

The Church.

"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

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Poetry.

THE PAST.
BY PROFESSOR WILSON.

How wild and dim this life appears!
One long, deep, heavy sigh,
When o'er our eyes, half closed in tears,
The images of former years
Are faintly glittering by!
And still forgotten while they go;
As, on the sea-beach, wave on wave
Dissolves at once in snow.
The amber clouds one moment lie,
Then, like a dream, are gone!
Though beautiful the moon-beams play
In the lake's bosom, bright as they,
And the soul intensely loves their stay,
Soon as the radiance melts away,
We scarce believe it shone!
Heaven-sans amid the lamp-strings dwell;
And we wish they ne'er may fade—
They cease,—and the soul is a silent cell,
Where music never plays!
Dream follows dream, through the long night-hours,
Each lovelier than the last;
But ere the breath of morning-flowers,
That gorgeous vision flies past;
And many a sweet angelic cheek,
Whose smiles of love and fondness speak,
Glide by us on this earth;
While in a day we cannot tell
Where shone the face we loved so well,
In sadness, or in mirth!

LIFE OF WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.*

The power of Divine grace is peculiarly exemplified, when those on whom the world has smiled are content to disregard its smiles, and to lay their many talents at the foot of the Redeemer's cross. He who has never been caressed and flattered, can know little of the power of those blandishments. He whom the world has frowned on, may resolve in turn to frown upon the world. But it requires, I repeat, a large measure of Divine grace in a rich man not to glory in his riches, in a mighty man not to glory in his strength, to count the honours and pleasures which almost force themselves on his acceptance but dross, and to follow the lowly Saviour. The little skiff that creeps closely by the shore may, without much difficulty, ascend the stream; but the vessel which stands out in the middle of the flood will find very often the current well nigh too strong to stem. Hence it is that the apostle declares, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble are called." Still the effectual power of God can make a way through all these obstacles, and we do accordingly find—and, blessed be his name, increasingly in the present day—some of the high and honourable of the earth ready to leave all, and to tread the narrow path where they meet comparatively few companions. Such a one was WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, of whose most interesting life I propose to gather in this and subsequent papers a few particulars.

This distinguished man was born in Hull, August 24, 1759, of an ancient and respectable family. The original designation was Wilberforce, from a township about eight miles from York; but this was changed by the grandfather of Mr. Wilberforce into the modern form. The family were in possession of very considerable property, partly inherited, and partly acquired by mercantile pursuits. His frame, from childhood, was feeble, his stature small, and his eyes weak; but his mind was always active, and his temper affectionate. At seven years of age, he was sent to the grammar-school of Hull, of which Joseph Milner was shortly afterwards master. Here he attracted notice by his admirable elocution. It was so "remarkable," said Isaac Milner (afterwards Dean of Carlisle), "that we used to set him upon a table, and make him read aloud, as an example to the other boys." He thus spent two years as a day-scholar; but, on the death of his father in 1768, he was transferred to the care of an uncle, by whom he was placed at a boarding-school of but mean character—such was the standard of education in those days—near London. His aunt was one of the well-known family of Thornton, and was connected with the early Methodists; he was thus brought within a strong religious influence, and an impression seemed to be thence produced upon his mind. But the intelligence of this was not pleasing to his grandfather, who determined on recalling him to Hull. Thither he attended his mother at twelve years old, and was speedily introduced to the gaieties of the place. Here, and at Pocklington grammar-school, where he lived under little restraint, he spent the years till his removal to the university with the reputation of a very fair scholar. His religious impressions had vanished in the society and habits he had, since his return from London, been accustomed to; but it is remarkable, that at fourteen, the first spark of a fire which afterwards burned so brightly was kindled. He addressed a letter from Pocklington to a York paper, in condemnation of the odious traffic, as he called it, in human flesh. It would be interesting to recover this document, and to mark in it the rudiments of the future friend of oppressed Africa.

Wilberforce entered St. John's College, Cambridge, in October 1776. He was now, by the death of his grandfather and uncle, in possession of an independent fortune, under the sole guardianship of his mother. It is not surprising, therefore, that, with his social disposition, and from the many temptations that were thrown into his way, he should have fallen into the loose habits of his associates. He was, indeed, mercifully preserved from actual profligacy, but his time was devoted to pleasure. He was a good enough classic to acquit himself, without reading, passably at the college-examinations, and mathematics he thought he might entirely neglect; but it reads a striking lesson to every young man similarly inclined, to know that Wilberforce, in after-life, deeply deplored his earlier remissness; and though he endeavoured, by subsequent application, to supply his deficiencies, he never could attain the mental regularity and well-trained habits which the wholesome discipline of youthful study can alone impart. Even at this time, however, a vein of deep and conscientious feeling lay beneath his gay thoughtlessness; and he declined subscribing to the Articles, which he was sensible he had not properly examined. Inquiry removed this hesitation; but it was not, on this account, till 1781, that he graduated as B.A.

Prior to his quitting the university, Mr. Wilberforce had formed the design of entering parliament. Instead of being ambitious of mercantile eminence, he aspired to shine in a very different sphere. Accordingly he declined entering on the business which, since his grand-

father's decease, had been carried on in his behalf by his cousin, Mr. Abel Smith; and, content with the ample fortune he inherited, he canvassed his native town, in expectation of a speedy dissolution of parliament. Just after the completion of his twenty-first year the anticipated event took place; and Wilberforce was returned for Hull by a triumphant majority. The expenses, however, of this election were not less than between £8,000 and £9,000.

This success invested his entry on public life with great éclat. He was welcomed by every circle of London society, and was introduced into all the leading clubs. Here the temptations of play surrounded him; but the seasonable winning of a considerable sum from persons who, he felt, could ill afford the loss, inspired him with a disgust for such amusements. Though encircled with perpetual incitements to luxurious gaiety, Mr. Wilberforce attended diligently his duty in the House of Commons. He had renewed his acquaintance with William Pitt, whom he knew slightly at Cambridge, and who was just then commencing his unparalleled career. Their acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy and confidential intercourse during the remarkable political crisis that ensued. Wilberforce had entered parliament as an independent man, and opponent of the American war and Lord North's administration; and his first important speech, in 1782, was in favour of a motion for peace with America.

It enters into the plan of this narrative to describe the political events of those times; but I may observe that Mr. Pitt soon after became Chancellor of the Exchequer, but resigned his post in April 1783. Freed from the trammels of office, he was glad to relieve his attention by a tour. Accordingly, in the autumn of that year, he proceeded, in company with Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Eliot, to France. At Rheims, the travellers stopped to improve their acquaintance with the language, before they ventured to present themselves on the more public stage of Paris. But unfortunately they had forgotten to take letters of introduction; and the only acquaintance they could form was that of an honest grocer, who frankly acknowledged that he knew none of the gentry of the place, and therefore could not introduce them. Meantime they were reported as suspicious characters to the police; but the archbishop's secretary, finding who they were, carried them to that prelate, by whom they were most hospitably treated. From Rheims they proceeded to Paris, and thence to Fontainebleau to the court, where their adventures furnished considerable amusement. The Queen, particularly, would often inquire of Mr. Pitt how his friend the grocer was.

On their return to England, parliament was just assembling, and speedily followed by Mr. Pitt's accession to power. It was felt important, by his opponents, that the great county of York should declare against him; and accordingly a meeting was convened. Mr. Wilberforce and his friends felt it equally important to attempt to direct its voice in favour of the minister; and therefore, though at present acquainted with few persons out of his own immediate neighbourhood there, he hurried to York. Many had spoken of both parties, and the meeting was wearied when Wilberforce came forward. Boswell (Johnson's biographer) was present, and has graphically described the scene. "I saw," says he, "what seemed a shrimp, mount on the table; but as I listened, he grew and grew, till the shrimp became a whale." His clear voice was distinctly heard through the vast assemblage, and his lively eloquence was enchainingly every heart, when he was interrupted by an expression from Mr. Pitt, authorising him to declare that the king had dissolved the parliament. An electric effect was produced: the address in favour of the ministry was carried, and the congregated freeholders exclaimed, "We'll have this man for our county member." It was a bold attempt for him to canvass that great county; and though he eagerly desired the honour of representing it, he dared not resign his hold of Hull. For that place he was unanimously elected, and for Yorkshire too. The enthusiasm for his success was wonderful; a large sum was subscribed to bear his expenses, not one-fourth of which was spent; and he and another ministerialist were triumphantly returned. The example was set to other counties; and Mr. Pitt's power was firmly established.

At the end of the parliamentary session, after a flying visit to the York races, he set out with his mother and sister, and Isaac Milner, for the south of France. From thence he was summoned, in January 1785, to the House of Commons, to support Mr. Pitt's motion for parliamentary reform. Milner, in this journey, was his only companion. During the session, Mr. Wilberforce was constantly in his place; but in the summer, he and Milner returned to rejoice his relatives at Genoa. This intercourse with Milner was the instrumental means of leading him to the saving knowledge of Divine truth. He had not previously been aware of his companion's religious principles; who, though at that time so far deficient in practical piety as to attend Sunday parties, &c., was not inclined to permit any railing of religion. When Wilberforce, therefore, laughed at it, Milner replied, "I am no match for you in this running fire; but if you really wish to discuss these subjects seriously, I will gladly enter into them with you." On their hastily quitting Nice, in 1785, Wilberforce, having taken up Doddridge's "Rise and Progress," asked his friend its character. "It is one of the best books ever written; let us take it with us, and read it on our journey," was the reply. They read it; and Wilberforce determined, at some future season, to examine the Scriptures to see if the statements of Doddridge were borne out. In their journey the following summer, their conversations became more important. They began, as Milner had proposed, to read the Greek Testament, and seriously to investigate its doctrines. The result must be stated in Mr. Wilberforce's own impressive words:—"It would indicate a strange insensibility to the ways of a gracious Providence, if I were to suffer the circumstance of my having Dr. Milner for my fellow-traveller to pass without observation. Wishing for an intelligent and agreeable companion, I requested my friend Dr. Burgh, of York, to accompany me, a man of whom it is difficult for me to speak with moderation, full as my memory must ever be of marks of a kindness that could scarcely be exceeded, and of a disposition always to forget himself, and to be ready to conform to his friends' wishes. A fund of knowledge of various kinds, great cheerfulness of temper, and liveliness of fancy, rendered him a delightful companion. But he had qualities also of a higher order—an entire conviction of the truth of revelation, a considerable acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, just principles of religion, and as affectionate a

heart as ever warmed a human bosom, with a continual promptitude to engage in every office of benevolence; but the habit of associating with companions, and living, for the most part, in society which, whatever might be the opinion assented to by the understanding, exhibited no traces of spirituality in its ordinary conversation, had induced a habit of abstaining from all religious topics in his common intercourse, and even an appearance of levity, which would have prevented his being known—except by those who were extremely intimate with him, or rather by those who, being themselves also religious, were likely to draw forth his secret thoughts and feelings—to have any more reflection than that average measure for which we are to give people credit whose only visible attention to religion consists in their going to church on a Sunday. A gracious Providence prepared him, I doubt not, by a long illness, for that change which he was to experience much sooner than could have been anticipated, from the uncommon strength of his constitution, and the temperance of his habits; but had he been my fellow-traveller, I should never have benefited by him in the most important of all concerns; indeed, I am persuaded that we neither of us should ever have touched on the subject of religion, except in the most superficial and cursory way. To my surprise, Dr. Burgh declined accepting my proposal; and I next invited Dr. Milner to accompany me, chiefly prompted by his acknowledged talents and acquirements, and by my experience of his cheerfulness, good nature, and powers of social entertainment. It was the more important to me to secure such a fellow-traveller, because we were to have a *litte-à-litte* in my carriage; the ladies of my party travelling with their maids in a coach. It is somewhat curious, that, as I learned accidentally long afterwards, my grandfather had declared that in after-life I should go abroad, with Isaac Milner as my tutor. I am bound to confess that I was not influenced to select Dr. Milner by any idea of his having religion more at heart than the bulk of our Cambridge society; and in fact, though his religious opinions were the same as his brother's, yet they were far from having that influence over his heart and manners which they subsequently possessed; though it is due to him to declare that his conduct was always what I called correct, and free from any taint of vice; and he had a warmth of benevolence which rendered him always ready to every good work. I must go farther; had I known at first what his opinions were, it would have led me against making him the offer; so true is it that a gracious hand leads us in ways that we know not, and blesses us not only without, but even against, our own plans and inclinations. The recollections which I had of what I had heard and seen when I lived under my uncle's roof, had left in my mind a prejudice against their kind of religion as enthusiastic, and carrying matters to excess; and it was with no small surprise found, on conversing with my friend on the subject of religion, that his principles and views were the same with those of the clergymen who were called methodical: this led to renewed discussions; and Milner (never backward in avowing his opinions, or entering into religious conversation) justified his principles by referring to the word of God. This led to our reading the Scriptures together; and by degrees I imbibed his sentiments, though I must confess, with shame, that they long remained merely as opinions assented to by my understanding, but not influencing my heart. At length, however, I began to be impressed with a sense of the weighty truths which were more or less the continual subjects of our conversation. I began to think what folly it was, nay, what madness, to confine month after month, nay, day after day, in a state in which a sudden call out of the world—which, I was conscious, might happen at any moment—would consign me to never-ending misery; while, at the very same time, I was firmly convinced, from assenting to the great truths taught us in the New Testament, that the offers of the Gospel were universal and free—in short, that happiness, eternal happiness, was at my option. As soon as I reflected seriously upon these subjects, the deep guilt and black ingratitude of my past life forced itself upon me in the strongest colours. I condemned myself for having wasted my precious time, and opportunities, and talents; and for several months I continued to feel the deepest convictions of my own sinfulness, rendered only the more intense by the unspeakable mercies of our God and Saviour, declared to us in the offers and promises of the Gospel. These, however, by degrees, produced in me something of a settled peace of conscience. I devoted myself, for whatever might be the term of my future life, to the service of my God and Saviour; and with many infirmities and deficiencies, through his help, I continue until this day."

During Mr. Wilberforce's journey, on his return to England, in the autumn of 1785, a change in his conduct was already visible; and some of his gay associates, whom he met in places he passed through, were surprised to find that he did not choose to travel on Sunday. When he reached home, he had a difficulty in acquainting his friends with the alteration in his views. Mr. Pitt was one of the first, whom he apprised, that though he should, in general, still support him, he could not be so much of a party-man as heretofore. Mr. Pitt received the intelligence most kindly, and assured him that nothing of the kind should affect their friendship. He now formed the acquaintance of Mr. Newton, the well-known rector of St. Mary Woolnoth; and was a frequent attendant on his ministry, and guided by his advice. His intimacy, however, with Mr. Newton, would be expected, fix on him the brand of Methodism; and his mother, it appears, had heard some such rumour. In a letter, therefore, dated Feb. 19, 1786, he says to her, "It is not, believe me, to my own imagination, or to any system formed in my closet, that I look for my principles; it is to the very source to which you refer me, the Scriptures. . . . All that I contend for is, that we should really make this book the criterion of our opinions and actions, and not read it, and then think that we do so of course; but if we do this, we must reckon on not finding ourselves able to comply with all those customs of the world, in which many who call themselves Christians are too apt to indulge, without reflection; . . . we must, of course, therefore, be subject to the charge of excess or singularity. But in what will this singularity consist? Not merely in indifferent things; no, in these our Saviour always conformed, and took occasion to check an unnecessary strictness, into which he saw men were led by overstraining a good principle. In what, then, will these peculiarities appear? Take our great Master's own words: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as

thyself.' It would be easy to dilate on this text; and I am afraid that we should find at the close of the discourse, that the picture was very unlike the men of this world. 'But who is my neighbour?' Here, too, our Saviour has instructed us, by the parable which follows. It is evident, we are to consider our peculiar situations; and in these to do all the good we can. Some men are thrown into public; some have their lot in private life. These different states have their corresponding duties; and he whose destination is of the former sort, will do as ill to immure himself in solitude, as he who is only a village Hampden would, were he to lead an army, or address a senate. What I have said will, I hope, be sufficient to remove any apprehensions that I mean to shut myself up, either in my closet in town, or in my hermitage in the country. No, my dear mother, in my circumstances this would merit no better name than desertion; and if I were thus to fly from the post where Providence has placed me, I know not how I could look for the blessing of God upon my retirement; and, without his heavenly assistance, either in the world or in solitude, our own endeavours will be equally ineffectual. When I consider the particulars of my duty, I blush at the review; but my shame is not occasioned by my thinking that I am too studiously diligent in the business of life; on the contrary, I then feel that I am serving God best, when, from proper motives, I am most actively engaged in it. What humbles me, is the sense that I forego so many opportunities of doing good; and it is my constant prayer, that God will enable me to serve him more steadily, and my fellow-creatures more assiduously; and I trust that my prayers will be granted, through the intercession of that Saviour, 'by whom' only 'we have access with confidence into this grace, wherein we stand'; and who has promised, that he will lead on his people from strength to strength, and gradually form them to a more complete resemblance of their divine Original."

Those who read this letter may easily see that it was no enthusiastic temper, but the calm spirit of scriptural piety which now swayed Mr. Wilberforce's mind. I shall add another letter, in a similar tone, addressed to his sister on Easter-day of the same year. He had on Good Friday, after much serious thought, communicated for the first time, and experienced somewhat of the blessing which the sacred feast yields to the faithful participator of Christ. The next day, he visited Mr. Unwin of Stock, the friend of the poet Cowper. "About five o'clock yesterday I put myself into a post-chaise, and in four hours found myself safely lodged with the vicar of Stock. It is more than a month since I slept out of town; and I feel all that Milton attributes to the man who has been

"Long in populous cities pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air."

I scarce recollect to have spent so pleasant a day as that which is now nearly over. My heart opens involuntarily to Unwin and his wife; I fancy I have been with them every day since we first became acquainted at Nottingham, and expand to them with all the confidence of a twelve years' intimacy. Can my dear sister wonder, that I call on her to participate in the pleasure I am tasting? I know how you sympathise in the happiness of those you love; and I could not therefore forgive myself, if I were to keep my raptures to myself, and not invite you to partake of my enjoyment. The day has been delightful: I was out before six, and made the fields my oratory, the sun shining as bright and as warm as at Midsummer. I think my own devotions become more fervent, when offered in this way, amidst the general chorus with which all nature seems, in such a morning, to be swelling the song of praise and thanksgiving; and, except the time that has been spent at church and at dinner—and neither in the sanctuary, nor at table, I trust, had I a heart unwarmed with gratitude to the Giver of all good things—I have been all day basking in the sun. On any other day I should not have been so happy: a sense that I was neglecting the duties of my situation might have interrupted the course of my enjoyments, and have taken from their totality; for in such a situation as mine, every moment may be made useful to the happiness of my fellow-creatures. But the Sabbath is a season of rest, in which we may be allowed to unbend the mind, and give a complete loose to those emotions of gratitude and admiration, which a contemplation of the works, and a consideration of the goodness of God, cannot fail to excite in a mind of the smallest sensibility. And surely this Sabbath, of all others, is that which calls forth these feelings in a supreme degree; a frame of united love and triumph well becomes it, and holy confidence and unrestrained affection. May every Sabbath be to me and to those I love, a renewal of these feelings, of which the small tastes we have in this life, should make us look forward to that eternal rest, which awaits the people of God; when the whole will be a never-ending enjoyment of those feelings of love, and joy, and admiration, and gratitude, which are, even in the limited degree we here experience them, the true sources of comfort—when these, I say, will dictate perpetual songs of thanksgiving, without fear and without satiety. My eyes are bad; but I could not resist the impulse I felt to call on you, and tell you how happy I have been."

(To be Continued.)

THE WORD OF GOD IS THE BREAD OF LIFE GIVEN FOR ALL MEN.*

JOHN xiv, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 13, 14; Luke xi, 9—14.—The deadly and mischievous consequences of ignorance therein: The pleasures and delights given to us in the Word of God: The Holy Ghost offered to teach every one that humbly asketh and importuneth Him, even to our Saviour Christ hath promised.

What should I say more of the Scriptures, how profitable and comfortable they be in all cases and parts of our life? In adversity, in prosperity, in life, and in death, they are our especial comfort. If we thirst, they are a sword; if we hunger, they are meat; if we are thirsty, they are drink; if we have no dwelling-place, they are a house; if we are naked, they are a garment; if we be in darkness, they be light unto our going.

They are comfortable to kings, to subjects, to old men, to young men, to man and to wife, to father and to child, to master and to servant, to captain and to soldier, to preacher and to people, to the learned, to the unlearned, to the wise and to the simple.

They are comfortable in peace, in war, in business, in joy, in health and sickness, in abundance, in poverty, in the day-time, in the night-season, in the town, in the wilderness, in company, and when alone. For they teach faith, hope, patience, charity, sobriety, humility, righteousness, and all godliness. THEY TEACH US TO LIVE, AND THEY TEACH US TO DIE.

* From "A Treatise on the Holy Scriptures," by Bishop Jewell.

Therefore hath Paul said well: "The whole Scripture is profitable." It is full of great comfort. It maketh the man of God absolute, and perfect unto all good works,—perfect in FAITH, perfect in HOPE, perfect in the LOVE of God, and of his NEIGHBOUR; perfect in his life, and perfect in his death. So great, so large and ample, and heavenly is the profit which we do reap by the Word of God.

The wise man saith, "Where there is no prophecy, the people decay." When the Scriptures are not opened, when there is none that can edify, and exhort, and comfort the people by the Word of God, they must needs perish; for they know not the way in which they should walk. They know not whom to honour, nor upon whose name they should call: they have neither what to believe, nor what to do. "Hell hath enlarged itself, and hath opened his mouth without measure," and they that are wilful and ignorant, and the children of darkness, go down into it. They become enthralled, and captives unto Satan. Their heart is bound up, they understand nothing; their eyes are shut up, they can see nothing; their ears are stopped up, they can hear nothing. They are carried away as a prey into hell, because they have not the knowledge of God.

So doth Christ tell the Sadducees:—"Ye are deceived, because you know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Thus he teacheth that error is the child of ignorance. The cause why you are so deceived, is because you know not the Scriptures: you have hated the light, and loved darkness; you have neither known the Father nor me: he that knoweth not the truth of God, knoweth not God. Herein, in this case, there is no plea of ignorance.—Ignorance shall not excuse us. Chrysostom saith, "Thou wilt say, I have not read the Scriptures; this is no excuse, but a sin." Again, he saith, "This is the working of the devil's inspiration, he would not suffer us to see the treasure, but we should get the riches." Therefore he compelleth us, "that it utterly availeth us nothing to hear the laws of God, but that upon the hearing we may see our doing follow."

Carnades, a philosopher, was wont to say of his master and reader, Chrysippus, "If it had not been for Chrysippus, I never had any body. He was my master and teacher: he made me learned: whatsoever I have, I have it of him." How much better may we use the like words of the Scripture, and say: "Unless it were for the WORD OF GOD, our wisdom were nothing, and our knowledge were nothing. Whatsoever we have, we have it by the Word. Without it, our prayer were no prayer; without it our sacraments were no sacraments; our faith were no faith; our conscience were no conscience; our church were no church." Take away the light of the sun, and what remaineth but darkness?—Heaven and earth are darkened. No man can see his way, or discern the things about him. Even so, if the Word of God be taken away, what remaineth but miserable confusion and deadly ignorance?

If we be kept from hearing, reading, and understanding of the Word of God, then will error, superstition, and all wickedness get the upper hand, and fall upon us, and bind us, and pluck out our eyes, and make scorn of us, and bitterly destroy us.

Even so, as with the people of Jerusalem in the siege, fared it with us, and our fathers, after it pleased God to take away His gospel, and to send a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord.—We were driven to eat those things which were loathsome and horrible to behold: we were driven to feed upon our own children, even the fantasies and vanities of our own hearts. There was no substance in them, they could not feed us.

In such case were the Scribes and Pharisees. When they foresaw to be guilty by the Word of God, and took away the key of knowledge, they fed upon their own devices, they neglected the commandments and will of God, and followed their own traditions. Therefore Christ reproved them, "O hypocrites, Esaias prophesied well of you, saying, This people draweth near unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far off from me. But in vain they worship me, teaching for doctrines men's precepts."

Therefore if we seek to know the Sacraments of the Church, what they are: if we would be instructed in the Sacrament of Baptism, or in the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ: if we would learn to know our Creator, and to put the difference between the Creator and a creature: if we desire to know what this present life is, and what is that life which is to come: if we would believe in God, and call upon the name of God, and do worship unto God; if we would be settled in perfect zeal and true knowledge: if we would know which is the true Church of God, it is very needful that we hear the Word of God. There is no other word that teacheth us unto salvation.

Here may you see the light of God's elect children. How they patiently suffered afflictions in their bodies, rather than they would deny the truth of God: they gave their backs to the scourge, their necks to the sword, their bodies to the fire. No tyrant, no menaces, no rack, no torment, no sword, no death could remove them from the love of the gospel which they had received. The more of them were cut down, the more did spring up; the more were killed, the more were left alive. Augustine saith, "They were bound, and shut up, and racked, and burnt, and yet were increased." This is the victory that hath overcome the world.—For the Lord answered St. Paul, "My power is made perfect through weakness." It liveth in death; it is made whole and sound by wounds and stripes; it is increased by those means whereby men destroy it.

We see Esaias beholding the Lord as he sat upon a high throne, and we see Paul taken up into the third heavens. We see the glory of God appear, and hear the voice which came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him." We see Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of a virgin, and how he made himself of no reputation; and took on him the form of a servant, and was made like unto man, and was found in shape as a man; that he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We hear him cry with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We hear him say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And, "Father, into thine hands I commit my spirit."

Here may you see the sun to be darkened; that the moon give no light; the earth to shake, the rocks to cleave asunder, the veil to rend, the graves to open, and Christ rise from the dead, and go up into heaven, and sit at the right hand of his father.

HERE YOU MAY SEE TWELVE FOOL SILLY MEN, WITHOUT SPEAR, WITHOUT SWORD, WITHOUT FORCE, MAKE CONQUEST OF THE WHOLE WORLD. No power could repress them, no might could withstand them. It is reckoned a great matter for a king, or a nation, to yield submission unto another king or nation. It must, therefore, be a matter of greater wonder to see all kings throw down their maces, and all people to yield before so few, so simple, so unarmed, and to acknowledge they had embraced lies and lived in ignorance; and that these twelve are the servants of the Highest; and to see how God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to overthrow the wise; and the weak things of this world to confound the mighty things. SUCH FORCE DID GOD GIVE TO THEIR WORDS. He made them the sons of thunder; they shook the foundations of the world; they threw down whatsoever stood against them.

Here may you see the overthrow of Babylon, which made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. How she is destroyed with the breath of God's mouth. Here we behold the resurrection of the dead: and four and twenty elders sit before

* From the Church of England Magazine.