

THE BOOK.

"*The Book!*" Oh, Book of Books! Oh, Word of Words!
The only Book whose title is "*The Lord's.*"
Thy theme, "the Truth," "the Light," "the Life." "the
Way,"

That leads from darkness to eternal day;
Thy mission, as thy subject, all divine,
Like heaven's bright sun, on every land to shine,
Where'er the guilty sons of Adam dwell,
Wherever reigns the power of death and hell:
To chase the darkness, and dispel the gloom,
To tell the victory o'er the yawning tomb,
Of the vast ransom for redemption paid,
The full, the rich atonement Jesus made,
When, bearing sin upon the accursèd tree,
He died, from guilt and judgment, man to free.

"*The Book,*" that opens heaven to our sight,
Reveals the Son of Man in glory bright,
At God's right hand exalted, till the day
He comes to take His Church from earth away,
To share His kingdom, and enjoy His love
Forever in His Father's house above.

"*The Book,*" oh, blessèd Book! what thousands there
Have found relief from anguish and despair!
The lost it tells of pardon full and free,
For such as I am, and for such as thee:
The pilgrim reads of heaven's bright repose,
And, full of hope, forgets his daily woes;
The tempted, suited promises console;
And pastures green refresh the hungry soul.
The mourner, streams of richest comfort finds;
Wisdom divine illumines inquiring minds,
That, with a childlike meekness, at the feet
Of Jesus sit, to learn its lessons sweet.
What secrets hidden lie in every page;
What light it throws on every bygone age!
The future there, from mortal eye concealed,
Is to the servants of the Lord revealed.

Oh, how refreshing, to the heart that sighs
O'er all th' unnumbered woes that meet the eyes,
And cause the sympathetic tear to flow
For all that sin and death have brought below,
To search this blessèd Book! for there we see
Grace reigns supreme to set the captive free.
Its mission, wide as human sin and need:

Oh, may we all combine its course to speed !
 Herald of mercy to a ruined world,
 Banner of peace to rebel man unfurled,
 To north, to south, to eastern climes and west,
 The Book its message speeds, and still is blest :
 The Afric reads, the Indian, bond and free,
 The savage and the wise. O'er land and sea,
 Mountain and vale—in city, village, mart,
 In every language, Book of Books, thou art :
 God's mighty voice of grace, and truth, and life,
 His balm for broken hearts, healer of strife
 'Tween God and man, the harbinger of peace,
 Bidding the tempests of the conscience cease.

“THE SCRIPTURES.”

THEIR DIVINE SOURCE AND POWER..

“ *The Scriptures* ” have a *living* source, and *living* power has pervaded their composition : hence their infiniteness of bearing, and the impossibility of separating any one part from its connection with the whole, because—

One GOD is the *living* centre from which all flows ;
One CHRIST, the *living* centre round which all
 its truth circles,
 and to which it
 refers, though in
 various glory ;
 and

One SPIRIT, the *divine* sap which carries its power from its source in GOD to the minutest branches of the all-united truth, testifying of the glory, the grace and the truth of HIM whom GOD sets forth as the object and centre and head of all that is in connection with Himself, of HIM who is, withal, GOD over all, blessed for evermore !

THE UNITY AND PERFECTION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

“ And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke xxiv. 27.”

The Lord's wisdom in dealing with the Sadducees of His day, may well be our pattern in dealing with a like generation in this day. “ Ye do err,” said He to them, “ not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God ” (Matt. xxii). They presented a difficulty, as they judged it to be, an insurmountable difficulty ; but it was no such thing to Him. Scripture He bowed to, and the power of God He asserted. Scripture was His rule of thought and judgment ; and He could rest in the power of God as that which would make every jot and tittle of it good.

This was His answer to them at once, His immediate rebuke of them. And it was enough. His Spirit afterwards in the apostle would commend the saints to God, and to the word of His grace ; so now, would He Himself lean on God and His word. It was enough for Him that God had spoken (see Acts xx. 32).

But after this, He shews these Sadducees, that the difficulty they suggested was simply an imagination of their own, and not a part of the Scripture, or the revelation of God. And then, in closing with them, He exposes their unbelief by the light of Scripture, rebuking their denial of

resurrection by a passage taken from Ex. iii.—thus again honouring Scripture as the authoritative rule of all our thoughts.

But this only as I pass on to my present subject, the fact that quotations from the Old Testament are largely found in the New. These *quotations* from the Old Testament, cited, as they are, in all parts of the New, with many and many a glance, or tacit unexpressed reference, link all the parts of the sacred volume together, giving it a character of unity and completeness. The *contents* of the volume do the same—they also give unity and completeness to it; for they constitute a history (with incidental matters by the way), a series of events which stretch from the beginning to the end, from the creation to the kingdom. And *prophecies* in the Old Testament of events in the New act in the same way as quotations in the New of passages in the Old. And thus, as in the mouth of several witnesses of the highest dignity, we have the oneness and the consistency, the unity and completeness of the Book from first to last fully set forth and established.

But this simple fact tells us, further, that all the parts of this wondrous volume are the breathing of one and the same Spirit; and again, the contents themselves speak the same. The moral glories which so brightly, so abundantly and so variously, shine in them witness that God is their source. This constitutes the “self-evidencing light and power of the Holy Scriptures,” as

another has expressed it. And thus the divine *Original* of the book, as well as its divine *Unity* and *consistency* is established; and we hold these truths in the face of all the insult that is put upon them by unreasonable and wicked men. Oppositions of criticism, falsely so called, like angry waves on the sea-shore. God Himself has set the bounds—and they only return upon themselves, foaming out their own shame.

In the progress of the New Testament Scriptures, the Lord and the Holy Ghost, each in His several way and season, use the Scriptures of the Old.

As to the Lord, we may find Him doing this in various ways.

1. He observes them obediently, ordering His life and behaviour, and forming His character (if I may so speak), by them, and according to them.
2. He uses them as His weapons of war or shield of defence, when assailed by the Tempter, or by the men of the world.
3. He avers and avows their divine authority and original, and their indestructible character, and that too, in every jot and tittle of them.
4. He treats them as authoritative and commanding, when He teaches His disciples, or reasons with gainsayers.
5. He fulfils them.*

* This, among other illustrations of it, is finely seen in John xix. 28-30, where the Lord seems as though He were calling Scripture to mind; and first recollecting that one very short passage of it had not been fulfilled. He refuses to withdraw Himself from the scene of suffering till it was—and then, all being accomplished as was written, just said—"It is finished," and gave up the ghost.

In such ways as these, the Lord honours the Scriptures of the Old Testament. What a sight ! What a precious fact ! How blessed to see Him in such relationship to the word of God ; for that word is to ourselves the warrant and witness of all the confidence and liberty and peace we know before God !

We read the 119th Psalm with delight, there tracing *a saint's* relation to Scripture ; and we know it to be edifying to mark the breathings of the soul under the drawings and teachings and inspirings of the Holy Ghost. But it is a still more affecting, a more edifying thing, to trace and mark, through the four Evangelists, the relations to the same Scriptures into which the *Lord Jesus* puts Himself.

Then, when the ministry of the Lord is over, when the Son has returned to heaven, and the Spirit comes down, He is seen (as in the apostles whom He fills to write the Epistles) to do the same service for us ; and in His way to put Himself in connection with the Old Testament Scriptures, as the Lord had just been doing. For in all the Epistles, as I may say, we get quotations from them.

And here let me add, there is no limit to this. These quotations are found in every part of the New Testament, and are taken from every part of the Old. They are found in Matthew, and on to the Apocalypse, and are taken from Genesis to Malachi. And this is done very largely ; so that in the structure of the divine volume, we have

nothing less than the closest, fullest and most intricate interweaving of all parts of it together, to the end, too, returning to the beginning, and the beginning anticipating the end. So that, in a sense, we are in all parts of it, when we are in any part of it, though the variety of its communications is infinite. It reminds me of the figure of the body and its members, used by the apostle to set forth Christ (1 Cor. xii.). There are many members, but one body. There are many books, but one Scripture, one volume. All are equally divine workmanship, though all may not be of equal value to the soul. The foot is not the hand, nor the ear the eye. But God has set them together in one body—as in the heavens, He has set stars and constellations together, though one may differ from another in glory.

But to pursue the same figure of the body and the members, we do boldly say, one part of the volume cannot be touched without all feeling it and resenting it. "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it;" God has so tempered it all together. If Moses be insulted, Paul feels it; if Daniel or Zechariah be questioned, John and Peter will resent it. Yea, and I may go further in the same analogy, and say, the uncomely parts have been given more abundant honour. The shortest piece in the whole volume is made to be heard in the conclusion of the finest, and most elaborate and most weighty argument we find in it. Psalm cxvii. is brought forth as a special

witness in Romans xv. And the book of Proverbs, dealing as it does with common, practical, every day life, is honoured by being made as rich and blessed a witness to the Christ of God in His mysterious glories, as we get in any part of the whole Scripture (Chap. viii).

Yea and I will take on me to say this further. As all other parts of the volume, like members of onebody, will resent trespass and wrong done to any part, so will the Spirit say of God and of the Scriptures, as He says of God and of His people, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye." The Scripture is His handiwork; and God will make a quarrel of Scripture His own quarrel. If He will awake in due time, to the controversy of His temple or His covenant, or His Zion, so will He most assuredly to the controversy of His word. He has magnified His word above all His name (Ps. cxxxviii. 2). "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words," says the Lord Jesus, "hath one that judgeth him" (John xii. 48).

And again let me speak, as I stand in presence of God and His oracles; Scripture links itself with Eternity in ways that are divine, like everything else in it. If we have quotations in the New Testament of passages in the Old, so have we, in both Old and New, references to the eternity that is *past*. And if we have foretellings in the Old Testament of events in the New, so have we, in both Old and New, the foretelling of the eternity that is *to come*. Scripture, as I may speak, retires behind

the borders of time, and discloses the secrets and counsels of the past Eternity, unsealing "the volume of the book," and disclosing predestinations formed and settled in Christ ere worlds began ; and Scripture passes beyond the borders of time, and is in the scenes and glories of the Eternity that is to come, giving us to hear every tongue confessing "JESUS to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 11), and many many kindred voices, and to see many many kindred glories. And happy for us, that it links itself with *time* as well as with *Eternity*. It goes before us to shew us the way all through the confusion and corruption that is abroad, to the last moment of the dispensation. All is anticipated ; so that we need not be stumbled by anything, however saddened and ashamed we may be. "Great peace have all they that love Thy law, and nothing shall *offend* them" (Ps. cxix. 165). We need not be afraid with any amazement since we have it. The confusion and corruption may be infinite, strange indeed in their changeful forms, and deep in their insolent wickedness ; but Scripture has prepared us for all, superstitious vanities and infidel insolence. The tare-field was spread out on the page of Scripture ere it stretched itself out in the defiled plains of Christendom. The unmerciful fellow-servant is seen in Matthew xviii., ere he is seen in the wars and controversies of Christendom. God in His word has not forecast the shadow of *uncertain* evils.

It is indeed marvellous, and yet not marvellous because it is divine. The Spirit of Him who knows the end from the beginning can account for it, but nothing else can. The Book itself, as another has said, is a greater miracle than any which it records.

And I would now end with a word about quotations, as it was with them I began.

These citations out of His own writings by God Himself, first in the Person of the Son, and then in the Person of the Holy Ghost, are beautiful in this character ; God is *sealing* what once He *wrote* : at the beginning He sent forth those writings as from Himself, being the source of them ; so now, after they have come forth, and been embodied in human forms as in all languages of the nations, and been seated in the midst of the human family, He comes forth to accredit them there Himself as with His own sign manual. God has both written them and sealed them, and we receive them as from Him, and in our way of responsive faith and worship, "set to our seal that God is true" (John iii. 33). "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever ; for they are the rejoicing of my heart" (Ps. cxix. 111). Surely these things are so.

To notice, with some care, the quotations themselves, as they meet us while we pursue our way from Matthew to the Apocalypse, is an edifying exercise of the soul. It helps directly to let us into fuller light as to the Old Testament oracles, giving us nothing less than God's own key for un-

locking the treasures that are there. And this exercise has also another direct effect—it binds all the parts, however distant, of the one volume together *under our eye*, and it serves to present the whole as one complete and perfect piece of workmanship in full consistency with itself throughout. The light is one, though it may be that of the Patriarchal dawn, of the Levitical or Mosaic morning, of the prophetic fore-noon, of the Gospel Meridian or noon-tide, and then of the Apocalyptic evening hour with its shadows, just before the solemn night of judgment which is to precede the second morning, the morning of millennial Glory. But this indeed it is. In Scripture, from beginning to end, we are in the light of God, from the first morning of creation to the second morning of the kingdom; having passed our own noon and evening hours, and also the season of the world's midnight.



ON THE STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD.

(EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.)

It is of the utmost importance that you, and every one of us, study the word systematically. You could not do better—above all things seeking direct communion with God—than to devote the first-fruits of your time to a regular study of the Scriptures. Desiring the Spirit apart from the word is a false pretention to power, outside the place of obedience and heart-subjection. As regards the guidance of the Spirit and the method to follow, I see both in the apostle, but in the highest form: “Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause” (2 Cor. v. 13). There is a power which takes us, so to speak, out of ourselves, God being there

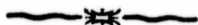
in divine energy ; but there is likewise an activity of love, which also is divine. The apostle, through the Holy Spirit, was in power in the presence of God, but the love of God acting in him made him think of others. These are two blessed ways of being delivered from oneself. " Sober for your cause " is the method—loves consideration for others.

As to reading itself, Scripture is explicit : " Be diligent in these things ; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy progress may be manifest unto all " (1 Tim. iv. 15—*Rev. Ver.*). I see two ways of reading the Scriptures : to place, through grace, my heart and conscience before them so that they may act upon me as being subject to them ; and to study them in order to lay hold of their import, the relation to each other of the different parts, and their depth. The first thing is to be filled with them, then, in communion, to draw forth from these treasures ; and finally, when there is reality, to allow scope for the free action of the Holy Spirit. Scripture distinctly speaks of order and of method, and also of the free action of the Holy Spirit. Almost the whole of the first epistle to Timothy shows methodic direction ; only now, that outward order has become the power of evil, and Christians find themselves as individuals in it, power has become the main thing—God being thus manifested ; and, all the Lord's people not being gathered in a scriptural way, the general order cannot be there. Thus it is that the faith of the believer is put to the test. But this does not do away with the general principle of order, and still less with individual order and method.



EXTRACT.—It was during the winter of 1804 that Dr. Chalmers delivered his four celebrated lectures in the University of Edinburgh on Predestination, and wound up his series by a fifth on the pulpit treatment of the subject. In this lecture, he warned his students most faithfully against the danger into which they might be tempted in dealing with such a sublime mystery. He said, "Gentlemen, we have entered on this great mystery with regret, and we leave it without a sigh. The subject which we have been treating professionally from the rostrum you will be called upon to treat ministerially from the

pulpit, but remember that the provinces are wide apart. We are dealing with the heads of our alumni; you have to deal with hearts of sinners. Give me a band of men who never walked, as you have done, the halls of a University, whose only library is the inspired oracles of God, whose only tutor is the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and let them loose on some wild moral territory, and they will do more ten to one, than our college-trained clergy, who must utter every truth and shape every gospel enunciation according to the rule and square of a rigid orthodoxy."



MEDITATIONS ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

(Continued from page 120.)

The Serpent and The Lion. The Feast.

(Chapter XIV.)

We have seen what nazariteship is. The history of Samson shows us, that in it lies our *spiritual power*.

Christ only has fully made good His nazariteship, an absolute moral separation, throughout the whole of His life down here, and it is still the case in heaven where He abides the true Nazarite "separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26).

Samson, the Nazarite, is hardly a type of Christ except as to his mission (chap. xiii. 5). He is really, rather the type of the testimony which the church of God renders in separation from the world, in the power of the Spirit and in communion with the Lord. The history of this man of God,

although abounding in acts of power, is notwithstanding one of the most sorrowful recitals contained in the word. Samson (the church likewise, founded on an ascended Christ) should have been a true representative of separation to God. Alas! he was nothing of the sort. In comparing his nazariteship with that of Christ, how striking does the deficiency of Samson's appear!

Christ, the true Nazarite, encountered Satan in two characters: in the desert, as the serpent subtle and enticing; and, at the end of His course, as the roaring lion that rends and devours.

In the desert, the Lord met the wiles of the enemy, with the word of God and entire dependence upon Him, and gained the victory. Samson, at the beginning of his career, encountered the serpent, who sought to entice him by means of one of the daughters of the Philistines. Twice is it said that "she pleased him well" (vs. 3, 7). From that time he formed the intention of uniting himself to this woman who belonged to the race of Israel's oppressors. It is just the same with the individual or with the church when in conflict with the deceiver; Satan, who had nothing in Christ (John xiv. 30), easily finds a response in our hearts. By means of the eyes, our hearts are lured to the object presented by him and find pleasure in acquiring it. It does not necessarily follow that we *must* fall. If such objects are attractive to our eyes, grace and the word which reveals this grace to us are able to keep us. Not-

withstanding the tendencies of his heart, Samson, kept by the providential grace of God, never married the daughter of the Philistines.

The desire of Samson shewed that the word of God had not its right weight with him. His parents, knowing much less of the counsels, but more of the word, of God than he did, said to him: "Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" (ver. 3.) The word of God was indeed explicit on this point: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son, for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (Deut. vii. 3, 4). Why did not Samson take heed to this? Christ, the perfect Nazarite, recognized the absolute authority of the Scriptures and fed upon every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The word of God not having its right weight with Samson, he started on a downward path which could only lead to a fall. In the life of Samson, three women mark the three stages which led to the loss of his nazariteship. The first *was pleasing to his eyes*; he formed a *passing connection* with the second (chap. xvi. 1), and he *loved* the third (chap. xvi. 4). When his affections were engaged, the last hour of his nazariteship had sounded.

Nevertheless Samson was not devoid of affection for Jehovah and His people. It is said, "But

his father and his mother knew not that it was of Jehovah, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines" (ver. 4). The domination of the latter was hateful to him. He was looking for a favourable opportunity to strike the blow which should break the yoke weighing upon the children of Israel. But Samson was not single-eyed; he brought a divided heart to the work. Trying to reconcile pleasing his own eyes with his hatred against the enemy of his people, he was holding out his left hand to the world and at the same time wanting to fight it with his right. Yet God took note of what there was for Him in this divided heart. "It was of the Lord" who could use even the weaknesses of Samson to accomplish His purposes of grace towards His people.

This proneness to seek in the world that which "pleases the eyes," led Samson into endless difficulties from which only the power of God could deliver him. There are many instances in the word where a *first* look turned toward the world involves the believer in irreparable trouble. We have to watch against that with fear and trembling, for we can never foretell what abyss a single lust may open for us. Such was the case with Adam, with Noah, with Lot, with David. Grace can keep us, but it will not do to trifle with it, nor to imagine that we can use it as a cloak to cover our lusts or to excuse our sins. Let us rely on it in order to be sustained and preserved from falling, and if we have been so unhappy as to have

abandoned for an instant this support, let us quickly return to it for restoration and for the recovery of our lost communion.

Samson was on slippery ground. His eyes were enamoured, and he desired to take this woman for his wife ; for alliance with the world follows the lust of the eyes. Then he made a feast (ver. 10), and seated himself at it, guarding no doubt the external marks of his nazariteship, for we are not told that he drank wine with the Philistines ; yet this repast had a sorrowful termination for him.

Before going any further let us take into consideration what preceded the feast in Samson's history. We have already said that Satan not only presents himself as a serpent, but also as a roaring lion. It was in this character that the Lord Jesus met him in Gethsemane and at the cross. Nothing is more terrifying than the roar of the lion. Satan sought to frighten the holy soul of Christ in order to make Him abandon the divine path which led down to the sacrifice. In the power of the Holy Spirit and in perfect dependence on His Father, the Lord withstood him in the garden of the Mount of Olives. At the cross, where he opened his mouth against Christ "as a ravening and a roaring lion" (Ps. xxii. 13), the Lord in "the weakness of God" (see 1 Cor. i. 25), overcame "the strong man," and, through death, nullified his power (Heb. ii. 14). In just the same form does Satan present himself to the children of God. "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walk-

eth about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. v. 8). If he does not succeed in beguiling us, he tries to frighten us. Samson was now confronted by the young lion, coming up against him from the country of the Philistines, and here his nazariteship was manifested in its full power, which is that of the Spirit of God. "And the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, *and he had nothing in his hand*" (ver. 6). Such is the way that we have to act when meeting Satan. We should not spare him in the least, for if we do he will return to the charge. We must, in our struggle, rend him as we would rend a kid. He can do nothing to us so long as we resist him fearlessly (see James iv. 7 ; 1 Pet. v. 9) ; for, weaponless (if we may so speak), Jesus has already overcome him for us at the cross.

Later on, Samson, passing by the same road, turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and found in it "a swarm of bees and honey ;" he ate some of it as he went along, and gave some to his parents. As the fruit of Christ's victory on the cross, all heavenly blessings have been placed in our hands, and these blessings are taken from the spoil of the defeated enemy. And if we, obtaining a victory over him (henceforth rendered easy), treat him as a vanquished foe, our souls will be filled with strength and sweetness. We shall be able to impart of what we have got to others ; but, like Samson who ate as he went along, our own souls will have first been fed. Let us never treat Satan as a friend ; if we do, we shall come away from such a meeting beaten and enfeebled, embittered and famished.

The victory of Samson over the lion of Timnath

was not only a proof of strength ; it was a *secret* between him and God. When his eyes were attracted to the daughter of the Philistines, he told his parents of it ; concerning his victory he told no one. The life of Samson abounded with secrets and at the same time with acts of power. Even his nazaritheship was a secret, a link, unknown to any, between his own soul and Jehovah. This link is for us *communion*. We meet with four secrets in this chapter. Samson had not divulged his intentions to his parents, nor the part that Jehovah had in these things (ver. 4) ; he had not told them of his victory (ver. 6), nor the place whence he had procured the honey (ver. 9), nor his riddle (ver. 16). All that, kept unbroken between his soul and God, was for him the only means of following a path of blessing in the midst of this world.

Let us return to Samson's feast. He put forth his riddle to the Philistines, rightly supposing that they would understand nothing about it ; indeed, had it not been for the feast, he would not have been in danger of betraying himself. But the enemy succeeded in robbing him of that which he had so carefully concealed. The world has an insidious effect upon us, leading to loss of our communion with God. If our hearts, like Samson's, in any way cling to what the world may present to us, it will not be long before we lose our communion. Absence of communion does not at first imply loss of strength ; it is, however, the road which leads to it ; for, as long as nazaritheship exists, even externally, strength will not be lacking, as Samson proved to the Philistines in the matter of the thirty changes of garments. But did this man of God have much peace and joy during the days of the feast ? On the contrary,

it was a struggle with tears, care and pressure (ver. 17). He was betrayed by the very woman of his choice. One can scarcely conceive that association with the world would produce the bad results which, as a matter of fact, it does. Samson would never have thought that his thirty companions, aided by his wife, would lay traps to plunder him, for the thirty changes of garments by right belonged to him. Satan may separate us from communion with the Lord, may make us unhappy; he may also hinder our being witnesses here below, but, thanks be to God, he cannot pluck us out of the hand of Christ.

The grace of God preserved Samson from the final consequences of his error, and delivered him from an alliance which God could not approve of. The Spirit of Jehovah having come upon him he performed mighty deeds. "And his anger was kindled" (ver. 19). Samson was a man of a very selfish character and was guided in his action by the sense of the wrong that had been done him. Nevertheless he was victorious over the enemies of Jehovah, and kept for himself none of their spoil, it went back to the world, from whence it had been taken. Then he quitted the scene of so much unhappiness and "went up to his father's house," which he never should have left to *settle* among the Philistines. May we profit by this lesson; and if, in our intercourse with the world, we have passed through painful experiences, let us hasten to return to the Father's house (which we never should have left, even in thought), where He dwells whose communion is the source of our peace and happiness all our pilgrimage way, till that moment comes when we shall enter forever into that house—our eternal dwelling-place!

(To be continued, D.V.)