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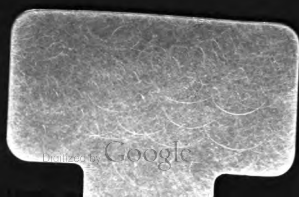
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WORDS OF PEACE;

OR,

The Blessings and Trials of Sickness.

WITH MEDITATIONS, PRAYERS, AND HYMNS.

BY THE

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100. u. 45.



P R E F A C E.

THIS little book is intended for those whom God has afflicted. My great aim is to show that sickness usually comes as a messenger of love ; that it is sent to be a blessing, and may be made, by God's grace, *a very great blessing* to the soul.

If by my words any suffering brother or sister shall receive comfort, if any careless one shall become awakened, or if any weak Believer shall be helped on his way to heaven, my end will be gained.

I commend the following pages to the kindness and love of God ; and pray that He may be pleased to use them for His own glory, and for the Reader's present and eternal good.

PLUCKLEY RECTORY,
May, 1863.

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CHAPTER I.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN SENDING SICKNESS.

THE Writer of this Book feels for you in your present affliction, and desires to do you some good. Dear Brother or Sister, I am come into your sick-room, as it were, and wish to tell you a few things for your comfort and profit.

God has seen fit to stop you in the midst of your busy life, and to lay you aside for a while. It is not by chance that His afflicting hand has fallen upon you. It is not at hazard that He has chastened you. It may seem to be a mere accident that *you* are afflicted, and not another. But no; God has done it purposely.

“Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.” “As a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.” Not a sparrow even falls to the ground without our heavenly Father’s ordering, and He prizes us more than many sparrows.

Learn this then—that your present Sickness or Misfortune is *of God*. It is His doing. He it is, who has brought this present chastisement upon you.

And what are God’s reasons for afflicting us?

Is it to *punish*? Sometimes it is; but not, I think usually. “I have seen the wicked (says David) in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree” — prosperous and happy. And, on the other hand, do we not constantly see the righteous

suffering under the heavy hand of God? Do not take, then, so sad and gloomy a view of affliction as this. There must be *another and truer reason* why the Lord chastens.

It is because *He desires to do you some great good*. The Gardener cuts and prunes his tree, to make it grow better, and bear more precious fruit; and God often uses His sharp knife for some gracious purpose. The wise and loving Father thwarts his child, and sometimes scourges it, for its good: and God uses His chastening rod for the very same reason. The skilful Physician, again, prescribes nauseous medicines to restore his patient's health: and God bids us take His medicines, though at the time they are very distasteful to us.

Now, the Gardener, and the Parent, and the Physician all wish to do good, either to the plant, or the child, or

the patient. And so, depend upon it, God wishes to do *us* good. This is the great object of His corrections—to do us good in our latter end.

Here then is an answer to the question, *Why does God afflict us?* Because He loves us, and wishes to make us holy as He is holy, and happy as He is happy. For, as it has been well said, “Fiery trials make golden Christians.”

It is most important to feel this—My God loves me, and *therefore* He afflicts me. If you can but realize this, it will turn your present chastisement into a blessing, and your sick-room into a little paradise! And remember, I am not going one step beyond Scripture; for is it not written there, “As many as I *love* I rebuke and chasten”; and again, “Whom the Lord *loveth* he chasteneth, and scourgeth every *son* whom he

receiveth." God had one Son without sin, but He never had any son without sorrow.

There is another thing too, which I want you to bear in mind—that *God cannot afflict wrongly*. He never makes mistakes. Our earthly parents sometimes do. They chasten us sometimes (St. Paul says), "for their own pleasure"; that is, without rhyme or reason, according to their own whims and fancies; "but He *for our profit*, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Before then you go a step further, ask God to convince you of this precious truth—It is my Father who corrects me, even He who loves me. I will receive this chastisement then from God, and remember that it is a loving hand that smites. I will kiss the very rod that scourges

me. I will say, "Father, not my will, but thine be done. Make me what thou wouldest have me to be. Show me what thou wouldest have me to do."

CHAPTER II.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN AFFLICTING *YOU*.

You are convinced, I hope, that God chastens *purposefully* and *lovingly*. Affliction comes from Him, and He afflicts, not as a stern Judge, but as a Father and a Friend.

If I have made this clear to you, I thank God for it; for thus I have given you a sort of foundation-truth, on which your happiness and profit at this season greatly depends.

But now let us go a step further. You will naturally ask, Why does God afflict *me*? What is there *in me* that calls down His chastisement at this present time?

1. Perhaps you have hitherto been,

like many others, unconcerned about your soul. You have gone on, from day to day, without any serious thought about the eternity which is before you. You have hitherto lived to the world, instead of living to God. I don't say that you have lived in wilful sin. You may not have done this. But still you have lived too much as if this world was your home—you have lived perhaps without God and without Christ.

If so, your present affliction is sent to arouse you. Its voice is a voice of mercy, saying, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light." God sends it to alarm you, to disturb you, to quicken you. He seems to say to you, Are you prepared to meet your God? Have you pardon and peace in Christ your Saviour? Is your soul saved?

Happy is it for you, if this affliction makes you consider, and if it leads you to think of that other world, which has been too much kept out of sight. Happy for you, if it makes you feel your great need of a Saviour, and brings you as a penitent to His cross.

2. Or perhaps you are one who has at times some serious feelings. Eternity is something very solemn in your eyes. You feel yourself to be a sinner, and you know that your only hope of salvation is in Christ. But you have never given yourself heartily to Him. The world keeps you back. Or some secret sin, some little cherished sin it may be, stands like a strong barrier between you and God. Ah, you want decision. You want to break entirely with the world and sin, and to surrender your

whole heart to the Saviour. You are only half a Christian. You are not far from the kingdom of God, and yet you are not in it. You are near the door, but have never entered in.

Do you not at once see then why God has afflicted *you*? It is to bring you nearer to Him. He would have you now see that a little religion will give you no comfort, and will bring no peace to your soul. It will not do for a sick-bed, and much less will it do for a dying hour.

There is a voice that whispers to you now, which calls to you with loving earnestness, Why will you die? Why stand so far off, when you may draw near? Jesus comes close to you as it were now, saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. I have knocked before by my Word, by my Spirit, by my Ministers. Now

I knock still louder." Oh say not, "Depart from me." But rather say, "Abide with me, O my Saviour. Pardon my past half-heartedness. Draw near to me, and bless me. Claim me as thine own. Make me thine for ever."

3. Or, it is possible you may be a Backslider. Once you felt deeply. You were in earnest. Religion was your delight. Your chief interest was in holy things. You loved God's Word and God's House. Prayer was your sweetest employment. The company of God's people was pleasant to you.

But something happened, which turned you from this blessed path. You grew somewhat cold. The lamp burnt dimly within you. The world regained its power over you. Your language now is—

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed !
How sweet their memory still !
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.

God might have left you in this state. But no; He loved you too well to do so. He now chastens you; and is it not in mercy? He may deal roughly with you; and would you not deal so with your dearest Child or Friend, if you saw them running into danger? I am sure you would. And so the Lord is forced to deal with *you*. Though you have acted treacherously towards Him, and “turned aside” from Him “like a deceitful bow,” He still loves you, and will not let you perish, without sending after you His warning voice, and stretching out His arm to save you.

Oh make this illness a time for returning to Him whom you have

forsaken. Think of God's great love in sparing you. Think of His kindness in making this gracious effort to bring you to Himself. He seems to say, "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. My arms are still open to receive you. I have blessings, which may yet be yours."

4. Once more. You may be a true Child of God, one whom He greatly loves, a plant over which He is watching with peculiar care. He sees you serving Him, and walking with Him, but He wishes your service to be a still more happy service, and your walk to be a closer walk with Him.

• The Refiner takes a piece of gold, and is not satisfied that it is precious. He takes means to make it *more* precious, by putting it into the furnace. Thus he purifies it, burnin

out every particle of dross that was in it. Aye, and when he takes it out of the fire, he rejoices to see it so pure and bright, that it reflects his own image.

And so it is with you, dear Christian Sufferer. God's promise is, "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely *purge away thy dross.*" "I will *refine them*, as silver is refined, and will try them, as gold is tried." Even the very best of us—how short we come of what we ought to be, and what we *might* be! Even the best of us—what need we have to be thus trained and disciplined for heaven!

No longer ask then, *Why* am I afflicted? But rather say, "Lord, let not my affliction be lost upon me. Accomplish in me thy own most gracious purpose. May I come out of this furnace, as gold purified seven times in the fire."

CHAPTER III.

HOW AFFLICTION SHOULD BE RECEIVED.

SOME receive affliction as if they deserved a different treatment from God. They murmur at it. It chafes and irritates them. Like "a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke," they will not bend their neck. This must be wrong; for shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil? If chastisement is our portion, must it not be well for us?

Others again receive it with unconcern, as something they must put up with as best they can. They look upon it simply as a misfortune,

which is to be borne because it cannot be avoided. This too must be wrong.

A true Christian will receive affliction with *Submission*. It is his Father's doing; and therefore he quietly submits. It comes from Him, and *must* therefore be well. He feels that there is a needs-be for it. What a sweet pillow is this, on which to rest his weary head! He cannot, perhaps, see *why* it is needful; but he acknowledges that it must be right, and that what he "knows not now," he will "know hereafter." It is a voice of love; and he is ready to exclaim with Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." I can give you no better prayer than that contained in the well-known hymn, which is given at the end of this book—

Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with Thine ; and take away
All that now makes it hard to say—
Thy will be done.

We should receive our Affliction too with *Patience*. St. Paul says that “tribulation worketh patience.” This ought to be its effect upon us ; and this *will* be its effect, if God blesses it to us. Sometimes patience can be learnt in no other school. We are taught in the chambers of sickness and suffering, what we cannot learn elsewhere. What precept and example fail to teach us, affliction sometimes will.

You are now called to patient, humble suffering. Others may be called to *do* much for God ; you are called to *suffer*. Your duty is to be *still*. This is your work now. Your heavenly Father allots it to you. And, be assured, you may glorify

Him quite as much by your patience, as you could do by the most active service.

Oh then, submit to this wholesome discipline; and pray that it may tame, and subdue, and chasten you, leading you to bear without a murmur whatever your heavenly Father shall lay upon you.

Our affliction should *humble* us. The people of Nineveh humbled themselves in their trial. Job said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." David says, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was thy doing." Even proud Nebuchadnezzar was for a while laid low. And we Christians are exhorted to "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God."

Surely, if anything will bring down our high thoughts, and set us upon our right level, it is sickness. You may, perhaps, hitherto have prided yourself on your strength, or your appearance. What are they now that you are wasted by sickness? Or you have perhaps been inclined to boast of your learning. But can learning relieve your pains, or help you to meet death? It is utterly powerless on such occasions. Or, again, you may have been lifted up by riches. But how miserably poor we seem, when God's chastening hand is upon us! Fall down then before God, and say, "Naked came I into the world, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

But I must go even further still,

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and say, that a real Christian will receive his affliction with *Thankfulness*—yes, even with thankfulness.

I doubt not but you now find it very hard to say, “Thank God for this trial.” And yet you *ought* to say it: and perhaps the time will come when you will be able to say it from your very heart. And even before this sickness has left you, your happy experience may be—“It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went wrong, but now have I kept thy word.”

For the sake of those about you, as well as for your own sake, try and take your trial thankfully and cheerfully. Brighten up. There is good in store for you. Aye, it is even on its way to you, though you may not see it. This illness, or this misfortune, may prove to be among your richest blessings. Ask God

to make it so; and then it will “yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.”

It has been said that there is a rough and a smooth side to every handle, and that we may take hold of things by either. Well is it if you can get into the habit of always choosing the smooth side. And you *will* be able, if only you can believe that Word, which says that “All things work together for good to them that love God.” There is a dark and a bright side to every providence, as there was to the pillar in the wilderness. We naturally fix on the dark side and call it *sorrow*; but faith sees a ray of light amidst the gloom, and forthwith our sorrow is turned into *joy*.

Though your sufferings may be great, think how many mercies you have. Think too how many people

suffer, even more than you do. Above all, think of Him who suffered so bitterly, but yet so cheerfully—and that for your sake—who said, as His darkest hour drew near, “The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”

Ah, if Jesus is with you—if He “speaks peace” to your soul—your gloomy chamber will be lighted up, and a peace will be there which the world knows not of. How true it is that “afflictions are blessings to us, when we can bless God for our afflictions.”

It was said of a young Christian sufferer that, “Notwithstanding the sadness of seeing her suffer, her room was the happiest place in all the house—the place where her sisters were sure to see the bright side of things, and to learn that to the watchful eye and thankful heart

mercies lie thickly strewn along the path of suffering."

Some murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
While some with thankful love are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's great mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW HINTS* WHICH CONCERN THE BODY.

YOU are now in your sick-room ; and if I mention a few little matters which will make that room more comfortable to you, I feel that they will not be out of place in a book like this.

1. A word about *Fresh Air*. One generally sees a sick-chamber carefully closed up, as if air was the great enemy to guard against. But

* Many of these are taken from a valuable little book called "Plain Words about Sickness."

this is altogether a mistake; for the sick person needs air as much as those in health, and even more.

Don't be afraid then of opening your window. In nine cases out of ten it will do more good than harm. And nothing presses down the spirits more than a close, ill-ventilated room.

2. Keep out as much as possible all *Bad Smells*, for they act like poison to the lungs and stomach, and most effectually prevent us from getting well. Dirty clothes should never be left in the room.

3. Let me give you a few hints about your *Bed*. The best bed for a sick person, or for a healthy one either, is, I believe, a hair mattress. And if that cannot be procured, almost as good and wholesome a bed, and certainly a very cheap one, is a mattress stuffed with clean, dry chaff.

The worst is a feather bed, for it heats the body, and makes the skin tender.

4. As regards *Food*. It is unwise to be always pressing a sick person to eat, when he has lost his appetite. In such a case the food will not nourish him, if he takes it. The stomach is now very feeble, and must not be overloaded. One often sees two or three kinds of food by the bedside. The sight of this is quite enough to disgust the patient, and make him loathe it. Let it be kept out of view, and only a little brought at a time, as the sick person needs it.

5. If you want to keep off *Infection*, let cleanliness be specially attended to. Let the floor be constantly scrubbed with soap and water. Keep a little bit of window open to air the room. Remove the curtains, if possible, and especially round the bed,

and also any bits of carpet on the floor. Get a little chloride of lime, and sprinkle it wherever there is a bad smell; or mix some of it with water, and let it stand in the room. But *air* and *cleanliness* are after all the best things to prevent infection.

6. Do not allow crowds of friends to visit you. We sometimes see a sick person's room thronged with visitors. This is bad both for body and soul. The presence of a friend now and then, especially if he be a Christian friend, is soothing and profitable. But it is good for you sometimes to be left alone with God, and to commune with your own heart.

CHAPTER V.


THE DUTIES OF THE SICK-ROOM.

“IN the day of adversity (says Solomon) consider.” This, my dear Friend, is “the day of adversity” with you. God has laid you aside for a while ; and it is your duty to *consider*.

In the days of your health you were hurrying on perhaps a little too fast. God saw this, and in mercy stopped you. And now He bids you make this illness a kind of pause in your journey—a kind of halting-place by the way—a time for “considering your ways,” for buckling on your armour, and for making a new start heavenward.

But let us come a little to particulars ; for there are certain Duties which a time of sickness specially calls forth.

1. You have a favourable time now for *the study of God's Word*. Perhaps your Bible has been hitherto a book but seldom read. Take it down from your shelf, and open its precious pages. Do not look into it carelessly, as you have often done ; but search it, as one seeking for a hid treasure. It contains the words of eternal life—God's message to your soul—a remedy for all your spiritual wants. You have probably more spare time now than you ever had before. Spend much of it in the careful and prayerful reading of that Book, which is your guide to heaven. Your time, if thus spent, will prove to be a time of unspeakable profit to you.



And when you read, lift up your prayer to God, and ask Him for His blessing. Entreat Him to write His word in your heart, and to bring it home to your conscience. "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul."

You will find in Chapter VII. some hints as to what passages are more particularly suited to a time of sickness.

2. Welcome *the visits of your Clergyman*. God sends him to you : receive him as *His* messenger. Speak freely to him. Tell him the state of your heart, and ask him to guide and direct you. When he is gone, think much of the words that he has read or spoken to you. This is the way to make his visits profitable.

Some like their Minister to speak smooth things to them, so as not to

disturb their peace. But is it not far better that our peace *should be* disturbed, if it is not resting on a right foundation? The Surgeon probes our wounds, and makes us flinch; but it is that he may heal us. And so must it be with our spiritual Physician. He may speak very home to us, and make our consciences smart; but no matter if it is to do our souls good. He tries perhaps to make us feel sorrow for sin—but why? It is that we may find joy and peace in Christ. Ask God then to make the visits of your Clergyman a blessing to you.

Give yourself much to *Prayer*. When health and strength were yours, and all seemed to go on smoothly, prayer was perhaps used merely as a form. You knelt down night and morning, but it was only

as a habit. There was but very little meaning in your prayers. But this sickness has, I trust, made you somewhat thoughtful. It has reminded you that you will not live always—that you may be nearer death than you supposed—that your days may be numbered.

Now is the time for prayer—for real heart-prayer. Oh, fall down upon your knees, and cry earnestly to God. Entreat Him to pardon the past—to give you the Holy Spirit in larger measure—to make you a true disciple of Christ—and, in short, to send you from your sick-chamber a thoroughly altered person. God *speaks to you*, as it were, in this your hour of sickness. And you will do well *to speak much to Him*. Tell Him all that you are, and all that you want; and beseech Him to mould you into His image, and

make you what He would have you to be.

Let the time of sickness be with you a special *time of prayer*. Let the walls of your chamber bear witness to your earnest cries to Heaven. I shall speak of the Difficulties of prayer in the next chapter.

Self-examination is another duty very suitable to a sick-bed, or a sick-room. Our hearts want looking into. Our secret motives want sounding. The inner chambers of our soul want searching out.

Very likely you have been in the habit of telling God *in a general way* that you are a sinner, and asking Him *in a general way* to forgive you. But this must not be all. We must bring each separate sin out of its hiding-place. We must know the turnings and windings of our deceit-

ful hearts. Thus alone can we make any real conquest over our besetting sins, and make any real progress in grace. Deal faithfully with your own self. Find out your true condition before God. Say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me."

I have one more duty to recommend. Now is the time to make *Good Resolutions*. These are common enough in the hours of sickness. The heart is usually softened at such a time. The conscience is awakened. And we determine, if spared, to lead a very different life. But too often, when health returns, our resolutions prove to be like the morning cloud or the early dew, which soon pass away. There is hardly any one so bad, but he has at times resolved to be better.

And may we not say, with an old writer, that “Even hell itself is paved with good resolutions”?

Ought we not then to make resolutions in our sickness? Certainly we ought. But our fault is, that we are apt to make them *in our own feeble strength*; and then they prove to be worthless. But if we distrust ourselves, and throw ourselves upon God’s strength—if we are conscious of our weakness, and entreat the Lord to help us—then He will enable us to carry out our resolutions, He will grant us the needed strength, and will give us grace to go and sin no more.

Remember then, whatever you resolve to do, let it be done *in simple reliance upon God’s gracious help*.

CHAPTER VI.

DIFFICULTIES IN PRAYER.

WHEN we are in health, and especially if we are much taken up with worldly business, we are apt to imagine that the days of sickness are especially favourable to Prayer. Is this the case?

In some respects it is. For then we are called aside from the world, and we have ample time for serious thought, and for religious exercises. At such a season too the nearness of God, and of the unseen world, are forced as it were upon us.

But who that knows what true prayer is does not feel the difficulty,

even then, of lifting up the heart to God? The world still presses its claims upon us, though not in the same way that it did when we were in health. It comes rushing in upon us in some other shape. Even the sick-room is not beyond its reach. Satan too is as busy now as ever, plying his temptations, and taking every advantage of our weakness.

It sometimes happens that even real Christians feel prayer to be irksome. Our minds at times are sorely harassed by wandering and distracted thoughts. Or our souls feel dry and barren, and we are tempted to leave off praying. Prayer does not seem to open the gate of heaven; and so we turn away from it, and give up knocking. At such times we should remember that, very likely, the prayers which cause us the greatest difficulty are the most acceptable to

God. We should think of Jacob for our encouragement. He wrestled with the Angel, and said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Or we may bear in mind the case of the Syrophenician Woman, who persevered in her petitions, until at length Jesus said unto her, "O Woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

As you lie upon your bed of suffering, or are confined to your chamber, bear in mind that there *are* difficulties; and you must make a deliberate effort to overcome them.

You need to have your *special hours of devotion* in sickness, quite as much as when you were well. It may be thought that as you have now so much leisure, this will be unnecessary. But sure I am that if you have no *fixed* times for prayer, your devotions will be very desultory and

pointless. A duty, which we fancy we may engage in *at any moment*, is sure to be badly done, if not left undone altogether.

And again, now that you have so much time for drawing near to God, it will be very helpful to you to *vary the subject* of your prayers. For instance, at the beginning and close of each day, your prayers might be general. At noon you might pray especially for others—for your Parish, your Minister, or any Individuals whom you may desire to mention before God. For we must not think merely of our own wants and struggles: but we should remember the trials and difficulties and temptations of our brethren, and bear them on our hearts before the Throne of Grace. Then at some period in the afternoon, you might devote a time to prayer for a direct blessing on your afflic-

tion; and you might also couple with it Self-examination, specifying any particular sins which beset you, and any graces which are lacking in you.

This would give a point and meaning to your prayers, which they would not otherwise have; and it would also make them far more interesting to you than they would otherwise be.

But though it is very desirable to have stated times for devotion, yet, if your soul is spiritually alive, you will not be content with this. Just as when a Friend whom you really love is with you, you will not be satisfied with speaking to him at meal-time, or at other stated periods, but you will be constantly wishing to converse with him; so it will be with you, if you feel God to be your Father, and Jesus to be your Friend. You

will be *constantly* longing to hold intercourse with Him who is so unspeakably dear to you. You will be *constantly* lifting up your heart to Him in short, broken prayers.

There are, be assured, “many hindrances in coming to the mercy-seat”—hindrances too from which you, my sick Brother or Sister, are by no means free. Be not cast down then, if you experience them. I have tried to give you a little help. But above all I would tell you that “The Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmities.” Ask *Him* to afford you the needed assistance, to give you a prayerful frame of mind, and to teach you what to ask, and how to ask it.

Truly your sickness will not be in vain, if during the hours of confinement you gain this one good habit—the habit of prayer. It will grow

upon you more and more. For a praying spirit, once formed during the season of illness, may become a blessed habit through life, never to be laid aside.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BIBLE THE BEST COMPANION.

THERE are many books which may be read with profit in the days of sickness. But there is one Book better than them all. I mean God's own Book, the Bible. Other books are from *men*: this is from *God*. And "who teacheth like *Him*?"

Many a sick person wishes to read his Bible, but is a little perplexed, and scarcely knows when or where to begin. It may be said, Is not the Bible *all* good? Is it not *all* profitable? Yes; but there are some parts of it *more especially* suitable to you in your present state.

I will take it for granted that you wish to profit by your illness ; that God's Word is precious to you ; and that you desire to make it your companion in your sick-room. I will try then and meet your case : it may be one of these two—

First, I will suppose you want some *Instruction in the Leading Doctrines of the Gospel*. If so, I would advise you, provided your strength is equal to it, to follow some such course as this—

1. Read Gen. i. and ii. Here you will see that man was created in a state of innocence and holiness—after God's image.

2. Read Gen. iii., where the sad history of our fall is related.

3. Read Gen. vi., where we learn the awful wickedness of men, when sin had once entered into the world.

4. Look at a few of the leading

prophecies, in which a great Deliverer is promised ; such as—

Gen. iii. 15 ; Gen. xlix. 10 ; Deut. xviii. 15—18 ; Psalm xxii. ; Is. vii. 14 ; Is. xxviii. 16 ; Is. xl. 3 ; Dan. vii. 13, 14 ; Mic. v. 2 ; Zech. xii. 10 ; Zech. xiii. 1 ; Is. liii.

5. Read through *one of the Four Gospels*, which tell us of the coming of the promised Saviour ; of His holy life ; and of His death upon the Cross, as our Redeemer.

6. You might then read *the Acts of the Apostles*, to show you what happened after our Lord's Ascension, and how bright was the faith of the Early Christians.

7. Then might follow the reading of *one or more of the Epistles*, which so beautifully teach us both what to believe and how to live.

Now, in giving you this course, I am supposing that sufficient time and

strength are allowed you to follow it up. Do not, however, fall into the mistake of thinking it necessary to read a large portion of Scripture at a time. A little, read thoughtfully, and with earnest prayer for God's teaching, will be far more likely to feed and refresh your soul.

Secondly, I will suppose another case. You may perhaps be *unable to read more than a very little*, and that only at times. And you may want,

1. Some *Awakening and Arousing* portions of Scripture. If so, you may find the following chapters suitable—

Job xlii. 1—6; Prov. i. 7—33; Is. lv.; Matt. xxii.; Matt. xxv.; Mark ii. 1—17; Luke vii. 36—50; Acts iii.; Rom. vii.; 2 Pet. iii.; Rev. iii.; Rev. xx.

2. Or you may look for *Comforting*

portions. Then turn to Ps. xxiii.; Ps. xxxii.; John x.; John xi.; John xiv.; John xv.; John xvi.; John xvii.; Rom. viii.; Heb. xi.; Heb. xii.

3. Or you may want *Help in Prayer*. Then read Ps. li.; Matt. vi. 5—8; Matt. vii. 7—11; Luke xi. 1—13; Luke xviii. 1—7, 9—14; Phil. iv. 6, 7.

4. Or you may need something to *stir up your Thankfulness*. Open your Bible at one or more of the following chapters—Ps. cxvi.; Ps. ciii.; Luke xvii. 11—19.

5. The following chapters may be found suitable to *almost any case*—Ps. i.; Ps. xxv.; Psalm xlii.; Ps. xlvii.; Ps. cxxi.; Lam. iii. 1—42; Dan. iii.; Dan. vi.; Hos. xiv.; Luke xv.; John iv. 1—30; John vi. 26—48; John x.; John xi.; Phil. i.; Eph. ii.; Heb. x.; Jam. i.; 1 Pet. i.;

1 John i. ; 1 John iii. ; 1 John iv. ;
Rev. vii. ; Rev. xxi. ; Rev. xxii.

Sometimes, when you are able, it will be well to take a verse or two of Scripture, and *turn it into prayer*. This you will find very profitable to your soul ; and it will help you greatly in raising your heart heavenward. For this purpose either the Psalms or the Epistles will be very suitable.

I well know however that a sick person often feels very weary, and scarcely able to read at all. At such times the effort of thinking is too great for the mind of one who is weakened by illness. If such is the case with you, my dear Friend, be not cast down. Your Father in heaven is fully aware of your infirmity. He knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust.

He will accept a few broken sentences, or even a trustful look, instead of a regular prayer; and He will bless the reading of a few short words, and make them as food to your soul.

May God's Word, whether read, or listened to, or treasured up in the storehouse of your memory, be very sweet to you in the time of your affliction! May it cheer many a lonely hour! And may your heart be so prepared by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that you may feel as though God was Himself speaking to your soul, and pointing out to you the way to Heaven!

CHAPTER VIII.

PROLONGED ILLNESS.

POOR weary sufferer, long have you perhaps occupied this sick-room. Your little world has for many weeks or months been contained within the walls of your chamber. Like an imprisoned Bird, your wings are clipped, and you are still forbidden to rove beyond your narrow cage. Lonely days and wearisome months are appointed you.

Be it so. Since it is God's will, it is and must be well. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

Why has God sent you this *long*

illness? He does not wish to weary you. He takes no pleasure in your sufferings. Does He not love you? And yet He has brought you into this state. Ah, is it not *because* He loves you, that He keeps you in it week after week?

Like a Father, He is chastening you, that you may be thoroughly weaned from the world, and may be made partaker of His holiness. A short affliction would not, in your case, accomplish the gracious work which He purposes to do; and so He lengthens out your trial. And, depend upon it, the day will soon come, when you will see that not one hour too long have you been kept here, and not one pain too many have you been called to bear. In your cup of suffering every drop has been carefully measured out by Him who cares for you.



Be content then to lie passive in your Father's hands. Instead of desiring that His chastening rod may be removed one moment before the time, rather ask that He will give you grace to bear your sufferings meekly, and that He will fully accomplish His great work in you.

With regard to *Prayer*, I have already recommended, in Chapter VI., the setting apart of *appointed hours* for this holy exercise. Order and regularity are never more valuable than in a lengthened illness.

And to *Prayer* forget not to add the delightful work of *Praise*. But, you may say, surely a prolonged time of sickness, and perhaps of suffering also, can hardly be a time for *Praise*? Yes, it may be, and it should be. God is good to all, and we may thank Him for His goodness. Whom

He loves He chastens; therefore thank Him for His love to *you*.

It often happens, as a Christian writer observes, that "when the heart is torpid; and yields not to the action of Prayer, it will begin to thaw with the warm and genial exercise of Praise. For how much is there to kindle the heart in the very thought of Praise! It is the religious exercise of Heaven. Nature is offering it unceasingly. The whole creation sends up one grand chorus of Praise to the Throne of God." Then join in with your feeble voice. Let some note of thankfulness be sounded, even in the chamber of sickness.

So too with regard to your *Bible-reading*. Not only let the study of God's Word be your chief employment, but read it on *some fixed plan*. Do not turn to it merely when you

happen to be in the mood, or pitch upon a chapter at random, but read it according to some rule.

For instance, you may take some Book out of the Old Testament in the morning, and read it through in order, and one out of the New Testament in the evening. Thus you will get to know much of the Bible; and you will take an interest in it, which you never felt before.

Let your Bible-reading be as one of your regular meals, which you cannot do without. Seek that your soul may be fed and nourished by it. "Thy word have I esteemed (says David) more than my necessary food." Above all, whenever you open the Bible, lift up your heart for the teaching of the Holy Spirit; for without it all your reading will be in vain.

There is one thought which often

distresses a confirmed invalid. I mean the thought that he is leading a comparatively useless life. Now, do not imagine that you must needs be useless even though you may be stretched upon a sick-bed. Depend upon it, if God has a work for you to do for Him, He can enable you to do it wherever He places you. And undoubtedly He *has* a work for you to do, prisoner as you are.

A Christian writer observes, "It may be God's will that our days may be passed upon a weary couch of pain: but still we need not be deprived of the heavenly joy of ministering. While a head to think, and a heart to care, are left to us, we may be planning for the spiritual welfare of some needy soul, and watering our plans with our prayers."

You may interest yourself in others, and do little acts of kindness towards

them. You may have an alms-bag, or a missionary-box, by your bedside, and so collect little sums from those who visit you. You may speak *a word* in season, or you may let the light of your Christian *example* shine, so that all who come near you may see what true religion is doing for you. You can *pray for your fellow-men*, whom you can reach by no other means. And who can tell what blessings you may bring down upon them by your earnest intercessions? And after all, a suffering child of God upon his sick-bed glorifies Him as much, by patient submission and resignation, as one actually engaged in more direct work for God.

Then, dear Friend, believe that your life, in this solitary sick-room, *may be* a very blessed life, a very peaceful life, yea, and a very useful life too. And truly, if you are Christ's

servant, you may cheer yourself with the happy thought, that when a few more suffering days and restless nights are past, and a few more trials are undergone, then you will be beyond the reach of suffering, and enjoy that "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

ARE you a Communicant? I mean are you one who in the days of your health loved to come to the Lord's table?

If you have hitherto lived in the neglect of this holy Ordinance, and fancy that the mere act of receiving it now will make all right, and set you fair on the way to heaven, you are greatly mistaken. The Lord's Supper is no charm to fit us for death. It is no passport to heaven. To look upon it in this light is to lower our Saviour's blessed ordinance, and to encourage ourselves in disobeying His command.

But if the Lord's Table is no new place to you—if in past days you have loved to be there—then most welcome are you now to this sacred Feast. You may, in this your day of suffering, “draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort.”

Or if, though once a neglecter of the Saviour's ordinance, you have through illness been brought to repentance—if the Holy Spirit has wrought within you a deep conviction of sin, and led you to the Cross—if you have heartily entered upon a new and better path—the thought may well come into your mind, May I now enjoy a privilege which in the days of my health I so sinfully neglected? Yes, if your heart has become tender, and if you love your Saviour, and feel an earnest desire to be His true and faithful servant, you are permitted to partake of this most precious means of

grace. Jesus welcomes you to His own Feast.

Whether then you have long been walking in the ways of Christ, or have but lately entered upon His service, so long as you are now truly in earnest, and desire henceforth to lead a holier life, then I would say to you, in my Master's name, "Come, for all things are ready. Do this in remembrance of your Lord."

This heavenly Feast is for the strengthening, feeding, and refreshing of your soul. And as you greatly need strength to help you on your way, and spiritual food to sustain you as you journey onwards, here in this Sacrament Christ is ready to give it to you; for He says, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

And what a blessing to be permitted on your sick-bed thus to remember your suffering Saviour, and

to feed your hungry soul on His Body and Blood!

Ask your Minister to explain any difficulty, or to clear up any doubt, which may trouble your mind. But above all, ask God to prepare you for this ordinance. Ask Him to give you a broken and contrite heart, that you may come as a penitent to the Cross. Ask Him to give you faith to believe in Christ, and to cast your whole soul upon Him. And ask Him to make His own Feast a very rich blessing to you.

Then I am sure that the Holy Communion will bring comfort to your soul, and help you on your heavenly way. Oh that you may derive much enjoyment from it, and may be able to say, "I sat under his shadow with much delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love!"

CHAPTER X.

NEAR HOME.

PERHAPS the days of your illness are drawing to a close, and death with its rapid strides is approaching near to you. Perhaps something whispers in your ear that your end is near.

What a difference there is between the death-bed of a worldly person, for whom sickness has done nothing, and of one for whom it has been a blessed preparation for a world of holiness!

The one will be uncheered and unblest, still far from God, and still without Christ. His bed of suffering will be changed for that gloomy prison-house, where the worm never

dieth. An eternity will open upon him, where the voice of mercy will no more be heard.

But the *Christian* Sufferer who has committed his soul to Christ—who has felt his sins to be a burden and a grief to him, and has found refuge in the Saviour—who has “washed his robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”—who has been taught by the Holy Spirit, and has been brought under His sanctifying influence—to him death is as a welcome messenger. It is as the gate through which he enters into glory. He is like a traveller, who has endured many a toil and many a trial; and now he is near his home—that peaceful home which Christ has prepared in His Father’s house.

My dear Brother, or Sister, look up, for “your redemption draweth nigh.” Think of your sins so great

and so many—and all atoned for—all forgiven! Think of your Saviour, and all that He has done for you—how He has borne with your unbelief and hardness of heart—how He has welcomed you to His bosom, and received you, although the chief of sinners. And can you not trust Him now? Oh, believe on Him with all your heart. Cling to Him as the limpet clings to the solid rock. Let Him be everything to you—His blood your only plea—His righteousness the cloak to cover you—His atonement your only hope. Let Him be in your dying thoughts. Let His rod and His staff comfort you.

Think often of Heaven. Here you are but a stranger: there you will be at home. Here you have a suffering body: there there will be no more sin and no more pain. Here you are

often cast down by the weakness of your faith, and the sinfulness of your heart. Here you have many a conflict and many a doubt, much darkness and ignorance. But there all will be peace; all will be light; we shall "know even as we are known." May your eye be fixed on heaven, and may you be made daily more meet for the inheritance of the saints!

Thank God for His past dealings with you; and trust Him, oh trust Him, for what is before you. May the last steps of your wilderness journey be safe and peaceful! May you "lean on your beloved"; and say in the humble confidence of an assured hope, "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: and now there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"!

CHAPTER XI.

RECOVERY ; A TIME FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND CAUTION.

I WILL suppose that your complaint has taken a favourable turn, and that, through God's mercy, you are now recovering. Your illness, whether long or short, is leaving you ; and health is coming back, with its many duties, blessings, and dangers. The season of recovery is a critical season : and not only does it call forth our gratitude, but also our watchfulness.

The illness which you have just passed through has, I trust, been blest to you. It leaves you better

than it found you—more thoughtful, more humble, more thankful, more in earnest. You have formed many a holy resolution, which you thoroughly mean to carry out; and you have declared before God, that you will henceforth live to Him, and give yourself to His blessed service.

These resolutions were made in the hour of your affliction, when God's heavy hand was upon you. And do you repent having made them? I trust not. I would hope that you are really anxious, God helping you, to live much nearer to Him than you have ever yet lived; and that the desire of your heart is to be His disciple. You are resolved to make a new start, and to live an altogether new life. And I promise you that, if these resolutions are kept, your course will indeed be a happy one, and you will for ever thank God

for having chastened you, and thus brought you to Himself.

But, if you remember, I told you in Chapter v. that your best resolutions will be worthless, and will fall to the ground, if they are made in your own strength. Even St. Paul felt that he needed greater power than he himself possessed; for he says, “I can do all things *through Christ which strengtheneth me.*”

Let me then remind you, dear Friend, that in yourself you are powerless. The strength you need must come from above. It is God alone who can “work in you to will and to do his good pleasure.” Never forget this. You must throw yourself upon God, entreating His gracious help, and that help will most assuredly be given to you.

But there is another caution I must give you. During the weeks

that are past you have been much in your Sick Room. You have been much alone. The world has for a time been shut out. But now you are going to plunge into it again ; and Satan will try hard to make you forget your illness, your resolves, and the great mercies which God has shown you. He will whisper in your ear, "Death is no longer hovering over you : it is afar off. You may enjoy a little more of the world yet, and there will be ample time to think of religion."

Then again, there will be many who will try to persuade you that the Christian life is a hard and gloomy one. They will laugh at your religious feelings, and perhaps endeavour by persecution to turn you from the right path.

Now, it is well to be prepared for both these trials, for they will surely

come. Remember, Satan desires to have your soul ; and the more in earnest you seem to be, the more desperate will be his efforts to draw you from your steadfastness. And as for persecution, it is nothing more than the Christian's portion. For, does not the Word of God say that "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" ? and again, that "we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God" ? If you would gain the victory, you must fight the battle ; if you would overcome, you must bear the Cross. But oh, how small these difficulties will seem, if God is on your side, and if Christ undertakes for you.

On leaving your Sick Room then—

1. *Expect to meet with difficulties.*
We can none of us win Christ with-

out many an effort. We can none of us reach heaven without many a trial by the way. Do not flatter yourself that the path will be smooth and easy. "The kingdom of heaven," saith our Lord, "suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

2. *Go forth in the strength of the Lord.* Conscious of your own weakness, be ever looking to Him for help. Lean upon His arm, and He will uphold you. Trust Him, and all will be well. Hear His loving promise,—
 "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

3. *Be decided for Christ.* There are many half-hearted, undecided ones in the world; many who set out for heaven, but never reach it; many who have pious feelings and promise well, but fail for lack of boldness and decision. They are always wishing

to be better, and hoping one day to be more in earnest ; but they never surrender their whole hearts to Christ, and therefore they are never really His.

A decided course is far the *easiest*. Let the world see that your face is set heavenward, and half your difficulty is over. Be content to lose your character with worldly people. Declare plainly that you seek a better country. This will make your course plain and straightforward.

Again, a decided course is far the *happiest*. If you are always wavering between the world and Christ, you will find no peace in religion. But if you are a bold, hearty, earnest disciple of Christ, then religion will give you the truest happiness. You will find her ways to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths to be peace.

Remember, God might have cut

you off in your illness. But He has graciously spared you. Oh then, show forth your thankfulness; not with your lips only, but by consecrating your *spared life* to Him who has so mercifully lengthened it out. It has been well said by an old writer, "Thanksgiving is good; but thanks *living* is better."

CHAPTER XII.

A WEEK'S MEDITATION FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

MONDAY.

“Wherefore hast thou afflicted me?”

NUMB. XI. 11.

WHY am I afflicted? For what reason is this sickness sent to me? These are solemn questions: let me try and answer them.

First of all, this is God's doing: that I am sure of. It is Thou, O Lord, who hast afflicted me. It is no other than Thine hand, that is laid upon me.

And then, there is another thing, which I am equally sure of—there

is a *why* and a *wherefore* for all that the Lord doeth. "Affliction," says Eliphaz, "cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." It does not come by accident. It does not light upon this, or that person, as if by chance.

Let me seriously think over the matter, and try to find out *why* God has dealt thus with me. Ah, there was a "needs be" for it: Perhaps I was growing worldly; and I wanted something to bring me to my senses. Perhaps I was taking it easily, like many around me, slumbering on without any misgivings; and this is my Father's voice, saying to me, "Awake, thou that sleepest;" "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Or perhaps I was building too much on my health and strength, and fancying that death was a long way off; and here is a warning come to me,

that mine is only an "earthly tabernacle," and it will soon be "dissolved."

Well, then, I see plenty of reasons for this affliction; and I see love in it all. Most true do I feel those words to be, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." It is not, as I thought, because my God loves me *not*; but because He *does* love me, *therefore* He afflicts me.

If God had not loved my soul, He would have allowed me to live on, as I was living. But He had pity on me; He cared for me; He longed to draw me to Himself. And so He called me aside for a while, that He might teach me something, and do me good.

Oh that this sickness may prove one of my greatest blessings! Oh that the Lord may sanctify it, and make it the means of bringing me nearer to Himself!

TUESDAY.

“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.”—1 PET. v. 6.

MAY I not say with Job, “The hand of the Lord hath touched me”? Oh that I may feel its power, and not thrust it from me! What is now my duty?

1. I will *think over my past life*. This cannot be done in a moment. Let me take a searching look into the very depths of my heart. This may give me pain, and make me feel uneasy. And so it is very painful sometimes to probe a wound; but is it not needful? Must we not get to the bottom of the sore, in order to heal it? What folly to shut one’s eyes, and cry, “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace. The great question is, Am I right with God?

What discoveries do I make! How many and great are my sins! There are some that I never noticed at the time; others that I have long ago forgotten; and some, alas, which I committed knowingly. How many bad actions have I done! How many bad words have issued from these lips! How many bad thoughts have passed through my mind! Am I not indeed a sinner? If I say otherwise, my own mouth will condemn me.

2. I will *humble myself before God*. I will cast myself down before His footstool. The cry that suits me best is the poor contrite Publican's, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Let mine be a heartfelt contrition—true repentance. Do I hate sin because my God hates it? Do I feel its misery, and desire to forsake it? Oh, when I look up, I seem to see God's hand lifted up against me; and

my heart seems to say, "Lord, I deserve it all."

3. Now then, I dare not rest a moment longer without *applying for pardon*. And where should a poor sinner betake himself, but to the cross of Christ? *There* is the only remedy. *There* is the only fountain in which a sinner can wash and be clean. *There* has many a penitent gone before me, and found forgiveness and peace. And *there* too will I take my stand. "Lord, save me, or I perish."

WEDNESDAY.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
MAT. XI. 28.

Ан, how many "heavy laden" ones there are in this world of sorrow! One is labouring under a painful disease. Another is sick and weary of a false world. Another's heart is full, and ready to burst, with some hidden inward grief. Sin is the weight which bears down a fourth.

Well, whatever be our peculiar case, here is a word for each and all of us. Here is a word from One who has power to relieve us.

He says, "Come unto Me." And how shall I come? I must come *humbly*, feeling my own unworthiness. I must come "in prayer *believing*." I must come *just as I am*, without

waiting to be worthier. I must come *like a needy beggar*, with nothing to offer, and with all to receive.

There is not a moment to lose. I have waited too long. The sand in my hour-glass *may* be nearly run out. Who knows but that there may be only a few grains of sand left? My Saviour *now* says, "Come." His invitation still sounds in my ears. His long-suffering is not yet exhausted. Oh, God forbid that I should trifle with His mercy for a single instant longer, lest perchance it be soon withdrawn. I will kneel down at this very moment, and say to Him, "Lord, I come as thou hast bidden me: I am guilty, wash me, and make me clean: I am oppressed, undertake for me."

And what is it that Jesus offers me? It is "rest." This is just what I need—rest for my poor burdened

soul. What! and is this rest then really for *me*? Is there pardon for me, who am the chief of sinners? Is there peace for my wounded conscience? Is there acceptance for one who has so often refused to come, that he "might have life"? Yes, there is all this, and even more. There is a heaven held out to me; the door is open; and the words, "*Welcome, Welcome!*" are written as it were over it.

Oh, wondrous mercy! How is it that I have shut my eyes to it so long? There is rest *here* in Christ, "joy and peace in believing:" and a better rest *above*; "There remaineth a rest to the people of God."

THURSDAY.

“The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”—GAL. II. 20.

WHAT! did He love *me*? Long have I lived with hardly a feeling of love towards my Saviour. I loved my family; I loved the world; I loved myself. And I did worse; for I loved my sins. But, alas! I felt little or no affection for my Saviour. My heart was alive to earthly things; but was cold and sluggish towards Him. And can it be that, in spite of all this, He loves me?

Who is it that speaks thus? It is St. Paul. Ah, no wonder *he* could speak of his Saviour's love, for he was a holy apostle. But stop: does he not say (1 Tim. i. 15), “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom *I am chief*”? Does

he not say, too, that he was “once a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious”? Then I too may take courage, and say, “He has indeed loved *me*.” Poor and ignorant as I am, undeserving and vile as I must appear in His sight, still, still His feeling towards me is that of love.

And how has He shown His love? He has “given Himself for me.” I have earthly friends, who I believe would give me money, if they had it. Some of them would give me up a portion of their time, if they thought it would be of service to me. But Jesus, my best and dearest Friend, what has *He* given? His own life—His very self.

Is not this enough to win my heart? Does it not touch me in the tenderest part? I can think of God's *anger*, and still remain stubborn. But now that I think of His *love*, my

heart melts; it throbs with affection towards this most loving Saviour.

And how is He dealing with me at this very moment? He might have cut me off, and then perhaps I should have been at this moment in hell. This would have been no more than I deserve. But no; He is *even now* dealing tenderly and lovingly with me. He has stopped me in my wayward course, that He might lead me into a better and a happier path. He has "brought me into the net, and laid affliction upon my loins," that He might gather me into His fold. He has "loved me with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn me."

FRIDAY.

“ Oh that I had wings like a dove ! for then
would I fly away, and be at rest.”

Ps. LV. 6.

REST—this is what I want. Sometimes, when I have come home at night, after working hard, I have felt, “ How sweet is *rest* ! ” Sometimes, after a toilsome week, when the Sabbath dawns, I have said to myself, “ How refreshing is this day of *rest* ! ” And now, in my sickness, when I have been racked with pain during a long and lonesome day, or have passed a sleepless night, I have thought, “ Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at *rest* ! ”

Now, is this a right wish ? or is it a wrong one ?

It is a *wrong* wish, when it arises

merely from a desire to be released from present suffering. Elijah, being tired of life, "requested for himself that he might die." Jonah, in a moment of disappointment, made a like petition. And David, under much the same feelings, uttered the words before us. The world sometimes goes ill with us. We are weary of it, and long to be quit of it.

How is it with *myself*? Am I weary of my sick chamber? Do I feel that the joys of earth have left me, and *therefore* I wish to be gone? God forbid. I will cheerfully bear all. I will lie here just so long as my Father pleases. His will—His blessed, holy, perfect will—and not mine, be done! "It is good for me to bear the yoke."

But is not the wish which David expresses sometimes a *right* wish?

Yes, when it comes from the lips of a true Christian, who longs for heaven, and is ripe for it. If we love any one, we shall desire his company. And if our hearts throb with love to our absent Saviour, well may we long to be *with Him*. Thus St. Paul had "a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." It was not because the world had shaken him off, or that he was weary of its toils and trials. No, he desired heaven, because his Saviour was there, and he panted to find himself by His side.

O God, give me such faith. Make me not only willing to leave this world at Thy summons, but ready to welcome that summons, saying, "Even so come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!"

SATURDAY.

“ I know their sorrows.”—EXODUS III. 7.

THANK God for this ! I have often said within myself, “ *No one knows my sorrows : no one can tell what I suffer.*” But now I hear, as it were, a voice from heaven, saying to me, “ I know thy sorrows.”

It is my Father who speaks these words. And He measures out every sorrow to me. There is not one too many. There is not one heavier, or sharper, than is needful. Neither am I called upon to bear them one day longer than is good for me.

No matter what my sorrow is ; whether it arise from pain of body or anguish of heart, it is the cross that is laid upon me, and I will cheerfully bear it. I will kiss the hand that smites me, for it is my Father's.

It is no small comfort to feel that the Lord “knows our sorrows.” Therefore we may be quite sure He will not lay upon us more than we can bear. As the refiner of silver carefully watches the metal whilst it is in the hot furnace, so does Jesus watch over His suffering people. There is no trial too small, and no pang too hidden, for His eye to reach, and His heart to pity. He feels for them, and tenderly loves them.

“Why then art thou cast down, O my soul?” Surely He who was with Daniel in the den, and with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the hot fire, and with Joseph in the prison—He who said to His mourning disciples, “I am with you always”—will be with *me*. No, my Saviour, I dare not distrust thee. I will open to thee all my heart. I

will tell out all my sorrows to thee one by one. I will "cast all my care upon thee," knowing that thou "carest for me."

Has not Christ "borne my griefs and carried my sorrows"? Then, though they sorely try me, they cannot crush me. They may be very hard to bear; but I will not, I dare not, repine. The heavier my load, the more firmly will I lean upon my Saviour. "I will trust, and not be afraid;" for "the Almighty God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

SUNDAY.

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”—REV. XXI. 4.

TEARS, and sorrow, and sickness, and death are man's heritage; they are his portion here. They are found in the cottages of the poor, and the mansions of the rich. We see them everywhere. There is not a spot in this wide world that is free from them.

Surely there must be a hidden cause for this. What is it? *Sin* is the cause. From the moment that sin entered into the world, man became a fallen creature; and death and misery became his portion.

But is there no remedy? “Is there no balm in Gilead, no Phy-

sician," who can heal us? In this stormy world, is there no hiding-place, no safe refuge? Yes, "the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, with healing in his wings." He is able to pardon sin, and to free us from its hateful power. He was "made sin for us." He suffered in our stead. He has conquered death for His people. It can no longer really hurt them. There it is still; and I must taste it; but it has lost its sting and bitterness.

Oh then, how happy may the true believer feel *even now*! Sorrow cannot crush him; sickness cannot overwhelm him; death cannot hurt him; for his "life is hid with Christ in God." He is safe now, and safe for ever.

And is there not a world before us, to which the Christian may look forward with thoughts of peace—a world

where no sin can enter, and where sorrow and sighing shall flee away? Let me think of that happy world. And the more my thoughts dwell upon it, the more shall I be willing to bear a little trial here. What are a few days of pain, and a few more wearisome nights, to one who is drawing near to his heavenly home? Oh, welcome sorrow! welcome suffering! if it only weans me from this treacherous world, and drives me to my Saviour's arms. My God, subdue every sin in me. Sanctify me by thy Holy Spirit, and fit me for thy presence, where "there is fulness of joy," and "pleasures for evermore."

CHAPTER XIII.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK ROOM.

1. *For one just taken ill.*

O HEAVENLY FATHER, now that I am visited by sickness, I desire to feel that I am in thy hands. I thank thee for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. And I thank thee also for this trial, which thou hast sent me. I know that it is for my good, and that thou in very faithfulness hast afflicted me.

O my God, I confess that I am a sinful creature. When thou gavest me health and strength, I was not thankful. When thou gavest me

opportunities for serving thee, I lived too much for myself. But thou hast stopped me in my course, and brought me down in my journey. Oh, grant that this illness may be for much good to my soul. May it teach me to know myself. May it lead me to Jesus, my precious Saviour. May it be a great help to me on my way to heaven. Make this time of sickness to be a time of blessing. Let it not be thrown away upon me.

Restore me, O Lord, if it be thy will. Bless the means used for my recovery. And grant that if through thy mercy I return once more to my usual health, this sickness may not leave me as it found me.

Lord, take me under thy special keeping. Do with me as thou seest best; and prepare me either for life or for death.

Hearken to this my prayer, and

bless me, both in soul and body, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

2. For Thankful Submission.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, in thy hands are all things. In thee I live, and move, and have my being. Thou doest all things well. Make me to feel this in my present affliction. Show me that there is much love in this visitation. Show me that goodness and mercy have followed me hitherto, and enable me to see thy gracious hand in all that thou doest. Teach me by this affliction to know myself better, and to know more of Christ my Saviour.

Lord, make me content to bear the yoke which thou layest upon me. Grant that I may willingly and cheerfully receive whatever thou art pleased to send me. Teach me to give up my own will, and to accept

thine. Oh teach me that lesson, so hard to learn—teach me from my heart to say, Father, not my will but thine be done.

I know not what is good for me ; but thou, O God, knowest. I would leave all to thy disposal, and ask thee to deal with me as thou seest well. Enable me to kiss the rod that scourges me, and thankfully to bear even the heaviest burden which thou, my Father, layest upon me.

Oh, turn my sorrow into joy, my heaviness into praise. And may I one day be able to say, It is good for me to have been afflicted.

Hear, O gracious God, this my prayer, and answer it for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

3. *Under much Suffering.*

O MOST gracious God, thou dost

not afflict willingly or grieve thy children. Look upon me now suffering under thy heavy hand. Thou knowest that my pains are great, and that I am sometimes tempted to murmur. Oh, come to my help ; and give me grace sufficient for my present need.

Remove this great trial, if it be thy will. Grant me some ease in the midst of my affliction. But if, O my Father,—if thou seest fit that thy servant should still suffer, oh give me grace to bow before thee with humble submission. Grant me the needed strength. And then shall I not bear patiently what thou layest upon me ? The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?

O blessed Saviour, who didst endure the agony of the Cross for me, make me to feel how little my suffer-

ings are, when compared with thine. Thou canst feel for thine afflicted people : stretch out the arms of thy compassion towards me. Meet me in this my hour of trial. Draw near to me, O my Lord ; and make me to taste that thou art very gracious.

All this I ask for thy own name's sake. Amen.

4. *For one under Concern for his Soul.*

O MY GOD, I desire to humble myself in thy presence. Too long have I lived without any concern about my soul ; but now thou hast in thy great mercy awakened me.

Thanks be unto thee for having shown me my exceeding sinfulness. Lord, make me to feel it more and more. O blessed Spirit, convince me of my guilt, and lead me to the Saviour. I now see but very dimly :

oh, give me more light. Remove every scale from my eyes, and shine brightly on my soul.

O Saviour, I wish to be thy servant. I wish to give myself heart and soul to thee. I wish to be numbered among thy people. Accept me, worthless as I am. Heal my soul's sickness. Give me health, and cure. Blot out every sin that I have committed, and wash me in thy own most precious blood.

Oh that the remainder of my life may be devoted to thee. Oh that I may hate sin even as thou hatest it, and may seek to be holy as thou art holy. Blessed Jesus, make me to be thy true disciple now ; and fit me for thy heavenly kingdom hereafter, for thy own name's sake. Amen.

5. For one under a lengthened Illness.

O THOU Father of mercies, and God of love, who hast kept me so long under thy chastening hand, I thank thee for all the tender care and kindness thou hast shown me.

Pardon me for any impatience, and for any restless feeling, which has at any time sprung up within me. Pardon me for my want of faith and love. Pardon me for my coldness and dulness of heart. Pardon me for those sinful thoughts and evil desires which have crept into my soul. Oh cleanse me, Saviour, from my guilt. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Give me peace, even in the midst of suffering. Make me to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. When I read thy holy Scriptures, make them

speak words of life and power to my soul. When I pray, may the Spirit help my infirmities. When I am alone, be thou with me. When I am with others, may I try to do them good. When I sleep, do thou guard me. When I lie awake, may I enjoy sweet thoughts of thee.

O God, make this long illness a blessed preparation time for eternity. Make me to know Christ, to love Him, and to serve Him. May I live upon Him from day to day, and from hour to hour. And for His sake may I at length be admitted into heaven, to dwell with thee for evermore. Amen.

6. *For a Sick Person before receiving the Holy Communion.*

O most gracious Saviour, I thank thee that thou hast provided a spiritual feast for thy people. Teach me

to come to thee day by day ; for thou art my hope and my support. And now my soul longs to eat bread, and drink wine, in remembrance of thee. My spirit is weak and feeble ; and I need support and strength within. But thou art able to supply all my wants out of thy fulness. Oh, do so in this holy Sacrament. Feed me with heavenly food. And, when with my *lips* I receive the bread and wine, may I in my *heart* feed upon thee.

I entreat thee, O my God, to prepare me for this heavenly feast, by giving me a humble, penitent, believing heart. I feel that I am in thy sight utterly unworthy, utterly unclean. Oh receive me as I am, and make me better. If it be thy good pleasure, may my life be spared for thy service. Or, if thou art pleased to call me hence, make

me meet for the inheritance of the saints above.

Grant me now a peaceful enjoyment of thee, in this most blessed ordinance. Make thyself known to me, and bless me abundantly. Cheer me in the remainder of my journey. And, when I come to the end of it, receive me into my home in heaven, for the sake of my only Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

7. For a Sick Person after receiving the Communion.

BLESSED Lord, thou hast not left me to myself in this my sickness. I thank thee for the unspeakable comforts of thy Gospel. I thank thee for the visits of my Minister. Thou raisest up kind friends to comfort me. But thou hast given me, what is better than earthly friends, a Saviour for

my guilty soul! Lord, there is pardon in thy precious blood. To thy cross alone I look for mercy.

Heavenly Saviour, thou hast given me a welcome to thy own most blessed Feast. I thank thee for it. My soul hath received comfort. Oh may that heavenly food nourish me unto eternal life! Mercifully pardon whatever was amiss. Forgive my coldness and deadness of soul.

May I now be more closely united to thee than ever. O my Father, look upon thy poor weak child. I desire to cling to thee. Strengthen me upon my bed of sickness. Let thy hand support and guide me. Place underneath me thy everlasting arms.

Keep my soul alive, and in health, from day to day. Thou hast graciously nourished me at thy table. Feed me ever more and more. Make me to feel the power of thy Spirit in

my heart; so that my faith may be more lively, my love more earnest, my submission to thy will more complete.

Grant that I may bear all that thou shalt lay upon me, with patient thankfulness. And when, at last, I am called to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, be thou with me; let thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Hear me, O Lord, in these my imperfect prayers, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

8. *A short Prayer for one in Danger.*

O MY Father, hear me at this solemn time for Jesus Christ's sake. Pity a poor penitent sinner. Make me to feel my many sins, and to mourn over them. Lead me to my Redeemer. By thy cross and sufferings, O Saviour, by thine agony and bloody

sweat, good Lord, deliver me. Purge away all my guilt. May thy blood cleanse me from my every sin.

O Lord, thou didst receive the dying thief; in thine infinite mercy receive me. Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. Spare my life, if it be thy will. And if so, oh that I may live more entirely unto thee, and that I may be able each day to say, To me to live is Christ.

But, O God, if thou art going to call me away, take me I entreat thee to thyself. My only trust is in Jesus. May I be found washed in the blood of that spotless Lamb. May I be found in Him pardoned and saved.

Lord, I would leave all to thee. Do for me as thou seest best. But grant peace and salvation to my soul for Jesus Christ's sake, my only Redeemer. Amen.

9. *For a dying Person.*

(This may be used *with* a dying person, by changing a few words.)

O most holy God, hear me at this solemn hour. My end is drawing near. Soon I shall leave this world. Oh that I may be with Thee. Oh take me unto thy presence, where there is fulness of joy.

Lord Jesus, I am vile and sinful. Cleanse this guilty soul with thy precious blood. Pardon me for all my transgressions; and fill my heart with love and peace.

Keep me from the assaults of Satan. And do thou, O my Saviour, stand by me as I pass through the valley of the shadow of death. May I fear no evil. May thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

O my Father, deal tenderly with thy poor weak and erring child.

Look not upon my sins, but look upon Jesus my Saviour. Pity me, and accept me, for His dear sake. I desire to bring all my sins to the foot of the cross. My cry is, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Stand by me, O God, in this my hour of weakness. Leave me not, neither forsake me, I beseech thee. Stretch out thy hand to hold me up, and let not my faith fail.

O pardon me, bless me, save me, keep me to the end, for Christ's sake. Amen.

10. *Short Prayers, when longer ones cannot be used.*

O HEAVENLY FATHER, I have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed. My heart is full of evil. Give me, I beseech thee, true repentance and a living faith; and save me for Christ's sake. Amen.

O MY GOD, pardon my many sins; draw me to thyself; and lift up my fainting heart, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O MY GOD, enable me simply to trust thee. Teach me to bear all that thou layest upon me; and to say from my heart, "Father, not my will, but thy will be done." Amen.

TEACH me to love thee, O my God, with all my heart. Father, draw away my love from earthly things, and fix it upon Thee. Amen.

LORD, strengthen my faith; and grant me patience in my suffering. Amen.

O GOD, be merciful to me a sinner, and comfort me with thy presence. Give me thy blessed Spirit, to create

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in me a clean heart, and to make me holy, for Christ's sake. Amen.

PARDON, O Lord, my many sins, and spare me for thy meroy's sake.

Spare me, good Lord.

From fretfulness and impatience, from murmuring and discontent, from hardness of heart and a too great love of this present world,

Good Lord, deliver me.

By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment,

Good Lord, deliver me.

BE with me, O my Father, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Help me, and sustain me, for my Saviour's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER XIV.

HYMNS FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

I.

MY God and Father, while I stray
Far from my home on life's rough way,
Oh, teach me from my heart to say,
"Thy will be done!"

Though dark my path and sad my lot,
Let me "be still," and murmur not;
And ever pray, as Thou hast taught,
"Thy will be done!"

What though in lonely grief I sigh
For friends beloved no longer nigh,
Submissive still would be my cry,
"Thy will be done!"

Renew my will from day to day;
Blend it with Thine, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say,
"Thy will be done!"

I

Though Thou hast called me to resign
What most I prized (it ne'er was mine),
I have but yielded what was Thine :

“Thy will be done !”

Should grief or sickness waste away
My life in premature decay,
Through Christ my Saviour still I'd say,

“Thy will be done !”

Let but my fainting heart be blest
With thy sweet Spirit for its guest,
To Thee, O Lord, I leave the rest :

“Thy will be done !”

Then when to Heaven's bright realms I soar,
These words, so mixed with tears before,
I'll sing triumphant evermore :

“Thy will be done !”

II.

I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me, and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.

I came to Jesus as I was,
 Weary, and worn, and sad ;
I found in Him a resting-place,
 And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 Behold, I freely give
The living water : thirsty one,
 Stoop down, and drink, and live.
I came to Jesus, and I drank
 Of that life-giving stream,
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 And now I live in Him.

III.

HEAR, gracious God, a sinner's cry,
For I have nowhere else to fly ;
My hope, my only hope's in Thee ;
O God, be merciful to me.

To Thee I come, a sinner poor,
And wait for mercy at Thy door ;
Indeed I've nowhere else to flee ;
O God, be merciful to me.

To Thee I come, a sinner vile,
Upon me, Lord, vouchsafe to smile.
Mercy alone I make my plea :
O God, be merciful to me.

To Thee I come, a sinner great,
And well Thou knowest all my state ;
Yet full forgiveness is with Thee :
O God, be merciful to me.

To Thee I come, a sinner lost,
Nor have I aught wherein to trust ;
But where Thou art, Lord, I would be :
O God, be merciful to me.

IV.

JESUS, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is high.

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life be past :
Safe into the haven guide ;
Oh receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none ;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.
Leave, ah leave me not alone :
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed ;
All my help from Thee I bring :
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.
Thou, O Christ, art all I want ;
More than all in Thee I find :
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin ;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.

THE SHEPHERD TRUE.

V.

I WAS wandering and weary,
When the Saviour came unto me ;
For the paths of sin grew dreary,
And the world had ceased to woo me.
And I thought I heard Him say,
As He came along His way,

Ye wand'ring souls, come near me ;
My sheep should never fear me ;
I am the Shepherd true.

At first I would not hearken,
And put off till to-morrow ;
But life began to darken,
And I was sick with sorrow.
And I thought I heard Him say, &c.

At last I paused to listen ;
That voice could not deceive me ;
I saw His kind eyes glisten,
So anxious to relieve me.
And I'm *sure* I heard Him say, &c.

He bore me on His shoulder,
And tenderly He brought me ;
Then bade my love grow bolder,
And said how He had sought me.
And I thought I heard Him say, &c.

I feared His love might weaken,
And fail, when more He knew me ;
But it burneth like a beacon,
And its light and heat go through me.
And I'm *sure* I heard Him say, &c.

Let us do then, dearest Brother,
What will best and longest please us—
Follow not the ways of others,
But give ourselves to Jesus.

If we'll follow on His way,
We may always hear Him say,
Come, little flock, come near me ;
My sheep should never fear me ;
I am the Shepherd true.

VI.

Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am—though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve :
Because Thy promise I believe :
O Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down :
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come !

VII.

“Is this the way, my Father?” “’Tis, my child.
Thou must pass through the tangled, dreary
wild

If thou would’st reach the city undefiled—
Thy peaceful Home above.”

“But enemies are round.” “Yes, child, I
know

That where thou least expect’st thou’lt find
a foe ;

But conqueror thou shalt prove o’er all below.
Only seek strength above.”

“ My Father, it is dark.” “ Child, take my
hand :

Cling close to me. I’ll lead thee through
the land.

Trust my all-seeing care—so shalt thou
stand

’Midst glory bright above.”

“ My footsteps seem to slide.” “ Child, only
raise

Thine eyes to me ; then in these slippery
ways

I will hold up thy goings. Thou shalt
praise

Me for each step above.”

“ O Father, I’m weary.” “ Child, lean thy
head

Upon my breast : it was my love that
spread

Thy rugged path. Hope on still, till I have
said,

Rest—rest with me above.”

VIII.

“ABIDE with me ! fast falls the eventide ;
The darkness thickens ; Lord, with me
abide.

When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

“Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day ;
Earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass
away ;
Change and decay in all around I see ;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.

“Not a brief glance, I beg, a passing word ;
But as Thou dwell’st with Thy disciples,
Lord ;
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me.

“Thou on my head in early youth didst
smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse
meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee ;
Oh to the close, O Lord, abide with me.”

IX.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear !
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
It calms the troubled breast ;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.

Dear Name ! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place ;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought ;
But when I see Thee as Thou art,
I'll praise Thee as I ought.

X.

SHEPHERD of thy little flock,
Lead me to the shadowing rock,
Where the richest pasture grows,
Where the living water flows.

By that pure and silent stream,
Sheltered from the scorching beam,
Shepherd, Saviour, Guardian, Guide,
Keep me ever near Thy side.

XI.

WHY should I fear the darkest hour,
Or tremble at the tempest's power?
Jesus vouchsafes to be my *Tower*!

Though hot the fight, why quit the field?
Why must I either flee or yield,
Since Jesus is my mighty *Shield*?

When creature comforts fade and die,
Worldlings may weep, but why should I?
Jesus still lives, and still is *nigh*!

I know not what may soon betide,
Nor how my wants may be supplied;
But Jesus knows, and "*will provide*."

Though sin would fill me with distress,
The throne of grace I dare address,
For Jesus is my *Righteousness*.

Though faint my prayers, and cold my love,
My steadfast hope shall not remove,
While Jesus *intercedes* above.

Against me earth and hell combine,
But on my side is power Divine :
Jesus is *all*, and He is *mine*.

XII.

WHEN this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glorious sun,
When we stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story ;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When I hear the wicked call
On the rocks and hills to fall ;
When I see them start and shrink
On the fiery deluge-brink ;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When I stand before the throne,
Drest in beauty not my own ;
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinching heart ;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When the praise of heaven I hear,
Loud as thunders to the ear ;
Loud as many waters' noise,
Sweet as harp's melodious voice ;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

XIII.

FROM Calvary's cross a Fountain flows,
Of water and of blood ;
More healing than Bethesda's pool,
Or famed Siloam's flood.

The dying Thief rejoiced to see
That Fountain in his day ;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing thy power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought, free reward,
A golden harp for me.

XIV.

I LAY my *sins* on Jesus ;
The spotless Lamb of God ;
He bears them all, and frees us
From the accursed load.
I bring my *guilt* to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White, in His blood most precious,
Till not a spot remains.

I lay my *wants* on Jesus,
All fulness dwells in Him ;
He heals all my diseases,
He doth my soul redeem.
I lay my *griefs* on Jesus,
My burdens and my cares ;

He from them all releases,
He all my sorrow shares.

I long to be *like* Jesus,
Meek, loving, lowly, mild ;
I long to be like Jesus,
The Father's holy child.

I long to be *with* Jesus,
Amid the heavenly throng,
To sing with saints His praises,
To learn the angels' song.

XV.

SUN of my soul ! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near ;
Oh ! may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought—How sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast !

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live ;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take ;
Till, in the ocean of Thy love,
We lose ourselves in Heaven above.

XVI.

THY way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be :
Lead me by Thine own hand ;
Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best—
Winding or straight, it leads
Right onward to Thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot ;
I would not if I might ;
Choose Thou for me, my God,
So shall I walk aright.

Take Thou my cup, and it
With joy or sorrow fill—
As best to Thee may seem,
Choose Thou my good or ill.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health,
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine the choice
In all things great or small :
Be Thou my guide, my strength,
My wisdom, and my all.

XVII.

ACCORDING to Thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember Thee.

Thy body, broken for my sake,
My bread from Heaven shall be ;
The cup of blessing I will take,
And thus remember Thee.

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary ;
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice,
I must remember Thee.

Remember Thee, and all Thy pains,
And all Thy love to me ;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember Thee.

And when these failing lips grow dumb,
And thought and memory flee,
When Thou shalt in Thy kingdom come,
Then, Lord, remember me.

XVIII.

JERUSALEM ! my happy home !
Name ever dear to me !
When shall my labours have an end,
In joy, and peace, and thee ?

When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And gates of pearl behold ?
Thy bulwarks, with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold ?

Why should I shrink at pain and woe,
Or feel at death dismay ?
I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

132 HYMNS FOR THE SICK-ROOM.

Apostles, martyrs, prophets there,
Around my Saviour stand ;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

Jerusalem ! my happy home !
My soul still pants for thee !
Then shall my labours have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.

XIX.

ONE sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er ;
I'm *nearer* my home to-day
Than I've ever been before !
Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be !
Nearer the great white throne !
Nearer the jasper sea !
Nearer the bound of life,
Where I lay my burden down !
Nearer leaving my cross !
Nearer wearing my crown !

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