUS "PHILANTHROPY" AND MONEY-RAISING.

27. 1. 73.

My Brother,

IF you have any reach over ———, tell him to mind what he is about.

There was an address of his in "The Christian" two or three weeks ago, and one in "The Christian Standard" of a few days back, both of which show, to the opened eye, that he knows not what he is at. In the former he uses the whip, not to bring people to the Rock of Ages, but to forward his own "philanthropic" purposes—yet under the garb of earnest religion and piety. In the latter, he talks of the "living word of God" in a way which shows that he can take the name of God in vain.

If he considers that he has a call to befriend the lads of London, let him carry it out on a bottom which corresponds to that call; but not dare to profane the name of the most High, by using it to frighten carnal people into parting with their money, and setting up for Christians on a sandy foundation.

He has yet to learn that that self-sacrifice, which springs from self, is one of the most pig-headed Antichrists upon the earth, and spiritually as bad as Sodom: and that, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, *giving* does no purge the *getting*.

87.

THE DESTINIES OF CARNAL CHRISTIANS.

29. 1. 73.

IN answer to your last, I would say, about “keeping all to yourself and God”—do not overdo this. In your weak state, He may use some one, yet in the body, to be a brother indeed, faithful in love and rebuke; which is of great price.

There is even a true philosophy in this. Each member of Christ's body, in proportion to his growth in Him, can, in the will of God, help his brother forward; and, if there be true humility of soul, impart of the gifts of the Spirit, to mutual profit.

As to not seeing with me on “there being nothing real or good in the mass of profession on all sides; that not even the place of babes in Christ, walking as men, can be given to the simple, humble, ignorant, deluded ones, who abound in these days”—I would say, let there not be a too rigid analysis or inquisition in this matter. Nothing good is one thing; and a babe in Christ, according to the true meaning of that term, as understood by me, another.

Surely there is something good in all men, *by the grace of God*, unless they be reprobates: but to be under the influence of this, more or less, as the drawing of the Father, is one thing; and to be so born of God, *as by the Spirit* to call Him Father, another.

He that is truly in Christ, and of Christ, must live by Christ, babe though he be: and while abiding in Him, there will be true humility and simplicity, in their measure; which is quite another matter from that which, under these names, is taught and practised by enlightened, though unregenerate, men. You will find that the assumed humility and simplicity of the present day is mostly of the flesh;

and, when properly tried, shows its spring to be of the first man, not a present springing up of that Life, which was in Christ, and now exists in the Lord in heaven.

Most, if not all, the other difficulties of yours will vanish, if you always abide under a sense of the difference between what is of God, and what is of man. What is of God is alone acceptable to God. What is of man, though in many ways good to man, as in the flesh, is of no account with God. Those seemingly painful difficulties which arise to the mind, while contemplating the mass of man-made Christians, and especially of highly educated persons of this class, who are particularly lovable to man as man, dwindle into nothing, comparatively, when it is remembered, that *what is of God* will stand any fire, but what is of man, the flesh, will be burned up. If I am in that which will not abide His appearing, what otherwise can be done?

* * * He therefore is the best friend of man, who, by the Spirit of God, seeing through the devices of Satan, and the abominations of fleshly Christianity, however lovely to look upon, faithfully shows the one, and lifts up a standard against the other. It is better to be judged, and denuded of fleshly faith, humility, and love, while on the earth; than to go on in a drunken dream, and in the world to come find the loss of all things. As to the final destinies of men, why are we to be more tender over fleshly and carnal Christianity, than over the same quality in Jews, Mohammedans, and Hindoos? Flesh is flesh, wherever found: and Spirit is Spirit.

The Lord of all the earth will do the thing which is right, to the uttermost iota: so that no individual soul, out of the countless millions, shall be able to say, from a solid bottom, Thou hast wronged me. Can we desire more than this? Can we ask for more?

There will be a war between the judgment and heart on these subjects, till perfected in love: but when God is all in all, it will be shown in a sweet, ineffable, manner, that all that He does is right.

We have been so used to look at the extremes of things, and, in our ignorance, to pin down the Almighty to a line of conduct, which agrees with the man-made creeds that we have been born into, that, maugre the most positive declarations of Scripture, that every man will receive according to his works, our minds portion out two positions, of the extremest torture and joy, into which we are to fall immediately after death; the contemplation of which is an insuperable bar to a right judgment in divine matters, and forces us, as it were, to make men and women, professing religion, either better or worse than they are, because otherwise we cannot reconcile their future position with our man-generated, foolish, narrow, notions.

This however, in its extreme form, lasts only till the Master comes home, and assumes the entire direction of the inner man by His Spirit. Then there is a judging with righteous judgment, according to the Spirit, and not the letter only; and this from a Divine life and sense, imparted by the Spirit to the new man.

The Spiritual man judgeth all things, but himself is judged of none.

Farewell.

88.

FIRST-BIRTH RELIGION, AND BECOMING ONE WITH CHRIST.

[Jan. 1873.]

Dear _____,

DO turn over a fresh leaf. Sink down out of yourself into Christ. Forsake that which is rational and soulish only, as your leading principle; and take hold, by the grace of God, of that which is spiritual and divine.

Logic and first-birth wisdom are well enough for the children of this world, and not to be slightly esteemed in their proper place ; but are altogether misapplied, when they are made to supersede the Spirit and Life of God, the Light and Life of men.

It is the operation of this last principle upon the heart, understanding, and conscience, that regenerates and saves ; not an intellectual appreciation of any propositions of revealed truth. It is the very operation of God, writing His laws on the inward parts, that changes from natural to spiritual, and brings over the will and heart's love from that which is earthly to what is heavenly. It is the very Life and Spirit thus imparted—making its believing recipient a partaker of the Divine nature—that saves ; not any imitation of this, having no deeper ground or root than the intellect, or understanding, or heart.

If saved at all, man must be so saved, by becoming one with Christ in God, in nature, life and Spirit ; he himself becoming comparatively nothing, and the Blessed One all in all.

Your trimming yourself up a little by study, "prayer," good works, discipline, reading the Scriptures, and making yourself a "Christian," is only gilding a rotten post, putting on the sheep's clothing, making a fool of yourself by ignorantly seeking to over-reach the Almighty, All-wise God : keeping the vagabond alive by a faith in Christ which saves him from death, in the place of the true faith, which brings to death by the cross : thanking God from that bottom which is accursed, and, like Cain, bringing an offering with hidden pride of heart.

I hardly ever think of you without remembering the most antichristian writer of the last generation. Most antichristian, because the best counterfeiter of true Christianity, passing off man, and his doings, and attainments, self-reconciled to God by a false faith in Christ out of him and for him only ; while the internal, unwashed, unsanctified, hypocrite, remains alive. Most antichristian, because

chattering in profound, if not deeply learned, style, in the behalf of false gold, and made-up precious stones. Most antichristian, because, by the help of superior talents, dressing up and adorning the Whore—false religion—with so much seeming modesty, and apparent excellence and humility, as to equal, if not surpass, in the eyes of all but the elect, the genuine qualities of the wedded wife, the true spouse of Christ and child of the Father. It is such as these that, though professing to write for the advancement of the true faith, do, in great natural power, the Devil's work of endeavouring to sweep it from the face of the earth.

I need not mention names. This one here described is your father, or elder brother, in faith, life and spirit. He wrote a book called "Elements of Thought."

In true love,

— . — . — .

89.

RELIGIOUS STILTS.

7. 2. 73.

My Brother,

WHEN you are so in Christ, and out of self, as to discern between soul and Spirit—between that which is of man, and that which is of God—you will step down from your stilts, and cease from bibbing "Scriptural" wine.

You cannot more effectually help forward Ranterism and Brethrenism, than by speaking or writing against them, in a highly spiritual strain, from the *same ground* of life with themselves.

It is the true life that is needed; not highflying talk, however Scriptural, about it.

This drunken talk, to the truly opened eye, is only as the assumed gravity and cleverness of one "half-gone," in the presence of his superiors. It arises from real ignorance of the true state of the case, or rather, to drop the figure, from a lack of that true lowliness, sweetness and solidity, which always abide, in their measure, in the spirits of those whose feet are on *the only Rock*. * * *

Again I say unto you—whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear—write and speak ONLY, on Divine things, from the measure of Christ in you. This you may do, in the will of God, as easily as breathe. And never again let Satan crucify the Son of God by, and in, you, by projecting you into the air, through your soulish part being inebriated with the Scriptures and self-will; thus making you a laughing-stock to wicked spirits, and a weeping-stock to all truly good men.

In true love,

— . — . — .

90.

THE FIRST ADAM'S RELIGION.

16. 2. 73.

* * What made me hit out against you was, I was sensible that you were not yet delivered from the first Adam's flesh, which always thinks highly of its own doings, and is very *prudent* about this, that, and the other. When you are truly dead with Christ, and also risen with Him, you will be very easy as to who it was that called you to take up the cross, or to give, or not to give: the

mainspring of this content of soul being a living sense wrought in the heart, by the Holy Ghost—or rather, I should have said, arising from his love and in-dwelling—that He and His Will are really and truly ALL IN ALL.

Till this is the case be patient with me, but above all with yourself; because when people are in a hurry to be so very good, so that they may cut a figure before *themselves*, their fellows, the Angels, and God, they are often put upon long drill, and kept out in the cold.

My brother, my brother, He that more than filleth the heaven of heavens is not to be juggled or wheedled by long faces, or any other precious things of the first birth. He brings deliverance to WHOM HE WILL, with a Princely Majesty, hard to be understood by creatures, whose tabernacle is flesh and bone.

Yes: about “dear _____,” it is not a mistake here and there only: that would soon be remedied: but he is upon a wrong ground altogether. It is his own will that lies at the root of his life.

Because he “believes” more, and more correctly, than others, therefore he *has* more, and has taken upon himself to blow the horn. This is the perfection of ranterism and folly, in a high and saintly figure. Of course it has to be filled in, or rather blown out, with a righteousness of the first birth, carmined over with Scripture and the blood of Christ. The truly opened eye, however, can see through these things, or rather *does* see through them—without effort, without pride of heart, or vain glory, or exaltation of self.

91.

THE SECRET OF PROSPERITY OF SOUL.

16. 2. 73.

THE great secret of prosperity of soul is to sink down with Christ in His death, passing below the love of all earthly things, and seeing and feeling the end thereof: then with Him you will rise. It is all wrapped up in these few words: all the providences of the Blessed One, in the form of trials both outward and inward, tend to this point; and as this is voluntarily and heartily entered into by the creature, God and man become one, and Christ is all in all.

Keep clear as much as possible of all religious gossip and talk. It is the Life that is needed; not much talk about it. Don't be hasty to judge men: rather judge the serpent in them: but above all be faithful in judgment over Number One. Greenness of the wood makes the fire to burn miserably: so do a loose tongue, and unrestrained flesh, put out the holy fire of the Love of God.

Dear _____, be a man of God, in all gentleness, prudence, long-suffering, and wisdom. Keep clear of _____, gossip, and _____; that my soul may love thee more and more to the end.

Farewell.

92.

THE RELIGION OF THE FLESH, AND THE
DIVINE ANOINTING.

26. 2. 73.

My Brother,

DO be still. ——— is up in the air, and you are grovelling with your nose in the earth, pilfering and stealing something good out of old books—"good books"—or your own brains.

I say unto you, *in the name of the Lord*, come to the measure of Christ in yourself, which by the grace of God you are favoured with, and abide by it and in it, not going out; and all will yet be well. Though it be never so little, it will grow, and you in it, and it in you, for ever. Any thing besides this is vanity and lies, *divinely considered*, however beautiful to the natural eye or understanding: so be content with the portion of bread broken by God to your own soul, and live on it, whether it be little or much; and be thankful.

If you do not do this, you will become an "enthusiast," and by your writings make others "fanatics." The voice of God is in the Divine Anointing, common to the begotten of God, and is known by its holy influence, and constantly constraining power, keeping the creature in subjection to the Christ of God.

If you look for more than this in yourself, or teach more to others, you will become a prime instrument of Satan, in the form of an Angel of Light.

It is in the Son that we have light and life and love. But His appearance is little, mean, and low: galling to the pride of the natural man, and running across the path chosen by his wisdom.

So I say again—Come to the measure of Christ in you; and abide by it and in it, not going out.

In true love,

— . — . — .

93.

ON A BOOK ENTITLED "GLADNESS IN JESUS,"

BY W. E. BOARDMAN.

2. 3. 73.

WHEN a nation becomes corrupt at heart from false religion, irreligion, or no religion, then the prince of the power of the air comes forth by men of reprobate minds, in all the hideousness of atheism and blasphemy, and shows the *dark* side of his character, stalking abroad in open day, and causing his subjects to glory in their shame.

Writers of the stamp and quality of this author are often ready, in these circumstances, to declare him to be an ass; not seeing that, by how much the more palpable and barefaced the deception, by so much the more is the Blessed One dishonoured, and His longsuffering tried: much less suspecting, or even dreaming, that this outside, vulgar, above-board, wickedness and blasphemy is only a part of a great whole, and serves as a feint, in hellish war, the better to cover over, or divert attention from, a spiritual wickedness of a rosy-coloured hue, which, as the highest stroke of infernal policy, is intended, if possible, to deceive the very elect.

This book is a good sample of this sort of thing. It would be sufficient answer to it to say—*It is all wind*—the great lie and bubble of the age blown out to its extreme dimensions, by one whose temperament and ability made the doing of it comparatively easy.

Believe that you have it, and you have it—this is the wonderful Egyptian wand that makes all vain imaginations glitter. But all is not gold that glitters. The devil has his *light* angelic side, as well as the dark: and never does he glory more than when he gets carnal Christians, such

as this writer, under the influence of spiritual drunkenness of his own egging on, to make merry over the Witness of God in their hearts, and treat the Holy Spirit as a power subject to their foolish, ignorant, whims, and wilful fancies.

This is the condition of this writer. If it be possible, may the Blessed One have mercy upon his soul : though as he has sown to the wind, it is very likely that he may reap the *whirlwind*.

94.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

10. 3. 73.

I WAS led to look into your tract, entitled ———, yesterday, and to make a few remarks thereon. You will observe that nothing is noted beyond page 3, though the same radical defect runs through the whole.

“Physician, heal thyself,” would not exceed in any way what ought to have been impressed upon your mind, before you put these things to the press. You are evidently “tarred with the same brush” as ——— and the Brethren, and indeed all the leading sects of the day ; who claim to themselves the position of Sons, when as yet they are not even faithful servants : and writing from this carnal bottom, confound things that differ, and so confuse the holy truth of God ; giving that to one, which belongs to another, so as to make all Babel and uncleanness, spiritually, on the right hand, and on the left.

A true Son of God is one in whom the Spirit of God cries, or witnesses, in an ineffable manner, *My Father*, without any effort of the creature, either by reading, or belief of doctrines, or any other action, more than simply becoming passive in His divine presence.

Now, whoever makes himself believe, or endeavours to make others believe, that either by works, or the belief of doctrines, or any other doings within the compass of natural power, *he can bring this into his spirit*, as yet knows nothing as he ought; and is a blind guide, and false prophet, in so far as he presses these errors, lies, and false doctrines, upon his own heart, and the minds of others.

This blessing is not to be bought, wheedled, or forced, from the heart of the Father, by any means whatever in man's power. It is of grace. The nearest way to it is to come, with the Publican, and admit that there is not a greater fool and sinner upon the face of the earth; and with this abiding confession, seeking nothing more than to kiss the dust, and beat the breast, in His holy presence. If, when in this position, He awakens up in the mind a sense of sin intolerable, so much the better: this is only preparatory to that work of mercy and love, which He is always willing to perform, *at the right time*; which must be left to Him entirely, or a false birth will be the result, and you will either go up in the air, with ——, or lie and grovel in false doctrines, with ——, who says "as there are so many children of God, who do not know that they are children of God—as there are so many whose sins are forgiven, who do not know that they are forgiven," etc., etc.—so on the one hand, with ——, riding above the Spirit and holy truth of God, on a cloud, in the air; or, on the other, with ——, grovelling in lies, false doctrine, and uncleanness, on the earth.

In the name of the Lord, I say unto you, *Examine your foundations on this matter*; and do be still, as to other people, till the Master comes home, and says, Peace, be still, to your own soul, and lives in your heart, as sensibly as you live in your body.

In love,

— . — . — .

95.

A LITTLE EYE-SALVE FOR TRACT-WRITING
BLIND GUIDES.

16. 3. 73.

I DO not expect that you will welcome that which crucifies your flesh. Remember that those, whose life is hid with Christ in God, are answerable to Him for faithfulness and plain dealing. The letter of the 5th, which you do not like, is much more necessary to you, than information about things which are only keeping you in a false light.

You may tincture your heart and brains with good men's writings till the judgment day, without coming to, or helping forward, a present flow of the divine life in yourself.

It is *present Divine Life*, fresh, clear, and flowing, that is needed: not tinctured, hypocritical, flesh.

He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

Your writing spiritual lies one month, and then expressing a willingness to blot them out the next, may remove you from the category of *wilful blind guides*, but not from ignorant ones. Both equally lead into the ditch.

How can you write "faithfully" to me, when you are in that dark spirit, which leads you to print lies for others?

96.

SPIRITUAL FAITHFULNESS, TRUE
TENDERNESS.

17. 3. 73.

AS to ———, and the feeling that I have towards him, it is as gentle and loving as to all the creatures of God (spiders and toads are treated kindly here): and when not called upon by duty to defend the holy truth of God, there is not the slightest feeling like animosity against any of his doings, or himself. Much more likely does it appear to be otherwise, when a judgment is made from outward appearances: but it is not so. Quietness, and an even love to all the world, with an utter oblivion to malice, or any other fruit of the flesh, is the only state suitable to those who come under the direction of the Spirit of God. This may appear to you somewhat difficult to reconcile with that amount of fault-finding which the last and many others from —. —. —. to you contain. Yes: it may seem like a contradiction; but it is not so. That last that I wrote to you was forced out of me by a sense of right, to which if I had done violence, the most—to me—painful circumstances might have followed. The mystery of the faith is held only in a pure conscience. When a servant of God comes under the guidance of His Spirit, he is no longer at liberty to do what he wills, or say what he wills; but only to wait upon Him with gentle, loving, submission; and then all is made plain.

It is this only that enables a man to be faithful under all circumstances, even to the burning of his own house about his ears. The return is a sweet, constant, loving trust in the Father, which no words can explain.

97.

SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS REBUKED.

19. 3. 73.

I HAVE something to say to you : be pleased to give it your best attention. When the Lord Jesus was upon the earth in person, He spoke to the people in parables ; and often kept things back from his disciples. Why was this ? It was simply because the divine light in Him gave such a clear sense of the real state of those who surrounded Him, that had he put it forth in ordinary language, neither the people, nor His disciples, could have borne it. It burst out now and then, however, as when He said to Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan : and spoke of men as children of the devil, vipers, dogs, swine, goats, thieves and robbers, etc., etc., and also when John wormed it from Him about Judas. So it is at this day with those whose inner eye is opened. They see that which, if they were to tell it plainly, would shut them out of the world, as it were, in reference to all by whom they are surrounded : so, to be faithful in measure, they speak in figurative language.

If —. —. —. had not had an assurance that you had had a deep scoring in your inner parts, and were marked out for a special purpose ; in the place of saying a rough thing now and then, he would have told the whole truth, and there would have been an end of the matter ; for you could not have borne it. So do not suppose that there is nothing but a *rough* manifestation of truth under these expressions which you are pleased to favour with your animadversions, in the place of fairly looking them in the face, and comparing them with those of Christ and the Prophets. This is not the whole of the matter. The truth is really so much worse than they show it to be, that, were it plainly stated, it would not be borne, or believed.

He that by the favour of God sees beyond the age in which he lives, and through and through those with whom he lives, will be sure to provoke his compeers, and bring into open flame their smouldering ignorance, their inbred foulness. But this is only for a time : for when an increase of the divine light is manifested in any solitary soul, in measure, beyond his fellows, it is preparatory to some outbreak, sooner or later, of the same blessed power, love, and light, and good, in others.

So leave the matter with —. —. —. and God. —. —. —. sees : you as yet are comparatively blind. When you see as clearly as —. —. —., you will not condemn or censure —. —. —. for roughness, but rather for overmuch smoothness.

When the most Blessed One really opens your *inner* eye, one of the most painful things that you will remember against yourself will be the bitter, ignorant, blind, talk, which you have given way to against the blessed truth IN —. —. —. This will cut like a knife.

Don't deceive yourself, or let the wicked one deceive you. You are not a truly spiritual man yet, but just in that state when any really subtle book, or plausible professing spirit, can push you here and there, in measure : and thus it will be till the Blessed One IS ALL IN ALL, really and truly, in you.

Amen.

98.

THE WAY OF LIFE.

26. 3. 73.

MY Brother, my dear Brother, my bowels yearn for you, that you may be delivered from all your enemies.

Do come out of all your gathered stuff, though it may be from such high authorities as ————— and ————— : and be content to be simply nothing—a little child, just taking what is given, and doing what you are bid, with meekness and humility, such as you have and are. Don't doctor yourself up, but treat all "self-inflicted discipline" as a cheat, a lie, and folly. Our salvation stands in Christ in us, and we of and in Him. He is freely given to those who look for Him, without money, without price.

All dignity, sweetness, might, majesty and dominion, are with Him, in Him ; and in measure become theirs who are united to Him.

99.

AGAINST BEING PUFFED UP.

28. 3. 73.

I STILL do not see that no one can help forward another, till he has reached the stature of the full-grown man."

It has been upon my mind to say a word or two to this, since first the words were read. Here it is that the mystery of iniquity, through self-will and carnal wisdom, enters.

Your having a pretty good head—that is, when it is all right—and reasoning faculties, enables you, by books,

and other methods, to secure gathered knowledge on the subject of the Life of God, or Christ, in man, and to use it at discretion, in your own will; though not from the bottom of real knowledge, and without the present life *or motion of the divine Spirit*. But this is all forbidden: and will as effectually keep you from pleasing God, *and growing in Him*, as any of the wrong doings which have made such terrible havoc of your spiritual life and peace in bygone days.

If you be "a babe," hang upon the breasts of the divine Word, and grow from the milk that flows from *them* alone. They are not dry.

How do you know—or any other man—how far ——— and others are safe guides, except so far as instructed by the divine Word? Indeed you have little need to know independently of this; for this knowledge is a poisonous wine, which gives no real strength or growth, but rising into the head, fills the heart with windy pride and false peace.

The secret of all secrets, in the spiritual life, is to speak, and live, only from the measure of Christ in yourself; keeping below it, rather than rising above it, in outward action, though close to it in obedience and heart-devotion—indeed, not to speak or write at all, till pressed by a clear call, and supported by a divine light or motion.

I know a man who, for many years, has not been allowed to make one memorandum; or in any way to study this, that, or the other, in reference to divine realities; and who has suffered from keeping books, and things, which were devoted by the divine will, as sacrifices to the divine love.

All that He requires of His children, in the way of duty, is to take no thought of what they are to write, or speak, till He brings upon them the exercise: and then He will supply the needful wisdom and power, and so direct the mind, that the arrows shall reach the point which He wishes them to hit.

You call yourself an infant, or “babe;” but when you speak or write, the oracle sounds like a man: and every truly spiritual man discerns this discrepancy, spiritually, just the same as they discern the warmth of fire, or the taste of sweet milk, naturally.

Now, it is not insinuated that you should not read spiritual books, nor that you should give over all these things in a hurry: but it is said, with the *utmost certainty*, that if you live to and for God alone, He will draw you out of these things, one by one, and teach you not to touch them, without leave from Him, and no longer than He permits.

How strange it is that to learn a simple lesson like this—to abstain from all broken cisterns, and to take to the Living Fountain only of all that is excellent and good, in wisdom, beauty, and power—should require so much whip and fire, that in nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand cases, men become old before they will let ALL freely go, and miss of it often then.

Now, my brother, there is a lesson for you to learn, not in your own will, but as you are led on in it by the Master, which, if you live, will serve you for the next five years.

May He that is most lovely give you His blessing, and peace—peace—peace.

— . — . — .

P.S. Don't make a righteousness out of anything here written. If you be a babe, act like one. If you hit, well: if you miss, why it is only what babes do. I am sure, if you are truly begotten of God, you will suffer any extremity, before you will willingly do what is displeasing to Him.

100.

ON THE USING OF AN APOSTLE'S WORDS.

30. 3. 73.

My Brother,

THOSE few words written to you yesterday call for some little explanation. It is true, they were not written, *as intended by me* to apply to your letter, or the extract: but when the letter was closed, there was a gentle admonition that they had an application, nevertheless.

It would be natural for you to say, "how so? the word 'accursed' [used by the writer of the extract] is scriptural, and true; and exactly suitable to the subject in hand: what objection can there be against anyone making use of it, in the fear of God?"

It does especially seem strange that —. —. —., who in a letter or two before that, had used language that could hardly be exceeded for strength, should notice this.

Such reasons as these show the prudence and right of giving a few words of explanation on this subject, leaving out the question of the "extract" altogether, which has gone to one who, as he is drunken with the Scriptures, is hardly likely to find out, or suspect, any wrong on that particular point.

The word "accursed" was used by Paul, who had many points of difference in his character, both absolute and relative, from most or all at this day. Almost everything about him was uncommon: his call and conversion were so: so were his illuminations and instructions. And then, there was in his case an abiding difference of position and power: for, although all the truly begotten of the Father are essentially one, as to the root, and inherent dignity, of their characters, yet the faith of miracles, and being caught up into the third heaven, with other especial

favours, would bring about the apostolic soul of Paul a peculiar greatness and power, of a complexion and reach, not to be met with at this, or hardly any other, day.

Now when a man of this status speaks, there is a *real living unity*, and relative fitness, between what he is, and what he says ; as long as he keeps within his measure. Nevertheless, there will be extreme points of even his discourse, where he has reached to the full length of his plummet. Yet, when he has done so, what he has said remains sound truth, and in keeping with the whole body of his preaching and writing.

But you will say, If then what he has said is the very truth, why may we not use it, and stand by it? Yes : it may be used, and stood by, in the order of God, as a reference ; but not incorporated into the discourse of one below him (Paul) in growth, as proceeding from the *I* of this lesser growth or status in God : or then violence is done to that divine unity, which is pleasant alike to God, and angels, and spiritual men.

Those who live near to the living Word will, in time, discern that there is a fitness and propriety in every word and action : but this fitness and propriety may not be measured by any set standard ; but has immediate and direct reference to the growth of their author, in God—a babe speaking and working as a babe : a young man, as a young man ; and a father, as a father. Nothing but a due knowledge of, and attention to, this can sustain harmony and peace amongst the true Lovers of God, the brethren of Christ.

These remarks may appear at first sight somewhat far-fetched, or hypercritical : but the more they are looked into, the more they will be found to contain *a substance which is of God*.

101.

PROPHETS GENERALLY PLAIN MEN.

2. 4. 73.

My Brother,

WHEN your letters come from a gentle spirit, though they be somewhat sprinkled with evidences that you have not got clear of the black death of carnal wisdom, they bring a purer satisfaction to the soul than gold or precious stones.

Your best letters are of value, as demonstrating that good sense and extensive knowledge are comparatively dross. When a man is in any measure "made up," the thing will out, sooner or later. This comes to pass, in your case, in a somewhat marvellous manner, because here and there, in your correspondence, at one time or another, you say the right thing on any given subject: but the whole of what you say not springing *only* from the measure of the Truth—of Christ—in yourself, when the time of real service comes, calling for the application of divine principles and supernatural power (which can be accomplished only where *the blessed Spirit is in the ascendant*), then you fail; your nakedness in measure appears.

These remarks are made in love: had it not pleased the Father to have brought —. —. —. through all this treacherous, gilded, "scriptural," iniquity (I speak as to a wise man) it would be impossible to stand at this day against that insinuating courtly godliness, which seems to become you and others so well.

But as for you, that "deep inward scoring" is my stronghold. The Blessed One has made at the bottom of your heart a few marks not to be forgotten: so, when you are, or would be, ready to cast off His servant as a burdensome stone, a spiritual hair-shirt, a prophet who has always something bad to say of you, you find that you

had better not. Don't forget, when you are tempted to do this, that it is not a pleasant but a painful office, and that if you were what you wish, it would at once cease.

Yes: "——— is an able writer;" but it is hardly right to say what follows, from the bottom of this ability—"If he gets hold, a thorough hold, of the truth, he will be able to speak with decision and clearness." First, you put the man where the Master should be—dethrone Light, and enthrone darkness. "If *he* gets a thorough hold of the truth,"—nay: this is the way to evil, not to good. If the Truth—Christ—gets a thorough hold of him, *it* or *He* may use him. Your position is one of the strongest holds of Antichrist and the pride of man. When a clever man gets a thorough hold of the truth, what follows, as the rule? Why, he makes that thorough hold serve his purpose; and so the Blessed One is compelled to serve his purpose too. It was this that threw that blessed man Moses from his seat of highest honour: being a man of great ability led him to forget himself on one occasion, and so to stir up the divine wrath, that he entered not into the promised land.

This is the very corner-stone of Satan's kingdom in false "Christianity"—grave faces, great outward sanctity on set occasions, with (if you will) a strong dash of gentility and polish amongst the upper and middle classes, and great zeal in the lower: then what more is wanted? Nothing, to make it all right for the Devil: for though "everybody" is able to talk, sing, preach, and pray, it is at best only men and women doing all this, *for* God, and *of themselves*: while *He—He*—of whom the very thought ought to ravish the inner man into the most gentle stillness and adoration, is hardly known or felt; much less is *He* the principal cause of all these diversified movements. It is the power that is wanted, not clever men only. We want those who carry God with them—in them. Where *He is*, though it be in a "Yorkshire ploughman,"—if *He be* there, there will be no lack of real

wisdom and heavenly understanding. Though it be locked up close even from the man's own knowledge, yet when the time comes for service, *in the will of God*, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.

Though the mystery of iniquity should become more mysterious a thousand-fold, there will always be those who, through Christ, shall plumb its depths even to the very bottom: but they will not necessarily be either clever men, or clever writers. God hath chosen another class generally, who are sufficiently humble to allow Him to ride in or upon them. He knows infinitely well how your clever men are given to riding upon His, and—shocking to have to pen it, yet really true—upon Him. Yes, loading Him with their sensible, Scriptural, but carnal, chat, swelling out and drawing in, lifting up their arms and eyes to heaven; but really and truly having nor light, nor life, from Him. Bellowing like bulls of Bashan, or wheedling like fleshly lovers, but full of all uncleanness within: always “washing in the blood,” but remaining as filthy as Sodom, and worse than Gomorrah—fair as angels, but treacherous as devils.

These are the wolves in sheep's clothing, to whom you would say, “*your propositions are good*, but you should seek for the very life of that faith, the buoyancy of that hope.” Alas! alas! my brother, this is blowing the horn for the Devil, with all your might, though you know it not.

Hear the truth of the matter. The “propositions,” as they hold them, are carnal lies; for as a man is, so is his faith; or as a man's faith is, so is he. Have you forgotten that true faith has its principal element of God—that it is a fruit of the Spirit? That the life and power of it are truly divine, and that only as man has this divine principle, can he either see, know, or believe aright? You say, they have the faith, because they hold the words of some scriptural proposition—they have the faith, but they want the life of it. Know ye not that a body without a soul is dead? How can that which is dead have anything?

It is only as the Life is given that faith exists. The Life—not belief—brings or gives the faith: belief neither brings nor gives life or true faith. These are the free gift of God in Christ Jesus. But then *you know all this*: for in the very letter where you are transforming false prophets into true, by a gentle application of old Windsor and rose-water, you say—“In Christ the substance was an essential entity, so that He knew, not by searching, but in being what He was; and this, in measure, must be true with any who are to be living witnesses, not dead repeaters of what they hear, and read, and in their wisdom-part apprehend.”

And again—“A knowledge acquired from books, etc., etc., is not the same as that which is from the growth within of the *substance of all knowledge*”!!

Oh, my brother, how loath every child of man is to receive and believe that it is through death that we have life. FOLLOWING *the Master*, either through thick or thin, rough or smooth, hot or cold, something or nothing, doing or leaving undone, being or not being,—diligently, faithfully, FOLLOWING—then comes quickly, in His will, the enjoyment of Salem, the City of Peace.

Farewell.

Don't let the enemy persuade you—ah! he is jealous of clever men. It is not so. All good things are *esteemed* in their place: but let me have that which is of God in preference to all besides. To this you say, Amen.

102.

KNOWLEDGE, UNION, AND LOVE.

8. 4. 73.

* * * * *

On these few words from your letter suffer the word of exhortation. Without charging you with affirming that knowledge may bring satisfaction, it would hardly be too much to say that the above implies as much. Be this as it may, really and substantially this is not the case. Knowledge in no case brings lasting satisfaction to the soul, because of itself it is not a living divine entity. Satisfaction, contentment, or peace, of a real and lasting character, arises, as to the root of it, in man, from Divine Union—such a union between the divine Spirit and the spirit of man, as brings into, or rather develops in the spirit and soul, a constant flow of love and confidence, supported by a sensible sweetness or evenness of mind, such as nothing but a divine power and supernatural life can impart. Now this, of itself, is not knowledge, nor wisdom, nor this, nor that; though these things are from it, or wrapped up in it. The nearest definition of it possible to language perhaps would be, a sense of God; an unfolding of the mystery of God; an embodiment of God in the spirit of man: a partaking of the Divine nature. The principal outgoing or uprising from this union, as sensibly felt by man, is Love. As the union becomes more vital and confirmed, the Love becomes stronger, brighter, deeper, quieter—unutterable, immeasurable.

* * * * *

“Thinking,” and doing, and leaving undone, as from man’s will, or imagination, or wisdom, will do little or nothing here. There is only one path to union and perfection, or the full resurrection of Christ in us: *that is, by*

and through Christ, to get hold of the Divine Will, in that present measure of it made known (this is of the utmost importance, as lying at the root of all genuine exercise of spirit), and to hold thereby in humility and fear; pleading only when liberty is given, and patiently and watchfully bearing all trials, provings, and turnings of the Divine Hand, till the internal City of Peace is gained.

It is this thinking, and reasoning, and running, and doing, and leaving undone, in own will, that spoils all. Bring all this to an end by looking for His salvation, as above: then all may be well.

As to knowledge—that is, spiritual and divine knowledge—it is not a sensible entity, or living possession. It lies locked up, sealed up, in the divine nature and will, and is developed when needed, or rather realized, as is pleasing to the divine Father, who withholds hardly anything from those who are, by divine grace, perfectly united to Him in Love—made one.

But knowledge, divine knowledge, never runs freely, pierces swiftly, or plumbs deeply, except as the Holy Will is in it, carrying it forward with heavenly force; the creature meanwhile remaining passive as to willing this, that, or the other—entirely passive.

There is a danger to the creature in going out with, or exercising, knowledge; for it is an expenditure of its force, while handling, as it were, the divine power: thus leading towards a temptation to pride—the condemnation of the Devil.

Love, on the other hand, strengthens, gathers in, brings together, makes one: while knowledge opens out, separates, and extends; taking the mind from its centre, and bringing into being a source of delight, which may lead off from the force and cohesion of divine union—holy Love: raising up or generating an outside sweetness, which is not altogether from the essential nature and Spirit of God.

So let those who desire knowledge and a sound understanding lose sight of these altogether, as objects of independent regard. They are not the bread of Life, but only accidental to it.

The love-union is all. All is wrapped up in it : so if all that you speak of above is to be given up, let it be as an inflowing of the divine Will and Nature floods them out ; or you will only plunge yourself into spiritual difficulties, from which you will not without great loss of time be delivered.

In love,

— . — . — .

103.

SPIRITUAL SUBJECTION.

13. 4. 73.

THE Father and the Son are one, not only in the Lord Jesus, but in every member of the body : so there is an absolute subjection called for, *in the very nature of things*, to that of God in a brother who is of advanced growth in the Truth. This would appear to favour spiritual despotism, and to establish a superiority of command one over the other, inimical to that sole allegiance which we each owe to the Blessed One alone. Yes : so it seems, to a superficial view : but when the foundations are looked to, this will be found to be an error. There is no despotism in God : and in the same proportion as God and man become one, there is no despotism in man. Moses was a man slow of speech, but chosen of God : and though, when his status was questioned and resisted, the opposers went to the wall, and he stood out more clearly the faithful servant of God, yet when a question of spiritual despotism was really to be decided, it was not he

who proved to be the despot, but his servant. What said the man of God? Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them.

So it is: there is no jealousy in the hearts of those who are one with Him—in Him. If by speaking a word they could bring glory to God, by raising all their brethren above themselves, they would speak it at once, and do it with heartfelt satisfaction, and loving joy.

104.

CHRISTED WITH CHRIST.

16. 4. 73.

BUT you “do see how the written testimonies in most minute details are of value, as in the case of the Greek ἐν.” Not much of that. I do see that each one twists these things like a nose of wax, and that Lachmann and Tischendorff say one thing, Dean Alford another, and ————— something else. I also see that when so much stress is laid upon these things, the only true good is neglected or slighted: for when, by force of reason, certain points seem to be established—what then, and then, and then? Can you command the Spirit to blow? Or call upon the Blessed One to visit your soul in such a way as, and at the time that, you choose, with a certainty of success? Certainly not: neither can you be assured that any other can do the same thing. Therefore it is clear that a movement from above—now, now, now—is worth infinitely more than all the minute criticisms that the world has seen, or ever shall see.

What is required is to be *Christed with Christ*. Don't you see that these verbal criticisms, and many-sided talk about what Paul, and Peter, and James said, have the

very life's blood of Antichrist in them? Supposing it were possible—which it is not—to be perfectly certain on all these points, this certainty would alter nothing at the root of things. Man, religious man, might, and doubtless would, set about rectifying his conduct and belief, but this, at best, is only gilding a rotten post, patching an old garment—all of which, in the place of helping forward the work of the Lord, only hinders the putting forth of His Hand. Who is to *Christ us with Christ*? This simple question ought to put away all unholy tinkering, or gildings, or patchings, as far as East from West, causing the soul to pant after Him—the living Blessed One—as the hart longeth after the water-brooks. Yes: hunger and thirst after Him, with an unutterable hunger and thirst, that ye may be filled. Don't be deceived: there is no being filled, without passing through this. This is the gauge or measure of the fulness which will follow. If there be not, or has not been, an alternate mighty force of desire and love, and love and desire, which is or was unutterable, and known only to the Blessed One, and the soul exercised thereby, that conversion and regeneration has ended, or will end, in wind.

God wants vessels to carry Him about; not pedantic schoolmasters, rhetorical preachers, or most judicious Christian men. The world needs God, not man: the Spirit, not learning: Christ, not eloquence. We need *Christing with Christ*. Glory be to God and the Lamb for ever. "Whatsoever ye ask shall be done." My brother beloved, burn your books; throw your quibs and quiddities to the winds; leave your judicious prudence behind the door; and so force an entrance, by holy hunger and thirst, into the very inner place of Divine Rest; that you may know what it is to be *Christed with Christ*, and experience, beyond all words, a flowing out of the belly of that water, which is nectar to the Angels, and the bread and wine of the Kingdom of God.

It is not judicious talk about this that will do. There is a time when this may be allowed and enjoyed, but it is only now and then ; and *then* only because of the weakness of the vessel. At no rate is this to be the best thing, but rather the worst, because of infirmities.

Oh, the Cross, the Cross, the fiery Cross!
 By it who would gain,
 The strife must maintain
 To death, were it needed, with Christ on the Cross.

105.

QUAKERISM AND BRETHRENISM.

21. 4. 73.

My Brother,

SUFFER a few words on that of worship. In all our movements for God, there must be a recognition of things that be ; and a co-working with Him against the prince of darkness, in every degree and form of his appearance. There are no sudden movements either in nature or grace : old trees die out, and new ones are planted in their place. Yet when things grow so dead and rotten, as seemingly to be fit only for the fire ; before the axe is laid to the root of any particular tree, its antecedents must, in some sort, be known and thought of, in connection with its present condition, before the blessed God.

If you compare " Quakerism " with " Brethrenism," going back to their first planting, you will find that the one was eminently a work of God, and the other of man. There were mighty movements from above amongst the first Quakers ; evidences of which are left, even now, to the opened eye, in that uniformity of testimony that ran through their first writings—a testimony for that which is of God, against that which is of man : of the Spirit, against the flesh : of a present and continued revelation, or manifestation, of God in man, as a subject of the Kingdom of God, taking the lead in all his thinkings, sayings, and

doings ; in opposition to man, by his own wit, learning, and wisdom, working with the Scriptures, and by them forming a rule of action, and guide of life.

On the other hand, Brethrenism has nothing of this to show, having sprung principally from a bottom of flesh—learned men sneering at others, and by a close study of the Scriptures endeavouring to make good those sneers, and to settle a course of Christian life from the records of Power and Life manifested nearly two thousand years ago ; while remaining, as to themselves, destitute of the present manifestation of the Spirit, in any tangible degree of clearness and power.

Even at this day, there are those among the Quakers, who hold to the testimonies of their forefathers with considerable consistency and sincerity ; and who are sufficiently instructed by Divine grace to obstruct, in some measure, the putting under foot—so common in the Society—of the truth experienced by their predecessors. So though Quakerism, in England, as a manifestation of pure Christianity, is fast dying out ; yet, taking England and America, with the Colonies, together, there are many well-instructed souls, who walk before God in humility and love, and are visited occasionally with out-beamings of the ancient power.

In dealing, therefore, with these different bodies of professors, an eye must be kept towards what they were in their youth ; and mercy and pity shown, in proportion to their antecedent, as well as present, standing in the Truth.

Quakerism was evidently a work of the Most High, and has made a mark upon the “Christian World,” so called, which may never be entirely obliterated.

Brethrenism, at its best estate, was only a heresy against pure Christianity ; a setting up, through the Scriptures, of man against God—of the flesh against the Spirit. It has the mark of Cain upon it, hasty and self-willed, though religious, Cain : and his blood and life are in it, even to this day. The other found favour and love, with Abel ; and his spirit remains, in measure, with this people, here

and there, to this day. God, the blessed God, forgets not the seed of the righteous to many generations. So let us handle them gently for His sake, being wise as serpents, and harmless as doves ; cleaving to that pure wisdom that cometh from above, which easily seeth the things of God, not judging according to the outward appearance of things, but righteous judgment.

It has pleased the Father to draw us from these heresies against pure Christianity ; and to convince us that even that power and purity, manifested through the first Quakers, is, so far as they are a Society, fast dying clean out, and being supplemented by the loose, soulish, preaching and praying of this day. Yet though this be the case, I doubt not you will be shown that they must be borne with ; yet not in such a way as to prejudice the Truth. It is clear to my mind, at the same time, that we must so work with God, and live in Him, that He may favour us with powerful visitations of Life, Power, and Love : so that through us, as instruments, a fresh appearance of Christ in His saints may be made known, reviving that faith and love tasted at Pentecost, and more or less manifested at different times since ; and not often more fully than amongst the first generations of the Quakers.

It is evident that the present crisis will need a clear coming forth of the Divine Power, so that we may walk without stilts, standing firmly, as men of God, in the Truth. But nothing is too much for Him to do for those who truly love Him. He knows that it is vain to pull down with the left hand, if, by Divine Power and grace, we have not ability to raise up with the right. This Power is wrapped up in the mystery of Christ, and always accompanies those, without exception, who confine their thinkings, speakings, and doings, for Him, within the limits of the present manifestation of His Will, through, in, and by, Christ Jesus. Be this your lot, says the soul of yours, in love,

106.

GOD'S SENT ONES ARE SWALLOWED UP OF HIM.

23. 4. 73.

I HAD a sense yesterday, before yours came to hand, that you were, or had been, getting into mischief. How strange it is that your age, acquirements, and good sense, don't keep you from playing the fool in spiritual matters. I don't mean vulgar folly, but that pleasant, respectable, moral and religious folly, so common at this day, and which neither a "mortar" nor the "cat" will eradicate, but which can be burnt out, or driven out, only by the incomings of Divine Love.

"Questions for all preachers and teachers to consider." If your eyes had been thoroughly opened, you would have seen that these questions are altogether wide of the mark; for if men are preaching and teaching UNSENT, they are just the things to establish them in that soul-destroying heresy, blowing them out with conceit and folly. But IF SENT, He that sent them will teach them what to say, and how to say it. "He that is with you shall be in you"—not as a dummy surely, but giving the light of life.

All that about conscience is well enough for a Scotch professor of moral philosophy, but has little or nothing to do with a *servant of God*. These have to preach to man as a creature fallen from God, avoiding hair-splitting, as they would the black death, and must take it for granted that He who saves by preaching, as a means, will bring it to bear upon *that of man* which needs most to be smitten.

The radical error of this paper, and your whole life *now*, is a fond conceit that men are to be saved through their understanding: when, in fact, the real centre and substance of this operation is the working of God in the heart. You at once respond—"I know that." But it is not what is *said*, but what is *done*, that indicates truly the quality of the interior life in man—his working knowledge.

I say unto you, my brother, you can benefit the world, only so far as you yourself become swallowed up of God; and speak as His mouth-piece, through Christ brought forth in you, to the people—that is, if you have a call thereto.

Surely God and His Love are enough, when you have Him truly in your heart to speak from, without pulling in by the heels metaphysical crotchets, and subtleties, which come in and go out of fashion, like women's bonnets, and have no end. These things are fit only for subdolous Greeks, and moral Scotchmen, who, while over head and ears in psychological contemplations, are mostly as far or farther from the present enjoyment of God than marauding Tartars.

In love,

— . — . — .

Look well to the gravity of the situation. If the Blessed One really lives in you, stick to Him—with all your heart, love, and thought. Hold by Him: He is worthy, worthy, worthy. All short of this is little better than push-pin, hockey, and bagatelle.

107.

CHRISTIAN STEADFASTNESS AND GROWTH.

24. 4. 73.

Dear _____,

DON'T be shaken or easily moved in your mind by anything past, present, or future. The Blessed One—ever Blessed—is a Rock that cannot be moved. As all is taken away that is not of Him, stability and Salem, the City of Peace, are gained.

All that has befallen those who have gone before, and especially those whom you have seen in the flesh, in a way of departure from, or loss of, the Truth, may act favourably as warnings against falling into the same errors.

These shakings mostly leave a few faithful souls, who have a hunger and thirst after God, that neither Hell, nor Death, nor the Devil, can take away. So, my son, shut that eye which would look too much towards the failings of others, and keep that well open and watchful which bears upon faithfulness, long-suffering, and truth, in yourself.

You are called of God to stand by His blessed truth in the quarter of the world in which you live, and to become a father to those who are of a weaker mind than yourself; see to it that you lose not your election by pride, worldliness through prosperity, or any other failing in true love, or departure from Him, who is the source and end of all true good.

You can become a true father in God, and shepherd over His flock, only as you are made one with Him, of Him, in Him. All other influence and power in religion will soon pass away. This comes only through His favour and love, and the daily cross; and is without limit or end. I say not that there is not a time when the cross may become easy and light, yea, become no cross; but this does not generally come to pass except through many turnings, trials, and provings, and some years' servitude in the blessed truth. If therefore you would see the Land of Beulah before you become, as to the body, a tottering old man, make a covenant with Him *to die to all but Him*: yea verily, die, die, die, till nothing of the flesh has power unfavourably either to reign or move.

If you can carry your wife along with you in this, well: if not, you need not be discouraged, for this kingdom comes not to outward observation, nor of the will of the flesh, but is the gift of God in Christ. Only so far as you enter into it, you will of necessity become the best of husbands, the most excellent of fathers, and an honourable man.

So, dear ———, live IN and for God ALONE, that the ancient Pentecostal glory may burn, as a genial heavenly fire, in the inner holy place of the heart.

Thy brother for Christ's sake,

— . — . — .

108.

A BLOW AT THE ROOT OF FALSE HOLINESS.

27. 4. 73.

My Brother,

THE arguments in your letters were not formally answered, not because that would have been a difficult task, or that there was much force of truth in them, spiritually and divinely considered. On the contrary, they show how weak your position is, as is that of all who undertake to handle divine matters beyond their reach and measure, in their own will and strength.

Seeing that you were capable of much pains-taking and labour, to support anything that you might have said or written, before you could, or would, say simply, I was wrong; there appeared little use of striving with you from that side of the matter. There is no end of ingenious quibbling. Good reasons are of little use, when opposed to self-will and spiritual ignorance—especially when these qualities are engaged for “the glory of God.” However, that you may not have any just cause to complain that an elder brother passed you by, without striving to bring you out of the air, to stand upon your own feet—and more, to stand with both feet upon the only Rock, Immanuel, God with us, we of and in Him—being moved thereto, the first of your arguments shall, with the divine blessing,

be looked to: and the more so, as it is supplemented with a solemn preachment about "standing off from all unrighteousness," which shows that, when you had done your best by reason to make good your position, not feeling over well satisfied with the stability of that part of your work, a little bit of mimic thunder was thought necessary to bring your recalcitrant brother, as you might well think, to order. Alas! alas! my brother, the Devil in lawn sleeves, or other robes, blowing an eloquent religious horn, is a thing of so common occurrence, taking a range of the last fifteen or sixteen hundred years, that you might well have spared yourself the trouble of playing that kind of music, with the hope of any success, to your brother
— . — . — .

"My brother has recorded" [you say] "that, abiding in Christ, the veriest babe sinneth not; that it is a small thing for the ever-blessed God to keep His child from sinning: and yet can declare that it is utterly false for me to tell a sinner that Christ can make him quite holy, and to assure him that till he is quite holy he cannot have come to Christ."

Now, in the first place, this is a false statement of the case. What — . — . — . did say, *nor more nor less*, was that to "assure him (a sinner) that, till he is quite holy, he cannot have come to Christ, was, *as a general proposition, utterly false.*"

When any one is so far put to it, as to have to make the show of an argument from such comparisons as these, the cause that he has in hand cannot be a good one.

That he who abides in Christ sins not, cannot be denied, or even questioned, by a truly spiritual man. That it is a small matter with the Blessed One to keep His child from sin is equally self-evident. But what has either of these immovable propositions to do with assuring a sinner that, till he is quite holy, he cannot have come to Christ?

That, as a "*general proposition,*" this is utterly false, is clear from the very nature of the case. No man can come

to Christ, except the Father draw him: but, under the drawings of the Father, there is a true coming to Christ by repentance, a repentance unto life, which causes a giving up of sin, so far as the will and ability of man are concerned, and a turning to God with full purpose of heart, even to working righteousness: and frequently, while in this condition, visitations of relief and power are felt, cheering on to hope, till the time of entire, or further, deliverance comes.

Now, to tell a sinner, even at this stage of his experience, as a "general proposition," that he cannot have come to Christ, is utterly false: because, so far as *he is concerned*, he may have come with all his heart and soul; while, at the same time, it may not have pleased the Father so clearly and fully to have revealed His Son in him, as to bring with Him entire holiness.

The very fact of putting these three propositions—two true ones with one false—together, thereby to cause the false one to be swallowed, shows that, if the writer of the false one were to be judged by his own statement, *he* has not even come to Christ. For surely that holiness which is compatible with laboriously striving to pass spiritual lies as the blessed truth, is not of God, but of man, if not of the Devil.

The root-error of this false proposition is a belief that man can, under certain conditions, by the aid of the Scriptures, bring himself into a given state of salvation or deliverance, in his own will and time, by believing this, that, or the other: when, in fact, nothing can be more dangerously false. Passing to extremes of this kind is a poor way of seeking to remedy the present dead state of things amongst professors of religion. Little good can come, in the end, of so teaching that they are led to believe, that by some spiritual movement, like unto a somersault, they are to be made quite holy; and, what is worse still, that this wonderful feat is within the compass of their own power and will. This is one of the most subtle movements

of the prince of darkness : bringing those who are affected thereby to a vain confidence that all that they believe “according to the Scriptures” is brought to pass—thus making the will of man to take the place of the Divine Will ; and, as a consequence, when no truly Divine Life and Power follows, then false made-up experience is the result, and men, sensible in other respects, become, in religion, the playthings and tools of the Devil, persuading themselves and others that they are quite holy, when, at the same time, they are compelled to admit that they are blind, ignorant, and wrong-headed, in reference to the things of the kingdom of God ; and, if honest with themselves, might soon see that they have really no more spiritual power, or light, than those whom they affect to teach, except so far as by the force of memory, reason, and imagination, working from the Scriptures, they bring themselves up to the belief of this and that.

The true experience of holiness, however, is known only in a quiet habitation—man, as to reasoning, willing, and doing, in the things of God, becoming passive ; and the Divine Life, Power, and Spirit, becoming all in all. He that writes from this bottom has no trouble with making difficult points of doctrine agree : the Fountain of Life in himself, without any help, necessarily, from any writings whatever, being enough to lead him in the way of truth and peace.

So, my brother, I say again—Come down from your stilts ; and cast away the peacock feathers and stolen jewellery that adorn your person ; and be content to walk in the present measure of grace imparted, be it little or much, that you may really come, if possible, into Salem, the *City of Peace*.

In true love,

—, —, —.

109.

CONSCIENCE.

1. 5. 73.

* * Conscience, as generally understood, is that of man which is capable of receiving moral and religious impressions. If it were left entirely alone by God and man, there is not sufficient ground to suppose that, of itself, it would work as a fountain, or living active source, of good. But neither the most Blessed, nor man, lets it alone, especially in what are called Christian nations : for as soon as intelligence begins to dawn, in some way or other, more or less, conscience is operated upon, either by earthly, or heavenly, influence and power.

Now, to give a clear distinction between these two powers working upon the conscience, so that men may get hold of it, and talk about it, is impossible : for it is one of the deep things of the kingdom to discern, by the divine Spirit, between soul and spirit ; between that which is of earth, and that which is of heaven ; what is of God, and what of man. That there is a distinction is certain, but the knowledge thereof is not tangible, or rather is not common to man, as man, in his ordinary condition, or fallen state.

The general operations of the Divine Spirit are on, or in, the conscience : so also are the operations of man, and law, and custom, and belief, with the reflex action of the mind upon itself. It is not, therefore, till by attention and use, under the regenerating influence and power of the Spirit, that man is brought to know, with clearness and certainty, the one from the other. So the question in yours, whether what is called conscience was not in fact something else, is not susceptible of any general or particular answer, except so far as each individual may have been exercised within himself thereon before the most Blessed God.

There can be little doubt that when it has pleased the Divine Spirit to work in an unmistakable manner, either

by extreme pressure, so to speak, as applicable to strong-willed men (N. B.), or those elected for special service ; or more gently and continuously, as is often the case where the original constitution of the mind may be of the cast of Lydia's, something is effected in man, as a spiritual being, which may answer, in some sort, to the parable of the 8th of Luke : but to say that that parable was intended to teach this, or to form a ground from which it is to be taught dogmatically, would be straining that, which in its simplicity is good, into a complex form, which, as a rule, would be bad.

No parables are, or ever were intended, to be rigidly interpreted, or to insinuate the existence of anything of a nature to supplant, or supersede, the present, immediate, teaching of Him, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

— . — . — . has never made any man, or number of men, to be a law to you : but only cast before you their writings, as a *passing* testimony in favour of the indwelling life and Spirit of the eternal God, who is—blessed be His great name—a thousand-fold more than enough for all that we need.

All this far-reaching, and deep-sinking, of the natural man—muddy and shallow enough in reality—is only disguised atheism, false philosophy, or irreligion, in some measure or another : for if a man really wants to please the Blessed One *at any price*, he has not to come here, or go there, or look up yonder, to find Him. HE is always, and everywhere, present to a simple, broken, and contrite, heart ; and giveth wisdom to those who are worthy of it, and with a right disposition ask for it.

So there is ten thousand times more hypocrisy and false-heartedness in this prevalent Babel of religious talk, than any but the Blessed One knows of : and just in proportion as the saints become swallowed up of, and one with, the interior sweetness of His divine light- and life-giving Presence, and are changed by it from one degree of light,

love, and strength, to another, it becomes distasteful as old wives’ fables : as also do all things of the flesh, however much they may appear as though they sprang from, or led to, that which can be truly made known by the Spirit of God alone.

In true love,

— . — . — .

P.S. The operation of evil and good spirits upon man has not been mentioned, yet not therefore denied, or ignored. It would only have loaded the subject with matter foreign to your questions.

110.

THE SCRIPTURES, AND “SCRIPTURAL” WRITINGS.

8. 5. 73.

My Brother,

ALL your laborious and tortuous arguments are in vain. The dilemma is with yourself, not with — . — . — . You have begun to teach others on a subject of which you are ignorant yourself : so have added to the number of those blind guides in Babel, who bring confusion and deceit, not a blessing.

If you know not the difference between what is understood as coming to Christ, and being so born of God as to be in Him, with power and ability to abide there—as you evidently do not—there is no wonder that you should wish to lay your dilemma at your neighbour’s door. But think you that this will excuse you before the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning? The last letter sent to you [No. 108] was evidently brought forth under the influence of the Key of David, as your

answer to it abundantly proves to the opened eye : for had you not written another word beyond what is found there, any man of God—or child really in the Truth—would see through your gathered stuff, and observe your Scriptural stilts, as easily as you would know that your servant was a thief, who, having run away, was dressed up, when found, in the last clothes that you had from your tailor.

You are quite mistaken, if you think that the Blessed One will give liberty to open your eyes on the mysteries of the Kingdom, when there is manifested a tenacious spirit of error and self-will. Nothing of the kind. If all the follies of your last were taken to pieces before your eyes, in your present state of mind, they would not bring you to repentance for having published, and blown abroad, spiritual lies. As long as the Devil and you together can find anything in the New Testament, so called—which it is very easy to do—that may be twisted or shown to prove that the letter of your Tract has the semblance of right, you will march off with flying colours.

But the object of every true servant of God is to bring people to stand upon a Rock that cannot be moved—not to settle them on a foundation of old clothes, wood, and stubble ; though these may, every whit of them, appear to be of Scriptural origin.

He that cannot speak or write for God, as well without the Scriptures as with them, *as to the root, ground, and substance* of the subject, may be a clever man, but he is not a prophet of the Lord, nor a true servant of God.

What Paul, and Peter, and others, have said on the mysteries of the Kingdom, is of inexpressible value, in its place : but all of it together is utterly valueless AS A SPRING OF LIFE. Yea more, it is, in thousands of cases, *and yours is one of them*, worse than valueless, being made to take the place of THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE.

A present sober, meek, possession, through Christ, of the Spirit and Kingdom of God, is worth infinitely more to its possessor than all Scriptures, either lost or found,

corrupt or pure, that have been given forth since the foundation of the world. Whoever touches them as an interpreter, not having the Key of David in himself, is sure to wrest them to the destruction of himself and others. They, of themselves, can no more show what is false, and what true, of the Kingdom of God, *where the mystery of iniquity is concerned*, than coals can give heat without fire. If there be not the same Spirit in the reader, who professes to teach the way of God, that was in the writer, they bring blackness, dirt, and cumber, in the place of fire, heat, and life.

So again I say—Come to the measure of Christ in you, and abide in it, not going out. All this climbing up another way is but the occupation of a thief and robber.

111.

MAN MOULDING HIMSELF BY SCRIPTURE. AN UNBELIEVING OUTLOOK ON THE WORLD.

14. 5. 73.

SOMETHING has to be said to yours, though at first it was desired to pass it over.

If it be a pleasure to you to know that there are those in the world, sufficiently interested to feel sickness of heart on your behalf, you have it within your grasp. Yours has cost a day and part of two nights of burden and travail. Your state is seen, and the burden of it felt: so, to get relief, a few words, going to the root of the matter, must be sent.

“Nothing is true *to me* merely because I find it in the Scripture, or because it is there, beyond all controversy: it is true to me only so far as God makes it my life.”

There is a great truth in these words of yours, though put in a wrong form. Get the Truth—that is, Christ, who

is the Life also—at any price, by all lawful means: but do not chalk out the form and features thereof, according to what you can make of it by Scripture, and then look to the Blessed One to give it life, beauty and vigour. By so doing, you make Him—the Blessed One—to serve, which He will not do, cannot do. If He has chosen you, He wants you to talk, not like Paul, John, or Peter; but like yourself. They spoke well, *from the Fountain of Life*, to those to whom they were sent, in their day: so will you, when in the same light and life with them, if sent, to those of this day. If not, hold your peace.

It is this error that keeps ———— where he is: you have got into a higher and more refined figure of it.

The Scriptures are not to give life, nor the form of it; but are precious, in their place, in competent hands, as a touchstone, to demonstrate to others the quality of the life professed or possessed.

That charge of *self-righteous or unbelieving eye* cannot be turned to one side. In proportion as these things [*i.e.*, the state of the world, and half-hearted religious doings] are seen by the light and life of God (Christ) in man, they are seen with composure and confidence, as the rule; which increases awe, love, and trust: but in proportion as they are seen by man, as a religious, intellectual, creature only, they are seen from a self-righteous, unbelieving eye or bottom. Thus seeing them has a tendency to increase that life and nature, in substance, though in ever so subtle a form; and will be found not really to join to Him, in confidence and love; but to drive to theory and notion, of a religious, philosophical, and it may be, scriptural, cast, that has the semblance of something great and good about it, but, at heart and bottom, is only Satan as an Angel of Light.

In love,

— . — . — .

112.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE AND DIVINE UNION.

20. 5. 73.

YES: that was for our friend ———— : but, at the same time, some parts of it were equally applicable to you. You have often given me sickness of heart, when writing on this subject; because, in doing so, you give evidence that the Life, with you, is something like what ———— by implication describes it to be, “the subjective reality of objective truth:” clearly showing that he knows, or knew, little or nothing of it truly.

The drift of yours that came to hand last night corroborates this, and made me feel like a mother towards her rickety child.

However, *much* more may not be said on the subject. It is a mystery, which possession alone can unfold, and give power in measure to speak rightly on: so there it must be left.

You write about the Life as though it were one thing in Christ, and another in His members—“He speaking from what He essentially was, and we from what we are made, do possess, are joined with by God.”

Christ, as He was man, received, spoke, and was made in every way like His brethren: so this talk about His speaking from what He essentially was, and they from what they are made to be, is not of the Light of Life, but darkness.

So also is that about God so honouring, or “putting honour” on, the Scriptures, as that a Son of God cannot now-a-days declare anything of the kingdom of God, but it will be found that he has been in reality expounding what was already in the Scriptures.

It is admitted that the Life is one in all who are begotten of God: but the way in which you speak of it manifests a great ignorance of the whole matter, in its universal

application. God by Christ in His members now discerns, testifies to, and speaks of that, which neither the Prophets, nor Christ—as He was man—nor the Apostles, either saw, or knew.

The fulness of God dwelt in Christ ; but the same fulness, in measure, lives in the members of His body : and if necessity requires—and it may require it some day—the members will not only equal, but overtop, the Head in mighty works.

Would you make a schism in that holy body which is one ?

You are evidently ignorant that, though the Father and Son are one, yet they are not more so than Christ and His saints ; and that God had, or has, no more love for the Head, than He has for the members of the body ; and that the mystery of God through the members will more and more unfold itself to the perfect day. There is no stronger hold of the prince of darkness than that which makes the Head one thing, and the body another.

In love,

— . — . — .

113.

THE SECRET OF THE PATH OF LIFE.

23. 5. 73.

NO : my brother, you must not abstain from writing on account of the pain [occasioned to me] : the pain is a pleasure, *as it is suffered for the Seed.*

A woman forgets her travail, when she clasps her son in her arms. There is nothing great or good brought forth for eternity without pain. When you get both feet upon the Rock, you will rejoice in tribulation also. We

must have fellowship with Christ even in sin-bearing—spiritually—with or for others. He felt the sin of the world before He was nailed to the cross. All those whom He chooses to help the Seed must have fellowship with Him in this part of His work.

There is no want of patience on your behalf: but I long for you to become a true and mighty soldier of the Lamb—*simply to stand in that measure of His Nature imparted: neither to speak nor act beyond this.* It is all in this last sentence. Come to this, and He that spoke and said, Peace, be still; will calm the high-running seas. O, I am glad that they run so high, because it bespeaks that your foundations are to be laid deep: and what a brother you will then become. O, the Love of the Spirit, that will flow through your vessel in the unity of the Seed in God.

* * * Nothing but Christ will pass with the Father. He is in your heart; and you and He will soon be one, if you will only be content to abide in Him, and bring all imaginations and reasons to His feet.

Here is the path to Heaven—TO GOD—in a few words that go to the root of all mystical, high-flying whoredom, and evangelical Ranterism. ABIDE HIS APPEARANCE IN JUDGMENT. Keep very low, when He appears as on Tabor. And watch towards Him in love to the end.

In love,
Yes—more than dare be spoken—

— . — . — .

114.

DIVINE CONCERN THE ONLY AUTHORITY FOR
WRITING OR PRINTING.

24. 5. 73.

* * * The great secret in this matter of writing and printing is this—never to do so without a sense of duty, backed up by an internal assurance from the Spirit, that if the thing is not done, you will suffer loss of the Divine favour.

Or, from another stand-point, never print but under a Divine concern of mind, sufficiently strong to control the current of what is written, and to bring the light of Divine favour.

When anything is thus printed, it carries with it a true Divine tincture—as real a substance, spiritually, as gold is a substance in nature—that Divine tincture remaining with it for ever.

Writings containing propositions in matters of religion, as true as $2 \times 2 = 4$, (put with good taste, and capable of being defended as true propositions from mystical and spiritual grounds,) if not thus strung together in and under a spiritual influence, carry not with them this Divine tincture, and cannot be freely given by a man of God, because they do not convey that spiritual influence, in which, if he be faithful, he continually lives, acts, and moves. It would be like a rich man picking out, to give to the poor, such sixpences as, though they have just so much of the mark on them as to make them a legal tender, every honest-hearted man hates to *give* away. So, my brother, take warning by this in future, and don't let your well-formed head, and tutored mind, make a fool of you, spiritually, any more. God's Will ought to be kept to, though the consequence be the instant sending of every man, woman, and child, upon the earth, MYSELF included, in the twinkling of an eye, to Hell.

* * * The truth is, my brother, it is such doings as these [writing without Divine call] that hinder otherwise "worthy" and "excellent" men from entering into the sunlight of heavenly day.

None enter *Salem*, but those whose estimate of self stands thus at Lloyds'—fool and ass A. 1.

115.

GOD'S SALVATION IS TO IMPART HIS OWN NATURE.

28. 5. 73.

“ I HAVE certainly never met with a single soul before, who had learned this mystery thus,” etc., etc., [*i. e.*, “by immediate revelation of God.”]

Then you never met with a soul who knew anything worth knowing of the matter : for what is *really* known of God can be known only by the Spirit of Life and Revelation within. No man knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him ; not by words or propositions, but by the birth, or a birth, of Himself in him, which carries the creature into a new Life. What has been said to you, and ———, and our friend ——— continually? *Get to the measure of Christ in yourselves.* That is, confine yourselves to His spiritual appearance in you, and do not meddle with the Scriptures, or good books, or any other thing that *leads you beyond*, or would keep you below, this.

This is God's gift and salvation, and is worthy of Him, and altogether another thing from words and propositions ; though all holy words and propositions are wrapped up in it, subordinate only to the will and direction of God as to their appearance.

God's Life and Divine nature constituted Him the Jehovah, though He had never brought forth the Word Christ, or a single proposition, or Angels, or men. His salvation is to impart His own Nature to us, in us; from which, as from an infinite abyss, will flow forth, in His Will, rivers of living water.

Read all the letters that you have received with this key, and new light will rise through them all: and you will see how reasonable it was to warn you against patching the old garment, dealing in old clothes, and working the oracle through Scripture and reason, the lives of good men, and the doings of the Saints.

Have you not been told that, if Christ be in you, He will not be a dummy, nor what you can make Him by the Scriptures; but will prove Himself to be Immanuel: and that you will, in measure, work as did Jesus in Jerusalem, and the Apostles after Pentecost.

Never mind the moorings: let them all go.

Take hold of Christ, the light and life, and abide by Him, and in Him; and all will be well.

Never mind how low His appearance may be: if He chooses that you should know Him only as an Infant for a time, what would you more?

If you are to be fed with the milk of the Divine Life and Word, surely that is enough.

So I say to you, as unto ———, get to the measure of Christ in you, and abide by it and in it, not going out.

In love, for Christ's sake,

— . — . — .

116.

ABUSE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

29. 5. 73.

* * * The abuse of the Scriptures is second only to Popery, in setting up and strengthening spiritual Antichrist at this day. It is just that ignorant, superstitious, reverence, which well-educated men like you have helped to build up and do foster, that continues the evil, and makes *rational*, in the place of *supernatural*, "saints"—Reason, and the Scriptures being put in the place of the Indwelling God.

117.

TRUE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY TO A FAITHFUL
SCRIBE OF HEAVENLY THINGS.

31. 5. 73.

* * * Common sense and prudence might teach him, that what he knows not of God, and Christ, and the mystery of Life, he has no right to teach, and preach to others, as necessary to faith and practice—that, in so doing, he is meddling with God's business upon the earth: and so defiling the consciences of men with false beliefs and notions, that they become like dirty and ill-constructed glasses, incapable of reflecting a true image of Him, who is the out-beaming of the Father's glory, and the express image of His substance. The Prophets and Apostles were called to declare what they knew: not to string passages of Scripture together, the meaning of which they knew not, and then exclaim—"Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot think, for I am a child. I am ignorant, yet not unhappy. I am not perplexed. *I believe.*" This is simply as dust

thrown into the eyes of self and others. It is just what carnal, letter-made saints—who in reality look to be saved because they believe they know not what—have to say to hide their want of Supernatural and Divine Life and Light—which they who are begotten of God have in common with Christ, as He was the Son of Abraham, David, Mary, and of God.

This is that wine which sparkles in the Whore's cup, put there by the serpent, fed on the Scriptures, and passing himself as an angel of light—not Living Water flowing from the bellies of those who are truly and fully born of God. There is no more certainty in such stuff as this than in the book of Tobit, nor half so much. That is an historical account from which something may be learned, and the rest left out by those who have not insight enough to receive it: while the other is a pernicious medicated wine, which, if freely used, ends in habitual drunkenness, idiocy, and death.

So, get to the measure of Christ in you—the true Christ, not the imaginary one—and abide by it, and in it; not going out.

118.

MEN TO BE JUDGED, AS THEY OBEY OR
DESPISE THE LIGHT OF GOD REVEALED WITHIN.

1. 6. 73.

“**T**HE alternative that I have probably never seen half a dozen, or less, who were Christ's, is appalling.”

There are no such sharp alternatives as this in the real state of the case: they are the result of partial, narrow views, or ignorance. Even to begin with rewards and punishments, which differ in an indefinite, if not infinite,

degree—many stripes and few stripes : every man according to his works—the sharpness of the edge is taken off at once. All men will be judged by the reception which they have given, not to dogmas, doctrines, tracts, religious doings, singings, prayings, and sermons ; but to the Light of God—to Christ. Every one who has so come under this power as to fear God, and work righteousness, is accepted of Him, according to his measure, though he may not have attained such a realization of it as to raise him to the dignity and prerogatives of a true Son.

Do make a distinction, palpable as a mountain, and never lose sight of it, between *earnestness in religion*, and humble sincerity towards God—FEELING AFTER HIM.

All these sharp-edged alternatives work for Satan, if carried to extremes by minds which are not sufficiently under the power of the wisdom of God. Wherever there is a sincere desire to please God, and a faithful cleaving to it, though it should take—speaking after the manner of men—a thousand generations, it will have time and place given, either to come to a flame or die out. Sons and Kings there may be comparatively few ; but there will doubtless be millions of millions of servants and subjects.

Two in six hundred thousand was the proportion in the wilderness : there is little doubt but that proportion holds good to this day.

It is zealous religious men who darken the air like locusts, and talk about Hell and Heaven as fools. *They* build upon entering the City by believing this, that, or the other : so naturally think that the more frightfully they may put the alternatives, the more effectually they will drive their hearers into the same path, or faith : some of them foolishly supposing that men will be judged and condemned for not receiving their sermons and windy prayers ; *whereas the flames of hell will kindle in each individual soul, only in proportion as they have done violence to the Light and Grace of God inwardly revealed*, though it may

have been, in some cases, through, or during the time of hearing, a sermon. He that spoke by the false prophet, and his ass, changeth not, and doeth whatsoever He will.

It is when religion is made to consist in this, that, and the other, *which has in reality its spring in man*, rather than the working of God by Christ in the Spirit, that men are led into wrong alternatives and folly: but those who esteem nothing in themselves as worth a rush, but what is of God, don't over-value themselves, or under-value others.

To come under the influence of the light of grace, so as to be benefited by it, does not necessarily imply that men are so born of God, as to be really children of the light; that is, to have life in themselves, keeping them that they sin not. But if any man has so come under the influence and power of the Light, as to faithfully follow it to the loss of all things, if necessary; he will be brought into that unity which is the only true ground of that blessed and happy state—a mystery which no carnal eye can see. * *

119.

THE WAY TO SALEM.—THE HOLY POTTER'S WORK.

11. 6. 73.

* * * *

You may soon come to an end of some difficulties named in yours, about a right application of this knowledge, by asking yourself—How many have a *real visitation of God* in their religious exercises; and are *willing* to go forward, when shown a more excellent “dispensation” than that in which they live? It were wrong hastily to condemn a sincere Papist, till he were fairly dealt with, in setting

before Him the truth in Spirit and Power: and equally so any other professor. Yet there is no more certain touchstone of the genuineness of a religious profession, than a willingness gladly to receive more light from any quarter in the providence of God; because true religion makes the soul *hungry after God*, and there is seldom a stupid resistance, in such, against those who, by the Spirit, are able to show in good demonstration where, and how, He is to be found more fully. Those who cannot do this, ought to hold their peace till they can.

The continuance of a round of religious doings, without a sensible advance in God, is of itself a proof of a wrong state; unless indeed the Rest be attained, *when* the life, as to outward observation, may be always the same, one even flow of strength and peace in the inner holy place, which, with little variation, overcomes all. But in this state, without any intermission, *the Love of God is all in all, growing brighter and brighter to the perfect day*: the only part of the creature being a watchful keeping towards the Beloved, in all circumstances.

* * * *

There is a direct cut to Salem, out of man's will and time, if he will enter it when it is offered. That is, to come under a *divine exercise* of spirit, such as the Blessed One shall vouchsafe, either of condemnation, or consolation, or a mixture of both: and therein to abide, at all costs, doing—in much weakness, it may be—what is laid upon the heart and conscience by the guiding Spirit, and never saying, Enough, till the Master says, It is well. This, I say unto you, outdoes every other way or mode of things whatever, and neither —————, nor any other man or number of men, nor an Angel from heaven, can set you upon a more certain and short path. All is wrapped up in it, and will come out of it, to the advantage of those, infinitely, who have courage and grace to abide by it and in it. Of course every faithful, hungry, soul would like at once to be in the Rest; to step into it, as into a

holy heavenly peace : but it is so arranged, in heavenly wisdom, that in this passage, whether long or short, there are great heavings, tossings, undoings, humblings, stumblings, self-abhorrings, and fiery trials, some of which are from the weakness of the creature, but all of which together make up the beating of the clay, the turning upon the wheel, the drying, beautifying, and, after all, burning, of the Holy Potter's work, so that the heavenly and Divine treasure of His Wisdom, Power, and *Love*, may be safely contained in the earthen vessel. The only way in which the creature can at all shorten this path, which, I dare say, appears somewhat dreadful, is by faithfully and watchfully obeying what is clearly made known from hour to hour by the Blessed Spirit of God.

My brother, there is no other way to perfect rest for man.

In love,

— . — . — .

P.S. You will observe that there is a way of shortening the path out of mutability into stability of Love and Peace—*faithful, watchful, obedience*.

It is very dangerous to write to those whose mental operations are wont to proceed with all the precision of a Babbage's Calculator. When such a one looks at the path of life under the similitude of an operation on the wheel of the Potter, then go half a dozen turns of the handle, and out comes—hard, sharp-edged and square—“Ah! that is what I have said all along: there is no help for it: this dead-and-alive way is bad, but it is what appears the only path of safety; it is the way through the wilderness. I am on the Wheel: I can't shape myself: I can't make the Potter put Himself out of the way; nor hinder Him from leaving me out to dry ten times longer, as it appears to me, than is absolutely needed: neither can I set Him upon glazing and burning when I will.”

No : thou canst not : but thou canst sigh, and cry, and groan ; that is, if thou art *truly hungry after Him*—if thou dost truly *desire Him*. As a rule, He cannot stand this long, when it comes from a right bottom. Who can tell but He may finish thee off-hand ?

However this may be, nothing can be more foolish than to look at any operation as necessarily long with Omnipotence—especially omnipotent Love—for, after all, this is a war of Love. Those who succeed best in Love are they who expect to win the prize every moment—not in pretence, but in good faith—and act accordingly.

Do so, and the Potter may soon finish His work. Amen.

In love,

— . — . — .

120.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

17. 6. 73.

THERE is something in true Christianity that you have hardly dreamt of yet. You have been led to repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ : and from certain views of these subjects have received and got up a measure of confidence towards God. But all this is of a very mixed and unsatisfactory character. I do not blame *you* so much : nay, I may say, not at all ; for this is the order of the day, the religious spirit of the age. But do look higher than this. Don't try to mend your religion : rather throw it all away, and begin to live in and for God alone, simply by ceasing to tinker yourself, and peddle your religion, through working the oracle of Scripture, and reason, and " prayer."

Are you ever to come into the Rest prepared by God for His saints? Have you a heart for it? Can you give up *all* for it?

If any dependent creature were to "pray," and muddle and do about you, as you do about the Blessed One, you might well set him down as crazy or drunk. Be still: and know, and *feel*, that He is God.

Your religion is more offensive to Him than your sins. If you would leave it, and take HIM, the sins would *cease*. Your religion would be lost, but the Blessed One would be found, and peace and love would be your portion for ever.

I say unto you, cease from your religion, and take God for your portion: then He will bring you speedily through the wilderness, to Salem, the City of Peace. Amen.

In love,

— . — . — .

121.

THE CROSS THE POWER OF GOD.—RELIGIOUS MEN, AND MEN OF GOD.

18. 6. 73.

* * * *

Christ, though bearing infinite burdens, humiliations, and tribulations, which brought sorrow and anguish upon His soulish and sensitive parts, never swerved for a moment, in the inner place of His heart, from a firmness of will towards, and an unutterable trust in, His Father and God. In this, as in all other things, He has left us an example, that we should walk in His steps.

Had He always been singing hymns with His disciples, or they with Him, or working miracles, or being transformed before them, where should we have been at this day? My brother, we must endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. It is the Cross that is the Power of God. As doubts, and fears, and weakness, and tribulations, heave over your head, wave after wave, you must learn to overcome them by *bearing* them, and glorying in them; though for a time you be speechless, and open not your mouth.

He who has not had a good share of these things is of little worth in the day of battle; and is a poor and empty comforter of those that are cast down.

Besides this, to have all joy would, in the present state, in the very nature of things, corrupt, or endanger corruption of, our conscience and peace.

There must be, and will be, a holy reverence and fear, though unseen and unfelt at times, yet forming a component part of the holy Divine flame of love and joy, as it burns in the creature.

If the goodness you speak of in your religious friend *is of God*, honour it: *if of man*, fear it, and do not bow to it, because the poison of unbelief and sin are in it, though it may appear as beautiful and comely as an Angel.

* * * *

That thousands of men come, more or less, under the influence and power of the Light of Christ is at once admitted: but doing so, and becoming children of the light, are different things.

Man, as a religious and intelligent creature, may profit by the Light, but never pass through that work of the Spirit which truly answers to being born again, and shows itself *by the will having had such an effectual touch Godward*, that it turns to Him every moment, as the needle of the compass quivers to the north.

The first are religious men: the last are men of God. The religious man may grow by practice, study, "prayer"

and education, in his religion; but he is under the influence and power of the first birth, *as his leading principle*, after all, and remains a religious man only, to the end of his days.

The man of God, though a fool as to the outward, in the very nature of things, if faithful, passes through the wilderness into Salem, and perhaps Beulah, if God will—*his will God-wards growing stronger and stronger towards its magnet for ever.*

The religious man, to carnal eyes and ears, may eclipse the man of God, because that which is *of* God can be seen by that only which is *from* Him.

He that hath an ear, let him hear.

122.

TRUE GUIDANCE COMES ONLY FROM UNION WITH GOD.

24. 6. 73.

* * * *

It is probable that _____ builds more upon the belief of passages of Scripture, descriptive of the privileges of the saints, than upon the personal realization of the liberty and power indicated by them to the opened eye and spiritual mind. Where this is the case, there is generally some grave summing up of great principles, which enables this kind of believer to ride easily, and by "faith," into the most holy place in heaven, while in reality remaining very much under the influence and power of the earthly mind. Anything that seems to put

a drag upon this "scriptural" way of settling the matter is generally spoken of as being of man, rather than of God: which, in fact, is only self-will resisting the convictions of truth, produced by such books, and bearing against that Protestant weakness or heresy, the very life and backbone of which is—"I believe, and therefore I have: I am standing upon God's platform:" thus making the Kingdom to be something given upon the evolution of the creature's will, rather than what it really is, the Spirit and Will of God undermining the creaturely will, and taking it away, so that each individual saint may in reality be moved by the *One*.

This is the end of hundreds, who have been brought face to face with the narrow path, but finding it too strait, have declined again to the broader way, in which they began.

* * * *

"What I desire," you say, "is not what we usually speak of as knowledge, but a good ground for confidence that I am doing God's will—not making mistakes like everybody else. Christ said that He did always that which pleased God."

My brother, Christ had this knowledge in *Union*, not in any distinct intimation: so must you, in so far as you have it. If you had it in any other way, it would defeat any good purpose, and stop the work of regeneration.

If you had what you ask for, you would have something upon which to feed and build, that was not of God: making Him one party, and you another; and the ground of your acceptance to be law, not grace and love. He cannot do this for you without stopping the travail of soul, which accompanies the passage out of natural life into that which is of God—spiritual and Divine.

His will is that we should be conformed to the image of His Son, that is, made one with Him in love; that Christ should be our Life, as He was, and is, Immanuel—God with and in us.

Any certainty that goes before, or exceeds, or surpasses, the growth of this unity is, *as the rule*, a lie or fleshly puffings up—something that is not of or from God. The very trouble and anxiety about the will of God shows that the root and ground of trouble, in some sort, remains: that is, that there is a life and will other than that which is of God. Now, this other life would not die, but be fed, by this knowledge which you seek, except as it comes in or with union; which union is, or will be, the death of that which desires to know this, that, or the other, as separate from God.

As you become one with God, all desire whatever will cease, except that unutterable sweet longing God-wards, which is beyond all language or words.

It will be His business to keep you from making mistakes “like everybody else,” if you make it your business to love nothing but Him, and seek nothing but unity with Him.

You would be too clever and good by half. God, the Blessed One, wants loving fools or babes, not wise, ready-made saints. He can put more wisdom into the heart of a loving fool, in the twinkling of an eye, than all the living prudent saints upon the earth possess, or than has been enjoyed by such—all such—upon the earth for the last eighteen hundred years.

In so far as you seek anything but God, you are deceived; and in so far as you are deceived, you are not one with God—one Spirit.

Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also. Look to your grafting **PRINCIPALLY**, not your doing. When union is perfect, doing will soon be right in every way. He can do as well without us and our doings, as with us; but He knows that we can do nothing without Him: so He lets Himself down to our littleness, that we may be enlarged by being taken up into His greatness. But this comes only with or in unity—Oneness.

Do what you will consistent with longing, desiring, and seeking, only Him. And never think that anything is done till you love Him perfectly, as easily as you breathe: till His Will and Love running through you are like unto a river of Life—the Paradise of God. Amen.

— . — . — .

The principal drift of the Saint's life should be to passively receive good, not to make himself good.

There is only One good, that is God.

123.

MAN-MADE "HOLINESS" PROPHETS.

29. 6. 73.

THAT on "holiness" has been read. Nothing good can come of it in any way. It is just one form of self working against another.

Pearsall Smith & Co. are only showing how far a man may, by belief bottomed upon the force of his own will, and for theory and direction guided by the Scriptures, work himself up into holiness, or anything else; while in fact it is only the power and force of man, not the wisdom and power of God. Papists and Indian Fakeers can do all this, though under another outward appearance.

It is man saving himself: not the Mighty God becoming His salvation. The true bottom of it all is this—they have no real vocation or call from God. They are not sent by Him: so all their doings and transformings will end only in more deceit and delusion.

The writer of the letter is of the same stamp, only in a modified form. To help to put these men right is only to help to make a lying false prophet more like a true one—to make the mystery of iniquity more mysterious.

I say unto you—they are not sent of God; but only of men. They can work any good, only as one kind of animal in nature keeps in check another.

— . — . — .

P.S. If a man will not submit to come to the measure of grace in himself, and abide by it, and in it, nor man, nor angel, can do him any good. Death alone can stop him. The more Scriptural he is, the more diabolical he is: as Satan is most to be feared, when robed in light.

You do not yet see the gravity of the situation. Anything short of a continuous exercise of spirit, under the Power, Spirit, and Love of God, without the creature's forcing—getting up the steam—is of no avail whatever.

The ragamuffins have been chattering long enough: make way for the Master. HEAR HIM. He alone is worthy.

124.

GOD THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE.

10. 7. 73.

THE old man is slain, if we may so speak, by the resurrection of the new: not the new raised by the death of the old. It is the mighty working of God in us that brings forth all that is glorious, and crushes under foot all that is of the flesh, the world, and Satan.

When once the creature is brought into Christ by an effectual touch of the mighty power of God, were he to watch and hold thereto, he might not fail any more. But this rarely, if ever, happens: therefore it is required that there should be renewed baptisms of the Holy Ghost, that any wavering or weakness may pass away, and the Blessed

One become All in All—not through the creature getting up the steam by an artificial faith, but by its simply turning to the Divine excellence, that all cause of stumbling or separation may be taken away.

Where there is a genuine love of God begotten in the heart and spirit by the Holy Ghost; and the conscience, that has been washed, is kept pure; there is an altogether unutterable confidence, and meek love, God-wards, which gives the faithful soul to feel that the whole world were little to give to God, and not much to receive from Him. So that, as to a question of anything that is not pleasing to Him, in the matter of purity and sweetness of spirit, there remains no more doubt of all that being made right, than there would be about a loving father succouring the child of his heart's love, when in great extremity, he having power so to do. Oh, this religion, this miserable religion: serving the Blessed One with the broken scraps of whining prayers, and half-hearted fleshly devotions, when nothing is worthy of Him but what comes from Him, and inflames the creature with a holy disinterested love and heavenly fear.

O, my soul adores the God of Love. He is worthy, worthy, worthy, worthy: everlastingly worthy.

125.

PEARSALL-SMITH-ISM. LIVELY RANTERS.

12. 7. 73.

THAT letter by R. P. Smith clearly shows the logical way in which the business is done, and how, by the Scriptures, reason, and a faith which is bottomed in the will of man, the mind is set a-working, and produces those effects which are supposed to be the veritable operations of God, when in fact they are principally of man.

Those coincidences in the annual report, and the view taken of them and of her own call by ————, [the writer of the report—a “Christian Worker”—] are striking: and by those who are but superficially acquainted with the depths of Satan, and the capabilities of the natural spirits of men, under religious excitement and strong self-willed belief, and with the operations of false and wicked spirits, would be taken as evidences of a truly divine work: while they are really no more so than many such things amongst the Papists, with other matters equally if not more striking, which have been experienced by myself and others, but which they have learned to handle as not from God principally, but rather to esteem them as trials of faith, and to prove whether all, with no exceptions, are to be led by lying wonders and false miracles, which keep from a true knowledge of, and rest in, God.

The false prophets in olden times were permitted to try the faith and love of God’s chosen ones: so, in this day, these lively ranters, who take the lead out of the hands of Him who is the salvation and leader of His children, are permitted to cause the true plants, of the Father’s planting, to sink down deeper and deeper into that unity and love, which enabled the Captain of their salvation to pass through His work without spot, or blemish, or any such thing.

In love,

— . — . — .

126.

SIMPLICITY AND PRAYER.

27. 7. 73.

IN your last there is a reference to prayer, and waiting upon God, and to that effectual fervent prayer, which availeth much with God.

All these have an existence, at one time or another, in a genuine Christian experience. By genuine Christian experience is meant one, which results from the operations and leadings of the blessed Spirit, in such measure as bespeaks that His rule is in the ascendant.

Your reasoning faculty is so strongly developed, that you are always inclined to be measuring the operations of grace in the heart, and comparing them with some standard or another. This, as a rule, is dangerous. The great object to be attained, or rather realized, in religion, is union, by the Spirit, with God—Oneness with God. Now, in bringing this about, the Blessed One is the principal Worker. The creature's business, or rather attitude of soul, is therefore, as the rule, one of passive obedience: yet even here, there must not be any pre-occupation in favour of this, that, or the other; or that which is for good will generate evil. If man determines his own passivity, he is just as wrong, in reality, though falling short in degree, as one who determines his own activity—the spring of the action being of man, not of God; of the flesh, not the Spirit. The great secret here is not meddling with the will and guidance of the blessed Spirit, from a bottom or ground, which is of man, rather than of God—so of man, as to be bearing in one way or another against the gentle drift of the Divine heart and nature; which, as a holy, sweet, Zephyr, bears, or would bear, onward, the Divine purpose, and place it within the reach of, and so as to influence, the elect—those who are called according to His purpose.

This may appear to bring things to a very fine point, and in some degree to justify the sneer of those, who pride themselves upon the sterling evangelical character of their religion, and say that when we leave the guidance of the "Word"—the Scriptures—there is always more of fancy, or imagination, or mysticism, than anything else; man's own "consciousness" supplanting the "excellent wisdom of the written word"—they forgetting in the meantime, if ever they knew, that this "excellent wisdom" is, in fact,

in as far as they are out of the spirit of the writers, only the Scriptures perverted by their own corrupt and muddy spirits. However, there is little doubt that so it seems to those who are novices in these things: but so it is not in truth, nor when the understanding which is of God—spiritual—is well exercised in knowing that which is of Him, in opposition to the wheedling holiness of the Whore and False Prophet, however professing to be guided by “the written word.” Neither is there that complication in the matter which these enemies—ignorantly so perhaps—of the kingdom of God would endeavour to prove that there is.

All great operations are simple in proportion to their greatness. So it is here. So also the great Teacher has taught, and so must every one teach, who is Christed with Him by God. The kingdom is taken by that simplicity, which knows nothing of itself, but all that it does know, of God: not by that wisdom, which knows all that it does know, of itself, and nothing of God. The simplicity of a child—it is this principle, generated in the new creature by the Holy Ghost, that takes all that which God has to give, and keeps the new man up to that mark and figure, which correspond to the crown that is prepared for him in heaven. This simplicity teaches acquiescence and content. If the Spirit leads into utterance of prayer, or to groanings that cannot be uttered; it is well. If to a cessation from this, and into a waiting attitude of spirit, in which words are seldom, if ever, used; this is well. Or if to the experience of that mighty prayer, which is beyond man’s power, and which may move heaven and earth, bringing with it an assurance, strong as life and being, that all that is asked will come to pass; and giving a clear sense of that faith which removes mountains, works miracles, and says—I will not let Thee go: this also is well.

If, however, anyone, looking from one of these states to another, begins to reason, and loses his simplicity; he may, in the mystery of iniquity, leave his position in God,

and taking hold of the spirit generated by another, pass from that measure which is safe and blessed, into an appearance of something more glorious and excellent, but which, at root, to him, is not of God, and therefore false and cursed ; and the end of which will be grief and loss.

You may say—How then shall I know when I am right? The principal assurance of this must be from God. If He continues to manifest a sense of His favour and blessing, there will be a growth in that which is good, a sensible dying out of self, and rising into Him ; which neither man's own will can generate, nor his words express : but which is, in short, a constant sense of God upon the spirit—produced by the Holy Ghost—the love-token between the Creator and the creature ; the bond of union between the Father and the Son.

In love,

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127.

SPECIAL CALLS.

2. 8. 73.

I DO not say *when* you ought to do it, but it does appear that it will have to be done sometime. You certainly have been in times past pretty well drunken with the wine of Brethren's fornication, and have done as much as many with your pen to keep the jovial bowl of the faith of flesh a-going : reason therefore might almost say that something very straightforward, and going right to the root, should, with the divine help, come from your pen, that will, in some sort, wipe from your skirts any of the blood of their souls.

Yet though this appears clear and strong, it is equally clear to my mind that you ought to patiently bear the burden of this your ignorant guilt—groaning under it, if needs be—till the Master gives the word.

There is nothing really good and strong, if He be not—not only in it, but—the very life and soul of it: and this He is, only as He clearly calls to the work.

Everything that a godly man doeth, in good conscience towards God and man, has the Divine life and light measurably in it: but it is only when He draws to a work by a special call, that there is that Divine force and vigour in it, which bespeak the work to be more of God than man.

128.

TRUE JUDGMENT HAS ITS ROOT IN GOD.

5. 8. 73.

My Brother,

YOUR letter came to hand this morning. There is one factor—a principal one on the subject of right and wrong, and the sense of these, as given to man—which it will be pleasant to name; that is, that the Holy Spirit lies at the root of it, and in such a way as to preclude anything like limit to its operation: for although to do right in order to please God is one view of the subject, and to your mind, (which is legal as to the natural bent of its working,) doubtless a favourite one; yet this in no way exhausts the field of view. The Love of God gives another claim. Give me Thy Spirit, that I may be lost in Thee: not only in the degree which shall save me from grieving Thee, or hurting my own soul, as to its acceptance, or general favourable standing before Thee; but in such measure, as that there shall, for substance, be nothing contrary between us, no principle left that in the least

degree would work in antagonism to that Union, which was perfect between the Father and the Son, in the person of Jesus Christ. This is a strictly evangelical view of the matter, and at once puts to one side all necessary imperfection, as far as turpitude or evil is concerned; though leaving the Blessed One the full possession of His beatitude as God, and so infinitely above the creature; yet allowing of a perfect oneness and union: so that in the question of right and wrong there shall remain not the slightest ground of dispute, or want of satisfaction; man being made, by grace, and through love, perfect in this matter, as His Father in heaven is perfect.

Now, there is one point here, which you must not let slip. This is of *grace and favour*: so it is a *free gift on His part*, and can be limited in degree, *only by the pleasure of His own will*. This, you will observe, has a tendency to run counter to your limiting the creature, so as to bring him within the compass of the operation of error ("sin," as you mostly put it) during term of life. You have such a general fairness in your mode of argument, and put your points so closely, that it is difficult, and would be laborious, and perhaps unsatisfactory, to combat them by counter-propositions and arguments: but this in no way secures the victory to your side. There may be a sense of right, as strong as it is possible for the soul and mind of the creature to sustain—so strong as to preclude the possibility of its being proved, or even supported, by argument: just as primitive and radical truth is strongest in its nakedness and simplicity. This holds good in this matter: there is no limit to the Union of Love between God and man, *but the good pleasure of His will*. Now as the union is increased, man's littleness and imperfection are supplanted by God's greatness and perfection: and he—the creature—ceases to be, as God becomes all in all. This shows your error in inclining to any limit, and pushing the subject on to the horns of a dilemma, by supposing one person to be sure that he is right, while another is sure that he is

wrong. Such a position as this hardly has an existence in the case before us, except where both parties are altogether wrong, and out of the truth: for when a man is born of God, he, the man, is sure of nothing: he learns to stand by, and let the Spirit justify and condemn. Where the Spirit gives not judgment, he judges not: where the Spirit judges, he sees the judgment; but it operates not prejudicially against his love to all, and his faith and standing in God. But then you say—Ah well, but what of a third person or party in this case? Well, there is this, even for a third person, if reasonable and tender towards God. A man of God, who is in the right, has the Spirit of God with him: and that Spirit, being one of wisdom and power, will, in the majority of cases, give evidence of His presence by power to demonstrate, in some way or other, the right, as seen through God: while he who is in error, and opposing the truth of God, will have the same stress of power against him; and will show by folly that it is man, not God, that leads; as the other mostly shows by wisdom that he is led by God, not man.

You have named the case of ————— once or twice, as one from which a contrast of this kind might be drawn. To me this is not difficult at all; as there have appeared, in some parts of her writings, things which proved that she was in error: and the very means used by her to prove the contrary, when the error was set before her, have confirmed the weakness of her cause. Her endeavouring to prove, by light-weight syllogisms, or foolish affirmations, that she was led by the Spirit of God, at once gave assurance that God was not there as her justifier. Just in proportion as men justify themselves from a factitious bottom, or even from a ground of rationality and reason only, it is evident that they are out of God, and in themselves.

You will hardly ever hear of a man of God being sure of his being right, as he is a man. When this question is brought before his mind by the force of circumstances,

over which he has no control, he will throw himself upon God, and wait for a favourable opportunity of gaining from Him a sense of the case; and act accordingly.

The faith of a man of God cannot go wrong, *as he abides faithfully in Him that is true.* This is his only business: and in proportion as he does this, there will be openings by the Spirit, whereby that wisdom and power, which he has by virtue of his Sonship, will be continually increased: and, on occasions, in the will of God, there will be the granting—of free grace and favour—of those baptisms and renewings of the Spirit, which are given as things beyond the claim or thought of the creature, and put to fault all his prudence and wisdom, as to how quickly, or how slowly, there shall be perfection of guidance, and peace, and love.

In love,

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129.

THE OFFERINGS OF FOOLS.

9. 8. 73.

* * * So in this dispensation and day, giving Him a good chapel, singing to Him heartily, and telling Him how Christ's blood has made all right, praying two or three times a day with a long face, converting the heathen, and keeping holy the "Lord's day"—but with all this, the heart of hearts, the soul's best love, is kept at home; and Number One, the man's self, the belly, the I, and me, and mine, are ENTHRONED.

Dear and only Love, till Thou come home, or take possession, binding with chains to an iron pillar, and scorching all round before a fiery furnace, is the desert of

our hypocritical love and holiness. But even this would only show, not take away, its vileness.

Thou alone art the only true good! Where thou art, and art truly King, there is true holiness and heaven!

130.

ALL GRACE AND FAVOUR; AND WHAT THEY WORK.

11. 8. 73.

[*Continuation of No. 128.*]

You see, my brother, that this fact of our power, sweetness, and wisdom, if we have any, being bottomed upon a *gift—a continuous gift*—the gift of the Spirit, is quite in keeping with the whole economy of God's grace to man.

You are essentially, by nature, a legal, order-loving, soul: which has a tendency to thrust you into the chair; to bring you high up amongst proper, orderly, gentlemanly, men: understand aright; not immediately by association, but indirectly by classification and mental tastes; for the fraternity here referred to is, as the rule, too earthly and worldly for you: so there is little fear of your becoming one with it in heart and soul—the Master having made too deep a mark upon you for that. Yet, nevertheless, your mental conformation makes all this to be as the groove, or a groove, into which you would naturally slip, and run on, with some degree of fitness, and sense of satisfaction and contentment.

Now, the Divine Goodness has so ordered it that our eternal destinies are more bound up with the operation of the love of the will, than with the calibre and solidity of

the reasoning and other faculties of the mind. Your capabilities, therefore, in this way—in so far as they modify, or bring a drag upon, the operation of the loving and will-part—are only moderately favourable, or rather are inclined to be unfavourable, when they by any means get into the ascendant. It is not insinuated that sound reason, under the influence of the Spirit, would not see the excellency of that plan, which has made Love and Union the very bottom, upon which excellence is to be founded—if indeed anything can be said to be founded, that springs, by a perpetual generation, from an infinite abyss of Goodness: but the fact is noted; because in the excess of what otherwise may be good, there is danger, as here indicated.

The parable of the penny, given to him that worked only one hour, must seem rather mysterious to your mind—a crusty, hard, bit for your judicial proprieties: but it is doubtless given to show that, which the “better end” of mankind, to which you belong, are mostly loath to admit, that the Blessed God will, and has a right to, do as He wills with His own; and to put down one, and raise up another, from the stirrings of a spring of motives, which seem to go flat against manly, even-handed, justice; or, at any rate, to rise from something right underneath, or beyond, the regulations of that code of law.

* * * Bear with me, therefore, in endeavouring to bring you to such an estimate of things as shall facilitate your progress in the better life.

You will see at once that the drift of all this goes to show that, though the Blessed One cannot be so treated with, as to barter infinite good in return for anything that we can give, yet a meek, earnest, humble, watchful, BELIEVING spirit, that pretends to nothing better than absolute poverty and worthlessness, is most likely to receive, of free grace, that Divine good, which may be the making of a man for ever. For when once the fountain of true love is let out freely into a man's soul, from Him that

changeth not, it will be his fault, if it grows not brighter and brighter to the perfect day. You are naturally an enemy to *lawlessness*, and are passing through a dispensation of grace, wherein it appears to you right to be rather severe, on that head, with yourself and others. But there is a lawlessness in Divine Love, which is the spring of the divinest law, because it brings into spiritual conjunction with the Author of it—the beginning of which is the administration of grace without law, and seemingly contrary to law, that love may take the place of law, and, by its force and working, remove the need and ground of law, by making us one with that nature which, for substance and excellence, is above all law, and beyond the reach, operation, and touch of it; being itself the very excellence which makes law necessary to any inferior nature.

You are often measuring yourself, as a man, by what you have done, are doing, and have capabilities to do; putting yourself thus in the form of Dr. and Cr. on the sheets of a spiritual Ledger. Now, my brother, as a rule, this is not good. You have the will to please Him in everything, and every moment. If the power is not there, it is not your fault: therefore all that you have to do, or can do, is to make a representation to the right Authority, telling Him how matters stand, and that the mental and moral machine does not work divinely, sweetly; that it lacks holy life, vigour of love, constancy and power, or sense of union: and simply asking if this state of spiritual inaptitude, moral deficiency Godward, and want of love, is according to His mind; or if He wills that it should always continue, or that you should feel want, and a sort of modified beggary in divine good much longer. If you do this *with a "single eye,"* and direct honesty of purpose—that is, honesty of *will, which leads to the sacrifice of everything, even to the hair of the head, for Him and His love*—then things will take a change from that time; some spiritual visitation of the Comforter will supervene; your aspirations after a perfect love will be realized; you will

love Him as easily as you breathe, and as constantly as your heart beats; and all sorrow, and sighing, and mud-diness of thought, feeling, and spirit, in the will-part, Godward, will be for ever done away. You will be removed from the peg of doing the right thing, Godward, by rule and compass, and thrust into a gentle furnace of heavenly love.

Anything in you, or in any other man, which would make the doing of this to be out of the line of God's will and good pleasure (to say nothing of His power—which would be the very lowest degree of grovelling infatuation) is of the flesh, or the Devil, or the natural unbelief of man; and ought to be made light of by contempt, and a constant trampling under foot. You ought to believe all that moral and spiritual purity possible, which is desirable, and according to the Scriptures lawful, in the evangelical sense of that term: and to expect it, as it were, every moment, with the same assurance that you expect the rising sun, or the coming day, or your sleep in the night: and no continued failure ought to lessen this expectation for a moment. If you had held this faith for ten years, with a constant failure from time to time; instead of letting it go, let it urge you on for ten years' more endurance, if needful; and then, perhaps, it may not be ten hours or days apart. This was the faith of Abraham, that won Isaac.

But here let me tell you something not generally known. It is a sign of Divine favour to be kept waiting a time for a blessing, when you can, in good conscience, lay the cause of delay on the good pleasure of God, not on your own half-heartedness, or want of faith: because when it does come, it will do so with a double, nay a hundred-fold more, strength, reality, and power. This is one of those secrets, which the God of heaven makes known, with assurance, to those only who truly love Him. In proportion as the sighing, crying, groaning, waiting, believing, travailing, have been arduous and long-continued; in

the same measure—only a hundredfold in favour of the receiver—will the result be satisfactory, solid, and divinely strong.

Oh, my brother, what asses and fools men are by nature! like cross-grained, griped, badly-born, spoiled infants; wanting everything that appears good, at a moment's notice; and if not granted instantly, grumbling like reprobates, because it is withheld, or manifesting—to Him that sees the inner man—a wonderful disposition towards carelessness, or inward resentment and wilfulness, that seeks consolation and comfort in another way. If He were not, as He is, infinitely long-suffering, the lot of Sodom would have been general, the world over, before this day. Ah, my Lord and God! is it too long to wait for a few years or days, to be made one with Thee, Thou source of all sweetness, glory, and love? The very honour of being allowed to wait, and gently, now and then, to give a look to Thee in faith, pulling the hem of Thy garment, as it were, is worth a many worlds. What then is it to come to spiritual Salem, the City of Peace—to be brought to that hidden place of Rest in Thee, where all sorrow and sighing is done away, and the days of servitude, and drudgery by law, are ended!

Here is your stand-point: it is all of grace and favour—a princely gift, given from a princely heart, which never grudges a gift; and, when once He begins to give, never says, Enough; nor holds His hand, as long as countless ages roll.

In truth there is no place for holding hands, when once the saint is glorified: for then, by an ineffable union, the joy of God, without the slightest earthly drag, will be the joy of His children for evermore. Amen.

131.

GUIDANCE IN A STRAIT PLACE.

18. 8. 73.

YOURS is indeed a strait place. There is, however, one path left, and only one. You must lose sight of all the intricacies of your position, as far as in you lies, and come simply to the measure of the Grace of God *revealed in yourself*, and let that be your only guide. Or, in other words, you must learn to discern between the voice of your Beloved—if he is *in very deed* your Beloved—and the voice of the stranger; that is, your own wisdom, the wisdom of the flesh, or the prudence of the earthly mind. When you have done so, and, by the grace of God, with an even courage, walk by this rule, through thick and thin; there will be an uncovering of His face to you, and such revelations, or manifestations, of His love, from time to time, as will meet all your needs.

Farewell.

Divine love, the love of the Spirit is the truest “LIGHT,”
The Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

132.

THANKFULNESS IN TRIBULATION.

19. 8. 73.

PERMIT me again to say, *Be thankful*; that the divine blessing may attend you in whatever you do. Tribulation is good, every way. God is the only Rock. Tribulation is to make us like Him. You will yet see the

day when you shall, with a good understanding and meekness, and without over-much fear, glory therein, because of the excellent effects and stability therefrom. Joy is sweet and pleasant : but a continuation of it would render you comparatively useless in God's household.

My Brother, whom in Christ I love, I am thankful for what you are, and where you are. May you become stronger and stronger to bear both tribulation and consolation, as is best in the will of God.

133.

BOOKS.

25. 8. 73.

My Brother,

THE book you refer to is, doubtless, the "Divine Economy," mostly, if not always, met with (in English) in 7 vols. bound up in 4. Poiret was originally a Calvinist of a very ultra figure ; but somehow or other met with the writings of Madame Bourignon, or became personally acquainted with her ; and the result was that he went to the other extreme : and being a man of a subtle and ardent mind, well versed in the dialectics of that age, and of a ready pen, he set about writing a justification of God's dealings with man, bottomed upon her views, but wonderfully elaborated, and defended against everything calvinistic and philosophical, that rose up in his fertile brain. He began to write some ten or a dozen sheets, but new light flowing in upon him led, or drove, him forward into the "*ideal truth of things*" though he acknowledged that he ought to have staid till they were *livingly and strongly realized in himself*, before he offered them to others. There is little doubt that his speculations

were a trouble to him : for after writing the work he prays that they may be taken away, and “one drop of Thy pure love” be given instead of them.

After reading Penington and Naylor, it would be impossible to obtain from Poiret any clearer light as to the way of life : though, here and there, many clever things are said, as was natural to so clever a man. I have felt a fear of recommending books to you, and especially such as his, in which there is much brilliant dross, and presumptuous ideality : having been taught, by a somewhat extensive experience, that books, the best books, are prejudicial, when *read in own will*. Of course, to have books like these at hand may not be absolutely evil : but they are nevertheless dangerous, as likely to lead the mind into idealities and notions, which may be mistaken for the true substance. * * *

P.S.—While at dinner it came into my mind that example is better than precept. So thoroughly has —. —. —. been taught in reference to books, that he has hardly a valuable one left. Neither has he any memorandums whatever of these or any other good things. He believes to the very centre of his heart that the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *LIFE*, is enough ; and that as he leaves all other things, this Spirit and Life will increase without end.

Did Jesus carry His good things in His memory ? Or had He them laid by in parchment rolls ? Or did they flow out of His belly like a river of water,—LIVING WATER ?

I do believe in the Living Water.

134.

TRIBULATION, AND WHAT IT DOES.

1. 9. 73.

My Brother,

WHAT was said on honesty of will, which leads to sacrifice, [No. 130] has not any immediate reference to earthly good, or the giving up of material wealth, or giving to feed the poor; but simply points to a vigorous, even, courageous, state of the will, which takes joyfully anything, in this or any other way, that we may, in the Divine providence, be called to, or tried with.

Abraham and Job have obtained an honourable distinction, which was more or less based upon this quality of heart, that will out-last the reign of Satan in the world. But we, who are called to the position of sons, have access to grace and favour, to which they were comparatively strangers.

Though not called to anything answering to the trial of the latter, you will certainly be proved with many turns in your spiritual life, which will bear a close analogy with the vicissitudes of the former—which may bring to your remembrance that saying of “honesty of will to the loss of the hair of your head,” and which may include many projects, say almost every one, that may have found a lodgment in *some corner of your heart* during the course of the last twenty years of your life.

But understand aright: the Divine providence, in this rough handling, does not aim at your ultimate loss, or the prostration of your hopes, or the entire sacrifice of your heart's desire, in the root and ground of these things, in so far as they are really good for you and yours: but only such a turning upside down as shall bring your wisdom and prudence into the dust, and cause you, with all the loving fealty of a sweet child, to hold on by His hand,

and trust in Him alone through thick and thin. If you are faithful in love, He will grant you MORE than the desire of your heart ; but it will be in His way and time, very much to the throwing down and confusion of yours.

There is one remark in yours which calls for a word or two. You say, *if* by the sacrifice of so and so, this that or the other would follow, etc., etc. Dear brother, this is your oversight or weakness : there must be the honesty of will and purpose Godward, though after the sacrifice you be tried like Job, or your wounds salted with salt, or your grace refined by your being put into a furnace hotter than you can well bear. There can be no ifs or buts in this case ; only an entire surrender and *abiding* therein, and then the work, so far as you are concerned, is done.

You say, what do all these mental or spiritual vicissitudes mean : “ what is their cause and significance ” ? Simply this. It is the blessed Husbandman using his TRIBULUM upon his own precious grain ; or the Heavenly King causing the faith of His elect to be refined as gold in the fire : or, to leave out figures of speech, it is a process of bringing to an end the natural, soulish, life, which is bottomed upon man’s will and wisdom, and of giving or imparting that new life which has its spring in the will, wisdom, and blessed Spirit of God, and that more abundantly.

May His name be blessed and praised for ever ; for He is worthy. Amen.

135.

THE GOSPEL "HARD;" AND THE WAY OF
TRUTH "DEEP."

10. 9. 73.

My Brother,

ABOUT the "Gospel being hard"—so it seems, doubtless, to those, who would make it an appendage to their comfort—something to add to their happiness only, in the place of what it must be, in reality, before any one can experience fully its efficacy—their one object, their All in All.

They that have riches will hardly enter the Kingdom, that is, become true subjects of Gospel life; because they possess something that engages, in measure, their heart's love and trust, and therefore hinders the process of regeneration, which brings with it, or rather at the end of it, rest and peace.

Riches may not here mean silver and gold only, but anything whatever that is not of God, and that holds to itself any part of the love of the will. So when any say complainingly that the Gospel is hard, they speak the truth: for certainly, in this state of half-heartedness and double-mindedness, they may seek to possess its privileges, but will not be able.

On the other hand it is easy in proportion as they who seek to enjoy it are whole-hearted, and part with all for it: not that in the very nature of the case or of things it becomes easy, but in **FACT** it does so, because the whole-heartedness brings its subject into conjunction with a Mighty Power and Wisdom, to which nothing is hard. It is here that fools outrun the wise, and the weak overmatch the strong, because, not trusting in their own wisdom or strength, and being inclined to take freely to

the position of the Publican, they do swiftly come under the influence of that grace and love, which heave off burdens, uncleanness, blindness, death; and, by union, impregnate the spirit with an irresistible simplicity and power.

As to the Way of Truth being "deep"—yes: it is so to the wise of heart, because in the light and life of it, they have to fathom and out-plumb the depth of the mystery of iniquity, first at home, and then abroad. But if by "deep" is meant that it is difficult to learn, by its complexity, or its unfitness to every capacity—it is not so; for a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err in the way of it. It is deep, in this sense of complexity and unfitness, to those only who are not prepared to give up all for its possession: but where there is, by the grace of God, a will to follow Christ through the regeneration; to embrace that Divine Spirit which is poor, meek, gentle, long-suffering, and without malice and hypocrisy; and to submit freely to those dispensations of Divine providence and grace that are trying to flesh and blood, it becomes simple as breathing the vital air.

It is the double eye, the looking two ways at once, or endeavouring to combine two contrary principles—two antagonistic forces—that brings confusion, difficulty, knocks, and death. But when there is a single eye, a child-like simplicity, a continued willingness in godly sincerity and meekness to feel and say, or at any rate to shut the mouth and wait for grace to say, I am a fool, and Thou only, my everlasting Love, art wise, and sweet, and all things; then the complexity and unfitness vanish into thin air, and that which appeared hard and deep is found to be a yoke that is easy, and a burden that is light.

As to that poor woman that got into a pet about "Biblicism," [a tract] there is not much wonder. It is not a pleasant thing for some unmannerly creature, some unchristian sinner, to expose an ulcer which, by its continual running, has kept up a beautiful complexion for

many a year: nor are we to expect that he will be pleasantly looked upon, who with a mighty hug, like that ancient worthy in Israel, pulls down about one's ears a building, the fruit of the labour and expense of a lifetime. So neither will he be universally loved who exposes the corruptions of self-generated holiness, or pulls down into the dust the stately pinnacle of a false rest and peace.

In love, Farewell.

136.

MEDDLING UNCALLED WITH THE THINGS OF GOD.

10. 9. 73.

YOURS of the 8th came to hand with the enclosure. I have looked through the tracts [by J. Denham Smith and others] which you have sent, with great sickness of heart. They are mostly a windy lot, made up of a substance in which Man—Man—Man—is everything, and the most Blessed God little or nothing.

At first, there was some difficulty in sending the tracts [some by the writer of this letter] at all; as it appeared only helping you to send forth opposing forces, which could only tend to battle and confusion: but trusting in Him who caused Moses' rod to swallow up the glittering trumpety of Egypt, they were forwarded. Permit me to beg of you to look into them, and if not too late, by the grace of God shining through them, to turn over a new leaf: for he must be mounted on a sad flimsy pinnacle who circulates such stuff for the bread of Life, or for

directions even to find it. The Gospel is not made up of good words, after the wisdom and will of man : but is the very Power of God, working unto salvation in the hearts of those who are the called according to His purpose.

You say that you are affectionately mine in Christ : but have you reckoned up the substance of these words? If you be in Christ truly, how is it that you send forth such muddy stuff as living water? He that believeth in Christ so as to receive Him, has, opened by the Blessed One within him, a spring which sends forth living water without end, without labour, without robbery, either from the Scriptures or any other source. Is this your case? No: it is not: because, had it been so, you would have died on the wheel, with every bone in your body broken in pieces, before you would or could have circulated tracts which make the Blessed God to be a thing to be played upon by the wit, or wisdom, or will of man, and His salvation to be the juggle of man's own imagination and a false faith. Look well unto these things, I pray you. You are a perfect stranger to me, in every way, personally; but in the light of God, you are seen to be on a foundation, which has the name of rock, but is not the very Rock itself.

Surely a man of your education and surroundings can hardly have been reading the Scriptures, and actively engaged in religious doings for years, and not have felt, now and then, that there must be some reality in these things, which you have not yet found. It can hardly be otherwise. Well then, suffer one who has found mercy to be faithful, to tell you that these occasional visitations and gleams of heavenly light are from above, and are sent for the express purpose of bringing you to your senses, or rather to a right mind, before it be too late: so that you may not have to stand before Him at last with a weight on your conscience, the result of having spent years of your life in *daubing*, on the right hand and on the left, with *untempered mortar*.

You might ask yourself profitably—Who CALLED ME to this officious work, this business of a fool? Is not my own folly and wrong-headedness enough, without making God's world a theatre, upon the stage of which, forsooth, to practice this soul-destroying art? Think of these things; and remember that you were warned once, at any rate, in love, by a servant of Christ, and lover of God, whom you know as

137.

HOW TO DEFEAT THE SOUL'S ENEMIES.

5. 10. 73.

DEAR Love, and wise and learned brother, lock up, or burn, your books, and become a fool, so that you may become truly wise. You had a hint given the other day that Matthew Weyer was kept in trouble, because of self-righteousness: so will you be, till cured of that fruit of "holy flesh."

God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have eternal life. He has done the needful for us, out of us, as the Lamb of God: there remaineth only that He take up His abode in us, and work in us to will and to do, of His good pleasure.

Now, His appearance in us may be little and low—if it were not so, it would defeat its own purpose—but not therefore the less real for that. So again it is said, look to, and abide in, that which appears in the Spirit to save: don't trouble yourself with any of the trio that work upon the soul to condemn. Did you make your own flesh? Did you generate your own soul? The Devil and the world

existed before you were born. There is sure to be a rumpus, when they are to be separated for ever: they are, in a sense, connatural one with the other. That Christ, the Sent of God to save, is as real an existence, a substance, a working power, as they, you may learn almost any day, when in temptation, or rather, under it. What is it, or who is it, that says, nay; not so: God is sweet, and good, and love? That is He: that is the Sent One: that is God in man, as He is the head of Christ: hear Him: turn to Him: stick to Him. Don't enter into any palavers about the state of the trio, either with yourself, or them; but abide in that measure of grace—of the appearance of Christ—that is with you. As you do so, *and in little things are faithful*, He and you will become one Spirit: and then you will see through all books, all self-righteousness, all death; taste words, sentences, and things; and grow in wisdom, favour, and stature—with God and His Saints for your lovers and friends.

Dear love, for the present, Farewell.

138.

“GOOD BOOKS,” AND THE HIGHEST GOOD.

8. 10. 73.

THE Love is in the Life. The Life comes generally with tribulation and death.

Reading in own will keeps alive that part which is for death.

“As the Love grows,
So the Peace flows.”

The living water is enough. The Life of God is enough. The bodies of the saints are His temples. There is an estate in Christ, in which every word, and thought, and

act, is under the control of the Master, the King : though the subject of it is at perfect liberty, the Love—the Life—being in the ascendant.

In this estate everything that is good will be given, both as to books, and everything else : but it will be in His time, and not to supply a lack of the Love—the Life.

It amounts to a reflection on the goodness, greatness, and sweetness, of God, to say, or to go about to prove by implication, that books are necessary to happiness, to continued peace.

No proposition may be truer from one point of view, or falser from another. True, as man’s life is religiously natural, pious, and rational : but false, in proportion as Christ is our Life.

“ Out of his belly shall flow rivers ”—that is enough. There are always some filterings of sewage, some tincture of flesh, corrupt flesh, in what is taken from books in own will ; but not a grain in an ocean of “ living water.”

The living water carries man’s will captive, or rather, purifies it at its root, its point of conjunction with the Divine. The sewage water, or rather, the water holding sewage in solution, when taken in own will, works otherwise—puffs up.

Are we not to read then ? Yes ; in the Will of God : but not from the bottom of necessity to happiness or Peace.

139.

ONENESS WITH GOD : AND THE ROMISH
WRITERS ON THIS SUBJECT.

13. 10. 73.

* * * The “seraphical” doctors of the Romish church, when treating upon this subject, generally make a distinction between being in a state of grace, which leads to keeping the divine commands ; and being so united to God in Spirit, as not to be able to do anything else. We should say, perhaps, he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit ; which would be taken in this state to mean something more than *morally so*—rather indicating that the Divine Spirit is so in the ascendant, and the life so flows, that what is of God overrules, by a hidden virtue, power, life, and love, any tendency or temptation to that which is not of God.

I do not say that they put it in this quasi-evangelical form : indeed, what they do, in substance, is generally to say over again, on these subjects, what has been said, or was said to have been said, by Dionysius, in his treatise on Mystical Theology, and agreeable to the dogmas of the church. Any who have verged nearer to the truth have mostly been hardly dealt with by the authorities.

You have some notion of the barbarous Latin of these old treatises : though the “Benedictines” have doubtless, in some cases, endeavoured to bring them up to the level of a later day.

The truth is that all the great and blessed things of God are as simple as they are great : and that these Seraphical Doctors and *Doctoras*, without exception, manage to infuse some of the tincture of the Whore’s cup, or of the flesh, into these subjects. To follow Christ, the Light, till we become children of it, takes in all that can be put before a fellow-creature on this point : with a caution that all

is of grace ; and that, although there will be a strict obedience to what is made known in Spirit, yet that that obedience is in no case to be made a means, by which to *compel* a flow of love and life. Self-righteousness—next to open sin—pulls down the heavenly building. Indeed, the way to walk easily, so far as this is possible, into the highest paths of light and grace, is to become a little child Godward ; and not to make too much of it when the sun shines clearly, nor, on the other hand, to faint, when it pleases the Master to visit with clouds and wind, and it may be, with hunger and thirst, and cold, miserable, rain.

Hold your will to His, or Him ; or, in other words, your spirit ; till it becomes easy so to do, without any reference to the immediate joyful results of so doing. These will be measured out by Him who does all things well. Terrible and bitter temptations, as the rule, precede openings and in-lettings of the heavenly Life : so that you may build upon it, that as wave after wave goes over your head, till the last gasp seems imminent,—by holding on, deliverance is sure to come ; and that all these trials go to make you a good soldier and faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Amen.

140.

CRUCIFYING CHRIST BY THE SCRIPTURES.

19. 10. 73.

YOURS to hand last night. Keep close to that, which makes humble, gentle, and loving, Godward : and all will be well. Don't let anything but the simplicity of God rule in your heart.

Poor ————— was told that it would come to this : but he takes the old sayings of Paul, with his own interpretations, and fights them against the Living God in the

hearts of His servants. This was what led the Pharisees to crucify Christ. They fought Moses and themselves against God in His Son. Their house is left unto them desolate.

In love,

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141.

WATCHFULNESS UNDER HEAVENLY JOY.

20. 10. 73.

My Brother,

YOU may be sure that yours of the 18th was a source of gladness. Anything that gives assurance, that there will be a steady help in doing *the will of God*, causes the stream of peace to run deeper. It is not simply the fact of your tasting the streams of that river which makes glad the City of God ; but a sense that this will fit you to do the will of Him, who will be our joy and blessedness for ever. The more He is known—He is **TRULY** known, only as He shows Himself to those who love Him—the more everything else dies out of the soul, and He becomes all in all. It is impossible to do His will rightly and sweetly, till the spirit and soul are, in a good measure, brought to rest in His goodness. I have one thing to ask of you—don't rashly wish of Him to stay His hand. The joy of God may be, in a measure, distressing to your weak nerves, now and then : but don't hastily seek relief from it. If you were to do so, and there were to follow, and abide for a time, a season of famine, you would hardly forgive yourself.

You will learn, in time, that heavenly joy needs great *watchfulness*—more so than tribulation and distress. There is no time when it is so essential to be prudent, as when you have drunk as much of the wine of the Kingdom as you can well carry. *Mum*—as the rule—is the order of the day on these occasions. You may not measure your own strength during these visitations.

He who has not the value of a pin's head belonging to him in the world, will forget his needs and poverty, and think himself relieved of all his trouble, when filled with good wine, or even under the delusive dream of stolen pleasure. So, in measure, will he be drawn, who has, in an unusual degree, been favoured with heavenly joy, and gladness of heart. Live only, my beloved, to do *His will*; whether you be passing through the brightness and sweetness of Tabor, or the terrible straits, or agony, of Gethsemane—both of which, in your measure, you will be made to know.

In love,

— . — . — .

142.

THE KEY OF TRUE POWER.—THE BLESSED ONE NOT OLD OR INFIRM.

25. 10. 73.

My Brother,

A WORD or two that I may be clear on the “startling passage.” On these subjects it is not well to reason overmuch. We are what we are, spiritually and divinely, by the grace of God: and if we follow, in writing or anything else, the natural flow of that grace through us, we

shall then do the will of God in the best possible manner. To reason from what Christ did, or Paul did or said, is not the thing: that is, if we would keep within our own measure.

If the spirit that leads either drives or wheedles in a direction contrary to the Master or any of His faithful servants, it is clear that it is not of God, and ought not to be followed: but to slip into their words here and there, in a discourse, in no way demonstrates that we are led by the Spirit, but rather that we are looking two ways at once, or to two guides for safety.

There was a letter once written to _____ on this subject, which you spoke highly of: perhaps these remarks may bring it to your mind. The substance of it was that each of God's children and servants has a true and natural figure of his own, spiritually; and that when he keeps within the measure of the powers and faculties of this spiritual being or man, as it is brought under a concern by the Divine Spirit, and goes not out to the right or left, or above or below, he does the will of God, and will have Peace.

To slip into the words or shoes of another, as the rule, is like paint, or false whiskers, or a nose of wax: if "well done," it may make a wonderful improvement to casual observers, but to the wise of heart, or "God will have realities," and not painted and got up lovers, except as they shall be made up by that hidden virtue, gravity, and sweetness, which He clothes them with, and which, working from the inward to the outward, covers over, or throws into the background, those weaknesses or deformities which each of His children may inherit through the fall, and is doomed to bear as long as he remains in this body and soul of thought and flesh.

Now do not misunderstand me here. If you feel within yourself that you were led into the passage referred to, naturally and sweetly, and that there was, and is, an internal witness that these words are what the Master led

you to speak, —. —. —. would be the last to interfere. But this alone will have any weight with him : the reasons (or any reasons) which may be given in favour, that do not reach to this bottom, are comparatively only painted lies, and just of the same value as those which a “ clever ” woman or man could advance by the dozen for carmine, or chalk, false whiskers, hair-dye, or borrowed fine talk.

We are to speak as oracles. Is then the Fountain of all good dried up? Are the treasures of His wisdom and knowledge exhausted? Has *He* grown old, and so enfeebled in His intellectuals, as to be compelled to be ringing changes on the old sayings, or remain mum? Or has he gone away from His own into a far country? Or do His increasing infirmities need, now and then, a lengthy nap? Of course, with me, you indignantly say, Nay. Why then are we to help to increase the atheistical spirit of this age by actions that give the lie to our discourse and words? If He, our Life and Love, be infinitely fresh and vigorous, existing in one eternal now of perfection, beauty, and strength, let us confine ourselves to what He may be pleased to impart, that He may, at any rate, have a few upon the earth, who shall speak a LIVING word in demonstration and power. Amen.

In love,

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143.

CHRIST MIGHTY, AS A MAN OF WAR.

7. 11. 73.

* * * * *

Yes: Lopez, Guion, De Renty, etc., are sure to be pleasant reading, because you will be led to look into them when your soul is to be cheered with some clearer views of the real sweetness of the path of Life. But fighting men and race-runners don't live on honey and wine, nor on grapes or pleasant things, always: and though you greatly love peace, yet there must be fighting a little, now and then. Our Captain, though altogether lovely, was mighty as a man of war in the cause of God and truth: and even now, by His Spirit in His servants, brings fire and sword against the Whore and False Prophet; and above all, against those who by their religious works declare themselves to be Wolves in Sheep's clothing. These are the pit children: young men and fathers of Apollyon.

144.

WALKING IN THE TRUTH.

13. 11. 73.

I WOULD have you walk in the Truth." When, in answer to your question, this response was given, it was evident that you only imperfectly, if at all, understood what was meant.

Now, that this fleshly blindness may not lie in any culpable degree at my door, a few words are given to explain the difference between walking in the truth as it

is in reality, and walking in the truth according to this soulish natural manner, taught by the blind guides, by whom you are led astray, and kept out of the Truth.

To walk in the Truth is to walk in Christ, for He is the Truth: yet not by reading the Scriptures, and then imitating His Spirit and actions thereby. This is *imitating* the Truth, under the influence and guidance of own will and understanding, and some inbeamings, it may be, of heavenly light, which are not given you for this purpose really, but to draw you from this folly, and bring you to the Father, that you might be baptized by the Holy Ghost into the nature of the Son. When thus baptized into the name and nature of the Son, you may walk as He walked, not by imitation, but as having been Christed with Christ by God. The Saviour's words were principally for the use of His disciples while they were, as you are, under the influence of a fleshly knowledge of Himself: but they were ordered to wait at Jerusalem, till anointed with the Holy Ghost and with fire, that afterwards they might do easily and naturally, from an internal life and power, that which they had seen their Lord do—not by imitation, but by the indwelling of the same Life and Power, and the direct leadings of the Divine Spirit.

Till you enter into this, you are only a carnal believer: and if you would give your body to be burned, it would not alter it. Neither will all your prayers, and imitations, and religious talk, which spring from a bottom of self-will, bring you into this state: you must be made sensible that you are poor, and blind, and naked, in the place of riding a cock-horse on the name of Jesus, and making yourself—or gladly being made by the carnal teachers you are led by—to believe that you are in Him, rich and increased with goods.

Farewell.

145.

DOCTRINE AND LEARNING NOT TRUE
SUBSTANCE.

10. 12. 73.

My Brother,

DON'T you see that had there been any real manifestations of Divine power in your meetings, you could not have kept it to yourself? The fame thereof would have gone abroad: even you would surely have made it known to me and others, as a cause of joy and rejoicing, in that the Master had truly appeared.

The Blessed One is not to be drawn into a partnership by higher doctrine, finer expositions, or stronger reasons. These are the glorious trumperies of Babel, by which the wise deceive themselves, and make fools of others; disgracing the cause of God, and making it only a thing which may be learned and taught by rule and compass, or, more exactly, by reading, study, and "prayer."

I say unto you, Nay. He is the Master and Lord: and will not be overreached into doing the will of the creature by any of these filterings of holy flesh. So, my brother, shut up for a time, and be still; walking with God in that measure of light and love afforded: or the time will come, when you will have reason to beat your breast, and say—Oh! fool that I was, with my Hebrew and Greek, fine doctrines and nice definitions. I had better have been wheeling a barrow, or crying, herring ho! herring ho!

Wait on Him only: He will point out what to do, and when to do it.

Yours for Christ's sake, and in love,

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146.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

11. 12. 73.

* * * And then there are all kinds and degrees of persons, who are equally fluent in "Gospel" talk—"Lords," Colonels, Captains, Lawyers, Grocers, Costermongers, "Navvies" and Thieves: but this also is *man*. Of old it was THE WORD OF THE LORD that was spoken of as being scarce, or having free course: but mark the difference. THE WORD OF THE LORD (without the "gospel" jugglery of these latter days) is *the Lord now speaking* through a chosen instrument, giving forth His mind as really and truly as ever He did, either by Prophets or Apostles; not man talking freely on what was given forth eighteen hundred years ago.

Now THE WORD OF THE LORD, as thus understood, is scarce.

The aforesaid Captains, Grocers, etc., etc., would say that it never was more plentiful: but they are liars, and know not what they say or do.

As long as lively gospel talk will pass for the Word of the Lord, there is no hope for us: but as soon as this is found out, pretty generally, to be lies and vanity, as to the substance of it, peradventure there may be again a hunger and thirst after the true WORD OF THE LORD.

147.

THE DISCIPLINE OF TRIBULATION.

16. 12. 73.

My Brother,

BE of good courage. The work of man's salvation has always been accompanied with trial and pain. They who lead, under the Blessed One, in any movement, the

spring of which is in heaven, must of necessity be well tried ; yea, as gold in the fire is tried, that the dross of that which is earthly may be put away. If it were possible to pass from out of false religion into that which is true, without the fiery process, it would hardly be desirable : because it would facilitate, if not encourage, the assumption of hollow and deceptive profession, bot-tomed upon carnal imitation.

The true elixir of Life, when taken, so fortifies the mind, that there is a glorying in tribulation, which the natural man hateth : but how shall there be a glorying in that which is not known ? If we suffer and be tribulated, and bear it patiently—thankfully—then are we true sons, and not bastards.

Shall we aspire to be accounted faithful and good soldiers, and turn faint when hunger, thirst, and weariness come ? Or lose courage when the din of strife and battle falls on the ear ? This will be the case, if the eye be not single : it will be sure to come to pass, if there be not a constant dwelling and growth in the Life.

Let us therefore abide in Him that is true : neither over-much elevated, when all is bright and clear ; nor cast down beyond measure, when clouds and darkness surround on every side. A faithful continuance in well-doing will—yea, does—receive a blessed reward. All these troubles and trials fit especially for the Master's use, by removing all that can be shaken, that that which cannot be shaken may remain.

In love,

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148.

AN ALLEGORY.

18. 12. 73.

My Brother,

A MIGHTY King there was far East : everything that was great and noble dwelt in him, and surrounded him, in superhuman degree. His riches were immense ; his wisdom profound ; his heart was more of God than man : he was, in short, the most perfect King that ever lived on earth.

Now, this King had a noble servant, who was somewhat faithfully inclined towards him, yet withal had a knack of speaking rather freely of his love before his master's face. The wisdom of the King, reading the servant's heart, yet loving him well, thought to teach him a lesson. So, knowing that the noble had a vast collection of costly nick-nacks, both old and new, gathered together from many climes, during many years, and at great expense, he took occasion to visit him ; when, as usual, some sly, but well-turned period of amorous intent dropped on the royal ear : when suddenly he turned him round and said in princely accents ; ———, enough of this : thou lov'st me well, in very deed, thou say'st : then send all these things up for fuel, *every one*, to boil our kettle, or pave our stable-yard ; and come, and live with me, and I will care for thee.

Now, though this noble had been "well educated," and could doubtless equal Machiavel in looking what he did not feel, yet the blow was so well planted, that his wind was gone. He could not speak, though he tried, and hum'd and ha'd most grievously. His Lord, who was good as great, seeing how the matter stood, easily turned the blow to one side by saying—Ah, yes : it would be waste to use these precious things for so vile a purpose.

I see it grieves thee sore : but, prithee, do not speak so largely of thy love : 'tis clear thy nick-nacks lie nearer to thy heart than my will and pleasure.

MORAL.

Man's religion has greater hold on his heart than the Will of God.

IMPROVEMENT.

Be still, in the Will of God, for twelve months, if possible : there is not one soul on the earth that will lose by it.

149.

FALSE FAITH AND A PHANTOM CHRIST.

19. 12. 73.

YOU were brought to my mind this afternoon, with a desire to help you out of your false notions of faith. How strange it might appear, had it not been noted by all truly divine men, that wise men have to become fools, before they can reach to heavenly wisdom. Here am I taking up my pen, in the cross, to endeavour, under the Divine hand, to batter out of your imagination fooleries which none but "wise" men are possessed with. Your great ailment is that you are too clever by half. You know too much. You are overmuch wise. You have got that spiritual malady, "the Scriptures on the brain," and logic, instead of Christ, in the heart. Do not misunderstand this last expression : it is not meant in an absolute sense. You have Him there in a measure, but your other derangements, like a magic lantern, so develope that possession to your mental vision, that you estimate the measure a hundred-fold beyond the reality.

This arises from mistaking the nature of true faith ; making its leading principle to be of man more than of

God ; bottoming it upon your own intellectual perceptions of Scripture truth, instead of the drawings and leadings of the Divine Spirit. This wrong-bottomed faith, when taken hold of by the will and imagination, develops a Christ of prodigious proportions, but which is, in reality, only a phantom of the brain, not Christ as revealed by the Father.

What is a phantom Christ, compared with the true ? It is such a one as requires a continued effort to make that to be substantial which is not—to give substance to imagination. Whereas the true Christ is known by a veritable working of the Wisdom and Power of God in the heart.

You can believe almost what you like, and as much as you like : but the salvation belongs to Another, and is imparted according to His will and pleasure : not in the wisdom, wit, and will of man, though wrought up into never so Scriptural a mould. Thou believest ; thou doest well : but if, with this, thou patiently waitest for the salvation of God, thou doest better.

Here is the mark or point of divergence between the true and the false. The true man believes and waits : the bastard believes, and helps himself ; and so makes the Blessed One, as far as he can do so, serve his folly, haste, and lust.

What is the real result ? He goes up into the air : while the true man sinks on to the Rock.

My learned, clever, persevering, strong-willed, loving, brother ; don't play the fool any longer. Be still, till the Master appears. Don't warm yourself any more. He is cursed, or a fool, that makes a fire on the Sabbath day. Have you seen the Sabbath yet ? Have you rested from your own works, imaginations, believings, and FIRE-MAKINGS ?

You had not when you last wrote : but we are waiting for you to come into a better mind : —. —. —. with a Rod ; another person, whom you know, with gentler means ; and both with open arms.

He of the Rod is tender-hearted : but there must needs be some one, with power, to keep things near the mark, under God : or all would run into imaginations and disorder.

In true love,

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150.

THE NATURE OF GOD REQUIRES A PERFECT OFFERING.

23. 12. 73.

* * * There is no solid rest in God, till everything but the promptings of His Spirit is borne as a temptation, as to writing, preaching, reading, or other things pertaining to the kingdom of God. This, however, is not fully realized, till the death of the soulish or old man, as far as his power over the will is concerned, is known.

A man is to speak and write only in the will of God. His "growth" has no immediate connection with the matter. If the veriest infant speaks in the will of God, he does well : but the danger is that, being an infant, he may speak when he ought to hold his peace, or *vice versá*.

Then again, "many little things may be taken by God as tokens of love, which the lover himself does not count to be such."

This may pass for a pretty saying, and doubtless has been gathered by you somewhere : but the very soul and spirit of half-hearted hypocrisy is in it.

The Blessed One is not, and in the very nature of things cannot be, SATISFIED, till the whole law is fulfilled. "Thou shalt love Him with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with

all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The tenth part of a grain short of this is robbery, and vitiates the whole matter: and it is the blindness of the antichristian spirit that would lead any child of God not to see this in the twinkling of an eye.

The Holy One's lambs are to be *without spot or blemish*, and His lovers Virgins.

151.

THE WORDS OF RELIGIOUS MEN NOT THE WORD OF THE LORD.

25. 12. 73.

THAT part of your letter bearing upon the "Love of God" was sweet to the mind. Will you allow free speech on this point? If you will, —. —. —. would say, make this the principal object and thought of your life.

It is one thing to come under the influence and power of the love, as described by you—and that is of great value: but it is not the thing which a scribe of your ability requires, to keep matters perfectly on the square.

In fact, it is almost dangerous to have it in that degree, and not to sink deeper out of self into God. You know the Light of the World in His spiritual appearance: so walk as to become a child of the light—that is, that this light may become your life, and be constantly the moving power of your actions; or rather, the directing power of the lower ones, and the moving power of the higher.

This does not exist as an established fact, till the old man, with his affections and lusts, is dead; or to avoid dispute, as good as dead, in that his power for evil, actively, exists no longer: then it is that you will, or may, be used by the Master, and do *His* work, in *His* will, not in your own.

It is of no use hiding this. A man may do a great deal of work, and it may be well done, so far as ability, and the finish and figure of it, are concerned—its substance passing well through an ordinary fire—yet if, at the bottom of the matter, the will of the man preponderates, as the prime mover, or, what shall be said, the essential tincture, there will be a shakiness and want of reality in the whole affair: and this simply from the fact, that it is not a present *word of the Lord*, given for the benefit, or condemnation, of men or their doings. So if you feel tied up, don't break the bonds in own will: rather look towards what is above noted, that all may be well.

152.

A PERFECT OFFERING.

[*Continuation of No. 150.*]

30. 12. 73.

My Brother,

UNDERSTAND aright: that quotation from the Law was not intended to work by, for condemnation or justification, but simply to show that the love of God must be entire in its nature, to meet with His approval. “With all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength,” works condemnation to the first birth, because that smooth-faced hypocrite is always for having two irons in the fire; one for self, and one for the Master: but to the new man from heaven the quotation is life and peace, because he knows that all of God is Yea and Amen. To him Law is promise.

If you would, once for all, go out of the first birth, and live according to the light and strength of the second, meanwhile crucifying the other to the death; a new epoch with the new year would dawn upon your soul.

It is not by tinkering up the old hypocrite, the flesh, that anything of heavenly birth will be increased ; but by leaving him on the cross, and watching towards, or sowing to, the Spirit, which brings health, strength, and peace. We are saved by faith, not by law ; though the light of faith is the life and soul of all divine law.

The Blessed God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. As He is received, joined to, and united with, in the holy bonds of spiritual marriage, the creature passes from the nature of a Law-keeper, into that of the Law-maker, which brings to an end the form and force of Law, in that his Life is that which is above, beyond, and beneath all Law, except as it is a Law unto itself.

— . — . — .

P.S. There are two handles to this letter. If you take hold of one, the writer will be esteemed an antinomian heretic, and dangerous person : if the other is grasped, a dear and loving brother.

153.

THE DIVINE WILL THE TRUE SOURCE OF POWER.

[Dec. 1873.]

My Brother,

SUFFER the word of exhortation. Do not forget that there is only one way of helping forward the cause of God and Truth upon the earth—that is, by being united to Him in will, and being filled with His Spirit. This is not brought about by the understanding being enlightened only, or principally ; but through sufferings and death : not sufferings and death brought on by self in its own will and time, but by Him in His. * * *

If the blessed Will of God be not at the back of our doings, they are only so much the more high-flying vanities. This applies especially to preaching, "praying," singing, or writing. His Will *by implication* is not meant—this is one of the deepest strokes of Satan's policy—but His Will *by manifestation*, which gives life, strength, and continued vitality to every good work; causing the inner condition of the worker, under God, to grow brighter and brighter to the perfect day. But this Will through manifestation is hardly ever known except through sufferings. When the Divine Goodness is about to employ any of His children in a service, He brings them through a fiery trial; so that, by submission, will may be brought to Will: then ensues peace in the regions round about, and the word of command is given.

A book might be written of reasons for this; but that is needless here: it is so, and always has been so from the beginning, and will be so to the end. One or two may be given, however, as you are so dear a lover of reasons.

The heavenly man, born of God, lies aback, beyond, or in the centre of the talking, reasoning, soulish man; as the soul in the body, and the spirit in the soul: and therefore requires to be isolated from their influence by an indrawing God-wards, when anything special has to be done. This, nothing but sufferings, as the rule, can bring about. When all is going on well for the soulish part in man—that is, when by a flow of heavenly sweetness he is content—then there is a ready flow of reasoning and talk on all religious subjects: but this is, as the rule, only of man. So, when there is to be a communication from above, the belly and stomach of the soulish mind are emptied of consolation; and, of course, talk ceases, or ought to cease, and a waiting posture of patience and long-suffering is assumed, or ought to be, till the Holy One makes known His Will in one of His dwelling-places upon the earth.

So, my brother, don't let the soulish part lead you into religious doings: this is Babylon, and death. You can

always suffer patiently ; and patient suffering is a most acceptable offering to God—in truth, THE most acceptable that a creature can offer.

It is easy to talk and sing, when all goes well, and the soul is replenished with wine ; and, being easy, in the long run is not found profitable : but patiently to abide the fiery trial, not once only, but seventy times seven, is not so easy, but very, very, profitable, and acceptable to Him, who has, or ought to have, all the heart's love.

In love,

— . — . — .

In proportion as a child, or man, of God speaks and acts only in the Will of God—that is, from the living movement of the Father's Spirit in the child's heart—he is a perfect man. Any perfection that falls short of this is a lying vanity ; that is, if rested in, or made anything of.

154.

RELIGIOUS FLESH.

[1873.]

YES : “ holy flesh ” is difficult to deal with ; especially so, when it takes the form of “ loving ” through thick and thin. There is a preaching “ Brother ” in this town, in whom it assumes the character of “ preaching-the-word ”-on-the-brain. Whenever he has an opportunity, either with a Chinese lantern mounted on a tripod, and so arranged that texts of Scripture of an appalling character are made to shine out with great clearness ; or, when daylight renders the above novelty unnecessary, with bills of a good size mounted on a board, and fixed to a pole

about seven feet high, carried by an assistant—he takes his stand near to some “Church” door, or public walk, and after having given, with the bill- or lantern-carrier’s help, a duet, and a few words of “prayer,” he literally roars out, and keeps pointing to the illuminated words or mounted poster, as it may be, with the earnest gesticulation of an auctioneer, or stump orator, gone mad.

Poor fellow, if his apparent excess and terrible bawling were the result of holy fire—of the love of God pent up and breaking forth—it were well: but it is, or was, only a violent effort of the soulish mind to drive Scripture and dogma down the throats of the wicked; and sounded to the opened ear so painfully earthly and carnal, as to give sickness of heart.

He was visited some months back by —. —. —., and an effort made to bring him to a right bottom: but no; Paul, Peter, and John, or the letter of their writings—“the word of God”—was his authority, and from that he would not budge.

The only favourable change—not favourable truly—that was observed the next time the exhibition was seen, was an improved lantern, really a hit in its way, and of which both he and his assistant seemed somewhat proud.

“Oh happy day that fixed my choice,”

sung in what an outsider might call a regular jolly tune, was being given: but there was nothing to intimate the least improvement in tone or spirit.

Yours is a different case. Nevertheless you will have, some day, before long, to clear out with the loving, aged, respectable, brother—gently and kindly, it may be, but plainly—or you will hardly *stand clear*, when called to an account.

The enclosed sermon by a Bishop is a fine specimen of the deceit of learning, and the delusion of Hell, covered over with goat’s hair, finely woven, in the place of sheep’s clothing.

155.

NATURAL RELIGIOUS LOVE.

3. 1. 74.

NATURAL love has its root in own will. Spiritual love has its spring in the Divine will. The first is a fruit of the natural mind and heart: the last of the Spirit of God, and it works in the spirit of man irrespective of own will. It blows where it listeth.

It comes not at man's will;
It moves not by his word.

As to John's not having been rebuked for his natural love of the Saviour—he was so by implication, when his natural love promoted him to desire to sit at the right hand, or left, in the kingdom, which was not Christ's to give: and also when the Master told him, with the rest of the disciples, that it was expedient that He should leave them, that the Comforter might come, and teach them all things.

You may see how strong natural love is: in the time of trial “they all fled.” True, the disciple whom Jesus loved returned the soonest; as doubtless there was a union of a more intimate character between him and his Master than was common to the others.

But even this does not justify, though it may not condemn, any natural love now. Christ, as He was man, with the appetites and passions of flesh and blood, lives no longer. He is now glorified with the Father, above all heavens, and is Spiritual and Divine, in body, soul, and spirit—so cannot truly and wisely be known after the flesh any more.

Have you forgotten that, when John saw Him in Patmos, he fainted—not of excess of love, but from fear: so great was the change that had taken place?

So, my child, you must cease to play the fool any longer, and learn to be still before God ; that your spirit may be quickened into a new life by the movings of the Holy Ghost : and then you will learn to discern between the voice of the true Shepherd and that of the stranger, and especially the fleshly stranger, which lives in your own heart : for, whether you know it or not, your passionate love is of the same nature as was Peter's before Pentecost, in so far as it springs from a natural, soulish, root.

156.

NATURAL LOVE AND SPIRITUAL LOVE.

15. 1. 74.

Dear _____,

THERE is something very lovable in _____ ; a tender feeling God-ward, and her heart is warm towards you. This, however, is not the true thing. That which is of God is something out of, and above, the affectionate part ; and inclines to control it, and to modify its warmth and follies.

So, dear one, you must incline her, as also yourself, to die with Christ on the Cross to all this loving stuff, however pleasant it may seem to be ; and to enter, through this death, into that life and love, which are immovable, unutterable, and eternal. The love of the flesh is not the love of the Spirit : the one is of man, the other is of God. That which is of God sees Him, feels Him, loves Him ; but not in the affectionate part, but in the WILL, heart, and spirit, *by the Spirit*—which love is of God, and joins to Him, controlling that which is of man.

Understand aright: that which is of God does not destroy that which is of man; but so rules over it, and brings it under subjection to itself, that all creatures of God become, in a manner, equal, and stand near to that of God in the heart, only in proportion as they are of God, or under His special visitation to bring them to a newness of life.

So, dear child, cease to love out of God: or, at any rate, so cease to do so, as not to hinder the sacred flame—the love of the Spirit, and the light of the Living Word—from holding a perfect control over all that is of man, that is not of God.

False religion is strong in the loving part: but it is the loving part which is of man—of the flesh—so cannot please the Blessed God.

Look well to this, beloved; so that in spirit, and in truth, you may become a chaste virgin to God, with Christ, and always please Him, being always led by Him.

Farewell.

157.

ALL GOOD IS OF GOD.

16. 1. 74.

Dear — — — ,

IT has been with me once or twice, since receiving your last note, to advise you to contend for the truth, from that measure of it, and the light thereof, which you find in yourself: always having respect to the leading of the Divine Spirit. In so doing you will have peace; and on all occasions, when thus led by the Spirit, power, also, to bring out the truth over all opposition of the adversaries.

If you should enter into combat in your own time and strength, this may not be the case ; and you may bring a shadow and temptation over your spirit.

You need not to be called upon to be faithful, when moved of the Spirit : this you are taught from above, and in yourself. It may, however, be profitable to say to you—don't move too easily without the Guide of Israel. Ever remember that *every jot of good* is OF GOD : and that you can do good, only as you are used in His hand to prepare the way of the Lord.

When you want any tracts, send for them. When you have any doubt about the quality of any tract, do not circulate it. Any tract that is written from the form of truth in the head only, in the place of being a speaking forth of the Truth in the heart—however correct it may be in sentiment—will not, as the rule, beget to God.

There is a mystery in this : yet, nevertheless, a great truth. The spirit and life of the writer always goes with what he writes on Divine things—saving only in very exceptional cases, when the Divine Word may become vocal through the organs of an ass.

Whatever else you do, make God your only love and trust : not out of your woman's heart only, but by the Spirit of grace and power, which influences the Will, giving it an effectual touch God-ward.

The love of the affectionate part only causes a smoke in the Temple : unless indeed it is altogether subordinate to the Love of the Spirit, when it will be tolerated till you learn better manners.

Farewell.

158.

SHALL THE SPIRIT SPEAK, OR MAN ?

25. 1. 74.

My Brother,

YOU have got some slippery friends, and silver-tongued lovers : but they will not altogether swallow you up, or put out the eye that is opened in you.

When you are visiting people in extremity, do not put LEADING QUESTIONS. You go to minister the true Christ : not a phantom generated by reason, Scripture, and self-will. First, be sure that you ought to go : then, when you are there, be slow to speak, or the blood of souls will hang about you.

The Blessed One wants true prophets : not clever, well-instructed, believers. Stand mum till you feel where the patient really is ; and if you cannot come at this clearly, remain mum, and retire. Better say, I could not see my way, than minister a false dose. The Blessed One does not judge humble ignorance so severely as too ready, shallow, knowledge, that leads to healing the wound, or curing the disease, falsely.

The Spirit wants a mouth-piece—an oracle—when He sends on an errand ; not to hear us talk gospel-talk. He is sick of that, and has been ever since the last book of Apostolic writing was given.

Until another time, in tender love,

Farewell.

159.

“FATHER IGNATIUS.”

27. 1. 74.

“IGNATIUS” is far too self-willed and conceited a little monk to be reached by anything, but the judgments of God. The Pharisaic spirit in him, maugre all his pretended humility and teachableness, is rampant.

The vain talk, and spiritual filth, that will be enacted under the leadership of so blind a guide as he, is sickening to think of.

How the devil makes use of one-sided writers. Even this vagabond from the Divine presence and power seizes hold of “Maitland,” as a “celebrated Protestant historian:” but says nothing of his *bias*, and utter untrustworthiness of judgment in spiritual things—indeed, how could he?—nor hints that he would have condemned a Protestant saint who was unlearned, and called a monk good in proportion as he was erudite: not knowing himself where true goodness really lies, or in what it consists.

However, either Dr. Maitland or the Scriptures will do, as long as they can be made to favour his project, or to appear to sanction his first-birth madness, and fleshly delusion.

Wise men have generally found that, when corruption universally abounds, it is best to go to *first principles*, not to the uncertain doings of the fourth century.

What does this poor demented creature mean? Does he think that the Blessed One is to be operated upon by shaven crowns, warmed up and reiterated “prayers” and songs, and imitations of Buddhists, Papists, Mohammedans, and Jews? All these things, as the rule, remove from the Blessed God—do not bring either Him to man, or man to Him.

Be still, and know that I am God—is the first lesson to be learned by such as these, and which this foolish chatterbox knows not.

He says that he “has washed his hands of the Christianity of this century.” Nothing can be more false than this. He is over head and ears in it, carried captive by its grand principle—the soul of Jesuitism—which is, that the Divine and Blessed One is to be worked upon by a continuance of first-birth performances; touched up by a skilful hand, as an infinite piano, so as to produce almost any tune that is required: or as a loving unknown spirit, well pleased to be sung to and adulated any way, rather than not at all—some flattering Him, as though He were an amorous lover to be kissed and coaxed into their mind: others treating Him as though He were a morose, melancholy, tyrant, to be pleased with black cloth, shaved crowns, long faces, and pious chatter. May He arise, and put these locusts of the pit to flight.

160.

DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS TO THE SOUL. THE TRUE SOLDIER TESTED.

11. 2. 74.

* * * * *

Don't fear resisting anything in the shape of “precious promises;” though they be applied with never so much seeming sweetness to the heart: only let your resistance be in a gentle, meek, and humble spirit. The true manifestation of God in the Spirit to the heart is, as the rule, without words, though not without giving a sense of things which is above them, and out of the power of Satan or the flesh to supply: with a hidden, gentle, childlike, hanging upon the Divine favour, love, and power, which neither

pain nor temptation can altogether take away; and which—taking moderate intervals of time—records an increase of strength, holiness, and love, growing brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

It is not affirmed that there may not be times when words may be found helpful: but they are always dangerous when dwelt upon, as leading from a heart-trust in God alone, and inferior in gracious operation to that undefinable sense of the Divine presence, which is the birthright of every truly begotten one of God.

The outward changes spoken of need not materially interfere with your heavenly race, except as incentives to keep your eye fixed on the goal. Indeed, rightly understood, these things are favours rather than otherwise, because just in proportion to the deceivableness of iniquity in the world and false churches, there will be an appearance of power, light, and life, from the Blessed One, in the faithful saints, which shall out-plumb the mystery of iniquity, and out-beam, and annihilate, in their hearts, the wide-spread and thick darkness all around.

The true place to test or bring out the highest qualities of a soldier is not on a Brussels carpet, while chattering over nuts, cigars, and wine; nor during a sham fight in Hyde Park: but in the din of battle, or entering into a real fight. To incline to sneak into the figure and pay of a General of Division without facing hunger and cold, or blood and smoke, would argue the possession of a mean soul. So, in heavenly things, while in the body, to desire to have sun up, month of May, and pleasant companions, all the year round, would not be good.

In true love, for the present,

Farewell.

161.

SELF-JUSTIFICATION, AND JUSTIFICATION
BY GOD.

15. 2. 74.

My Brother,

SOME weeks ago you wrote to me a letter in which you made a remark that has often been brought to my mind since. At the time it was clearly and strongly felt: but—not always to be finding fault—it was passed over. Many gentle knocks since then have indicated that it cannot be altogether gone by. * * * Certainly there is nothing between us to lead to an exaggerated view of the matter against you, but rather a danger the other way, that that confidence and kindness on your part, which in the providence of the All-blessed subsists between us, should cause a closing of the eyes, and shutting of the mouth, when really there is something that ought to be said.

What you referred to was the ground of your acceptance with God; and an expression, rather freely given, that you had little difficulty on that point.

Now, it is not for me to interfere between the Bridegroom of souls and His bride; nor to pry into their love-secrets, or to be over-curious about their interchanges of tenderness, or correction, or reproof, or trial: only as a friend of the Bridegroom, who has obtained mercy and wisdom to be faithful, it is open to me to say, that if you build upon any deductions of reason from promises, or taking for granted this, that, or the other, upon the basis of analogy, or trust, or hope, or a faith which rests in self-will; in so far as you do so, you are captivated by the spiritual Antichrist of the day, and tarred with the same brush as Darby, Kelly, Newton, -----, with all

the thousands in other sects who take the name of God in vain, and are prophesying spiritual lies, from the root of a false faith, watered by Scripture, reason, learning, and self-will.

It is God that justifieth: any made-up thing short of this will burn like stubble, and leave the soul a standing place where no bottom is, in the trial by fire.

So, my brother, get clear on this point, by surrendering up all your precious and holy trumpery, if you have any, and standing naked upon *the justification of God* made known in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Anything but this will fail when He appeareth; and in the time of battle, even now, leave you like a cripple on crutches—worse than useless, when the fight waxeth very hot.

In love,

— . — . — .

162.

“PREACHING THE GOSPEL.”—FAITHFUL REPROOF.

19. 2. 74.

* * * You are not accused on this point: the matter is only put before you, that the infinite gravity of the subject may be realised. Here is ————, one only amongst thousands of men, of spirit and ability, who are preaching the Gospel, as it is called, from a wrong ground. Here rises the question, are those who see through this delusion, in measure, walking according to their light, in faithfulness to God? It is the special business of — . — . — .’s life to do this, and by all means to

help others also who are led that way. Accusations are useless beyond a certain point. Surely the time of their application to you is past: still now and then, there may yet be times when something like a stirring up of the pure mind may be needed.

There is no pleasure in this occupation, as of itself: yet, of necessity, it is laid on some. Now, at this moment, there is not a speck on either heart or mind against you: if to-morrow something is shown, what can be done better than make it known? If you are perfectly clear in the sight of the Father, He will JUSTIFY you; and then it will be your turn lovingly to reprove your mentor, or helper, or friend, or brother.

163.

TO A LEADER IN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS.

19. 2. 74.

—, —,

YOU are making a pillow of delusion or thorns for your dying head, and treasuring up wrath and anguish for your poor deluded soul. Where are you going to, or when will you stop? Is it not enough to have been made drunken with the doctrines and deceits of Brethrenism? Now you must call a meeting to organize, or spirit up, a counterpart to the spiritual ranterism and wickedness of Yankeeism.

Know you not that a faith which is of the flesh is an abomination to God, and that those who are ranting under its power and influence are instruments of Satan, and spiritually of Sodom? Brethrenism has proved that a natural belief gives eternal Life: Yankeeism that natural

heat and musical excitement give the Holy Ghost. You have believed the former : are you going to be swallowed up by the latter ?

You have been living, and preaching, a false conversion for years : are you so carried away by Satan as to believe that it can be improved by any fire, or faith, or love, or excitement, which has its root in the flesh ? Your first business is to repent of the spiritual lies and folly which you have been spreading broadcast by all the means in your power this long time, not to plunge deeper and deeper into spiritual wickedness and folly.

In your present condition you cannot *write* a page, on the holy faith of Christ, without showing to the opened eye that you are deceived and a deceiver, a spreader abroad of lies. What then can you do but *preach*, also, lies to others ?

You spoke truly when you said that the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh was a knowledge too wonderful for you : but you spoke lies when, immediately after, you said that you had life in Christ through believing. There is only one life in Christ : if you have it, as you say that you have, the knowledge of it would not be too wonderful for you. The Life gives the knowledge. As is the Life, so is the knowledge. If the Life be Divine, the knowledge will be Divine also ; as is all that is begotten and brought forth of the Father. But that knowledge which is stolen from the Scriptures and other books, and bottomed on a faith which is of fleshly root, gives not the true Life. Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. That you have not the true Life, and consequently not the true knowledge of it, rests not upon your own words only, but upon the evidence of all that you say and do, and are about to do religiously.

They that are born of God sin not : that which is of God keepeth them, as long as they abide in it and with it : and not only so, but it is of a growing nature, and glorious like everything that comes immediately from

Him, and is of Him. The only way to secure its increase is to walk humbly in the holy fear and love, and to keep from spiritual works of the flesh—not to meddle with it, and strive to make it do wonders under the guidance of the human will ; but rather to bring the natural will into entire subjection to it.

In the place of this you are calling meetings to enquire into the “Scriptural possibilities of faith :” that is, in plain English, to learn out of the Scriptures, by discussion, how you may manipulate the Divine Being, or sing to Him, or pray to Him, or flatter Him, so as to make Him do wonders through you, or by your means ; and baptize your rotten doctrines, and vivify your corrupt hearts, who are yet in the flesh.

Those spiritually drunken Yankees, with their pipes, pathos, and passion, are out-running you in the fleshly race, and are so working the oracle as to stir up a jealousy of the flesh in your hearts. Therefore, as there is a faith which removes mountains, you are willing to get hold of it, if possible, and wield a spiritual power that will bring you up to par.

Oh, ye drunkards, ye learned swine, when will ye cease from your delusions, uncleannesses, and lies ? When will ye cease from taking the name of the Blessed One in vain, prophesying spiritual lies, and stirring up soulish flesh into natural faith and false worship ?

Even on the ground of patriotism, and a love of your families, ye might cease : for nothing brings wrath sooner than a corrupt and false faith, a noisy, fleshly, blustering, musical, handling of heavenly things, and of the Divine and Holy Being—a singing, and chattering, and wheedling of souls into a religious sentimentalism, which is of the flesh, not of the blessed and glorious Spirit of God.

As for you, your walk and talk show clearly that you know not the blessed God in reality, and that you have not truly come under the power of His Life and Love ; and consequently that you cannot, from a living ground,

—, —, this is the last time you will be called. If you stop not, and repent, you will end in spiritual delusion, and finish in a false and lying peace; or have a terrible thorny pillow under your dying head.

— . — . — .

—————

164.

THE SPIRIT THE TEACHER.

22. 2. 74.

ALL that you have said in your last is pleasant to the taste. Your prudence and patience with your children will meet with its reward. Only take care, with the Divine help, that nothing on the earth, or in heaven, hinders the growth and flow of Divine Love in your own heart. God in man can alone, by man—through man—teach the true knowledge of God and Christ to man. It was not altogether a hyperbolic expression of our Lord's, when He intimated that the faith of God would remove mountains: though few know that the life's blood of that mountain-moving faith is in the Love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given. The miracle-working Prophet had a faith which gave power over the elements, while he was under a special influence of the Spirit of God (which influence must be felt to be known): but it is, or will be, the Sons of God, who will exercise

this power, or rather be exercised by it, in a moral form, from a bottom, or spring, of Union with the Blessed One in Love—which exercise will increase the constancy and power of the perfect Love of God, in an unutterable degree, even while in these earthly tabernacles, these bodies of mortal flesh and bone. But there may be no impatience; no holy lying and chattering; no manipulating; no making of images; no flattery; no making of love from a wrong ground; no drunkenness. The meek and lowly mind must win the day—the patient mind, the virgin mind, that moves only as moved by Him, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will and pleasure. Where this is, He will come, and will not tarry.

For the present, dear brother,

Farewell.

165.

MOODY AND SANKEY.

22. 2. 74.

THERE is a letter of yours, of some days ago, which, if not noticed, is likely to appear to have slipped by. In it you mention the “outwardly remarkable results” of the movement. Have not the talents of _____, as an Editor, misled you in some degree? The performance by Sankey, *in its way*, may have merit; but these things don’t last long. _____ brings together the statements of partizans, who themselves are unable to fathom the quality of the movement—he putting to one side, “for the glory of God,” anything strong to the contrary.

If you remember how that dogma of Brethrenism—eternal life in Christ by faith—on a Sandemanian foundation, has captivated all the great “Christian workers” of the day, it will be only natural for you to suppose that those thus prepared, by the malice of the evil one, are quite ready and eager to drink this spiced American Wine: but when these drunkards, or wine-merchants, shall have passed away, and the effects of their strong drink died off, what then, and then?

This kind of thing has, in a good measure, been “played out” in America, and will probably soon come to an end, in so far as the excitement and novelty are concerned, here also. Moody has so many favourite discourses, and telling anecdotes; Sankey has his rôle of songs: but a veritable hungry and thirsty soul could, and would, digest the whole lot in a week, and still remain hungry and dry. “Artful dodging” may help to extend the entertainments over a considerable time: that, however, which comes not from the true Life, will become tasteless and tedious with constant use, to those who are really honest-hearted.

When anyone takes a survey of religious doings and anomalies in a general way, and from a merely human stand-point, he should never lose sight of the many millions of Mohammedans, Hindoos, Chinese, and other nations of the earth. This will prove a strong solvent of “*mysteries* :” as also is that great fact *that there is evil in the world*, which makes the multiplied different appearances of it comparatively reasonable, and easy to swallow, to the lowly mind.

If the ever-blessed, most holy, and glorious One, in His perfect wisdom, has seen fit—thus as men we speak—to allow evil to appear, as a dark back-ground to that wonderful drama, which, from its beginning, may need fifty thousand years at least, before it ceases, and the great jubilee year of the blessed God sets in; it does not seem likely that the conflicts between principles, and the strifes between parties, should partake altogether, or in a great

measure even, of that element, which is called "war in a teacup," or His thunders be of such a character as a multiplication of teaboards would produce: but rather, that there should be such impressions made, and principles wrought out, in this succession of ages, and registered on the indestructible nature of the soul and spirit of man, as are commensurate with the eternal destinies of the human race.

166.

BE PATIENT.

27. 2. 74.

—————, my child, be patient, be patient, be patient. It is not said, nor thought, that you are impatient: still it is said, be patient. Be still before the High and Holy One, so that He may take the lead in your inner man, and by His Spirit bring you into Salem, the City of Peace.

As long as you allow yourself to lead Him, He will bear with you; but cannot give to you the commendation that Christ gave to Mary. There be plenty of warm-hearted, busy, religious, Marthas; but not many patient, meek, and loving Marys.

Be still, my child, be still; and learn to hear the Shepherd's voice, and to know it from that of the stranger. It is better to walk painfully and sufferingly for a time on the earth, than to fly foolishly up into the air.

But if you behave yourself prudently, He will give you as much comfort as is convenient for you. You have yet to learn that there is, in the present state, danger even in being favoured with heavenly wine. You judge things as yet from an untried ground: the natural ardour of your heart runs away with you. My child, be patient, be patient, be patient.

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167.

DARBYISM.

[Feb. 1874.]

THE letter of J. N. D. simply shows that he believes one thing *from self-will and Scripture*, and the people about whom he is writing believe another thing *from the same ground*; and that they are both ignorant of the truth as it is in Christ. There is more hope, however, for the chatterboxes than for the muddled carnal lawyer. He has done more for darkness and death than they are capable of achieving in their lifetime. His serpentine wisdom is working in thousands of long heads, and inflaming their strong wills in favour of delusion and deceit: the others are only for a time, amongst women and simple souls, who will never make a notch on the age in which we live. Don't meddle too much with these wordy things, unless you feel *strong* IN GOD to hit out against them. A walk with God, and faithful accomplishment of His will, will bring more favour with Him, and good to the world, than all that they are writing in England and America.

168.

TRUE LOVE.

1. 3. 74.

— . — . — . is rather a believer than a reasoner, and has gone in (having been led thereto) for true love, for many years, with all his heart, and soul, and strength. He is willing to be as a little flower, not bigger than a three-penny piece, or a drop of pure water, or as a raspberry, or a strawberry, to give one little jot of pleasure to his true Love; and then, if it please Him, to be swallowed up and lost for ever in Him.

169.

NATURAL AND DIVINE FAITH AND LOVE.

9. 3. 74.

“**D**O not all Christians know Christ, not merely historically, as all the civilized world does, but, so to speak, savingly; and yet only naturally at first? The Apostles did so, up to the time that Christ told them, It is profitable for you that I go away,” etc., etc.

Not so exactly: because there is direct evidence to the contrary. “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

So they were under the influence and drawings of the Father, which is something more than that which is natural.

“For ten years I have known Him naturally, and been happy.” Not so: because by nature no man can know Him. Rather, you have believed in Him naturally, and a natural joy has resulted from that faith. We are saved by Christ, only as we become one Spirit with Him by the power of God. If we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of His. But Christ’s Spirit was not natural, but Divine.

Don’t let anything of this kind turn your mind from what may now be the mind of God towards you. Whenever you feel His tendering, enlightening, and softening power, bend under it with meekness and gentleness; but don’t fly up above it. That is a sure way to lose it, and cause a long delay of His coming again. He is the salvation of His people, if they will cease from their own works, and let Him work in them. This is the way that the problem must be wrought out. * * *

A kingdom is not divided against itself: but these natural, happy, and believing, Christians will resist with all their might anything deeper than they possess, though it leaves

them slaves to sin and inbred corruption, and altogether without any experience, which in any way will tally with that of Christ and His Apostles. If mighty works may be done in His name, and yet the worker remain an alien from the love of God, surely a false faith and joy may be raised even more easily than this. True joy is the joy of God, and may be known by the fact that it is not within the power of the creature, and always works *humility*, *meekness*, and the love of God. The kingdom of heaven is true love, the love of the Spirit; not the love which is worked up by any reasoning whatever, or bottomed upon an act of the creature-will, but a letting out of the Divine Spirit into the heart, which takes away all fear and doubt and sorrow, and makes God infinitely sweeter to the soul than thousands of silver and gold, or the beauty of a thousand worlds.

Dear ———, cast all your reasoning and trumpery—I mean your holy trumpery—to the dogs, when you go into the presence of God; and present yourself as a worthless, helpless creature before Him, conscientiously doing, or leaving undone, anything that you may believe that He calls you to do, or leave undone; and you will not be long left to yourself. It is your clever, prudent, and wise ones that go empty away; while the meek and lowly fools, and children, or publicans, with their heads down, and beating their breasts, win the day.

And above all things, when the enemy of souls draws near and fills your spirit with darkness, misery and dread, so that you would almost sooner never have been born, be sure and bear it patiently, looking out with long-suffering for the breaking of day. These are the times when, if you faint not, you will reap heavenly treasure and Divine visitation: and when once you have drunk of this stream, all others will be forgotten and cast away.

This cup of the Spirit cannot be forgotten. It brings Divine love, joy, and peace, more divinely than good wine and proper food, in a natural way, give strength and life

to the hungry body. What would you have more? There is a joy which comes through "good" singing, and lively preaching, and man-wrought faith: it passes through mighty meetings of people, and produces excitement and content for a time; but it is not necessarily good, nor divine, nor of God. The joy and Spirit of God open heaven, and *humility*, and a *sweet love of God*. This is a line of things out of the way of the flesh and devil. God's love—His blessed Spirit—shuts up, makes wise of heart, and more gentle than a lamb, though, in the will of God, more terrible than a lion in fight. That of the flesh makes chatterboxes, and fleshly lovers, and leaves the heart unpurified from self-will and earthly love, violent, changeable, and trifling; hot one day, and cold the next; wise in the morning, a fool at night; singing about heaven, but longing in the heart for the earth.

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170.

THE SECRET OF GROWTH IN THE DIVINE LIFE.

13. 3. 74.

THE kingdom of heaven is true Love—the Love of the Spirit: salvation, glory, and eternal Life.

No: there is no room for boasting; or, as you more properly put it perhaps, for the boaster. Indeed, how can he exist, where Christ is known, and reigns? It is true that when the balance inclines towards that side which indicates in favour of the enemy, it does indeed take away the ground from under man's feet, and brings him down: or even if it only seems so to indicate, there must be great heart-provings; which has led many ill-instructed persons

to conclude that this, therefore, is the most favourable condition of things to be realized on earth. But nothing can be farther from the truth: for although anything, almost, is better than the boaster, yet it is surely a sad mistake to suppose that weakness is the best qualification for meeting successfully so truculent a villain.

The truth is—there is little fear of anything that he may do, when the true Life is well in the ascendant; when the Divine Spirit is the leading agent. This therefore is that towards which the eye should look. The soulish nature, the flesh, is of the earth, and for the earth; and so, contrary to the Spirit, which is of Heaven, and for Heaven. As therefore that nature, which is of heavenly and Divine original, comes to the growth, strength, and wisdom, of Manhood, the earthly man—the flesh, the ass—is kept in due and honourable subjection.

You at once say—Ah, that is the point: but I cannot increase the strength of the heavenly man: I know of no celestial dumb-bells, to bring out his muscle, and mend his general health; to bring him to the vigour and prowess of some of the least of the Beloved's mighty men—to say nothing of those who were of the first degree. Do you? Or does anybody else, that you ever heard of? Well, some have been met with, who knew a thing or two in this line worth knowing; and, doubtless, so far as they personally were concerned, they had been taught how to comport themselves, so as to favour the operations of Divine grace upon themselves. But it is a mistake to suppose that what has worked well for one plant of God will always suit another. Each has its peculiar constitution, and requires position, circumstances, and treatment, suitable thereto: so that any directions, which would lead to a taking hold of the matter, as though heavenly plants were to be grown by the acre, with so much rain, wind, and sunshine, to serve for the whole lot, would prove a failure.

Ah! then, you say, we are at a dead lock: so I must go on in my low way as well as I can. Not exactly so:

for although there are hidden dealings, and particular operations, which are needful for the well-being of every individual plant of the Father's planting, which none may safely interfere with; yet He does not take the whole matter entirely out of the hands of others, but sometimes uses an under-gardener, or poor labourer, in such a way as that they almost seem to do more than Himself; though, in very deed, He it is that giveth the increase.

The kingdom of heaven is true Love—the Love of the Spirit. Look out then in that quarter, where true Love comes from: and as you doubtless have a notion what “true” earthly lovers look for in each other, and have, or ought to have, each one in himself, or herself, towards the other, see to it that you rest not short of a perfect offering in this higher matter.

It appears that we are highly favoured in this affair, the Bridegroom having so arranged matters, that perfect Love brings up to the highest figure and stature of perfection: and while, as you say, on the side of the bride, there is affinity with weakness, yet the great and ineffable beauty and majesty of the Lover of souls, His princely magnificence of heart, and unutterable greatness, goodness, and sweetness, of Spirit, throw an advantage, by His favour, to the side of the weaker vessel, that is too often overlooked. What a solace—nay, ground of joy and gladness—it is that though the boaster has no right of inheritance with the bride, yet she may, with meek confidence, remember that the King, and His love, are altogether without, or beyond, the thought even of weakness, vacillation, or dishonour: so that, though she may feel ground of fear, or a reason, or many reasons, for shame and confusion of face, on her own part; yet, on the other hand, the glorious perfection of His nature is incapable of being, in the least measure, affected by her low degree, and outward seeming dishonour; and that He has bound Himself so to dispense His favours, and impart His nature, that there shall be brought about a perfect

unity, and therefore, of necessity, congruity of nature and state. Now, this being so, you must pay your court accordingly; remembering wisely the quality and dignity of your Lover.

We don't tell one another generally how to "make love," as it is called: the internal principles of our nature teach that art, more or less, to perfection. So it is in reference to Him, who is the Head of all things. If we be born of Him, there will be a longing after, and an incessant movement of spirit towards, Him; with an increase of love and unity, which neither fire nor water will put out, or altogether allay. True, if there be slackness of purpose, and a turning to one side after other lovers, much loss may be experienced, and punishment merited, and, in measure, inflicted: but rarely do any blandishments of Earth, or baits of Hell, effectually turn from God a spirit that has, at any time, had a powerful heavenly touch in the will, and been perfectly united to Him, even so far as its own will is concerned; though not fully proved, and in the furnace found faithful to the Bridegroom.

Many build much upon the devotion of the bride; but the wise of heart are always incredulous, till they have good satisfaction as to the mind of the Bridegroom; knowing that there is no Rock with the creature, except of Him, in Him, on Him—where only is Salvation, Glory, and eternal Life.

Hallelujah. Amen.

It is possible that this letter is rather for some person unknown to the writer. You will judge.

171.

TO A CHIEF PROMOTER OF
 “EVANGELIZING” OPERATIONS, THE DOINGS
 OF MOODY AND SANKEY, ETC., ETC.

19. 3. 74.

Neighbour _____,

A FEW days ago a letter of yours was put into my hands, in which various reflections were made upon some remarks in a letter written by me to _____ [*i. e.*, letter No. 163]. On looking over these reflections, and observing their falsehood, weakness, and superficial character, a few words were pencilled upon the margin to point out these characteristics, and the letter was returned and forgotten. Since then, having felt an engagement of mind to point out some of these follies to you, the letter has been asked for again, and is now before me.

Before entering upon the task, it may be well to say that any lively hope of your eyes being opened, or heart affected, in a measure to repay even the light work before me, does not exist. You have plunged too deeply into the mystery of iniquity, and have too many earthly interests bound up with it, to receive that truth, which, if received, would bring about your ears the structure in which is your heart's interest and love, and force upon your awakened conscience a clear and painful sense that you are really more an object to be pitied than those sinners of whose souls and salvation you are making merchandize. It is now as it was near two thousand years ago: *true faith* is strangled in the birth by self-interest and self-ends.

The first passage in yours which is noted for examination runs thus—“Now I am bold to say that there is no Scripture precedent for the abusive and vulgar language

of your friend : on the contrary, it is as unlike the spirit of the Apostles, as it is foreign to the mind of Christ, who did not break bruised reeds, or quench smoking flax." Here then first is *falsehood*. "There is no Scripture precedent for the language used." Nothing can be plainer to a reader of the Scripture than that the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, *did use language every way as plain and strong*. Then there is weakness—pulling in by the ears a passage of Scripture which has no relevance whatever to the case in hand, or the parties concerned. What have bruised reeds, and smoking flax, to do with those who are taking upon themselves the place of *leaders and chief performers* in religious movements? That passage of Scripture refers to those who are weak in grace, and—far from being able to lead or drive others—have great difficulty in upholding themselves. You seem to have been conscious yourself that little headway was being made, and that the work already done needed bolstering up, as it is immediately added—"The strong language which Jesus used was to men of a very different spirit from Mr. ———— : and remember that He was Jesus, and the Master fitly speaks as it would be unfitting for a fellow-servant to speak." This brings out the third characteristic of your letter—its superficial character—assertions with nothing like solid truth or reason at their back. Now the truth is that the Prophets, who were servants of Christ, and spoke by the Spirit of Christ, before Jesus was born, *did use equally strong language*, and the Apostles and others, after He was risen, also did the same : so that you are found, in this your superficial ignorance, little better than a liar, and false witness against His servants in all ages, before God, and those in whom He dwells, and His Spirit reigns. True, you endeavour to slur over the falsehood, weakness, and superficial character of your performance, by adding two other assertions equally false and superficial with the former—first, that Mr. ———— was of a different spirit to those whom Christ rebuked ;

and second, that —. —. —. is a fellow-servant with Mr. ————— : but these, like all the rest that you have written, are simply without proof or truth.

There are only two spirits which are the cause of all spiritual contention, and against one of which the servants of Christ have been called to wage war from nearly the beginning of time. The one is of *Light*, the other of *darkness* : the one of Truth, the other of error : the first of the Spirit, the last of the flesh. Before you had run out into this jumble of falsehood and Scripture, it would have been well to have examined what —. —. —. did say, and to have given some proof that he was in error on this vital point. This would or might have given some seeming force to your assertions of the difference of spirits, and of being fellow-servants : but not having done so, the reasons in the letter to ————— [No. 163] stand against this assumption, and leave —. —. —. good ground to deny these last two assertions altogether. Flesh and Spirit may be very much alike in outward appearance, but are as different as Hell from Heaven at root. Satan is never stronger than when he works as an angel of light, baptizing the highest forms of fleshly worship with the names of “the work of God,” or “the work of the Spirit.”

There are reasons given in that letter which are not to be decently got over by simply calling them “abusive and vulgar.” It was there stated that a faith which was of nature only, and not a fruit of the Spirit, would lead to a worship, etc., etc., which was “spiritually of Sodom :” and afterwards, those who were actively engaged in stirring up this false spirit, faith, and worship, were spoken of as spiritual Drunkards, men of Sodom, and learned Swine. That your superficial knowledge of the difference between that which is good, and that which is evil—that which is of the flesh, and that which is of the Spirit—may not serve you as an excuse at *the great day*, these statements, which you have falsely called abusive and vulgar, shall be put before you plainly in a few words. You will then

be left without excuse, when, if you repent not, they will be brought against you at that day.

Your letter, far from leading to a desire to withdraw, or to hush up, or to modify them, in the slightest degree, proves rather that they are not a jot beyond the truth as applied to your present condition; and shows clearly to the opened eye, that as you are a child of darkness, and servant of a faith and worship, which are of the flesh, they, with the following explanations, are your just portion.

“Spiritual Drunkards,” of whom you are one, are those whose consolations and comforts spring from religious exercises; or a “faith,” “hope,” and “love,” whose life is of man only, not of the Spirit of the Blessed God.

Men of Sodom, spiritually, of whom you are one, are those who stir up one with another, and force upon the Divine Being—the Blessed God—acts of “love,” “faith,” and “worship,” which have their root in and from the flesh; and are contrary to the Will and Spirit of God.

Learned “Swine” (spiritual), of whom you are one, are those who form to themselves, by reason, imagination, Scripture, and learning, notions of Gospel life and mysteries; but remain, as to their own inner life, natural only, and without the Divine life and guidance, given by the Holy Spirit to the new creature in Christ Jesus.

Now these being a true spiritual portrait of your character, and indicative of the faith and worship which you are setting up, as is fully evidenced by the Spirit to those who are wise of heart, it is denied that either you, or those whom you have taken upon yourself to defend, *are* “God’s dear children,” or servants of Jesus Christ. God’s dear children are in the Spirit, not in the flesh; neither have they pleasure in that which is of the flesh: so also those who are truly servants of Jesus Christ are in His life and light. Who but those who are drunken and blinded by the prince of darkness would have the impudence to say that they are in the Spirit, or walking in the light and life of Christ, as their leading principle, who

carry about with them a musical box, and depend upon scientific singing of solos and songs to get hold of the feelings and passions of poor fallen men and women? Those who have been favoured to know what the power of God really is, and what the presence of His blessed Spirit really does, have no difficulty in tracing this to a human and sensual root, and have as little scruple in trampling it under their feet, as a work of the flesh in the main, which will help forward the cause of Satan in the long run ; and therefore also in refusing to acknowledge the principal actors therein, or abettors thereof, as either servants of Jesus Christ, or dear children of God.

There is some sheep's clothing at the finishing of your letter, ill adjusted, and mixed up with falsehood ; but as it refers to that which stands upon your own foolish dictum only, supported by weakly applied passages of Scripture, it is left as unworthy of notice. You may impose upon poor first-birth "saints," like yourself, with these sweet words, long faces, and hypocritical quotations of Scripture : but they in whom the Spirit of the Father and Son really dwells can see the wolf beneath this fleshly guise, and have no difficulty, *when called of God*, in thrashing this assumed meekness, but real internal villainy, with a rod of iron.

The spiritual dirt and filth which you are spreading broadcast over this nation, for filthy lucre's sake, and from blindness of heart, will sink you into the lowest Hell, if you repent not.

172.

LOVE UNRUFFLED IN SHARP ENCOUNTERS.

26. 3. 74.

My Brother,

IT was thought to be best that you should see the two or three letters to our friend ----- They will give you an idea of what the mystery of iniquity really is, that we have to contend against. There is always a corrupt ground in high-flyers. It is one thing to paint the truth in high colours, and another to be in the power thereof. The former brings vain imaginations, and windy talk, and opens the mind for the prince of darkness as an angel of light. The latter gives humility, meekness, and the holy fear, with necessary power to repel and overcome all enemies. At first there was thought of sending the letter back, and asking the writer to burn it: but as something of this kind has occurred before, it was resolved at last, under the Divine hand, to meet the matter with reproof and rebuke—not over heavy, because of the infirmities; not over light, because of the wickedness.

Much more might have been said, and other points of weakness and perversity taken hold of; but as the battle is the Lord's, the prisoners taken in rebellion may well be left in His hands.

It is probable that David had a rough time of it with that miscellaneous collection drawn together at Adullam: but the Divine anointing gave him power to hold his own, till the time of deliverance and crowning came. He is well kept, who is helped up by the arm of power, and instructed by the wisdom of God. All men, and every thing, so work together as to result in good to those who are the called according to His purpose. May His great name be had in everlasting remembrance and loving praise. He is worthy of our best love and eternal regards. Amen

173.

Same Subject.

THERE is one thing that brings comfort and strength of a solid character to the mind on this subject: it is, that the Spirit, the Blessed Spirit, gives an assurance that the battle is the Lord's, and that by simply doing what He calls for, though nothing very showy may appear, it is not labour in vain. Another thing is that heavenly love is not lessened, but rather increased, during these sharp encounters, and that nothing but the most unruffled love to God and all men reigns in the breast.

Dear Friend, Farewell.

174.

PLEASING GOD.

26. 3. 74.

My Brother,

BE not over-anxious to do something to please God: but rather be anxious to be ready to do anything which He may make known that He requires to be done, or left undone.

If you cultivate this state of mind towards Him, as grace is given, you will soon enough know what He requires to be done.

The great object of life is to become united to Him in Spirit. This union takes place, as by, in, or through, obedience to the requirings of His Spirit, Light, or Grace, in the heart, the enmity is removed out of the way, or brought under the feet of His begotten One in your spirit.

In love,

— . — . — .

175.

PATIENCE UNDER TRIAL BRINGS CERTAIN
DELIVERANCE.

29. 3. 74.

My Brother,

DON'T trouble in your mind about anything past, as regards those who truly know the Lord, and walk in His holy fear and love. When you are right with Him, you will not be wrong with them.

No suspicion dwells in the love of God—the love of the Spirit: rather a disposition the other way, to forget everything that is past; or, if it be remembered, to think of it much more tenderly than would be safe for you to do. So all that you have to mind will be to keep low before Him who, without respect of persons, judgeth every man righteously; and who, when their ways please Him, makes their enemies to be at peace with them. Their brethren and friends, having His Spirit in their hearts, are sure to be the same.

Any darkness or deceit that you may have passed through will enable you in future, by the grace of God, to help others who may have been overtaken by the same; and will otherwise prepare your mind to serve those who, in this day and generation, may be brought out of spiritual delusion and drunkenness, to serve the Living God in sobriety and truth.

It is too true that very few know *the Shepherd's voice* from the transformings and fancies of the Whore and False Prophet in their own hearts—the Antichrist within. It may therefore be to your advantage (should you be called, as you doubtless will more or less, to stand forth in behalf of the blessed truth, the indwelling Life) that you have passed through some of the higher forms and transformings

of religious flesh. All things work together for good to them that love God. Humility of heart, and tenderness of spirit, Godward, *with patience under trial*, make this more certain than that $2 \times 2 = 4$: while pride, hastiness, and minding high things, make it as uncertain as a tale of old, or a dream of the night. There is an absolute certainty in everything of God man-ward, just in proportion as the creature stands *out of* self-will, pride, and hastiness, and *in* His Will, with humility, resignation and meekness.

There is neither variableness nor shadow of turning in Him: but the above is a simple statement of truth, without exaggeration, as it stands relatively between Him that is all good, and more than all things; and man that, without Him, is evil, and so worse than nothing.

In love, Farewell,

— . — . — .

176.

FLESHLY HOLINESS.

3. 4. 74.

“**P**EARSALE SMITH, who is yet under the bondage of the flesh, though in a high figure,” &c.

That is, all he did and said [at a “holiness” meeting] was from a *natural* root—his prayers and speech, though in a highly religious figure, neither coming from God, nor reaching to Him.

The natural, rational, soulish, principle, or in other words, the spirit of Cain and Esau, obtains not the blessing, however religiously inclined.

There was the dramatic action, intonation, and expression, corresponding to familiar speech with God: but being only natural, rational, and soulish, it could not pierce through the region of the prince of the power of the

air. This was clear to the spiritual mind: in fact the prayers did not go out of himself, much less did they reach through the power of the flesh and devil in others, or up to Heaven.

So with the readings, or sermons. * * *

Then that operatic touch at the last was just the same in spirit. There was not a spark of *supernatural* fire or power in the whole.

That working the oracle with Mayers and the musical box about Pentecost can never be forgotten. In the last verse, or last but one, of the solo, Mayers bellowed out, *with operatic art*, that he felt it in his soul, or something of the sort.

Thus it is: they being, with Adam, out of spiritual Eden; not having, by the power of Christ, in the will of God, re-passed into the place of union again, EXCEPT IN NOTION, all this working amounts, spiritually, to imitation only, and partakes of the nature of mockery, and the sin of Sodom.

If man could, in a natural principle, take hold of, or enter, Paradise and God's power; or otherwise rise into the heavenly places, and from thence sound forth a living word from God, *with the Spirit of the Blessed God in it*; the elect must then be deceived without remedy, their only safety being in the Shepherd's voice. But this he cannot do. It cost our Lord, on our behalf, His humiliation, agony, and death: and those who are made ministers of that which comes from within the veil must also have passed, in the power of God, by death with Christ, through that region, or out of that principle, in which the prince of darkness reigns; and, in spirit, REALLY dwell with Christ in God.

A cry from this position shakes Hell, casts out devils, raises the dead, and brings the creatures—the called ones—to true fellowship with God in life and action.

Those "for years sound in the faith"!!! who profess to have been profited by these ministrations, are only

natural, soulish, Christians ; or, at best, those who, having begun in the Spirit, have ended in the flesh. He or they can “profit” these in one way only—that is, by putting them to screwing up *their faith*, which is natural and of man only, to a higher pitch of intensity. This, however, is only man changing man, or himself, into another figure : not the Blessed God, by His Spirit, bringing him into another Life, or higher principle, and clothing him with Divine and heavenly power.

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

177.

G. FOX. MOODY AND SANKEY. THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE IN MAN.

5. 4. 74.

Dear _____,

THERE is a love of God which is immovable, and there is one that is changeable. The first is a fruit of the Spirit, and comes in when old things have all passed away, and all things become new. The last is when things are passing away, and man works the oracle, now and then, of himself. Now, this is the difference between William Bramwell, the Methodist, and George Fox. Bramwell had the love of God in measure shed abroad in his heart, but he had a knack of gathering sticks, and stirring the fire, in own will. Sometimes the sticks were green, and did little more than make noise and smoke : at other times the fire was hot and clear.

Now George [Fox] had passed through all this, and saw to the bottom of it ; so you must mind and give honour to whom it is due.

There is a danger of confounding men, and times, and things. The present Quakers have become lukewarm,

and blind; but many of them have right notions of what the thing ought to be. So you must be as wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove, pure and clean within yourself, which will give so much the more weight to your testimony: and don't let these changes in times and men lead you to confound things that differ. *The light of Christ, or Christ the Light*, with George Fox, was the clear shining of the presence of God in his heart: which light and glory, as it was minded, and followed, and fed upon, caused the heavenly man to grow, and to become wise, and strong, in Him who is without beginning or end. The light of the Quakers now is little more than natural reason and conscience. Not that the well-informed amongst them don't know better than this: but their bad behaviour, and lukewarmness God-ward, have brought a night of darkness over their souls; so they are glad to walk by this light for want of a better, and upon the crutches of the "*ancient testimonies*."

We have some sad Ranters here from your side of the water; not Quakers, but what are called Revivalists. They are drunken from the bottom of a false faith, and go singing and ranting about the country, raising the young people up into the airy mind with songs and solos, and luscious talk about Jesus, and His blood, and a faith which has its root and growth from self-will, and the letter of the Scriptures only.

The effect which they can produce with their songs, and other Yankee "dodges," they call the work of the Spirit.

Whenever you feel liberty, write to me about all that is on your mind. You may be sure that there is one man upon the earth who will tell you the truth, in the Divine will, with love, according to his measure, and as the Spirit shall give liberty and power.

For the present, dear _____,

Farewell.

—, —, —.

Moody and Sankey are the names of the American Ranters.

P.S. There is doubtless in every man a spiritual principle, of higher quality than the soul, which is capable of receiving the Divine Light, as it comes from God. As he (man), in and with this principle, receives and obeys the light, he becomes one with it, and is quickened into a new life and Sonship by it ; and so is born of God, a child of the Father, and brother of Christ. He then in measure has Light and Life in himself, and, under the Blessed One, speaks forth the Word of Life on the earth to others.

Man is body, soul, and spirit. As he is truly spiritual, he is one spirit with the Lord.

It is the love of the Spirit which is immovable. The love of the soul is changeable. The spirit of a spiritual man wills divinely : the soul, of itself, only naturally.

178.

FLESHLY PITY, AND DIVINE EQUABLENESS.

8. 4. 74.

My Brother,

THE Remembrancer is indeed a good remembrancer. Some days ago you wrote a few lines, in which you named a need to watch against a fleshly feeling of exultation rising against ————— and Co. and others, [“chief abettors of carnal preachers and workers”] and gave some expression of pity in that direction.

Now, while it is wise, and good, and only right, that anything of the flesh should be checked in this line of things, yet it is also necessary that *fleshly pity* should not take its place.

The Divine Spirit is the only guide in these matters. He is always equable in movement, and consistent in action. So, while anything of the flesh, either one way or the other, must be suppressed, it may be well to remember that the spirit in ————— and Co. will show no mercy in the prosecution of its own ends. The prince of darkness is in it, and playing through it a much higher game than with the immoralities of the nations. False praise and “worship” set up his kingdom on an immovable basis comparatively, as one of its immediate results is a false rest and peace: besides being the very quintessence of dishonour to the Blessed God.

The sum of the matter is this. There must be a walking in the Spirit which cannot err, and which neither justifies the wicked, nor condemns the just; feeling after, and obtaining, that in God which leaves without a self, and whose very life’s action beats in the direction of—Not my will, but Thine, be done.

There is nothing that these people will not do in the prosecution of their designs “*for the glory of God:*” nevertheless the villainy that they will be guilty of—spiritual villainy, which of all villainies is the most thorough-going villainy—can be clearly, sweetly, and constantly, held in check by Him only who sees the end from the beginning. Therefore walking in Him, as dear children, and doing His bidding, is the only way in which all will be well, and our labour not in vain.

In love,

— . — . — .

179.

The same Subject.

14. 4. 74.

IT is difficult to explain how it is, but these doings of all those who are out of the Truth, and serving the Blessed One from a ground of flesh (which, in other words, means serving a being of their own making or imagining—for flesh and blood cannot enter, or see, or reach to, the Kingdom of God) have little, or, it might be said, no effect on the sensitive part. There is no desire to see, hear, or read about them, except so far as it is laid on the mind as a duty. Then, every thing, or any thing, that is said or done is weighed in the presence of God, and past, and forgotten, in five minutes.

It would be vain to endeavour to explain the trials, temptations, and exercises, that have brought to this. They have spread over many years, and still continue with increasing force at times—always resulting in a clearer sense of the nature of these matters, and an increase of strength to stand firmly against them, though every man on earth were to cry out against what is said.

180.

FLESHLY PREACHERS. OVERRUNNING
THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

15. 4. 74.

My Brother,

YOU are right. The musical box [Sankey,] with numbers and energetic “Gospel” talk, may work upon the imagination and natural feelings, and produce a sem-

blance of the work of the Divine Spirit, which, with a natural faith, based upon the Scriptures and self-will, may effect a change of life for a time; while the mighty working of the Holy One in saving power is not known.

The great heresy of this movement is that it overruns the work of the Spirit, and makes natural belief one with that faith which is a fruit of the Spirit of God; man himself becoming the *leader* and *worker*, both internally and externally.

There is no surer way of bringing a curse or blast upon that which is of the Blessed Spirit than by *overrunning it*, or holding back from performing its requirements. But the former is, doubtless, the more dangerous of the two. When a child of grace has done wrong, there is generally an open door to repentance, and a hope of reconciliation, upon a determination not to be disobedient in future, with confession, humiliation, and patient waiting. But when, through the malice of Satan, or the ignorance and spiritual drunkenness of False Prophets, men are led up on the wings of a false faith and self-will into the airy mind, or made drunken with imaginations of a gospel character, there is no place for repentance, or for a repentance which is of God, because there is no sense of wrong-doing; the creature being above the genuine, meek, and lowly mind, though in a counterfeit one, in doing, working, and believing, according to Scripture and self-wisdom.

This is where Pearsall Smith from Philadelphia is, as well as Moody and Sankey, though in another line of things; and where he, with good words and fair pretences, is bringing those foolish ones, who are beguiled by his false faith and doctrine: from the bottom of a false, because fleshly, faith, taking this and that for granted, the substance of which is not really known; and then rejoicing with a creaturely joy, fanned with the gentle but Satanic airs of self-complacency.

So, my Brother, be not beguiled either with good words, numbers, or music, into a path beyond that which the

Blessed Spirit leads into. All this will pass away: and those who are led astray by it will become as sheep in a desert land, where neither Shepherd nor herbage is.

He who in a passive state of mind knows not the consolations of the Comforter is a False Prophet, though all the world go after him. It is the blessed Light and Life of the Spirit of God that is needed, not the ranting folly of men. *They who minister this must themselves be one with the Giver of it.* He lays the axe to the root of all iniquity: the False Prophets daub with untempered mortar, and beget not to God. They make men RELIGIOUS, but not Sons of God. Publicans and harlots are nearer to the Kingdom of God than these religious men.

Farewell.

181.

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW.

19. 4. 74.

* * * You must not be faint-hearted, or impatient. The works of God, as the rule, spring not up like mushrooms. He has to prepare those who have, in any way, to help forward His cause; so that there may be Fathers ready to take care of the new-born babes. It is quite easy for Him to turn a nation from darkness to light, and to bring multitudes from the power of Satan: but in doing this, an army of reserve has to be prepared to meet contingencies and extreme cases; so that the legions of hell triumph not overmuch over those who may be gathered, or gathering, to God.

Quite clear it is to my mind, that He can raise up men, here and there, who would walk into a fiery furnace, with all the coolness and sweetness of the Hebrew captives: and others, who shall have more than the wisdom of Daniel,

though, in the estimation of themselves, and of men, they are of very little account. To be led by God, and thus to do miracles, is no child's dream: it is the very thing that the elect are called to; and if they do it not, it is because they have turned aside from following Him with full purpose of heart. There can, in the very nature of things, be no half measures in these matters: he that comes under the power and sweetness of God, becomes supernatural and powerful, as truly as fruit becomes sweet and ripe under the influence of the sun. Spirit with Spirit is one Spirit: this is spiritual science of the order of Christ, and after the ordination and power of God. This blustering noise, and carnal dust, got up by Satan, "The Christian," Moody, and Co., will only work together for good, in the long run, to the called of God. There is nothing impossible with God: and as little is there anything impossible to those who, in, by, and with Christ Jesus, are *one in Him*.

Be of good cheer. Farewell.

182.

BRETHRENISM.—THE GODLY HELD IN REMEMBRANCE.

21. 4. 74.

* * You see how perseverance amongst "Brethren" has established a dry, formal, hypocrisy, painted and garnished à la Paul; and has set this nation into a wordy "Scriptural" faith, which has found its way, more or less, through all denominations, and made them as ready-wrought ground for the Ranters [Moody, Sankey & Co.]. Learn from this, that if error can, by the force of will, soul-power, and Satan, be thus scattered, and bring forth fruit so many fold; how much more shall the Truth and the Life, by the power of God, make a lasting mark upon

the ages, though it reach not, seemingly, to so many souls.

The Divine power and providence always hold up Truth, though at times He may seem to treat it as the woman of Canaan. See how those who have really known God live over again, again, and again: while the setters up of garnished error become less and less esteemed, and at last, when their work has run its course, are rejected, as salt without savour, and their works trodden under foot of men. What man has set up, man can pull down: but the works of the Lord are for ever and ever.

183.

NATURAL LOVE, AND DIVINE LOVE.

21. 4. 74.

* * * Will you tell ————— that it is very “pleasant” to be loved from a *natural ground*; but it is sad puddle, when compared with the true thing. She is looked at as a marked soul for the MASTER: so must be careful how this carnal love exercises too great a reach over her. *Anything, “more than Me,” is the criterion.* Not as the result of reasoning or legal obligation, but from a free flow of that Divine Life, which is implanted by the free grace and favour of God.

True love, as it cannot, so it ought not to need to, be whipped up to the point of preference. It is a free flowing stream, that, if not hindered, swells and swallows up all beside.

Therefore neither man, nor woman, need stand in doubt long, as to how matters are working towards the Blessed One.

The question is—do I feel a constant going out of heart-love and obedience, grounded upon the meek and lowly mind of Christ, after God, the Blessed God? Does

this flow night and day without force and compulsion? That is, does it flow as living water?

If not, then in so far as this is so, my religion is a vain excuse: it is a lie, a made-up thing, that is bottomed in flesh, not Spirit; in man, not God.

Learn of me, said the Beloved, and ye shall find REST TO YOUR SOULS. "I am meek and lowly"—that is the touchstone or secret of REST.

When we can innocently, yet truthfully, as a little child, look the Blessed One in His face, and say, I am meek and lowly; then Salem is known, the City of Peace is gained. "Meek and lowly of heart:" then the Sabbath of Rest is attained.

184.

DEADNESS TO ALL BUT GOD.

1. 5. 74.

GREAT natural love has a tendency to mix itself with efforts, which are best, when altogether under the control of heavenly grace. Patience, however, on your part will, with the Divine favour, bring that deadness to every thing, but His Will and Love, which is the highest privilege on earth: as almost every other good thing, if not embodied with it, follows, in the Will of God, the possession of it.

All the fears which may be felt, as to your doing the part of an advocate, may be put to one side safely, if, on the other hand, you move not beyond the sanction of the heavenly Spirit—the Divine and inward Guide. All, beside doing this, may be of prudence and flesh in a high form. Safety lies here, in closely abiding in Him; so that, under Him, we may work freely towards all, irrespective of earthly ties or loves.

185.

THE LIVING WORD WITHIN, AND THE
SCRIPTURES.

4. 5. 74.

HE that is born of God has the Word of God abiding in him—that is the *Living Word*, not the Scriptures. It was this Word of God that was the life and wisdom of those who wrote the Scriptures; and is now the life and wisdom of those who are truly born of God. Understand aright: no child of God will speak, or think, lightly of the Scriptures: but he may and will, in his measure, have the same Spirit as the writers of the Scriptures, and also will have this Life, and Spirit of truth, imparted, independently of his mind working over the letter of the Scriptures.

The Scriptures confirm the Life: they do not give it. They bear a testimony of it, or to it: but are not it. * *

So let each one come to the Word *in himself*, and abide therein: and he will grow in the Word, and the Word will grow in him, and bring to Salem, the City of Peace.

186.

TO A LEADING MEMBER OF A RELIGIOUS
SOCIETY.

10. 5. 74.

THERE is only one way of serving the Blessed God in this day, so as not to be contaminated by the different ranterisms of Babel: that is, each one should abide in the measure of grace imparted, with a gracious longing after a growth therein. * * * * *

It is the life of, or in, Christ which is the light of men. No man knows anything more, really and truly, of God, than is imparted to him by, through, or in this life. This life comes not by words, nor in answer to fleshly "prayers;" but is granted in the Will of God, who, by His Spirit in His children, helps their infirmities, and leads them to ask according to His good pleasure.

This is an infallible truth in the things of God. Men and women are wise, holy, and good, only in proportion as they are Christed with Christ—that is, have in themselves the Life and Spirit of Christ—by the Father. This Life and Spirit leads not to many words or metaphysical disquisitions: but to quietness, simplicity, meekness, watchfulness, and love.

So with Teachers—a man may be full of Scripture and clever talk; but empty of the Divine Life, the Life of Christ.

No man can do any good permanently, except as Christ is his life. He who is full of Christ, with no talents, will do good: while he who is full of talent, and empty of Christ, will do evil.

Don't go out of one street in Babel into another. Rather be still, and let God be your guide.

Yours, in the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord,

— . — . — .

187.

AN EXHORTATION TO FAITHFUL PRAYER.

15. 5. 74.

My Brother,

UNDER a sense of the growing evils by which we are surrounded, resulting from religious exercises which are of the flesh, and profit not, my mind has been drawn to a special and near waiting upon the Blessed God, that

He may, of His great mercy and love, favor us with a manifest putting forth of the divine hand of His power; and that we may individually receive a larger measure of the Divine Spirit, so that walking and living in this increase of His Light, Life, and Love, with power, we may more successfully war against the prince of darkness, and bring souls into Christ, the True Light and Life, where only is rest and peace.

If it please the blessed God to incline your mind towards a sympathy with this, perhaps you will for a season specially watch towards Him, in your measure, in humble faithful prayer, as the Spirit gives power.

The names here given have a sense of these things. Will each one, as he receives this, forward it to the following name and address on the list?

If any one on the list knows of another with this sense of things, and given up to serve God with all his heart, let him, if he wishes, add the name and address of his friend.

188.

DECISION NECESSARY.

23. 5. 74.

* * * The ways of the most Blessed One are a great deep. We have only to do His bidding, with a right good heart and will; and the end is always peace to the worker, and glory to the King. He is never looked at here, as though matters were so complicated, as to bring to Him confusion of mind. No: blessed be His name, there is no dilemma, out of which He cannot save the true-hearted: no flinty heart that He cannot break or melt.

There is one condition of warfare, which you will have to be brought into; or you will often strive in vain. It is no matter who you are called to go against; there must be a perfect willingness, if not a determination, to lose both

their love and friendship, for Christ, if necessary. There can be no medium here: it must come to this point in substance—"if you won't have Christ, or cannot receive Him, me you will lose." There is no alternative: to act otherwise is to trifle with your own testimony for Christ, and to make the whole matter range within the compass of own will, or the mind of the flesh. It is true love that brings to this; for when the Divine Life becomes the ruling element, with great patience, there is an utter distaste for half-hearted or muddled hypocrisy, either at home or abroad: and every thought and imagination is offered, or sacrificed, to Christ, the Son of the Father, with alacrity and delight. Everlasting praises to Him, who hath so taught us Christ, that neither the world, nor flesh, nor Satan, can hinder the flow and increase of Divine peace and love. * * * * *

189.

THE TRUE SERVANTS OF THE LAMB.

24. 5. 74.

* * * * *

The true servants of the Lamb are weak in themselves, and strong only in God; but He gives His strength most in their weakness. When they are weakest, then they are strongest. You can see, without help from here, the advantages of this: it keeps the worker low, which is the most befitting state of heart that can be presented by man to the Lord, the omnipotent God, and is most agreeable to Him, when accompanied with a loving confiding faith. Dear soul, join —. —. —. in being nothing, sinking out of self into a round O, that would gladly get into some solitary place—in His will—and know and love Him alone. Kings keep their lovers, as well as their workers and statesmen. If He chooses you to be a lover, more than a

worker, what then? Can you mend the matter? Surely His love and favour are better than the honour that cometh from men. Don't forget the letter on "free grace." Your mind and spirit are naturally inclined to rule and compass, law and order. The quintessence of all these things lies in the LIFE, the *Love*.

190.

FLESHLY "HOLINESS."

To _____, M.A.

1. 6. 74.

WHAT are you about? Have you nothing better to do than to encourage false doctrine and heresy in the world? Your "_____" was read years ago, and it was then seen that you were in words, rather than power; in imaginations, rather than substance: yet there was not observed anything flatly contradictory to the letter of the truth, or if so, it has been forgotten.

Even now when you blow your silver whistle, things come forth of a literal, lively, and correct character, though clearly—to the opened eye—of man, rather than of God. If you are to continue in this classic line to your life's end, using "sound doctrine" and flowery speech, in the place of being an oracle of God, let it be so. Stand in your lot upon that bottom, and suffer a terrible devastation when your works are subjected to the fire: but, in the meantime, do not lend your name and music to the Devil in his efforts to corrupt the faith, and banish vital godliness out of this land and the world.

These remarks are called forth by observing one or two articles written by you on "holiness," in a recent publication containing other articles of the most unsound and

corrupting character. The one that your attention is called to particularly for your convenience is that in the June number, on "faith." In that article the faith of God, or that faith which is of God, being a fruit of the Spirit, His gift, and holy, having the Divine Will always embodied in it, is made one with the faith of Satan, or the faith which is of the flesh, and which, at root, springs from the will of man, not of God.

This is put, you will find, in terms so plain, that there is no misunderstanding the matter. It is therefore left with you.

That true holiness is scarce upon the earth at this day, in proportion to its profession, is known to those who are living near to God, and are devoted to His service: and that its place is being supplied by fleshly and fair counterfeits of different shades of character, though springing from one root, is equally patent. Is it to be banished altogether under the helping hand of such as you, who, though languid and sentimental spiritually, still have a sense left in your souls of what the true thing ought to be?

Your talents may well give you courage to mix amongst these blind guides, with the expectation of bringing some into a better way, and thus justifying this line of action: but will this, think you, justify you in the sight of Him, who *hates* man doing evil that good may come?

191.

A WORD IN SEASON.

7. 6. 74.

ABIDE under a living sense of the Divine Presence. This has been the stronghold and comfort of the Saints in all generations. All good is wrapped up in it: all salvation comes out of it. These few words are written from it and in it.

Farewell.

192.

ONE WITH GOD.

10. 6. 74.

* * * * *

There is a diligence in breathing after God, which is quite another thing from creature-activity. That makes rich, where slackness brings poverty.

All grand and Godlike things are profoundly simple in their action. To become one with God, in His Will, is as simple as one of the most common operations in nature, when once understood. It is thus : by the Spirit, cleaving to God, evenly, constantly, and lovingly, through thick and thin, evil and good, dark and light, hot and cold, hunger and thirst, riches and poverty, evil report or good report, honour or dishonour, temptation or consolation. The result is equally certain as the rising of the sun, brighter and brighter to the perfect day—is as certain as that God is, and is true, and no lie.

But this certainty does not consist altogether in this, that the Father will accomplish it in the way of willing that it should come to pass ; but equally from the fact that, in spirituals as in naturals, things are so wrought into one another by Divine wisdom and power, that when this course of action, by Divine grace, is adopted, the result follows with the same certainty as first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear—thus giving, as it were, a double certainty, to the great comfort of the godly man : for if, in an exceptional case, any failure on the one hand should, by mishap, as it were, supervene, there yet remains the word of His power, which will bring that to pass of which the believer, through the Spirit, has faith and hope.

May His holy name be everlastingly blessed, for He is worthy.

Farewell.

193.

DYING WITH CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

16. 6. 74.

* * * * *

You may bolster up a temporary peace and joy by believing things about the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ, or anything else. But the Peace of God, which is the gift of God, will never flow in your spirit as a constant stream, till you have died with Christ on the Cross.

Your religion at present is as much your own as your clothes and property, and used much for the same purpose ; that is, to please yourself. You cut the former, or have them cut, to suit your taste ; and deal with the latter as your prudence dictates. But should you be favoured to be numbered with the called, chosen, and faithful, you will find that Another will lead you, bind you, prove you, and bless you ; and that to please Him you would willingly and readily walk into a fiery furnace. It is one thing to know God—truly, really : and another to believe plausible theories of salvation, and then to rejoice because you believe.

194.

THE UNCTION OF THE HOLY ONE.

To the Same.

24. 6. 74.

YOU must ever remember that those who have found God, and really know Him—who live in Him, and He in them—are not in the position which seekers occupy. They have a sense of words, and men, and things, which

is not of man, but of God. The unction of the Holy One showeth them, without labour or study, all things necessary for their eternal good and present guidance.

You are evidently without this: yet stiffly maintain certain positions as though you possessed it. Here it is that you fail. You speak about God, and what He will do, as though you knew all about it by experience.

When you have the true fear and peace of God in your heart you will act differently.

Farewell.

195.

FAMILY RELIGION.

26. 6. 74.

Dear _____,

“**A**RE the children to be brought up like heathens?”
That is the question. The only way to avoid this is to avoid heathenish worship at home and abroad. All vain repetitions, of every kind, make God an Idol, and those who use them Idolaters. Chapels and churches, as the rule, are of men, not of God; of the flesh, not of the Spirit. True religion is nothing more or less than walking under a living sense of the Divine presence. First, let Father and Mother do this: then He who comprises all good in Himself will lead on to all the rest.

Of course your answer is the true one. All that children need to learn, or can learn of men about God is best taught by those who are united to Him in Love. When a man's or woman's heart is truly ravished with the Love of God, the sweetness of their life and spirit is a constant lesson, which cannot be hidden from their children: and if they are called to say a word or two now and then about God, or of Him, their words will pierce like fire into the hearts

of those who hear them, and lead them also to long for the possession of Divine Love. The Love of God—the Love of the Spirit—is worthy of Him. He who said, Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength, in Law, makes this a promise in Gospel. Now love can't be forced, or got up, or made up. When genuine, it runs away with those who are the subjects of it, carries them out of everything but the Beloved, with whom they are ravished continually, and in and with whom they walk, in peace and joy.

Now get this, you —————, and then ravish your wife into it, by the hidden—though, in a sense, seen—beauty, which will shine out of it, constantly, both as it pacifies your heart, and shines in your life. Then it will be an easy matter to bring the children at any rate to see, that if there be any religion worth having, Father and Mother have it; and if any others are more highly favoured, Father, and Mother will know about it, and use every means to get more themselves from this or any other source, and communicate it, as far as they can do so, to their offspring.

In all these things the true wisdom is, take no thought for to-morrow. Do what is right to-day. Walk in the holy fear to-day. Look out with all your soul's constancy for the holy love to-day. Then everything in hell or earth or heaven will work for your good, and the good of your children, to-morrow. There is an absolute certainty in the things of God. Get the Kingdom first—the Kingdom is true Love, the Love of the Spirit—get the Kingdom first, and then all the rest will follow. There is no slackness with Him: in these things all is Yea and Amen. Hallelujah to God and the Lamb. So again it is said, get the Kingdom first, and all the rest will follow.

Your dear soul of a wife “will follow —. —. —. if” No; she won't: she must be led by the Spirit. My business is to set people up with or in the truth, not to make a traffic of their souls. When she

is ravished with the Love of God, my work is done. I am His, and He is mine; and I want not any other love but His, except as it is subordinate to Him, and for Him, and of Him. This must be your language, and the language of your wife, and your daughter: then all will be well.

My business is to call her to union with the Bridegroom of souls, to let her know how she may please Him, how she may know Him, how she may love Him. When once she has seen *His* beauty, felt His Love, then her business will be done—in substance—for ever.

The beauty of the King is beyond all other beauty; and His daughters are all glorious from within. Hallelujah, Hallelujah: the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

With Love,

196.

DYING ON THE CROSS TO LIVE.

5. 7. 74.

Dear _____,

THE time has come for you to turn in and win. You know all about the Man of Grievs, how He bore our sins, and suffered for us. Now you must go on to the cross with Him, that with Him you may rise to a newness of life. The letter you know: the figure you know: the way you know: but now you must die on the cross with Him. To die with Him is sweeter and easier than to live a legal life without Him. Death and liberty are better than life with servitude and bondage.

This death will be accomplished without reasoning on the difficult solution of questions, or any intellectual labour. It will simply turn on the point, with the Divine

favour—Will you die with Him? Will you *will* to die with Him? Will you give up your holy or unholy prayers, and die with Him? Will you give up your holy or unholy friendships, your Christian or unchristian loves, your righteousness or unrighteousness, your goodness or badness, and die with Him? Will you take Him for your Bridegroom, and die with Him? He won't reject you: He calls you, and bids you come. Will you pass through death with Him? If you will, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

Dear child, don't delay any longer. While your mind is young, vigorous, and strong; while there is a good portion of your natural life not run out; come to the conclusion, with all your heart and soul, Yes: that I will; that I will; by Divine grace, help and love; that I will—die on the Cross, and live with Him.

Amen, dear soul.

— . — . — .

197.

TRUE AND FALSE LOVE.

20. 7. 74.

Dear _____,

YOU don't want a long-winded address on religion, but something pointed, that will go at once to the root of the matter; yet sufficiently clear, so as not to leave you in the dark. The greatest of Doctors of the Divine life, our dear Lord and Master, towards whom, if you be wise, you will always keep a longing, loving eye, brought things down, and within a very moderate compass, when He declared that two sentences contained the whole of the matter—the whole Law and the Prophets hanging on

the Love of God, and of man. Now, dear child, here it is: true Love is the question. False love is that which has its spring in the will, mind, and heart of man: that is, it is a love which is of the rational, soulish or natural part only, and is generated by the same qualities in others or another. True love, that is, Divine love, is another matter: it requires a nature connatural with its object. So no man or woman can love God truly, without having a Divine principle raised in them, a new life, a life that is from above. When this exists in clearness and power, then there is a reciprocity of feeling between the Blessed God, and the new man, as there is in nature a reciprocity of feeling between those that are natural. You will see from this that the true love is not a thing which you have in your own power, as you are simply a human being: but it is a blessing of grace or favour, as you have been born of God, or from above.

This shows the absolute necessity of being passive before God, when you would know whether you do truly love Him or not.

The old hypocritical first-birth man is always ready with fair speech, or strong asseverations, to affirm that it is only necessary to think of the benefits received, or the goodness manifested, to command a Love of God; and is wonderfully ready, under the influence of fear, self-love, and self-interest, to trump up a showy, windy thing, mis-called love, and to make a free protestation thereof, or, at any rate, an internal application of a false, one-sided, assurance on the subject. But of all this kind of thing, dear child, beware, as you would of the smoke of the Pit. It is only the railing, hypocritical, self-righteous Pharisee over again, though in another figure. He was without a spark of the real thing, while his despised, humbled, and breast-beating neighbour, who could hardly lift his eyes to heaven, because of the load of guilt upon his conscience, had a sense of the sacred flame. Would you quickly pass into the clear blaze, or white heat, or perfect Love—well,

this is not mine to give you : but the way thereto is to comport yourself as did this fellow-sinner, or to get at the Saviour's feet, as did another : and there, in the anguish and pain of waiting, the genuine Love, when perhaps least expected, will spring up in your heart.

The weary and heavy-laden cannot miss of finding rest. Heaven and earth shall pass away ; but one sinner, who, with self-abasement, holds on by the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and does no more than look, and groan, and wait, condemning herself, and justifying the Holy One, shall never fail of obtaining her suit, and seeing the day when she shall rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Then to love the Blessed God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, will be, in His will, as easy as to breathe : and to love your neighbour as yourself, no very difficult thing. Amen.

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198.

THE WAY OF LIFE. FAITHFUL WARFARE.

26. 7. 74.

DON'T say anything about your letters not being welcome. They are always as much so as you could well wish. Anything written by — . — . — . that is of service, belongs to you, is your right : we are not to live to ourselves, but each one for the other.

Those few words about you and ————— need perhaps a little explanation. The true way of Life is to be so united to God in Love, as on all occasions to do His will.

Now His will does not always require that we should be pushing our principles and beliefs on others ; but, as the rule, that we should walk closely with Himself, and when He calls to battle, fight with a single eye, irrespective

of all consequences. When there is a jangling about principles only, it is only man versus man; but when there is a call from above to any particular service, then it is another matter: life or death must be the result. This is where our friend has always been up to this time, and where you are likely to join him, if you are not careful. You both have the reasoning faculty pretty well developed, and this leads you to suppose that when you have put an adversary on the horns of a dilemma, something is done, and you are clear. No such matter: this is mere sham fight, and hypocrisy, when compared with the true thing. Christ never teaches, never taught, such jangling as this. It must be, it is, the Life of God against the life of Satan, and the flesh; and if there be not a giving up, there must be a parting asunder. Here he that would save his own life, or that of those who oppose the Life of God in him, has not yet even dreamt of the reality of the battle. He that can write to a "religious man" about the blessed truth, and, after he has received a refusal, still calls such a one his friend and dear brother, is a traitor or false prophet; and shows that he is, or has been, fighting for himself, and his principles, not for God, and truth, and life. This is the reason why it is so dangerous to engage in these matters, where there is not a right call. If, when you are writing to any persons in favour of the Kingdom of God, you do not feel perfectly free to lose their friendship, and all the advantage of their help, or anything, or everything else, be sure you are not writing for God, but for yourself, and will fare accordingly.

There must be no fighting for Barclay, or Fox, or this person, or that; but each one must strive, when called of the Blessed God, for that measure of the Divine principle, which has, by His favour, been developed in himself: and thus striving with prudence, moderation, and patience, yet with a willingness and determination to lose friendship, or life itself, in the defence of the truth, there will be a coming forth of God in favour of the right cause.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. A good heart, and holy will—"a new heart, and right spirit"—will fight a thousand-fold more strongly for God, than reason, or logic, or learning. He is in the former in a sense that He is not in the latter: and where He is, there is Power.

Dear one, do cease from following that immense revolving light which you carry in your upper storey; and stick to the little child Jesus, that is born in your heart. The Devil, and the flesh, are in the former; the Eternal and Ever-Blessed Jehovah is in the latter: and though His appearance may be small and mean to the carnal eye of man, the whole force and wisdom of the Godhead are at the back of it. O, if you and your wife could but see the advantages of your position, such as they are, and cease from man altogether, and follow Christ through the regeneration, and live for one another, and to Him alone, how quickly would you make all things square, and bid adieu to all and everything that is not of God, and Christ, and heaven. In proportion as you do this, heaven will begin below: as you do it not, uncertainty, uneasiness, reasoning, whiffling, and spiritual death will follow.

Farewell.

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199.

TO A PROMINENT "REVIVALIST,"
AND PREACHER OF "HOLINESS BY FAITH."

3. 8. 74.

HOW to get at you is not known: yet to let you pass without a note of warning is impossible, with the retention of a good conscience.

There is something so hearty, seemingly, in your drunkenness, and so princely in your whoredom, that it seems like waste of time meddling with the matter. What needs to be said is that you have missed your way, and by the example of others, and the deceit of your own heart, with the malice of the Devil, are growing worse and worse. Your faith—and this is the principal thing—is of the flesh, not of the Spirit: it is in word, not in Power: of man, not of God. You are evidently as ignorant of the true faith, as it is a living Divine substance, as is the Pope of Rome.

Some of your utterances on this subject, of late, have been truly terrific, as showing that you are passing into that state where you will be left to the blindness and pride of your own heart, and the vain imaginations of your own mind. The ranting Americans seem to have driven you mad. You were drunk enough, and blind enough, and fool enough—spiritually—before they came: but since their advent with their self-holiness and false conversions, you are clearly going from bad to worse.

Can't you see or feel that you are being urged forward by that which is of man, and self, and the flesh—not of God? Were it of God, you would, while cool in spirit, and passive as to the action of your mind, have such true supernatural visitations of Divine love as would infuse a tincture and sweetness into your life and utterances, not of man, but of God; and which all the truly begotten ones would immediately relish and discern. But there is nothing of the kind to be felt in all that you do or say: nothing truly Divine, truly of heaven, truly of God; but, on the contrary, a ranting, carnal, first-birth spirit, raised up into the air upon the wings of reason, imagination, Scripture, passion, singing, and sentiment.

—————, —————, stop before you further go. This drunkenness, this high-flying rant, this blending of heavenly things, as far as you can, with an earthly spirit, is real spiritual Antichrist in its higher forms, and not

a whit less abominable, spiritually, in the sight of the Blessed God, than Ritualism and Popery; being equally of the flesh, and as far removed from the true spirit of life, humility, meekness, and power—the Spirit of the Living God.

So look well to your doings. Few there be at this day, comparatively, who are capable of holding the plumb of true judgment to the work of such ranters as you; and, in the crowd of companions, you will be tempted to pooh-pooh, and sneer over the matter. Nevertheless you will find, either in this world or the next, that these few words are to you a message from the Living God by His servant.

200.

ON RIGHTLY BEARING BURDENS.

9. 8. 74.

My Brother,

SOMETHING more than giving names seems required in the case of your difficulties. It is all very well to reflect upon “revolving lights” and “moral calculating machines,” if there be something better to point to at the bottom of the matter. Well: there is. You have not overdrawn, perhaps, the difficulties of the situation: but this really constitutes the value of it. It is in rightly bearing burdens that regeneration is perfected, and the Blessed God made known. Life comes through death, in death, with death—death to reasoning, death to forethought, death to care; but not death to faith and trust. This is the problem to exercise your immense light on, your calculating machine—Is there anything too hard, too intricate, too complex, for Jehovah? One turn of the “immense light,” one revolution of the “machine,” and out comes the emphatic—No.

What then is to be done? Simply to wait, suffer, and trust; remembering that as the trust is constant, and when patience is perfected, then will the deliverance be clear and sure. Abraham knew not where he went, but he knew with whom he went. In proportion to the uncertainty, he was required to exercise a perfect trust. This was his righteousness: he believed God, and won the day at last.

If a man has not a good heavy burden upon his back, he is sure to play the fool. The flesh is a wicked and stupid ass in reference to heavenly things—yea, a horse, a dog, a monkey, a goat: so it must be burdened to the highest pitch; and in, and with, the patient bearing of this burden, God is revealed in the spirit, and heaven breaks into the soul.

When this new creation is perfected—made stronger and more glorious than in Adam the first—then the work is done, and deliverance won.

If you gather up the heads of this discourse, and digest them properly, you may be driven to the conclusion, that, on choice, you would perhaps have to ask for one or two more children, and not wish the difficulties of the position a whit less. * * * *

201.

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

11. 8. 74.

Dear _____,

THERE was nothing in that of the other day intended in any way to point at, or reach, you. You are down in the Commissary's book here as a thoroughly good housekeeper, and dear soul every way.

The hint may be serviceable, however, in reference to any of your little flock, that give evidence of being what are called "muscular Christians"—that is, more inclined for knocking about than reading or study, etc., etc.

In this case a Tommy Hoyle's print gown, cotton night-cap, and pair of gloves, may not be amiss. The great principle of a successful and happy education—thoroughly understood by the Jesuits—is not to oppose nature, but to follow her pointings.

Here it is that they carry all before them. They never think of forcing mathematics into or upon a rhetorical and passionate soul, nor rhetoric and poetry into a thoroughly mathematical head. This principle is the grand secret of all their success as educators. Get to know what a child is fitted for by nature; then help the child to close in with nature: speedily all goes smooth and well.

Every creature has a special adaptation for something: Providence will mostly favour that which leads each one to a suitable position. This will take in everything, from making tarts or collars, or starching, or knitting, to learning languages, or teaching, or drawing, or writing a book, or whatever it may be.

If you have a thorough little scrub in your flock, by all means let the child learn to do everything in the scrubbing, washing, and cleaning line, in the very best possible style—these scrubbing fools are often God's favourites—giving her to understand that anybody can clean in a fashion, but that to do the thing well, without making a noise or stew, or *dirtying her own person or clothes*, is a rare and valuable accomplishment.

Comparatively few ever think thus. After giving you the key note, I may safely say,

Farewell.

202.

MOVING ONLY AT THE DIVINE CALL.

16. 8. 74.

* * * * *

There is, however, a more important point than this, the question being whether such and such a piece was written from a preponderating Divine call—that is, such a call *as that the violation thereof would bring a wound to the conscience, and a corresponding weakness over the spirit and soul.*

The general spiritual intelligence of a true believer, who is living near to the Blessed One, may give him clear views of this, that, and the other: but this falls far short of a Divine call to active operations.

It is always better to avoid running before the time; because, after all, any form of truth, without the impelling power of the Divine Will at the back of it, may not profit the people at all. Man speaking or writing the most sacred truth in his own will and time is wrong; and brings death, not life.

There is a point here that you will doubtless get hold of without further enlargement. To violate this rule, or line of conduct, never brings true peace: because, however true that which is written may be, if out of the Divine order, it only brings confusion, or increases that already existing.

A single eye makes all this as plain as two and two. Doing or leaving undone all to please God, and without any other object or aim, simplifies everything, and causes an unvarying flow of Divine peace and strength in the under surface of the soul. This, of course, can be done only in and by the power and leading of the Divine Spirit in the heart.

May His life and love, wisdom and power, be your portion every moment and for ever.

203.

THE CROSS THE POWER OF GOD.

19. 8. 74.

IT is observed that our friend ————— has fallen into the same error that you at first did, in reference to Wilkinson, and the value of his work [“The Saint’s Travel,” &c.] No comparison will stand in his favour, when balanced against such men as Fox and Penington. These men were quietly settled in that truth, of which he drew so ravishing a picture—seeing in part, and prophesying in part. This ravishing picture has its value—*great value*—because it takes hold of the imagination, and sets the soul a-longing after God: yet the very first thing that it—the soul—will have to learn will be, to forget, as it were, the impression made by the book, and rest content with the pleasant or painful impressions made directly by the Blessed God, in His providence and grace.

It is the CROSS that is the Power of God; not heavenly wine, and grapes, and oil, though these are excellent in their place. The grapes of the promised Land may be eyed, and longed after, innocently; but it is far better, with Caleb and Joshua, to do the right thing under the pressure of the Cross.

Dear one, it is by being steady, God-wards, under all circumstances, even when all that is sweet and delectable may seem to have taken its flight, when clouds, thunder, and frightful wind, would almost betoken that the end of all things is at hand—that the Rock is felt, and a strong hold, and firm footing, on that which is IMMOVABLE, are obtained.

204.

THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

31. 8. 74.

YES ; my brother, Wilkinson's book is more fascinating than Barclay's. It takes hold of the imagination, and gives such a ravishing view of the promised Land that, for the time being, all time, and toil, and care, are forgotten. Barclay's is rather a book of reference, which you may now and then be led to look into profitably, on the various subjects of controversy, with which you will, perhaps against your will, be called upon to meddle. From this point of view you will find him a friend indeed. In early life, the romance of nature brings a delusive, though pleasant, sense of things over the mind ; but time, and the stern realities of actual service, sober down the beautiful vision. So it is in spiritual and Divine things : any really good book, that will inflame the mind, and enlist the imagination, giving a beautiful view of some attainable good, though more or less remote, takes hold of the affections, and leads captive the will, beyond the sober reality—not that it overdraws the good, but simply because the surroundings and accompaniments of it, which are of a more sombre hue, are, without design perhaps, kept out of sight.

What then ? Are these ravishing books to be discarded, or lightly esteemed ? No : by no means : they are to be used as wine to him that is weak, or dainties for those who are faint, and unable to eat stronger meat ; and occasionally as a relish for stronger men.

You will find, as you grow older in the heavenly warfare, that it is the Cross that is the Power of God : that it is by taking it up constantly, till there is such a love of it as to cause a glorying therein, that immovable stability and supernatural dignity are attained.

Wine and strong drink cause the strong man—yea, even the weak—to do prodigies *for a time*: but the reaction may set in, and with it weakness, and defeat.

The race-runner, or sculler, or batsman, who should prepare for action with wine and cake only, might begin with much assurance, but would be sure to end with disgrace. There may not be a book in the English language to equal Wilkinson, for stirring up in the soul ardent desires after God, and inflaming the imagination with heavenly things: yet the first thing to be attained to, in the din of real war, will be to forget his exciting pictures, and take up with sober realities. That which is broken to the soul by the Captain, during the campaign, may be something very different, as the rule, from what the soldier may have imagined, though occasionally the reality may surpass all his imaginations. Such are the vicissitudes of the Christian's fight—the heavenly warfare.

Cheer up, my dear brother: the path of the true child grows brighter and brighter to the perfect day; though storms, and deaths, and temptations, are never wanting long in the way. Be sure that, beyond a certain point on the heavenly road, there awaits you a perfect resting-place in God. When once you have attained to this place, neither storms, nor deaths, nor temptations, will be able to reach your internal Peace.

Farewell.

205.

REPRINT OF "THE SAINT'S TRAVEL TO SPIRITUAL CANAAN:" BY R. WILKINSON.

10. 9. 74.

YES, my brother, what you say is very true about the "false rests;" but all this would be of little avail, were there not something warm and glowing at the end.

Indeed, if the thing be rightly remembered, there are hints of blessedness, more or less, all through the book, which lead on, and give hope and courage to endure to the end. Even true repentance has its sweetnesses, and the Gospel is good news and glad tidings. Few people would care to employ that Physician who dealt in nothing more life-giving than digitalis, antimonial wine, and Epsom salts.

The great thing to be desired, for seekers after true religion, is that their wills should be so deeply touched by the Divine hand, either through or without means, that their difficulties and trials, or the narrowness of the path, shall in measure be forgotten, or pressed into oblivion, by the joy of something set before them. This is often effected by refreshing views of truth, and sensible sheddings abroad of the Divine Love in the heart by the Holy Ghost. A good book must have an analogy with the reality of things, or, rather, it must prefigure truthfully, in a good degree, that substance which a growing experience, by the Divine favour, will develop to maturity.

Wilkinson is good, in his measure, because he always carries, along with the knife, an elixir to drop into the wound. There is generally something said, on the most searching occasions, that gives courage and hope; or if there is not, there ought to be. We are saved by faith, which is of God: not by a lively sense of wretchedness only, resulting from a lying man-generated faith, the babbling of false prophets, and the allurements of deceitful hearts.

There has been a little rising of something about this business of yours, which would lead to the hope that you might be gently whipped into confusion by having to prepare a second edition. Will you allow me to box your ears with a kiss or two? Pray what business is it of yours what becomes of your labour, pains, and expense, in bringing out Wilkinson? Is it a love-gift, or is it not? If it be, does He that loves them that love Him ever forget, or in the long run overlook, anything done in this

line of things for Him? Did the beloved fare any worse for having laid up silver and gold, very much, towards the temple, though he built it not? Dear one, it is His Love we should work for, suffer for, die for; not anything particular beside that. It is the privilege and duty of the Saints, being filled with the love of God, to go on boldly, nobly, and cheerfully, in the main; while often in secret they may have to cry out, though perhaps without words, How long, O Lord, how long?

* * * *

Yes: you will, with the Divine hand, require to hit hard, before the impudence and hypocrisy of these "workers for the Lord" will be reached. This kind of thing seems in full swing just now. Nothing could be more barefacedly impudent and really hollow than that letter. What these men are really doing, and leading others to do, is to ride a-cock-horse upon a "Jesus" of their own imaginations, so as to put the very and ever-blessed God out of His own Temple, and to banish the true sense of His presence and love from the face of the earth. Yet what a growing power is at the back of this impudent, ranting, spirit. What has to be done, with constancy, and lively trust, and hope in the Mighty Power of God, is to smite with one hand, and build up, or sow the seed of something better, with the other.

Dear one, cheer up and faint not.

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206.

THE REPROACH OF MEN.—QUIETNESS OF
ALL FLESH.

15. 9. 74.

My Brother,

YOU are blessed when men speak evil of you, and say reproachful things about you. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

These things will drive you nearer to the Source of all Good, and cause, even in this world, a richer benediction to rest on your inner man. Your brethren in Christ will love you more and more for this also: so do not be ashamed, but rejoice and be glad; yea, be glad.

There is a tenderness and love towards you, while writing this, beyond words; it is exceeding pure and sweet. So again it is said, rejoice and be exceeding glad.

Farewell.

In the quietness of all flesh—reasoning flesh, imagining flesh, busy flesh, proud flesh, humble flesh, saintly, holy flesh—the voice of the true Shepherd is heard. Blessed be His name for ever: yea, let His holy name be blessed.

207.

RELIGIOUS MAN'S COUNTERFEITS OF THE
DIVINE.

17. 9. 74.

ALL that originates not in the Divine heart and will is *of the flesh*. It is no matter how Scriptural and holy it may appear, or how much like the genuine Divine

work it is. The better the counterfeit, the greater the mystery of iniquity. This is the great master-stroke of Satan in these last days—to lead men into holy doings, believings, singings, and rejoicings, which have their root in the flesh—in the will of man—and are not the genuine outcome of the present mind of the Blessed God, but simply an imitation, a working of and in the mystery of iniquity.

208.

R. P. SMITH AND "THE HIGHER LIFE."

[*A Reprint.*]

20. 9. 74.

Pearsall Smith,

DURING the last few months much that you have written and said has been, by various friends, brought under observation; and has called forth statements as to the sense, given by the Blessed God, of your religious work in this nation.

It is only just that you should know this: with the Divine help, therefore, in a few words, the substance of what has been said shall be set before you.

Before doing this, however, it may be well to say that, should you feel at any time so far impressed with the truth of what follows as to desire any explanations or justifications of what is or shall be written, or of what has been written to others, on your public writings and workings, they will be gladly, with the Divine permission, given, should there be evidence that they are asked for in sincerity and good faith.

There dwells not in the heart of the writer of these lines the shadow of a doubt that He who shows the truth to His chosen will also give them wisdom and power, in His own

will and time, to manifest that truth to others for His own glory, and especially so to the parties more immediately concerned; so that, when their work comes to the fire, they may be left without excuse.

What is here addressed to you is really meant to reach your partner in life as well, as there is doubtless a unity of faith and action between you. In truth, some of her sentiments have been so clearly contrary to the faith which is of God, and supported by such a decided personal animus, as to indicate that in the working out of what is done, or has been done, she is the leading spiritual power.

That which remains to be said is, that your joint work is of the Flesh, not of the Divine Spirit—that the will and animus of man is the leading agent, not the Spirit and power of God. Also that you yourselves are yet under the bonds and power of the fleshly mind—the carnal heart—in spiritual things; therefore really limited by the prince of the power of the air within the capabilities of the flesh: for what does not emanate from the blessed God cannot pierce through all opposing influences of devils and flesh, and reach to Him. So all that you teach and do, as the rule, is only from the working of the natural mind and heart, through scripture and reason, tintured with the writings and experience of other men and women, and blended and wrought together in such a manner and form as to bring your lives, workings, and conversation, to the figure and appearance of those of the true saints of God, according to your notions of them; while, at the root of all this working, it is a natural principle only that is moving. Moreover, you and your wife, and your deluded converts, are the workmanship, spiritually, of yourselves, not of God.

The substance of all that has the appearance of holiness, goodness, and sanctity, in you, or those who have imbibed your spirit, is not an outcoming or outflowing from the Divine Spirit through God-called, God-begotten, and God-sent, men and women; but an imitation only, in the mystery of iniquity of these latter days, wrought, or being

wrought, up to the highest degree of perfection, according to the measure of your acquired intelligence on spiritual matters, and the natural constitution of your minds and hearts.

It is not needful here to say, with any length of detail, how such pretenders and deceivers as you, by your impatience, carnality, hypocrisy, and getting up imitations merely of Divine power, are helping the cause of irreligion, Popery, and infidelity; though at the present time such doings are especially objectionable and fatal: this must be left to you and others to ponder over. Neither is it affirmed that you are passing off upon the world these counterfeits as designing cheats: it is not believed that you are doing so. But it is said that under the influence, and with the help, of interested parties, and the power of surrounding circumstances, and the deceit of your own hearts, with the malice of Satan, this has been brought about; and that you have been the principal agents therein, by generating, through a highly strung-up faith of man—of the flesh—a delusive and carnal imitation of Divine influence, as well as by developing a counterfeit presence of the blessed Spirit and power of God, by songs, and other creaturely manipulations, common to your nation and countrymen.

So take heed to your steps. A venal press may laud you; carnal christians may applaud you; rich ones may countenance you; and lukewarm hypocrites may censure you from a carnal ground, and thus drive you onward by the force of their wrong-headed and rotten-hearted opposition operating by contraries: but let not any or all of these things together blind you against the truth. *Your present course will only bring shame and confusion of face at the last.*

If, however, these few words do not lead you to repentance, or to a waiting to find a place for repentance, with a desire to be saved from your delusions, they will at least bring satisfaction to a few elect souls, who truly know

Him, and some little of the excellency of His power; as they have brought contentment of heart to the writer, in, and before, the blessed God.

— . — . — .

N.B.—The address of the writer, should any desire to communicate with him, is :

Where copies of this letter may be had gratis on application through the post.

209.

GOD THE WORKER. MAN TO WAIT.

25. 9. 74.

Dear _____,

YOU see that all that man can do in helping another is subordinate to the Divine Spirit. If by any means a counterfeit repentance is generated, that is, a repentance which is not the work of the Spirit, or rather the result of the work of the Spirit, then follow a counterfeit faith and false peace. So there needs to be great prudence and forbearance, and a close personal walk with God; or the work becomes adulterated with carnal sentiment, fleshly love, and other mixtures, which are only for the fire, and which help not towards an entrance to the kingdom of God.

This false work is what is especially being carried out by Moody and Sankey, and such imitators as the people of "The Christian." Then comes after a company of reminders in the form of preachers of "holiness," such as P. Smith and his wife, and others.

The great secret of stability and reality is to take care that the blessed God is *the Worker*, and not to overrun, or too much interfere with, His work. To be doing ever so

humble and little a thing, really at the bidding of the Divine Spirit, will bring a blessing beyond all the high-flying doings of the flesh, however scriptural may be the form that it may take.

The publican outran the Pharisee, (who was rather a forward professor) though he did nothing beyond beating his breast, and dwelling upon his character as a helpless sinner.

Whatever you do, take care that you feel God with you—in you : and that His love shed abroad by the Holy Ghost is your chief comfort, and only real joy. This is a state of things which man is utterly powerless to bring about. The only approximation towards being a helper in this matter is when he simply watches, suffers, and believingly waits for the salvation of God. His deliverance and sweet comfort come when man has not confidence in himself, and often when he feels just on the brink of despair.

210.

RELIGION FOR CHILDREN.

29. 9. 74.

Dear _____,

BE content to bear the burden of your children at present. There is no remedy for it : any steps that you take to get relief will only increase the evil, without really removing the burden, or the cause of it.

The patient bearing of burdens, with meekness of heart Godward, is a prayer that rises as incense before the Blessed God, and brings an answer at last. All other kinds of prayer may fail through the fault of the offerer : this cannot. It infallibly moves the Heart that rules the world.

If you cannot find a company of worshippers for your own profit and satisfaction (which you cannot, if due attention be paid to the voice of the true Shepherd in your own heart) how can you take any active steps in helping your children to become false worshippers?

You say, what then am I to do, or what is to be done? Take the Lord for your portion, and walk with Him, bearing your daily cross, and dying to all but Him. Then, in due time, there will be a love-union formed between you, that will, as far as possible in the present state, make all clear and easy: and that Divine Spirit of wisdom, love, and meekness, which will become your life and portion, will be more to your children than any outward religious profession extant—and if you be faithful, the Mighty God of Jacob will be to them inwardly a convincer of sin, and draw their minds to righteousness.

Tell _____ that men must become thoroughly sick of false religion, and really hungry and thirsty after righteousness; or they will graft any information respecting true holiness on to their present formalities and fleshly hypocrisies, and become greater deceivers than they already are.

To hunger and thirst after righteousness is one half of true holiness: the other half is the gift of God in Christ. There is the whole matter. But the first half is of God, and the second from Him: therefore *He is our salvation*, and the *Rest of Saints*.

How long the dispensation of hunger and thirst may last, before the dispensation of Rest, and God All in All, sets in, is known only to the Blessed One. Faithfulness on the part of the creature brings to that which is most desirable. So, dear soul, be faithful. Watch, watch, watch. Die to everything which is not of or for God, and live alone in Him.

True or perfect death always accompanies true and perfect Life.

Farewell.

211.

ON INTERIOR SUFFERING, AND HEAVENLY
FRUITION.

3. 10. 74.

* * * * *

But it must be told—and this is the purport of this letter—how blessing came during the visitation.

It came through patient, willing, suffering as with Christ on the Cross; and it was shown, not by light on the mind only, but by a Divine incoming of endurance and power in the heart, and union with the Blessed One in the Spirit, that there is a proportion adjusted by Him, between suffering as with Christ on the cross, and fresh in-lettings into the new life—the Kingdom of God. The factors of this proportion, though infinite in Christ compared with the members of His body, alter not the adjustment, or the reality and oneness of the matter, as it bears upon the saints of God. He, Christ, trod the winepress alone, and has secured a proportion of glory which shall never be equalled: yet the adjustment holds good—as we suffer with Christ, so are we, or so shall we be, glorified with Him, not only in the world to come, but in the present life.

So, my brother, there be, speaking in a secondary sense, more resurrections from the dead than one, even in the present life. Every time that we are brought into mental conflict and other difficulties, in the order of providence, and stand therein faithful, hugging the pain and suffering, and glorying in the tribulation, as with Christ on the Cross, at the end thereof there will be another resurrection from death into the life that is in Christ, though these resurrections may, after many repetitions, leave us much below the dignity and glory of our Head.

Therefore, dear brother, let us manfully suffer with Him, that even here we may reign with Him over all the powers either of flesh or devils that oppose; and stand before the Father, washed by the blood, and in the life, of Christ, into the sweetness of innocency, and fixed by the power of God firmer than the hills, in a standing, in which there is no guile.

— . — . — .

P.S.—Yes: my brother, “sowing the wind” hits the nail with precision and force on the head, and abundantly meets the case of most of these productions: yet fresh openings in the light, and explanations of the mystery of iniquity, seem to be called for by the Divine Spirit in the hearts of those whom He hath chosen to expose this mystery of iniquity, and are doubtless pleasant to those in whom He lives and reigns.

There are some very sweet things of the flesh sent herewith, showing that continuous effort is being made in favour of beautiful death. The letter killeth: the Spirit alone giveth life—might be written on every one of them.

Farewell.

212.

CONTENTMENT WITH THE DIVINE ORDERINGS.

7. 10. 74.

Dear Brother,

BE content with the bread broken to you: if it were less bitter, and you had more wine, you might be troubled with a lightness in the head.

George Fox, shivering in a cold damp prison for weeks together, might well enjoy in-lettings into invisible things,

now and then, beyond your lot, who are surrounded with the necessaries and comforts of life. But if you willingly abide in your measure of suffering, with patience, the end will be measurably good, and *most suitable* to the Divine will and purpose. He knows what fits us best to do His will. If things were going all smooth and pleasant, who knows but you might overrun the Spirit of Grace, and get into the activities of flesh?

That all good is of God is a proposition more certainly true than is generally thought of; and infinitely so beyond what the aggregate of that which is called Christian faith spiritually and divinely awards to it. We, then, can do good only as we subserve the Divine Will every moment, in reference both to ourselves and others. Sink into His Will then, and be assured that as a desire to please Him and do His Will is uppermost, or at any rate the strongest feeling of your heart, He will in due time make all clear, and as bright as is most conducive to your eternal profit and His own glory.

As to "*self*"—that is not worth mentioning. It is not the weakness or strength of self, but the power of Christ, which is the efficient cause of our salvation: and your *self* is not any worse, probably, than any other body's *self*—perhaps not so bad as many, if we may talk in this silly way. What are twenty thousand *selfs*, with a legion of devils in each, to the *power* and LOVE of God?

May the Divine blessing rest upon you always.

Farewell.

213.

THE STRAIT GATE. STRIVE.

13. 10. 74.

My Brother,

THAT Life of A. Bourignon was not sent as anything very valuable. The quality of it, spiritually, is not high ; but yet it is a phase of religious life, and though the man part, or rather woman, sadly preponderates, nevertheless, as that eye is opened which sees through all things, there will be a discerning between that which is of the flesh, and the little that was of God.

As to yours of yesterday, all this fasting and waiting will, under the Divine benediction, grave deeply upon the tablet of your heart a truth which ought to be well known, and never for a moment forgotten, that Love—true Love—is a *fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God*. Far from the want of it which you feel being a bad sign, it is rather the contrary, indicating that you are to be well taught that all good is of God ; and that this truth must be apprehended, not in word only, but in very deed : so that it may become, as it were, the very backbone of your religion, and be accompanied with that reverential fear which keeps the watch over the tongue, and life, and thoughts, constant and vigorous. If you were permitted to enter into rest before the time, you would naturally be inclined to widen the door to others : but the bitter bread which you have to eat will teach you, so that you may teach others, that our Saviour was neither mistaken, nor over-stringent, when He said—“*Strive* : for many shall seek, but shall not be able.” You must not overlook altogether the difference of our positions : remember that, to say the least of it, many years have been spent by —. —. —. in passing through the wilderness, as it were, alone, before you were well awakened to the sad state of delusion with which we are surrounded. And also that,

as our call is principally to stand forth in defence of the Faith which is of God, in opposition to that noisy, windy, thing which is of man, it is necessary that the foundations of this edifice, in each of us, should be laid deep; so that no wind nor waves shall be able to shake the building, when storms arise. That a patient continuance in faithfulness to God, and this testimony, will bring storms, there can be no doubt: and the longer they may be delayed, the more fierce and terrible it is probable they will be. Skin for skin: all that a man hath will he give for his life. When therefore the holy Pharisaic life of this generation is trampled under foot, and their precious things spoken of as dung and dross, it is likely to bring out talents, subtilty, and power, which nothing but the might and wisdom of the Blessed God in His people will be able to withstand. You see, dear one, your calling: so you must let patience have its perfect work, and learn to be content on short commons and bitter bread, as well as to be thankful when wine and precious things are abundantly spread over the table, and you are favoured with appetite and liberty to eat and drink freely thereof.

A good soldier should take kindly to all weathers and trials, especially when faithfulness *insures the victory*.

There may be no need to say anything about reading mixed and muddled books; but there is no doubt that the Divine Spirit will make even this, when wisely done, very profitable, because it gives a familiarity with the transformings of Satan, which are much the same, at root, in all ages.

The chatterings of A. B. on so small a stock of Divine good only set forth what, in a grosser form, inundates the Christian world of the present-day.

If any person, with Divine authority, could have whispered into her ears the simple, and little, but infinitely important truth—Abide in the measure of Christ, and grace, imparted: she might have been a burning and shining light.

But no : this was hidden from her ; and so there was a continued unrest and turmoil in her nature—holy talk, high-flying expositions, and rattle by the yard, and sheet by sheet, to keep off that death which accompanies perfect rest and life.

These things are for our profit. Having these examples before us, what sort of men ought we to be, upon whom the ends of the world have nearly come. Glorious and Blessed God, we will adore Thee, and prove the greatness of Thy power and love by forsaking all but Thee : so that for Thy glory we may know what it is to live the All of God and naught of man. We are getting old : but it is not too late for Thee to kindle up a flame, in which Thy glorious Power shall be the overbearing factor, and we nothing but adoring slaves, and servants of Thy majesty and sweetness. Amen, my God, Amen.

— . — . — .

214.

The Same.

14. 10. 74.

THEN again, dear Soul, one who is called to stand forth in defence of the faith which is of God ought to be well exercised, both as it regards the windy faith which is of man, with all its serpentine twistings, and hypocritical workings ; as well as that which is Divine, and pure, and clean, and which carries with it a measure of that power which removes mountains, and that wisdom which knows all things. But it is in the exigencies of trial that this is to be learned. Had our Lord been born with a silver spoon in His mouth, and constantly dandled on the lap of plenty, He would hardly have been able to succour the elect under all conditions. As it was, being poor, and not having where to lay His head, His necessities brought

Him into immediate contact with the supernatural power of His Father, so that He could speak on Divine faith as never man spoke, not from an intellectual basis only, or principally, but from the bottom of the Divine reality.

“Have the faith of God,” said He, because He knew what the faith of God was, as it was a living, working, substance, making all things possible and easy to its possessor.

What then, dear soul? Are you to begin to put yourself into the condition of your elder Brother? No: by no means. You have your position, your trials, your temptations: these will bring you out into that measure of the stature of Christ which is suitable to your place in the body: and if you do what you are called of God to do, wisely and prudently, the time will not be long delayed, when you will have a constant settled peace which passeth understanding, if not a joy which is full of glory.

It would be false to ignore that the straiter the gate passed through, the more perfect the quality of the faith on the other side: but this ought never to lead any one to make his path narrower than Providence leads into. God is the salvation of His people, the Blessed God: they are His workmanship. He does not want any help in beautifying the pattern, or in manipulating on the wheel; or in drying, burning, glazing, or fitting for His use and purpose.

So be of a cheerful, steady mind. Here is ---, who would fain be more than God would have him; so he is coming out with something that will carry him over the heads of his brethren. You saw what a narrow gate he has made for himself: but should he pass through it, he will come out only a fool on the other side.

All good is of God, dear one. If we meddle with His work, nothing will be mended, but everything marred and hindered.

With love, Farewell.

215.

THE SPIRIT, NOT INTELLECT, THE TRUE GUIDE.

18. 10. 74.

My Brother,

THIS metaphysical way of writing is not good, because to those who thoroughly understand what you mean it is comparatively useless, and to those who do not, or do so only from the bottom of natural intellect, it is pernicious.

The only way to Christ, and to the knowledge of Him, in all its depths and heights, while here, is through the Spirit, which convinces of sins and errors, and the same Spirit, which comforts and guides into all truth.

If you would be a minister for God, all that you can do is to aim at the same point with Him in others, and submit to His working in yourself. A metaphysical Christ is equally a phantom with a fleshly one.

As we must keep to the measure of Christ in ourselves without intermission, so must we bring others to the measure of Christ in themselves. If they are given over to a reprobate mind, it is better to let them alone. There is no time to waste or spare.

216.

RUNNING WITHOUT A CALL.

21. 10. 74.

A CARD was sent in answer to yours yesterday. It seems well this morning to say a few words more on the subject, as what you say *appears* much more reasonable and right than it really is.

You say, "we must in all charity take into consideration the age and inexperience of the sons and daughters of God." This is right to the very letter, when applied to the walk and conversation of such; but hardly meets the case at all when "age and inexperience" jumps into *print*, and seeks to spread crudities and lies about the Kingdom of God.

In so far as they do this, they are not the children—"sons and daughters"—of God, but of the wicked one. They may have come under *some* influence and power of the Spirit, but not abiding therein, are, from the bottom of this slender foundation, building to their own confusion and that of others.

One of the great master-strokes of Satan in this age, is to set "age and inexperience" a-doing what they are not qualified to do, nor called to of God in any way. Observe here, when any persons whatever do so important a thing as to write and print upon the Kingdom of God, if not called of God, *in that act* they are children of the Devil, because they are doing his works.

Every child knows the proverb—All is not gold that glitters. This is true in a degree that no words of man can reach, in reference to the things of the Kingdom of God. The sincerity and earnestness of the writer is no guarantee whatever against unsoundness and lies; those very qualities being probably the very reasons of the writer's presumption and folly, leading to reasoning like the following—All these people are half asleep and blind: I, who am awake and earnest, am called to set them right. The reasoning may not take this above-board form, but this is the channel that it has run in, though perhaps unobserved by him who has been deceived thereby.

Let earnest and sincere souls live out their earnestness and sincerity, until they know the voice of the true Shepherd from that of the stranger. Then—and not till then—they may have a call to sound an alarm in Zion.

217.

RELIGIOUS PERFORMANCES SUFFOCATE THE
DIVINE LIFE.

30. 10. 74.

* * * About the Clergyman, and friendship with such being a burden—here it is. There are even Clergymen who are tender towards God ; but their engagements and other considerations hinder them from giving up to the Spirit of Grace : so they settle down to a religious routine, and never rise higher than fear and “service.” A child of grace who gives up all, and consequently by Divine favour, sooner or later, is brought into perfect liberty of soul, may warn such ; but after doing so, can continue a friendship with them with loss only, because he would, by so doing, be helping to blind them in false service, and even harden them against the visitations of the Spirit. He who comes to clearness with God in love can feel true friendship and unity with those only who are in the same position, or at least are *willing* to give up all to become so.

False religious service is utterly incompatible with true liberty and purity of soul, though it may consist with a degree of tenderness Godward.

Of course, this is only giving reasons for what is made known by the Spirit to the heart. A holy soul simply feels all this without any reasoning whatever.

218.

THE POWER OF GOD-SPOKEN WORDS.

13. 11. 74.

Dear _____ ,

IN that letter of Col. _____'s to you there were a few words about the simple faith of the "New Testament," as compared with the reasoning against false faith, and the description of the true, given in the tract "True Faith." As this is one of the strong points of those who are captivated by a faith of flesh and man, in contradistinction to that of the Spirit, and of God, a few words seem called for.

The two cases generally given are the thief on the cross and the Philippian Jailer; neither of which really militates against the nature of true faith, as of God, and the gift of God. For instance, taking the penitent thief, as the narrative is given in words simply, and read by the natural man, it indicates natural faith only: but when read by a spiritual man, the case is altogether different. For, first, the character of the thief's repentance, produced by the Divine Spirit, both as to the force of conviction, and the terrible pressure of pain, is in no way touched in the history, and can be truly discerned by those only who may have been made to drink most deeply of the terrors of the Lord, or the brokenness of spirit, produced by a powerful application of the sword of the Spirit, or the hammer of the Living Word. Then again, the words spoken by Christ to the thief—the narrative gives no sense whatever of their inherent spiritual force, *as they came from God*: this can be known only by a spiritual heart which has passed through a similar crisis, in kind, if not in degree: which experience gives a clear knowledge that, in proportion to the crushing, overpowering, or piercing, force of the convincing Spirit, so also will be, or is, the sweetness, strength, and clearness of that Divine

voice, which speaks into existence a Heaven of light, joy, and consolation, where, the moment before, there may have been a Hell of darkness, misery, tribulation, and despair.

These few words give the substance of the whole matter : they might be enlarged upon greatly, but here you have the key of the mystery.

This will also explain the quality, speaking after the manner of men, of conversions, when they are sudden or otherwise : their real worth and excellency being in proportion as the Divine element preponderated or preponderates. One word from God clearly spoken, or one Divine manifestation clearly given, has infinite efficacy and virtue in it. It turns the world, and all that is in it, as an object of love, into rottenness and dead men's bones ; and produces a corresponding change, internally, in the disposition of the will and spirit of man. To simplify the whole—here it is in a few words. Conversions are sound and good in proportion as the Divine element, or the Divine manifestation, is clear and strong ; and the creature, by humility and obedience, conduces to its permanent character as a saving Divine operation upon itself.

There were men, even in the Apostolic times, who believed, and were baptized, but the whole thing, for substance, was of man, and a failure : there was, or had been, no real putting forth of the Divine power. The creature, carried away with words, had over-run the Creator. The Apostles, however, being Divine men, that is, men in whom the Divine element preponderated, soon discovered this, and acted accordingly. Where this is not the case, that is, where the Divine element does not preponderate, as in the case of Moody, Sankey, and Co., the whole generates to the mystery of iniquity, and is a sublime work of the flesh, which, if possible, would deceive the very Elect.

Watch, and farewell.

119.

ON BEING NOTHING AND NOBODY.

22. 11. 74.

Dear —————,

NO : that question of power and love is not for children : without Divine help it is too much for strong men. The genuine things cannot be got hold of by the creature, nor in own will.

Lowliness, patience, and long-suffering, may be your lot many a day yet. Remember you have been a great whoremaster in spiritual things : but you will reap, if you faint not. If thoroughly sincere, there will be a sweetness even in lowliness and littleness. The Blessed One has so balanced things in the moral and spiritual world, that he that sinks down into nothingness before Him, and is thankful to Him for any little spark of power, light, or love, abiding in it, *and being faithful to it*, treads in as safe a path, and one as acceptable in its measure to God, as the mightiest of His servants.

You can see without —. —. —. telling you, that everybody *really wants* to be something and somebody : perhaps you have not yet learned as well as he, that this is the sure path to remain nothing and nobody.

It is the lowly that, in God's time, become mighty : but when they are mighty, they cease not to be lowly, and are as content to be nothing and nobody as something and somebody—yea, more so.

These may seem little better than paradoxes : they are, however, in heavenly things, solid truths ; and in the realization of them, as the outcoming of the inner Life, the Land of Canaan is gained—that land where spiritual milk and honey flow.

Any man that aims with all his soul, mind, and strength, as led by the grace of God, to become absolutely nothing

for the love of God, will, unknown to himself, be raised to riches and honour, and will become, whether he will or not, a man of high degree.

This is the strait gate: let him or her pass it to whom it is given.

The lower you sink, the higher you will rise. But the sinking must be genuine. There must be no crawling all-fours in shallow water on the sand, no swimming with one foot on the bottom; but a launching out, and diving down into that which appears to be bottomless, and a trusting the Ever-Blessed One with the consequences.

Do you suppose that the wonderful Galilean was "blowing the horn," as the hypocrites do, when He said, "strait is the gate?" If you do, more fool you.

Dear souls (for this will suit you, and ————, and ————, and others) steer out from the Land of hot rolls, muffins and coffee, rose-water, looking-glasses, and vanity; haul down your pictures and finery—little by little, it may be, as the heavenly Joshua leads on—and die on the Cross with Christ manfully. Then you may "stand in His shoes," but not till then; for as long as your hearts cling to aught but God, and Truth—though it be only with the weight of a straw, to say nothing of waggon-loads—in the time of trial the balance will go down against you.

With love,

— . — . — .

220.

SCRIPTURE, OR THE INDWELLING WORD?

24. 11. 74.

Dear Colonel,

ARE you the youngest Colonel in the Army? You must be either very young, or a very blind old man.

Do you walk with peas in your shoes? How long are you expecting that it will take you to make the blackamoor white? Are you coming up to Town for books, brushes and washing powder? It is supposed that, with care and the Divine blessing, you may last fifteen or twenty years longer. Are you bent upon wasting this, or half of it, or three parts, in playing the fool?

You want something to “elucidate the Scripture.” But, dear soul, what is the use of elucidation to a dead man, or a child in the throes of birth—“a poor blind sinner,” who as yet takes “his own ways of thought?”

You have missed the mark altogether. Christ is the Saviour of the soul—not the Scriptures: Christ, not out of us and for us only, but with us and *in* us. As He is brought forth in your heart, you will possess the key of David, in measure, yourself; which will elucidate the Scriptures by bringing you into the same life and nature as those who gave them forth.

Everything that falls short of this, if rested in, is a cheat and a lie.

Halt: at your peril you take another step. You are face to face with a General of Division. Answer me this question in the name of my Father, your King. Did Jesus Christ make Himself good by reading the Scriptures, or was He good by union with the Father, that dwelt in Him?

If it was the life-giving Word that dwelt in Him that was His life, so before you can follow in His steps, it must

be the life-giving Word dwelling in you, that must be your Life.

Till this is your experience, you are beating the air: your praying and reading are all in vain: your study, your zeal, your resolution, your imitation,—it is all gilding a rotten post.

You are hardly born yet, and you want to be cutting capers, like a spiritual mountebank. Be STILL: and know that God is God. Nothing will pass with Him but the cries of the babe of His own begetting.

Herewith go three or four Tracts which will be of service to you. They will be followed by the good wishes of your sincere lover and friend,

— . — . — .

221.

THE SPIRIT'S SWORD NOT TO BE BLUNTED.

28. 11. 74.

Dear ———,

WHEN the Blessed One calls any one to write something sharp for His service, He prepares their minds and hearts for the purpose, and gives a satisfaction, when the task is done, which is not of self, nor under the control of self-will.

Under these conditions no explanations can be given, except in the form of self-renunciation. After the blow is delivered, *on fitting occasions*, a justification may be advanced; but to do this as part of the message from God is contrary to sound reason, and will hardly be paralleled in the Scriptures.

The blow is given to wound, and it is in the wounding that the Divine Spirit works—if the message came from

Him—for while the wounded are burning with indignation against the smiter—the instrument—then the Master stands up for His servant, by bruising the sinner's spirit inwardly, and making it almost impossible for Him not to feel the truth of *His own testimony*, in the inward parts. He, you see, is the real worker.

If there be not a thorough humility of heart wrought by the Holy Ghost, which is a state of things out of the power of the creature, there is poor ground to build on, as the rule, that the message is from the Blessed God.

That “nothing and nobody” letter is pretty clear, and will stand a true friend to any one who will take it to heart. To a gracious soul it is a little bit of sugar-candy for the waistcoat pocket. In truth, there is so deep a truth in that letter, that it will be more precious, as to its fundamental principle, in proportion as the soul and spirit of any of the true seed are united to God.

God the Worker, God the Potter—is the truth that we, ploughers and sowers, of this day, by Divine grace, must, as it were, by all means, bring before our generation, and cast into the earth; that when the high-flying drunkenness and hypocrisy of the present doings are “played out,” there may be something for the poor disgusted souls to take hold of, as the reaction sets in. This however must first be done by its *realization* in ourselves: all else will follow this, but without this, we ourselves are in moonshine and deceit.

Farewell.

222.

TO MOODY AND SANKEY, THE AMERICAN
REVIVALISTS, SO-CALLED.[*Reprinted.*]

[Nov. 1874.]

OH, ye DECEIVERS, who, from the bottom of flesh, and a letter-formed faith, are raising a structure of wood, hay, and stubble, on a foundation of sand, in the souls of the foolish: Cease your ranting,* singing, folly; and, if there be a place of repentance to be found, find it.

Ye have done more for the kingdom of Antichrist in this country during the last few months, than you will ever be able to undo.

The harlots, drunkards, thieves, and blind, upon whom you traffic spiritually, will, in the Day of Judgment, stand justified rather than you.

This is a word of warning, which, in this day of words and songs, in the place of the Divine Spirit and Power, few will be able fully and freely to endorse: it is, however, none the less true for that, and is, nevertheless, as clear as the sun at mid-day, when there are no clouds, to those whose eyes the Lord hath opened, and also to His servant,

— . — . — .

[Address.]

* All are Ranters who preach on heavenly things from a natural ground only.

223.

"HIGHER-LIFE" PERIODICALS.

4. 12. 74.

* * * The one remarkable feature of the whole is the terrible force which they give to the puffing department. The old Napoleon used this power with unflagging energy, knowing what an astonishing influence it exercises on the ignorant masses. Spiritual ignorance may exist, in its grossest forms, with a good amount of education : as, where the Blessed God is not really known, fear and superstition work wonders in favour of impudent and talented writers, who assume this, that, and the other ; and write, from a carnal ground, about the Blessed God, and His power, with all the assurance of novelists and dramatists.

224.

A CHRIST OF THE CREATURE'S OWN MAKING.

4. 12. 74.

* * * This female correspondent is a well-educated religious woman, with a warm heart, and a sweet Christ of her own making, which she flatters, and lies to, in a very pious fashion. She is ignorant that God is a mystery : Christ is a mystery : faith is a mystery : and regeneration is a mystery. And, above all, there is in her heart great ignorance that her religious and pious doings are more in the way of her coming to a better state of things, than her other sins.

The only thing that will do her any good is to get her to be *still*, and feel after God. If she does not come to this, without a miracle of grace, she will go on making love to her fleshly Christ, and finish up, with _____, in a lying dream, to be awakened to the real state of things, when a remedy will hardly be found.

225.

REASON DOES NOT OBTAIN LIFE.

10. 12. 74.

DO, dear soul, depend less upon that terrible faculty of reasoning, which you have so “well” and “happily” developed. It is marvellous how well it seems to direct you in all things: but like all false guides in the things of God, it does not replenish the heart with Divine love.

Here it is with the Scripture people and bible-worshippers. They work the oracle with great tact, and bring out, with great force, a copy or imitation of the true thing: yet the further they go in this line of things, and the more perfect their imitation becomes, the more faulty and useless it really is.

The end of life and all its exercises is to be made *one with the Divine nature*, not to become clever imitators in religion. Anything that enables its possessor to work his passage along religiously, without being brought more and more into union with the Blessed God, as the Divine root of all good, defeats this object; but working the Scriptures or reason as an oracle for this purpose does so, and therefore is injurious.

The union of the soul with God is brought about through anguish, and patience, and faith, under all provings of mind and heart; with a gentle yet constant suffering as with Christ on the cross.

It is wonderful how a little reasoning or Scripture-guidance will, in the wisdom and prudence of the flesh, avoid this, and get over difficulties and trials in some other way than through and with Christ and the cross, which alone is the door; leaving the heart and spirit without any increase or growth in the Life, or nearer union with the Source of it. All that is here said might be summed

up in walking with the Blessed God *more* as *dear children* ; not serving Him as bible-made saints, or excellent prudent reasoners, with a life from the wrong root.

Farewell.

226.

“COMMON-SENSE :” AND ALL FOR GOD.

12. 12. 74.

Dear _____,

“COMMON sense” ahead of the Divine Spirit shuts the Divine eye, which alone can behold that beauty which no mortal eye can or ever did see.

Faith, a fruit of the Spirit, ahead of common sense, opens that eye that sees, that ear that hears, and that heart that feels, Him that is invisible: and brings to a union with Him, standing in the immovable power of God.

* * * * *

If you are not made willing to give up all, you cannot be a true disciple of Christ.

The Blessed God is far too good, great, and sweet, to be put in place *No. 2*. He will have all or nothing. So would you, if young and rich and beautiful again. Would you take a higher position in earthly things than you would give to the Blessed God in those that are heavenly? Think again, and again.

227.

CARNAL PREACHERS, AND PREACHERS SENT
OF GOD.

14. 12. 74.

THERE needs nothing more to be said to ————, than that Paul was *spiritual*, and sent of God; and so had the power, under God, to beget to God, and generate to the Spirit. The Americans [Moody and Sankey] are yet carnal: consequently have no power to beget to God, or to generate to the spirit.

That which is carnal cannot generate that which is spiritual, but only that which is carnal. That which is spiritual will not generate that which is carnal, but contend against it.

————— and the Americans are upon the same bottom—flesh, intellect, self-will, Scripture, and talk; in the place of the Spirit and power of God.

228.

SATISFIED IN GOD.

22. 12. 74.

YOU are too clever by half. You are too weak for strong meat: you are afraid of wine. Dear one, turn fool and little child; and if the Divine Spirit brings judgment home to your spirit, sink down before it, and say—not in words, but in sinking out of everything like reasoning or palliation, or *bringing a reach over the Divine Goodness*—O Lord, my God, I have not chosen Thee, but Thou hast chosen me. I have nothing to say; nothing to pay. I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing that is good: there is an end of the matter. When you are poor, abide by this: when you are rich, abide by this: when tempted, abide by this: when relieved, abide by this: when full of joy and heavenly wine, abide by this: when your peace is as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea, abide by this; and then all will be well.

229.

SPIRITUAL DRUNKENNESS AND WHOREDOM.

[1874.]

AS to the criticisms on your card—if they are rightly remembered, they were to the effect that the card was to “sinners” a temptation, and to a saint a stink.

A temptation, in as much as it eggs on to a false deliverance by a self-appropriation of the precious sacrifice of Christ, in the place of waiting patiently under the Divine judgments, until, in the Will of God, by the Spirit, the application is made, and true peace given.

It stinks to a saint, because he sees, by the light and power of Christ, that it draws the weak and hungry to a highly seasoned dish of meat and wine, which, though pleasant for a few minutes to the natural mind and palate, feeds that life only which ends in corruption and death. For they who eat and digest the letter of the Scriptures from a religious self-will and natural appetite only, eat that which, being void of the Divine Life or pabulum, killeth: and in so far as they do so, increase the vitality and power of the spiritual body of sin and death.

As to the “saints” at —————, you will understand their case and their cure better, as you are, by the grace of God, delivered from that spiritual drunkenness and whoredom, of which as yet you are guilty, and doubtless they also. Understand aright. Spiritual drunkenness, adultery, etc. are different kinds of pleasures and consolations of a religious character, taken in own will and time; but which do not spring directly (nor indirectly) from the Blessed Spirit of God in the heart, but come from either the world, or the Devil, as an angel of light, or the fleshly mind enlightened and puffed up by Scripture, reason, and self-will, or intercourse between carnal “saints,” who, from a root of flesh, kindle a fire, and imitate the free workings and love of the Divine Spirit—

and that to such a degree of perfection that, mixed with lying wonders, all but the Elect are deceived thereby.

By the Elect are meant those who, being led by the Spirit of God, are, by a true and new birth from above, made spiritual members of Christ—of His flesh, and of His bones.

In love,

— . — . — .

The explanations are given that your fiery steed may not pitch you over his head, and perhaps break your bones.

230.

THE SPIRIT GIVES LIFE.

17. 1. 75 .

A FEW words more than at first appeared necessary arose in your behalf: so another sheet is used.

With this, no veto from above intervening, will be sent a few copies of “Living Faith” and “Peace and Rest.” Bear patiently the warning that these and other “good books,” without care, are easily used to an evil purpose.

The great thing to the possession of *Truth*, as it is a living, enlightening, and quickening Spirit, is a present standing in the true grace of God; that is, as here intended, simply being, in our own estimation and sense of things, what we really are to the Spirit of God.

Now “good books” will lead out of this, or remove farther from it, as well as anything else, if read in *own will and time*.

Every well-instructed child of God should, and will, abide and walk under a present sense of the power and

influence of the indwelling Spirit, whether that power, for the time being, grinds to powder, or brings into a fiery furnace, or begets confidence, or distils into the spirit and soul a sweetness that no language can express.

This is the great point, not to be lost sight of for a moment, till the Rest is gained.

O, that you saw this as it is seen by —. —. —. or, may it be said, O, that you felt it as it ought to be felt.

Dear one, it is, or would be, better to be nailed with Christ on the Cross—literally nailed—or to be thrust into a fiery furnace, than to be at liberty through good books, or “sublime” doctrines, or self-will, or anything else, beyond what is of God.

Ye—not your bodies, but the *mind*, the WILL, the DESIRES—must die and rise again, before there is true Peace and *Rest*.

Farewell.

231.

SELF-SENT PROPHETS THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS.

29. 1. 75.

THAT pencil-written letter of _____ is indeed a marvel of spiritual wickedness and “deep-down” hypocrisy. It has crossed the mind frequently. The mystery of faith is held in a pure conscience. When man pretends to hold it otherwise, he is given over to all delusions and deceits, and grows up into the image and spirit of the Devil. _____’s is a hopeful case. He has knowledge enough to move on for a time: the question will arise speedily with him (if it may be called a question), when the narrowness of the way is felt, and idols have to be burnt in the fire, which have been thought of

as Angels of God—who shall abide this refining fire, this searching power, with which Christ in Spirit appeareth ?

There is a lively hope that _____ will pass through the ordeal. If he does, he will become a valiant soldier for the Truth in his measure.

Do you sufficiently consider that the “wind of desire,” passing over the “Christian world” at this time, is much more the result of puffing, and the chatter of unsent prophets, than the influence of the Holy Ghost ? and that it is a sign more for evil than good ? Any religion that has its spring in *man* is more opposed, whatever may be its pretensions or outward show, to the real appearance of God and Christ in the heart, than irreligion and infidelity. Harlots, wine, gold, and land, out of man, with ambition, conceit, and malice, in him, are more easily parted company with, than sanctity and faith which have their spring in himself, and which have been worked as oracles for many a year.

If you look well into this subject, you will see that this “wind of desire” is bottomed upon wood, hay, and stubble, which are for the fire ; and that the unity and fraternity so much accompanying it, are of the flesh, the filterings of *man's* “wise” and “spiritual” conceptions of the Truth, aided by the Scriptures, without anything like such an appearance of God with it, as to lift it out of or above the religion of man.

You are thus spoken to, that you may not suppose that such men as _____ [a zealous “Evangelist”] are only the thickness of a few opinions from the Truth. They are the greatest enemies of it : and do more to continue the reign of Antichrist and the Devil, than Infidels, and those *Publicans* who feed and dress well, by thousands upon thousands, in this country, by selling poison, and that which physically sets up the kingdom of lies, madness, wickedness, and lewdness.

If you will but look in the face that which here follows, you may see this more clearly.

Did the Blessed God ever, since the foundation of the world, *send* one man to oppose the blessed Truth? Can He fight against Himself? If not, then it follows that they that do fight against the Truth, are of the prince of darkness, and are, as much as in them lies, setting up the principality of Hell.

Your harlots, publicans, infidels, brothel-keepers, and play-house supporters, are doing this against their consciences comparatively; while unsent Prophets work their oracle above the region of conscience, and, being possessed by the prince of darkness, and doing his work in a mystery of iniquity, are pushing forth their carnal conceptions of Scripture propositions as the present utterances and oracles of the Blessed God: putting the filthy creature and his chatter into the place where alone ought to dwell the Spirit of the Everlasting Father.

It is known that these blind guides will refer to the epistles of the Apostles, etc., for evidences that the primitive churches were not paragons of perfection. There is one thing, however, in the records which we have of those times, that these children of darkness will not refer to; that is, that while the Apostles lived, there were those who could speak out plainly for the truth, and also with certainty against error. Let them be accursed, says one of God's oracles. We—ye—have an unction of the Holy One, and know all things, says another.

Now all are for blessing, through thick and thin. And the most forward prophets know nothing to-day, but what they may find out to-morrow was a mistake. They are always being blessed, yet preach they know not what. The unction of the Holy One is with them continually, but when what they say is put upon paper, it is full of lies, contradictions, and deceit. Lord, Lord, is being written of, sung, and preached, all the world over; but the writers, singers, and preachers, are empty of Divine good. There is nothing supernatural about them, or Divine in them.

They say they are doing the *work of God*, and preaching

the blessed *Truth*, thus blasphemously fathering upon the Blessed One their ignorance, lies, and uncertainties : claiming an acquaintance with Him whom they have never seen, and do not know, and with whom they have no interest whatever—thus being deceived themselves, and deceiving others.

How can such as these believe and receive the blessed Truth? If you look at their position and doings, they are farther from it than any other living creatures : fighting for the kingdom of flesh, darkness, and lies; above the reach of conscience; and yet—if they are to be believed—in daily fellowship with, and receiving continual answers of prayer from, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Farewell.

232.

THE PEACE OF SELF-APPROPRIATION, AND THE PEACE INBREATHED BY GOD.

[Jan. 1875.]

Dear _____,

SUFFER a word of exhortation, as helpful towards the constant walking in the Divine light and love, which you so strongly desire.

Learn, dear soul, to discern between a peace which rises from the self-appropriation and belief of any propositions or doctrines whatever, and that peace which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. The one is the peace of the Whore and False Prophet : the other the peace of God.

This is put forth not at all to question the possibility of there having been such a sight of inward corruption, and, at the same time, such an application of the precious blood of Christ, as you speak of : but simply to warn you against over-running the Spirit of Grace in these matters.

Those who have passed through the deceits of the False Prophet see into these things clearly, and have learnt to know the Shepherd's voice.

So, dear soul, when by the Divine Spirit (or the lesser light of Conscience) you see things of corruption, don't apply anything to dull the sight, or ease the pain. Your business, in such a case, is to wait in humility and self-abasement, till the same Spirit that condemns, or shows corruption, justifies, and raises up a power—Christ in the heart—that treads all temptation and corruption under foot; enabling in watchfulness and humility so to walk, as Christ Himself also walked. A steady adherence to this rule will bring death, by the grace of God, to the old man, for all practical purposes, (he thus being nailed with Christ on the cross) and life, strength, and health, to the new.

If you do not pass by this passive state through death into life, though you pray never so much, and believe this that and the other never so firmly, and at times seem to have breakings in of heavenly light, the kingdom of God with power will not be set up in your heart. The creature will always remain more or less in the ascendant, unfitting you for a chosen instrument for the Master's use.

Farewell.

233.

RESPECTING THE SCRIPTURES.

9. 2. 75.

“**T**HE words written by Prophets and Apostles, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, were not their own words, but are of God.”

Is there not a fallacy here? Were not the words written by the Apostles their own words, as they were

under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, as spiritual men? Your position ignores their spiritual union with the Blessed God, as His children and *sent* messengers; and would make them nothing but passive instruments of His Spirit. This is not borne out by the facts of the case, and is against the holy mystery of the Gospel, which brings into unity and oneness God, Christ, and the Saints.

If they had been passive instruments only, their language would have been equal and correct. But this is not the case: each man expressed himself according to his quality, as a man, a scholar, and a man of God. And what was written by each was for the particular occasion, and to the particular persons and characters to which their words were addressed.

“I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it,” etc., etc. “But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you,” etc., etc.

The above is put before you, not to provoke argument, but simply to help towards getting free from a superstitious feeling about the Scriptures, which in most professors of this day is working more or less fatally. There can be no truly blessed revival of religion, till the leaders have found the only Rock.

Farewell.

234.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

11. 2. 75.

To the same.

AS to setting a stumbling-block before professors, Christ was and is a stumbling-block, in whatever aspect He is taken, either as the Way, the *Truth*, or the Life.

But there is no salvation in any other name : so if He be not received, as He is the Truth, or in so far as He is not thus received, there is no salvation.

I say unto you, that Christ is sufficient every way to salvation, and that in so far as you receive into your own heart a superstitious reverence for anything beside Him, you become a prey to the prince of darkness ; and, when encouraging the same in others, a setter up of his kingdom.

Do give yourself fair play. You will not mend matters that are gone by, which you were guilty of ignorantly when you were a bible-worshipper, by keeping in your heart a sneaking tenderness for your old idol. Look the thing clearly in the face ; and if Christ be enough, cleave to Him, that He may teach you all things—that you may experience the Anointing which gives a knowledge of all spiritual blessings : for until you get to this, when the nip comes, in the very nature of things you can remain only a trimmer.

Farewell.

235.

GROWTH IN CHRIST.

16. 2. 75.

Dear _____,

IT is true, the Blessed One is good, and especially favourable to His own seed. Don't be overcome with impatience when the way is rough, dark, and for a time dreary : these things are to wean you from sweets and other things which profit not, and to give hardness, that you may *endure* as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Ever remember the one great truth, and it might be called great mystery, and that which is kept secret from

all that is of the flesh—*our Salvation stands in Christ*, whether as He is in the womb, or an infant, a little child, young man, or father.

Keep within the compass of these different growths, as they are brought forth by the Father. Or in other words, abide in the measure of Christ brought forth in yourself, and then all will work well; and He will grow in you, and you in Him, till all ground of difference will be removed out of the way, as well internally, as by the grace of God it has been taken away externally by the High Priest and Captain of our Salvation, who hath gone into heaven for us, and ever pleads the cause of His seed before the Eternal and Ever-Blessed God.

There is as great a tenderness in the heart of God towards Christ in you as an infant, as there is favour towards those who have become young men and fathers: if indeed there are fathers in God to be found upon the earth in these days of words and doctrines, rather than substance and power.

Dear soul, farewell.

236.

TO ONE UNDER SPIRITUAL TRIAL.

27. 2. 75.

Dear Brother,

DON'T look—that is, by choice—to that which harasses the mind: rather, if you must reason, look to that which lies below it, and really (though, while you are in conflict, not perceptibly) controls it.

Why do you not curse and swear right out with a will? Because the central power (to which look, and on which depend) holds you from it. Hold to this Divine power: for when it gains perfect dominion, all this suffering will

vanish, like the smoke of a lucifer match ; and peace will become the covering of your mind.

These exercises are necessary, doubtless, to fit you for some work which lies hid in the future, and unknown to all but the Blessed God.

When there has been a competent trial of your patience, and the necessary exercise by, and experience of, tribulation, you will come out of the affliction more equal in your trust, and constant in your resistance of evil, as the beaten anvil to the stroke.

Avoid reasoning overmuch upon these matters : an Infinite, and Omnipresent, and Blessed God makes all things simple. Adhere to Him, rather than reason. Aspire to that state of mind and heart, which soars no higher than to be as a little daisy, or any sweet flower, which may in any way please the Beloved best.

Perfect love will cure all your troubles, though it may not give a perfect immunity from suffering, which in the present life would be an evil, unfitting you to be of service to others.

If the enjoyment of this perfect love were attained without going down into the depths, and beholding the wonders of the great deep, it might bring you to a state of peace and rest ; yet you would be left comparatively a novice as to the power of darkness, although somewhat comfortable in the enjoyment of light. The best soldier is he who behaves well under hardships and adversity.

Cheer up, my brother. Your troubles and temptations are far more welcome to —. —. —. than a continual trimming between right and wrong : and bespeak that, when you have been refined five or seven times, you will in some way or another be called to a deeply responsible service.

May the infinitely wise and Ever-Blessed God EVER be with you and yours.

Farewell.

— . — . — .

237.

ON PATIENTLY SUFFERING THE DIVINE WILL.

28. 2. 75.

Dear _____,

BY patient continuance in doing and suffering the Divine Will, that which is of God will grow in you, and you will grow in it. If you were to come to a knowledge of the mysteries of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, without a corresponding acquaintance with the darkness of the mind, and hardness of the heart, when left alone, it might seem to be for your ease and comfort; but would leave you in a shiftless condition, as a helper of others—an instructor of the ignorant, and comforter, under God, of those that may be cast down. So, dear soul, bear patiently all the turnings of the Divine Hand, remembering that no man can add to his own stature, or legitimately make his hair white or black.

There is a Divine purpose bound up in the heart of every chosen one of God. As you, by renewed baptisms of the Holy Ghost and fire, become one in spirit with the Divine Father, this purpose will be accomplished sweetly in you, without any great effort on your part, but only that continued obedience and filial love, which is due from a child to its Father.

Wisdom and understanding are the gifts of God by the Spirit; not things which can be commanded by study, and much seeking among books and the experience of men.

What is necessary to be known from these natural sources you will be led into, without any specific purpose of your own mind, if you adhere faithfully to the pointings of Grace, and do not go beyond that Divine sense and relish of things, which the Anointing will give.

The Divine admonitions are gentle, and not to be evoked in the will of man: and it is perilous to turn from or

evade them, or to over-run them, or fall short of them. But when through fear, or any other brutishness of the mind, there is a fault committed in this most important line of duty, the safe way is to bear the indignation, with patience and humility, till it be overpast; and to learn by the sharpness of the rod, or the keenness of the spiritual rebuke, that it is a bitter thing to sin against the Light and Grace of God—so much the more so as His Love is sweet, and known to be excellent beyond words.

With love,

— . — . — .

238.

AN OUT-LOOK ON HUMANITY BY “WISE” MEN AND “FOOLS.”

28. 2. 75.

YOU are in danger from two things especially; your bodily indisposition, which has a depressing influence on the mind; and a logical, exact, turn of mind, which leads to making pictures of what, as seems to you, ought to be; and then, perhaps unknown to yourself, to a kind of forcing of your experience into a line of things most suitable thereto.

Remember also, in reference to the terrible thoughts, that everything in yourself and around you is just what might be expected from the working of the two leading principles which lie at the root of any reasonable theory of what is seen—the *controlling providence* of an All-wise and Almighty God, yet so working as not to infringe upon the *liberty* of busy active man—at least so moving as not to do violence to his responsibility.

Any intelligence short of Infinite Wisdom, in view of the working of things continually seen by man, if not

under the influence or control of Divine love or power, would be for modifying their operation, according to some limited view : not suspecting that, by so doing, he would meddle with, and disarrange, causes whose effects will reach to, and operate in, eternity. Here it is that "the wise" run more contrary to the mind of the Blessed God than "the fools." Being strong in reasoning, yet weak in materials from which rightly to reason, they are continually meddling with things too heavy for them, and stiffening up against some evil of their own imagination, or rather, a limited view thereof, which brings them into conflict with the procedure of Almighty God, and ends in their coming off, with the Knight of windmill notoriety, to their own wounding and loss. Whereas "the fools," under the influence of grace, say—He who has done so much in wisdom, knows well what He is about; and cannot be confused, or in difficulties, though matters look complex, and even terribly affrighting : at any rate they are too deep for me : therefore to follow the leadings of Grace, and trust in Him, is all that I can safely do.

Then, again, there is another matter. When the mind is enlightened as to the fitness and righteousness of the Will of the Blessed God being done, and the lack of power to do it is felt, there is a danger of seeking this power by unlawful methods : whereas the only way to the possession of it is to feel *hopefully* after the Deliverer ; and in Him, and with Him, step by step, to pass out of darkness into light, out of weakness into strength.

The Salvation of Israel is of Jehovah. That is enough for a gracious soul. It is of grace—free grace. The very statement of these facts, known by all experienced pilgrims to be the very truth, should carry light, life, and comfort, in measure, to the very centre of the soul. Amen.

239.

TO AN ADVERTISER OF TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE
FOR QUILTS.

[Feb. 1875.]

Neighbour _____,

YOU will do well to ask yourself this question—Who called me to increase the means made use of by the Teachers of this religious, but really Godless, age, to confine the minds of professors to the dead letter of the Scriptures, in the place of bringing them to a knowledge of the *Living Word*?

The hypocrisy of your quilt speculation may not appear to your own benighted mind; but it is, nevertheless, felt by those who really know the Lord, and walk in the light of His countenance.

It is the Divine Power and Presence of the Lord that is needed in the heart, not a hypocritical familiarity with the words of Prophets and Apostles.

Whether you can answer the question herewith sent for your instruction or not, be sure that, in the sight of the Blessed God, your work is an abomination; and that, if not repented of, it will bring you in the life to come into company with those hypocrites, who made and wore phylacteries, and crucified the Lord of Glory.

— . — . — .

240.

CARNAL RELIGIOUS ZEAL OVERBEARS THOSE
NOT ON THE ROCK.

14. 3. 75.

* * * * *

When men have not their feet upon the everlasting Rock, the straightforward business manner which these Americans [Moody and Sankey] assume, and the puffing and impudence with which they and some of their abettors carry out their programme, bring a reach over many of those who are in such a case, and cause them to fear, from the bottom of a fleshly conscience, lest, by holding off, they be found fighting against the Blessed God. There is hardly any stronger hold in the dominions of Antichrist than this. It is the fruit reaped by those who have been sowing with a slack hand God-ward. When the time of trial comes, these know not the voice of the stranger from that of the true Shepherd.

Here it is that the true Prophet, in the times of spiritual dearth and darkness, is always thought to be fanatical or extreme. There being greater affinity, in the masses of professors, to darkness than to light, the light is rejected, and the darkness of the many welcomed.

It is matter of gratitude that the Blessed One tempers His inner favors to suit these circumstances, and so supplies His servants with comfort, joy, and heavenly wisdom, as to enable them to face all, with sweetness of mind; holding their own, by that of God in them, against all comers, and even growing stronger and stronger spiritually, when surrounded on all sides by those who are weak, and, if left to themselves, comparatively blind.

Everlasting praises to His great and glorious name. He hath chosen the weak to confound the mighty; and those that are little in their own eyes to be His Lovers

and Friends. Oh, my soul, magnify and bless Him! He is worthy, worthy, worthy. Hallelujah to God and the Lamb for ever! Amen.

— . — . — .

241.

TO A "REVIVAL" PREACHER.

14. 3. 75.

Neighbour _____,

IS not the religion of the flesh, in a high figure, prevalent enough in _____, that you should go about to increase it in quantity, and, though it might seem impossible, render it more carnal and natural in quality?

Do you not yet know that all that which comes from the flesh, whether it be called faith, or love, or by any other name, is only gilded hypocrisy and Pharisaism?

All is of the flesh in religion where man is the leading agent. Are you so blind and infatuated as not to see that this Moody and Sankey movement is of man? Your own preachings, expositions, and calling together of people to hear one another talk finely on the Scriptures are bad enough, and will make the fire hot enough when your judgment sets in: do you want to increase it seven-fold?

You have been warned before, and have had the rod on your back lately: but are rather worse than better for it. The next stroke of the Divine anger will cut you down to the ground.

If it be not too late, thou white-washed hypocrite, and deceiver of men, **REPENT.**

From a lover of the Blessed God and all men,

— . — . — .

This is the last warning.

242.

THE ONLY GOOD.

15. 3. 75.

Dear _____ ,

YOU were brought before my spirit this morning.

Is the union felt to have taken place between your spirit and Him who is the Centre and Source of all Good?

If not, dear soul, don't let anything whatever put the transaction from before your mind and heart. The true substance lies here: all short of this is shaky, misty, and comparatively vain. When you and He are one Spirit, there will be peace; and a love will rise into existence within your spirit, beyond words, and a faith giving the victory over the world, flesh and devil.

You may be, and doubtless are, a dear good child without this, according to the natural and common meaning of these terms: but there is not a one jot of TRUE GOOD in the universe, which is not *of* and *in* God. So, dear child, you must be made one with Him, through Christ, before anything satisfactory of goodness and love can be known.

Farewell.

— . — . — .

243.

THE WILDERNESS.

16. 3. 75.

* * * Do not give yourself up to analyze too much your internal feelings. If there be a continued desire to please the Blessed One, and patiently to suffer His judgments, whatever they be, He will not forget you

at the real crisis: and when the time of the singing of birds sets in, all that you have felt in your passage through that terrible wilderness will be forgotten, or only tend to increase your wisdom and joy.

This spiritual wilderness is that which lies between your being guided by your well-informed, religious, and scriptural self; and becoming dead thereto, and, as a little child, walking with the Blessed God, and being led, comforted, and fed, by His Spirit ALONE.

244.

DOUBT.

26. 3. 75.

“**D**OUBT” brings the highest kind of tribulation. Don’t resist it, otherwise than by turning towards the Mighty One. Let it come with all its force and sharpness.

Stand under it with head down, and the mind humble, before the Blessed One, till He takes it all away. Anguish fits for the reception of the new life—that which comes from above. There is no stronger anguish than doubt, unless it be despair.

What is wanted is, not a fitness for doing, but loving. When you love rightly, you will do rightly. Love is a fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God.

So live for nothing else but for love, and to love. When you press closely upon Him for more love, He will let you know what He wants you to do, and what hinders you from being filled with Divine Love.

245.

INWARD TRIBULATION. LOVE.

27. 3. 75.

Dear _____ ,

DON'T make a trouble of anything. When everything is dry, and inward tribulation is hard to bear, walk softly and patiently: the Deliverer will most certainly come, and bring an increase of faith and love with Him. It is said, "*come*," speaking after the manner of men, for He is never nearer than in the day of trouble.

Don't let the horn-blowing of the Americans and their followers move you to impatience or an indignation which is of the flesh. You are called to serve and love One who can bring good out of all this evil *easily*: there is no confusion or want of foresight in Him.

Let the one object of your life be to grow in LOVE: everything is wrapped up in this. When you love rightly, you will live and act rightly. There is nothing like love for giving wisdom, and prudence, and heavenly knowledge.

Of course the drunkard's love is not meant here; that is, the love of the flesh, bottomed upon a letter-wrought-up faith; but the love of the Spirit—the constant aspiration and longing of the babe of glory, the child of God.

If you have a life worth twenty years or thirty, let every moment of it be devoted to love—to the acquisition of love. The sure way to this is never on any occasion whatever to desire anything else. When you have lived twenty years, and sought in that time nothing but Love, you will have become a mighty man of valour.

Dear soul, Farewell.

246.

THE BLOOD-SHEDDING BOASTED OF BY THE
ENEMIES OF THE CROSS.

[March 1875.]

Dear child,

SOME days ago it was upon my mind to write to you: this led to asking _____ for your address.

Do remember that in professing to be a follower of Christ, you must submit to His Cross in yourself (He came not to do His own will &c.) as well as take advantage of His agony, death, and blood-shedding on the tree. All favour comes through Him, but there is no favour to those who, while boasting of His blood, are enemies to His Cross in themselves, and live in their own wills. The whole of Christ's work was to the end that we individually should not live unto ourselves—after our own wills—but that we should live to Him, with Him, in Him, who died and rose again.

The true Love of Christ is a fruit of the Spirit, and makes willing and anxious to please the Blessed God every moment, giving the power also sweetly so to do. The false love of Christ is of the flesh, and keeps alive self-will, making His passion, and death, and blood-shedding, in reality, a covering for self-will, which lies at the root of all unrighteousness.

It is known that this may not be very pleasant at first blush to one who may be enjoying solos and sweet singing, and the fascinating and powerful influence of great congregations: but it is none the less true for that. If you would really have the love of Christ—of God—shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given, you will have to embrace the inward as well as the outward Cross. It is Antichrist's strongest hold in young strong-willed people, to cause them to think of, and believe in, the outward Cross, and to lose sight of the inward.

Remember, dear child, that the consolation brought from the outward Cross by Self-will is of the flesh; and that the consolation ministered to those who meekly and constantly bear their cross daily, and follow Christ, is of the Divine Spirit, and changes from glory unto glory until it brings to the Throne of the most Blessed God.

Farewell.

— . — . — .

P.S. Don't stumble at those who know the truth in measure, but don't live it. It is only the truth that makes free and happy in God.

247.

CLEVERNESS AND FEAR.

1. 4 75.

SUFFER a word of exhortation. Cleverness and fear are both on the side of the prince of the power of the air. This is brought before you, because of an expression of fear—"I fear"—which you gave utterance to on the reception of those few words [of rebuke—No. 241] to —————. In doing the work of God, avoid all cleverness, and trample firmly upon all fear.

It is the cleverness that generates the true ground of fear. All that is to stand for ever must be bottomed upon the only Rock. Anything that is to accomplish the designs of the Everlasting must come from His Spirit. When therefore He condescends to use any earthen vessel in the way of wisdom, understanding, or only straight-forward rebuke, it is abominable to fear; because the most impenetrable hearts are softer than oil before His rebukes. The sharpness of His sword passes like heat

through the most steely substance, being as subtil as it is penetrating and all-pervading.

But your clever men are always doing a little bit of sharp practice for God ; and as little or nothing comes of it but wind, it generates a disposition to unbelief or fear. If a man bully, from a bottom of self, for God, it is only wind that brings forth the whirlwind. So, if he reasons scripturally and excellently from the same ground, it only sends the person addressed up into the air. But if any man, under a sense of the holy fear, which is of God, sits down and clears his breast till the Divine gives him calm and rest of mind, there is no room for fear. The word thus sent shall not return void. It will either bring towards favour, or clear the way for the Rod or the Sword ; and in either case it will be profitable to the instrument used by the Blessed God.

You will never work well for the Blessed One, till there burns such a love in your heart that all things are equal, your very best doings causing no more elation than the middling and worst. So, dear soul, turn to that of God in you, which burns against all that is not of itself in you, till, without the shadow of a lie, it is felt that He who is unutterably worthy is All in all.

Farewell.

248.

ON BEARING SPIRITUAL CONFLICT.

3. 4. 75.

Dear Soul,

ACCCEPT a few words of exhortation about that fear which hath torment. Of whatever kind it be, whether with, or without, relation to bodily ailment, you will overcome it, in the power of God, by going under it,

and sinking below it. That is, do not reason against it, as it comes to the mind, enwrapped in any threatening propositions, or suggestions of evil, either present or to come: but say Amen to them by a passive acquiescence; at the same time trusting to the blessed power of God that all will be well under them, and that His adorable Will is blessed in what appears the worst, as well as the best, of providential allotments.

It is not said that this will act instantaneously, as a talisman: but it is affirmed that in a patient leaning towards, and continuance in, this frame of mind Godwards, there will assuredly follow victory and peace.

In some cases, this course will lead you through a furnace heated, as it were, seven times. Don't mind that: these are the deaths by which you will pass through that region guarded by the fiery sword, and eventually eat continually of the Tree of Life, which spiritually is in the Paradise of God. These fiery baptisms bring all to true simplicity, in body, soul, and spirit; which is that without which a sense of the Blessed One cannot be maintained continually, or He be rested in firmly.

When the flame is very fiery, while thus travailing, and internal strength is very small, turn gently, yet firmly, towards the power of the Blessed One, which you will find near, even in you, there and then present—not for instant deliverance, but simply to bear you up under the internal anguish and pain.

This is one of the phases of that strait and narrow way, which there be few that find.

Much might be said of the excellent fruit which this line of conduct will bring forth: but it is felt best for you to find that out by personal experience; so that you may not grasp the shadow for the substance.

Farewell.

249.

TEMPTATIONS. DYING TO FLESHLY ACTIVITY.

9. 4. 75.

Dear _____,

ALL temptations whatever may by Divine grace be made subservient to the good of the called, chosen, and faithful. They are intended to bring the creature out of *himself*, out of *flesh*, out of *self-will*, out of *other creatures*, INTO THE BLESSED GOD. Take care that _____ does not keep alive in you by fleshly activities that which—before you have constant peace—must die with Christ on the Cross.

This is a day when the abomination of fleshly activity reaches to heaven: those therefore who are called to bear testimony against it have to die clearly thereto in themselves, before they can be used for any real good to others. It is a more acceptable sacrifice to the Blessed God, at this day, to wait patiently upon Him, and not to move but at His call, than to “convert” a thousand or ten thousand souls.

Farewell.

Don't esteem a year or two lost in learning this lesson well.

250.

CONCLUSION OF A LETTER TO AN ACTIVE RELIGIONIST.

24. 4. 75.

* * * * *

For the present enough. If you were set down as (1) a *deceiver*, (2) *liar*, (3) *robber*, and (4) *murderer*, you would impute such terms to passion, or pride, or fanaticism. Nevertheless, without a grain of any of these qualities,

such charges might most truthfully be laid upon you. Why? Because you (1) *give* the *husks* for the substance; and (2) *call them the substance*; and thus, by the malice of Satan, (3) *rob* and (4) *murder* souls. If not too late, repent.

1st. He that gives adulterated and poisonous food is a Deceiver.

2nd. He that calls such food the genuine article is a Liar.

3rd. He that does thus deceive souls, robs them of the *living bread*, and is therefore a Robber.

4th. And in so far as he does so, is a Murderer of souls.

251.

RELIGION *VERSUS* DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

28. 4. 75.

A FEW words have just been written to _____, one of the London "Workers." Here follows the copy, not to engage you in any anxiety or trouble about such matters as these, but simply to say a word or two, as they may be given, for your thoughtful consideration, taking this note to _____ as a kind of text:—

" _____,

There is a great difference between religion, and a true and living knowledge of the Blessed God. The former is plentiful: the latter is scarce. Take care that you do not confound these two things which so widely differ. There is nothing more fatal to the knowledge of God than mere religion: when a man is religious, and doing a great religious work, it is very seldom indeed that he knows anything truly of the Blessed God. He may, and can, quote

Scripture, and give doctrine and good words, and do what are thought to be good works ; while yet the whole is only religion, not the outcoming of an Indwelling God.

A paper of yours came to hand a few days ago, in which you praise men of whom the writer of this note has some knowledge by experience. Of the dead and unknown nothing may be said ; but of the living and known, who are publicly doing a great stroke of religious work, a word or two may be uttered. They are religious, but know not God, and are driving forward a corrupt form of religion, under the cover of activity and good works, which will eventually, if not hindered by Almighty power, poison more and more the "Christianity" of this nation, by infusing into it secretly a soulish, natural life, in which Old Adam, not Christ the quickening Spirit, is the leading agent.

Hypocrisy cannot be hidden from a good man : much less from the Blessed God."

— . — . — .

_____ of "The _____" was the individual whom _____ had extolled in the superlative degree. A copy of the paper to Moody and Sankey was enclosed to meet his moderate encomiums on these.

Now, _____, you see the state of the case. It is the knowledge of God *by a revelation of the Spirit* that is needed, to cleanse and beautify the soul, so that there may be unity and peace with the Father by the Spirit.

This, dear child, you must have as a beginning, so that it may grow brighter and brighter to the perfect day. You know what the Saviour has done in your behalf, so that, in your struggle to obtain this, you may have a ground of faith and hope. This is enough. Delay not; procrastinate not : but as the Divine Spirit gives power, press through that strait gate, which separates between being under the bondage of the flesh, and the liberty that accrues to those who are born of the Spirit.

This, dear child, is a real transaction, and will be clear and well-defined in your case, as you are faithful to the strivings of the Spirit, and cry mightily, from the very ground of your heart, to the Blessed God, when you feel pressed down under the Egyptian bondage of the flesh, and are longing for the liberty and deliverance which accompany a real manifestation of God in the Spirit.

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252.

DIVINE LOVE. "STRIVE."

29. 4. 75.

To the same.

THERE appears to be something lacking in that letter to you last night: so there must be an effort to bring an entire freedom of spirit. You see, dear child, the perfection of religion is Love; but then it must be from a right ground. Here it is, especially in your case, that the "bondage of the flesh" may need some little explanation. It is not meant that you are in any especial manner under the power of outward sin. No: what is meant is the incapacity which there is in nature to fulfil that command, *which is a promise* under the dispensation in which we live, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength.* Now, if this is not being brought forth as a fountain of living water in your soul, you are under the bondage of the flesh, and need to pass a strait gate, before you come to a true peace and rest. This is a just ground of complaint, which you can take up against yourself, and bring before the Father of the spirits of all flesh. If you don't love Him thus freely, constantly, and increasingly, it is because His Spirit in you is not the leading agent—has not become your life. There is nothing

more foolish than an effort to *make* your heart a flame of *Divine Love*: you may watch towards the voice of the Comforter, when He leads you through self-denial in a direction bringing you nearer to Himself; but even this does not secure what you require, that is, to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, which blessing is of free grace and favour. Of course, if He keeps you as above, watching towards Himself, you must be faithful to His leadings in that direction: which faithfulness will not hinder, but increase, that *unutterable longing*, which you will be brought to feel, of being swallowed up of Divine Love.

If you do not pass through this strait place, and come out victorious on the other side, with a new Life and Power which make the love of God as easy as breathing the vital air, you will remain little better than a legal, half-hearted pretender all your days. The great gifts of the Blessed God are of free grace; but this hinders not that you may have to pass through a dispensation of anguish and striving, which will unlock the mystery of those words of the Lord—*Strive*, for many shall seek, and shall not be able.

There, dear child, the gate is open before you. If you would have a heaven on earth, die out of all but God, and rest not until He is your All in all.

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253.

TO A PROMINENT "EVANGELIST."

29. 4. 75.

LAST night a few words were sent to an unsent prophet; that is, one who has no Divine commission—no true call of the Blessed God. This morning it appears best to send you a copy of them, as they are

equally applicable to your case. You are both deceivers of men, and unable to bring them into the possession of the Blessed God. Not having Him yourselves, you cannot impart a knowledge of Him to others. You both belong to that generation, who compass sea and land to make proselytes, and, when they are made, bring them into the same false life that ye live yourselves.

[*Copy follows here.*]

There, —————, take these few words, and make the best of them. You are a more able and higher-flying hypocrite than he to whom they were sent. By "hypocrite" is here meant, one who by his actions professes to be sent of God, but really is not. In this sense you are a hypocrite.

They that are of God hear His words.

If there be a place for repentance, lay hold of it. There is little time to spare.

254.

TO AN AMERICAN "FRIEND" ON A PREACHING
VISIT TO ENGLAND.

[May, 1875.]

—————,

FROM an account sent here a few days ago, it appears that you are preaching Moody and Sankey Gospel among the poor dead "Friends"—the honourable name Quaker is withheld from them. Now, my child, you had better return to the place from whence you came than do this.

The Testimony given to the Quakers was spiritual and Divine, and brought the Blessed Spirit to His right position as Leader and Guide of the people of God: you will only

make things worse by supplying in the place of this—which, as to the power of it, is lost—a faith which is of man, and a gospel wherein the will of man is in the ascendant, and is the leading agent.

These poor Ranters, M. and S., will be beaten with few stripes because of their besotted ignorance; but you will receive many, because of the opportunities you have had of knowing better.

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255.

TO THE "REVIVAL" AND "HOLINESS-BY-FAITH"
PREACHER ADDRESSED IN LETTER NO. 199.

[May, 1875.]

A FEW days ago a friend was asked for your address. The reason for asking was given: here it is—"He is the greatest drunkard upon the face of the earth." Now, my son, to say this in the presence of the Blessed God is not a small matter; and if any person ought to know all about it, you are the man.

You are thus spiritually drunken, —————, and it is seen by the opened eye to be so from the character of your faith, which is of man only, not a fruit of the Spirit of God.

The Kingdom of God in man is that power, rule, and dominion of God, that brings all that man is and has into subjection to Christ; which subjection is experienced by grace through faith; which faith is of God and from Him, a fruit of the Spirit. In conjunction with Divine Love, this faith, though a holy mystery beyond words, is most simple in its operation, and is a true guide; being that

through which, or in which, the leading of the Divine Spirit is felt, and the blessedness of His Kingdom is known. In earthly phrase, this Divine faith is the point of contact, or medium of communication, between the Blessed God and man.

When any man, in the place of being subject to this holy faith—the faith of God—(his own will being passive under its influence and power), takes up scriptural ground or propositions, or deductions therefrom, and in the strength of his own will and religious intelligence, believes this that and the other, and prints and preaches this to be the true faith of the Kingdom, which gives the victory over the world, and saves the soul from sin, then Antichrist is set up; man, not the Blessed God, is on the throne, and rules; and spiritual wickedness and drunkenness set in, and if given way to, become more and more the confirmed habit and life.

Under the power of this faith of the flesh, wonders, in the mystery of iniquity, are wrought: and thus spiritual wickedness and drunkenness are encouraged.

When thus shamefully drunken, the drunkard speaks of himself as being happy in God, and rants about the scriptural possibilities of faith, and encourages himself and others, *in the confidence of faith*, to do this or that or the other, and to *declare* this or that or the other, though the substance of what is thus *declared* is **ALTOGETHER UNKNOWN**.

Now, ————, you are and have been thus drunken, and are growing worse and worse, thrusting, or allowing the prince of darkness to thrust, your own religious intelligence and will into the seat of the Blessed One's Throne in the heart; and in this fleshly or spiritual delusion, taking yourself the lead, instead of being led, as a true son of God, by the Spirit of God.

There: it is done. Many words and reasons become not this magnitude and gravity of this case, and would be thrown away on you.

Remember, when your judgment begins, that you were warned, and told plainly that you were yet outside the Kingdom of God; on the wrong side of the strait gate; working lying wonders in the mystery of iniquity; a tool of, and co-worker with, the prince of darkness, in a highly religious figure. Repent if it be not too late: peradventure there may yet be found a place of repentance.

— . — . — .

256.

HELPING FALSE PROPHETS.

12. 6. 75.

Dear _____,

DON'T you see that you have fallen into the snare of the age in which you live, which is, men that have riches of this world, but are blind, and poor, and naked, of heavenly good, taking upon themselves to "evangelize" by proxy, in which clever work they are Satan's ablest servants.

From the prickings of natural conscience, and the palaver of false prophets, who call them the Lord's people, they soon come to the conclusion that they must be "doing something for God:" so either personally, or through organization, they take from their employment men, who though equally blind with themselves, have more impudence and lively talk; and set them up as "Evangelists"—which really means, that they fill the land with spiritual liars and False Prophets.

There is hardly one to be found who has done this in a grosser form than you have; though you would reason like a philosopher in self-defence.

Divine light comes, not by reason, but by Divine favour. They that are of God hear His words.

You have been warned. If you hold on in your own will, and this wrong course, you will bring shame and confusion of face upon yourself at the last.

I say unto you, that _____ is a deceiver and False Prophet.

— . — . — .

257.

THE WAY INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

13. 6. 75.

Dear _____ ,

THAT which kills and makes alive is always near you : by joining with it, you will be led out of all other things whatever, and brought into the Kingdom of God.

This Kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When you are in it, all things will be equal—pain or pleasure, honour or dishonour, life or death, darkness or light : nothing will be able to separate you from the LOVE OF GOD, which is in Christ Jesus.

The Blessed One will translate you into this : you can do nothing *radically* towards the new creation yourself. He must take the lead, and become the Worker in you ; or you will be always learning, but never come to a knowledge of this new Life—the Truth.

So, dear soul, turn towards the heavenly Lamb within yourself—the Spirit of Christ. He is the way into the Kingdom of God—to justification, holiness, and heaven.

258.

THE SHADOW AND THE SUBSTANCE.

16. 6. 75.

YES : it is true, Moody and Sankey and Pearsall Smith, for substance, are one. The former falsely convert : the latter falsely regenerates. Anything that man or woman can enter into with "heart and soul" is congenial to nature, especially if it be in a religious line of things ; but the true thing begins only when they find out that they can do nothing at all, and that this religious pudder is the most offensive and burdensome sin of their lives, and the most difficult to get rid of.

How strange that well-educated and clever people do not see that to have real friendship and communion with the Blessed God is of infinitely more value every way, than to be blindly working the oracle, according to Scripture and reason, for Him. To do His Will is life and peace ; but how can His will be done, if He be not felt and known ?

Praying, and singing, and preaching, are no more feeling and knowing, than wishing and talking are possessing and enjoying.

* * * None can work for Him who have not a resting-place in Him, and are sent out from Him. He only is a true witness who has the image of the Truth graven upon his mind, and can speak from what he has seen, heard, and felt. So also, he alone can speak for the Father, who has a resting-place in His bosom.

259.

PATIENCE IN TRIBULATION.

18. 6. 75.

Dear one,

HOW an excellent "Babbage" fails for eternal things. This terrible tribulation seems long; but when once it passes away, and you reap the fruit of it, you will then think quite the contrary to what you now do, while roasting on the gridiron. Ah! you will say, I fear that I cut short that sowing time by my impatience, and so lessened the weight of that glory, which now melts me into sweetness, from head to foot, throughout soul and spirit; and fills me with a deep steady roll of the Love of God.

Farewell.

260.

THE UNCTION.—THE TRUE, AND THE
COUNTERFEIT.

[June, 1875.]

YESTERDAY while looking over some letters for an address, yours again came under observation, and there was noticed something like a sneering phrase, which, though intended to reprove —. —. —., does at the same time manifest the writer's ignorance of vital christianity. Here it is—"You assume the knowledge of some prophetic disclosures, and therefore from your high peak of excellence cry aloud your anathemas and oracles."

Now as for the "Anathemas," they shall be left out, as not exactly the things which you will be able to find in what has been written. The object at present is not, principally, to dispute the truth of your statements, but

to show you that what you hyperbolically charge upon —. —. —., put in a reasonable way and truthful degree, is what ought to be, and will be, found in every true child of God: and the fact that you make it a subject of reflection, not to say intentional sneering and fine writing, shows that you are yet out of it, and therefore out of that Divine Life and union, which it indicates, where it is possessed.

Although “prophetic disclosures” and “oracles” may not be the terms most appropriate to set forth that Divine knowledge, which the unction of the Holy One imparts to its possessor, yet it is not because they exceed in excellence, but rather because they fall short of the blessed Truth.

He that is born of God, and hath been Christed with Christ, has, in virtue of the Divine Nature imparted, something abiding in him, which gives a certain knowledge of the things which are of God: which, though not answering to the terms used by you, precisely taken, does not fall short of them, but rather surpasses them in real value every way; just as a constant enjoyment or possession of that which is Divine exceeds an intermitting or occasional gift. He that is in the Kingdom of God, as a son, really and truly, by virtue of his Divine geniture, exceeds in dignity, sweetness, and genuine humility, the greatest of the prophets, though the servant of all, and the least of all.

You and the rest of the singing prophets know little or nothing of this; so sneer at, and make light of it. You pretend to be sons—according to the letter, of course—but your pretensions are bottomed only upon a self-willed belief of certain Scripture propositions; so that they amount only to a reckoning or believing, when, in reality, the substance is wanting.

These few lines are not written with any lively expectation of your doing better for the present; but with a view to duty, and a sense of right before the Blessed One; so that He may be justified when He condemneth, and

you may be left without excuse when brought into judgment for your vapping and ranting folly.

What are wanting at the present time are true Christians— that is, those in whom the very Christ doth truly dwell: not made-up Yankee or other counterfeits. A made-up Christ begets a made-up Christ. No stream rises higher than its fountain.

Where the Blessed God, Father and Son, dwells, all that is good will follow: but where, in the place of Him, there is only an imitation of Him, made up from the Scriptures, natural intelligence, and stolen experience, there will be confusion and every evil work.

261.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE FLESH—MAN SAVING HIMSELF WHENEVER HE PLEASES.

9. 7. 75.

YOUR manuscript was not returned at the time that it was sent, as there was a conjunction of circumstances which forbad it. There was a thought that passed through the mind at the time, that you could write, for substance, when in the writing vein, another like this in two or three hours.

There is something so gravely bad in the delusion which your paper is intended to counteract, that it may be left, without an especial call to the contrary, to reaction and the weakness of false principles to bring it to an end: though in the meantime a conscientious testimony ought to be borne continually against it, by a *life in God*, and words fitly spoken, when they are given.

The thing is saturating the whole religious machinery, called evangelical, of the day. A Methodist Preacher, a few days ago, said twice within the compass of one

discourse, that there was not a person there present, who might not write his name in the Lamb's book of life, before he left the building, that night. H. Varley was hammering away for one hour and a half, last night, to prove by logic, anecdote, and illustration, that, in a search after assurance, everything beside a simple belief that Christ put away sin, and consequently the sin of every one of his hearers, by His death on the cross, was superfluous and pernicious—at the same time ridiculing convictions, feelings, and repentance; but highly extolling a simple act of the will, put forth in the belief that Jesus saves the sinner, when the sinner believes that He does so, upon the testimony of the written "word of God," irrespective of feelings or results. What hindered *all* his hearers from accomplishing that, which the Methodist Preacher set forth so coolly and classically, was that "*their heads were full of wooden ideas*" about the value of repentance, feelings, &c. &c. These wooden ideas only required removing, and then all would be well. He hoped by a little further "*catechetical instruction*" after the meeting to bring about that result.

It appears, according to his own reckoning, that, during the last few years, upwards of a thousand souls have been passed through this intellectual process, by his instrumentality.

As to himself—though he never felt more his sinfulness, and want of the development of the Christ-life, than at this hour, yet he never felt more assured of his salvation in Christ.

The Methodist Preacher has been written to: he was modest and classic, comparatively, in his delusion. Varley is drunken to his very finger ends with his logical deceit.

The Devil seems to be having it much after his own heart in these latter days.

Farewell.

P.S. It was noticed that there was little or no power, during either of these exhibitions, but such as is common to a good lecturer on teetotalism, or a reader of Shakspeare.

Varley is highly nervous: so is fitted to reach the feelings common to the souls of men. But his hold on the invisible power of God is at Zero.

262.

NO TRUE LIFE WITHOUT TRIBULATION.

To the Same.

5. 8. 75.

YES: it was —. —. —. that heard those wild sayings of Varley's. There can be little doubt that, as you say, Varley and the Americans, with their followers and imitators, are only carrying out, with variations, warmth, and other accompaniments, the carnal "Scriptural" discoveries, dogmas, and positions of Brethrenism. Those Brethren whom you speak of will find it out of their power to pass from death into true life and liberty, in their own wills, and at their own time.

Penington's "Jew outward," and other pieces, would not be received: there needs a hunger and thirsting after the Blessed God—to say nothing of shakings, and inward fears—before false assurance, and carnal comfort, will be given up.

Penington's writings were useful in his day to guide those who came under the power which wrought mightily up and down amongst the first Quakers. There is little power, however, to guide now. His pieces may be read by intelligent minds, till they raise up a kind of shadow of the true thing. There will hardly be more done in others, at this day, than is felt and known by the living leaders themselves—known, not by books, but by a living, direct, continuous, communication from above. Living

spirits, raised up by the Blessed One for that purpose, are necessary, as the rule, to guide living souls.

That "peace and joy without self-denial," of which you speak, is mostly false. The genuine thing never comes, as an abiding substance, into the hearts of those who are strangers to self-denial, and the Cross. There may be flashes and drawings from above; but these all, when genuine, lead to the Cross, and death for the old man: or they will soon pass away, leaving little behind beside talk and conceit. He that knows not tribulation, knows not himself: nor does he know the Blessed God. It is a patient bearing of crosses and tribulations, that generally precedes in-lettings into that which is invisible, immovable, and eternal; and which accompanies those Divine operations that change from glory to glory, and make more perfect and glorious the union of the spirit of man with the Divine and Ever-Blessed Spirit of the holy and most glorious God.

Indeed, he is no man in Christ, but rather a novice in the things of God, who does not, in the Divine Will, glory in tribulation. Everlasting praises to His adorable name, who maketh the weak things strong, and the foolish wise. Amen.

263.

THE SPIRIT'S GUIDANCE DEFENDED.

14. 7. 75.

To ———,

THERE is a tract published by you on the work of the Spirit. Supposing you to be the writer of it, it seems a duty to inform you that you are a Deceiver and False Prophet, and liable to meet with the reward of such.

The whole drift of the Tract is to lead people away from the only true Teacher, and bring them to depend

upon teachers that are false. You evidently know little or nothing of the direct work of the Spirit of God upon your spirit: so would teach others that it is unnecessary.

To follow you through all your reasons would be only a waste of time, and answering arguments that have been answered many times before. Two or three remarks, however, which are given by you as proof positive against the direct operation and testimony of the Spirit, may be noticed, because they so distinctly show, to the opened eye, that you are a deceiver and blind guide.

They are as follows. "If any one claims to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, let him (the reader) ask the party whether he has received what those did who were thus baptized on the day of Pentecost: and if not, then what evidence is there of the gift?" To which it is answered, though such a one may not have received *all* that was given for special purposes on the day of Pentecost, he may have received what was essential to his geniture and sonship; and, according to the Will of the Blessed God, that also which is necessary for the work which he may be called upon to do at *this* day. It may be added also, for your information, who are evidently ignorant of the baptizing power of the Holy Ghost, that those who are thus favoured do not "claim," nor set up claims, as the rule, but go about doing the work which they have been baptized for or into, in a way that it could not be done by themselves, or anyone else, if unbaptized by the Spirit of God. It might also be shown that being baptized by or in the Holy Ghost is a thing without which no professor ever attains true brightness and strength; but ever remains under a cloud, and within the trammels of Law, though in a "Gospel" form—in the flesh, not in the Spirit; so unable to please God. But this is not necessary, or convenient, here.

You say, "Again, if any one claims to have the Holy Spirit personally teaching them all things, and guiding them into all truth, he (the reader) can ask such, Do you

make any mistakes? Do you ever see reason to correct yourself, and others who are thus taught and guided? and if so, the claim falls to the ground." Here again it may be said that they who have the unction of the Holy One teaching all things, and guiding into all truth, are the last persons to set up "claims," or a claim; but simply find themselves constrained by the overshadowing power of the Blessed One to do the Will of the Father, and to follow as led by the Spirit. The questions put by you here, to prove the whole a delusion, are worthy of the power of darkness, from whence they came: but like all lies, they prove, when well sifted, either too much or too little. Now it is sufficient in answer to say, that the Apostles had this guidance, and made mistakes: therefore the argument falls to the ground. It may be added also, that every well-instructed one, who is walking in this Divine power—in God—would answer further, that though mistakes may have been made, the fault was not in the guidance, but in the carelessness, or unwatchfulness, or other weakness, of the guided.

What you further say about the Spirit bearing witness with his (the child of God's) spirit, shows of itself that as yet you are in the flesh, and also that when it suits the purpose of the dark fleshly mind, you can do violence to *your* guide and rule—the Scriptures. This of the witness of the Spirit is a subject which may not be opened too much to those who are in the darkness of the first birth, and in the nature of the serpent, or of dogs and swine, lest there be a biting or rending: yet it may not be out of place to say that the Spirit's witness to sonship is a precious gift of grace—of the unutterable grace of the Blessed God in the new covenant: everlasting praises to His great name—and is, like the true faith, a mystery, held only in a pure conscience; and also that it is, in faithful souls, for substance and excellence, beyond all words and propositions, and as continuous as the beholding of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus, which it is

evident by your writing that you have never seen, and are doing the very thing never to see.

It is not expected that you will cease from your service of the prince of darkness in the face of these few lines : but it is hoped that you may consider how great is that damnation which will fall upon those who, by printing lies, may cause others to stumble into Hell.

From a lover of God and all His creatures,

— . — . — .

264.

THE CRY OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS.

20. 7. 75.

My Brother,

A WORD or two in love about the Blessed God speaking. Almost everything may be subverted by extremes. Now while there is, for substance, unity on the subject, still there is room for a few words in that wisdom which is from above, so that extremes may be prevented. The high tide of wrong-doing would naturally lead one to suppose that nothing but a mighty out-speaking from the Source of all Power will do any good : which is indeed very true. Here, however, it must be remembered that He works contrary to the wisdom of man, and speaks as really through His babes and sucklings, if they abide within the limits of their measure, as by those of full age : yea, and in some cases more effectually.

The cry of innocence has its overpowering force. Christ at twelve, in the Temple, did as really speak for and from God, when He gently ruffled the equanimity of the doctors of darkness, as He did when, at a more advanced age, He

caused them to gnash upon Him with their teeth. The former service fitted Him for the latter. It would not do, therefore, as the rule, to limit the requirements of the Blessed Spirit to any given time or age. If you, or ———, or ———, or ———, or the most foolish, really, under the Divine hand, are truly called, in the simplicity and sincerity which correspond to your age, and in the sense of the case before the mind, to say a few words, obedience will bring peace, and there will be a growth in the gift, with an increase in wisdom and strength, fitting for something more weighty in the future.

The truth is that, where there is the true innocence and simplicity of the child's state, there will be calls given: whereas, if there be a disposition to do the work of a man at first, the way of usefulness may be shut up.

The vessel must be fitted by a gradual fire to bear the action of heavy service: otherwise, if thrust into an intense heat at the beginning, it would be shivered and lost. So with the servants of God. Too much of the heavenly gift at first might unsettle, or puff up with pride: whereas, little by little, there may be reached an unlimited degree of power, without falling into the condemnation of the Devil.

As there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine that need no repentance; so there is a joy over one little one, who in simplicity and sincerity cries out against the corruptions of Babel, and the lies and deceits of Babylon, that is not known on hearing the mightier voice, or heavier blows of an accomplished man of war. He, whose name be blessed for ever, has chosen to confound the high and mighty by the weak things of the world, rather than by those that are strong and mighty in wisdom. * * *

Dear soul, farewell.

265.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FATHER AND
THE SON.

20. 9. 75.

NO: my brother, there can be no difference in "essence," because that which is truly *of God* is *One*. My Father, and your Father: my God and your God. That which rightly calls the Blessed One, Father, is of Him. He who sanctifies, and they who are sanctified, are all of One. They that are joined to the Lord are one Spirit.

As the Father and the Son are one, so Christ and the Saints are one. He that Christed us with Christ is God.

Seek not the opening of this mystery in any other way than by simply renouncing, and dying out of, own will and knowledge; and casting yourself every moment of your life, however "*feebly*," as a little child, upon His goodness, grace, and love.

No man knoweth the Father, but the Son; and no man knoweth the Son, but he to whom, or rather in whom, the Father revealeth Him.

Christ Himself could not show to Nicodemus those things which pertained to a nature or state, in which he was not: so neither can, nor could, an angel from heaven manifest the mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh—beyond that which was, or had been, already manifested by Him, who is the essence of the mystery, in both Christ and the Saints.

The Son is begotten by the Father: no man knoweth the Father, but the Son. As, therefore, the Son is brought forth in you by the Father, you will know both the Son and the Father; and in no other way. Words are of little or no use here: it is only as united to, and made one with, the substance, that the substance is known.

That which sees the substance must be of the substance, because anything that is not of the substance cannot see it or know it.

Christ is not to be known any more after the flesh. His body is changed—made spiritual and glorified. We now are to know Him in Spirit, and in our spirits.

As we become one Spirit with Him, so the flesh, or body, will be kept in subjection, till our change come.

The end of the mystery is God All in all.

Dear soul, farewell.

266.

NATURAL LOVE A TEMPTATION. THE MYSTERY OF UNION WITH CHRIST.

4. 10. 75.

THE enclosed from _____ is a difficult handful for you to deal with: so much love from the wrong ground and root seems to close the door against that faithfulness which the case requires; or, at any rate, renders necessary more than ordinary force and prudence of mind to throw off those bonds which such writing is calculated to impose. There is nothing that will help you to get through such strait places as these, with satisfaction of mind, but an increase of the Love of the Spirit. You must live for this; think for this; trust for this; inly long for this; as it is inly longed for on your behalf by a lover of yours many times a day.

As to writing more on the mysteries of our union with Christ, and oneness with God, nothing will be withheld, that can be rightly written or given: but these things, if not in the time that has the Divine approval, are, though pleasant and wonderful, worse than useless, because they

take the mind from those operations, which are being wrought there by the power and grace of the Master. He alone can bring to perfect *rest* and *peace*: no secondary light or heat is enough for this. Whenever there is a strong desire for this, and a courage to tell Him so, with a willingness to abide the turnings of the Divine Hand, the Life and Light will come. This is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow, or as $2 \times 2 = 4$. * * *

Dear one, farewell.

267.

FOLLOWING THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE.

5. 10. 75.

THE sons of God are led by His Spirit. Learn with a quiet mind to follow the Shepherd's voice. He will teach what to do, and what to leave undone: what to ask for, and when to ask for it. When you resign your will to His, entirely, and keep unspotted from the world, you will be kept from falling to sleep, on the one hand, and fleshly anxiety and faith, on the other. Don't serve the Blessed God as if He were a vicious Nabob, ready to take off your head at every fault you commit. But do not wash yourself, by an act of your own will, when you have done wrong; but simply look up, and abide, with the patience of faith, under the felt indignation or trouble, till it be overpast. That mode of self-application of the blood is of the flesh, and leaves the wound unhealed, and the indignation to be revived at another day: whereas, when God by His Spirit speaks comfort and forgiveness to the wounded mind, the thing will not be revived with condemnation any more.

You were once told, it is believed, that you were too clever by half. Dear soul, watch against this. It is the little children that have the mysteries of truth and of the Kingdom—which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost—revealed in them by the Father.

With love,

— . . . —

268.

MAN'S NEED MET ONLY BY CHRIST
REVEALED WITHIN.

6. 10. 75.

Dear _____,

IT is the Love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given, that you need; not the certain knowledge of any particular fact. That Christ died for you is as certain as that He died for any other person on the face of the earth: yet the belief of this does not of itself give a new heart and right spirit. It is only as the Father reveals His Son in you by the Eternal Spirit, that you will receive that which will bring peace and rest to your soul. If you believe in your heart that He deals hardly by you, and keeps you out of His love longer than is right, you had better think about telling Him so: and if He gives you power so to do, there is little doubt that you will receive light on the subject from above. In the meantime, don't dabble with any forbidden thing: don't seek comfort in anything beside, or in the place of, His love. Then, as sure as you are a living creature, He will visit you, and make Himself known to you.

Don't be afraid of opening your mind to —. —. —.: in the Divine Will, perhaps, now and then, he may be the conduit used to convey into your soul some little glimpse of heavenly love, preparatory to your becoming a young man, for strength and growth, in Christ; when you will be able to walk with vigour, and some degree of inward jubilee, and be favoured at times with heavenly joy.

Dear soul, Farewell.

269.

RUNNING UNSENT.

31. 10. 75.

Dear _____,

CEASE from man, and be still. Let the Blessed One be the only object of your thoughts and love. You will obtain all that you desire, through GRACE and favour, if you mind your own business, and believe and trust in the Mighty God.

If you don't mind, you will bring an evil name upon the narrow path, and those that walk therein. Does not your own heart tell you, at times, that you should let all beside yourself alone? When you, by grace, through faith, have entered into the rest of perfect love, you will know, or be shown—continually—what to do, and what to leave undone.

The beam must be taken from your own eye: then you may, by Divine favour, have a word or two helpful towards removing the mote from your neighbour's.

How can you see this, that, and the other, which is not of the Truth, when you yourself are yet in bondage; or, at any rate, not perfectly free? My child, my child,

be a fool no longer: be still, and retire from all contention, till the root of contention is taken away from within yourself: and even then, move not, till clearly and sweetly drawn by the true Shepherd.

You must take little or no notice of what half-hearted men may say about this, that, or the other. It is your influence as a woman that moves the wrong part in them: so they speak “loving,” lying words from that part that is for the condemnation and the fire, and would move the same “loving,” lying part in you also. This will always be the case, more or less, according to the degree of natural sympathy, until, by renewed baptisms of the Divine Spirit, your love to the Holy One shall be perfect, and He shall dwell in your heart, the Lord and Master of every movement—of every imagination—and you shall be a virgin to Him in spirit.

There, dear soul, —. —. —. is clear. Lay these words to heart, or the rod or the sword will follow.

Farewell.

270.

CHRIST ALWAYS CONQUEROR.—SPIRITUAL LUST.

24. 11. 75.

Dear————,

THAT Satan is displaced by Christ in the children of God is true: nevertheless, when he is allowed to harass the soul, the feeling of that exercise must necessarily be within. The terms which you use are not the best—“it seems to me, the more of Christ within, the more of Satan to oppose Him.” Christ, when brought

forth, is always powerful to the bruising of Satan ; because he is never allowed to appear in greater power than can be borne without loss by either babe, young man, or father, in Christ. To obtain the victory, these must abide in their measure. When, by the grace of God, they do this—which may always be the case—they come out of the trial with a corresponding growth and strength. When, on the contrary, there is failure, there will be a corresponding loss.

Theory in these matters will be at fault, however Scriptural it may appear. It is real warfare that makes a good soldier, or shows a bad one.

There is, doubtless, a growth or state in Christ, where failure is not known : but this may not be sought for itself alone. To be dead to all that is not of God, or that is not God, is what may be sought after, or rather will be, if the soul is destined to a place of high favour. All other motives are liable to corruption or deceit.

It is easy to picture to the mind a high degree of love and faithfulness ; but not so common to be free from spiritual lust therein, and an eye to the sweetnesses and other favours which are understood to accompany the possession of these blessings of the first rank.

Eye single : body full of light.

Always thanks. Farewell.

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There is always some measure of hidden joy when an exercise is of God.

True or perfect love seeks the Divine Will, not personal joy or pleasure.

To be perfectly one is best of all ; whether it be on Tabor or Calvary.

271.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

23. 12. 75.

Dear _____,

YOU have committed sin, and sinned against the Divine Spirit, many times : but *the Sin* against the Holy Ghost you have not been guilty of. This is a sin which is not fallen into through the influence of sudden temptation, but is the result of a wilful rejection of Christ, and of His propitiation, from a settled hatred of heart and mind. Wicked Lawyers and unjust Judges, with deceivers and thieves, may rejoice when their purposes are facilitated by the ignorance or misfortune of those with whom they have to do : but the Blessed God is just the contrary to all this. He gives due warning, and is long-suffering, and points out beforehand the pitfalls and temptations with which His responsible creatures are surrounded : and as long as there is in any heart a desire to please Him, and a longing for deliverance from that which grieves Him, *the sin* against the Holy Ghost is far away. On the other hand, if there be a continual grieving of His Spirit, and commission of *sins* against the light of grace, the Spirit may be withdrawn, and the soul be left to its own delusions, selfishness, and lies.

So, my child, mind what you are about ; and remember what the Saviour did for you ; and let not His death on the Cross be forgotten. Everything that you need comes through Him : look up, believe, and sin not.

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272.

UNITED TO GOD. STRIVE TO ENTER IN.

30. 12. 75.

Dear _____,

DON'T forget the chief good—to be united to the Blessed One in love: that is it. How strait is the gate, and narrow the way; and few there be that find it: yet if not another beside yourself, so much the more does the reason hold good—Strive to enter in.

You need not strive to be religious, as some of your loving relations are: that you are already, and even this is not to be sneered at. But you are called to choose the better part—to rise into favour, to be one in spirit with Him who was One with the Father.

With your enlightenment, everything falling short of this will be set down in that book, which will be one day opened, as little better than an excuse. So, dear child, Strive: yea, Strive: yet strive lawfully. Until you are made perfect in Love, something may be doing, but nothing is DONE.

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273.

THE NEW CREATURE AND THE CROSS.

15. 1. 76.

* * * It is easy for persons of a good calibre of mind, when under a degree of spiritual influence, to make a fair show, and by clear impassioned reasoning, chastened by a strict sense of propriety, to carry with them great power of persuasion; which will commend itself to the like cast and calibre of mind, when in the

same spiritual condition. But even these taking things are found of poor quality often, when weighed in scales that register only that which is from above; or when they are passed through the fire, so as to leave that only which is from heaven.

The Blessed One is utterly invisible, and insensible, to every creature, save only as there is a spiritual being, or life, brought forth in them, connatural with Himself. The bringing forth of this new creature, and its perpetual growth in Him, are of God. The real object of all His dispensations is to bring the creature to an *entire* trust in, and love of Himself—a love not based upon, or growing from, the affectionate part, but grounded in, and proceeding from, that which really has its life from Himself.

This Divine principle, this new creation, this new man, is perfected by passing through a succession of vicissitudes; each of which, if faithfully borne, brings the babe to a child, the child to a man, and the man to his full stature and strength. This is the strait and narrow way, and there is no other. All heresies, fooleries, and *isms*, arise, indirectly or directly, from the opposition which the will of man brings, in a thousand forms, against the humiliating path of the cross. Anything and everything—faith, prayer, love, earnestness, in every degree of refinement or force,—is made to be the power of God, in the place of that which alone is so, the Cross.

Ever-Blessed and Adorable One! How good Thou art, and how sweet is Thy Cross. Blessed be Thy name, these things, though hidden from the wise and prudent, are revealed in babes.

Dear soul, farewell.

274.

SINNING NOT.

28. 1. 76.

Dear _____,

AS to living and not sinning, the whole may be put into small compass.

First, Cease to do evil—cease to make a religion for God: for as long as this is being done, there will be continual Sinning.

Second, Learn to do well. To do well is to believe in Christ, *to receive Him*, and *to abide in Him*. *He that abideth in Him*, SINNETH NOT.

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275.

PATIENT BEARING OF SUFFERING.
RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

5. 2. 76.

Dear _____,

ALL the dispensations of Providence, whether pleasant or painful, leave open the door of that strait passage which leads into life, and more and more into God.

If, through pain of mind and body, there appears nothing but turmoil and dryness of soul, for the time being, one of two things may always be done, where there is watchfulness. There may be a patient waiting, till the Divine Light-giver again appears in His warmth and beauty: or there may be a meek offering up of the suffering

and pain felt. Of one thing beware—never, willingly or wilfully, to shorten the time of suffering. This is always an act of self-robbery, and diminishes the glory which follows upon a patient bearing of suffering and trial. Whoever is called to bring a new measure of light and love into the world, either for the few or the many, must be made, or will of necessity be made, acquainted with suffering. Suffering is the measure of Glory. Nothing fits the creature to stand before the Blessed One in holy communion but a course of suffering in one way or another. That will which belongs to the creature, as a creature, is never brought to a proper state of ready acquiescence, but through suffering and death.

You may, now and then, look at Bunyan or the unknown German [Theologia Germanica], but don't feed upon either.

Don't feed upon the evangelical propositions of Bunyan, or the intellectual light of the German.

The great secret of spiritual health and growth is not to take hold of anything but God.

Bunyan's evangelical propositions would lift you into the air, through the understanding and rational part: the German, through the intellect and imagination. It is not said, don't read this, that, or the other; but it is said, don't *feed* upon anything but God: don't believe in anything but Him. Let your love and heart rest upon Him, and Him alone, with simplicity and child-like sincerity continually. A clear day without clouds will come at last.

Farewell.

276.

TO ONE CAST DOWN AND TROUBLED IN SPIRIT.

7. 2. 76.

My Brother,

DO not look at the work wrought within, but to the Worker. If there has been unwatchfulness, or wilful wrong-doing, put yourself into the Publican's place, with the simplicity of a little child.

If there has not been either the one or the other, leave yourself in His hands—make an offering of your wretchedness, patiently awaiting His time.

He changeth not in His love towards those who seek Him, and do not reject His Son, the Beloved, the Anointed.

Farewell.

277.

“GOOD BOOKS.”

To the Same.

9. 2. 76.

* * * * *

The danger of this kind of helps [“good books”] is that they lead the creature to put itself into this, that, or the other *course of doing*, that such and such things may follow. Now this is only a refined way of putting the Adorable Potter on to the Wheel, or, from a lower standpoint, setting the creature to save itself. The all in all to a child of the Father is His (the Father's) love, not the child's love. We love Him, because He first loved us. The life's spring of true love is the gift of God. The best love of the creature, without this, is a low, mean, villainous thing comparatively. Self and self-ends are at the bottom of it. The love which is of God is pure.

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278.

PATIENCE IN TROUBLE.

To the Same.

12. 2. 76.

Dear Soul,

WHEN a man is judge and jury in his own case, one of two things is sure to happen—he will be either too easy, or too hard, with himself. There is no man now living, neither has there ever been one on the face of the earth, either called to do, or capable of doing, this.

He that was born of a Virgin did not do it—“of myself I can do nothing: as I hear, I judge.”

You had better leave your wretchedness of body and soul to the Blessed God.

If your case is worse than the Publican's, it is rather better than worse for that.

As you cannot mend it, leave good, bad, and indifferent with the God of Love.

One glimpse of His Love and beauty will drive all darkness and misery away.

Don't be disobedient to any known duty; and

Farewell.

279.

To the Same.

13. 2. 76.

My Brother,

IF it was the Divine nature within him that led the Publican to beat his breast, and join with the Divine Goodness against himself; is it not the same that leads you to stand against the suggestions of flesh and Devil,

during misery and distress, or unfeelingness and stoniness of heart—to say nothing of those horrid impulses to blaspheme or sneer?

Gently hold to the Helper; and, at the right time, a little of His beauty, sweetness, and glory, will melt the hardness, and cause all blasphemy and darkness to flee away.

There has no temptation happened to you, but such as is common to man—especially to those who may have to be standard-bearers at some time or another.

Glory and everlasting praises to God and the Lamb for ever. Amen.

280.

THROUGH HOT AND COLD, FAIR WEATHER AND ROUGH.

15. 3. 76.

Dear _____,

NEVER fear: summer and sunshine will come again, with a more profound sweetness than ever. In the meantime, don't confound sweetness with the God of it: simply cling to His will with constancy. These shakings are necessary, that that only which cannot be shaken may remain.

Will to will, Spirit with spirit, through hot and cold, wind and tempest, fair weather and rough, brings a union which will last beyond ages of ages. It is a great favour and honour to pass through the fire of tribulation and interior unrest: without these things there would be lightness, and a want of depth and solidity.

The treasure of Divine Love is too precious to be put into a vessel of earth, altogether green and rough from the wheel: there must be drying, the furnace, then glazing and finishing; all of which require time and change of

temperature, with other additions necessary for solidity, durability, and beauty. His Will is best. He knows best. He does best. He cannot do any other than best. May He be ever glorified in our weakness or strength, in our tribulation or ease, in our joy or sorrow. Amen.

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281.

WHAT TRUE GOD-SERVICE IS.

18. 3. 76.

Dear _____,

THE true God-service is true love. When made perfect in love, all the rest will follow, in course, under the conditions of watchfulness and faithfulness.

There are thousands upon thousands in England, America, and other places, who are in the roll of those that call themselves servants; but the number of generous, faithful, souls, that aspire to perfect love is few. You have had a call to this, and maugre all that is past, may come to rest and peace therein, before you depart from the body.

In your bodily afflictions always be faithful to the *inspirations* of grace, as it is understood that you were under the last visitation. And not only so, but wait for them. Never mind the "madness." Christ was mad, and all true followers of Him will be esteemed so too by those whose religion is bottomed on the self-righteous principle—who are not dead from, and raised with Him above, their own and other men's prudence and wisdom.

There is nothing in the Scriptures that may not be realised, in measure, at this day, where the *eye is single*, and the heart humble and true. Purenness of heart sees

God. Where He is seen and felt, He must be loved, for He is surpassing lovely. Where He is loved, He is trusted. Where, for good, He is trusted, all that is blessed follows.

* * * * *

If you think subtle propositions will feed the soul, they are to be had for a shilling or two in the Catechisms of the Church of Scotland, or any other books that will affirm such statements as that Christ did not die for all; that as the Elect are foreordained to life, so the reprobate are foreordained to damnation; with various knotty points on the freedom of the will, etc., etc.

Such stony nuts as these you will find of little profit, beyond filling the belly with wind. There is no bottoming "eternal counsels" from the ground of reason: you cannot command supernatural light to fathom them; it is therefore bad policy to look to one side after them, as they may only lead to a waste of time and destruction of the mind. The children of God are not called to shun any difficulties brought upon them in the order of Providence, whether they be theological or physical; but to seek them is not good. All that Augustin, or Jansen, or Calvin, has said on the subject of Election will fail to bring a settlement of mind: that must come from God alone, and, when obtained, it may not be lawful to be spread abroad. But to seek it from Him for itself would be foolish. The true path in these things is to live on that portion of the bread of God, which is meted out day by day; not minding high things; leaving to Him to open or shut holy Wisdom's gate to the inner man. Though this seems a poor line of things to the religionist of a high figure, it is, really, the narrow path into the possession of the Wisdom of God.

Farewell.

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282.

HOW PARENTS WILL BEST HELP THEIR
CHILDREN GODWARD.

25. 3. 76.

* * * The bread of heaven is not wrapped up in propositions: the wine of the Kingdom, which maketh glad, is outside of all books whatever. They come from heaven more directly than a sunbeam from the sun.

The most effectual reach over the minds of your children, next to the direct operation of God, will be through the spirit, in which you and your other half live, and breathe and speak. When you are swallowed up in love (the love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost) there will be that gravity, consistency, and sweetness—not of earth, but of heaven—which will tend to bring them to God; and to season, or tincture, their spirits for eternity.

It may not work immediately, or evidently: but its effects will be felt through life, and in death, and for ever.

Wherever God and man are united in Love, there is a member of Christ—an anointed one of God—whose out-comings should correspond in kind and flavour with those of the Beloved, the everlasting David.

* * Peace be with you always. Amen.

A SPIRITUAL MIND ALONE CAN DISCERN
DIVINE TRUTH.

8. 4. 76.

Neighbour _____,

WHEN you and your friend _____, while passing along the _____, were conversing on certain knotty points, more or less connected with religion, it struck me that you both were arguing from a wrong ground on the matter: that is, that each one was expressing doubts and belief on certain dogmas, which, had you been better informed, or rather, more advanced in the knowledge of spiritual things, you would not have so freely done.

It did not seem to be known to you that, to converse on spiritual and Divine things profitably, a spiritual mind is necessary—that without a spiritual mind the things of God cannot be discerned or known. If ever you knew, you seemed to have forgotten, that he that truly believeth that Jesus is the Christ, *hath been born of God*: and that without this birth from above, or a supernatural operation of grace on the mind, an expression of faith or unbelief on Divine things is simply the result of ignorance or self-will.

You are among the first of men that would see the folly of an ignorant ploughman disputing about the abstruse points of astronomy, and would at once say—My man, you have hardly mastered the more simple facts of this case: it ill becomes you to dispute those things which can be truly known by those only who are thoroughly well up in the science.

It is admitted that there is this difference between natural and spiritual things, that, in the case of religion, a man cannot in his own will or time become a prophet,

or a spiritual man: or, in other words, he cannot become, when he wills, learned and well-grounded in the things of God. God is the Master here. This fact ought to make men the more careful how they meddle.

The only path which lies open to all men, or any man, is to be careful to attend to the admonitions or checks of the Divine Spirit in the ordinary concerns of duty and action in life; and to abstain from any premature dogmatic expression of belief or unbelief, which have nothing better than natural and incompetent knowledge at the back of them.

The Blessed God is as truly known to His own at this day, as He was known to the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, at a former age. They who know Him best are swift to hear, but slow to speak beyond the measure of their real knowledge, which they have received by grace or favour. Those who are not so are under the influence of natural knowledge and passion only, and know nothing as they ought to know; and are puffed up in their minds, and floating about upon the rubbish of their own, or other men's, notions and whims, whether these be for or against God, or Christ, or Heaven, or Hell.

If there be in your mind any tenderness God-ward, cherish that and bow to it; and leave the rest. Don't join the number of those who are filling up their measure of iniquity by spreading irreligion, scepticism, and immorality on the earth. If you have joined them, break the connection, and turn over a fresh leaf, if it be not too late.

The love and friendship of the Blessed God is the one great, needful, and blessed thing.

284.

REBUKE OF CARNAL PROFESSORS.

23. 4. 76.

SOFT knocks enter hard blocks: but when a tree is rotten at the core, a good heavy blow passes through the bark and sap-wood, and reveals the state of things within. Such as ———, [a zealous “evangelist”] if spoken to gently, assume a position of superiority or sanctimonious pity; and so retire with a whole skin. This is not the case, however, when they are rebuked sharply: the first birth then shows itself, and the mask of piety and heavenly authority drops to the ground.

The respectability of ———, which is useful as a decoy, where any thing is to be had, gives way to the vulgarity of “bosh” [the language of this “Evangelist” in his reply to faithful reproof] when the hidden things of darkness are brought to light.

There was a great promise made to a Prophet of old, on the condition that he should separate the precious from the vile. May wisdom and power be given for this purpose at this day.

Jer. xv. 19.

Amen.

285.

GOD DWELLING IN THE HEART THE
ONLY GOOD.

30. 4. 76.

* * * In the meantime, it may not be burdensome to you to know that there is a constant bearing of you in spirit, to the intent that you and ——— may become, in very deed, true and decided lovers of the

Blessed God, by the power of the new life, and the anointing of the Holy Ghost.

Dear child, remember that all falling short of this is vanity, and that everything opposed to it is a lie, a wicked lie.

God dwelling in the heart makes a man or woman better and sweeter and wiser every way, and does not take away one jot from the sum of their happiness even while on the earth; but, on the contrary, adds to it increasingly day by day. * * * * *

_____, _____, you must lead the way: you must pass through death into life, the new life; or, whether you will it or not, you will become a hindrance and a stumbling-block to the others. Till you fear the Blessed God greatly, and love Him constantly, by the Holy Ghost, and with the same facility that you breathe the vital air, you will never be a true doctor of the Divine life. When you can say, graciously, that a constant sense of the Divine presence and sweetness is your hidden portion night and day, then perhaps —. —. —. may be able to say that he owes you nothing: till that is the case, he must bear a burden greater or less every day.

Farewell.

286.

TO A "REVIVALIST" AND "MISSION"
PREACHER.

1. 5. 76.

—. —. —. to _____.

MORE than forty years ago the writer of these lines stood with your father in the _____, while he was, according to his measure and light at that time, preaching Christ. He was pleased to say that, with a few more young men of the same stamp, this nation might

be won; such confidence had he then in the gift of prayer alone, without the addition of any other qualification. Soon, doubtless, this warm and confident expression of feeling became modified, as he encountered the full force of the opposition which, by the Devil, the world, and the flesh—especially religious flesh—is set up against any extensive advent of the reign of God in the hearts of men. This knowledge and kindly remembrance of him has inclined the mind and heart favourably towards you. That this may not end in wind only, be kind and humble enough to spend a leisure and quiet hour in the consideration of those truths, which may herewith be given for your edification or condemnation.

Your attention is thus solicited, because, strong perhaps in the conviction of the sincerity of your own feelings, you are likely, at the suggestion of that part in you which is of the first birth, to slight anything in the way of caution or reproof, as coming from a pretentious, or lukewarm, or meddling spirit.

For once, dear soul, look to the end of this chapter, before the roll is thrown on to the fire. Peradventure the voice of God may be heard in it, and you may be made to feel that the writer is not a pragmatist stranger, but one who has rightful authority from above—the unction of the Holy Ghost: one who is in the habit of doing nothing, of which he cannot yield a prompt account to God and man, if called thereto.

Then first, dear soul, as the Blessed One opens the way, cease, if possible, from being a partaker of the letter only; and become, by grace Divine, a minister of the Spirit. As long as you are knowing and preaching Christ after the flesh only, all that you do will be jerky and unsatisfactory. Christ in Spirit is the alone Rock of stability and power: without this it will require all the force of your character to keep your own head above the waters; and even by great labour and much self-willed, swinish, "prayer," you will not be kept from wounds, inconsistencies, and

putrefying sores. On the other hand, if you, by Divine power, sink down, or, if you will, rise up, out of the first Adam into the spiritual virility and force of the manhood of the Second, the Lord the quickening Spirit will yield to you His constant presence, and by His indwelling unction give you a power to overcome all your adversaries, and to walk steadily and firmly onward, uninjured by the world, the flesh, or the Devil.

Remember also, that a man may be thoroughly in earnest, and a constant hard worker, and also that such a one may be instrumental, now and then, in turning men from a life of wickedness into a religious course; yet, at the same time, the whole sum of his doctrine, preaching, and living, being taken into account, it will be found to have helped forward the reign of Antichrist—spiritual Antichrist—upon the earth. Religion and spiritual worship are two very different things. The old man may become very religious: the new man alone can become truly spiritual. There be hundreds, yea thousands, of setters up of religion; but hardly one of a thousand able to stand forth, and honestly and intelligibly advocate spiritual worship. This can be done by those only who have passed through theory into the substance—whose life is hid with Christ in God. When you have done this, or when Christ is your life truly, you will not tell yourself or others to “grasp at the possibilities belonging to those in whom dwells the eternal Spirit,” because you will then know that they who are filled with the Spirit, or have become truly subject to His power and love, are under *His grasp*—are led by Him. You will then understand that He is their life; that *His will* is the ruling power in their hearts; and that His Spirit, not dead and inactive, but lively, piercing, and powerful, teaches them that in the doing of His Will there is eternal life. As long as you set people and yourself a-working from the bottom of religious self-will and the Scriptures, you are filling the world with pragmatistical religionists, and also are doing the very best thing to empty it of God.

The whoredom of the whore, and vileness of the liar and thief, do not more effectually keep away the sensible presence of the Blessed God from the face of the earth, than does that fleshly-bottomed faith and religion, which, by man and music, in these latter days is being set up.

When your connection with that soul-puzzling medley of religion, the Church of England service, is thought of, there appears little hope of any permanent good arising from these few words: indeed an almost assured feeling arises that you will continue, by the force of your natural abilities, to drive on in your present course.

If it be not too late, however, seize hold on the first opportunity that offers itself, and get into some place of rest and solitude; so that you may, if possible, get the mind of God on your present line of conduct and proceedings. Can you for a moment suppose that the Divine Spirit will in any lasting way support you, while you are backing up by passionate addresses, "prayers," and appeals, that miserable compound of Moses and a fleshly knowledge of Christ, with which you are connected? No: it cannot be, though you were ten times as strong as you are, and your will were ten times as powerful as it is: this connection will swamp you at the last. Then, perhaps, some few ignorant "revivalists" will bemoan you as a fallen valiant in Israel; while, in fact, there will be far juster grounds for the wise of heart to fear that you have been taken out of the way, because, being fully bent on setting up that which, in the order of God, next to Popery must come down, you were found a strong worker in favour of the mystery of iniquity of these last days.

Your fellowship with those sad *Ranters* from America would go to show also that at heart you are one, and that you are working from the same fleshly root as they. By "Ranter" is meant one who preaches Christ after the flesh from the dictates of "reason and common-sense," in distinction from one who is truly sent of God, and who preaches from the unction of life, with true spiritual light and power.

To bring this to a close—do not forget that natural eloquence, touching anecdotes, and striking facts, may bring tears, without at all begetting the soul to God: that as the preacher, so is his word: that if he be carnal, passionate, and frothy, so will his word in substance be; but if he be spiritual and united to God, so will his word in substance be Divine and the Word of God: not one jot of it shall fall to the ground.

Now, though it is said above that you are almost sure to drive on in your present course, nevertheless the remembrance of your father, and a kindly feeling towards yourself, seen yesterday morning for the first time, but, above all, a sense of duty to the Blessed, helps to keep in existence some faint hope that what is here written will not be altogether in vain.

Be assured that you will have to give an account of this letter; and also that if you slight it, or cast it on one side, in the pride and haughtiness of flesh, your present course of action will speedily come to an end.

— . — . — .

287.

To the Same.

3. 5. 76.

IT is found this morning that conscience is not clear as yet in your behalf. Have patience therefore for a little while: there is a hope that after these few words there will be liberty and peace, and that you will be *troubled* no more.

You were pleased, on the morning of the 1st, to eulogize a person of the name of _____, in the presence of a good number of people. * * * * *

Now, my Son, your eulogy might be very pleasant to yourself, and to many of those who heard you: nevertheless it remains true, that that which is in high esteem amongst men is often an abomination to the Blessed God.

If ever you come to be truly enlightened by the Blessed Spirit of God, and by Divine favour are brought down from the heights of self-willed, religious, ecclesiastical flesh to the meek and lowly life of the Spirit of Christ, you will then see that *vain repetitions* in "worship" at this day show clearly to the opened eye two things: first, that the God thus "worshipped" is an idol: second, that the people thus "worshipping" are blind and blindly guided. Even your favourite bottom of religious reasoning—"reason and common-sense"—might show this, were there no self-interest and prepossession in the way.

Certainly the mind that originated those discourses which are imputed to Socrates and Plato, might, without the Scriptures, have demonstrated this. But "Christians" have a surer word, one which, though not dialectic, is infinitely more authoritative and sure—the word of Christ. God in Man hath spoken here: "Use not vain repetitions."

But "common-sense and reason," it is said, might show this. Yes: and so they would, without words, if men would be still, and think for a short time of what the Blessed God really is, and also, of what they themselves are. Would any decently educated and well brought up son—dutiful son—think for a moment of treating a good, able, rich, and willing parent with anything like the reiterated mockery and hodge-podge of your morning service? God hath said by the mouth of Christ, He that asketh receiveth: he that seeketh findeth. This is the Truth. He therefore that *acts* continually, or that teaches others to *act*, in such a way, as to show by *overt doings* that this truth is a lie, is a blind guide, and is living in the root and substance of all hypocrisy; and the god that he mumbles to, and fondles in his fleshly imagination, is an idol, and not the true and living God.

The god that is thus mumbled to may be called a Spirit, but it is evident, in the reality of things, that his qualities and nature have their origin only in the besotted mind that thus periodically makes a show of worship.

They who thus "worship," "worship" they know not what. Whose work, then, were you doing when you took upon yourself the task of eulogizing one whose life was spent in training people to this mumbling, hypocritical, idolatry? And because he did it with sincerity, as it is called, forsooth you must represent him as a saint. Alas, alas, he was no saint, but, like yourself, a blind leader of the blind, and was taken away after he had done his best to bring those spiritual mountebanks from America into this land, who have raised such a wave of antichristian Ranterism as was hardly ever heard of before in this nation. These, with others of the same fleshly spirit, have set the people, and you among the rest, into a paroxysm of religion, bottomed upon "reason and common-sense," and kept alive by high flesh and carnal song: thus making them an easy prey to every carnal pretender who has come under the hands of a bishop, or who has the impudence to call himself an evangelist.

You will at once speak of a want of "*charity*;" forgetting, if you ever knew, that that charity which admits of idolatry and false worship, however beautiful it may appear, and large-hearted it may be called, is only an apple of Sodom at heart, an outcome of holy flesh—not a fruit of the Blessed, the Ever-Blessed, Spirit of God.

There, ————— : —. —. —. has done. He knows that spiritual Antichrist is a wonderful self-willed, head-strong beast, that can either smile like an angel, or growl like a devil, while in the pursuit of its apparently holy purpose. He, however, neither courts the smile, nor fears the frown; and only writes, that, having done his duty, he may walk with God in Peace. Dear soul, if it be not too late, turn over a fresh leaf, sink out of yourself into God, and *Farewell*.

DIVINE GUIDANCE.

4. 5. 76.

YOU will doubtless be kept from a snare of the enemy, common to resolute, sincere, souls—that is, slighting the little appearances of good, or rather, perhaps, overlooking them in looking out for something more excellent and taking. It is in the HUMBLE improvement of that which is little that Divine favour is found. It is a small matter for Him to impart heavenly riches and honour, when there is a prepared state of mind to receive them. The meek and lowly find *rest*. They that hunger and thirst shall be *filled*. These two propositions are ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN.

It is impossible, perhaps, to put the workings of the Divine Life into sentences. It is well that it is so, or there would be more counterfeit sanctity in the world than there is. However a fact or two may be tabulated now and then, and the wise of heart will gather instruction therefrom.

As the Divine Life is developed, or, in plainer terms, as the child of the Father grows, the intimations of duty are fainter. A well-tutored and good-conditioned child does its father's will intuitively: a single cast of the eye is enough. An ox well accustomed to the yoke very seldom needs the goad. It is your jerky, self-willed, young things, that are full of blood and mischief, that need every now and then some terrible pricks, or otherwise blows in the front, to keep them back—heavy blows.

It is well at times, in humility of mind, to act upon gentle intimations, with a *trusting and loving heart*.

The creature is called upon to trust, and to watch the indications of duty; or he would not be a responsible, loving, and lovable, being.

289.

NOTE ON ERSKINE'S "DOCTRINE OF
ELECTION."

14. 5. 76.

THERE is something very hateful to the soul of —. —. —. in things of this stamp. A knowledge of men, together with the internal light of the Blessed Truth, has shown that the writers and promoters of these fine theories, under the soporific influence of their belief, remain in the flesh, and live the life of the flesh, though it be in a high figure.

Believing, or pretending to believe—for theory often has little belief at the back of it—that God is full to overflowing with love, and a longing regard for the salvation of all men; they remain, as the rule, void of that true fear, and holy reverence, which a real knowledge of the Blessed God *always* imparts. Their writings also beget that slipshod, unseemly, if not disgusting, familiarity and easiness of spirit, which a fleshly faith eventually generates.

An open and avowed enemy, a rabid opponent, an able Papist or infidel, may be understood, and turned away from, by most men: but these "loving," rational, though CARNALLY MINDED, defenders of the Eternal God, are deceivers of a class not so easily avoided, and will doubtless meet with a reward that corresponds with their desert.

Why should anybody put himself out of the way about being right with, or pleasing, so good a "God," as they make "him" to be? How can any miss doing this, seeing "he," who is all-powerful, is so anxious on the subject?

Their writings effectually keep those who are taken therewith from *coming under the working of the DIVINE*

HAND—that without which all knowledge, ability, and belief, are utterly *worthless*.

They forestall that ineffable anxiety of spirit and soul, without which there is never a true birth from above: and leave themselves, and their followers, under the power of carnal “reason” and “common sense” only, assisted by stolen or borrowed notions, and the Scriptures.

290.

NO JUSTIFICATION WITHOUT SANCTIFICATION.

16. 5. 76.

ALL your jangling about the *distinction* between “being justified by faith and sanctified through faith, and the work of Jesus for the sinner and the work of the Holy Spirit in the saint,” is vain.

I say unto you, there is no “DISTINCTION” between justification and sanctification. There is no justification without sanctification; except it be that justification of the wicked which is an abomination to God.

When you say, “there be three *things* that justify, Blood, Faith, God;” and call them a three-fold cord, you prove nothing, and speak unsoundly. When the Blessed God justifies, all that is essential to justification is embodied in the work, or accompanies the act. Though a man have never so strong a *faith* in the *blood*, if the origin of it be self-will, it is a delusion of the Devil to say that it justifies.

You have done nothing while you were preaching, unsent, your lying faith, that many Jesuits have not done in spreading their idolatry. This only shows the truth of that Scripture, that a man may do much, and yet it may profit nothing, being bottomed upon self-will only.

291.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

24. 5. 76.

Dear—————,

THERE is only one way out of trouble and sin. Die with Christ on the Cross out of all that is not God—that is not of Him.

You have little business with the Devil in others, while he has any power in yourself. Eye single: body full of light.

If ever you are redeemed by a mighty hand out of the earth and the things of it, it will be of free grace. The Blessed God is the Worker.

You may and will, if faithful to the Living Word in the heart, *watch and inly groan*: nevertheless true riches and Divine love come down from above.

As to the “blood of Christ,” you say rightly that the knowledge of it is possessed by those only, who have been saved fully by it.

Meanwhile there are two doors which lead towards blasphemy about it. One is passed by those who with Hicksites, Unitarians, and philosophers, speak lightly of it, of its worth, of its efficacy. The other is entered by those who from a carnal bottom speak highly of it, and *handle it*, so as to proclaim that washed and justified by it which is filthy still—which is unholy still: doing that falsely for themselves, which can be done truly by God alone. Moody and Sankey, the Gurneyites, and thousands upon thousands of other Ranters, are of this class.

No man nor woman upon the face of the earth, in a meek, quiet, and lowly mind, can think too highly of the blood of the Lamb of God. Nevertheless, if they or others **HANDLE IT**, wash themselves, pardon themselves, and justify themselves, by it, from the ground of these

high thoughts and self-will, they are netted by the Devil, the prince of darkness.

So, dear soul, think meekly and with a lowly mind of it, till you are swallowed up in the glory of it; for it is of infinite price: but avoid, as you would avoid blasphemy, *speaking lightly of it, or handling it.*

— . — . — .

It is no use putting off. If you will not give up to die, you will not be made to LIVE.

Glory, Salvation, and Everlasting praises to His Blessed Name.

292.

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE LIFE.

6. 6. 76.

THE Scriptures spoken of by the Apostles were, doubtless, the Jewish “canonical” writings of that day. Some of them have been lost, it would appear by internal evidence. Nevertheless what remained to them were able to make wise unto salvation, *by the faith which is in Christ.* As this faith is developed by a growth of that which is of God, the spirit of the writers of the Scriptures, and the value of what they wrote, are appreciated by the internal sense and unction, which are of God.

This is part of the mystery of that faith, which is held in a pure conscience and heart; and which cannot be put into words and propositions. It sees, feels, and, in the will of God, knows (according to its measure) God, and Christ, and Paradise, and Love; and brings forth living water; and breaks to elect souls the bread of God—the bread of Life.

The fact of Christ's having chosen the Apostles, and endowed them with miraculous gifts, will always give a kind of "honourable" exclusiveness to their writings in the estimation of carnal Christians. Neither is it wise to meddle with this feeling; because in proportion as men and women are weak in grace and life, they are under the influence of the natural feelings of awe, which make up no mean part of the religion of nature.

They cannot be reasoned out of this: indeed they ought not to be. The hidden wisdom of God is reserved for those who abide the fire—for those who, purified from dross, are trustworthy in His sight, who sees through all coverings, and knows thoughts even when they are far off.

If the ignorant are reasoned out of that which they have, they may become worse rather than better, unless indeed the Divine power and love is the principal factor in the operation. "Don't give that which is holy to dogs, neither cast pearls to swine," reaches as a Divine principle, *right through* all created being. Angels are negatively foolish: saints have their strength, wisdom, and security, only in Him. Therefore to show before the time, or indeed at any time, that inspired Scripture is part and parcel of the Church that is in God, as really as faith or love, would be hurtful rather than good. As the image of the great Assayer is brought forth in each of His Lovers, these truths show themselves as part of that mysterious wisdom and glory, which are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

P.S. Men do not enter into Life—into God—by right notions, but through DEATH. It is death to every thing that is not of God, that makes the gate *strait*.

293.

THE WAY THROUGH ALL TROUBLES.

24. 6. 76.

Dear _____,

WHATEVER waves outwardly, or troubles inwardly, beset you, there is one way through all. You must sink in self-abasement below them all—pass, by humility of heart, Godward, right under them; neither handling nor extenuating them.

This may appear like the separation of body and soul for a time: but if you patiently bear the tribulation thereof, the true joy and heavenly solace will come in from above.

The Blessed One is great in mercy; great in power; great in compassion; great in holiness; and great in Love.

Everlasting Praises to His great and holy Name.

— . — . — .

294.

A CALL OF LOVE.

26. 6. 76.

Dear _____,

TIME slips away like a dream at break of day. When you attain to the present age of — . — . — ., or of _____, one of the things which will always bring regret will be, that you did not sooner, and more fully, devote yourself, or give yourself up, to God and His Love.

Ah, dear _____, who upon the face of the earth is more responsible than yourself—well educated, a clear

head, and easy circumstances, with only so many trials and difficulties in your path, as are necessary to bring your faith and love to perfection? What would you more? Do you prefer being driven in at the point of the sword? Would it be well, think you, to hold off, till you are quickened into allegiance by pains and penalties? Your better judgment says, no: but earth, flesh, procrastination, and other things, point the other way.

Come, dear soul, turn over a fresh leaf: be a mother in Israel, as well as a mother at home. There is no true Rest but in Him. Many other things may, and will, glitter; but without His love they are only gilded lies—yea, the best of them apples of Sodom, and gilded lies. His Love is the best of all things in earth or in heaven: if, indeed, it be not a desecration to speak of it, after the manner of men, as one good thing—though the best—amongst others.

There is no need, however, to explain it to you: you see all this the moment that it is pointed out: yet the mighty touch of the Will is wanting.

_____, _____, rest not night nor day, till this greatest gift of heaven, this blessed, effectual, touch, is given. All, all, all, without this, is only vanity and a lie.

295.

THE RELIGIOUS MAN, AND THE MAN OF GOD.

3. 7. 76.

Dear _____,

IF _____ can get any “good” from Stephen Grellett’s book, or rather if any good is imparted to her in the reading of it, let it pass. Stephen was a “Friend,” as you intimate, not a Quaker. He did much to help forward a ministry bottomed upon the wisdom and

will of man—a ministry in which Scriptural knowledge, head knowledge, and fluent talk, were the principal elements, instead of the Divine presence, and the mighty power of God.

This kind of ministry begets its like, *religious* men, not men of God: men much more FOR Him than OF Him—the religious will in them *running before* the Will of the Blessed God.

One of the greatest temptations, if not the very greatest, at this day, is to become religious, rather than to become men or women of God: to rise up hastily heaven-ward upon the wings of self-willed propositions, rather than to abide patiently under the work of the Spirit, till saved, and inflamed by the Love of God.

This temptation was too strong for Stephen, and made a fool, spiritually, of his biographer.

Your late affliction was to help you out of this quagmire, by bringing you into a condition in which nothing but His presence, and a sense of His love, would satisfy your spirit.

Dear soul, as you put off the weakness of your body, and gain strength, so put off, or leave behind, what is left of your *religion*; and feel after, and take hold of, God alone. You will find everything you require in Him: yea more than everything. Everlasting praises to His great and holy name.

Perhaps ———— may say, after all what is the difference between being *religious*, and being a man or woman of God? Here is the difference.

The spirit of man, the creature, is foremost and uppermost—the principal factor—in the religious man or woman. On the other hand the Blessed Spirit of God is the Life, the Leader, and Guide—the principal Factor—in the man or woman of God.

296.

SIMPLICITY.—BEING “USEFUL IN THE WORLD.”

15. 7. 76.

Dear _____,

YOU need not scruple to write, when you believe it to be from above : if you write in self-will only, it will profit little or nothing.

Do not consider anything of more value, while you are upon the face of the earth, than simplicity of mind and heart. One of the greatest errors of your life has been a want of simplicity. You have generally had some belief working in the heart, that you were called for this or that special purpose : this has led you to act as you otherwise might not have done, had your mind been more single or simple—free from bias, or a settled, self-imposed bent.

To die with Christ on the Cross out of all that is not God is enough. Nothing, under God, more simple than this, and nothing more fatal to self. This leads through that strait gate which is found by few, and brings into perfect love. When this is the only object of life, all that is pleasing to the Father follows. As to being useful to others, that is a thing which, comparatively, needs no thought. When a fire has a good body, and is well supported, hot and clear, nothing can hinder it from giving heat to all around. So when the spirit and will are united to God with Christ, and the heart, soul, and mind, entirely His, everything is done that pleases Him, without definite thought or care.

Do, dear soul, be simple. The only way to become something, is *really*, without latent or spiritual hypocrisy, to desire, in the holy Will, to be nothing.

Not my will, but Thine be done—is the true philosopher’s stone : all melts into gold that enters the crucible with this flux ; or, if not, is dissipated by the intense heat which is generated as the earthly will dies.

Religious people easily tell of favourable providences, while they are yet alive : if, however, they were dead with Christ, they might see that the worship of their fancied treasure in this line of things has been little more than a smoke in the temple all their days.

The Divine hand bears continually towards death and resurrection—a death to self, and a new life in the Blessed God : this pressure, however, from a bias in the creature, given perhaps by the spirit of this carnal and self-righteous age, is interpreted to be favourable principally towards being useful in the world, by doing some work in a religious way for God. The truth is, nevertheless, that the creature thus overrunning the Divine Spirit is, in the reality of things, as far as in it lies, pushing the Blessed God out of the world. If you can see this, it will be well : if not, in religious self-will you will keep driving along. God is the Worker. God is the Worker. Stand still, and feel Him to be your guide. Don't make Him to serve your holy religious lust.

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297.

RESPECTING SOME WHO HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH “ANNIHILATION” THEORIES.

27. 8. 76.

Dear ———,

FIRST ask the accused from what ground they hold their “*views*,” and the precise nature of them. If they have had no special revelation on the subject from God, their foundation will hardly be anything but stubble ; as the Scriptures are against them : and to-morrow or next day their “*views*” may change. If they hold them from a special revelation ; before they are condemned, they ought

to be heard. Then, again, the spirit in which they hold these “*views*” must be tried. Tell your correspondent not to damage a good cause by weak arguments. There is no special need to take into account the misery of the damned, to justify the work of the Lord Jesus in redemption: the countless number of ransomed souls, at the *end*, would amply justify that; and *some* of these annihilationists hold a “full tale” of punishment previously to, or in the act of, destruction.

For yourself, remember that any “*views*” in religion, which are not held *in the Holy Spirit*, are wood, hay, and stubble, as a foundation; though, for substance, they be true, and easy to be understood. How much more ought this to be remembered on questions, the rigid solution of which is not essential to salvation—questions, the surroundings and conditions of which, it has pleased the Blessed God, shall be seen only as a riddle, or in a glass darkly?

298.

THE WAY TO LIFE. THE STRAIT GATE.

28. 8. 76.

Dear _____,

THERE remains nothing for it, but that you should pass the strait gate: or that you should pass through such an exercise of mind and heart, as shall result in the Divine principle—the Spirit of Christ—rising to the ascendant, or taking the place of rule and dominion in your spirit and soul.

Welcome all troubles that bring you to this. You might, with Lydia, be brought to it by insensible degrees: you need not however covet this, because it may be that a sharp exercise, and heavy shakings, would be best, and

cause the dominion, and sweetness, and peace, of the Spirit to come forth within you in more sensible relief and power.

However this may be, dear soul, never forget for an instant that the sum of all true peace, and rest, and joy, is in the possession of God—of the Love of God: and that there is no insuperable difficulty between you and the possession of this grace, and favour, and love, of God. No insuperable difficulty; because the salvation of every soul is, from beginning to end, of God—He having given, and giving, His Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might have everlasting life. So then, if there be, on your part, a submission to, and acquiescence in, all that He brings upon your spirit, in the way of judgment, or condemnation, or anxiety; sooner or later the day-spring—the eternal day-spring from on high—will visit you, and remain with you.

Ah, dear soul, the sweetness, purity, and peace, of the day-spring can be impressed on your spirit by the Blessed God alone: though, when it rests within you, it will bring with it self-evidencing excellency and power.

Let this be your motto— God alone: God alone.

299.

ELECTION.

4. 9. 76.

* * * The fascination spoken of could not have been intended to convey the idea, that there was anything said by Dell [A. D. 1650.] which will enable the human mind to look in the face that position which lies at the root of all Calvinism, however pleasantly it may be dressed up—that, by an *eternal* and *sovereign act* of the *Divine will*, regeneration and all its attendant graces are conferred upon the Elect, and that the rest are left to perish.

Logic, and a misinterpretation of certain passages of Scripture, may drive or lead to an expression of belief in this : as yet however it has not been the lot of —. —. —. to meet with any truly spiritual man, who could lay his hand upon his heart, and say, that the *Divine Spirit* did sweetly, certainly, and constantly, witness to this.

Dell ambles up with his views, as being the word of the Gospel, and says many things to make them palatable, and easy of digestion, to those who believe them, to begin with : but the above knotty point remains by him untouched.

300.

TRUST IN GOD.

16. 9. 76.

Dear —————,

YOU must look in the face the fact that anything whatever, which it is in the power of high or low, or rich or poor, to hold as their own, and in their own wills, will, as to its yielding pleasure, sooner or later terminate in smoke.

Vanity is the secret mark, set by Him to whom the end and beginning are one, upon all things, that are not held of Him, by faith and love.

So, dear soul, if there be any internal intimations of drawing, or rebuke, or love, from above, don't pass them by.

To have a great and able friend seems something : but what is this to having the Mightiest One, who, in the very nature of things, can never fail? Where He is first, in love and thought, all creatures—all things—are working for good, though appearances may point the other way.

The false appearances are part of that operation, which

brings into being the highest quality that a creature can present to the Blessed God.

If ever you are rich towards Him, TRUST will be the pervading element of your heart and soul.

Is it not time that something was being felt towards becoming that which alone gives the true good—a faithful lover of God?

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301.

DREAMS.—WHAT “GLORIFYING GOD” IS.

12. 10. 76.

Dear _____ ,

“**D**REAMS” are, doubtless, good, bad, and indifferent. The bad and indifferent, as they come from the flesh or the devil, may well be let alone on this bit of paper. The good are to be known by their tincture, and the effects which follow. Of course, there are dreams, of such power and demonstration, that they can hardly be misunderstood: but these are, as the rule, few and far between.

When well-defined dreams come, which do not answer to this character, then the above touchstone may be applied.

Does the tincture of the dream beget, in the spirit and soul, sweetness, love, and humility—especially meekness and humility? because, when anything appears more than ordinarily bright and profitable, something answering to sweetness and love is likely soon to arise in the soul: but if it be not of the Divine principle, its tendency will be towards puffing up. This test, therefore, of humility may not safely be forgotten.

Then, again, as to the effects which follow. If “not my will, but Thine be done” stands out in greater clearness,

and if there be a corresponding readiness of heart to cleave to this proposition, beyond all other imaginable good whatever; then, though the dream should be questionable—yea, even though the devil were in it—it may turn out, like Job’s trial, a good and profitable thing.

Ever remember that one will—one spirit—with the Lord, through thick and thin, rough and smooth, joy or sorrow, if not the highest degree of that perfectness attainable in the body, is next to it.

Dear one, don’t think about “glorifying God,” as anything distinct from loving Him perfectly—being one with Him in will and love. When you and He are thus one—truly one—you cannot help glorifying Him: because His Will will be like the magnet; it will ever draw your spirit unto itself, and cause you to do the best possible things to please Him, without knowing, and hardly thinking, anything about it.

It is all wrapped up in this—one God, one will, one love. All great things are simple. In proportion as you are in multiplicity, you are in weakness: in proportion as you are in unity, oneness, simplicity, you are in strength—infinite and eternal strength. So, for two or three years, or till you get further instructions from above, let simplicity and oneness be your aim. When this is granted, you will glorify Him in the best possible manner and degree, as naturally as you breathe.

Salvation, honour, and everlasting praises to God, and His Lamb. Amen.

302.

TO ONE WHO WROTE AGAINST THE
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

13. 10. 76.

* * * As you have, or have had, souls hanging upon you for eternity, it appears a duty, before the Blessed God, to propose the same difficulty to you.

If man has no principle in him above that which is *natural*, to what in him is addressed the spiritual word of the Gospel? If he has no principle connatural with that which is proposed to him by the Divine Spirit, how is he guilty in refusing it?

Regeneration is not a new birth of flesh; but a new Life of Spirit.

In short, how shall that, which is natural only, receive that which is spiritual, or be condemned for not receiving it?

303.

ROUGH WORDS DIVINELY USED.

21. 11. 76.

YOUR visits sometimes leave a remembrance not to be passed over without a word or two.

When here last, you used the word "Swine" rather heartily. There was a letter once written to _____, on the word "accursed" perhaps [see No. 100], which touched on the subject of strong language. Doubtless you remember it. It might very well do in this case, because the principle is the same: yet, as there is some difference in the gravity and surroundings, a sentence or two may not be amiss.

It is not a question of right, or whether the word is right; but simply can *you* use it SWEETLY, divinely, as in the presence of the Ever-Blessed One? Does the Holy Ghost seal it home to your heart as the truth, or is it only religious intelligence, or an intellectual grasp of things?

You need not answer —. —. —. He asks for yourself, not for himself, nor doubtingly. If, when you try the spirit by which it has been spoken, there should be a little doubt, it might be well to wait a little longer, till all is made sweet and clear; and, in waiting, to use such terms as are suitable to your measure of grace and faith.

All kinds of prophets can use sweet words, and they are received “sweetly” by fleshly thousands: it requires the Divine Spirit Himself to use rough ones sweetly, divinely, truly; and only from and in Him can they help to a Divine end.

If the Sword of the Spirit, as used by His servant, is defiled with the ichor of flesh or the carnal nature, it may cause the wound to fester, and bring corruption or death, instead of health and life.

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304.

TO A TRACT DISTRIBUTOR.

28. 11. 76.

Neighbour,

THOSE Tracts which you put into my hands at the Railway Station have been looked through. They are not wanting in good words, but their spirit is bad and radically antichristian.

He that teaches men to believe on Christ without the Holy Ghost is a false prophet, a deceiver, and an antichrist, because, though he speaks about or of Christ in

Scripture terms, yet, not having the Divine Spirit, a carnal fleshly Christ is set up, and a carnal fleshly faith generated and encouraged.

No man can come to Christ but by the drawings of the Father : and no man can believe on Him to the salvation of his soul without the Holy Ghost. In your tracts you go out of the way to say that salvation is not by the Holy Ghost. Then, again, in that called "assurance of life," you put the power into the hands of man to pardon himself by an evolution of his own will. Nothing can be more treacherous and false than this. It is the Blessed God that justifieth, and by the Holy Ghost reveals Christ in the heart ; and this is done in *His Will and time*, being a real act and Divine operation : but the way that it is put in this Tract makes it altogether an act of the creature.

"I believe in Him : God says I am saved, and so I know I am : bless His name." If Satan himself had set about writing a Tract, he could hardly have made one more dangerously false than this.

He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ *hath been* born of God. This "I believe in Him," from man's will only, begets bastards, not true sons. Those that truly believe in Him do so by the Holy Ghost, not by an evolution of their own will, *when they will*. How shocking that you, a man in years and of education, should be wasting your time, and deceiving your own soul, by spreading such pernicious stuff as this.

Those who are born after this fashion remain carnal, blind, and self-willed, and as full of sin and misery as they were before their false conversion ; though in a more self-righteous figure, and under the cover of the "finished work of Christ." Those who are born of God by that faith which is the gift of God are new creatures : old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

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Everlasting praises to His great name.

305.

DYING TO SELF-RELIGION THE WAY TO PEACE.

14. 12. 76.

SPEAKING after the manner of men, $\frac{99}{100}$ of your troubles have been brought upon you by the inborn strong-willed Pharisee that you inherit from the first Adam. Do, dear soul, be still. Do, dear soul, be still. No man lights a candle, and puts it under the bed, but lets it shine forth to disperse the darkness.

Do let Christ shine forth in your heart in all His native sweetness and simplicity, and don't smother him with the thick covering of your own self-willed righteousness. If you would pass a few years in the peace of God, be still, and let "my LORD" alone, and give Him an opportunity of showing you that your salvation is more His business than yours.

The "dear LORD," as it is the fashion to call Him in these religious days, is not to be wheedled out of His precious treasures by "holy" worry; neither will He give Himself in exchange for so much self-denial and prim walking: and as little will a full-grown Pharisee, after the model of "Jesus," bring Him over to make terms with the "holy" hypocritical first-birth flesh.

So, dear soul, be still, and sink right under your own cleverness, and self-will, and self-holiness, and leave it all with the Master to demonstrate to all around that He dwells in you in very deed.

If you don't, you will drive away those around you, or drive them into a fleshly imitation of Christianity.

The brightest holiness that a creature is likely to attain, while in the body, will be elicited while *simply walking under a sense of God's presence in the heart.*

If you have not this sense of His presence, you must wait patiently till He gives it. You are not hindered from inly sighing.

Farewell.

306.

THE TRUE RESTING-PLACE.—RELIGIOUS
PEACOCKS.

[1876.]

Dear _____,

DON'T be in a hurry to get relief. The *everlasting* good comes not through books, nor in words, or propositions; but ineffably, and, mostly, at men's extremity. Your natural vivacity of spirit seeks continued relief and entertainment in this or that. It is natural that it should be so: but there is a Resting-place in God, where the heart holds *dominion in peace*, though the soul may be exercised by anxiety and tribulation.

In truth it is through tribulation that this Salem is gained. Everlasting praises to His great name.

You will have to give a wide berth to the *religious* Peacocks, and the *pious* Foxes: they are more difficult to deal with than ordinary pleasure-loving sinners. The inward Solomon only can discern the spirits.

307.

MAN-SENT "MINISTERS."

BUT "saints" are not "poor sinners," save only as they are made to be so by the carnal doctrines of men, and the preaching and "praying" of "ministers" who, being themselves out of that power which cleanseth from all unrighteousness, and overcometh the wicked one, cannot minister it to others.

This nation is universally burdened with the blinding hypocrisy of these man-sent prophets, who, though they have the "good words" stolen from the Scriptures, are without the Divine Power that saves the soul, and brings the Spirit into Rest and Peace.

308.

“MINISTERS” WITHOUT DIVINE POWER
ARE HYPOCRITES.

To the Same.

Neighbour —————,

SOME time back, in a sharp reproof, you were classed amongst the “hypocrites” with which this nation is burdened. The following few words are sent that the enemy of all good may not take you at a lasting advantage, by inclining you to believe that it was only an extreme epithet, used in a moment of “loss of temper.”

By “hypocrite” was and is meant one who represents himself to be what he is not. That you are such a one will appear to yourself before God, if you look at the character which you assume—“a Minister of the Gospel.”

The Gospel is good news and glad tidings, whereby sinners receive the forgiveness of sins, and, being cleansed from all unrighteousness, live without sin—that is, live and sin not. But you, being out of the *power* that cleanseth from all unrighteousness, and overcometh the wicked one, cannot, therefore, communicate or *minister* that power to others.

What you preach *for* Gospel is only talk about it—a continual shuffling, over and over again, of the Scriptures, and mixing them with your own or other men’s carnal interpretations, by which you hide from yourself, and from others, the lack of the Power of God in yourself, and so pass over, as best you may, your consequent inability to minister it to them.

Here, then, is the point. A “preacher,” or “minister,” of “the Gospel” without Divine power is a *hypocrite*, because he has not *the substance in himself* of the name which he assumes. Men are *saved* by *power*; not by words about the power.

Though it be not meant that you are what is “vulgarly” called a hypocrite (on this point the Blessed God is the judge), yet it is meant that in His sight, as a pretended “preacher,” or “minister,” of the Gospel of God’s power, you are, to all intents and purposes, *a hypocrite*; because, not having His overcoming power in yourself, you can neither preach it, nor minister it, to others: though you may, in a mystery of iniquity, deceive yourself and them about it. The Blessed God does not send a man to preach or minister to others that which he has not in himself. Those “ministers” who are without the Divine Power, that overcomes, in themselves, are sent of man, not of God: they are HYPOCRITES—blind leaders of the blind.

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309.

DIVINE LOVE.

FIRST, as to the enclosed sentiments on Divine Love. They are written in ignorance of what Divine Love really is, as a supernatural grace; and of the depth of that passage, “We love Him, because He first loved us;” which implies, in the first place, a supernatural manifestation of God, by the Spirit, as Love, to the spirit and soul of man, without any motive on His part but His good pleasure in Christ Jesus—which supernatural grace, being accompanied by a Divine power, and giving a new life, begets a return of love in measure, and of the same nature as the spring from whence it comes.

It is evident that this writer understands the thing from a carnal, soulish, bottom only; which is equivalent to a man loving a woman on account of her beauty or riches; a miser loving his gold because of its supposed excellency; or one man loving another for some benefit received—none

of which figures separately, nor all put together, touch the holy mystery of Divine Love, which, as it is in man, is a spontaneous rising up of unutterable adoration, trust, and love, unbottomed upon any motive whatever, but really springing from the Divine nature: though he (man), as having a rational, as well as a spiritual, nature, is not debarred from reasoning, according to the obvious relation of things: but just in proportion as he is of God, this ceases, and supernatural grace, love, and light, become all in all.

You will never get strong, or truly prosper in heavenly things, if you trifle too much with such as these. They are not of God, but of the wicked one; and quite as far from the kingdom of God as harlots and thieves.

310.

DYING TO SELF-WILL THE ONLY WAY TO SALEM.

TO die out of all self-will, with Christ on the Cross, is the most effectual prayer that can be offered. There is no passage to Salem but through this strait gate. The creature would choose any other but this: this however is the chosen of God.

When you have thus died, you will find a new life: you will have all things in God, and God in all things. Even in passing this strait gate there will be comforts and consolations given, if needed. Some of the martyrs have found a bed of roses in a furnace of fire. At any rate, there is no remedy. You cannot steal a march that will bring you into this City: there is only one gate—that is at the end of *the pass of death* to own will in all things.

311.

CHRIST BROUGHT FORTH IN ANGUISH
AND WEAKNESS.

“**H***E* is brought forth in anguish and weakness, when the creature has no strength.”

That is, the Anointed One is so brought forth : all the true members of Christ's body are anointed ones.

The Anointing, in the first instance, generally takes place when the creature is under the sentence of death within himself, and has no strength : and so it is in its continuous working to the end. The renewings of the Holy Ghost, which are necessary to the bringing forth of the Divine Life to the measure of manhood, are generally vouchsafed when temptation or trial have taken away all self-confidence, and made the creature feel that he is without strength.

The anguish, mostly, is at that point of the temptation immediately antecedent to the outletting of the heavenly unction from the Blessed Comforter, dwelling in the innermost sanctuary of the heart and spirit. So, then, weakness and anguish, in the Divine order, are things to be entertained with loving patience and constancy, or, at least, when very severe, with meekness and quietness, as preliminary to heavenly favours, and, in the Will of God, necessary to Divine disclosures.

As the Blessed God thus uncovers Himself in the Spirit, through these salutary visitations, solidity, sweetness, and evenness, are attained ; and that which is talkative and frothy is lost.

In love,

— . — . — .

P.S.—He that enters into trouble voluntarily, with greedy intentions, will remain poor.

He that, having been led into trouble, carelessly or wilfully passes out of it, will not get rich.

312.

THE REVEALING OF CHRIST WITHIN.

* * * The truth is that, generally, there are two ways or modes in which Christ is revealed to, or brought forth in, His children by the Father.

One is, by occasional interior illuminations of the Holy Ghost, which give such heavenly demonstration of Divine things as can be felt only by the hidden man of the heart, and can hardly be set forth in language without sadly dimming the excellency thereof, and a danger of so grieving the Holy Spirit as not to be without loss to the speaker. The other way is, by a continuance of exercises, made up of inward and outward trials and consolations, which, little by little, entirely take away that which is earthly, and make room for the growth or increase, by special favour, of that which is heavenly and Divine.

The first is occasional, and—speaking after the manner of men—more pleasant; yet, at the same time, somewhat dangerous, and, withal, less lasting in its effects than is the second: nevertheless, not to be lightly thought of or spoken of, by any means; on the contrary, rather to be handled as too holy for talk or general communication. The second continues, generally, during most of the passage through the wilderness of this life; though, where the heart and spirit are faithful to God, with such imperceptible shades of feeling as hardly to alter the solidity of the peace of God *beneath*, or the constantly deepening current of *hidden* jubilee, and inexpressible love.

Many have fallen through the puffings of the mind under high spiritual favours; but, since the world began, a lowly-minded, constant lover, *who kept low*, never came to lasting grief.

It was said that Christ is revealed, and brought forth, by the Father in one or the other of the above ways: here it may be added—or by a union of both. By this you

will simply understand that the true knowledge of Christ, as He is God and man united, can be attained to by each individual member of His body, only as such a one is brought through these or the like means to his or her degree of unity or oneness with the God of Love. All knowledge of Christ otherwise attained is, for substance, only words and vanity.

Christ *without* is known only as He is brought forth *within*.

313.

ABIDING UNDER THE ANOINTING.

IT is true that there is a poison in all books, and especially in religious books. The only remedy is to abide under the Anointing, until it becomes a satisfying portion, and really—not in word and theory only—leads into all truth. Activity in religion, at the present day, only brings forth that which is spurious and of the flesh, accompanied with many words, much that is imaginary, and consequently a continuous feasting on religious vanities. God dwelling in the heart is the only power that can drive out these things, and set up that kingdom which cannot be moved. But He cannot be pulled in, and set to work, in the will of the creature. There must be a patient waiting for His appearing, and a watchful walking, so that His moving and working may not be overrun by the self-will of the self-righteous believer, who will do anything rather than suffer and wait.

* * * In proportion as Christ is really brought forth in the heart and spirit, the Divine blessing will be in us, and around us, and accompany everything that is done.

314.

A LOVE WORTHY OF GOD.

Dear _____,

THERE is one GIFT OF GOD which you may reach after, in your inner man, *constantly*, and without doubtfulness or fear of illusions—a LOVE WHICH IS WORTHY OF HIM.

All stability and quietness of spirit are wrapped up in this, beside a thousand minor things which cannot be named—all, however, valuable and pleasant.

The *solidity* alone of this Love is worth a thousand worlds ten times told.

If your heart goes out after it, it is SURE to come.

— . — . — .

FRAGMENTS.

All that you have to be careful of is, not to outrun the Divine Will or Work in others, but simply to speak that to them which the Blessed God gives to be spoken. Whatever *you* write is almost sure to be correct every way. But, dear love, this is not the point. Is it what the Divine Spirit calls for at the moment? This is the point to be minded.

He that can help himself to life out of the Scriptures, is his own saviour: but his life and salvation will be of and in the flesh.

Say, within your measure, what you know by experience to be true, and what is as clear as the sun: and leave the Scriptures, as a stronghold to fall back upon, when the enemy comes up with wrath and in great force.

The simplicity of an infant in the hands of God will do wonders: but a child on stilts is the weakest of all soldiers to march against the enemy.

This simple question, put by the Master, will be enough to strike you into the hottest place of Hell—Who called thee to meddle with the setting up of my Kingdom, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, while thyself a stranger to it?

A meek and lowly sighing after the Blessed One, night and day, morning, noon, and night, well mixed with *patience* when idols are pulled down, bosom-sins torn up by the roots, temptations keen, and Satan rampant—is the narrow and safe path to honour, and glory, and eternal life.

The voice of the Spirit in the heart—if indeed it may be called a voice—is very gentle, and brings to a cross—the cross—at the same time hardly interfering with a sense of freedom. The safe path, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, is to *take up the Cross*. In doing this, if mistaken, though this will happen very rarely, if ever, (though it may *seem* to do so frequently), we grow stronger and stronger in God.

Your child will have to know, sooner or later, that there is a “*Gospel*,” so called, which, though it have the letter or form of the truth, is not the bread of life; but a soporific, pleasant to the taste, yet leading unto death: and that the “dear preachers” and “ministers,” though the most excellent of men at this day, and to a woman’s heart angels of light—are retailers of stolen goods, and passers of false coin; self-deceived, yet deceivers.

“Strong in faith, but strong too in his own will.” This may not be, my brother. True faith is of the operation of God. It is the holy light and heat of His Spirit in the inner sanctuary of the heart (the spirit), shining forth with pervading power through the whole man, and becoming his life. But just in proportion as man’s *own* will lives, and is strong, the light and heat of God is weak. On the other hand, as the will of man becomes weak, the light and heat of God become *strong*.

Put it in a shorter form— Eye single : body full of light.
Strong “own-will” is the father of false faith.

The death of own will, by crucifixion with Christ, is necessary to the perfect life of the soul.

When man has *no own will*, God, the Most Blessed God, becomes ALL IN ALL.

All those whom God chooses to work for Him are put through a preparatory course of discipline. Moses was a long time in the wilderness before he saw the glory of God in the bush. Joseph, David, and many other ancient worthies, did not enter upon their task—of which they had been forewarned—immediately. The first thirty years of our Saviour’s life are a blank to us. When the Most Blessed wills, a deep notch may be cut quickly upon the stick of time.

While man is man, and in himself, however “righteous” he may be, he is an abomination to God, maugre his pretended faith, preachings, teachings, “prayings,” and washings in the “blood of the Lamb.” It is only as he loses his own will and fallen nature, and becomes One Spirit with Him who is at the right hand of the Majesty on high, that he is accepted truly and fully, and that the invisible appears in sight, and He is seen by the *opened* eye, His mind and will known and felt, and the character and quality of all men and all teachings tasted in the inner man, as naturally as food is tasted and relished by the senses of the outer.

“ There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins ;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”

Even the poor Ranters can sing this, which in a sense is true. They, however, miss the virtue of it, because

they dip themselves into this fountain in an imaginary manner, when they like, how they like, and as often as they like; instead of waiting for God, the Baptizer, the Revealer, the Saviour. So, as they go in, so they come out—self-baptized, self-saved, self-comforted: not New Creatures in Christ Jesus. So they remain in the fall, and do not experience the restoration—children of the first Adam, not of the Second.

A man may have a clear testimony from God, with little or no arguments; which if he faithfully delivers, He that gave the testimony will justify him therein.

On the other hand, there may be strong arguments for and against, where there is no real Divine testimony at the back of them; consequently none to deliver independently of them.

This is just where the great mass of the Preachers of this day are, in reference to what they call the Gospel.

— The high and mighty—those whose religion is a cross between the soulish mind, and the words of Christ, Apostles, and Prophets.

The Pharisaic spirit always lauds the Spirit of Christ, when at a distance, as in the Prophets: but when it is brought to their ears and doors, spits out against it as blasphemous, contradictory, and absurd.

Every time that you, in a hearty manner, grasp the hand of a hypocrite, or soulish, carnal, “Christian,” and let your soul unite with his or hers, or his or hers with yours, the Divine Spirit is grieved, the Holy power lessened, and you go away in measure crippled, and shrivelled up spiritually.

One word of Power from above is worth more than all the books and tracts written since the foundation of the world. When He speaks, though it be never so little, it cannot well be forgotten.

The Scriptures teach always to pray—to pray without ceasing, etc., etc.; but they cannot give the qualification necessary to this, that is the Holy Spirit; neither can they tell A. or B. whether he PRAYS IN THE HOLY GHOST OR NOT.

The way, the only way, to pray in the Spirit, is to give up all “prayer” that is not of the Spirit, and to watch towards the Blessed God continually for such help as is necessary to true prayer—prayer in the Holy Ghost.

Praying without ceasing is a mystery which no *words* can explain, but is as easy as breathing the vital air to those who have come under subjection to the Life of Christ in their hearts, and walk in the Spirit.

Self-willed “prayer,” either in public, or in private, *or in the family*, is a fountain of self-righteousness, hypocrisy, and deceit; and is an abomination. It hinders the Holy Spirit from leading into true prayer, which is always answered; and shuts up the soul from the Light of Life. It also keeps such as are exercised therein from the help of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

P.S. Those that do know Him love His “wrath,” though it be terrible, with an unspeakable love.

In truth, there is nothing connected with holy walking, which is withheld from a constant, humble, beseeching, loving, faith. When we want holiness in our own will, it is as adultery and murder. But when the Blessed Spirit leads on to holiness, then all will soon be well.

The true and safe path, however, is to be constant in childlike cross-taking, watchful walking, and humble love. ALL good is met with, sooner or later, in this path.

As the Love grows, all will become easy or more equal. The truly Divine rejoices in bearing and suffering, as well as in receiving good and enjoying. A constant bearing of the mind, and heart, and soul, towards "All for Him" brings the invisible in sight, and makes the Divine Love and Presence the most real, solid, and constant good.

Ah! the Divine wisdom and heavenly beauty lying under the surface of those words, "Neither run before, nor lag behind." Ah! the unspeakable honour of doing the Will of God—of being a faithful servant, in never so little a matter, for Him.

Ah! the fatuity, the egregious folly, the madness—the stark staring madness—of being careful for anything whatever, saving only loving Him ENTIRELY, and doing His Will perfectly.

To "love the Cross" is an excellent sign of health. If you hold by this, through weakness, and in all weathers, something better than even this will follow, sooner or later. There will come a time when the hands won't feel the nails, nor the brow the thorns: a hidden unutterable sense of God will become All in All; and this will grow brighter and brighter to the perfect day.