

P O E T R Y.

"JESUS WEPT."

—o—
Draw near, ye weary, bowed, and broken hearted,
Ye onward travellers to a peaceful bourne,
Ye, from whose path the light hath all departed,
And ye, who are left in solitude to mourn:
Tho' o'er your spirits hath the storm-cloud swept,
Sacred are sorrow's tears, since "Jesus wept."

The bright and spotless Heir of endless glory
Wept for the woes of those He came to save,
And angels wondered when they heard the story,
That He who conquered death wept o'er the grave,
For 'twas not when His lonely watch he kept,
In dark Gethsemane, that "Jesus wept."

But with the friends he lov'd whose hope had perish'd
The Saviour stood; and thro' His bosom rush'd
A tide of sympathy for those He cherished,
While from His eyes the burning tear-drops gush'd,
And bending o'er the tomb where Lazarus slept,
In agony of spirit "Jesus wept."

Lo! Jesus' power the sleep of death hath broken,
And wip'd the tear from Sorrow's drooping eye,
Look up, ye mourners, hear what He hath spoken,
"He that believes on me shall never die;"

Through faith and love your spirits shall be kept;
Hope brighter grew on earth when "Jesus wept."
U. S. Gazette.

LETTER OF REV. HENRY VENN,

On the Doubts and Fears of upright Christians.
Yelling, Nov. 25th, 1777.

It is-nearly a week since I had a momentary interview with your ladyship. Since that time you have been scarcely an hour out of my mind.

Base worm as I am, I yet feel much for every one who has begun the glorious warfare of a Christian. I feel still more, when one is plucked from among the high ones of the earth, as 'a brand out of the fire;'—when there is found in Cæsar's household an honourable lady, bold to confess the faith of Christ crucified; and returning to the ark of God, like Noah's dove, over a vast world of waters, gaping to swallow her up.

Let this be my apology, if your ladyship should think I need one, for sending you, unasked, this short epistle. It comes from an aged servant of that ever-blessed Lord who has revealed himself to you as all your salvation.

From the few words you dropped in the chapel, I at once understood your case to be the same with the greater part of the family of our Saviour: for, strange as it may sound, it is too true, that few, comparatively very few, upright Christians, are free from gloomy doubts and fears! The universal cause, in these excellent persons, is a discovery of manifold sins and corruptions of heart, to which they were once strangers. They now feel prodigious unbelief, and often a brutish stupidity of mind. They often are devoid of the Spirit of prayer, of delightful communion with God, and of any sensible impressions of the love of Christ. They feel pride, and sloth, and self-love, fighting for the mastery, &c. &c. For these things they are sadly cast down.—But we may say, to such upright Christians: How read ye the Scriptures? Is it not written, that the flesh, in God's children, 'lusteth against the Spirit;' and that they even bear about with them what properly deserves the dreadful name of a 'body of death?'

In every age, the most useful and excellent in Christ's Church, even when sure of eternal glory, have been compelled to cry out, 'Oh, wretched man that I am!' Your soul, blessed be God! is athirst to resemble the chief of his saints. It is a Divine ambition;—yet you forget that the very complaints, so bitter to your soul, were found in them all—the same change in their spiritual frames—the same involuntary wanderings in prayer, and manifold deficiencies. On this account even St. Paul concluded himself 'less than the least of all saints,' and had no confidence in himself,

Indeed, were not our case *hæc* thus deplorably defective, what need of atoning blood to cleanse the best—of 'the righteousness of God, which is, by faith, unto all, and upon all, them that believe'—of mercy in its brightest display—of all the wonderful process in the salvation of the church? every part of which supposes, in the hours of glory, defects and stains, which have excited their tears and groans, in all ages. Besides, daily observation proves, that no sooner do we lose a sense of our villainess, than self-preference, or a conceit of our perfection, rises up in the mind. We should therefore be humbled to the dust, from the knowledge of ourselves; but so long as Christ is our only hope and our peace, and the supreme desire of our souls is to serve and please him in newness of life, never let us one moment give place to a doubting temper, whether we are in him, and he in us. This, I can have no doubt, is every day your aim. 'Be, therefore, of good cheer!' is the command of all the Prophets, Apostles, and the Saviour—'which you are to realize, as if addressed to you by name—'thy faith hath saved thee.'

'Still,' you may be ready to reply, 'I am afraid, lest I should be deceived, and at last be found a hypocrite.' Against this ruinous self-deception there is an infallible security. Pray thus: 'Try me, O God! and seek the ground of my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts; look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!' When this prayer is repeatedly offered up, to suppose it possible our most gracious and loving Father should permit us to be imposed on to our ruin, is at once to deny his goodness, and all success in prayer.

Your ladyship fears lest you should be found at last a hypocrite. No child of God but has had this fear; some for a shorter, others for a longer time. It is often of great service, to excite to greater vigilance and diligence, till love casts out this uneasy fear. But I would have you fear, also, and pray against hard thoughts of God;—these are natural to us. Before we are awakened, and believe the word of God, we think, foolishly, that he is such an one as ourselves; and then daringly live in the way of self-indulgence, and conformity to a world which hates him: saying, 'Tush! there shall no harm happen unto us!'—though all the penalties and pains denounced on the children of disobedience stand in full force against us. After the remembrance of this, our wicked way's become grievous to us; and we even loathe ourselves, for what we have been, and what we have done against our glorious God, then we are beset with sad apprehensions, as if he were implacable. Though his nature be love, his mercies over all the works of his hands, his long-suffering—as you and I know—exceedingly great; though he swears by himself, he hath 'no pleasure in the death of the wicked,' we are still apt to fear he will be extreme to mark what is done amiss in us. Though he loved our persons when we were dead in trespasses, and delivered up his Son for us when we were enemies, we fear he does not love us, to save our souls, after we are reconciled.

You should fear denying the tender compassion of our great and merciful high Priest, and calling his most faithful promises into question. You should fear being guilty of entertaining low thoughts of his blood, as if it only cleansed the most advanced in holiness—not Jerusalem sinners, who had execrated his person, and shed his blood, with blasphemous exultation over his agonies. You should fear, also, disobedience to his repeated commands (though he knows all your defilement, and just causes of complaint against yourself) of rejoicing in the Lord, whilst you have no ground of confidence in yourself. You should fear grieving the Spirit of God, who is the Comforter given to make glad the church of God, and vouch the perfection of the sacrifice offered by Christ, and accepted, as the full, perfect, and sufficient payment for their debt who flee to him for refuge.

SCRAPS.—Let him who doeth well beware how he boasteth of it; for rarely is it of his own will.

Who is there that judgeth not either too highly of himself, or thinketh too meanly of others?

Man who fears to breathe a whisper against his earthly sovereign, trembles not to arraign the dispensations of his God; he forgetteth his majesty, and rejudgeth his judgments.—Selected.

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