

whether it is easier to discharge one's duty under the smile, or under the frown of popular favour, your own Christian experience will easily decide. Having made these remarks, I shall simply conclude in the words of the great Apostle (1 Cor. iv. 3-5), 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of any man's judgement; yea, I judge not mine own self: . . . but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God.'—I am, &c.,

JAMES LAMONT.

"Rev. R. Craig."

SELECTIONS.

FOR THE BEREAVED.

I was sorry to depart leaving your ladyship in grief, and would still be grieved at it, if I were not assured that you have one with you in the furnace, whose countenance is like unto the Son of God. I know that if you were not dear to God, and if your health did not require so much of Him, He would not spend so much medicine upon you. All the brothers and sisters of Christ must be conformed to His image in suffering, and some do more strikingly resemble the copy than others. Think, madam, that it is part of your glory to be enrolled among those whom one of the elders pointed out to John. "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." You have lost a child—nay, she is not lost to you who is found to Christ; she is not sent away, but only sent before, like unto a star, which goeth out of our sight, doth not die and vanish, but shineth in another hemisphere: you see her not, yet she doth shine in another country. If her glass was but a short hour, what she wants of time she has got of eternity; and you have to rejoice that one belonging to you is now in Heaven. Build your nest upon no tree here; for you see God hath sold the forest to death; and every tree, upon which we would rest, is ready to be cut down, to the end we may flee and mount up, and build upon the rock, and dwell in the holes of the rock. Whatsoever you love besides Jesus, your husband, is a strange lover; now, it is God's special blessing to Judah, that He will not let her find her paths in following her strange lovers: "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths; and she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them." O thine happy Judah, when God buildeth a wall betwixt her and the fire of hell! The world and the things of the world, madam, are the lovers you naturally affect—the hedge of thorns and the wall which God builds in your way, to hinder you from your lovers, are the thorny hedge of daily grief, loss of children, weakness of body, uncertainty of estate, lack of worldly comfort, fear of God's anger for unrepented sins; but what do you lose though God twist and plait the hedge daily thicker? God be blessed, the Lord will not let you find your paths; return to your first husband—do not weary, nor think that death walketh towards you with a slow pace; you must be ripener you be shaken; your days are no longer than Job's, that were "swifter than a post, and passed away as the swift ships, swift as the eagle that hasteth to the prey." There is less sand in your glass now than there was yesterday night; this span-length of ever passing time will soon be ended; but the greater is the mercy of God, the more years you get to advise upon what terms, and upon what conditions, you cast your soul into the huge gulf of a never-ending eternity. The Lord hath told you what you should be doing till He come. "Wait and hasten," saith Peter, "for the coming of the Lord;" all is night that is here, in respect of ignorance and daily ensuing troubles, one always making way to

another, as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth; therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day of the coming of the Son of Man, when shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself that the King is coming; read His letter sent before Him. "Behold, I come quickly." Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky, and think that you have not a morrow. I am loath to weary you; show yourself a Christian by suffering without murmuring; in patience possess your soul; they lose nothing who gain Christ. I commend you to the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus, assuring you that your day is coming, and that God's mercy is awaiting you. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit!—*Samuel Rutherford*

"HE WAS A BURNING AND A SHINING LIGHT."

Not burning only, nor shining merely; but burning and shining. The enthusiast burns, but does not enlighten. The formalist shines, but does not warm. Neither alone will do for the minister of Christ. Warmth without light will never produce vegetation, nor will the rays of the moon fructify the earth. "When there is light in a minister," says an old writer, "consisting of human learning and great speculative knowledge and wisdom of this world without a spiritual warmth and ardour in his heart, and a holy zeal in his ministrations, his light is like the light of an *ignis fatuus*, and some kind of putrefying carcasses that shine in the dark, though they are of a stinking savour. And, if on the other hand a minister has warmth and zeal without light, his heart has nothing excellent in it, but is rather to be abhorred, being like the heat of the bottomless pit, where, though the fire be great, yet there is no light. To be hot in this manner and not lightsome, is to be like an angel of darkness. But ministers, by having light and heat united in them, will be like the angels of light, that, for their light and brightness, are called 'morning stars.'"

DAVID MOUENING FOR SAUL.

He, who was to be the restorer of this kingdom, sang of Saul and Jonathan on the day when he heard of their fall, "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided." Was this an idle flattery, by one who knew it to be false, of a man whom flattery could please no longer? I believe it was nothing of the kind. David spoke what he felt at that moment, and he would not have wished to recal the words afterwards. He had known a loveliness and pleasantness in the life of Saul, which all its after discords could not make him forget. He had known a real man under the name. A false man had borne it too. The one was dead; the other was still alive in his memory and heart. Other questions, agitating, perplexing, almost maddening, he could leave to Him who only could resolve them. There were symbols of reconciliation in the death of Saul and Jonathan. The father and son, who had been often so unnaturally separated, were united at last. David was privileged to think of them together—to let the tenderness of the one efface the hard treatment of the other—feel that God had meant them to be one in heart and act, though the evil and dark spirit, to which Saul had yielded himself, tore them asunder.

Brethren, I believe it is not dangerous, but safe, not a homage to falsehood, but to truth, in our judgement of those who are departed, to follow David's example. We may dwell upon bright and ballowed moments of lives that have been darkened by many sins; those moments may be welcomed as revelations to us of that which God intended His creatures to be; we may feel that there has been a loveliness in them which God giveth had them, and which their own evil could not take away. We may think of this loveliness as if it expressed their inner purpose of their existence; the rest may be for us as though it were not.

As nature, with her old mosses and her new spring foliage, hides the ruins which man has made, and gives to the fallen tower and broken cloister a beauty scarcely less than that which belonged to them in their prime, so human love may be at work to 'softening and concealing, and busy with her hand in healing' the rents which have been made in God's noble temple, the habitation of His own Spirit. If it were lawful in the old time to cover with love and hope a multitude of transgressions, it cannot be less lawful now that the earth is overshadowed with a mercy that bloteth out iniquity, and transgression, and sin; when the blood of sprinkling has a mightier voice than that which cries for vengeance; when the atoning sacrifice reveals heights, and lengths, and depths, and breadths of love, in which we must rejoice to be lost.—*Maurice's Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament.*

DEATH IS YOURS.

God hath put death into the covenant,—a new covenant which He hath made and established—which, if you lay hold on it, will recover all you have lost, ransom you from death, redeem you from hell, and advance you to a more sure and blessed condition than your original state from which you have fallen. This is the hope of sinners! this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord! And death is in this covenant. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, all are yours."—(1 Cor. iii. 22.) Death! there is a great purchase, you will say; what advantage is that? Yes, death is an advantage,—"To die is gain." For,

The commission of death is changed. It was once, Take him, jailer; away with him, carry him down, to prison with him, there to be reserved to the judgement of the great day. It is now. Take him, janitor; take him, porter; take him in; give him an entrance into his Master's joy. Death doth but take the bride when she is ready, and lodges her in the chamber of the bridegroom; this made death the Apostle's desire, "I desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better."—(Phil. i. 23.)

Death is conquered. What does this mean? Your enemy is yours; other than this, your enemy is conquered to you; a conquered enemy is made a tributary; death is disarmed, it hath lost its sting. When a serpent hath lost its sting, you may take it into your bosom. He that can say, "Death, where is thy sting?" may go on and add, "Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory." A signet sent from Heaven with a death's head is a precious token. Come, Christians, be of good courage, set your feet on the neck of this king of terrors.

Death is at once the destruction of all their enemies. When once death hath done its office upon them, then farewell Edom, and Ammon, and Amalek, and Egypt; farewell the perishing brier and the grieving thorn; then farewell sin and sorrow for ever; the Egyptians they have seen, and feared, and felt to-day, they shall see no more for ever. It destroys itself, their last enemy, by destroying them; it hath its welcome and farewell the same moment; it is but welcome death, and farewell death for ever. Death dies with them; once dead, they die no more for ever; mortality is swallowed up of life; death is cast into the lake of fire, that is its region; there they die, and die again, over and over, for ever and ever; but for the saints,—it doth but set them on the banks of that good land, whether it cannot follow them. Our Lord by death, by ours as well as His own, hath delivered those who were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Christians! you may now not only with patience, but with desire, expect the assault of this king of terrors. What! shall tribulation, and persecution, and famine, and nakedness, and peril, and sword; shall sorrow, and fear, and mortality die with me? Yes, sin shall die with me. Then we have death; Lord, strengthen me this once; let me die with the Philistines! Would it be good for thee to be with the Father?—in the bosom of thy Bridegroom,—the presence-chamber of thy Lord and