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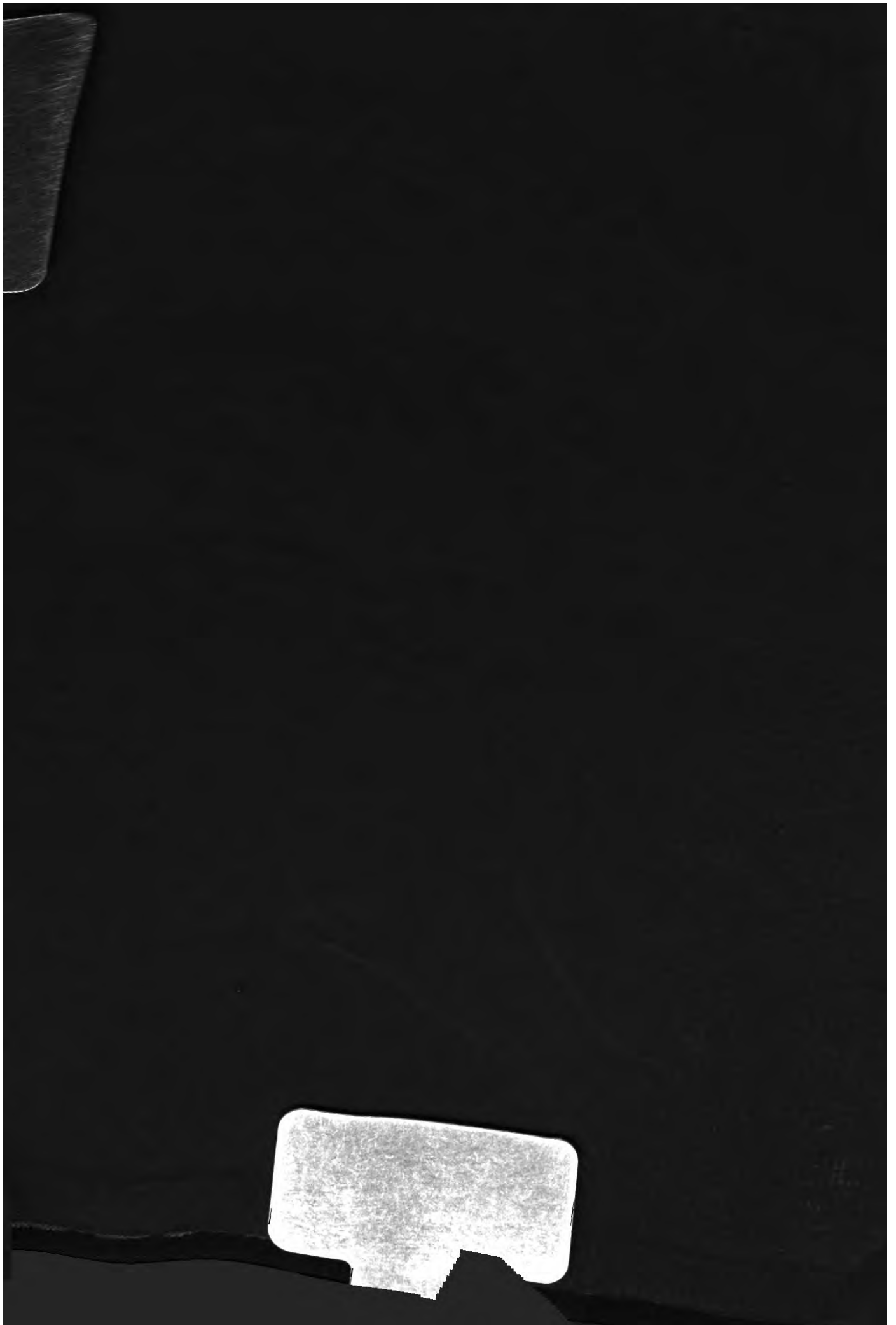


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Brief Service

and

Early Reward





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MEMORIALS OF JAMES GARDNER, B.D.



Brief Service and Early Reward

OR

MEMORIALS

OF

JAMES GARDNER, B.D.

LICENTIATE OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BY THE

REV. BENJAMIN MARTIN, M.A.

LESLIE.

“Οἱ δούλοι αὐτοῦ λατρεύσουσιν αὐτῷ.”

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

1887.

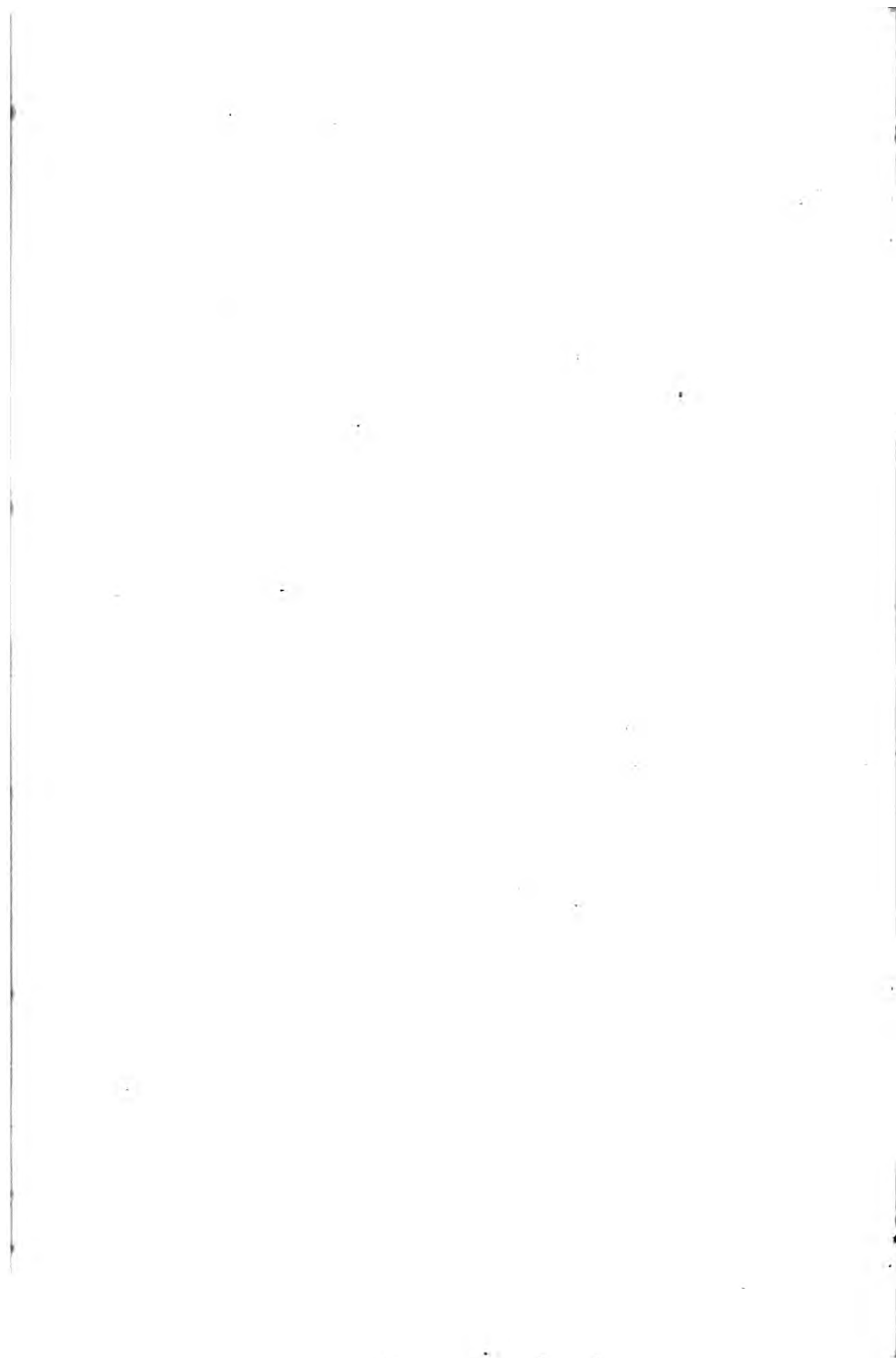


P R E F A C E.

ON the death of Mr. James Gardner, B.D., many of his student-friends and acquaintances expressed a wish for some memorial of him. His parents—Mr. and Mrs. James Gardner, 28 Minto St., Edinburgh—yielding to this desire, put all his papers into my hand, and requested me to prepare this Volume for Private Circulation. The work has been to the writer a labour of love for one who will be long remembered by not a few, beyond the circle of his own family, for his amiability, intellectual brightness, and spirituality. While thanking the friends who have contributed reminiscences of their son, his parents hope that this Memoir may recall to relatives and acquaintances the main features of his character, and leave on their minds and hearts, by its perusal, salutary lessons as to the vital importance of an interest in Christ, and a life of loving communion with Him. “He being dead, yet speaketh.”

BENJAMIN MARTIN.

TRINITY MANSE, LESLIE,
29th October 1887.



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CHILDHOOD.

PSALM lxxiii. 23-26.

*Nevertheless continually,
O Lord, I am with Thee :
Thou dost me hold by my right hand,
And still upholdest me.*

*Thou, with Thy counsel, while I live,
Wilt me conduct and guide ;
And to Thy glory afterward
Receive me to abide.*

*Whom have I in the heavens high
But Thee, O Lord, alone ?
And in the earth whom I desire
Besides Thee there is none.*

*My flesh and heart doth faint and fail,
But God doth fail me never :
For of my heart God is the strength
And portion for ever.*

These verses were adopted by James Gardner, when he was a boy, as the expression of his hope and confidence.

CHAPTER I.

Childhood.

THE design of these memorials is to present the portrait of a youth, who, although not permitted by reason of early death to perform much in his life, yet gave such promise of good work for the Master, that it may serve not only to recall his features to his friends, but help others to know him, if in this sketch he can be fittingly set forth as he was in his gifts and graces. The full-blown rose is worthy of being painted in its flush of beauty; but the bud has also a charm of its own, on which the eye never wearies to rest. The aged warrior putting off his armour after his life's victories deserves a memorial; but the youthful soldier, cut down in the putting on of his armour, touches the heart as well and admits also of a record.

Such a youthful soldier in Christ's army was James Gardner, who, born in Edinburgh on the 2nd June 1861, died on the 29th October 1886, when, after a more than usually brilliant student career, he was prepared to begin his life's work in the ministry of the Gospel. Nor was this wish to serve God in the Gospel

of His Son an afterthought suggested by a wider experience of life and its duties; but as from his earliest years he was a lover of God and His Son, so even in childhood he formed the purpose, from which, amid enticing inducements to another calling, he never swerved, that he would be a minister of Christ. It is affecting now to think of him, as a mere child, when a friend said to him, "But, James, you cannot be a minister," replying—his little frame quivering with emotion, and his countenance struggling between the expression of disappointment and hope—"But may I not be able when I am older?" As in the case of Samuel, his young life was given up from the first to the service of the Temple and its Lord.

He was early taken to church, where he took delight in the worship as far as he could then understand it. On the Sabbath evenings it was a great treat to him, while sitting on his Grandfather Gardner's knee, to examine the pictorial Bible and listen to the stories of the saints of old, until, when he was four years of age, he was able to read them for himself. His hope of being a gospel preacher was brightened when one day the late Rev. James Robertson, Newington, promised him in due time to share his pulpit with him. This promise was long kept in mind, and a sermon was even written, which he many times delivered to his brothers, sisters, and young friends, so that he might be well prepared for that important occasion. When he was seven years of age he wrote in pencil on scraps of paper a

sermon on Luke ix. 59, "Follow me," which shows how early he understood what it was to follow Christ. His last sentence is very appropriate to his brief service and early reward, "Let us follow Christ wheresoever He will lead us, and at length we shall receive our due reward."

As this purpose of his childhood developed into the settled conviction of his youth, so his features in youth gave an indication of the bright intellectual countenance that was so attractive in his student days. The mingled gentleness and vigour, the alternating playfulness and seriousness that distinguished him in later years, could all be traced in their germ in his childhood. His physical health, the indications of his intellectual power, and the charm of a quiet, tractable, affectionate manner all seemed to betoken in the future a happy and useful life.

The impressions left on him by frequent visits to his friends in Leslie, so entwined themselves round his heart, that to the end he cherished with fond remembrance the familiar scenes and faces so dear to him in his early childhood. Above all, the hallowed influences of his home were at this time silently moulding his character, deepening his reverence, and strengthening him to resist the strain that was to be put on his faith in his future training.

SCHOOL DAYS.

XCIX.

*I climb the hill : from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath,
I find no place that does not breathe
Some gracious memory of my friend.*

*No grey old grange, a lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy world :*

*No hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the latest linnets trill,
Nor quarry trenched along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw,*

*Nor runlet tinkling from the rock :
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves
To left and right through meadowy curves,
That feed the mothers of the flock :*

*But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindlier day :
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die.*

TENNYSON'S *In Memoriam*.

CHAPTER II.

School Days.

THE earlier training of James Gardner at school was also well fitted to give him a healthy bias in favour of gospel truth; for at Newington School, where he received his elementary education, he had the opportunity, under the teaching of Mr. Chalmers, of imbibing religious principle along with secular instruction. The rapidity of his progress at this school, his decided bent towards books, and his aptitude for mastering intricate subjects, showed his parents the propriety of furnishing him with the best means at their disposal of developing his powers by sending him to some higher school, where he might prepare for that profession on which his heart was so lovingly fixed.

Their choice fell on the Collegiate School, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, an institution which, under the able direction of Dr. A. Hamilton Bryce, LL.D., D.C.L., the head-master, well known for combining classical attainments with a remarkable power of imbuing his pupils with his own love of learning, has taken a first place in a city pre-eminent for the excellence of

its educational establishments. Most of the youths attending this Institution were intended for a mercantile or professional career; the majority of them belonging to Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, but many coming from other districts and countries: so that he had, in addition to the training which competition with such a class of boys gave him, the advantage of being brought into contact, at the formative period of life, with those who, while in a good social position, were intended like himself for the work of a laborious life. He had little difficulty, however, through his native talent and diligence, in taking a leading place among his competitors; so that at the close of his studies in the school, it was found that he had been first in all his classes, save the last, when he lost the dux medal by only half a mark.

The keen rivalry, however, in this miniature world as to which of them should be greatest, instead of producing alienation, seemed only to bind the youthful antagonists the more firmly to one another in the bonds of friendship. The ties thus formed, although broad seas ere long rolled between the friends, and different occupations scattered some of them over the world, were so close that, like the love between David and Jonathan, separation seemed only to strengthen them. In the case of others the rivalry of the school was transferred to the more prominent arena of the University, where old battles were fought over again, with very much the same result of establishing James

Gardner's reputation as that of a young man of excellent scholarship, and much more than average promise. One thing most commendable in him was that, while he studied hard to be first, yet, when he did succeed, his happiness seemed always to be mingled with regret that his success had led to the disappointment of others, who after all might be better scholars than himself.

But, while diligently prosecuting his studies in secular learning, he was not forgetting that that was only a means to fit him more perfectly for knowing and making known the higher truths of revelation. His study, therefore, even at this time, was much in the Bible. So well did he apply himself in this direction that when a prize was offered by the late Rev. Dr. Drummond, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, to the scholar in the Collegiate School who had the best knowledge of Scripture, he was, after a searching examination, pronounced the winner, and had presented to him as his reward, "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul," by Thomas Lewin, Esq., M.A., F.S.A.

Possessed of a fine musical ear and a rich voice, he at a very early age began to cultivate his talent for music. The piano was to him a source of rare enjoyment, while it relieved the strain on his severer studies. Nothing gave him such exquisite delight as listening to the worthy rendering of high-class music. So severely did he scrutinise himself at times that he was disposed to rank this love for music, if not among his

besetting sins, at all events among his failings which he would do well to moderate and curb. For the other recreations in which youths indulge, although in a very moderate degree participating in them, he never had any strong predilection. If as much had been known then as was understood afterwards of his physical constitution, it would have been a duty to repress somewhat the intense activity of his brain by a larger amount of bodily exercise and athletic recreation. But in a nature, where a sense of duty preponderated over a love of pleasure, it was almost inevitable that the mind would be cultivated at the expense of the body. There can be no doubt that, while at the Collegiate School there was laid a solid basis for accurate and varied scholarship, there was also induced the habit of overwork, which, because it did not in him produce immediate lassitude or prostration, proved in the end so disastrous to his health.

During this period the long walks which he had with the writer of this in the country round Leslie and on the Lomond Hills had always a bracing and invigorating effect on his system. In some of the farm houses which he visited in these walks, he endeared himself to the people by his gentle manners and winning ways. From his annual visits, and his well-known decision to study for the ministry, he came to be so identified with the manse, that a farmer's widow, lately deceased, who took a special interest in him and his

cousin Dr. John Douglas Watt, then studying medicine, gave them the names of the Young Minister and the Young Doctor.

While the chubby-faced boy had now grown up into a graceful youth, with slightly curled dark auburn hair, bright blue eyes, and refined features, his mind was rapidly growing in strength, some even of the deeper problems in philosophy and religion beginning to fascinate him and disturb his peace. The conversation was often turned, during these walks over the hills, on such subjects as had been perplexing him. A habit of mind, which continued with him to the end, began at this time to be observable. Partly through natural timidity, and partly, perhaps, through an instinctive feeling that he would in this way best arrive at the truth, he would give forth certain opinions, stating the strongest arguments he could find in their support, in the hope that the friend with whom he was conversing might be able to overthrow them, and confirm him in the belief which he really held, and in which he was anxious to be more intelligently established. It was not an infrequent practice with him, too, on these occasional walks, to throw into such Latin or Greek as he could command his description of the scenery through which he was passing, not to show how much he knew, but to convince himself how much he had to learn before he could be called a scholar. Thinking that the accomplishment of writing shorthand would be useful to him in his future life, he set himself at this time to study

and practise phonography, in which he afterwards became very proficient.

Short entries in a diary which he kept at this time, show many of the usual pathetic struggles of a young human soul towards the fuller knowledge of itself, its surroundings and its future. How to look lovingly still on the faith of childhood, in the new light streaming in on it from the world of literature and speculation, seems to have been one of the problems ever present to his mind. Much help in quieting the spirit of doubt and leading to a brighter hope was evidently got, among other influences, from the sermons of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Mair, Morningside, under whose ministry he always considered it a privilege for him to have been brought up. Light from various other quarters broke in on him, so that in 1875 he is able to record, among other mercies, this as the crown of the whole: "Especially I have been led to entertain a good hope through grace with a clearness and intelligence which, I think, that I never had before." A year later he adds: "This year has slipped quickly away; and I think I have made a little progress in Divine things, as well as in secular learning."

The following verses, written in 1876, are given only to indicate his outlook at this time on life:—

LIFE TO THE WORRIED.

“ Say, what is life,” the people of the world do ask,
“ But endless cares and troubles hid beneath the mask
Of outward levity ? ”—
“ What, but a gathered heap of evils hard to bear,
Concealed by some, and rightly too, with anxious care,
Beneath frivolity ? ”

Thus people of the world oft reason with themselves,
As one who underneath the fair bright surface delves
For something better still ;
Better, he hopes, than aught his poorer neighbour has,
Though it be hard dry rock, or metal in the mass,
Yet never to his will.

Know then, who never at life's brightest side do look,
But search amid earth's cares as if for some safe nook
Where they may end their days,—
Who cover carking cares at times with feignèd joy,
Know not the priceless blessedness life to employ
For our wise Maker's praise.



EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY.

MY LOST YOUTH.

*I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain ;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still :
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."*

*There are things of which I may not speak :
There are dreams that cannot die !
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill :
" A boy's will is the wind's will
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."*

—LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER III.

Edinburgh University.

SESSION 1877-1878.

AFTER having been four years at the Collegiate School, where, in addition to advancing in the branches of an English education, he laid the foundation of accurate scholarship in Latin, Greek, German, French, and Mathematics, James Gardner entered the University of Edinburgh in 1877, being then in his sixteenth year. That his opportunities had not been wasted is evidenced by the fact, that he gained by competitive examination the University Tyndale Bruce Bursary, tenable for two years, and a United Presbyterian University Scholarship.

The record of his first session at college is very varied. His time was so well spent in conscientious preparation for Professor Blackie's second Greek class, and Professor Sellar's senior Latin class that, at the close of the session, he passed the classical examination for Master of Arts. But he is also found attending, and taking part in the work of the University Philomathic Society, the Musical Society, the Morning-side United Presbyterian Sabbath Morning Fellowship

Association, and the United Presbyterian University Students' Society. Walks round Arthur Seat and the Braid Hills, in congenial student companionship, seem to have been utilised for the discussion of questions bearing on religion and philosophy.

There were problems which at this time very much perplexed him:—"How do I know that I exist? How do I know that the facts which memory recalls to me are true, and that events have really happened which I remember? How do I know that God exists?" His search for certainty on these questions leads him through many a tangled speculation, showing, amid crudeness of thought, not a little originality, till he accepts the validity of consciousness in its testimony to himself, the world, and an infallible standard of truth and duty. In reference to this period he has these jottings:—

"I wish I had kept a record of all the trials and difficulties I have gone through in my mind for the last two or three years. It might have been useful to me. But my mind was too thoroughly absorbed at the time to think of writing anything down. It is a very curious and painful experience we undergo in passing from boyhood into opening manhood. Apart from the intellectual difficulties I have experienced, I have felt for the last year or so, that the old juvenile days are gone and shall never return. I feel as if I were entering on a new phase of life altogether. I wish I could compose a poem on My Lost Youth. I admire these lines of Longfellow—

'A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'

It might be gone. The warbling minstrels of the air
 Gave utterance suitable
 To such a scene: they sang with soul-like feeling rare
 And joy unspeakable.

Enrapt, I listened to the linnet's song,
 The blackbird's melody, the thrush's treble sweet:
 The finch his voice upraised and bore along
 The brilliant theme, for the whole chorus to repeat.
 The air around was filled with sound; it quavered, swayed
 With rhythmic agitation;
 Not as when swayed by storms for desolation made,
 But moved in adoration.

Oh, I have been in many a gilded hall
 Where Beauty's daughters fair preside, where Music's tongue
 Speaks out in studied tones, which lingering fall
 Upon the cultured ear; but never heard a song
 That matched this morning's holy hymn in stately flow,—
 This perfect symphony:
 For 'tis but part of the grand oratorio
 Of Nature's harmony.

SESSION 1878—1879.

In his second session at college, James Gardner attended the classes of Junior Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Logic and Metaphysics. In October he obtained the Lewis United Presbyterian University Scholarship. In April he passed the Master of Arts' examination in Mathematics. In the class of Logic and Metaphysics his love for speculation found both scope and guidance. In an essay on "Language and its Imperfections, especially in Philosophy," he shows

a precision of thought and expression along with grasp and fulness, beyond his years ; while in an essay on the question, "Is Berkeley's view of what external things are true and sufficient?—and if not, why not?" he returns to the subject which had formerly so perplexed him, and vindicates Berkeley from the philosophic objections brought against his Doctrine of Matter, without committing himself to a full acceptance of it in its practical consequences. "The laws of thought," he says, "may be imperfectly understood, and the pretensions of philosophy may be inadmissible; but as long as the laws of thought, as they are at present understood, and the pretensions of philosophy stand, so long must we allow the main argument of Berkeley's system to be unassailable."

One defect he notes in his philosophising, that, while by the constitution of his mind he is pushed back to first principles, he had not so examined them as to prove them to be first principles; and therefore he had not that certainty as to his conclusions which he longed to have. As soon as he should attain to this philosophic certainty, he would like to investigate the subject of man in relation to matter, to God, and to a future life, and embody his opinions in a form at once simpler and more in accordance with daily life than is usually done,—probably in a work comprising Psychology, Science, Theology, Ethics, and what may be termed generally, the Philosophy of Living. In connection with some of his reasonings about man he

puts and discourses on the question, evidently with a leaning to the affirmative side, Whether civilisation, instead of being a mark of progress, may not be the result of degeneration from man's original condition at his creation. These opinions are stated here not so much for their worth, as to show how, having accepted the teachings of Revelation, he was trying, although with much perplexity, to work his way round to an intellectual acceptance of them from the side of Philosophy. In the process, however, of these speculations, his spiritual vision was, as he afterwards sorrowfully confessed, much obscured, and his piety weakened.

But, although sometimes bewildered on his way, he was striving to keep his heart pure and spiritually bright with hopes of the future life. It was not often that he put his thoughts into verse, but he was so struck with the scene in Newington Church at the funeral service for the Rev. James Robertson that he wrote the following lines on his return, expressive of these hopes.

FUNERAL SERVICE FOR REV. JAMES ROBERTSON,
2nd June 1879.

Low liest thou, departed saint,
In death's last icy-cold embrace;
Now pure and free from mortal taint,
Thy spirit sees thy Saviour's face.

Where now thy lifeless form appears,
Thy loving voice has oft been heard,

Calming thy people's doubts and fears,
By comfort from the living Word.

Where prayers ascend from o'er thy head
For mourners weeping thy decease,
Thou hast their souls with manna fed,
And led them in the paths of peace.

There thou didst hear thy people's praise
Ascend to Him who bore our load,
And with them didst thy spirit raise
In adoration to thy God.

But now thy funeral chant we hear,
In mournful cadence rising slow ;
The strains of sorrow round thy bier
Break from thy weeping flock below.

Thy name shall speak of holy calm,
And live here, loved and cherished well ;
Whilst thou hast gone to wave thy palm,
And in immortal honour dwell.

SESSION 1879-1880.

In 1879 James Gardner entered on his third session at the University, during which he attended the classes of Moral Philosophy and Rhetoric.

In the class of Moral Philosophy his essays were invariably assigned a good place. From an essay on "Personal Control under Moral Law," we take the following summing up of his reasoning:—

"We must now bring together the two main threads which we have been following up, and see if we can unite them. We shall here go over them in the re-

verse order and as briefly as possible. We find in our nature three distinct elements, intellect, volition, and emotional susceptibilities of various kinds. By the last (which does not comprehend all impulses, however) we are prompted to act, by the second we have the power to act when so prompted, and in the first we have provision for the government of the second, some impelling force being thus also supplied. If the will act under the influence of the third element without the first being called into exercise, then the condition is an abnormal one; that is, man is not acting in accordance with his entire nature, his will has lost for the time its status as a controlling power, and the impulses are unduly obtruded. But when all three act together then we have harmony. Intelligence, then, combined with will, the two acting and interacting, gives man his true standing as a rational responsible being; and by the power of attention bringing intellect to bear upon the lower motives, these are brought completely under control, and man attains to the noblest height of freedom in self-government. Nay, so completely is the control acquired that even understanding is brought under his authority; for intelligence and will going hand in hand, can turn back, as it were, on the intellectual processes themselves and command them according to the dictates of reason. It is freedom of self-government of the most universal and thorough-going kind. And when this self-direction is established under the dominion of moral law, then

the true glory and dignity of man appears. For seeing the moral law standing before him in all its awe-inspiring absoluteness, he feels himself to be in a region where everything sordid and selfish is completely broken down, and his whole being acts in accordance with the law's behests in the most harmonious and ennobled freedom."

He wrote three essays for the Professor of English Literature and Rhetoric. From one on "Song and Story," we cull the following extract,—

"Beside the aid given to memory by the practice of verse, it seems a very reasonable thing that man in an uncivilised state should seek to embody his feelings and thoughts first in song. Primeval man is pre-eminently a natural man. The whole life is occupied in dealings with the physical world. He sees with wonder and admiration the magnificent scenes which Nature displays, and is surrounded on every side by her beauty. He is a man of emotional rather than rational tendencies; and as soon as the stupefying awe, which first overcomes him, has worn off, he begins to give play to his emotions. He is free from the glosses and corruptions which civilisation does always, to some extent, raise. His life is truly a life poetic in the fullest sense of the word. For what is the great inspirer of the poetic art? Is it not nature—free and docile communing with being as we find it, not as it is twisted and disfigured by the deforming hand of man? Thus poetry is but one of the many forms in

which expression is given to the striving after the pure, the beautiful, and the true. Hence its prevalence in all ages, and hence the greatness of its charm to all minds which are not so sullied by the pollution around as altogether to lose sight of, or even actually detest a better state. The connection between song and story is easily marked. Indeed the poetry of a half-civilised state partakes very largely of the nature of story. Witness the deeds recorded in Homer's Iliad and the battle-scenes described in most of the Celtic literary remains of this country. In the form of verse, stories were handed down from age to age among the Greeks, the Saxons, the Norsemen, and we might almost say among the people of every tribe or nation which has emerged from the rudeness of a primitive state. Men there were whose profession it was to commit these tales to memory and compose new ones to be handed down in turn to future years. They travelled up and down the land, and were gladly welcomed alike by the rich in their castles and the poorer classes in their huts. Noted among these travelling minstrels were the Troubadours of Southern and the Trouvères of Northern France, the Minne-singers of Germany, and the Glee-men of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. In this way narrative first found its expression in song; and the hearers of the tale had at once their desire for story and their love of poetry fully satisfied together."

From the German of Körner he translated at this time the song entitled

THE THREE STARS.

Three stars with a bright light of kindness
Down into life's gloominess shine ;
The stars which so cheerily twinkle,—
They call them, The Song, Love, and Wine.

There lives in the voice of the Song
A heart full of sympathy true ;
Youthful joy in Song is renewed,
In Song grief forgets itself too.

But Wine is the breath of the Song,
Companion of life's loving mirth ;
'Tis painted with glowing bright rays,
In spring never dying on earth.

Yet first of the three doth the third Star,
With promise of blissfulness shine ;
It rings through the spirit like Music,
It glows in the bosom like Wine.

Now, therefore, ye dearly-loved Starlets,
Straight into our darkened breasts shine ;
Through life unto death may we ever
Be followed by Song, Love, and Wine.

In April, he passed the examination in Philosophy for Master of Arts. There is evidence, however, that during this year he was awakening to the danger of allowing his spiritual life to decay by yielding to two opposite tendencies, the deadening influence of a worldly life and the fascination of philosophy. The awakening happened in this way. At the opening of Mayfield Free Church there was stirred within him by the sight

of his old teacher a train of reflection which brought up vividly before him his school days with their much-loved Bible lessons and their happy memories of true religious feeling, which made him scrutinise his spiritual state, with the result of alarming and saddening him. He thus mourns over his declension and pleads for grace to keep him from falling :—

“ I am fearful of having slipped back dreadfully during the last year or so. Company has such allurements that I am more than ever getting careless, and in danger of losing Christian principle. Thou God of my fathers and of my childhood, forsake me not now. While friends and kindred droop and die, be Thou my stay and my joy. ‘ Whom have I in the heavens but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart fainteth and faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.’ Why shouldest Thou be as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest Thou take Thy Spirit from me? Let it ever abide with me. May it never—never leave me. Lord, I desire Thy face, Thy presence, and a continual sense of Thy nearness. Take all else from me and give me Thyself. Take me for the love Thou bearest to Thy Son. Purify me. Make me holy as Thou art holy, so that I may delight in Thee after the inward man. Forgive my backsliding, and restore to me Thy salvation’s joy. Lord, to Thee and to Thy service would I consecrate my life—my whole being. Help me in my life’s work to be faithful even unto death. Lord God, in Thee have I trusted. Let me never be confounded. Amen.”

It was at this time that, meditating on eternal things,

he noted down a fragment of reflection on, "Does death end all?" This was followed by a short contemplation on John xvii., which may be regarded as the spiritual answer to the question; and by the translation of a hymn from the Latin of the Venerable Bede, on Christ's Ascension, which is our sure guarantee that death does not end all.

DOES DEATH END ALL?

"You see that corpse still and rigid. There those deep sunken eyes that lie in their hollow discoloured sockets—those high cheek-bones—that skin shrunken and sickening to behold—those clenched teeth, all fill the mind of the onlooker with repulsive horror. Ask him to touch it: he shrinks back as from a loathsome reptile. Ask him to stay alone in the same apartment with it but for five minutes: the minutes seem hours. Ask him if he can love that stiffened form: and his feelings recoil from the thought. And yet yesterday that repulsive form was known as a man. It was loved and cherished. It was the centre of attraction and the object of solicitude and affectionate care. And now here is the end of it. To-day we are what it was yesterday: to-morrow we may be what it is to-day. How we cherish ourselves, and how we detest it: and yet soon we may be lying as stiff, and gaunt, and cold. All whom we know must one day be like it: and there they eat and drink, laugh and sing, marry and are given in marriage. If death like this is to end all, what is the good of living? But the mystery of death is met by the revelation of life in Christ here and beyond the grave. Death does not end all."

JOHN XVII.

And is it so : that we who trust in Christ,
 Who know Jehovah as the One true God,
 And Jesus Christ his Messenger and Son,
 And thus eternal life possess, shall have
 The joy of Christ Himself fulfilled in us?
 And that the world may know the matchless love
 Wherewith the Father hath the Son and us
 Endowed, shall we the glory of the Son
 Partake, beholding Him where high He sits,
 And viewing there the brightness which enshrined,
 E'er yet the earth's foundations firm were laid,
 His heavenly Being? Bliss untold to know
 That in our souls the seed of love re-sown
 Shall grow, till in the Father's home it bear
 Celestial fruit, well pleasing to the Son,
 In whom abiding through the grace Divine
 Of the One Spirit, we for ever dwell,
 Restored unto the bosom of the One.

CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

(*After Bede.*)

A song of glory let us sing,
 Let hymns anew loud echoing ring
 Christ, by a pathway trod alone,
 Hath risen to His Father's throne.
 In glorious triumph, and with might
 Hath He ascended heaven's height,
 Who had, when mortals scorned His sway,
 By dying, taken death away.

That wondrous kingly triumph showed
 Enthronèd powers in homage bowed,
 And angel hosts in glory bright
 Encircling heaven's eternal light.

Then, too, on Olivet's lone hill
 Thy loved Apostles, awed and still,
 Beside thy virgin mother fair,
 O Jesu, saw Thy glory there.

Then, lo, ascending heaven's pure height,
 Resplendent with celestial light,
 On throne of might, by suffering won,
 Sat down God's co-eternal Son.
 Thence yet to come in glory dread
 To judge the living and the dead,
 By righteous law and saving worth,
 According to their deeds on earth.

Only Redeemer of lost men,
 We pray that Thou, O Jesu, then
 Wilt bring us safe to heaven above
 With Thy blest servants in Thy love;
 There to behold Thy Father's face,
 With hearts full of Thy Spirit's grace.
 Then by that view our souls shall be
 Content to all eternity.

SESSION 1880-1881.

The year 1880 finds him busy with Hebrew, Philosophy, and a tutorship. His vacation was spent at Callander, where he was greatly benefited by long walks among the beautiful scenery of that neighbourhood. On his return he gave himself up chiefly to study for honours in Philosophy. Though warned by some that he was too young to compete with men of matured minds, he resolved that he would go up, and if possible win.

But in the midst of these studies his old religious

struggles were renewed. What grieved him most was that when in society or at his books, he could get so absorbed that he had little heart for religion. Was it wrong, then, to go into society and to study? or how could he, being thus lawfully engaged, keep his spiritual life fresh and vigorous? His own solution of the difficulty was the right one when, in the spirit of Paul in similar straits, he writes: "Would that I could bring everything under the shadow of the cross!" These broken utterances of a prayer reveal the earnestness of his soul at this time for light and spiritual strength.

"Great God, Thou changest not. The earth is all as one place to Thee, and so with time. A thousand years are to Thee but as yesterday. Oh to feel my nearness to Thee more deeply and constantly! What is our life if Thou art not its director, its end, its alpha and omega. How difficult it is to overcome sin—especially little sins! Would that my life were impregnated with love to Thee and to man; that all my work were done to glorify Thee, and not merely from the routine of a mechanical necessity. Come, O Spirit of God, and fill my spirit with Thy Divine breath of eternal life!"

In the spring of 1881 he wrote for the class of Metaphysics an able essay on "A Comparative Criticism of Spinoza and Berkeley," in which he not only displayed an adequate knowledge of the abstruse systems of these philosophers, but a power of analysis rare in one of his years. One or two brief extracts will best show its character.

“If Spinoza was an exile and an outcast he was a citizen of the universe and at home in the eternal. And so he ever strove to live the perfectly good life which is above all earthly interests. If there is a repulsiveness about his dry mathematical reasonings, there is an element of real grandeur in his life. Statuesque he rises before us amid the tumults and troubles of political and domestic struggles, with his foot on the pedestal of reason, his gaze on the immensity of heaven, and the breath and gleams of infinity playing on his head. In this respect he forms a marked contrast with Berkeley, who, working under the power of patriotism and religious faith, sought to guard the common beliefs of ages from the inroads of novelty and scepticism.”

“More than two thousand years before Spinoza or Berkeley lived, the exiled Xenophanes, casting his eyes abroad over the face of nature, and upwards to the heavens, had declared the One to be God; and the sublime recluse Heraclitus had enunciated the *ὄδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία* as the solution of the universe. Then the Socratic and Platonic period came, and the fleeting things of sense were regarded as adumbrations of the Eternal Ideas in the realm of pure Reason. And so the stream of speculation flowed on ever deeper and wider, until in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the Christian era, we have Spinoza proclaiming his One Infinite Substance, and Bishop Berkeley announcing his faith in a Spiritual Unseen, in whose mind are the Archetypal Ideas or Principles, by partaking of whose reality the transitory data of sense acquire significance. But as the One, and the Becoming of the ancient philosophy refused to be reconciled, so does it seem that, even after the *νοῦς* has taken its place in a profounder view of things, our finite mind must fail to mark the union

of the Eternal with the Changeable in unbroken rational symmetry. The psychological procedure, supplemented as it has been by the transcendental criticism of Kant, the true Cartesian and elaborator of the self-conscious ego, equally refuses to explore the whole length and breadth of existence. However great the aspirations, and however encouraging the prospect, no one comes forward with a redeemable promise: 'Sublimi feriam sedera vertice.'

"Berkeley, unable to discover a true cause in the co-existence and succession of phenomenal things, found his want supplied in his own conscious spirit, and by analogy in the supreme Spirit on whom all of us depend. Kant showed that the human cry for a causal power could not travel beyond the phenomenal atmosphere which surrounds us. Yet he too acknowledges an unknown Power that gives us the manifold experience. Such an admission seems to us an unavoidable element, not only in those philosophies usually called Common Sense, but in every philosophical system which would adequately explain our experience. This acknowledgment, arrived at after most acute thinking, and put forward with the deepest sincerity and devoutness of feeling, will always commend Berkeley and his philosophy to all clear-headed and warm-hearted men. It may be a good thing to live for a time under the spell of Spinozism, and learn the dignity of man and the overwhelming majesty of God, but we hold it true that after all man is greater than his conceptions, for it is—

'—a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires.'

In the examination for Honours in the April of this year, notwithstanding predictions of failure, and his own self-reproaches for lack of preparation, he not only

passed, but took a higher position than he had anticipated. The degree of Master of Arts was thus conferred on him with first-class Honours in Philosophy. Yet at this very time, when he was thus exemplary in his diligence, he was so oppressed with a sense of his own weakness and apathy that he represents himself as sitting for hours in dreary abstraction, when he should have been concentrating his whole mental energies on his studies. But, even in his hour of success, this depression of spirits over his lack of energy, especially in the spiritual life, only brings him as usual to God for grace.

“Lord, to whom can I go but unto Thee; Thou art the restorer of life. Thou hast filled me with life; and if I die, I return to Thee. Thou hast striven with me; I have put Thee from me. Wretched that I am, who shall deliver me? By the dear might of Him who is my surety, because He hath poured out His blood for me, animate me with zeal for Thee, with a consciousness vivid and ever-abiding of my responsibility before Thee. I have named Thy name, I have sat at Thy table, I have enjoyed communings with Thy spirit. O Lord, hearken and do, defer not for Thine own name’s sake, and for Thy Son’s sake. This is all I can point to as my claim; but is not this enough, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Master. Amen.”

Thus, in his nineteenth year, closed his University course, in which, while proving his intellectual strength, he also learnt somewhat the meaning of this Scripture: “He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow;”

and in which, driven again and again to God for aid, he experienced that nothing can satisfy the heart and beautify the life, but the abiding of the Lord Jesus Christ in the soul by the presence of His gracious Spirit.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

CHRIST AND THE SOUL.

*“ God’s child in Christ adopted,—Christ my all,—
What that earth boasts were not lost cheaply, rather
Than forfeit that blest name, by which I call
The Holy One, the Almighty God, my Father?—
Father ! in Christ we live, and Christ in Thee—
Eternal Thou, and everlasting we.
The heir of heaven, henceforth I fear not death :
In Christ I live ! in Christ I draw the breath
Of the true life ! Let then earth, sea and sky,
Make war against me ! On my front I show
Their mighty master’s seal. In vain they try
To end my life, that can but end its woe.—
Is that a death-bed where a Christian lies?—
Yes ! but not his—’tis Death itself there dies.”*

S. T. COLERIDGE.

*“ Being desirous (so far as I understand myself) to spend my
little time in the world to the best advantage of the glory of God.”*

Adopted as motto by James Gardner from
the life of John Howe.

CHAPTER IV.

Theological College.

IN the year 1881 James Gardner entered the Divinity Hall, where by his kindly and truthful nature he speedily won for himself the confidence of his fellow-students, and by the thoroughness of his work the approval of his professors. In 1881 he gained the Biggart Bursary, and in 1882 and 1883 he held the Robert Kerr Scholarship. He not only took a high place in his classes as a scholar, but he early showed that he possessed the natural qualifications for developing into a popular preacher.

In some departments of study he got so absorbed that, with the true student instinct, he thought he could have spent a large part of his life in thoroughly investigating and mastering them. So little, however, did he think of his own attainments that he was with difficulty prevented from breaking his Hall course, and returning to the University for the purpose of, what he called, perfecting his scholarship. There was in his case a continual struggle after an ideal perfection which he could never reach. He thought almost

nothing gained, unless he knew all that could be known. He loved knowledge for its own sake, and not merely as a door through which he could pass into a professional career. He was haunted at all times by the inquiry, which he could never shake off, how he could reach completeness in his knowledge, and certainty in his conclusions. This tendency, while it stimulated to study, prevented him from being so uniformly cheerful as he wished to be. It was not an unusual thing for him to accuse himself of hypocrisy for preserving an air of cheerfulness among his friends, when in reality he was in great perplexity over some unsolved problem of Knowing and Being.

During the three years of his Hall course he gave himself up without reserve to a conscientious study of Hebrew, Church History, Systematic Theology, Old and New Testament exegesis, and the Practical Duties of the Ministry. For his professors he had a warm regard, and often expressed his sorrow that he had not time to do full justice to their several branches of learning. His fellow-students also he regarded with, what might be truly called, a brotherly affection. For, although there were a few with whom he was specially intimate, yet he loved them all, and seems to have been in a more than usual degree beloved by all.

The sermons which he preached at the Hall were of the student type, more fully developed on the intellectual than the practical side, but showing that with an increased acquaintance with the soul's sorrows and

aspirations, he would become more simple, direct, and telling. Believing that every minister should have the power of preaching without notes, he resolutely trained himself, at no small cost of mental labour and anxiety, for the unfettered delivery of his discourses both at the Hall and in the Church.

In addition to the work of the Divinity Hall, he took an active part in the Hall Missionary Society. Impressed with the importance of strengthening the Church at home, he was anxious that the students should take up for one year Church Extension as their Scheme of effort. Outvoted in this, he entered heartily into the proposal preferred to his own, and in town and country earnestly pled on behalf of the students' Scheme. Going forth two and two, the Divinity students are wont to spread themselves over the churches, enlisting the sympathies of the members in some particular mission field, giving a specimen of the talent of the rising ministry, and acquiring invaluable experience in the practical work of preaching. In this capacity he visited during his Hall course not a few churches, making friends wherever he went, and leaving behind him pleasing memories of his work, and favourable anticipations of his future career. Among the places visited were Tillicoultry, Alloa, Dunfermline, Abernethy, Dalkeith, Lauder, Cairneyhill, Kilmarnock, Hawick, Galashiels, and Peebles. In reference to these he often spoke of the unbounded indulgence with which he had been treated. So faithfully did he fulfil his mission

work that one of his addresses reached its majority. With an eye for the beauties of nature and a heart susceptible to lessons useful for the ministry, he derived so much benefit both to soul and body from these visits, that he was wont to say that no Hall course could be complete without the experience which such work gives. At this period he had grown into a tall, slender, pale-faced youth with fully developed forehead and dark auburn hair, the brightness of his eye lighting up his whole countenance, especially when he spoke, with the glow of intelligence. Chosen by his fellow-students one year to represent them at one of the meetings in connection with the Edinburgh Presbytery's Mission Week, he gave an address in the Synod Hall, where his youthful form, rich voice, and fluent speech drew forth the interest of the large audience, and the applause of his class-mates, whose partial judgment on his appearance he was very far from being able in his modesty to confirm.

The whole of the money collected by the students was not, however, devoted to their annual special Scheme, a portion of it being reserved for Home Mission work. In the Arthur Street mission, the students supported a missionary, in addition to giving their personal labours in conducting Children's services, Sabbath evening meetings and Bible classes. In this way the work of the students was twice blest: it blessed those who waited on their ministrations, and it blessed the young preachers by drawing out their

sympathies, and teaching them the need of simplicity and directness in seeking to win souls for Christ. Believing that there was need for church extension in North Merchiston, the students, transferring their labours to that district, bought an iron church and began in Yeaman Place a preaching station, which was ultimately sanctioned by the Edinburgh Presbytery, and in due time congregated. It is now a fully equipped congregation under the pastorate of the Rev. John Pollock, formerly of Freuchie. In the building up of this young congregation James Gardner took a deep interest, visiting from house to house to find out the non-church-going and invite them to the church, assisting in conducting week-night services, and preaching on the Sabbath. Although one of their number was the missionary in charge of the station, there was ample room for other students helping in the good work. From the fact of his being resident in Edinburgh during the Hall recess, a considerable part of the work fell to his share, which he most willingly and heartily did as a labour of love. The spirit in which he engaged in this work and the enthusiasm which he carried into it, may be gathered from the following extract from one of his addresses.

“It is surely very appropriate, that those who are preparing for the work of spreading abroad the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God should foster and enlarge their heart’s desire that the world may be saved, by banding together for mutual stimulation and united effort, in doing what

lies even now within their power to attain this end. The educational process which we undergo, in our Theological College Missionary Society, makes a deeper impression on many of us than mere additions to our knowledge. There comes to all of us an enlargement of sympathy, a more thorough and brave and resolute consecration to the service of our Master."

The Rev. John Pollock, in the Quarterly Record of Merchiston Church, thus refers to James Gardner's work in the founding of the congregation:—

"We are no longer connected with the Theological Hall, and we cannot say good-bye to it without an expression of our indebtedness to our student friends. What they have done for the congregation can never be fully known by the members. The devotion of one, however, may be taken as an example. Mr. Gardner will be long remembered by those who formed the first nucleus of the congregation as a young man of singular earnestness. He set his heart upon the prosperity of the congregation, and laboured hard to secure it. It is fitting that such a tribute should be borne to the worth of one who spent and was spent in Christian work, and very much in connection with our own cause. He has passed away from us, not to the work of the Christian ministry, to which he eagerly looked forward, but to the still nobler and purer service of the upper sanctuary. And it is pleasing to those among us who knew him that we have a visible memorial of him in the communion service which he presented to the congregation."

In the Theological and Literary Society of the United Presbyterian College, James Gardner also took

an active part. To this period belong three essays on "Scholasticism;" "The Justification of Culture;" and "Mr. Matthew Arnold's Religious Position: an Exposition and Criticism."

The problem which he sets before him in his essay on Scholasticism is, How the Church, adopting the methods of Pagan philosophy, sought to christianise the highest human culture, and to what extent it was itself enslaved by the methods it was wishful only to use for its own ends. The conclusion to which he comes after a long historical survey is, that philosophy as the highest outcome of human reason, and Christianity as the highest wisdom of God, must in the end harmonise, through philosophy throwing off its imperfections, and embracing religion purified from its misconceptions. The various philosophies are only the attempts of the human mind to grasp the truth which Christianity has already fully revealed. Christianity must therefore embrace all true culture, and harmonise with it.

"If Christianity," he says, "is to be the universal religion, it must take in the universe. It cannot afford to leave science, literature, and philosophy outside. In general it may be said that there has been more or less antagonism evinced between the various forms of culture and the spirit of Christianity. From the mystical imaginings of the Gnostics, and the subjective exaltation of the Alexandrians, on through the centuries down to the strenuous labours of the Positivists, or the alluring words of the author of 'Literature and Dogma,' there has been a continual trial of strength between these two forces.

For many hundreds of years there was a decided preponderance of power on the side of Christianity; in later times there has been an apparent reinforcement to the strength of its adversaries. There has never yet been a time when our religion was totally under the control of free thought and unaided reason: but there has been seen the complete, though temporary, subjection of the learning and the wisdom of the world to Christian guidance. At a time when there seems a likelihood or a danger of an opposite result it may not be uninteresting to take a glance at the period when the whole of European thought was brought under the dominion of the leaders of the Christian Church. When Christianity entered the world, apart from the more individual work of quickening in men faith in its Founder as the Saviour of their souls, it had the wider task before it of winning over the existing methods of culture for its own advantage. During the ages of the Fathers the Church was irresistible. Its native vitality and instincts kept it true to itself; and its energy was so tremendous that it swept all obstacles before it. When it became supreme—the owner of all power political and social, no less than intellectual, the individualism which prevailed at its advent had been transformed into absolute universalism. The Church was all in all. Then the leaven of reason which it had incorporated began to ferment; and with this there came a rent in the great organism. Scholasticism was the handmaid of orthodoxy, but it became the master of the Church Catholic. The spirit of independence revived as in the youth of antiquity, but with a new faith in a larger and fuller nature, and with a consciousness of right as a guide. In modern times there is a basis of certainty where there was none in ancient times.

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“Mystery is almost the exclusive property of theology. Practically at least the religious reverence for the unseen affords man a place of rest, and our loftiest speculations border on those very themes which form the essence of our spiritual aspirations. We cannot boast of any marked advance in this respect in our modern attainments compared with the meditations of these mediæval thinkers. The most philosophically minded among them found their higher occupation in absorbing meditation on entities, beyond which they confessed that there were ineffable essences of which they had no conception. And in this historical connection of Scholasticism as a whole, may we not mark an illustration of the same principle? The Church for a time placed undeviating faith in her dogmas: without this the world would never have been Christianised, and the Scriptural revelation would never have been understood. But the free play of thought, I believe, was never altogether extinct. Before the period of her all-conquering sway, the Church had to suffer the attacks of rationalistic antagonists from without in the form of the dying ancient philosophy; and when that expired, though the heretical activity within her own borders had also waned, there still existed in her pale the slumbering intellectual life of Europe, which awoke into energetic play in a couple of centuries. The heresies which annoyed her then were the attempts, by the natural endowments of reason, to understand the truth which she had spread abroad.

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“And now reason has been doing its best for 300 or 400 years; Christianity has been existing alongside of it as an acknowledged system of truth; and yet there has been no total reduction of the enigma of revelation by the chemical solvents of science. The Protestant Exodus was

made on the express assertion of the right, which the individual consciousness possesses, of yielding to no authority its claims for rational satisfaction as to the objects of its faith. The result has been a gain to Christendom, to the individual, to the world. But as yet man has been unable to loose himself from all sense of dependence. He has demonstrated, and is demonstrating as years roll on, that he is very distinctly an *imperium*, and is inclined to forget the whole truth involved in his status as an *imperium in imperio*; but it remains to be said that he has not yet placed himself as the great god at the head of the 'world's altar stairs.' Magnificent schemes of metaphysical deduction and bewildering dialectic have striven to do it; political ambition has striven to do it; physical science seems to be going to try very hard to do it; ecclesiastical blindness has tried to do it: but it is yet undone. Still in our time the tide is running strongly in that direction; and we may well be pardoned if the post-scholastic *zeit geist* should convince us that it is nearing the dreamt-of goal. For my part, when I look at the enormous revolution which the world has seen in the past, and how little radical change there is in it, I confess I am apt to doubt the ability of this century's forces. The current may be like the Gulf Stream, which ever makes for the same shore. But I do believe that with each attempt we grow into fuller and better men. The faith which we have cherished so long becomes clearer and brighter, with every new era that dawns on the efforts of devoted thinkers. Our duty undoubtedly is to study and know our age as it is in the light of other ages, that we may be able to widen the bounds and clarify the titles of belief, as it is given us to do in our own day. What the issue of present antagonisms may be, and how the world's

faith is to benefited thereby, should be the work of a lifetime to show."

In a shorter essay on "The Justification of Culture," he is still found discoursing on the old question, How culture, as the highest development of the human mind in science, literature, and art, ought to lead up to the hearty acceptance of the fulness of life in the spiritual sphere of revealed religion. The fact that so many who have the broadest culture reject revealed religion, ought not to make those who accept revealed religion reject the broadest culture as worthless. To reject revealed religion is to come short of true culture; and to despise the highest merely human attainments is to injure religion by limiting the sphere of its influence and work.

"We therefore must judge," he says, "that the most highly cultured man, if he advances far enough, must come to a point at which it is necessary for him to incorporate the moral and religious within the scope of his efforts. But since the highest attainable stage in human experience is so far from the ideal,—practically at an infinite distance from it—there is every inducement for a man to adopt this element of the fulness of life at an early or at the first stage, and no valid reason for delaying the cultivation of it to a late period of his own development, much less for entirely ignoring and discarding it."

The essay on Mr. Matthew Arnold, read before the United Presbyterian College Literary Society, is an

elaborate exposition and criticism of that writer's religious position. Clearly perceiving that his system is incoherent and self-contradictory, that it involves Atheism, the destruction of Christianity, and the reversal of the wheels of human progress, he yet does more than full justice to his motives, and comforts himself by the hope that the Gospel will gain by the necessity of restating and re-vindicating its truth. Fascinated by the idea of culture as the handmaid of religion, and with the true student instinct of welcoming light from any quarter, he fails, while exposing the errors of his author, to give the right name to the effrontery of the man, who in the nineteenth century of grace, and with the splendid results of the Christian civilisation before his eyes, can propose to give a new lease of power to Christianity by plucking out its heart, and insisting that its mummified corpse is a new spiritual force for the world's regeneration. The accompanying extract will show how he looks on Mr. Arnold's new religion :—

“ Here, then, is the central idea which shapes and controls Mr. Arnold's theological position : he discards theology as we usually speak of it, and accepts the religion of the Bible as it is moulded and relieved of superstition by culture. With the power, which wide reading gives the man of culture, to estimate the proportions and relations of what he reads in the Bible, he comes to apprehend the religion of the Scriptures in its nature, soundness, and essence,—in its facts and right conclusions. This involves at the outset the acceptance of the language of

the Bible, not in a rigid, fixed, and scientific sense, but as fluid, passing, and literary. Religion, he maintains, has pre-eminently to do with conduct, not with abstruse reasoning or metaphysics: it comprehends, therefore, morality, which relates to practice and habit; but it adds to the precepts of morality the powerful adjunct of affection,—passionate attachment to, or craving for persons and ideals outside of the agent. What distinguished the ancient Jewish religion above all others was the supremacy it gave to the ideas of conduct and righteousness, and the strong attachment it evinced to the real power outside the nation—what was called Jehovah, or more strictly the Eternal. When Jesus Christ came, He took from Israel's religion its external and exclusively national character, and made it inward and personal. The essence of His doctrine and character lay in His renewal of the old intuition of righteousness, and the new power He was able to give it in the hearts of mankind. He effected this by two things, a method and a secret. The method was repentance. The secret was dying to self. Saving faith is the yielding to His attractiveness, and acceptance of His method and secret, as the rule and guide of life.

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“It is, to say the least, disappointing to find that he who can set before us such an ideal, when he comes to give us a specimen of its operation, advocates the view of ‘advantages special, local, and temporary.’ In spite of his plain statement that scientific methods and results are only part of the wide field compassed by the pursuit of letters, his conclusions as to the truths of the Christian religion are reached solely by the principles of natural science. If the people will accept only what is scientifically verifiable, Mr. Arnold surely delivers a public

insult to the Bible, when he says that its language is not scientific but literary. For if the major part of the Scriptures is literary, it can have no interest or value for the mass of the people, according to Mr. Arnold. When, therefore, Israel personified the Eternal, and became thereby an orator and poet; and when Paul produced his closely articulated sentences, and orientalised, both Israel and Paul must say what has no attraction for the mass of the people. But when he so divides the scientific from the literary and gives over the scientifically verifiable to the people, he gives to them not Bible religion, but scientific morality."

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"His fundamental thesis seems to be that the function of Hellenism is to go back and try the rule and ground of Hebraism; and he says that this is needed now for our larger culture. The opposite of this thesis seems to be demonstrable; for it is a question whether Hellenism has ever touched, or can touch the rule and ground of Hebraism. He cannot give to religion, that is to Hebraism, the chief part in human life, and at the same time give to Hellenism the government of this major part. The wondrous renewal of religion, which was effected by Jesus Christ, cannot be accounted for by any existing elements of culture and education. This has been a weighty argument in support of His supernatural origin; and infidelity has been unable to explain it away. No amount of Hellenic culture has been able, throughout the centuries which have elapsed since Christ's birth, to raise any one near the level of Jesus in wisdom and conduct. Coming down the stream of history, we observe that culture not only contributed nothing to the inauguration of the grand world-religion of Christ, but it gave no aid to the revival of the Christian

religion, which is known as the Reformation. During the Middle Ages the only culture known was that which found its home in the Church; and under its tutelage religion became superstitious, insipid, and worldly. In the sixteenth century Hebraism and Hellenism reissued from the darkness where they had been apparently lost in each other; and they have since flowed on in the two streams of which the Reformation and the Renaissance were the respective fountains. The religion of Protestantism is not weak in that it refuses to apply the central Hellenic idea of the Renaissance to its own development, and pursue in all lines of activity the law and the science of things as they really are. It is weak in so far as it consents to allow Hellenism, that is literature and science and art, to carve out its forms of truth or instruct its workmen. Hebraism should not forget—that is, Religion, Christianity, Protestantism should not forget—that the new life and movement which can awaken a healthier and less mechanical activity is not to be imported from Hellenism, but is to spring up within itself. I do not think the path of victory for Hebraism is now, any more than it has ever been, through the demesne of Hellenism. Religion is not in our day, nor at any time, to be fed on the foster-milk of culture. Protestantism is not to be saved from superstition or secularism by laying hold of the principles of science, or the transitional theories of criticism, or the renewed methods of philosophy. Therefore, let all who wish with single purpose to further the cause of man's salvation, which is the cause of Christ and the Bible, know what has been said by the Prophets, by Christ, and His Apostles; and they shall attain to that sound judgment which 'forms insensibly in a fair mind along with fresh knowledge.' For here there is no mere fallible teacher, but an Infallible

Spirit 'to teach us all things, and guide us into all the truth.' ”

It is pleasing to find him, in the midst of his graver studies, penning the following lines to a fellow-student, now the Rev. J. Anderson Brown, M.A., Beawr, India :—

A SINGLE MYRTLE FLOWER.

Only a myrtle bloom,
So small and scant and bare?
But Love's true tokens cannot be
Gay flowers with colours rare.

Love has but modest eyes,
Which peep out from the shade;
Its blossoms smile on every act
True friendship has displayed.

And thou, sweet modest flower,
Wert on the myrtle tree!
Oh, may our lives like thee appear,
Snow white with purity!

As the end of his Hall course drew near, we find him again taking a retrospect and a forecast. He discovers so many failings when he looks back,—so much spiritual declension,—so great a lethargy in the divine life and leanness of soul that he is cast down into the depths. And when he turns his eye towards the future, he shrinks back from the thought of the ministry. Fears assail him on every side, fear of mere mechanical sermon-writing without spiritual life or true purpose—fear of being tempted to write above his experience to please those who expect their experi-

ence to be reflected in his—fear lest he has not a right message to deliver, after all his searchings for truth and grappling with the results of human learning—fear that his motives in seeking the Christian ministry have been so mixed that he is in danger of running without being called. On one occasion he seems to have been so dreadfully assailed by the spiritual adversary, that he was afraid he had too lightly accepted the proof for the inspiration of the Scriptures and the grounds of the orthodox faith, and that he would have to take more time thoroughly to examine them, that he might be able either to stand on them with unquestioning confidence, or, if he could not do that, stop ere he had finally committed himself to the position of a public teacher.

This period of darkness evidently came to him as the result of a too prolonged contemplation of the infidel arguments of modern criticism, without the aid of some counter-balancing influence of a more highly practical and devotional kind to keep alive the spiritual life. Here, then, we have a brave young soul near the end of his divinity course, feeling that he had been passing through a wilderness of spiritual drought, serpent-like temptations, and battles with the enemies of the faith, till he is in danger of perishing. Very pathetic is it to think of this at the close of a preparatory course for the Christian ministry—the weakening of faith, the blinding of the spiritual eye, and the deadening of the soul.

The experience that comes through such fiery trials may make the student an abler soldier of the cross, but the price paid for it is great if it leaves scars on the soul, and if in the earlier years of his ministry he is less engaged in feeding his people with the bread of life than in reasoning himself out of his own religious difficulties, and struggling up to the average level of the godly in his congregation. Might not our Colleges be made more than they are nurseries of the spiritual life, without being made less schools of theological learning? As practical religion and Christian experience are to form a large part of a minister's teaching, they ought to be an important part of a student's training. It is not merely practical training in Church Law and Forms that he needs, but in dealing with the soul's sins and sorrows and aspirations. Not that in James Gardner the eclipse of faith was total or of long duration, but it must have been real and heart-crushing when he could thus write:—

“I do not feel in a fit state to sit down and write sermons. If I get a text, what can I do with it? I attack it in the time-honoured way of finding the connection with the context, seizing on its chief thought, then dividing the subject topically or textually, usually by a combination of both methods in my case. Then when it comes to filling up such an outline, I must proceed either according to the lines of the Shorter Catechism and the Erskine Theology, finding in the text a central point for rallying round it all the old doctrines and verbal beliefs—which is the easiest way to proceed—or I must write a

semi-philosophic, moral paper full of abstract principles, which I must confess I have not verified in actual life. Or I must fall rhapsodising with gushing sentiment and tear-written exclamations, and periods of which, when I read them in calm moments, much more when I think how I have forced up feeling again to deliver them, I feel myself ashamed. I cannot represent religious truth as a real thing, with which we have all to do in our living and our prospects.

“Surely, one may suggest, that a student who has been travelling all summer must be able to write an interesting discourse! Yes: fill it with grandiose declamations about the ways of mankind in general, and glowing periods describing scenery, which interest the people for the nonce, but what has it to do with religion? If I probe the text to get a sure footing whence I can start,—something which I verily feel and believe, where is it to come from? Then, in the search for a sure starting point, it is ten to one that some difficulty as to the proper reading would start up, and I would have to attain proficiency in the rules of text criticism, and before I proceeded in my discourse arrive at a conclusion on the point in accordance with my own views of the date and canons of MS. criticism, which, when done, would have no necessary connection with my hearers. Or if I ventured on a theological subject, and walked out into the well-trodden morasses of dynamics, or even tried to seek new highways of my own finding, what assurance could I have in my inmost soul, that all was not a vain dream of human ingenuity, a melancholy mirage which presents its old pictures time after time to seduce the wayfarer to a treacherous trust?

“Where, in the all pervading doubt and testing, can a thoughtful nature find repose? Where, above all, is the

modern preacher to find with confidence the materials and authority for the discharge of his office? External nature alone is undecieving; and the false artist and scientist may describe and formulate her beauty and mysteries with diligence and interest, stifling therein for the time their thoughts of anything higher. But what of the true artist, true to the best and deepest significance of his work? And to such is the preacher nearest allied. The welfare of the human race must ever be the deepest concern to both; and in the changing and developing tendencies of mankind, must each feel his true sphere of inquiry and work. To both, as to one man, is confided the weightiest of all tasks, to keep the spiritual pulse of the nation beating healthily, so as to prevent the accumulation of such humours as bring on spiritual sickness with all its frightful consequences.

“Instead of losing ourselves, therefore, in the never-ending tossing and striving going on around, let us rather try to find the origin of the various movements, whose complication will be found mainly to arise from this mutual struggle, and which are in their origin and direction probably simple enough. Having found the leading tendencies, we must discover if it is possible to synthetise them in the spiritual nature of man; for herein lies the only hope of the race, the last and never-to-be-abandoned, which, if it disappear, will leave nothing but blank eternal despair. But in the pure spiritual nature, thus discovered through its present-day manifestations, should be found the elements of the immortal Divine elixir, which will fill the frame of our generation, and of future generations, with fresh life, and strength, and sweet health.”

The lowest point he ever reached seemed to be on the 29th October 1883,—the date on which three

years later he was to reach his highest blessedness, with all his doubts removed and his trials over.

Not that we are to regard his words at this time as indicating that he had cast off God, and the Bible, and the orthodox faith. But for the time being the adversary, watching his opportunity, when there was a decline in the spiritual life, dragged him down into the depth of darkness, whence issued this cry of a well-nigh broken heart. He had lost his way, and his faith was so weak, that he could not see the old path of life where he could have found rest to his soul. This eclipse occurs after his return from studying in Germany. How far it was due to bewilderment among the fogs of German philosophy, and to absence from the faith-strengthening Sabbath services to which he had been accustomed, or to pride of intellect still unsubdued by the grace of God, or simply to a sudden assault of the enemy at a time of deep depression, it is not easy to say. But this seems clear that, with an increase of his learning and knowledge, there was a decrease of his spiritual life. He felt that merely to moralise and philosophise in the pulpit would be useless; while he did not feel capable of doing thoroughly what he knew to be expected of him—evangelising in the sense of preaching the Gospel as a simple message of peace to men, without the admixture of any human philosophy. It seemed hard that so little of what he had spent his years in acquiring could be directly used in preaching: and that he would have to come down from the heights of

philosophy to be the simple publisher of good news from God to sinful men. The utter futility of converting the Gospel into a philosophy he saw with perfect clearness at a later period, and if he had lived would have testified with all his soul against the ensnaring delusion, so prevalent among students, that a preacher's intellectual strength will be the measure of his ministerial success. He learnt that it is not by man's might, but by God's Spirit, that success in spiritual work is to be attained.

STUDY AT ERLANGEN.

PARAPHRASE liv. (2 TIM. i. 12.)

*I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend His cause,
Maintain the glory of His cross,
And honour all His laws.*

*Jesus, my Lord! I own His name,
His name is all my boast;
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost.*

*I know that safe with Him remains,
Protected by His power,
What I've committed to His trust,
Till the decisive hour.*

*Then will He own His servant's name
Before His Father's face,
And in the New Jerusalem,
Appoint my soul a place.*

James Gardner's Favourite Paraphrase.

CHAPTER V.

Study at Erlangen.

HAVING a good knowledge of German as it can be acquired in this country, James Gardner was anxious to study for a term in Germany, that he might become more proficient in the language, and thereby be more able to enter into the spirit of German philosophy and theology. His wish was gratified when, at the close of his second session at the Divinity Hall, he, along with two fellow-students, Mr. Benjamin Mein, and Mr. John Oman, set out for Erlangen in Bavaria. They sailed from Leith to Hamburg on the 21st April, and returned on the 19th August 1883. During the four months of his stay in Germany he kept a diary, from which, and from letters written to friends at home, we shall be able to give glimpses of a Scotch student's life at a German University.

On their voyage they experienced somewhat rough weather, but thoroughly enjoyed themselves, sentimentally watching the retreating shores of their native land, striking up an acquaintance with some of their congenial fellow-passengers, singing hymns on deck on

the Sabbath, by-and-by straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of the land of their brief sojourn, and at last, as they set foot in Hamburg, gratefully recording the perils of the North Sea over. From Hamburg they pass to Berlin and Potsdam, where they visit the chief places of historical interest. Thence they go to Wittenberg, and make themselves familiar with the memorials there of Martin Luther. At Dresden they spend their time viewing the city, with its picture galleries. On the Sabbath they attend divine service in a church, the beauty of which is in strange contrast with the emptiness of its pews and the multitude of pleasure-seekers outside. A long railway ride brings them to Erlangen, where they get rooms near to each other and settle down to their work.

“ERLANGEN, 5th May 1883.

“Yesterday was the first day I began to feel at home here. After attending three classes, Oman, Mein, and I went out on the Nürnberg road for a walk. The road is finely shaded. On either hand dark pine woods stretch far away into the country, looking like a solid fence with a green leafy top. Here and there are gaps and footpaths through them; and at intervals forest roads. We went on for a bit, and then turned to the right along a broad side-way. We went in among the trees. The sun was shining brightly; but we were protected from its rays. The resinous scent of the pines was delightful. Moss covered the ground; and here and there a bright yellow butterfly flitted about from flower to flower. By-and-by we emerged

on pasture ground, through the midst of which ran the railway. We crossed the line and made for the road before us, which we knew led back to Erlangen.

“The view as we looked back was one of the most picturesque I have seen here yet. Light green glades ran up among the dark trees; and in the foreground was a farmhouse with dairymaids running about. One or two long carts, drawn each by a couple of cows, were wending their way slowly into the woods, in various directions, while church towers appeared here and there on the swelling uplands. The dresses of the countrywomen are of the most diverse and vivid colours. One, for instance, wore a dark-coloured petticoat with a green edge at the foot, a blue kind of tunic with sleeves carried partly over the breast by a brown handkerchief, while on her head, tied in a knot in front, was a red and black kerchief which flowed behind half way down her back. They are all well sunburnt; but few are good-looking. We returned by the *Gottes-acker*, or churchyard.”

“We discovered at the station,” he writes in his diary under date 5th May, “that our luggage had come. We got it home, unpacked, and had tea made. While the kettle was boiling I opened my English Bible, and there the first words I read were Matt. xii. 46–50, ending with ‘Who-soever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.’ I felt deeply affected, as I reflected that Christ’s spirit must be His servant’s, and that part of my lesson in coming here was to learn independence of earthly connections, and self-reliance, guided from above. I knelt and prayed. I prayed that I might be able, in my life’s work, to make all men whom I meet know the fatherhood and motherhood of God. After tea I opened the Bible again, and my eye caught

Luke xiii. 6-9. I feel that God has too much reason to speak of me as He does here of the fig-tree. May I get new life and growth and sap this year. That I might learn God's way among men, and have my spirit established in Him by the richness of His grace, was my concluding prayer."

"ERLANGEN, 9th May 1883.

"Here, then, I am," he writes to his uncle in Leslie, "now settled down in the very heart of Germany, with millions of people sounding their 'achs' and 'ochs' for hundreds of miles all around us. And yet I have only to go to the next door to my two companions and I can have as much English as at home. Indeed, the difficulty is to keep off English. We make resolutions ten times a day not to speak another English word, and ten times a day we repent of our sins. We have made the acquaintance of an American, who likes to have a talk in his *Muttersprache*. We have also seen a Swiss, Merle D'Aubigné by name, a son of the historian of the Reformation. A Free Church probationer has also arrived, with a decided Glasgow twang. The Preses of the Theological Society declares that half Scotland is coming over. Erlangen, indeed, is taking a foremost place among the Protestant universities of this country. The theology of the University is characterised by its moderation and semi-evangelical tone. The Rector, Dr. Frank, who lectures on Dogmatics, is reputed for his learning and judgment; and so far as I have been able to follow him, his views seem to be very much those of the orthodox party in Scotland. I hear him disputing the views of men like Schleiermacher and opposing those who would take the supernatural out of religion. I intend to take the exegetical class of Professor Zahn, the editor

of 'The Apostolic Fathers.' I purpose also attending Professor Class on metaphysics. He speaks beautifully. We had an introduction from Dr. Drummond's son to the Theological Verein, a student's society. On Tuesday and Thursday evenings they have *Wissenschaft*. For about an hour and a half they discuss questions of science or exegesis. The remainder of the evening is spent in true German fashion,—in singing, smoking, and drinking beer. One or two of the members speak a little English. I am going to get one of them, Hoffmann, to read German with me, and I shall read English with him. Another of them is named Harms, a son of the Director of Foreign Missions in Hanover, and nephew of Claus Harms, who did so much for evangelical preaching in the earlier part of the century."

During the *Pfingsten*, or Pentecost holidays, he visited the Thuringian Forest and the Luther country. From this ten days' tour he derived much benefit to health, spirits, and knowledge. From his letters, a few extracts are given.

"SONNEBERG, 13th May 1883.

"I was amused on my way to Coburg by the recitation of an old soldier, who had evidently been in the Franco-German war, and displayed with great glee a small silver eagle as a trophy. He stood up every now and then and repeated long war-ballads, to the merriment of the travellers."

"Coburg is the prettiest German town I have yet been in. It is so clean; and the trees are so fresh after the rain. It stands at the foot of a gently sloping hill, crowned

by an old castle. All around the outskirts are villas and avenues of trees; while everywhere there are clumps of cherry trees, at present white with blossom. There is a statue of Prince Albert in the Markt Platz which was unveiled by the Queen. Opposite to it, on the other side of the square, is the palace of the Duke of Edinburgh, who is heir to the Duchy. Queen Victoria has been here three times. I felt quite at home in Coburg. On the way to the Schloss I met a German who was very anxious to air his English and French, and assist me in sight-seeing.

“The most interesting things in the castle were the rooms once occupied by Luther, who stayed here for three months, about the time of the Diet of Augsburg, and during that time translated the Prophets and Psalms. In his sitting room stands his table with drinking jug on it,—very large, about a foot high, and six inches in diameter. In his bedroom are the remains of his low bed and chairs. Both of the latter want the bottom, and are very frail and discoloured. In a small room, adorned with paintings of the Reformer, he is said to have written the famous ‘Ein feste Burg.’ Leaving the castle, I got the way to Rosenau, where Prince Albert was born, pointed out to me. The walk through the light green lime trees, fresh after the rain, was most charming. I got there a little after an hour’s walk. It is a simple building, not very large, and a country residence of the Dukes.”

“JENA, 16th May 1883.

“Here I am all right, after ten days’ most delightful travelling through the Thuringian Forest. I left Sonneberg by post-coach for Neuhaus. I secured the box seat beside the driver. Our way led through many pleasant villages

with streams running down their midst, and high hills on each side clad from top to bottom with thick woods. At Neuhaus I got into another coach for Schwartzburg. The road was not so hilly at first, but dark with the trees for miles. The valley is narrow, the woods on the hills are all shades of green, clear streams are flowing, and thin strips of meadows run between the hills. This afternoon I was in the outskirts of Jena, surveying the battlefield, and as many of the town lions as I could."

"HALLE, 17th May 1883.

"Yesterday I left Jena, and proceeded to Weimar. Every corner of that pretty town is teeming with interest, owing to its connection with one of the best periods of German literature. At the beginning of this century, Herder, Wieland, Schiller, and above all Goethe, had their residence there and made it famous. I saw the houses where each lived, and was in Schiller's, the only one open to the public. Goethe's official residence is a large plain-looking house in the Goethe Platz. I was in the Ducal vault in the cemetery, and saw Goethe's and Schiller's coffins standing side by side, covered with withered wreaths and white ribbons, and with golden and silver laurel wreaths in cases at their heads. The park at Weimar, with the river Ilm flowing through its midst, is dreamland, so enchanting. Every part of it has some memorial of Goethe. Here is his garden-house, a small structure of two stories about six yards by four, with a terrace and a garden on the slopes around. There he lived for seven years, going to it for a night or two at a time. There is the Römische Haus, built like a small Roman villa, where the Duke and he used to have their symposia. In the Ducal library, I saw Goethe's cloak and court dress, Gustavus Adolphus's doublet and

boots, and Luther's monastic gown. I had a pancake and a glass of Bavarian beer for supper. On the way to Halle the rain poured, and the lightning flashed, revealing the streams as we rolled along. The moon was also occasionally shining through a rift in the clouds."

"EISENACH, 20th May 1883.

"I left Erfurt yesterday. The cathedral is very old, dating from the thirteenth century, and is in the pure Gothic style. At one end of the town is the Augustinian Convent where Luther was monk, where he was so diligent in prayer and penance, and where also he first saw the truth that 'the just shall live by faith.

"Eisenach is said to be situated at the finest point in the Thuringian Forest. The Wartburg is a castle on a high rock, about two miles to the south in the midst of the hills. The path is very steep, and leads through woods. The castle hill stands clear up among the other bergs, and is richly clothed in trees from peak to valleys. It has been restored by its present owner, the Duke of Weimar; so that it now presents a faithful picture of what it was in the twelfth century. The gem of the place is Luther's room, about five yards by six, with an old bed and table in it, and a double window looking out to one of the loveliest views in Germany. There the hills roll on with their covering of dark pines, and crowned here and there by woods whose reddish hue gives a fine contrast to the green. In some places there are limes and beeches, whose light foliage makes the effect of the velvety pines still more striking. In this place Luther lived in friendly confinement for ten months. He was brought here by the Elector of Saxony when he had made his bold declaration at Worms; and here he assumed the guise of a knight, wore armour, and

was known as Junker George,—Squire George. His breastplate, with a bright steel border, and helmet are hanging up in this apartment. Here also he began to translate the Bible into German, and actually accomplished a large part of his task. It was here that he had the face-to-face encounter with the devil, and threw the ink-bottle at his satanic majesty; but the lime on the wall where the ink-stain was shown has unfortunately been lately broken off.”

“I went off to the Anna Kirche, and was pleased to find it crowded. In the area all were women, and every seat was packed, two long rows being reserved for soldiers’ wives. Pastor Schubert read his text, Luke xiii. 6—the fruitless fig-tree—the passage I read with such interest the other week at Erlangen. I understood almost everything that he said; and he is the most earnest and eloquent preacher I have heard since leaving Scotland. It was the first real German sermon that I had heard, and I enjoyed it. It was thoroughly evangelical. Then as the minister pronounced the benediction in German, ‘The Lord bless thee and keep thee,’ my mind wandered back to Morningside, and I heard Dr. Mair pronouncing the words, as he so often does. We finished by singing the first verse of the hymn, ‘Now thank we all our God,’ to the same tune which is in our hymnal at home.

“When the congregation was dismissed, I stayed behind to witness the communion service. Pastor Schubert delivered a short address on the lines of his sermon, then knelt before the altar, and as the audience also knelt he offered up confession of sin. Then came more singing, after which he read the words of institution, or rather chanted them, and consecrated the bread and the wine, making the sign of the cross over them. Then he stood behind a railing,

on one side of the altar, and as the communicants came forward two or three at a time he put the wafer in their mouths. When about twenty had partaken, they went round behind the altar to a similar railing at the other side, to which the clergyman also advanced and administered to them the wine, laying his hand on their heads and blessing them.

“As I descended in the evening from *Hohe Sonne* I heard the voices of the Thuringian maidens singing their *Lieder*, or spiritual songs in the woods. I had seen two bands of them on my way out. They were evidently happy in their relief from work, and went in bands of a dozen or so, two or more abreast, arm-in-arm. They are strong, sturdy young women, bareheaded, and clothed with dark dresses. The airs they were singing were very melodious, dwelling a great deal on the higher notes, but with long turns and trills that were very catching. They walk at a good swinging pace, keeping time to the tune; and one or two sing always two notes lower, so that there is a pleasant chord from beginning to end. At a distance the singing sounds like wind among the trees.”

“ERLANGEN, 27th May 1883.

“On Sabbath we declined to go with some German students to a place at a distance, on the ground that we three Scotchmen wanted to have a meeting among ourselves, in which they acquiesced at once. At night we had a profitable conversation on ecclesiastical and religious matters. Then when it was getting dark we sang a psalm and some paraphrases, among them my favourite, the fifty-fourth paraphrase, which mamma taught me one quiet Sabbath afternoon long ago. I had a letter from Uncle Robert yesterday, which inspired me with greater

spirit to go on and make the best use of my time. It was very kind of him to write before I had sent him a letter. I enjoyed the first half particularly. You must thank him in my name for giving me such a refreshing letter."

"ERLANGEN, 29th May 1883.

"I feel somewhat sad and meditative this afternoon ; for I have just witnessed the funeral procession of one who has fallen a victim to the absurd practice of so called honour-satisfying duelling, which is rather prevalent here. He was a chemical student, and had got shot in the arm with a pistol bullet, was taken to the infirmary, where his hand was amputated, but where he died yesterday from blood-poisoning. He belonged to Munich, and his body is being conveyed thither by rail. This is the second pistol-duel which has been here this *semester*. I believe one of the principals in the other was injured in the arm. A great many of the students have their cheeks and their hands disfigured by cuts and slashes received in light sword encounters, which are not so dangerous, but very foolish. There are two of the Vereins distinguished for their fighting propensities. They have red colours on their caps. One, the Germania, seems to exist for little else ; I understand its members are frequently pitted against each other for sport."

"The Theological Verein discountenances duelling. It meets twice a week for *Wissenschaft*, or scientific and exegetical discussion of the Greek Testament. We are reading Galatians ; and I heartily wish our men at home knew the Greek Testament and the principles of exegesis as the German students do. At nine o'clock the meeting resolves itself into a *Kneipe*, when there is the liveliest

time possible with beer-drinking, smoking, singing, and delivering mock-heroic speeches. I am not going to give myself up entirely to German modes of dissipation. The inn in which we meet, the Schwartzer Bär, is not the most elegant or attractive in Erlangen: but its terms are moderate and its fare substantial. Mine host *Krauser* is a curious customer, with rotund body, dark unctuous face, bandy legs, and a grating voice. He has two daughters, who are worked to death; one of them, Rosa, is a special favourite with the Verein. I have matriculated as a regular student of the Royal Bavarian University in Erlangen, and so become a student burgess of the town. We are now no longer foreigners, but subject to the German University jurisdiction, and are also free from the authority of the civil police."

"ERLANGEN, 3rd June 1883.

"I got on Friday afternoon the budget of letters from home. There came also the dear gifts, with which you were pleased to rejoice my heart on the first birthday that I have spent away from home. I may say that Saturday was a very happy day with me. I could not wish to be more so. I was in the best of health, my spirit superlatively calm and peaceful; and the bright hot sunshine and soft balmy air, together with the remembrance of my past, and thoughts of the present and future, combined to give me what was as near satisfaction as any one on earth could, I think, experience. I knew not how you were, but I could trust that you were as safe as I myself. I spent a large part of the forenoon in the Schloss Garden full of leafy bowers and echoing with the songs of birds, and read there some of my Hebrew Bible."

The following is part of a meditation which he wrote down in the Schloss Garden referred to in the foregoing letter :—

*“ Was sollten wir auch sagen ?
Was konnten wir uns fragen ?
Wir wussten ja genug.”*

UHLAND, *Die Zufriedenen.*

“ As I sat this morning in the Schloss Garden in the bower formed by eight lindens, whose delicate foliage might have been that of maiden-hair ferns, I came to some notion of what my work in life must be. My mind was filled with the purest calm, as I thought on the blessings amidst which I have grown to this the twenty-third anniversary of the day of my birth, and the mercy and truth of which I was assured by the Hebrew Scriptures lying on my knees; and as I looked through the transparent leaves among which the rich-toned birds were warbling, and through the light-glowing blue beyond, and saw behind all One who has magnified His Word above all His name, I saw the garment of the Father of my spirit.

“ Is not this world a tangled jungle vast and intricate, and for the most part dark? Whence the travellers who inhabit it come they know not; whither they go they cannot exactly say; but travel onwards they must. There are a few beaten highways, which floods of men have opened up, as they swept through the maze; and these are the admiration of all who still pass onwards. But the road, which has been trodden by many, betrays too clearly its wearisomeness to make it used by the restless bands who would make new paths. Some wayfarers find it more suitable to follow the by-paths that penetrate the wood; and sometimes they hew out for themselves a new inviting

and sheltered way. The air is everywhere sultry and oppressive; and even the stoutest traveller is for the most part in distress and pain. Many bands are sick; and the gaunt sharp faces, and the limping or bandaged limbs, suggest serious diseases and wounds. The women and children are oftentimes the gayest of the human race; but frequently one notices young faces beclouded with grief, or agonised in suffering. The secret misgivings and fear that groan at the heart of this innumerable throng, are worse to endure than the severest external inflictions. The darkness which surrounds them is emblematic of the grosser gloom of their hearts.

“In the midst of all this disquiet, misery, and ignorance, I find myself, in common with some of the more favoured of my species, possessed of a peace which is at times complete. I care not to ask whence I have come; I fear no harm from the unexplored gloom around; I know the kind of universe which extends outside of our present domain; I have not arrived at this state of mind by any deduction from the scenes in which I find myself placed. Its proof lies in itself, and in its realisation. By this I have the most immovable conviction, that each member of my race is the object of the most loving care of a Being, at whose absolute disposal lies our whole career and future destiny. It is the greatest consolation to learn by infallible signs, that this sovereign ruler has made Himself known by His name of Love. I know that when I have quitted this my present dwelling-place, I shall find my true home where my spirit shall live, undisturbed by doubts or the slightest shade of anxiety, in my Father’s country of Eternity. This knowledge I think and speak of as my hope, by which I do not mean that it is at all problematical, but all is not yet realised in my experience.

“I cannot possess such a hope without trying to discover if my co-sojourners possess it; and when I learn that they do not, I hear a voice within me, which I know to be the will’s echo of the call from the Invisible One, to become His messenger to them. This is the work of mercy, love and truth. I feel at ease in this gloomy jungle of life; I have delightful perfumes, which the Lord of the Land generously permits me to enjoy. Under His direction I shall become a guide through this perplexing Forest. I shall assume the character of a gardener, to beautify the roads that my weary brothers and sisters have to travel. They must work, as I must; they must go on with their cutting out or beating down; but I shall do all that I can to have their pathways bordered with the most beautiful and fragrant exotics whose breath shall revive them. I must know the district well and be ever busy with my planting and tending, that the wayfarers may have a breath of ex-terrestrial fragrance. I must know the darkest spots, that when weary travellers are lost in the labyrinths of despair, I may be able to guide them into the sunlight. Men may wonder how the flowers bloom so freshly with such scanty light; but the secret must ever be incommunicable to those who know not the power of the Lord of the Forest, and the gracious audience He gives to those who cry for light. For the muscular backwoodsman, as for the feeble and despairing, I must have a greeting ready, so that I may be able to tell him how his path will lie. An overwhelming all comprehensive travail! But it is that to which I am called by the most sacred associations of childhood and youth, by the cherished wish through years of doubt, and by the irresistible determination of opening manhood. *What I must see to now is to do it.*”

“ERLANGEN, 5th June 1883.

“Apart from my own ‘rum’ ideas, the only fun I get here is with the students. They are a good-humoured band. I was up with three of them in one of our lodgings this afternoon. If you had seen our attitudes, you would have been amused. Two are stretched full length on the floor, one in his trousers and shirt; two are perambulating the floor, one in his shirt sleeves, yelling a verse or two of what is here called a song, and the other swinging a stick round his head; one sitting on a table with his legs under him half asleep, and the other thumping on the piano.”

“ERLANGEN, 10th June 1883.

“Frau Reichert, my landlady, brought in to me two large black-letter German volumes this morning when I was at breakfast. She says they belonged to her brother, who was a minister in Augsburg, but died some years ago. She wishes to give me them home with me. The dimensions of one are two feet by a foot and a half, and eight inches thick, which are quite fatal to my entertaining such a thought. It is entitled, ‘The training of the soul and its relation to the unseen.’”

“NÜRNBERG, 13th June 1883.

“Yesterday morning, I was, along with five or six of the Verein, *en route* for this ancient and imperial city. We had a journey of about an hour. When we arrived the rain was pouring very heavily. We made our way to the ‘Restauration,’ near the station, where we ‘bummelled’ about—an expressive German slang word meaning to

saunter, or loaf about—till eight o'clock, when we went to the grand mission service in the St. Lawrence Kirche. This is an immense building of great antiquity and beauty. It was filled with the largest audience I have seen in a German church. We had a stirring sermon from his Reverence the High Consistorial Rath Müller from Baireüth. Nürnberg is full of splendid old churches. The town was very lively, it being the annual missionary festival of the Bavarian Lutheran Church. There was a large meeting in the Rathhaus in the forenoon, another after dinner, addressed by missionaries, and a church concert in the evening. I was only at the preaching.

“One of the most interesting buildings we were in was the Jewish synagogue, a splendid building in Moorish style of architecture, with three domes. It was beautifully decorated inside with small trees in tubs, and various plants and flowers, on the occasion of the confirmation of the young. Over the main entrance, in large Hebrew letters, were the words: ‘How dreadful is this place: it is none other than the House of God and the gate of Heaven.’ We were also in the old castle or Burg, where we had magnificent views, and also our nerves tried by the display of ancient instruments of torture. Nürnberg is guarded by sturdy ancient fortifications; and consisting of old high-roofed, red-tiled houses, and narrow quaint streets, it is a representative of the wealthy cities of the Middle Ages.”

“ERLANGEN, 17th June 1883.

“I had a good walk yesterday afternoon with our Scotch friends to a village called Spaidorf. The way led slightly uphill through pine woods. A very pleasing diversion in the walk was the discovery that a party of soldiers were in

the wood practising skirmishing. We came to the open now and then, and discovered occasionally a dozen or more soldiers lying down under cover on the edge of the copse, as if preparing to assail a little hamlet which showed itself over the rye-fields to the right. Some brisk firing was going on towards the left. Spaidorf is very pretty with its hop gardens, and the pastured uplands swelling all around it. The hops were trained to grow up long poles; and when seen through these green-swathed forests of small masts the villages look as if they were placed behind a flower-wreathed lattice.

“On Friday evening I was at the weekly practising of the Erlangen choral society. It consists of the students and the young women of the town. It meets in a large room adorned with fine old paintings in the Schloss which once was the palace of the Margraves of Brandenburg Baireuth, and the kings of Bavaria. Behind it, in the garden between two of the College buildings, is a curiously carved old fountain, presented to the town by the French Protestants who found refuge here when they fled from France at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. It is always playing: and in the water around there are gold fishes swimming, and water-lilies flowering. The singing in the Schloss was undoubtedly grand. They know how to blend their voices well together, and are good at shading. It is really wonderful how the sound swells and diminishes.”

“ERLANGEN, 23rd June 1883.

“After I had written the first half of this page yesterday, we repaired by common consent to the Schwartzer Bär to join the Verein in a walk to Atzelsberg, whither they had been invited to a great *Kneipe* by another Theological

Verein. At ten minutes to six, then, behold thirty stout young fellows with straw hats, and green song-books, and one umbrella between them,—the sky being somewhat threatening—moving off from their stance before Herr Krauser's door. In a few minutes we were in the Schloss garden, and the members of the other Verein also made their appearance; and then the interesting ceremony of self-introduction was gone through. Every member of the one Verein must present himself before every member of the other, lift his hat, bow his upper man to the angle of forty-five, and give his name.

“Then we set about our walk in earnest, making our way at a fair pace through what remained of the Schloss garden, up through pine woods, between rye and wheat fields, to Atzelsberg. At intervals we got grand glimpses of the panorama to the north, over Franconian Switzerland and to the west. I was engaged during the whole time in conversation with the *Fuchs Major* of our Verein, getting information about the state of the German Church. The proceedings were inaugurated by an hour's *Kneipe* in the open air under the linden trees, where there were tables and benches. Here I got a chat with one of the *Studienhaus* who hails from Frankfort-on-the-Main. I also made the acquaintance of a Bohemian who was the intimate friend of Bastetski, a Bohemian whom I knew at our Hall last winter.

“Seated at length in the Upper Hall with its low roof, a few feeble paraffin lamps suspended therefrom, the company soon showed that it meant to enjoy itself. We had complimentary speeches; there were sent round jars of beer which compelled their recipients to treat the company to a song; there were also read several comic poems by members of the *Studienhaus*, which excited the

greatest mirth and uproar. As there was no prospect of the meeting breaking up at a reasonable hour, mindful of our traditions, we three heroes effected our departure. It was a splendid night, the moon shining brightly with just sufficient clouds to make the sky pretty. We followed the coach-road; but soon it became evident that we had never been that way before. We retraced our steps; and after romantic wanderings over the country we got home long past the anticipated hour."

"ERLANGEN, 1st July 1883.

"After writing the post-card on Friday I had a tramp of ten miles before I could post it, and had altogether a walk of twenty-five miles that day, arriving at Erlangen at seven in the evening. The country through which we passed—the Baireüth line—became more and more beautiful, hilly, wooded and crowded with innumerable hop-gardens. When we got to Pegnitz it was dark. The glow-worms were flitting past us in the dark most enchantingly—lovely specks of green light sailing along. In the morning Mein and I set out with our pack on my back—my bag with the necessaries therein for both weighing 25lbs. We carried it for an hour alternately.

"After a charming walk through a lovely glen called the Püttbacher Thal, during which we amused ourselves by chasing butterflies and lilac-coloured moths, and devouring wild strawberries, we arrived at Pottenstein. I shall never forget—the romantic little castles—the fantastic dolomite rocks—the green-flowing chrysanthemums in glens, which words cannot describe as they are seen in the last week of June—the roads lined with cherry-trees, where you put up your hand, eat, and go on contented—and, not least, the scorching heat, the deep blue sky, and the climbing up of

the mountain paths which made the perspiration flow like a river. The district is very famous in scientific circles for the great caverns, or Höhlen, containing what are supposed to be antediluvian remains.

“The mammoth caves of America are, perhaps, the most wonderful, but many of the most striking discoveries have been made in the caves of Central Europe. That district in Bavaria which is called Franconian Switzerland has several very noted caverns. The Sophien, which is the largest in Germany, is of the greatest interest both to the zoologist and the geologist. It abounds in fossils of various animals, and is famed for the perfection of its numerous stalactites. It is situated in a narrow rocky gorge. Opposite to it in the narrow valley is another cavern with a very wide and lofty entrance, but it is not in itself nearly so large or important as the Sophien cavern, which has rather a small entrance that might be readily passed unnoticed by one who did not know it was there. It has what may be called two entrance halls, both very large, but with somewhat low roofs. The first has light enough for one to read in, and from it two doorways through the solid rock lead into the second hall, which is very much darker. For a long time this was thought to be the entire size of the cave; but about the year 1830, as the floor of the largest or second hall was being levelled and its walls made a little smoother under the directions of its owner, the Count of Schonbrunn, the workmen found at one point that their instruments went through the wall, and thus there was discovered what has turned out to be by far the most interesting part—the real cavern far into the side of the hill.

“This cavern consists of three divisions, which were discovered one after another. The first and last are the

largest, but the middle one is in some ways the most valuable. When you enter the first you find, by the help of the candles which the custodian has lit all over the place, that you are nearer the roof than the floor. The sound of drops of water falling is heard on every side. From the roof there hang down, in most grotesque shapes, pieces of a peculiar kind of rock known as stalactite. They are formed by the water dripping from the roof; and while some of them are like long and short candles hanging in the air, others are like sheep-skins hung up to dry. Some are from their shapes called 'swines' ears,' while others are like curtains suspended from the roof with various folds. Most of them are white and transparent when a light is placed behind them, and give forth a sharp metallic sound when struck with a stick. Directly under each stalactite there is on the floor a companion one jutting upwards as if to meet its friend above. These are formed by the drop of water falling from above, which carries with it a very minute deposit of rock, calculated to be the millionth part of a metre. It will thus take millions of years for the two parts of the stalactite to meet; and the age of the cavern may be guessed from the fact that there are a few completed stalactites standing here and there, solid columns reaching from floor to roof.

"As you step slowly to the bottom of the cavern there are shown to you on the way the fossilised remains of various antediluvian animals firmly imbedded in the rock. Here you find the huge bones of the mammoth, three times as large as our elephant. Opposite there is the long straight horn of a stag, which is quite unlike anything now to be seen among stags; and further on you come across skulls of stags or bears, all as hard as the rock in which they are fixed. It is supposed that these animals did not live in

such caves, but had died, perhaps, in the open air, and then been swept into the caverns where their bones now lie by the rush of water."

"ERLANGEN, 3rd July 1883.

"A chief feature in the life of each day here is the bath. The University bathing establishment is on the river, and consists of a series of sheds finely shaded by trees, in front of which three parts of the river are fenced off. In one the water reaches to the loins; in another to the arms; and a third is for swimmers. So here all day long a crowd of water sprites disport themselves, reminding the reflective nineteenth century man of the happy days of ancient Greece. A Scotch student has specially signalised himself here. The second or third time he went to the bath, he ventured beyond his depth; and not being a particularly good swimmer he ducked down and began to blow and splash like a porpoise, whereat there was a general shout among the brotherhood, and a rush, and more splashing, and the youth, who was not at all in danger, was rescued and baptized 'Moses' on the spot. My *Kneipe* name is Absalom Baedeker, my hat having been twice lifted off my head by the branches of low-hanging trees. I have been for ten days in Franconian Switzerland. It is a thoroughly Catholic place; in every village and at intervals along the roadside are large crucifixes for passers by to perform their devotions at.

"The best preacher here is Professor Zezschwitz, who has a style somewhat resembling Dr. John Ker's; but owing to the bad acoustics I miss a good deal of what he says. I heard the great Dr. Ebrard a few weeks ago in the French Reformed Church, where he preaches regularly. I understand him very well. He is old, but still vigorous.

“Give my respects to Aunt Mary. I frequently think of Leslie and its surroundings; especially when a cock crows do I imagine myself in the old manse where the poultry used to waken me in the morning with their friendly voices. Here it is a widow well up in years who effects the same by coming into my room and opening the shutters.”

“ERLANGEN, 8th July 1883.

“I have not yet told you how the *Stiftung's Fest* came off. The first sign of the extraordinary occasion was the appearance at dinner on Tuesday of one Böttcher, a delegate from Leipsig Society. He speaks good English and is studying Scotch. It was funny to hear him reply, ‘It disna maiter,’ ‘very gude.’ The proceedings of the Festive meeting proper were opened by the singing of Luther’s ‘Ein Feste Burg.’ Struve then read the annual report, in which the arrival of the Scotchmen was noticed as a distinct accession to its strength. Professor Frank then followed with a prayer which I will not soon forget. It was spoken and not read, and so simple and touching that I felt he was a true and good man. We then adjourned to Krauser’s public rooms, where we had three speeches from Professors and one from a Privat Docent. Frank referred to the international character of the Verein, there being both Norwegians and Scotchmen there. His kind words so touched me that I afterwards got on my feet; but the strange language proved a complete stumbling-block to the transit of my thoughts. My thoughts, indeed, were many, but my vocabulary was too limited, and I twisted my sentences in all kinds of ways. As it was, when I sat down there were shouts of ‘prosit’ from every side, and about a dozen fellows around me offered in a twinkling to clink glasses with me. Many of

them said afterwards, that though the German was defective, they appreciated the feeling. If you saw my melancholy face at the corner of a table in the *Kneipe* with half a glass of dead beer in front of me, while the glasses around had been filled once and again, you would perhaps wonder how I could ever describe these meetings as merry. I do not wish to fill my letters with the many dull moments I pass alone in a lonely mood, in which the only consolation is that my health is so good. As a student I am shut out here from all other society except that of students; for the members of the University have very little intercourse with the private families here."

"MÜNICH, 12th July 1883.

"I am sitting with Oman in a restaurant in the capital of Bavaria, waiting till our dinner is brought to us. Munich is certainly a fine city, and we are both very much pleased with it. It combines the changeable atmosphere of Edinburgh with the luxury of Paris. The buildings are large and magnificent. It is famous for art; and yesterday we spent almost entirely looking at pictures. The specimens of the great masters, Raphael, Rubens, Murillo, Dürer, and the collection of modern German art are the best in Germany. In the Museum we saw Tilly's magenta-coloured coat, and Napoleon the First's sword with gold and mother-of-pearl handle. From some parts of the city we can see the Alps-in-Tyrol, which are not very far off. I am in capital health.

"In the library at Munich, containing 25,000 MSS., we saw the principal treasures, a brazen tablet from the time of the Romans, being a soldier's discharge from service; two very valuable MSS. of the Gospels; the Codex Purpureus of the ninth century, written in Latin with gold

and silver letters on a dark purple vellum ground ; and the Codex Aureus, of the year 870 A.D., written in gold letters bound in plates of gold, and adorned with jewels and pearls. We also saw the first book printed by Gutenberg.

“ ERLANGEN, 19th July 1883.

“ At dinnerto-day we heard that there were nine duels being fought between members of the Ansbacher (red), Baireuther (green), and Bavarian (blue) corps. As some of the Verein were going to see them, we resolved to accompany them out of curiosity. The day was cloudy and cold ; but quite fair. At the west end of the Bridge there is a *Gast-haus*, with a small garden in front of it, and an open green behind. Here the encounters were taking place ; and the Bavarian blue and white striped flag was at the mast-head. We met Fuchs Burchardt at the door : he had been there since morning. One fight had just taken place, which had been more than usually bloody and spirited. Loëhrs, the German American, anon made his appearance. He took us upstairs to the dressing-room, which was full of young men. Clothes were lying about everywhere of all kinds. One man was bandaged and another lying full length. Two were sitting in chairs in their shirts, and their friends dressing them up for the ensuing contest.

“ We went down and in a few minutes were in the front garden, where we were told they were just going to begin. Through the passage leading to the back we went, and met the combatants being assisted out at the back door. A great padded leathern apron was hanging from the neck to below the knees. There were leg pads, arm pads, and a broad thick leathern bandage to protect the neck. A

pair of iron spectacles completed the defensive armour. Much interest was taken in this fight, as the one was a Jew and the other was a Greek. The former had red colours on the handle of his *schläger*, the latter blue. The seconds had helmets of cloth of like colours, with iron frontlets to shield the face. The spectators closed around them very near. They were got into position, their sword arms, heavily padded, being meanwhile held up by the seconds or marshals of the lists. Then the *schlägers* were raised in mid-air, the words '*aus lager*' cried by the master of the field, and the clashing of the steel began, all high up above their heads, the points of the weapons being kept lower. After about five fences, halt was called; one had been hit: it was the Greek, who had got a pretty deep cut on the left cheek. To the surprise of all, the combatants were at once led into the house. The Greek had been *abgestochen*.

"We waited about a quarter of an hour before the next couple were brought out. They were the *Fuchses* from the Baireüther and Ansbacher corps. Each *Fuchs* has to fight three times before he can become a *Bursch*. The one was very stout and stood immovable; the other was more agile. At the first bout the stout Ansbacher got a terrific cut on the left forehead, the skin being peeled off for about two square inches. The blood speedily covered the left side of his face completely. He stood very quiet, grinning in a mild way, while the attendant physicians spunged the blood off the wound, which did not prevent it from breaking out as badly as ever, and continuing to the end. In the next two or three rounds, which were very short, and in which the men hewed away at each other in a most unscientific, careless way, the other *Fuchs* got rather the worst of it, so that his countenance presented as bloody an appearance as that

of his foe. They had to fight for ten minutes at the longest, but at seven and a half minutes, having lost so much blood, they determined to give it up for the present, neither being declared victor. Their wounds took so long to stitch up that it was a considerable time before the last contest of the day came off.

“The chairman of the Bavarian had been challenged by a *Bummeller*, or unattached young spark, when both were slightly intoxicated. The captain was a tried blade, the other had never had an affair on hand before. To the surprise of many, it proved the most scientific and best contested encounter of the afternoon. In the first encounter the Bavarian received a slight cut on the left forehead; in the second the other man got a scratch in the same place, and one or two on the left cheek. They were just beginning the third round, and excitement was getting strong, when a cry of ‘The Gendarmes,’ was raised. At once there was a scattering. The gallant Bavarian threw off his gloves, and, in a trice rid of his armour, rushed down to the end of the inn, and turned into a road where there was a door leading apparently to a cellar. Some friendly hand unlocked it for him, and he was speedily as safe as lock and key could make him. I did not see where the other fair-haired youth went to. Several soldiers who had been witnessing the fight, however, stayed and most of the spectators. In a minute or two one gendarme appeared in the inn yard beside the corn-field, gun with bayonet fixed in hand. He went outside, but evidently got no satisfaction. To increase the sport some knaves put two long poles at a back window to make him think the birds had escaped in that direction; and he was soon off on the wrong track. After hanging about for a little we came off.”

“ERLANGEN, 22nd July 1883.

“When sitting in my room after coming from church, my attention was called to the street by the number of people hurrying along. Prominent among the passers-by was a man carrying a flag, dressed in holiday attire. On looking out I saw a crowd. I put on my hat and went out to see what it was. Not far from the corner is the Nürnberg gate; and outside of it I could see flags and colours flying, while a carriage was ever and anon passing along between the ranks of those who were lining the streets. At last I spied some of our own Verein, and was told that they were waiting on the procession of a union of Singing Societies. So, sure enough, in a few minutes the sound of the trumpet was heard, and very shortly the advanced guard came in sight, with a stout boy carrying a white tablet bearing the name of the Singing Society which followed; then came a band which at this moment ceased playing; then a group of about a dozen girls dressed in white muslin with red sashes hanging from their shoulders, and bare-headed, with red wreaths circling their hair; then some half dozen more societies each with banners and decorations of oak or fir leaves, and sharing two more bands between them. The effect of the whole was rather comical, even the girls putting on an air of swagger. The processionists seemed not particularly impressed with the dignity of their position. After returning, we three Scotchmen had our Sabbath evening tea and talk, and singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”

“ERLANGEN, 26th July 1883.

“This morning I got papa’s, Mary’s, and Lizzie’s letters, and was glad to hear you are all again in the fair way to

being in your usual health. Lizzie and Christopher will be almost already thinking of returning from Leslie, where I hope they have enjoyed themselves. It will be as convenient for me to meet mamma and papa at Maintz as at Frankfort. It would, I think, be possible. It will be possible, I think, to visit Strasburg, and still leave Rotterdam with the boat on Friday the 17th August."

"ERLANGEN, 29th July 1883.

"Will this be the last letter I shall write to you from Erlangen? Sorry I will be to leave, I suppose I must say forever, the quaint town where I have spent so many happy weeks and months. Much as I have seen and heard, I do not feel that I have added aught to my stature in any sense; but perhaps that may become more apparent afterwards. Your life at home has been almost my own; for Mary's devoted thoughtfulness and penmanship have given my eager thoughts ample food to keep my family instincts strong and healthy."

The meeting of James Gardner with his parents at Maintz, so long looked forward to, took place as arranged; and together they travelled through a part of Germany, Belgium, and Holland. From Rotterdam they returned to Scotland on the 19th August. His letters to his friends from Germany reveal an intense love of home, and an ardent desire to learn, from men and from books, what would be profitable to him as a minister. Of his inner spiritual life at this time there are only glimpses in his letters and in his diary. Probably

there was little real progress in grace at this time, but a certain mental calm from seeing more clearly before him the nature of his life-work, with the prospect of soon entering upon it recruited in health and strengthened in spirit.

LAST SESSION AT HALL.

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar :
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home :
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy.
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy ;
The youth, who daily further from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended :
At length the man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.*

WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER VI.

Last Session at Hall, License, and Assistantship.

ON his return from Germany James Gardner, deeply interested as he had all along been in the Students' Scheme and in Yeaman Place Church, took up again with enthusiasm the threads of business in connection with them which had been dropped during his absence. Writing at this time to one fellow-student, now in India, and referring to the serious illness of another, he says—

“ I should like with you to feel through this illness the value of each moment more and more. Four months from home have not taught me a lesson of diligence—at least I have not appropriated it, having been rather helplessly observant than active. I have seen a great deal since we last met. My knowledge of the ways of men and nations, and of the forces that are pushing forward in our age for recognition and power, has been somewhat widened and clarified. But of direct benefit for a minister's work I have gained little. Perhaps more will show itself by-and-by. I do not wish any preaching or active work till the Hall begins, but want to read and think, to see whereabout I am.”

To the student friend who had been so ill he thus wrote on learning of his recovery :—

“ I cannot tell you how pleased, how more than pleased, how affected I was to read once more a letter written by yourself. In your sore affliction we have all been brought nearer the verge of the unseen, and perceived what frail fleeting shadows we are in this world of sense and boasted life and work. You yourself have learnt most. May we be enabled to strengthen each other to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. I am engaged chiefly at present with home mission work, getting the committee's report ready, and everything prepared for the new committee.”

In the midst of these preparations, and not a few spiritual perplexities, he began his last session at the Hall ; and as the months moved on he recovered much of his lost spiritual energy. His home and church life, with his work as a student, did much to restore his soul, and give him a higher relish for purely spiritual truth. In the question also of Church and State he took a deep interest, and defended the cause of Disestablishment at a conference which the Synod's Disestablishment Committee held with the students at the Hall in November 1883. At the end of the session he was awarded the Eadie prize, given to the student who has gained the highest number of marks in the class examinations in New Testament exegesis during the third session, consisting of the German edition of Herzog's Encyclopædia. At this time, also, he took the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

When the Divinity Hall closed, instead of resting from exhausting work after a period of hard study, he was induced to accept an assistantship at North Berwick, under the Rev. William Calvert, B.A. He entered on his duties there on the first Sabbath of June, and continued till the end of August 1884. On the 10th July he was licensed by the Edinburgh Presbytery as a probationer. His work as an assistant was somewhat hard for one who had so few sermons on hand; but he liked the congregation and was cheered by their expressions of goodwill. He was growing in intimacy with the minister, the people, and his work, when, owing to neglect in not changing his clothes after a severe wetting, he was seized with a hoarseness, which, as it threatened to continue, necessitated his resigning his assistantship.

This was the first intimation of a disease which, lasting for two years, at length cut him off in his early manhood. The license to preach and the prohibition from preaching came to him almost together. Brought to the borders of the promised land, he was sent back into the wilderness of affliction. The opened door of work was suddenly closed. Although he had finished his course at the school of the prophets, he had to study other two years in the school of tribulation. So great a change in his plan of life was borne with patience, in the hope that, after a year's complete rest, he would be able to resume his career. In a note of the 30th August 1884, he thus writes of his case:—

“I left North Berwick on Wednesday morning. Dr. Affleck says that I must go to some milder drier country place at once. He says that there is some dulness in front under the right shoulder, but that I should throw it off if I get my system up. However, as you suggest in your letter the question of spending the winter in a warmer clime—Bournemouth, Cannes, or even an Australian voyage, has already been mooted. The dulness, which is not yet at all tubercular, must have come on very recently, as I was examined in May and pronounced quite sound. Laryngitis may be an independent disease, or it may be symptomatic. Dr. Affleck advised Rothesay or Bridge of Allan for me just now. I asked how Leslie would do. He said he thought it distinctly worth a trial. Without your letter, I was, therefore, about to write inviting myself for a few days. I thank you for your kind invitation. I intend, if all goes well, coming over on Monday. I am to try the air for a few days, and if it does not improve my cough I must go elsewhere. Aunt Mary need not be alarmed. I am no invalid as yet at any rate; and I shall not allow her to trouble herself about me.”

RESIDENCE AT FORRES.

PATIENCE.

*When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He, returning, chide :
“ Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ? ”
I fondly ask : but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “ God doth not need
Either man’s work, or His own gifts ; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best ; His state
Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest ;
They also serve who only stand and wait.”*

MILTON.

CHAPTER VII.

Residence at Forres.

IN the beginning of September 1884, James Gardner visited according to promise his uncle at Leslie. When his friends there saw him, they had the greatest difficulty in concealing from him their surprise and grief at the change in his appearance. The pallor of his countenance, the feebleness of his step, the hoarse whisper instead of the strong manly tones of his voice, struck a pang into their heart. There were the same gentleness, brightness, and intelligence, but they were mingled with an unwonted sadness, struggling to conceal itself under the guise of hope in a speedy recovery. Evidently impressed with the seriousness of his malady, he yet nobly set himself to second all efforts to build up his shattered frame. Nor were these efforts altogether in vain. Cheerful conversation, well-regulated diet, short walks in the clear pure air of the Lomond Hills soon wrought a wonderful change on his appearance. His voice resumed something like its old tone. His countenance, though still pale, had a more healthful hue. His strength was so far restored that he

could take a considerable walk without much fatigue. He read and wrote, conversed and played the harmonium as in other days, so that the manse seemed to have its old James back once more.

Beautiful though his spirit was when he was solemnised by the appearance of unfavourable symptoms, he had yet much to learn before he was thoroughly convinced that, no matter how thorny the road, it was the right way to the inheritance. If he were not to recover, he preferred a short course; whereas God knew that a longer pilgrimage in the valley was necessary. Hope deferred, ambition checked, mystery over the future, made him realise that he had not yet, amid all his attainments, reached such an experience of God's grace as could give him the completeness of victory which he desired. The study of experimental religion had now to be entered on with a seriousness, of which he had only occasional glimpses in the past. There were spiritual fountains of blessedness, of which before this he had only heard by the hearing of the ear, but which, ere long, he was to drink of with soul-satisfying fulness. The intellectual was still bulking more largely in his mind's eye than the spiritual; but affliction was to reverse his estimate so completely that he was to know ultimately what it was to count even his intensely-loved philosophical studies as loss for Christ. He had known the reality of spiritual things on the authority of Scripture; he was now to have his faith so strengthened that he

would see them and live among them as if they were the only realities of this mortal life.

One Sabbath evening, on the writer of this going up to his room, after the departure from the manse of a young communicants' class, he said that he had been much affected by the singing of the members and the solemn associations of the purpose for which they had met—to hear about the dying love of Christ. He had continually to mourn his own reticence and slowness to open out his mind and heart about spiritual things. It was not that he did not think and feel about them, but the words died on his lips when he wished to speak about them. What a privilege it was for these young men and women to be thus early imbued with reverence and love for the Lord Jesus, and furnished with right views of the Lord's Supper. He wondered how, even if he were well again and put into the ministry, he could deal with souls seeking light and needing direction, when he was so far back himself on these very matters. He had been so trained professionally that he knew much about the outside of religion, but little comparatively of its inner life. The conversation led up to this, that he was now to set about acquiring a deeper personal experience of God's love in Christ, that he might have more comfort in his own soul, and be better fitted to guide others in the deeper and hidden things of the heart.

As his mother had met with a serious accident to one of her limbs, he returned to Edinburgh after a three

weeks' sojourn in Leslie. On his being medically examined he was pronounced to be much better in his general health, but that the throat and chest still showed symptoms that would make it inexpedient for him to winter in Edinburgh. As the weeks wore on good tidings came of "improved strength," "lengthened walks," "firmer vocal chords," "absence of chest pains." His mother's health also recovering filled him with a hopeful spirit that they would both yet weather the blast and come out of it spiritually strengthened. Letters coming to him, with requests to consider certain spheres of labour, were at once put aside with the answer that, even were he perfectly well, he had made up his mind for another year's study either at home or abroad, as he did not feel qualified as yet in any way for a ministerial charge.

The visit of his three intimate Hall companions, the Rev. J. Anderson Brown, M.A., Rev. Francis Ashcroft, and Rev. John MacInnes, M.A., before their departure as missionaries to Rajputana, India, while a source to him of great delight, afforded him an opportunity of expressing to his friends his high appreciation of their youthful enthusiasm and consecration to foreign service. When spoken to about his entering the foreign field he unhesitatingly gave it as his conviction that, although coveting the work of a missionary, yet he had never felt that he was specially called to such a sphere. The fascinating proposal was made to him that he should accompany his three friends to India,

and after recruiting his health return; but so many obstacles stood in the way, personal, family, and medical, that the scheme was abandoned. A voyage to Australia with a much loved cousin, Dr. John Douglas Watt, who was going out as the surgeon of the vessel, was also carefully considered, and by medical advice rejected. Rothesay, Bournemouth, Ventnor, San Remo were all spoken of as a winter retreat; but at last it was decided that he should winter at Forres in the Cluny Hill Hydropathic Establishment.

Among his enjoyments at this time, he mentions the miscellaneous reading he was able to overtake—history, biography, poetry—with a sense of happy freedom, which he had never had in his more regular and compulsory studies. Among his papers there are jottings of his musings on the books he was reading, showing acuteness of perception, and a spirit ever on the alert to gather up the experience of the wise on his favourite subjects of inquiry,—the correlation of the different departments of knowledge, and the possibility of man's attainments on earth being subservient to the advancement of God's glory, as well as his own happiness in the world to come. Debating with himself this latter question, he would fain formulate some definite conclusion, but forbears, with the remark, that musing on such a subject is after all fitter than dogmatic thought, and that patient waiting will ere long disclose all.

In the beginning of November 1884, James Gardner took up his residence for the winter and spring in Cluny Hill Hydropathic Establishment, Forres. One of his first letters from that place states that both he and his three missionary friends had now arrived at their destinations—they to begin their life's work in the service of Christ among the heathen, and he to rest while still young and prepare by recruited health for preaching the gospel at home. The harder lot was that of him who had to wait while his heart was in study and work, but he felt the aptness of Milton's lines to his case: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

His journey to the North was to him the source of keen enjoyment, after his enforced retirement—the ever-changing scenery, the brown hills and towering Bens, partially hid in mist, and pleasant companionship by the way, all combining to revive and exhilarate him. Although his first impressions of Forres and Cluny Hill were not so favourable as he had anticipated, yet the longer he stayed the better he liked the whole neighbourhood—the fine walks in the sheltered paths through the woods and the cheerful home-like society in the establishment. With a proportion of damp, cold, and snowy days, he had on the whole during his sojourn weather of such a nature that he could be a good deal out in the open air, either walking or driving. The life-like descriptions of visits paid to places in the neighbourhood show the intense human interest he took in humble village, frozen loch,

or ancient abbey. When compelled to remain within doors his time was spent in innocent recreation, reading, or conversation.

From the great variety of visitors he could always count on gaining fresh insight into forms of life quite new to him, and an appreciation of the habits and wants of human nature in different classes of society which he thought would be invaluable to him in his future work. He learnt to sympathise with, and comfort the invalid who had outlived his hope of recovery. The man of the world taught him how easily and completely the earthly could absorb the soul. Diversity of creed was seen to be quite compatible with a common worship at one family altar. Denominational zeal even found a harmless field for its exercise, now in the person of an Anglican curate who did not feel that he had quite discharged his duty till he had done his best to convince the youthful probationer that there was no real Christian ministry save in the line of Apostolic succession; and now in a member of the Society of Friends, who told him that ministers as a class were the servants of another than Christ, and that the only ministry was that of the inner light. When the routine of his daily life was broken by the arrival of his brother, or sister, or fellow-students to spend a few days with him, the event is recorded with the genuine pleasure which only an invalid, away from his home among strangers, can fully experience. Home and Hall news were eagerly devoured, the work of the

Students' Missionary Society and the prospects of preachers inquired into, the hour of his friends' departure being the only sadness associated with their visit. The brief sojourn of the Rev. John Smith, M.A., Broughton Place, afforded him unmixed happiness ; and of a sermon which he preached in Forres he says, "It was most stimulating, and I believe will live with me." As his voice strengthened he sometimes conducted family worship in the drawing-room, but never felt strong enough to fulfil a promise to preach at sometime for the Rev. William Watson, M.A., Forres.

From the time of his arrival at Cluny Hill till he left, there was a slow but steady improvement in his health. The report of the medical men was that the more serious symptoms were gradually disappearing, and that there was good hope of ultimate and complete recovery. The proposal of a voyage to the Mediterranean or India was discussed anew, but by medical advice was finally laid aside. In spite of steady increase of vigour, he could not help at times seriously pondering what the issue was to be. He expected to be convalescent in a few months, but the return of strength had been so slow that he was constrained to write thus :—

"Shall I ever become strong enough to carry out my past intentions into realities? I do not entertain the possibility of saying, No: but yet when I think of the constant demand made on the respiratory organs by our professional work, and of the effect which even a little

of that work has had on me I cannot but have forebodings. Ambitious I do not deny that I am, but I cannot imagine any career for myself but one in which my own advancement would mean the advancement and good of my fellow-creatures."

On hearing of the death of a grand-uncle he thus records a dream which he had :—

"His death surprised me considerably. Very old and ripe he was, and his relatives can see light in the darkness, both for themselves and for him. I do not believe in dreams, but it is not a little curious that last night I had two distinct dreams one after the other, in both of which I thought I was looking out for messengers who would bring me news of a certain person's death, I forget whom. The messengers were three in number on both occasions. I did not know of my grand-uncle John Watt's serious illness and could not anticipate his death.

"We had a really profitable communion service this forenoon in Mr. Watson's church. The sermon was on Rev. xii. 11. The communion address was very full of feeling and impressive on 'Lo, I am with you alway.' I enjoyed the whole service very much, and profited by it more than I have by any church service for a good while. These grand old psalms are so touching! We sang the 35th and 54th Paraphrases. I am thinking of writing a post-communion address on 'And sitting down they watched Him there.'

"I have been reading a sermon by Dr. Eadie on John iii. 16. He has only three heads. Do you object to my using your division when I write my sermon on that text? It is the best I have seen. I have a jotting of the heads in my note-book. My illustrations will likely be different ;

but I will not preach it in Leslie, if I should ever stand again in your pulpit."

In a letter to the Rev. D. M. Forrester, B.D., Logie-almond, he has these touching words in reference to his future life:—

"A New Year has turned for us once more the page of time; and one dreads to sully the yet unwritten tale. In these circumstances the communion of friends becomes of real service, being no empty form of mutual congratulation, but a true source of encouragement and heart-strengthening. This evening is beautiful, more peaceful and beautiful than I can tell you in words, and as I look out over the green fields to the dark shadows of the Altyre and Darnaway Forests, and the fading hues of sunset that light up the tops of the near pines on my right, my thoughts wander back to the times of my boyhood, when the mystery of life thrilled me with strong expectancy not unmingled with sadness. Things have sadly changed, — thoughts and plans and scenes, — like the cloudlets now in the sky; but my day has not yet dawned. I do not want to act in the coming years, if I be spared, foolishly. My prayer is that I may be directed wisely to one solid acquisition after another in a way which I have not yet known, and fitted for our Master's work. What gaps!—what vacancies in the past!—wrought not by one's surroundings, not by one's illusions and weakness, but by one's own follies and stupidity and awful blindness! I humbly hope I may have opportunities yet given me to make better use of time in health and strength."

From his Cluny Hill letters we take a few more extracts showing his hopes, and fears, and struggles.

“I wish I could find a quick path to fortune and power for your sakes. Vain wish! universal and not quite wrong, but only to be attained by hard repeated efforts. My life one would think is cut out for me, and all I have to do is to go forward.”

“I have finished reading a book of much interest and profit. It is named ‘The Night Lamp,’ by the late Rev. Dr. M’Farlane of London. It gives an account of the religious experience and death of his only sister Agnes, who died after many weeks’ illness at the age of twenty-one. It is exceedingly well written. I have not enjoyed a work of that kind so much for a considerable time.”

“The spring is a delightful time here. The air is becoming soft, the trees are swelling into bud. Their branches are swarming with almost every variety of song-bird: and their trills and twitterings all day long are delicious after the long, hard, silent winter.”

As the spring wore on he took up again the almost forgotten art of studying,—Goethe’s works in German and Luthardt’s Apologetics,—the life of rest and recreation and idleness having no permanent charm for him. With the advancing year he tried the strength of his wing in an occasional flight of the Muses, of which the following are specimens, dated April 1885.

TO A THRUSH.

Blithe bird that pipest in my sight,
 And when I passed, flew heavenwards
 Amid the boughs, thou hast no guards
 ’Gainst ill, save plumage, song, and flight.

Thou needest none : thou know'st not wrong,
 But always beautifully wilt live,
 Right lessons to thy nestlings give,
 And in thine innocence be young.

Oh, would that I might live like thee
 A life unerring, lovely, pure,
 Maturing by some instinct sure,
 And from known sins kept safe and free !

Ah ! power of choice is curse and crown,
 How hard to grow entire by it,
 Like thee or thy companions fit,
 The pine, the brook, the mossy down.

RANDOLPH'S LEAP ON THE FINDHORN.

Spring sunshine soft from noon hath made
 The bare trees gleam with smiles ;
 The broad brown river hath displayed
 In glee its rippling smiles ;
 Till, where from either bank the bold
 Twin rocks all but caressed,
 In curling strands together rolled
 The straitened waters pressed.

But hark ! there is a murderous shout,
 And through the high wood's veil
 Is seen, in downward race flash out,
 The fire of polished mail.
 Then comes a fearful rush and bound
 Through crashing twigs and stems,—
 Randolph pursued a place has found
 Where numbers he contemns.

He swerves not ; o'er the deep he springs
To him no unknown feat,
Then turns with furious brandishings,
His enemies to greet.
Panting they halt when they descry,
His glittering blade up-waved,
None dare that deathful passage try,
Brave Randolph ! he is saved.

The following memorandum sums up his reflection's on his life up to the close of his sojourn at Cluny Hill, in which we see the struggles of a sincere youth to grasp the meaning of life, and the best way to make the present bear on the final issue of our life's work.

“My lengthened stay at Cluny Hill must be of the greatest advantage to me. I must say that hitherto I have not been able to ‘learn anything’ from the weakness which has kept me idle for six months. They have been welcome, I have often thought, as giving me a time for re-thinking my position, and enabling me to go out to my life's work with greater sincerity of purpose, and with a heart less divided between conflicting claims and tendencies.

“Last night I got, after a mood of more than usual excitement, a clearer idea than I have yet had of the necessity there is, nay of the opportunity there now is, for me at last to make some advance. For twenty-three years I have suffered the evils of expectancy. The long period of prostration of energy, feeble desires, and lack of enthusiasm, —which coincided almost with my Hall course,—the utter despair which I have sometimes felt during the last twelve months, and finally the collapse of my bodily power, which had been one source of solace amid mental vexations, have

put an end, or are putting an end, to the bounty of life. I am coming to believe in the finitude of life, its resources and promises. I see the futility of dreaming over the tenderness of the past, or the wealth of the future. I am beginning to appreciate the rule of ingratiating and engrossing myself at once with the present, as something of equal friendliness and familiarity with the past and the future; or, rather, I attain to the future through the present and learn the necessity for a powerful active personality developing itself by uniting with the various events and characters of each new day and week, finding therein its proper sphere of exercise, and moulding thereby its future. Thus the whole man is 'renewed day by day.' The world and the human race preserve their youth. As the Scripture saith, in a somewhat different application, 'Old things are passed away, and all things are become new.'"

LESLIE AND EDINBURGH.

A STRICKEN DEER.

*I was a stricken deer, that left the herd
Long since ; with many an arrow deep infix'd
My panting side was charged, when I withdrew,
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There was I found by One who had Himself
Been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore,
And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene ;
With few associates, and not wishing more.
Here much I ruminatè, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.*

COWPER.

CHAPTER VIII.

Leslie and Edinburgh.

JAMES GARDNER expected to leave Cluny Hill in the end of April ; but the “gab of May,” as the last short, sharp blast in the beginning of that month is called in the North, prevented him from reaching Edinburgh till the end of May. His friends were delighted to see him so much improved in appearance. Although still somewhat pale and troubled with a short cough, he was much stronger and brighter. In a letter at this time to the Rev. Peter Peace, M.A., Blyth, he writes thus :—

“It is probable that I shall not be at your ordination. I am a great deal better than I was in September ; and if you saw me you would probably say with my friends that I look quite strong. The doctors whom I have seen since coming South agree that I am nearly quite well. I never wearied in the slightest in the North ; and if I had been content to live for pleasure’s sake alone, I daresay I could have stayed *ad infinitum*. And even at home the aimlessness of my present course of life is not altogether removed ; but at home one can naturally fix on a definite aim more readily, and pursue it more constantly, as there are fewer distractions and temptations to *dilettantism*. Regret, too,

mingled with my feelings as I left that sunny spot by the Moray Frith ; for its beauty has fixed itself upon my fancy in all its varying conditions during these six months. I cannot look back over that time, and at the big white house without having a perfect crowd of familiar faces, many appealingly friendly, all of them interesting, trooping through my memory. And now here is old Break-down, once more at his usual tricks, dreaming about the past and cogitating about the future, and paying little attention to the present. But we must not give up the fight with the evil one yet for a long while ;—only I hope our shadows are not standing behind our back mocking at our sincerity.”

After spending a month in Edinburgh, where he had the opportunity of consulting the ablest physicians, he spent the months of July and August with his uncle in Leslie. The weather was so good during almost the whole time of his sojourn there, that he was able to be much out in the open air. It was his great delight, along with a congenial friend, to ramble over the Lomond Hills, or saunter up the river-side towards Lochleven, while the conversation ranged freely over politics, literature, or art. The clear bracing air invigorated his whole frame. Long walks of ten miles did not seem to exhaust him.

The subjects which he studied at this time were the Niebelungen Lied, German Hymnology, painting and architecture. With the return of health there was a return of his old spirit of calm joy. Life was brighter, and his way seemed opening up. Hope revived that he might one day preach again. By rest and care the

enemy that had taken possession might be expelled. The inner spiritual life was flowing in a fuller and more direct channel. The reviving of the soul's life, so conspicuous afterwards, began to appear. Imperfect conceptions of the relation of culture to religion, art in the sphere of the spiritual life, and philosophy in the region of revelation, were gradually being got rid of, some of them not without a struggle. Central gospel truths were always intelligently held, but now they were beginning to assume in his eyes somewhat more of their vast proportions, and to assert their overwhelming influence.

The shadows, however, were still intermingling with the sunshine in his experience, as may be seen from the following lines written at Leslie in August 1885:—

A GARDEN REVERIE.

Love is opening, shall it wither?
 Thus I questioned, coming hither
 To this rose-bush near the holly,
 Where I thoughtfully and slowly
 Drew a blushing bud unto me
 Till it left the stem. Now through me,
 In the hedge's shadow standing,
 Thrills of sympathy commanding
 Vibrate in anticipation.
 For I gaze with admiration
 On a flower whose nascent sweetness
 Soon will perish, and in meetness
 Anxiously this makes me ponder
 If the bud I gathered yonder,

'Mid parterres of quiet pleasure,
 Will remain my chiefest treasure,
 Or decay. O richly blooming,
 Hearts and hopes throughout perfuming,
 Let it live! Sweet flower, I'll sorrow
 If thou'rt still love's sign to-morrow.

My love, I cannot sing to thee
 With perfect charm of minstrelsy.
 I know with joy that only such
 Becomes thee, though weak fingers touch,
 In loyalty to thee, this lyre.
 My actions mock my high desire,
 And powers appear distraught and parched
 That should be always nobly arched
 In graceful hardiness and verve,
 To shoot o'er trifles and deserve
 Thy presence high with pride to hail.
 I see the hyacinth grow pale
 Before the stately lily's blaze,
 And what shall stay before the rays
 Of thy clear worth, august in youth,
 But sound existences of truth,
 With beauty in their form and course,
 Directed by wise innate force?

To me the same bright sunny heaven
 Of constant mercy may have given
 Its light celestial; but that part
 Of the immortal human heart
 Which should on earth glad verdure bear
 Of deeds responsive to Heaven's care,
 And by fraternal dealing gain
 A wealth of culture and domain,
 In me was growing bleak and waste.
 But friendship's breezes have solaced
 My need, when wafted on them came
 A seed that's rooted and lays claim

My whole life's landscape to renew
And make strength blossom into view.
Shall I, then, lose this love-tree fair?
Nay, thou despoiling blast forbear!
Come, gently fostering winds and blow;
Ye skies that hide th' unseen, bestow
Your favours; and ye guardians all
Of man, with aid attend my call.
O Love Divine! pour forth thy shower
Of blessing, limitless in power.

CHRISTIAN TRANSMIGRATION.

A thousand wondrous scents, and sounds,
And sights delight our willing sense;
Could I not with them blend and share
One world so lovely and immense?

Am I not part of all I see,
And seeing love and would approach?
Ah, yes! but these will live when death
Comes on thy senses to encroach.

The summer will succeed the frost,
And green shall be the tree and lawn;
The ethereal heavens shall brightly smile
When thou with all thy loves art gone.

But shall my ashes not revive
In flower or tree in green arrayed?
And wilt thou hear with joy the bees
That hum around thy leafy shade?

It may be so, and yet my frame
Shall rise in nobler form, I trust;
And with my spirit glorified
Dwell in the kingdom of the just.

On returning to Edinburgh in the beginning of September for his sister Mary's marriage with Mr. W. Mannington Ritchie, at which he showed more than his wonted animation and geniality, he was again examined by the doctors; and as the progress he had made in Leslie during his two months' sojourn there was very marked, he was recommended to return thither for the rest of September. Resuming his old place and habits in the manse, he still continued to improve in health, so that, with the exception of an occasional short cough, there seemed nothing specially wrong with him.

It was on this visit that he was enabled finally to yield up some of his speculations about the possibility of our attainments in science and philosophy having a distinctive effect on our position and blessedness in the future world. In a long walk on the Lomonds, on a bright clear day, with the writer of this, he argued long and ably for some form of his idea being accepted, as not inconsistent with the evangelical faith. The beauty of hill and dale and tree and stream, the glory of the deep blue sky, the starry heavens, and the ever-changing sea, were to him, he said, a present and full joy. Music, again, was something more than mere melodious and harmonious sound—it was religion finding expression. Might not painting have a power to quicken the soul's life? Might not philosophy have in it results which would not end in time, but flow out into the eternal future? Ere long, however, he was enabled to

take in juster views of the relation between the seen and the unseen, between the æsthetic and the religious. Music, painting, philosophy might be handmaids to religion, but could not of themselves create religion. Some of the most irreligious men have been among the greatest artists, poets, and philosophers.

We know too little of the conditions and occupations of the future life to assert with confidence, that the highest culture of time shall give its possessor in eternity an advantage over others less favoured. It is faith in Christ that brings the highest blessedness in time and eternity. The growth of the soul in the region of the Divine love is so much larger an attainment than all others, that he who has the hope of this can afford to leave out as of little account the question of whether science and art shall have their sphere in the future life. The Gospel does not offer the high reward of heaven to the most æsthetic, or learned, or philosophical, or cultured, but to the most faithful, whatever their other attainments. However modified or explained, the gospel of æsthetics is another gospel than Christ's, and would substitute works for faith. There will be no aristocracy in heaven of royalty, or nobility, or culture. Earthly distinctions will vanish in the eternal light. The sum of eternal life is the knowledge of Christ.

Time being given for quiet reflection, James Gardner came to adopt this latter view. From this time, it is believed, dates his more complete consecration to Christ.

It was seen after this that he had a growingly absorbing interest in spiritual things. All else was valued for its power to aid in knowing Christ and eternal truth more thoroughly. On leaving Leslie for Edinburgh he was apparently in good health and heart. The clear hill air had given a tone to his system which it had long wanted. There seemed a brighter future for him in every respect. Little did we know when he left us thus well, stating that he was "better more ways than one," evidently alluding to his clearer gospel views than when he came, that we were never to see him again in our home. From frequent visits and early associations he loved the place and its people, but his good-bye was to be his farewell to Leslie.

The last three months of 1885 were spent at home in Edinburgh. When the weather was clear and bright he was able to take regular exercise in the open air. Rest, regulated diet, vapour baths were combined with light study for the recruiting of his energy, and the re-establishment of his health. Such progress was manifest as the weeks passed on that he had the brightest hopes of recommencing work in earnest in the summer. Public affairs, family friendships, students' and preachers' prospects, all shared his interest. Withal it was most beautiful and yet pathetic to see how patiently he submitted to restraints on his movements, and how gently he demeaned himself under the chastening of the Lord, convinced that in some way, though not to him fully visible, this ordering of his life was

the best. His attitude at this time comes out in the following letter of Nov. 1885, to the Rev. Francis Ashcroft, Ulwar, India.

“A year has now come and gone since we bade each other good-bye for a time, and we are, therefore, so much nearer our reunion, which I do confess I sometimes imagine; and I wonder in secret what may be the altered circumstances amid which we may meet, when that privilege is accorded to us. Since I wrote you from Leslie I have been getting along pretty well and have made real progress in strength of stomach and nerve; so that, in common with all who know me, I can pronounce myself a great deal better. My cough, too, is not of much account, my doctor having succeeded in relieving it partially, and I believe the amelioration will go on. I am really in good spirits, and continue to hope the best for myself. I mean to stay in Edinburgh as long as I can; and if any very severe weather comes on, I can go off to some milder place for a little. When spring comes round I may make a more prolonged stay in some country place to escape the east winds.

“I daresay to most outsiders I may seem not to be acting most wisely in persisting to remain in Scotland, when I am quite well enough to go elsewhere, but too weak to work at present here. It may be so; all I can say is that I have been so thoroughly accustomed, nay have been so personally devoted, to look upon this country as my sphere for life, that I feel warranted in making a struggle for it.

“The mere question of living is to me of minor importance; it is how I am to live—what form will my life and activity take?—these are the aspects of the question that interest me; so that of course without certain modes of living and exciting influence which are stamped into my

constitution and spirit, as the modes for me—as in fact myself—I would be of little use anywhere, a mere encumbrance without even a wish for life. It is certainly hard to say what my feelings may become on the subject, if, for instance, I were to remain tied up in my present position, say for another full year, or two years, or more. But as I said in a previous letter, I am endeavouring to live in the present now, and less in the future. It is more profitable, and after a certain stage is over, more rational, that is, after one sees intelligently what it means.”

EDINBURGH AND CORSTORPHINE.

ELEGY TO SPRING.

*Now spring returns : but not to me returns
The vernal joy my better years have known ;
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
And all the joys of life with health are flown.*

*Starting and shivering in the inconstant wind,
Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,
Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclined,
And count the silent moments as they pass.*

*The winged moments, whose unstaying speed
No art can stop, or in their course arrest ;
When flight shall shortly count me with the dead,
And lay me down in peace with them that rest.*

*There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,
When death shall shut these weary aching eyes ;
Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.*

MICHAEL BRUCE.

CHAPTER IX.

Edinburgh and Corstorphine.

DURING the first three months of 1886 James Gardner continued to improve in health. Almost every day he was able to take a long walk. The clear frosty air invigorated him, but a cold, raw, damp atmosphere confined him to his room. "I wish the spring were over," he wrote on one of these damp days, "I feel as if it were now with me or never."

His books were his daily companions. We find him studying History, Philology, and Psychology. Among the books read at this time were Roscoe's "Lorenzo di Medici," Newman's "Apologia," and Sophocles' "Œdipus Tyrannus." So far had his health been recruited that he began to write a sermon, in the belief that he would soon need it. The deepest interest was taken by him in all that concerned his fellow-students. Their success in the churches was his joy. Not a word of murmuring, that he had been left out of the race, escaped him. All his letters at this time breathe a beautiful spirit of contentment and happiness. The following memorandum of 22d Feb. 1886 gives the experience through

which he had passed and the point of rest to which he had attained.

“This age is not teleological as other ages have been. Teleology and finality are not favourite thoughts with it. My own mind seems largely teleological, and thereby, perhaps, many of my conflicts with present tendencies may be explained. At any rate, when one is laid aside from active work, his teleology becomes vexatious. In certain moods or attitudes I lose sight of all possibilities of aim, like one who is floating or swimming on the sea, and plunges down suddenly over head and ears accidentally; so that no land or object is seen, and nothing is heard, but confusion floods his senses. At these times I am like a boy who has lost himself in a dense fog, and is so troubled that he cries, shuts his eyes, and fancies hobgoblins and other horrible creatures are looming through the mist. Just so at these times, when the sense of my being lost seizes me, I am the prey of grey undefined shades. My mind then seems to become one scopic instrument, so that I am sensible mainly of an indistinct field of vision as seen through the object glass, while a certain amount of focussing and adjusting and straining goes on; and in spite of all nothing to see! The vacancy which is the only thing alighted on notwithstanding the effort — though the effort may take place with the smallest possible exertion of conscious volition—is positively painful.

“To give an aim one must have external calls of duty, or lively affections, or a rationally constructed idea of the course one’s life has taken, and is likely to take. In my present state of retirement the first are wanting to me; and it is marvellous how one’s perceptions of duty get dimmed and find little place in a life which is, if not in

principle, yet in outward conformation, selfish. My affections are cut off from their true objects just now—save of course in their highest manifestations. And while the last, as a help to concentration of endeavour, is that now ruling my actions, yet it always labours under the disadvantage of being vague; and in my present case it lacks the co-operation of the others, which in ordinary life tend to fit it into daily opportunities, as well as to enrich it with material and embellishment.

“Over all such obstacles and suppressions of energy I long to advance,—and I may say I appear to myself to be advancing—towards a regulated harmony of activity, that *selbstsetzung*, which is man’s highest form of existence here, and which should draw out his highest ambition at all stages,—that state in which, like a piece of spirit-mechanism with all its machinery within itself,—with its moving force, yea and its law as well as itself, man can alone do his work as man, and thereby as God’s true servant.’

But the sky of his bright hopes was in the beginning of April suddenly overcast. One week he writes: “I have stood the winter splendidly. I have been out almost every day, and have gained steadily in weight.” The next week he was unexpectedly laid low by very alarming symptoms. But his faith was so strong, that, although he knew he might soon pass away, he could say,—“Only God can help,”—“Keep calm,”—“I am safe”—“I really cannot foresee the issue,”—“If I am taken I pray that I may be enabled in all humility to trust in God to the end,”—“I do not cling fast to earth,”—“My pride of heart is what I fear most.”

After some weeks he began again to improve. He

could sit up part of the day, read a little, and converse with friends; but for three months he made no steady progress. Strength was gained only to be lost. Hope of recovery was dashed by repeated relapse. Once or twice he was able to take a short walk; but there was no real rallying of the vital energies. How gentle, and considerate, and happy he was throughout this period is a pleasing memory to those friends who ministered to him. A bouquet from the ordination table of a fellow-student at Logiealmond was much prized by him, coming as it did laden with sacred associations of friendship and consecration to the work of Christ. Writing to the donor he says:—

“I hope you do not think me fretful. That the past two years have been saddening I must confess, yet I have during this long trial never felt such despondency, nor experienced such bitter mental anxieties, as I did immediately before my break-down, and at intervals since my school-days. Every one has had such struggles, I daresay, and you yourself, I doubt not, yet those to which I refer have overshadowed my life so completely that if I were to write a history of my life, there would be nothing in my sight almost worth telling, but the sting of my mental sorrows. I thank God for the peace He has given me in my affliction, though I do not pretend that it has been free from passing clouds and perplexities. How thankful should I be that my physical strength did not give way during that period of mental and spiritual conflict! I do not wish to give even the semblance of over-confidence and boasting; but I trust I may say, *I seek after calm resignation to the worst that may befall.*”

In conversation with him at this time, one felt that he was insensibly beginning to look upon this world as one who was a citizen of another. The interest he took in passing events was not that of one who expected to share in the struggle, but of one who measured their importance by their relation to the eternal world into which he was soon to go. The light of eternity was revealing to him the triviality of much that seemed most important in human life. The problems that had so fascinated him were receiving their solution in the enlargement of his spiritual nature, and the perfecting of his trust in God. The ambition to take a high place as a thinker and Christian teacher was giving place to the growing desire to know more of Christ as his Saviour and undying Friend. His centre was being more completely transferred from earth to the heavenly places in Christ.

In the hope that he might be benefited by a change of air, his family removed to Corstorphine in the beginning of August. Notwithstanding daily sauntering in the garden, and frequent drives when the weather was favourable, he did not give any signs of being invigorated, but as the weeks wore on, rather showed symptoms of being weakened. Visits which he prized very much were paid to him here by Professor Calderwood, Dr. John Ker, and Professor Johnstone. He felt deeply their kindness in coming to strengthen and comfort him in his affliction. The almost daily visits of an intimate fellow-student, now

the Rev. J. D. Robertson, D.Sc., North Berwick, served as a link of connection with the life of the University and Hall. But his weakness increasing, it was resolved to return to Edinburgh. He would have preferred to go to Leslie, but that was too far for him. When told that the physicians had no hope of his recovery, he said :—

“I am fond of life. It is a beautiful world. I am grieved to leave my dear friends. But it is long since I set my face towards Jerusalem. I am quite safe. I am going into God’s presence trusting to His mercy in Christ. My fears and doubts are all taken away. I have a simple faith in Christ’s merit. Only I am sad at the little I have done for Him.

“‘ Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.’”

LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

RESIGNATION.

*O Lord, my God, do Thou Thy holy will—
I will lie still—
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm,
And break the charm,
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
In perfect rest.*

*Mortal ! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think, who did once from Heaven to Hell descend
Thee to befriend :
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,
Thy best, thine all.*

*“ O Father ! not My will, but Thine be done ”—
So spake the Son.
Be this our charm, mellowing Earth's ruder noise
Of griefs and joys :
That we may cling for ever to Thy breast
In perfect rest !*

KEBLE.

CHAPTER X.

Last Days and Death.

WITH difficulty James Gardner was brought in from Corstorphine to Edinburgh, where in the midst of loving friends he spent the weeks still given to him in preparing for his Lord's presence. As there was during his life the complete absence of all pretence to an experience riper and fuller than he really possessed, so there was at its close a simple truthful expression of his Christian hope. His growth in the spiritual life during these latter days was remarkable. The one book with him now was the Bible, in which he found a well of living water to refresh his fainting soul. His spiritual nature fed also on "Rutherford's Letters," "Hervey's Letters," "Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine's Sermons." As he climbed higher and higher on the hills of divine holiness, he left the mists of human philosophy far down in the lower valleys. The sunshine of God's full love was all around him. He breathed the purer atmosphere of heaven, and felt how good it is to be in the secret of the Lord.

The prayers and conversation of his minister, the

Rev. Dr. Mair, Morningside, were very helpful to his faith, and were looked forward to by him with much pleasure. The ministrations of Principal Cairns and Professor Johnstone were also much valued, as strength to him in the day of trouble. Dr. John Ker, for whom, along with all his fellow-students, he had a warm affection, and who, in turn, had a deep interest in him as one of his most promising students, turned round to him when he was about to leave the room on his last visit and said, as if he had a presentiment that his own death might not be far off, "Cheer up, James, we shall see each other again." In a little while Professor and student were seeing each other in the light of the throne.

To some of his fellow-students, who were permitted to see him, he spoke earnestly, as strength was given him, of the great work before them and the need there was of laying aside some of the false ideals which both they and he had cherished as to the best way of preaching. He had found that nothing of man's wisdom could be of any avail when souls were, like his, face to face with eternal realities. If he had been permitted to preach again this was the lesson he would take to the pulpit, as it had been taught him more fully on his sick-bed than anywhere else,—the love of the Father in the death of His Son, and the power of the Son through the Spirit to comfort and save. The experience of a death-bed was unfolding to him in a fuller way than he had ever anticipated the marvellous

power of Christ's love, shown in His death, to sustain and console. Good news to him was not so much the unfolding of the deeper mysteries, as the old simple truth that "Christ died for the ungodly." This he saw more clearly than ever to be the power of God to salvation.

Some of his last letters, written in pencil when he was in great weakness, reveal the strength of his faith, and his sure hope of soon being with Christ.

To the Rev. Francis Ashcroft, Ulwar, India, one of his dearest fellow-students, he thus wrote:—

"You will excuse this short pencil note. It is written in bed, and I am on my back, unable to lie on either side. After four months' confinement to the house, for the most part in bed, I was taken to Corstorphine for August to try the effect of a slight change of air. I was much reduced by repeated attacks; but this has proved to be by far the worst.

"I cannot help feeling a pang of sorrow at the prospect of leaving my dear friends; but the gain is immeasurably greater. I rejoice to think those I love best,—those with whom my intercourse has been longest and closest, are lovers of our Blessed Saviour, so that there is a joyful reunion in store for us all. I thank God He keeps my spirit calm, and I can trust to the Lord Jesus to take me safely through all afflictions and death itself to the heavenly mansions. It is only a little while at the longest, and then all will be gathered home. So it seems, dear friend, that our friendship, begun here and interrupted partially for a season, will be fully resumed in heaven: 'For saints forever love.' Give my kindest remembrance

to Brown and M'Innes, with my enduring affection and good wishes. With all love and desire for your bodily health, spiritual growth, and worldly prosperity, I am yours till the end, whenever in God's wise and merciful providence that may be."

To the Rev. D. M. Forrester, B.D., Logiealmond, he thus wrote :—

"As you may judge, my desire is constant to know more and more of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection. He does not forsake me. What a blessed assurance to know that He will never do so! Would that all my sins and imperfections and weaknesses were completely swept from me by the living manifestations of God's perfections in Christ! I thank you for the texts you mentioned. I have no interest in any book just now but the Bible, or some work connected with it. I would have liked to answer Willie's letter to me, but have found it impossible. Perhaps you would let him know how much I enjoyed it, and how glad I was to find his experience was so like mine. I thank you all again for your kind words and deeds, in which you have abounded; and may the Divine reward be found in your own souls. The Lord God be a sun and shield unto you."

To his cousin, Dr. John Douglas Watt, who had gone to Australia, he sent the following farewell letter :—

"By this time your wife and children will be with you, and you will all have been rejoicing in your reunion. I felt I did not do justice to the occasion when I bade your wife good-bye, but when one is unwell, he is not always 'all

himself,' or 'all in the whole, and the whole in every part,' as Aristotle hath it. Four months ago, I was vigorous, lively and happy, and in a very fair measure of health; just now the doctor tells me he looks with great anxiety on my case, and cannot bid me be very hopeful. So, my dear Douglas, it looks as if we were not to look on each other's face again here below. Our long train of happy intercourse is to be broken asunder. I am sure there has been always in both of us a desire to keep free from shame, yea to witness for the cross of Christ.

"When one gets to my state it is comforting to reflect that, however imperfect and barren one's life has been, Christ's work stands firm. A simple trust in His faithfulness, that He will be with me to the end, is the only attitude for me. The hope I have, then, is that Christ has died for me, 'that whether waking or sleeping, I shall live together with Him.' We shall meet again, shall we not, where life is one glad day? And now I wish you nothing but good health, a good life and a long one, with God's blessing on your dear wife and children. I remember you all daily in thought and in prayer, and will remember you to the end. May God keep each one of you in perfect peace."

To his eldest sister, Mrs. Ritchie, who was unable to visit him, he sent this parting word:—

"I have had a rather severe turn; and I am very sorry, as the summer is nearly gone, and my physical health is not saved. It makes me look at what people call the worst. By Divine help, I can truly say, it is misnamed, and is not the worst at all. It is the grandest change one can anticipate. It is by no means a wrench, if one can just get courage to face and endure the pains and weariness to which the flesh may be subjected beforehand. And even

regarding these we might endure similar agonies and live. The two worlds seem one, do they not? It is Christ who takes us from the one to the other; so that it is He who makes them one for us. I know this serious illness will sadden you; but I may rally and go out and in as God's messenger. You will agree with me that there is a strong ground of peace and calm underneath our sorrows, which at times comes up into our conscious feeling. Let us thank God for it, and ask Him to make it more constant to us; and so we shall get rest to our souls. May we be all kept faithful and true; so that we may see how God shineth out of the darkness."

To the writer of this, who sent to him every few days words of comfort and direction, he sent this brief reply:—

"I am still supported by a peace-giving trust in my Saviour, and am feeling Him more precious to me. You ask if I ever seem to have reached the land of Beulah. Inasmuch then, as my happiness is a constant happiness, and inasmuch as I have no dread sights in the valley of the shadow of death, and have no doubts in my horizon, I may be said to be enjoying it in part; but I cannot speak of bright visions of glory, or rapturous communings. My mind indeed is quiet, and I thank God for His peace and rest, and pray that He may preserve me in it, until my Lord presents me faultless in His Father's presence. At the same time my heart is full of desire to know more of Christ, and to be admitted into the inheritance of the saints in light. I often think of aunt and of you, and remember you in my prayers, as I know you have done for me. May God bless and reward you in your service. As we do well to remember, there is a happy reunion in store."

His uncle, Robert Martin, who often conversed with him, gives the following reminiscences of his death-bed experiences:—

“The memory of the just is blessed; but if surviving friends are to receive the full blessing of their memory they must call to mind the faith and hope of the departed, and seek to be animated by like aspirations. The wish to be remembered by our friends after we are gone is a common feeling, and is justified both by our religion and the comfort it affords. Our friend James Gardner had lived among us long enough to become a prominent life in our family circle. His passing away from our midst in his opening spring, when as yet his branch was scarcely filled with leaves, may well weigh us down with grief. All seemed fair for a life of prosperous work, when the voice said to him, ‘Come up hither.’

“In recalling the last scenes and words of a good man on the eve of his departure, there is much instruction mingled with a feeling of pleasing sadness. His words become more weighty and real, as they are spoken on the verge of the eternal world. Such was our experience as we accompanied James down the shaded alley that leads to the narrow stream of death, when he began to cling more closely to his friends for support. His whispers grew softer as his vision and hopes grew brighter of the Heavenly Home.

“The announcement made to him that there was no hope of his recovery brought out the fine balance of his mind in the calm resignation with which he accepted God’s will. To his aunt, Mrs. Gordon, who was attending him, he said, ‘Oh yes, Aunt, just live a little longer and then die. Give my love to grandmother and them all,—mind, it is “love,”

not mere compliment.' After this his perplexities were seen to be gone, and his death-chamber was lighted up with the brightness of heaven. To him heaven with its repose and earth with its suffering seemed blended into one. In the midst of his weakness he would lead on the conversation towards the heavenly country and its bright inhabitants. His intellect was clear to the end and capable of minute distinctions of truth. He would say to me, 'Just talk away the same as if I were answering, and I will give you a sign as to what I think.' He seemed to have topics of conversation ready for those who visited him, and they were of great variety. His fondness for books was very great. He would get me to give him the drift of a book like Dante's Paradise, remarking at the close that he had only up to this time been acquiring professional knowledge, and he had missed much of what was the most important of all.

"His uncle in Leslie, who was deeply affected by his illness, besides making frequent journeys to see him, regularly sent him soothing and edifying letters, which he greatly prized as a draught of refreshing water to a thirsty soul. He was in the habit of lifting the letters and handing them to me to read with an expression of his gratitude for the benefits received. The subjects in the letters generally formed the topics of our conversation.

"One night he said, 'As I felt a little stronger to-day, I got down some of my books and I took a fancy to read the Apology of Socrates in the Greek. He must have been a brave man Socrates to die so confidently on so little,—mere guesses and poor guesses, having only the unproved hypothesis of the transmigration of souls to rest on. It lets us see how the greatest minds can be deluded by the current notions of the time. I do not see how I could die

happy with a mere peradventure in my mind as to the fact of a future life. It is hard enough work to die with all the certainty that the Gospel brings of life and immortality, with sin atoned for and forgiven.' I said, 'You are right; but Socrates was brave because he thought he had lived a good life. His was natural religion, which always lays hold of good works and the cultivation of the intellect as the ground of hope. Philosophy with Socrates was the highest good. He had cultivated it here under difficulties, and was now about to die for it. He was confident that in the other world he would enjoy the company of the great heroes of the past, discoursing with them on philosophy, and prosecuting his inquiries under better auspices. What we call spiritual life, he would have looked upon as weakness. All true religion begins with a sense of sin against a Holy God, followed by reconciliation and renewed friendship. With Socrates sin was not moral defilement, but intellectual derangement, which could be removed by the study of philosophy. His Stoicism, too, had a large share in confirming his courage.' James added, 'I was very fond of philosophy. It is a most fascinating study; but very fruitless in the highest interests. It yields me nothing now in my present position; but it has its uses among living men.'

"This led me to speak of the Christian's hope of immortality, resting on the sure basis of the work of Christ, and the oneness of the believer with Christ through the indwelling of His spirit. The spiritual life on earth is the same with the spiritual life in heaven, because Christ in us is the same in both spheres, and is the hope of glory. 'Yes,' he said, 'the same spiritual life in heaven without the hindrances. I am happy since I lay down in having this life; and I hope I will have patience to the end. As

we parted he said, 'Next visit I wish you to sing me some hymns.'

"At my next visit I fulfilled my promise by singing the hymns which he had chosen. I then sang one which he had not before known and which he specially liked as appropriate to his case: 'Lord, it belongs not to my care whether I die or live.' Then, 'According to Thy gracious word, in meek humility,' was sung, at his request, to Dundee, of which he was very fond. I asked him why so few liked minor tunes, and he said, 'The reason might be that the plaintive key, not suiting the mood of bustling life, was passed over for something brighter. But when one comes to my condition these minors are very sweet and refreshing. How much I have learnt here already! I do not sleep much; but I think over all the texts and conversations I have had during the day, marshalling them all before my mind and consoling myself with them.'

"Then he said, 'I wish to talk to you about this. Most people in speaking about religion dwell almost exclusively on Christ, and very seldom mention the Father. Now is that right? for I like to dwell on the love of the Father.' I said that very likely those who spoke thus meant the same thing as he did, and were not purposely excluding the Father; that Christ had taught us so to speak; that we cannot know the Father unless we know the Son; 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;' that as the Son is so is the Father to us; that we cannot know the Son without the Spirit who brings us to the Father and the Son; and that thus we have the full Godhead working on our behalf. 'Thank you,' he said, 'that is my very idea. I only wished you to go over it for me.' This led to a conversation on the Fatherhood of God in relation to adoption,—that the Fatherhood and Sonship

are not merely figurative but real relationships, witnessed to by the Holy Spirit, and guaranteeing all spiritual blessings in life and at death.

“ ‘I have no fear,’ he said, ‘although I am looking death in the face; but I feel that I would like to have put more work for Christ into my life.’ I replied that this was very natural for one who had been only fitting himself for work; but that when the husbandman in the parable hired his labourers it was a penny a day for those hired in the morning, and the stipulation with those hired last was ‘whatsoever is right.’ ‘Yes,’ he added, ‘so it is, “Whatsoever is right I will give thee.” God is to be the Judge of the work and the wage; and I should be satisfied with that.’ I pointed out that the works of the blessed dead followed them, which applied to the case of the young servant who had only dropt a few seeds which might bear an abundant harvest for eternity.

“ On visiting him at another time I found him stronger, and the thought flitted before him for a moment, ‘what if I should recover my health somewhat?’ But it almost immediately vanished with the remark: ‘No, I should be of no use. I could not take my share of life’s work now.’ We then sang some hymns, which was an introduction to conversations on the heavenly world, its inhabitants, the ministry of angels in furthering the work of redemption, and the interest the redeemed in heaven will take in the things of earth.

“ As time went on his disease made rapid progress. On the last Sabbath evening I visited him he seemed to think that his end was drawing near. He held my hand in his and looked wistfully and steadily into my face whispering, ‘Do you think it will be long now?’ I replied, ‘No, James, it will not be long now.’ ‘How long, think you?’

‘Not beyond a day or two.’ He smiled, as if pleased that his release was so near, saying, ‘The great thing I have been striving to do during my illness has been to exercise patience. I would not like to be impatient or to murmur. I would wait His time, but I feel a certain dread of the physical change at the end.’ I replied that such a dread was natural; for death to man was unnatural, as he was not originally designed to die; but this shrinking at the physical change shows that your spiritual being is in healthy exercise. He then gave me a smile of assent. He then beckoned me to come near to hear him whisper: ‘I would not like to be forgotten.’ ‘That,’ I said, ‘is natural; but we cannot forget you, James, as you have left many things behind you to keep us in mind of you, your essays, sermons, books and life.’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘I have a number of papers, some of which I am afraid I would not think true now. I have learnt so much since I lay down here.’

“At this point he seemed anxious to say something of importance. I bent down to listen, and caught the words: ‘The introduction to Christ.’ ‘You are thinking how you will comport yourself in your introduction into the presence of Christ?’ He nodded assent. I said, ‘Probably there will be no introduction of the kind you imagine, as is common at an audience with an earthly king. Our mistaken idea of placing royalty at a distance from the people misleads us. King Jesus will need no introduction to you, when He knows you already. You are His, and He is yours. You are one with Him.’ ‘That is a comforting thought,’ he said; ‘it satisfies me. I was forgetting to look at it in that light.’

“To this I added, ‘Part of the painful shrinking you have at the thoughts of quitting the body may be that of

going to a strange country, a dread of loneliness among those unknown to you. But you will find it quite different. There are no strangers and pilgrims there. They are all of kin,—“fellow-citizens;” and there will be nothing but warm welcome all over. When Christ was here in His humiliation He was among enemies bearing the curse for sin; but there He will be at home with His own, and will be seen to be as meek and lovely as ever we read of Him being among His friends on earth. It is one of the joys of the redeemed to welcome home the friends from earth, as they arrive one by one. You are young to welcome the rest of us; for we will soon all follow. He then asked for a little water, and as He lay sipping it at times, he said, ‘I may content myself with a sip for a short while here, when I shall so soon be taking large draughts from the clear cool river flowing from beneath the throne.’

“He then asked me, ‘Do you think there will be any struggle at the end?’ I said, ‘You will probably exchange worlds, James, when you are asleep.’ Holding my hand at parting he said, ‘My regards.’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I will convey them to all your friends.’ ‘I mean them,’ he said, ‘for yourself—mind for yourself,’ with a fine smile on his face. We then had worship in an adjoining room within his hearing, which he enjoyed with an expression of ecstasy. Only once did I see him again for a few minutes ere he fell on sleep, and saw Jesus in His glory.”

The following reminiscences of his latter days, preserved by members of his own family, are precious as showing his trust in Jesus Christ and his hope of glory:—

“One day, when he saw members of his family preparing

for church he said, 'Oh that I could go and worship too!' Like David his soul fainted for the courts of the Lord. 'This is another Sabbath,' he said on a different occasion, 'I wish to be kept quiet and have a profitable day.' It was his last Sabbath on earth preparatory to the rest that remaineth for the children of God. On the afternoon of that day, after lying quiet for some time he took his mother's hand, and said, 'What can you do for me?' 'Well, James,' was the reply, 'what would you like me to do?' 'To keep Christ ever before my eyes,' he said, 'and to remind me that as my days so shall my strength be.'

"On being asked how he felt in prospect of death, he said, 'Oh, yes: I am a poor sinner resting on the faithfulness of God through the finished work of Jesus Christ my Lord. I am quite prepared to die in God's time, if it be to-night, or in a week, or in a month.' -Latterly he asked every night for a text to sleep on, remarking that through his life he had always fallen asleep thinking of some one, or of something he had been reading in his books. But now he had laid aside all his books, as the last of his earthly pleasures; and the Bible was now his only and sufficient companion. After hearing portions of the Bible read, he would ask for special favourite chapters, whispering at the close, 'How comforting, how refreshing!' On his last Sabbath worship was taken in an adjoining room, that he might hear without being unduly disturbed. During the singing of the 23rd Psalm, he lay with his eyes closed; but at the end of it he looked up exclaiming, 'How beautiful! a day's march near home!'

"On the Monday afternoon, feeling the burden of weakness, the text was repeated to him, 'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;' and he was reminded that Christ would never leave him nor forsake

him, seeing that he was trusting in Him, when he whispered, 'No doubts! no doubts!' He showed gratitude even for small things, such as a drink of cold water, telling his friends that they would be rewarded, as the Master Himself had said that 'a cup of cold water given to one of His little ones in the name of a disciple would not lose its reward.'

"When first told that his illness was such that he would not recover, he said, 'I would like to live, but if it is God's will that I am to die, I am prepared for it, and can say with Paul, "To me to live is Christ, and to die gain." He was nearly always calm and composed, and would exclaim, 'Soon, soon I will be walking the golden streets of the New Jerusalem and seeing the King in His beauty.' 'I know whom I have believed.' 'What we know not now, we shall know hereafter.'

"To one of his aunts who was leaving, he said, 'I'll say good-bye; and if we do not meet here again, we shall meet on the other side.' To his mother he said, 'Do you think the Lord Jesus will come for me soon?' and when she answered, 'Yes, James, He will come soon, at His own time.' Claspng his hands over his heart, and with beaming eye, he breathed out these words, 'Oh, the joy is almost insupportable at the thought of meeting with the Lord Jesus. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Forgive me, oh forgive me, if I have been impatient.' He asked that a hymn might be sung; his sister Lizzie sang parts of 'Just as I am, without one plea,'—'Brief life is here our portion,'—'Jerusalem the golden,'—'For ever with the Lord,'—'For thee, O dear, dear country.' He often spoke to his mother of the time when he would be 'at home.' He liked her to hold his hand firmly; and once when he was greatly exhausted, she said, 'I am so sorry for you, James,' he

said, 'Never mind, dear mother, I will soon be singing for sighing.'

"To his brother Christopher he said, 'It may be long, dear brother, e'er we see each other again; but remember you must come and meet me in heaven. We must all meet there.' At another time he said, 'It seems as if I were in a long room lined with people, and at the end nearest me there is a deep curtain. One is leading me by the hand, and I am afraid to go beyond within the curtain; but I know that it is all right, as long as I have a hold of His hand.' This text he told his brother to remember, "Whosoever will leave father and mother, brother and sister and lands for My sake and the gospel's, the same is My father and mother, and sister and brother.' To his eldest sister he sent the message, 'I would like you always to think of me as at peace—"perfect peace." To his youngest sister he gave this verse of his favourite psalm:—

' Nevertheless, continually,
O Lord, I am with Thee,
Thou dost me hold by my right hand,
And still upholdest me. "'

"In his last days he often repeated this text, 'Our present light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

"Early on the last night of his life, the 28th October, he got very restless, asked to see the doctor again, and wished all his friends near him. When his father came in worship was taken, which he much enjoyed. He fell asleep till two o'clock, when his father gave him a sip of cold water. He then composed himself for rest saying, 'Good-night, mother,—mother dear!' About four o'clock his

mother heard an unusually long breath; and when she looked his gentle spirit had fled. He got his wish, dying without a painful struggle. He fell asleep, and awoke in glory."

The writer of these Memorials visited James Gardner as often as he could, and always found him patient, gentle, and ready at once to converse on the great theme of Christ and His love. A few sentences from the letters sent to him may serve to throw light on the brief conversations with him recorded below:—

"At all times we should be holding ourselves ready for the Master's coming, but when one is seriously ill the preciousness of Christ as a Saviour becomes more real to us. His strength abounds above our weakness. His grace transcends our sins. We have a sight of the King in His beauty in the mirror of the Word, in the glass of Christian experience, and also in the rending of the veil of the flesh. In the valley of the shadow He is nearer and dearer than ever He was in the brightest days of prosperity."

"Our hopes rest on a secure basis—the promise and the oath of God. Our assurance does not rest on the steadfastness of our faith, but on the promise of God. Even should our faith be very weak, yet our Rock is very strong; and we must 'look to the Rock that is higher than we.' The love of Christ in His death for us is a guarantee that the casting away will never be on His side."

"Having got that point settled about being in Christ, we must see that we 'abide in Him.' It is by the Holy

Spirit dwelling in us that we abide in Him. Christ's own Spirit being in us, we cannot but dwell in Him. Then abiding in Christ we shall not be ashamed at His coming. I trust you are having a foretaste of the glory of Christ: the Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance."

"When the Master's hand is laid on us, as on the Beloved Disciple in Patmos, and His voice falls on our ears, 'Fear not,' then we are calmed, and revived and comforted. It must be a strange experience to quit the body, but then He will be near us, the loving Friend, who comes closer to us when our best earthly friends cannot go with us any further. Our very death-pangs He will share, our spirits He will receive, our grave He will hallow, and our body he will fashion like His own glorious body."

"I felt very sad when I got home and walked round the garden to think that it was so beautiful, and you would not see it again. Yet I thought the Heavenly Paradise would be more beautiful still, and you would soon be walking there without any of the weights and sins of earth."

"What you say, that you are in peace, and quiet joy is really what is meant by Beulah; near, sweet, and abiding communion with God in Christ. The steady out-flow of our love to God in Christ, and the down-flow of God's love in Christ, is undoubtedly heaven begun. This is to be in the heavenly places, exalted with Christ above the storms and fears of this lower world. Faith is the golden channel through which the water of life flows into our thirsty souls."

"I hope, dear James, you are having a 'little sanctuary' in your own heart when shut out from the earthly sanctuary. Communion with a living Saviour, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is the most delightful

occupation of the redeemed soul, and so absorbs the heart that all else seems tame and uninteresting in comparison."

"How simple the method of obtaining life,—trusting in the Son! How attractive the object of our faith—the loving Son of the loving Father! How enduring the blessing—endless as the Son's life! How rich the gift—life, fulness of love, grace and glory!"

"As we look on the ravages of disease, and feel faint and weary, and breaking up, we who are in Christ can say, All this is reversed in the purpose of God, and death is itself slain by Christ. Think of that, James, you believe in Christ and shall never die—only remove into the highest room of the Father's House. 'There shall be no more death.'"

"The idea is truly overpowering that Christ's love to us is as real and strong as the Father's love to Christ. This ought to be a word of infinite comfort to us, that by no possibility can we be separated from God's love. Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

His love to Christ deepened as the weary days flew past, and he felt that whatever failed the love of Jesus Christ to his soul would never change. The unchanging, the abiding love of God in Christ was his constant joy and sure comfort, as the subjoined conversations show:—

"When reminded once of 'the love of Christ which passeth knowledge,' his eye brightened and with feeble panting breath he added, 'Yes, I do love God—and Jesus—and my friends.' He saw them all in the one eternal

light of love. 'If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.'"

"He described his peace as steady. The source of his peace was his childlike trust in God in Christ. He knew experimentally the meaning of the words, 'Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace* whose mind is *stayed on Thee*.' When told that the blessedness of the peace that he was enjoying was really heaven begun, and a foretaste of the coming glory, he acquiesced with the remark, 'Safe *in* Christ here, and then *with* Christ yonder, which is far better.'"

"The perfect suitability of the Gospel to the wants of a helpless sinner, was a theme on which he liked to hear friends speak. It was his own case. What would he have been—weak, sinful, helpless—if the work of his salvation had not been entirely finished, and if the terms on which it could be obtained had not been such as suited his spiritual poverty; 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' The fulness, the freeness, the blessedness of the Gospel struck him the more forcibly, the more he drew on its grace, and felt its power to bear him up amid the swellings of Jordan. It was very beautiful to see his soul grow in spiritual strength, as his body waxed weaker and weaker. The outward man was perishing; but the inward man was being renewed day by day."

"When the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelation was being read to him, he interrupted the reading at the words, 'And His servants shall serve Him,' remarking 'What a comfort these words to one like me! How many of His servants forget to serve Him; they will all remember to do it then. The young like myself have fewer opportunities of serving Him; they will take up the service there.' His life up to this time had been spent in preparing for the

work of a servant of Christ; and his sadness at having done so little was relieved by the hope of in some way serving his Lord in Heaven."

"When the conversation centred on Heaven, its blessedness, its beauty, its glory, he said, 'I am not so much concerned to know what it is like, as to be assured that it is a place where everything that is best shall be found, and especially our Best Friend. I do long to be with Christ.' The words were added, 'which will be far better,' and his brief reply was, 'That is undoubted.'"

"He wondered if Christ Himself would really come for him at death to take him home. He was greatly comforted and strengthened by the assurance that the Lord Jesus had been at his sick-bed all along; that as the world was receding He was coming nearer to his soul; and that when the veil of the flesh was rent he would find himself borne in the arms of Christ to the heavenly glory, there to 'see face to face.'"

"Not being able to speak much at one time, and afraid lest his silence should be misinterpreted, he said, 'I want you to know that on Divine things I think with you. I have learnt much on my sick-bed. I wish you to know how much I have thought of you and loved you, not merely as a nephew, but more. I will never forget you where I am going.' 'Neither can I ever forget you, James,' was my reply. 'I have been bound up in you, but God is now going to take you to Himself. I will leave you this text to-day, so appropriate to one who is so soon to get the victory, "More than a conqueror through Him that loved me." It is not merely triumph over death, but blessedness through death so great as to be beyond our highest hopes. "Death swallowed up in victory."' With glowing eyes he gazed on me and said, 'What a fine text

to rest on! I cannot give you a text, but I would like you to know how much I was comforted by your letters to me. I often repeat the lines you sent me as expressing my feelings :—

“ ‘ And when I’m to die,
Receive me, I’ll cry,
For Jesus has loved me, I cannot tell why ;
But this I do find,
We two are so joined,
He’ll not be in glory and leave me behind.’ ”

We then shook hands, only to meet again beyond the River. He gently fell asleep next morning, Friday the 29th October.”

Thus passed from our midst one gifted with talents of a high order, and who, after sparing no pains to fit himself for preaching the good news of salvation, was called up higher when on the threshold of what seemed his life-work. Valuing learning, and imbued with the true spirit of the student, he learned in the school of affliction to estimate more highly than all mere human lore the power of the cross of Christ to give solid comfort and abiding peace in prospect of death. It was his own persuasion that he was converted when young, but that absorption in study, entanglement in the intricacies of modern speculation, and an over-estimate of the intellectual as compared with the spiritual, dwarfed his growth in the Divine life, till within the last two years of his life, when he was severed from these influences, he felt the reviving power of the faith

of his boyhood, and rapidly grew in the graces of the Christian character and in ripeness for heaven.

Rejoicing to the end in the success of his fellow-students, as if they had been all his personal friends, and without the slightest trace of envy or regret that he had been stopt in his career, he looked upon the work in which they were to be engaged with a far higher estimate than formerly of its worth and responsibilities, as consisting chiefly in bringing souls into saving union with Christ "who is eternal life," and in perfecting the work of grace in the hearts of God's children. Although ambitious to put out to the full his powers of mind, he was too humble and gentle to imagine that his death could be any loss to the Church; but others besides his relatives, knowing his gifts, were expecting from him in his maturer years specially good service in the kingdom of Christ.

On a gloomy, stormy November day, his dust, attended by sorrowing relatives, Fellow-Students, and Professors, was laid to rest in Dalry Cemetery in hope of a glorious resurrection.

*REMINISCENCES BY FELLOW-
STUDENTS.*

LYCIDAS.

*Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor ;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear night of Him that walked the waves,
Where other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.*

—MILTON.

CHAPTER X.

Reminiscences by Fellow-Students.

THE Rev. James Frame, B.D., Millport, thus writes :—

“My acquaintance with James Gardner dates back to about 1878, when we found ourselves members of the same congregation, and attending the same classes at the Edinburgh University. I was soon led to hold him in the highest esteem. He was an excellent student, evidently possessed of rare intellectual gifts, which he was carefully cultivating. Whether in the University examinations, or in the meetings of the Literary Society, or in private intercourse, one marked James Gardner as a young man of parts who was likely to have a brilliant career in life.

“But he was more than a scholar. One could see that his natural gifts were sanctified and ennobled by the Christian spirit that shone in his general character. I always found him a true, genial, and considerate friend. When in parting from him for the last time, I expressed the hope that the presence of the Lord would be realised by him abundantly in his affliction, he thanked me and in turn expressed the hope that the Lord’s blessing would follow my own work. I remember this as indicating that he died as he had lived, forgetful of self, full of consideration for others, his heart in the Christian ministry to which he himself had been consecrated.”

The Rev. Peter Peace, M.A., Blyth, gives the following reminiscences:—

“I have a vivid recollection of the first time I saw James Gardner. It was in 1878 at the winter session of the United Presbyterian Under-Graduate Society, which then met in the old Library Room in Queen Street. My attention was directed to him as he rose to speak,—his youth, his address, his beautiful form, all prepossessed me in his favour, and I felt that a new power had come among us. James had earned a high reputation at the University, but it was only at the Hall that the full force of his personality began to be felt. An examination is a very imperfect gauge of a nature like his; and to say that he was one of the best students of his year would give a very inadequate idea of the position he held among us. He was our ἀνάξ ἀνδρῶν. We were proud of him. We felt for him a respect and even reverence which students seldom give to one of their own number; and we honoured him with such honours as students are in a position to bestow.

“It was during our first session at the Hall that a few of us formed a connection with our departed friend which we shall cherish as long as life lasts. Five of us in 1882 formed ourselves into a Society which was humorously called ‘The Brick-Brick-Club.’ It was partly literary and theological, but largely social. At our ordinary meetings we prepared for our Hebrew and other examinations amid much student hilarity and controversy. He did not often attend these meetings; but at our social gatherings his natural gravity of disposition relaxed wonderfully; and he surprised us all by disclosing unlooked-for powers of wit and humour. But while he had a vein of geniality in his nature, he was habitually earnest, and lived ‘as ever in his

great Taskmaster's eye.' He made his own the words of the Master, 'I must be about my Father's business.' He had literally no time for the trifles which are the work of some youths. Even in his early student days, much as he valued University honours, love of study, and friendships, he evidently looked on all these as nothing compared with the work of preparing himself to be an ambassador for Christ. He fell a martyr to duty. If his idea had been a little less high, and if he had allowed himself more relaxation, he might have been with us still. But his life was not short if, as the poet says:—

' He most lives,
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.'

"We were licensed together by the Edinburgh Presbytery, and then came his illness and residence in Forres. At my ordination I had a beautiful and christianly tender letter regretting his absence. At the close of 1886, hearing that he was worse, I specially journeyed to Edinburgh to see him for the last time, only a week before his end. He was very weak and his words were necessarily few; but his faculties seemed, if possible, intenser than of old. He was evidently waiting for coming bliss; but next to this what impressed me most was the deep interest he took in his friends. His image and his friendship, I shall always cherish as one of my best possessions in this world."

The Rev. Francis Ashcroft, Ulwar, Rajputana, India, sends this brief note of his departed friend:—

"James always seemed to me too pure and gentle to remain long on this rough world of ours. Indeed he seems to me scarce other than my King's ideal knight, wearing

the white flower of a blameless life. His nature was entirely trustful and loving; and I of rougher mould, yet privileged to share that trust and love, felt in his company a better man, fuller of nobler impulses, and of a wider faith. Himself far greater, he yet loved to cling to him whose strong will made a resting-place for quiet thought and contemplation far removed from our gross earth.

“He lived in an intellectual sphere apart, above us, looking on all things from a higher standpoint of philosophic certainty, which gave a certain quaintness to his talk and other-world feeling to his speeches. His very doubts were different and distinct from ours. And when in College exercise or Hall sermon he gave the fancies of his keen mind wing, we were lifted above the clouds, and heard for a moment the music of the spheres. Even in the Hall his mind was in its first youthful joyousness filled with the beauty of the unseen world, which he would find hidden away behind the flowers and stars.”

The Rev. J. Anderson Brown, M.A., Beawr, Rajputana, India, thus wrote to his parents when he heard of his serious illness:—

“The news that the doctors despair of James’s life sent a pang through my heart. Little did I imagine that my letter would reach you at a time of bitter trial, if not of bereavement. If James is still with you convey to him my love and deepest sympathy. I cannot explain by word or pen what my heart feels, and what I would wish you to say to him for me. But I commend him to the God of all peace and comfort. I know his brave heart, and strong faith, and feel assured that, in the midst of pain and suffering, he sees ‘One like unto the Son of Man.’

“I did not imagine when we parted, standing as we both did on the threshold of our life-work for the Master, equipped and ready to enter upon it, that he would be thus taken aside and led upward by the path of trial and suffering. Even now he may have reached ‘the mountains of myrrh and the hill of frankincense, waiting there till the day break and the shadows flee away.’

“It must be a sore trial to Mrs. Gardner and yourself to see disease sapping the life of a beloved son, of whom you justly cherished such bright hopes. May you have grace given you to say, ‘Thy will, O God, be done.’ ‘His way is in the sea, and His path in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known.’ So many of the mysteries of life prove to have been the servants and ministers of His love, that we may well believe that all the afflictions of time are ‘working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’”

The Rev. Thomas E. Miller, M.A., Dunfermline, thus expresses himself regarding his beloved friend and fellow-student:—

“I feel it difficult adequately to express all I feel with regard to James Gardner. In his death the Church has lost one of her best and brightest students,—one who in coming years would have done much to help in filling the not-soon-to-be-filled blanks in our Church caused by the death of such men as Dr. William Robertson and Dr. John Ker. When I speak of my friend as one of our best and brightest students, I do not refer specially to his scholarly attainments,—his degrees in Arts and Theology are language sufficient on this head,—I refer to qualities more highly valued by students than any diploma from University or Divinity Hall,—qualities of mind and heart

not brought out through the medium of examination-papers. Some of these to my mind are, Geniality of disposition, brilliancy of conversation, readiness in debate, a well-informed mind on the burning questions of the day,—and all of these my friend Gardner possessed to a superlative degree.

“ He was a brilliant student, but he was more and better ; he was an all-round, human-hearted man. Here is a case in point which may serve as an illustration of the out-and-out fairness of his mind. When a great question stirred the Hall, such as the choice of a scheme for the students, and there was much debating and speech-making, some of us indulged the fancy of making a comparison between the parties and speakers at these meetings and the parties and speakers in the House of Commons. The different parties, Conservative, Liberal, Radical, Irish, and even the Fourth Party—for it was then in existence—were easily enough identified. We could even find for many of the individual speakers their political prototypes ; but we hardly knew what to make of our friend Gardner. And the reason was this : although the cause he espoused was pretty sure to win, and largely through his influence and eloquence, he was so pre-eminently fair and reasonable in debate that he was never treated as an opponent, never regarded as a party man, but equally respected and beloved by all sections of students. The students of the Hall generally, and specially those of his own year who knew him better, looked forward to his career in the Church with great hopefulness.”

“ Physically well made, he gave no signs of collapse in his health. I well remember my surprise towards the close of 1884, on receiving a letter from North Berwick, where he was then acting as assistant to the Rev. W. Calvert, B.A., asking me to take his place, as he had been ordered to have complete rest. I saw him shortly after

this, and I felt a pang of regret that he had remained even so long at North Berwick ; for by that time he had lost the glow of health and beauty, which had never left him in his hardest student days at the Hall. This was the close of his public work.

“The last occasion on which I heard him address a public audience has left an ineffaceable impression on my mind, and has often come back to me now since his death. I asked him during our last winter at the Hall—he was then President of our Missionary Society—to address an evangelistic meeting in our students’ church at Yeaman Place. He at once consented and spoke from the text which struck me as strange then, and has struck me as strange since, Ecclesiastes vii. 17, ‘Why shouldest thou die before thy time?’ The address was given with all his accustomed grace, and eloquence, and earnestness ; but the part that has stuck to me is the introduction, where he made it transparently clear when a man dies before his time. It was not a question of days and years ; we might die young, and yet not die before our time ; we might die old, and yet die before our time. The question had relation to the inner spiritual life. At any age a man died before his time, if not ready to meet God. I have often thought that, judged by his own words, my friend has not been taken away before his time, however mysterious the visitation of Providence may seem to us.

“At various intervals during his two years’ illness, I saw him and conversed with him on many subjects, and not once without great profit to myself, and ever-increasing admiration for the spiritual beauties of his character. The last time I saw him,—not long before his end,—he spoke as usual not of himself, but of his fellow-students. ‘I think of you all,’ he said, ‘I pray God you may all be long spared

and be greatly useful in your various spheres. Yours is the noblest calling on earth.' Then he spoke of the need of consecration and of what he had learned, in his own phrase, of 'the heart's depths of consecration,' in the furnace of affliction. He then commissioned me to write to a mutual friend in India, and to remember him to all fellow-students; and then taking me by the hand he said, 'Good-bye, and God bless you all.'

"On that wild and wintry day not long after, when we followed his remains to their last resting-place, the loss to his own parents, though very great indeed,—the loss to many of us of a dear personal friend, was not the thought uppermost in my mind, but the loss on a larger scale to the United Presbyterian Church of one of her most promising and distinguished students,—one of her loyal-hearted and devoted sons. There was one ray of consolation on that dark and desolate day, and it came to my heart through Tennyson's 'In Memoriam.' The words are descriptive of Arthur Henry Hallam, but they may be spoken with equal truth of James Gardner :

'Thy leaf has perished in the green,
And while we breathe beneath the sun,
The world which credits what is done,
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame;
But somehow out of human view,
Whate'er thy hands are set to do,
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.'"

Mr. John Oman, B.D., who, along with Mr. Benjamin R. H. Mein, B.D., was with James Gardner at Erlangen, gives the subjoined account of their German experiences :—

“ Four months are not a long time, yet, in such a short and active life as that of our departed friend, it is a considerable fraction. When, moreover, we consider that during these four months in Germany, he saw more, and had more new experiences than during any other similar period of his life, it assumes an importance not to be measured by mere number of months. As I saw him every day, and at times all day long, and as our life gave us the greatest variety of topics for conversation, a rare opportunity was afforded to me of knowing him.

“ We three, Mein, Gardner, and myself, sailed in the *North Star* for Hamburg. We all began diaries; mine never got past Hamburg; Mein's got to Erlangen; while Gardner's alone reached home. Sabbath was a very stormy day. As the sun set luridly over the billows, and the sea washed the deck at our feet, we sat in the shelter of the upper deck singing hymns, led by Gardner's deep strong bass. This was a scene he always liked to turn back to. It was Tuesday before we arrived at Hamburg. Gardner had been very sick, had slept little or none, and he was weak besides from overwork during the past session, but he was the most eager and active of all. We tramped all day through Hamburg, went by night train to Berlin, which we explored next day, Gardner ever foremost, ever at his Baedeker or his pocket-dictionary, and at night when I was dropping to sleep he was writing up his diary. Thursday we spent at Potsdam, Friday at Wittenberg, Saturday, Sabbath, and Monday at Dresden. Gardner was fresh from the study of Luther's life; so that to us whose knowledge was much more general than particular, he was a valuable companion. Besides this, he had recovered his strength and spirits before we reached Wittenberg, so that he felt himself master of the situation.

Dresden, too, he enjoyed like a schoolboy on his holidays. It is true that he never lost the intensity of his speculative spirit. Goethe, Matthew Arnold, and the problems of the beautiful and the dutiful were not shaken off even in the Picture Gallery. An almost empty church set him speculating about the effect of his own calling on the world. Still, I never saw him so little reflective,—so simply, calmly happy as during those days among the churches and cloisters of Wittenberg and the galleries and palaces of Dresden.

“Arrived at Erlangen, we got lodgings, Mein and myself in one house and Gardner next door, in what had been Professor Frank’s room the year before. His landlady, Frau Reichert, whom we somewhat irreverently termed ‘Gardner’s widow,’ was very careful of him and thought much of him. With the students he did not at first get on so well. He was too silent and reserved for the somewhat gushing Germans. Their apparent coarseness of manner repelled at first his city-bred mind. But as he made progress in the language, he learned that, notwithstanding all their seeming frivolity, there was much earnestness and thoughtfulness in them; while they in turn came to know that, under his quiet distant manner, there beat a warm sympathetic heart; so that no man left Erlangen with a larger company to escort him, or with a heartier parting when the train moved off. With some of the students he made friendships which he kept up as long as his strength permitted; and by many he is still remembered as one whom it was good for them to have known.

“When we were away by ourselves for a stroll he was all life. Like most intense natures he had moods of utter abandonment to fun and talk; and those who have not

seen him in this mood, have only seen half of him. The time when he most unfolded himself was on Sabbath evening when Mein and myself took tea in his lodgings. After tea we read and expounded Jude in Greek. Then we sang psalms and hymns. Afterwards a special license was given to speak English, when all our pent-up thoughts, which had been slowly endeavouring to trickle through all week in German, rushed forth in their accustomed channel. If I could only picture him, as he sat on a cane-bottomed chair in front of the old piano, running his fingers over the keys, talking of home, of our companions, of the psalms with their tunes, of the merits of the German hymns, and when as the evening drew on the conversation became more solemn, not even his most intimate friends would believe that he could be so genial, so free, so humorous without losing any of his earnestness.

“Such an intense spirit had necessarily graver and even gloomier moods. One would not wish to have had him without them; but it was these times of doubt and despondency when he forced himself to work with fierce energy that undermined a sound if not robust constitution. Sometimes, too, he was in a disputatious mood, when our discussion waxed warm, especially on the meaning of words. This was a foremost subject with him. He would refine on the words in a sentence, till he utterly mystified himself. He had a habit at this time of studying words from the outside. When revising his own writing, he would walk round every word in it; change one here and another there; walk back a little and look again until he felt there must be more change. The result often was that his best writing after this process was marred.

“Frequently our talks were on religious subjects. He was never without some difficulty; and yet he never was

without strong faith. He said he had been at times in blank darkness; but I think it was rather metaphysical morning mist than real doubt. Materialistic scepticism seems never to have troubled him: nor was the smallness of man in this vast universe a persistently troublesome thought to him. But within these limits, all questions philosophical and theological he had thought on; nor did he find any satisfactory ground to rest on, till in the end he returned to the simple faith of his boyhood.

“Of his travels I need scarcely write. In Thuringia he spent eight days alone, and came back both exhausted and ill. Mein and he spent four days in Franconian Switzerland, where they were put in terror of their lives by being locked in a convent cell. Then he and I spent a week in Munich, which he explored with the care of a Livingstone. Before returning to Scotland he joined his father and mother, going to Wittenberg, Heidelberg, and by the Rhine to Rotterdam. When we again met, it was on the Leith steamer.

“A few of the incidents of our life were classical stories with us. Our glued chairs placed artfully at the piano used to break down with Gardner about once a fortnight till he discovered the trick. His *Stäblings Kopf*, or head clipped to the skin, caused much merriment and discussion, we maintaining that it was *Sträflings Kopf*, or jail clip. Then came his first speech in the Verein, which a straightforward German said was *Kein gutes Deutch*, or not good German, but understood by all. Then came Professor Frank's *ganz einfaches Abend-essen*, or quite simple supper, to which fortunately we were not invited together, as we had only two black coats among us.

“In many ways Gardner changed entirely during the time I knew him: but from the first he had the same

earnestness, the same self-control, and the same ambition. As a mere boy he had a clear and broad view of self-culture ; and all his days he lived faithfully, if not fully, up to his ideal. The older he grew the more his ambition became sanctified, and affliction brought additional kindness, mellowness, and gentleness. He was respected by all who met him : and he was never respected less by being known more. I remember no action nor word that I could not tell now that he is away. He lived as seeing Him who is invisible. I have seen him in work and in recreation ; but I never saw in him aught for which his dearest friend need blush. Of how few of us could this be said with truth, when we, like him, have gone to our eternal rest."

The Rev. D. M. Forrester, B.D., Logiealmond, gives the following reminiscences :—

"The first time I saw James Gardner was in the Senior Latin and Greek classes at Edinburgh University. I can well recall his youthful appearance, his head resting on his left hand, his eyes withdrawn from the Lecturer, and the earnest look on his face. Indeed, even then it seemed that he was 'puzzling over' something, either testing what he heard, and reconciling it with what he already knew, or with effect grasping it, and analysing and storing it. For some years after this I lost sight of him, our classes being different. But I had heard that he was taking the senior classes in Philosophy ; and one of his class-mates then told me with marked emphasis that Gardner would have outstripped them all, if he had only been a little older.

"It is a strange feeling that one has in passing from the University to the Divinity Hall. The studies are dif-

ferent, yet related to one another. The companionship is very different. Like pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope individuals fall in alongside of each other. Five of us drew together. We sat together in the classes, walked together in the country, prepared our examinations together. Our coterie had its name, 'Brick-Brick-Club.' Each one had an office and a title. These were delightful days; and James used to throw himself heartily into all our fun and frolic. Yet in his case, we each felt that there was a world of thought and action into which we could not penetrate, but which we knew to be there. In our Hall meetings and debates he took a share, but in a quiet way, all his own.

"In our Club we had our criticism of each other's discourses. I remember that we agreed among ourselves that whatever we might see open to criticism in Gardner's discourses, we should say little lest we should wound him, and he should brood over what we might thoughtlessly enough say. I remember his discourse in the Hall on 'The Talents.' We listened with the utmost eagerness, for there was power of thought, and beauty of touch; but its length was extraordinary. He must needs grasp the subject and express its completeness. Yet we sometimes felt that his thought was rather involved. It needed clarifying, especially if he were to move the people from the pulpit. On the other hand, he could be clear and definite enough; witness his exegesis on 2 Cor. xii.; and especially that on Exodus vi. 3.

As a thinker he was deep and penetrating; but he was also a scholar. We reckoned him far and away the best scholar in the year. His scholarship, especially in Hebrew, was of a very fine and accurate description. It has often appeared to me that if he had been spared,

he would have developed such a union of scholarship and delicate penetrating thought as we see in Canon Westcott.

“It seems but as yesterday that he sat on these Hall benches, always ‘puzzling over’ what was being said by the Professors. Even while walking along the streets he looked as if engaged in some knotty problem. Subjects and questions haunted him for long. These he did not as a rule share with his associates—whether they were questions in scholarship, or problems in philosophy, or theological difficulties. His own inner life we did not at the time know.

But he was by no means a dreamer. His enjoyment of fun was unlimited, and his relish for music was great. He had also good business capacity. He was elected Convener of the Home Missions in connection with the Hall; and as such he had the superintendence of the station at Yeaman Place. The firmness, decisiveness, and aptitude for business which he showed there, surprised even those who thought they knew him best. In many respects such work must have been most irksome to *him*; yet he did it thoroughly and triumphantly.

“We all felt the greatest freedom with him, and yet knew that there was a world within to which we came not. His eyes, his very smile, had a strange depth in them. His fineness of nature was our wonder. His depth of thought often left us far behind him. There was no one whom we loved more; though we, perhaps, understood him only a very little.”

The Rev. William M. Paton, B.D., Abernethy, Censor in the Hall of the year to which James Gardner belonged, sent, in name of the students, the enclosed letter of condolence to his parents:—

“At the risk of paining you by the renewal of sad memories, I wish at the bidding of the class-fellows of your son at the Theological Hall, to convey to you their deep and heartfelt sympathy on the great loss which you have sustained in his death.

“Scattered as we were throughout the length and breadth of the land, the sad news cast a shadow upon all our lives; and at our first opportunity of meeting together during the sitting of the Synod, we agreed to forward to you a united message of condolence and an expression of the respect and love which your son inspired in us all.

“His high and varied scholarship, and the active interest which he took in our Missionary Society and other Hall Schemes, compelled us to respect and esteem him; while his pure mind, his great humility, his warm enthusiasm, and his entire unselfishness fairly won our hearts.

“We feel that in him we have lost a friend, and the Church of Christ a servant of the fullest consecration and the highest promise; but we know that a far greater loss is yours, in that you have lost a son, so much beloved and so worthy of love; and, therefore, we venture to send to you an earnest assurance of our sympathy. We pray that God may comfort you in your deep sorrow, and enable you to wait patiently for that happy meeting-time when severed hearts shall be reunited, ‘and God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes.’”

The Rev. Alexander Mair, D.D., Morningside, after preaching, on the 7th Nov. 1886, from 1 Peter i. 7, ‘The trial of your faith,’ thus referred to the death of James Gardner:—

“In finishing my discourse this morning, my dear

friends, a discourse more immediately meant for young men, it is my sad duty to close with a special reference to the death of one of your number, well known to many of you. I refer to the decease on Friday week of Mr. James Gardner, M.A., B.D., the son of one of our members of session, and a licentiate of our Church. Mr. Gardner was born in 1861, so that at the time of his death he was twenty-five years of age. He was from his earliest years imbued with an earnest religious spirit, and had all along set his heart on the Christian ministry as his life-work. He received his preparatory education at the Collegiate School, where he took a foremost place. In 1877 he entered our University, and there also he took an honourable position in his classes and finished his curriculum by graduating as M.A., with first-class Honours in Philosophy. From the University he passed in due course into the Theological Hall, and here again he maintained his character as an excellent student. He took a distinguished place on the examination list, and secured the high esteem of all the Professors, as well as of his fellow-students. In the summer of 1884 he took his degree of B.D. at our University. Nor should I forget to mention that during his whole course he showed his distinct superiority by maintaining a most prominent place in our competition for scholarships, and carrying off some of the highest bursaries. He was licensed by our Presbytery on the 10th July 1884. Having previously accepted an appointment to North Berwick as temporary assistant, he entered on his work there in the beginning of June in that year, and continued at it until his health gave way towards the close of August, that is, for the brief period of about three months. Mr. Gardner was to have supplied the pulpit in this church on the fourth Sabbath of August

1884. He had preached on the third Sabbath at North Berwick, but during the week his voice failed him, and he was unable to fulfil his engagement. This was the beginning of his long and fatal illness. He spent the following winter and spring at Forres, and the next winter and spring partly in Edinburgh and partly at Leslie in Fife, not without hope at times of recovery; but in April of this year his disease entered on a more acute stage; and after about six months' gradual ebbing of the tide, he quietly passed away on the early morning of the day mentioned.

“Mr. Gardner was a young man of excellent natural abilities which he had most assiduously cultivated. He had a high ideal of the work of the ministry to which he had consecrated himself, and counted no labour misapplied which might help to prepare him for the efficient discharge of his duties. He was possessed of an amiable and genial disposition; so that his circle of friends was large, and by all of them he was held in high esteem. He took a warm interest in all Christian work, and a very active part in the Evangelistic and Home Mission operations carried on by the students at the Hall. During his brief ministry at North Berwick, he gave full proof of his ability and of the excellent spirit that was in him, by discharging his duties in such a way as to furnish a sure pledge, should God spare him, of being a most successful minister of the Gospel.

“But above all Mr. Gardner was possessed of a most thoroughly Christian faith and spirit. This became more and more manifest as he drew near to the other world. He not only bore with patience the protracted illness through which he was called to pass, but was full of almost unclouded peace and joy, which rose up at times even to exultation. He talked freely about his experiences and about his approaching death, or rather his approaching glory;

and frequently the expression which lighted up his face, as he spoke of these things, made it shine like that of an angel. To him death had lost its sting and had been swallowed up in victory. I have left his bedside at times feeling a doubt as to which of us was the more to be envied—he who was going home to be with the Lord, or I who was remaining to do some more work for Him. He has gone to be with Christ, and we may rest assured that the training he received on earth will not be lost in Heaven: for we know that there His servants shall serve Him.

“Young men, let me say a word to you in his name; for he was one of yourselves. He being dead yet speaketh—now speaketh to you. The lesson of his experience for you is very great; it is that the one supremely true and noble life is a life of faith in Jesus Christ. It was this faith which kept him safe and firm amidst the temptations of the day. It was this faith which moved him to consecrate himself to the work of the ministry, and which bore him up triumphantly in the valley of the shadow of death. Let me now entreat you, standing as it were by his grave, to accept the same Lord Jesus, by the same faith, as your Saviour, Ideal, and Friend; and so doing you will assuredly find that this faith will be to you, as it was to him, a strong sheet-anchor, keeping you safe and steadfast amid the storms and currents of the age; and at the same time a Divine light within you, ennobling and transfiguring all your life and character, and at last ‘turning the shadow of death into the morning.’”

SERMONS.

IN MEMORIAM.

*No birthday gift for thee, brother,
No token of our love :
For thou hast left our home, brother,
And art with God above.*

*No need to wish thee now to spend
A length of joyous days ;
Thy birthdays all are at an end,
Thy life one hymn of praise.*

*We do not ask thee to return
To this sin-stricken earth ;
But oh ! we miss thy face and mourn
On this thy day of birth.*

*We miss thy loving sympathy,
The music of thy voice,
Joining in tuneful melody,
And making home rejoice.*

*Thou hast no years in thy blest clime,
Thine is the life of God :
We travel up the years of time
To reach thy bright abode ;*

*Where thou wilt welcome us to meet
The countless ransomed throng,
And raise with them in anthem sweet
The new celestial song.*

*Thou wouldst not leave thy home, brother,
To dwell again in clay :
But we shall see thee soon, brother,
In heaven's Eternal Day.*

M. W. R.

2nd June 1887.

CHAPTER XII.

Sermons.

A PERTINENT QUESTION.

Why shouldest thou die before thy time?—ECCLES. vii. 17.

THE question of the text is virtually a command to shape our lives, so that their end may be at once their furthest limit and their proper goal. To understand the injunction and profit by it, we must attempt for a little to discover what "dying before our time" really means. And we must look at the question as also directly pertinent to the eternal welfare of the unseen and spiritual part of our wonderful nature.

In the FIRST PLACE, then, we ask, Why shouldest thou LEAVE THIS WORLD before thy time?

It may be well to remind you that no life can be said to have an untimely end, *merely because of the early period at which it may terminate.*

Death may come to the infant, the youth, the strong man of middle-age, or the hoary-headed patriarch; and to each of these it may come in good time. Each of

us may inherit from birth those seeds of disease, which to-day or to-morrow, this year or in a score of years, may develop their shoots and throw over us the deadly shade of our last long night; and yet the descent of death's darkness may come to us equally in good time. It may be at a seasonable hour that some youthful Abijah dies, when the feet of the sorrowing mother, returning from her mournful errand in quest of consolation and advice, have just touched the threshold of the afflicted home. There are many Jonathans lamented over by those to whom their love was most serviceable—men who, swifter than eagles and stronger than lions, have fallen dutifully in the midst of life's battle, and left a gap which, it is feared, no one can fill. But, because the gap is there we dare not say they have fallen too soon; for He whose eyes are everywhere upon the evil and the good, and whose bountiful care is over all His works, has appointed the "time to man upon earth," and "the bounds that he cannot pass."

He who has had no time to feel the depressing cares of life cannot be said to find its close too soon. And the man who is ever ready to acknowledge the uncertainty of life, and admits that all its course is in the hands of One who disposes events for His people's good, will not be quick to speak of the removal of a friend as premature, without some better reason than that it has occurred early in life; nor will he be inclined to say that the hour of his own departure

from this mortal scene, though it may be unexpected, has come before its proper time. There may be the prayer: "Oh, spare me that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more;" but there is also the true desire, "Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days what it is; that I may know how frail I am." When life has been viewed as a preparation for death, a man cannot be said to die before his time, however early he may be cut off.

It is, perhaps, still more apparent that life has never an untimely end, *when a conscientious use has been made of talents and opportunities.*

The attention of men and women is not to be confined to what directly prepares for death: there is also life with true growth to be provided for. We must all do our share in promoting the best interests of mankind. We can revive the courage of the faint-hearted, soothe the ruffled spirit, alleviate anxiety, remove obstacles, and enter with sympathy into the prospects and plans of the energetic. Many can do far more than that, having natural endowments of a high order, and a store of intellectual energy, moral force, and earnestness which needs only to be put into action. Many have deep spiritual grace which can fertilise and bless the wilderness around, and spiritual talents entrusted to them to trade with. Not a few have the means of assisting others in virtue of their training or station.

All who thus use their talents and opportunities aright have a purpose in life. They are acting in accordance with the Divine will. When such fall we can say that they have displayed the loveliness and glory of life; and their death cannot defeat their chief aim. They attain the reward of life through realising its meaning; and death can never be premature for them. For while life is a sphere of disorder, yet in that very fact lies the necessity for sustained effort; and our aim, in our personal character and work, ought to be to introduce order into it. And to him who has begun his life with this aim, and has carried it through so far by turning every advantage and even disadvantage to beneficial account, his end can never be said to come too soon.

It is clear, then, that when one has neglected to make a right use of time, his death is premature; *for he has not yet accomplished the duty required of him.*

We are all either burdens on our fellows, or their helpers; and he who has done nothing to enable them to rise to a higher view of themselves before his term of life is finished dies before his time. There are men and women who grow old in selfish indulgence; they have means to minister to their desires; they let others carry their burdens; they do worse, loading men with grievous burdens which they refuse to touch; and having done everything to avoid the common difficulties in the world, accommodated themselves to

every change, and shown themselves willing to sacrifice truth itself for continued ease, their end, though protracted to the limit of human life, when it does come is premature. Rest from active duty can never be the business of life. When it appears it is out of its due order. Its proper domain is guarded by death. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest;" and the Scriptural advice, if you do not wish to die before your time, is this: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

But more especially our death will be untimely *if we have withdrawn from activity among our fellow-men through any feeling of disgust or dissatisfaction with their weaknesses and sinful errors.*

It is a commendable thing to have as little to do with unrighteousness as possible, and to seek communion with God and those who are likest Him; but it is a false and fatal pursuit of righteousness which leads us from the haunts of men, or their various modes of action and thought into the retirement of the consecrated chamber, or the seclusion of one's own meditations or aspirations. A strong desire to cultivate holiness of character, and to become liker Christ in meekness and humility, with a dread of endangering our safety or wandering from the faith, sometimes leads to a false view of the busy world of social relationships, commerce and education. There were saints in the Middle Ages who withdrew from their family circles

and the duties of their station to pine away in obscure places, wear out their lives by prolonged meditations, and literally give themselves to death inch by inch, that they might make themselves more righteous. Such persons died before their time. And their spirit is not extinct, though it may now manifest itself in a different form. There are men filled with a true longing for righteousness, who find it indeed their meat and drink to reflect on and do the will of our Heavenly Father, but who see the world so full of harsh antagonism to it, that they virtually excommunicate the world from their thoughts, arrogate to themselves an almost exclusive knowledge of God's will and Christ's law, and prevent their salutary influence from reaching the unrighteous, lest they should destroy their serenity of mind. If their neighbours will not look at the truth from precisely the same angle of vision with themselves, they will be offended at them. They say in effect, Jesus our Master was stern and uncompromising with sin, and we who are His followers must be the same. He put even His friends behind His back, when they became adversaries of His work, and considered them an offence unto Him, when they savoured not the things that be of God. This spirit is sometimes found in the most sincere servants of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the difficulty of dealing with it arises from this, that it professes to copy Him. It is, however, in some respects an imperfect copy, springing from an

erroneous application of Christ's words, and a wrong conception of the respects in which He is an example to us. Those who possess this spirit are in danger of being "over-righteous" and "overwise," through not observing the point where mechanical observance of the letter is apt to diverge from a full surrender to the spirit of Christ. Its tendency is to isolate its possessors from the mass of men, so that they become solitary and as good as non-existent for the life of the world. By so living, they have neglected to advance God's glory among His temporal works; and they die with their life's duty largely unperformed,—“before their time.”

It can never be the part of a Christian to curse the world and die. Desire for purity must not be made the excuse for neglect of duty. The sphere of his service is the world, which, in its perplexing mixture of good and evil, is valuable for the trial of faith. The glory of the present life is to display the power of spiritual simplicity, not outside of it, but in the midst of its sinful disorder. Our business here is to see that the wild tossing billows of doubt and difficulty are bearing up the compact barque of the human soul, which was launched, not to nestle under the shadow of the woods where its timbers grew, nor to sit secure in a pleasant anchorage, but to carry out into the pathless ocean of life, the living ensign of that unseen country which is beyond the horizon that encircles our vision, and where reigns in light and glory our

loving Father in Christ. The Son of God alone could be separate from sinners; and yet He did eat and drink with them. He did not refuse to deal with the false traditions of the elders: He corrected them. He confuted the Sadducees by their own principles when they sought to entangle Him in their talk. When the Gadarenes besought Him to depart, He went back to His Galilean friends who were waiting for Him. He commanded His disciples to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves; but that was when He sent them forth as sheep into the midst of wolves. When persecution overtook them in one city they were not to retire to the wilderness or the cave, but to another city and centre of human activity. We must testify in the midst of a sinful generation; otherwise we shall be ashamed of our Master, who shall in the end be ashamed of us. The Christian example of Peter and Paul, and the other great workers in the Church, has been the answer to our Lord's petition, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." It is the labour, not the luxury of righteousness that tendeth to life. If through a feeling of over-sanctity, or hyper-wisdom, or reluctance to endure the fight, we retire from our share of work in the world and the Church, we deprive the present order of things of what they have a right to, and we ourselves become solitary and barren; our spiritual life is wanting in robustness, and we must miss the pro-

bation of life, the discipline of struggle, and the reward of victory. We are to overcome the world as Christ has overcome it, not by withdrawing from it, but fighting in it. If we refuse to be God's witnesses, we shall feel when we come to face death that it has met us too soon, that we have not yet entered on our own true life; "we shall die before our time."

Somewhat similar is the feature which marks another class of persons, whose lives end all too soon, though it springs from a tendency to the exactly opposite extreme: "Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish:" *for that man dies certainly before his time who brings death on himself by over-indulgence in vice and wickedness.*

I need not dwell on the connection that there is between sin, disease, and death: "He that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." A man needs not lay violent hands on himself, but only let wicked habits grow upon him, and foolish, intemperate, and immoral practices acquire an invincible mastery over him; and they will work death upon him. They will make his end premature; for they implant and foster disease from which he might have remained free. They prevent him from using life aright; and not having learned how to live and how to die, death comes to him too soon. His life has not blossomed; neither is he himself the richer for it, nor is the world. He is a wreck; the breaking up of the ship comes too soon

when it takes place on the sharp crags of the rock-bound coast. This is, perhaps, the easiest way to understand how a life has been prematurely cut off. We need the warning, "Be not over-much wicked: neither be thou foolish." The strong and youthful cut down by intemperate habits; heads of families removed, whose presence had not added to the comfort and fulness of home: persons in public responsible positions brought to the grave ere their work was discharged, have all left their duties undone, "they die before their time." Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?"

Is it not a wicked thing to shorten by sin our own career of usefulness, and cut ourselves off from the thousand benefits of life for the sake of pleasures that are worthless as the foam on the stream? Yet in every branch of conduct this form of wickedness and foolishness appears,—in the pathways of science and mental study no less than in ordinary practical pursuits. For no phase of extreme indulgence in questionable conduct can any valid excuse be found. Why should any one barter blindly and wilfully what is most precious to him, and most truly his own,—the highest faculties of soul and the richest endowments of body, yea life itself, for a short term of intense excitement in sinful passion, with its bitter and deadly fruit: "Be not over-much wicked; neither be thou foolish; why shouldst thou die before thy time?"

From these illustrations of the temporal reference of the text, it will be seen that the true spirit of a right-hearted man is that of resigned resolution as in Job: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Unselfish devotion to the welfare of our brethren among whom we live, and the care taken to preserve our own souls from corruption lead our minds up to a conviction that our years are not in our own keeping, and point to the loftier possibility of a life "hid with Christ in God."

But in the SECOND PLACE we ask, Why shouldest thou DIE TO LIFE ETERNAL before thy time?

I surely do not need to prove to you that there is such a thing as *eternal life*, and *eternal death*.

It is the very design of God's Revelation to convince us of these great realities, and teach us how we may avoid death and gain life. Man is a native of a realm of eternal existence, as well as of this present world of mingled life and death. No one doubts that, though here a soul's desire may be for sin's deceitful pleasures, yet when it comes to that bourne from which there is no return, it has then the most absorbing anxiety to escape the horrors of eternal misery and win the immortal joys of heaven.

But what the word of God assures us of is that, in that eternal future, there can be no passage from the realms of death to life. Every one will receive

according to the deeds done in the body ; and there is a great gulph fixed for ever between the two estates. That is the period decreed by God when every soul that loves sin must die. But is it not the case that in this passing life there are many souls consigned by their own free choice to eternal death, when, owing to the free offer of salvation in the Gospel, there is as yet no need for it ? Beyond the tomb no offer of life will be made to the sin-stricken soul ; but here we have eternal life freely bestowed upon the sinner, who receives Christ as the Father's best gift to a perishing world. Many pass by the gift and die for ever. It looks as if it were an appropriate question to put,—“ Why shouldst thou die before thy time ? ”

It remains true, then, that all our race is divided into two great classes, the righteous and the wicked, *those who in the life to come shall inherit the blessedness of holiness, and those who shall dwell in the curse of sin.*

There is no reason, however, why those in whose life the law of sin bears rule should not even now pass over to join the number of those who, not entirely free from sin's power and still subject to the corrupting conditions of this complex sphere, are yet willing subjects of that monarch whose sceptre is righteousness and peace. The natural man, you say, has still the traces within him of what he once was, the marks of his lost greatness, the embers of the

brilliant flame of holiness that at first shone within him; and what, then, is the difference between him and the righteous man? The natural man has only the embers of what was once the glowing, all enswathing fire of holiness in his bosom. These embers are day by day getting colder, and will gradually fade away till they go entirely out, leaving only the lifeless dust to be tossed about in darkness by the whirlwinds of a dismal doom.

The righteous man, on the other hand, has had the living holy flame kindled again in his heart out of heaven, whence its original fire was sent. And the warmth and light of the renewed life will not again decrease. It will neither get low under the cold blasts of temptation, nor under the waters of death itself. It is taken from that Eternal Light which burns in the heavenly temple, and is perpetually replenished by "grace for grace."

Now there is no reason why every soul which is dying to this eternal spiritual life should not now receive that fresh life of light and love which will never die. Why should your light go out? Why should you die,—before your time? Before your time! Assuredly, for you are as good as dead already; although your time for final condemnation has not yet come. Your time for such need never come. Why should you, too, not have that fire of righteousness within you which will never go out? Why should you not have that belief and that life, which

if a man have he shall never die? "He that believeth in Me though he were dead yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." There is a period coming when, if you are foolish now, you must die; when you have passed the line of physical death and entered the realm of the unchangeable, anxiously as you may wish to live, there will be no alternative for the foolish but death. But why should you die before that time? Why should you die now? Why should you be foolish? It is the old story of the sailors, who in a broad estuary of fresh water, imagining that they were still in the open sea, were perishing with thirst, when they had only to dip their vessels into the bright water at their side, drink, and live.

You cannot but see, then, that if you are planning and hoping for this life only, *your future must be a cheerless and miserable one.*

You cannot but know that there are men and women around who lay their plans differently from you,—who have serener minds, nobler purposes, and brighter hopes. And you must be conscious that their views of things, their desires and their sources of confidence are wider, loftier, surer, and more abiding than yours. Why, then, should you not have the same as they? It may be pleasing to feel the breath of temporary prosperity fan our cheek, but it is treacherous and can never raise a permanent glow of

life in our spirit. Let not the embers of spiritual convictions be smothered by their own whitened dust. Let us not be too easily pleased with a few glistening sparks of counterfeit interest in things divine. Let us not mistake them for the quickening of the new life: for these are only signs of a speedier death.

Let us know, then, that by no mere human device can we get our souls rekindled with the blaze of that lost celestial life; nor let us deceive ourselves by imagining that we can somehow find health for our spirit by diligent searching into the deep things of this world's mystery. Let us not waste time by moving about in quest of salvation from profession to profession, from one source of earthly happiness to another, which our Father in Heaven has distinctly told us cannot deliver our souls from death.

There is One who is the Prince of life: and if we would live eternally,—and who would not?—we must derive our life from Him. In Him alone is life: His life is the light of men: “That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” That light is shining now around us; let us have our darkened spirits enlightened by it. To all the living there is hope: and the bread of life is within our reach, of which, if a man eat he shall live for ever. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is that Prince of Life, the light of men, the bread of life. “Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have

everlasting life; and the Son will raise him up at the last day."

Eternal life is now to be had without money and without price: after death it will be no longer offered. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Why shouldest thou be foolish? Why shouldest thou die before thy time? Just now God willeth not that any should perish, but all should come to Christ that they may have life. After death He does will eternal condemnation to all who obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness. He will *then* render to every man according to his deeds; but *now* he declares, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

"*Why shouldest thou die before thy time?*" What more can God's own voice say to us? Will not heaven and earth, with our own hearts, bear this witness against us at the Day of Judgment—if we continue to reject Christ who is the Life—that God has this day set before us life and death, blessing and cursing? "Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods, &c.—
MATT. xxv. 14-30.

Christ has bequeathed Talents.

MORE than eighteen centuries ago, a Teacher, famous by a few years' itineracies in a small Eastern province, and seated one peaceful evening on a hill overlooking the capital of His country, declared to His surrounding followers that He was about to take His departure into a foreign land. For a long time He would be gone, but at last He would return. But He had certain possessions which He wished to leave to the care of those who had received His teaching. In the forecast which He gave of the manner in which his goods would be treated, He spoke of Himself as Master and Lord, and of His followers as bond-servants. With a tone of authority He described the Householder who judges of the various abilities of His servants and divides among them His goods. His interest in the charge committed was so great, and His rights so sovereign, that He announced the most glowing

rewards for the worthy, and sentence of doom on the unworthy. Nor did His followers dispute the correctness of the wise Teacher's words. For had they not forsaken their quiet homes by the Galilean lake at the call of one whose words were "spirit and life"?—had they not left wife and brethren, and parents and children through their devotion to One who was to them in that present an hundredfold?—had they not abandoned the traditions of their race and cast themselves for direction upon Him who might be to others one of the prophets, but who was to them the Son of the living God?

*These Talents have been bequeathed through the Apostles
and the Church.*

Did their hearts burn within them there on that peaceful evening as He opened to them the books of the future? An indefinable solemnity brooded over their hearts as they listened, and as they thought on the lessons He had taught, His discipline of love, and His celestial light breaking on their darkened souls. And now there was the gleam of a brighter light as they heard of His departure, and His absence, and His return. Carefully were His words kept in their minds and hearts; and when their loved Master was slain by cruel men, then they knew that He had really departed and that they were in danger. When from on high there came the visible endowment of power,

there flashed up in their breasts the consciousness that they had Talents; that their Master had truly left most valuable possessions in their keeping; and that, in the spirit of their three years' companionship they must be faithful to their trust. And forthwith they set to work with their Talents, and speedily multiplied the number of those who accepted the words of Jesus. They watched and prayed, they spoke the Word with all boldness, they did signs and wonders among the people in the name of the crucified. So their term of life flew on, but—their Lord returned not. Yet had they seen His treasures increase so well that their delight was found, not in slothfulness because of His tarrying, but in urging upon all those who with them “loved His appearing” the necessity of not wearying in well-doing. And when the feebleness of age and the approach of death forced them to rest from their labours, they were content to hand over the ministry they had received to those chosen to succeed them. From generation to generation the message has been bequeathed, until we have now arisen to proclaim it. Back across the lapse of centuries we can still see the departing Christ, as His foot leaves the summit of Olivet, and He glides up out of our sight leaving all His work and teaching behind Him. And in the vastness and splendour of what the Christian dispensation has become, in the sympathy that binds us with our living Lord in the heavenly country, in the unspeakable glory to be revealed at the restitution of

all things, we feel our obligation and incentive to make the most of the precious things of God which, we can perceive, have been delivered to us according to our several ability.

These Talents are really in our midst.

Over our towns and cities there spring up elegant towers and spires; among our own glens there steals out at intervals the music of a bell to call the villagers to a solemn assembly; for one day in seven men quit their business haunts to join in sacred services. What mean these noble edifices, these musical chimes, these peaceful Sabbaths? There is in our midst a treasure so precious that it demands unceasing care for its preservation; there is in the heart of this Christian nation, a spiritual power so active that it claims from each a share of his time and labour; there is a duty, weighty as life, laid on every one who has named the name of Jesus Christ. His church has spread itself over the land, and bears in its bosom for its members the legacy which its living but absent Lord entrusted to it. Ever sounding through the Master's household, constant as our waking hours and the light of day, at morning, noon, and night, there is the cry of the Spirit of Christ—"Watch." If all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, then in view of that sharp reckoning which is before us all, ought we not to examine our own hearts now to

ascertain if we have aught of the manifold grace of God ; and if so, how we are using it ?

Have we got these Talents ?

Allow me to put in here a word of caution. While it is very needful for us to do all we can to discover if we have talents, it is not necessary, nor possible, nor perhaps desirable, to find out how many and how great they are. It is impossible for a man so exactly to gauge his powers that he can lay out accurately the proper plans for his life and work ; and, not to speak of the certainty that even the best prepared schemes would be cut short in actual trial, such an unwise measuring of ourselves might at the outset tend to discourage many from making any attempt to do something for their Master. But it is assuredly of extreme importance to inquire, "Have we any talents ?" And a little assistance in this inquiry may not be taken amiss.

Those of us who make such an examination, must recognise that there is required of us a conscientious searching of ourselves, perfect fidelity in laying bare the true state of our heart as in the sight of a holy God. If we thus sincerely endeavour to know the real attitude of our souls to Him, we shall discover whether we are isolated from, or dependent upon Him. If we can honestly feel our desires going out towards Christ ; if, withdrawing our thoughts from our

business, our friends, and the world, we can fix them on Him who reigns unseen behind the veil; if we can say, though with a faint perception of the full meaning of the words, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside Thee?" then we may well conclude that we have evidence of the possession of heavenly gifts. If we find that, after removing all the usages and conventionalities of life, our desires have proper direction, that there is found in us some good thing toward the Lord our God, then we may humbly hope we are not without the talents of grace from the hand of our Master.

It is the strength of this faith which distinguishes not only the man of five talents from the man of two, but the devoted from the wicked and slothful servant; and it is this sense of attachment to an absent Lord which, when sufficiently realised, leads to the noblest and most arduous labour on His behalf. This feeling of reliance is not in the natural man: "It is the gift of God." It may be weak and faint, but still we have here what is essential. It is plainly our duty to encourage this confidence; for in proportion to its strength will be the success of our work.

*The Talents of Grace are given according to Ability
for Work.*

The grace which this fundamental attainment implies is furnished to us according to our several

abilities. In human nature we can discern two kinds of ability. There is capacity to receive, and power to act. I think it will always be found that power to act is a truer test of a man's ability than capacity to receive. The disposition which ever cries "Give," is weakness, and not power; but our activity is the true measure of our ability. What is given is only truly made ours when it is seized by our energies and becomes part of our strength. We may forget the shape and temper of the sword which a friend has shown us, or which we have seen on the wall of a museum, but we do not forget the pattern and excellence of the weapon we have wielded and proved in many a fight. Now I believe our Lord in giving us spiritual talents has bestowed them upon us, not according to our capacity to receive them, but our power to use them. If He gave us less than we can use, He would not be exercising us as it is just to Him and good for us that we should be exercised; and if He gave us more, they would be useless.

Up, then, Christians, and work! Sit not idle, because you think you can do little, or have not yet determined how many talents you possess. You have trust in your Master; show the world, show yourself how much activity you have, and you will learn how much ability, how many talents you have. Can you murmur that you have too few when you have not yet used all that you have? Your breast is animated with faith in your Lord; you are sure of His worth, His power, and

His love; will you not, then, extol His service in the hearing of strangers, who are either secret or open enemies. O friends! the more we perceive the reality of the separation between ourselves and those who are not of us, the more we feel the repulsion between the Church and the world, the less will we be inclined to ask, How many charges has He laid on me? How many talents has He committed to my care? Unconsciously we shall draw what we need from the treasure-house of grace which He places at our disposal. With no guide but the Word of our Lord and Saviour we can put forth our energies, sustained and impelled by our ever-deepening sense of the righteousness of our mission; being confident that in everything we are enriched by Him, "so that we may come behind in no gift," but may go on and "abound in faith and utterance and knowledge," as well as "in all diligence and in love."

There is Diversity in Spiritual Gifts.

It would be wrong to deny that there are differences in ability, and in the number of talents which each servant of Christ possesses. But it cannot be held that a difference in outward circumstances and opportunities implies a difference in the number of the talents. If there is ability in the man, he will make his natural gifts the opportunity for his action. Men of so-called great opportunities have seldom been men with many

talents. Their talents often consist in the power of controlling their circumstances and creating their opportunities. To complain that we do not possess ability for service, in what may seem the more influential positions, is to complain that we are what we are. God's absolute sovereignty over us, even as Creator, is implied throughout the whole of this parable. In his own peculiar line of action, each talented man will use his spiritual gifts. The public speaker will show in his address the Christian tone which pervades his life and thought; the man of business will enliven and purify his work by his Christian virtues; and the religious teacher will powerfully impress his neighbours by his example in word, in charity, in faith, and in purity. It is not the most obtrusive and stirring service that is always the most worthy. The mournful voice of an afflicted one cries out, "What is my strength that I should hope? Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh brass?" For thee, too, anxious, disconsolate one, there is comfort.

"Who best

Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

Talent-using ought to be an Absorbing Occupation.

I have already tried to show how your faith should manifest itself in work: consider for a moment how

interesting and absorbing the work should be. Though trading be in the first instance a necessity of our living, yet we know how it possesses a fascination for the energetic ambitious mind. The youth of sound instincts longs for larger opportunities of exercising his faculties, and works assiduously at his apprentice-tasks that he may enter without cumbrance on the arena of manhood's rivalry, where he hopes to make his way to fortune. And though there is little reason to envy the man whose brow is marked by the rude buffetings of a generation, and whose weary spirit frets and chafes under the very schemes which alone have any attraction for him, yet is the world's activity with its multitudinous crossings and dissolutions a never failing healthy source of interest and concern for the best of human kind. What pleasure more intense than the keen ecstasy with which the clever man measures himself with his competitors in enterprises needing foresight and ready purpose, or guides his favourite plans through peril and seeming disaster to the wished-for destination! Or to take a wider view, what can equal the charm that delights the poet or lover of nature, as he pursues the countless objects of beauty, the diversities of colour, voice, and elegance of form? How much of the happiest, truest life of man is spent in travelling in body or mind among the thousand joys of the free world God has placed us in!

And what, we may ask, more captivating to every

faculty of the soul, what joy more comprehensive than the eager watch which the spirit keeps over the moral and spiritual horizon! All the objects of man's love are within the scope of that outlook; for it is his life-work to discern "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." The amazing complexities and varieties of man's moods must be there; for we have in our charter the principles to correct, and the register in which to place all the subtle formations which our volatile nature can assume. We have not only to survey this boundless field, but we enter it, and deal with what we find there. We must bring our own heart, swelling with the new spiritual life, into contact with this outer world where as yet sin reigns; we have in the spiritual life the touchstone of the kingdom; and by it we are to prove the souls of men whether they are of God. If we find that they are not so, we are to endeavour so to influence them that they shall receive the grace in which we rejoice and "the salvation which is in Christ, with eternal glory." We must spread in all directions the knowledge of the Lord, lessen prevailing oppression and crime, alleviate suffering and sorrow, raise the fallen and revive the faint, so that "the abundant grace may through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."

Equal Rewards to Equal Diligence.

To stimulate us to good works, let us notice that what is considered in adjudging the rewards is not the greatness of the results, but the degree of diligence which we display. In the words of the faithful servants, in the parable before us, there is a transparently truthful statement of facts as to what they had done with their talents. The reply of the Master is in each case precisely the same. There is a wide difference between the two gains the servants report; but it is the element common to both that the Master regards; and it is in view of that sameness that He pronounces the same reward for each. As both have evinced the same consistent and earnest fidelity to their trust, so both receive the same: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." There may be and probably are grades in the heavenly service, as in the earthly; there may be degrees of dominion hidden under the term "many" things; but the real prize is there in both declarations "Well done: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Hard-working labourers here below for your absent Master, cast not looks of envy on each other. There is one task before you all; the glance must be forward, never aside to see who is getting in advance of you. Spend time in contem-

plating with jealous feeling the activity of your neighbour; the true fervour of your own spirit cools, you begin to lose ground, and by-and-by you may find that you have lost it entirely. As the duty is one, so is the reward. Let it be graven on the consciences of Christ's followers, that it is diligence which ensures the reward; that equal diligence, although with unequal talents, will be equally rewarded; but as a companion parable teaches, we may to start with have equal gifts bestowed, and yet in consequence of our unequal diligence receive very different rewards.

The Unprofitable Servant.

And what are we to make of him who buries his money in the earth, and at the reckoning defends himself as rendering justice to a hard and stern Lord? I think from this illustration we may learn the following things:—(1.) Idleness really proceeds from a greater devotion to ourself than to one's absent Master. (2.) Even the most timid and hesitating may serve Christ faithfully. (3.) Our Master's character is much more generous and merciful than many suppose.

(1.) When we read that he who received the one talent "went away and digged in the earth and hid his Lord's money," we are not then told about the motives which prompted him to do so. It is when he excuses himself that we hear his profession of fear

for his Master. It is very improbable that he had any definite reason in view when he buried his talent. It was only when he was brought face to face with his Lord that he was forced to give an explanation of his conduct; and the hollowness of the explanation shows its deceitfulness. For as his Lord points out, even such a view of his Master's character as he professed to have had, should not have led him to commit the money to the earth; if the Lord was exacting but yet his Master, he should have given it to the bankers, that his Lord might receive at last his own with the rightful interest. He must at least "get the benefit of his bad character." It is so easy to be wicked and unfaithful, to gratify one's own impulses and desires. It were an easy thing for a company's agent in a foreign country to allow his duty to slip out of mind as he revelled in the strange sights and companionships around him, as he mingled with the throng of pleasant acquaintances and learned their mode of life, their joys and their sorrows. He would not need hard thoughts of his employers to make him bury his duties in forgetfulness. And so with us whom our Master has left to trade for Him here. Very alluring is the shifting crowd of scenes and persons that entertain the spirit of man. And it is all the more so because we are ourselves part of this variety, and in the theatre of the world exhibit our own peculiarities of thought and temperament. Hence we are easily inclined to forget that, while we are in

the world as part of it, yet we are in it also as new creatures. We have something fresh to put into the world; and if we allow the mass of incidents and engagements to cover up this force within, we are in the highest degree untrue to Him who hath given us this grace in His own behalf. It is self-indulgence in a smooth, comfortable, and it may be virtuous life, or it may be in earthly thoughts of ambition and sordid avarice, which buries our talents; and a man may bury five as well as one. It is this self-gratification which our Lord condemns; for it is this which makes us unprofitable.

(2.) If any one thinks of serving our Master, but is deterred from so doing because of His apparent character, there is a way which no loyal follower can miss, and which our Master himself approves. Some natures look at the Christian life rather in its legal aspect than in the light of grace. God they see to be a Holy Perfect Being who requires from us perfect obedience. He is a task-master rather than a Father; and they consequently think if they cannot make their own souls perfect, how can they venture out to deal with others. How hard to satisfy Him with work in the great field of the world! There is some truth in this view, which sensitive timid natures take of Christ's service. It is difficult, and it is strict. But let those who cannot look beyond this phase of it remember, that no demand is made with which it is impossible to comply. If you cannot venture on great

achievements, then in humble duties you can show your devotion to His cause. If you cannot trade openly in spiritual things with the sons of men, then as a private member of His household, you can support the bank in secret prayer and meditation, that the Master may suffer no loss. You can, according to your ability, support and succour your comrades who, in the great institution of the Christian Church, carry on the noble work of building up God's kingdom. You can, by earnest pleading with God, as a loving faithful servant, help to hasten the time, when with joy even the faint-hearted shall return to their Lord "His own with interest."

(3.) But let it be ours to obtain a fuller view of our Lord's character than will leave us content with this. Christ will not require us to reap a harvest for Him without first giving us seed to sow; nor will He gather into the barn from off the threshing-floor the solid grain, which He has not first caused to be spread out and winnowed. He does not, because He is Lord of heaven and earth, command us to take with grasping hand the best of all we find among men, and force it into consecration to His service. And in truth how mercifully, how generously does our Lord accept all we have to offer, which is even at its best but a poor imperfect work! How He rejoices in our joy, and loves to note our hearts becoming softer and our lives richer in grace! No chilling legal bounty does He offer. It is a warm glad

encouraging encomium: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The humbler servant with his four, is as good and faithful as he who had the ten talents. Our Master does not weigh out His praise in scales, as men measure out our money's interest. But His heart glows with affection when He sees the true flame of devotion in His loyal servant's bosom; and, as He watches the lowly worker struggling amid suffering and the difficulties of poverty to fulfil His will and add to His treasure, and sees how the affluent and illustrious live in culpable self-indulgence, He gives His verdict: "Verily this poor widow hath cast in more than they all." It is Christ's self-forgetful love that attracts the homeless sinner to seek this best of Masters; it is His love that bids Him say: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed;" and it will be the same love that will constrain Him to set us in charge over "all that He hath."

Shall we be Wicked and Slothful?

And now, friends, are we going to allow our hearts to become "overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life," so that, when we expect it not, the day of our Lord's return will come upon us suddenly as a snare and our portion be appointed with the hypocrites? The Master, you say, will excuse His devoted servant, if he should let a little time pass with friends in heedless gaiety; the loving

Father will pardon the fault of His son, if in merry idleness he bury the irksome tools or the uninviting task-book out of sight : better that the heart be right, even with a languid exterior, than that the assiduity be feigned and the heart corrupt. But, then, a soft exterior seldom covers a sound heart. The fruit must not only be nourished by the sap within, but must be ripened and matured by contact with the refreshing breath of the summer breeze and the reddening rays of the summer sun. The brain that will not think or learn grows weaker and more foolish every day. The arm that is unused soon shrinks in muscle. The birthright which Esau bartered for a mess of pottage brought a rich inheritance to Jacob. The stone, which blinded builders once rejected, the same is now become the head of the corner. And so the grace that would bless the careless soul, if he would only receive and use it, gradually withdraws from his hardening heart, and will at length be wholly removed, when the Lord will give it to His faithful stewards to be possessed by them for ever. If we think we do well to keep all our blessings only for our own enrichment, without thinking of the claims of the Lord's heritage, then shall the reproof be heard : " Wicked art thou, for thou hast robbed thy Master ; slothful, for thou hast considered only thine own case. Where now are the evidences of thy discipleship ? Will a true disciple rob his Master ?—will a faithful servant sit down in sloth ? Cast ye him forth into the darkness of

eternal night away for ever from the household into which he has intruded. There let him weep, as he dwells for ever on the loss of his soul. "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Or shall we be Good and Faithful?

But, beloved, that ye may have boldness in the day of judgment, let your love be made perfect. Our love at the best is cold and faint: why should we let it die entirely through neglect? Is it so light a thing to have this transcendent love within us, that we can pass it by without seeking to verify it in the clear light of Divine fellowship? Is it such a trivial thing to have God abiding in us, that we can hide ourselves from Him in the multitude of our avocations? "Little children, greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world." The force within you, being divine, has no limit to its achievements. Slight and insignificant your love may appear, as you are overawed by the obtrusive effrontery of men and society. But encourage it to grow. Unite it with the force that lies in kindred hearts. Let it work, and as it goes outward in thoughts and deeds of charity and heavenly zeal, you will see it multiply a hundredfold. And if it be your happy lot by hard earnest use to double it—to make your two talents four, or your five talents ten, then you will hear these words: "Well done:

over a few things thou hast been faithful, over many things will I set you."

No human mind can paint the bliss that will thrill the bosoms of the faithful, when the Lord returns once more to take His own. No words can describe the rapture of their meeting, or the splendour of their ministration before the throne of their King. But in the many mansions prepared for eternal service above,—in His presence where there is fulness of joy, His servants, who on earth have purified their hearts and lives and perfected their love, "shall serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them, and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

MARY'S MEMORIAL.

Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.—MATT. xxvi. 13.

IN noble families we sometimes find old legends fondly rehearsed relating to some incident which befell a conspicuous ancestor in bygone times, and which is still supposed to exert a spell over the fortunes of the house. Here and there throughout the country we meet with local customs, which once had a meaning and a need, but which are kept up from reverence for the past, when all occasion for them has disappeared. With nations also we often find treasured monuments of their early history—perhaps some “Stone of Destiny,” whose presence gives a mythical assurance that the throne will not pass away from its favourite line of kings. As time rolls on such legends, customs, and objects cease to exercise their magic charm, and come to be regarded as curious relics of a credulous and superstitious age. To-day we have to consider a bequest of a different order—the memorial of a deed which had in it nothing shadowy or unreal, the

memorial of a sentiment which has not grown weak with the lapse of time, but which still vibrates throughout Christendom, the memorial of an assurance which loses not value as the years flit past, but which is a source of hope to all who struggle on through the tedious work of life. But what is this memorial, whose power is thus marvellously preserved as ever new, though it is nineteen centuries old? Who is the hero whose figure is thus ever present with us, and whose wreath of laurel is as fresh to-day as when first put upon the brow?

The deed was done, away from the glare of the stirring city, in a small village. It was done by a heroine of humble family, who knew little of the world beyond the precincts of her home. It was not in the glory of the Galilean ministry, in Nain, or in Magdala, that this event took place. It was on the third day before the passion; and the scene was Bethany. For nearly two full weeks the harvest season had been displaying its ripening fruits and its cloudless skies. And now at evening the moon was sending down its golden light, the beams striking upon the tops of the pomegranates and almond trees that half concealed the houses of the hamlet clinging nest-like to the side of the hill. In one of the larger houses the yellow light in the windows was brighter than usual. The villagers had gathered there at the bidding of its owner, Simon the leper, to sup with a guest who was well known on that hillside. At the

table in the place of honour reclined Jesus of Nazareth, the dearly loved friend of the charitable family of Lazarus and his two sisters. Lazarus also was present at the feast, an object of wonder and fear; for he had entered into the secrets of the world beyond the grave, and only a short time before this he had been raised from his tomb. Martha was there, busy with the work that suited her best; and Mary, too, was there, overwhelmed by the strength of her love and devotion. Suddenly she rose and glided round to where her Master lay, and, taking from her bosom a costly jar of white alabaster, without heeding in the confusion of her emotions the looks of those who filled the room, she broke the jar and poured out pure Indian spikenard on the head of her Lord; and then over His feet poured the remainder of the ointment. And as the delicious perfume was wafted o'er the chamber and penetrated all the house, she knelt down and wiped with her thick tresses "those blessed feet," while tears of love and adoration mingled with the pious offering.

But the spirit of evil was in the company. The thief and traitor was the first to give vent to his feelings of indignation at what he considered at best an instance of feminine lavishness and lack of prudence: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" His words struck his fellow-disciples as having apparent truth in them. Hard thoughts of the lowly worshipper

sprang up within them, and even rose to their lips. Their Omniscient Master, however, understood the situation at once; and in calm majestic tones He spoke in her defence. "Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon Me. Do good to the poor whensoever ye will; them ye have always with you, but Me ye have not always. In a few days I shall be condemned to death, slain, and buried; then ye will not grudge My being anointed with oil for the tomb. This woman hath come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." With what merciful wisdom does He not blame, but extol this woman's act: "My words shall never pass away, and wherever the words of life I have uttered are spoken on earth, there shall this that this woman hath done be spoken about. Wherever the sinner hears the Gospel proclaimed, there shall he hear of the devotion of this human heart."

This is, indeed, an amazing prophecy!—a prophecy, which we know has been fulfilled and is being fulfilled, —a prophecy which, while time runs its course, shall continue to be fulfilled. Let us attentively consider this astonishing announcement; for we cannot fail to profit by the study of an action which has been so gloriously rewarded. Let us strive to show the inner spring and essence of the deed itself, and of commen-

dation thereon bestowed, that we may find some cheer and guidance for our conduct.

I ask you, then, to look at these three views of this incident,—

FIRST, *The Significance of this Woman's Anointing of Christ.*

SECOND, *The Universal Publication of this Woman's Act as a Memorial of her.*

THIRD, *The Lessons which we may draw from this Woman's Conduct and Christ's Approval of it.*

I. In the FIRST PLACE, then, I would have you discern, *The Significance of this Woman's Anointing of Christ.*

“She hath,” says Christ, “wrought a good work upon Me.” Mary had the honour of having performed one act of sterling goodness. Such acts are so rare in the history of mankind that the world cannot afford to lose any of them. So thinly scattered are those lustrous jewels, amid the sordid dross of human actions, that the universal cry of paganism and modern heathenism is, “Oh, who will show us any good?” And truly in vain might we cry for this boon of genuinely virtuous conduct, so long as there is withheld the light of that countenance, whose goodness our best actions must reflect. Apart from Him there is only the worthlessness of sin. It is at His Divine and spotless touch that our imperfect deeds are transformed into good works.

Mary's action was a good one because it was intimately connected with her Saviour, not merely connected by the external contact of the spikenard with His sacred head, but bound to His glorious perfections by the inward motives of faith and love. Possessed of a disposition, in some respects resembling that of the Beloved Disciple, this gentle woman, whose supreme delight consisted in drinking in the words of heavenly truth from Jesus' lips, and in contemplating the matchless peace and beauty of His holy life, had by these occupations her spirit daily renewed, and made liker His in all holy desire and impulse. At His example she could not but love the poor. Doubtless to many a hungry one did she give meat, and to the thirsty drink; for many a homeless wanderer had she spread the couch of rest; the naked she warmed and clad; the sick and aged she visited, for the sake of Him to whom the least of these were brethren. Nor had she any thought of ceasing her ministrations; but from the day when He was parted from her till the time when she laid herself down to die in the sure hope of rejoicing in "the resurrection and the life," we can imagine her becoming still more gentle and charitable. For the poor she had always with her, but here was One who had taught her to do all this, and who would soon cease to speak deep words of encouragement to her on earth. Would she neglect her neighbours if she thought now about Him? Would she not in the truest sense minister to the poor, when she ministered to the

Holy One who for her sake, as well as for others, became poor,—that Holy One whose life has taken so much bitterness from poverty, and surrounded it with a softer and more hallowed light.

The disciples showed that they had missed the true meaning of this woman's gift by suggesting that it should have been sold for the poor,—a twelve-ounce jar, for something over ten English pounds. We cannot believe that they all had the same thievish purpose that Judas had. Probably they would have liked if Mary had presented their company with a donation equal to the value of her alabaster jar to be distributed at their discretion among deserving objects of charity. No one can blame them if they had such thoughts; their three years' intercourse with their Master had taught them the alphabet of Christian giving, and they loved to put the elementary truths they had learnt into operation. But they had not yet penetrated to the deepest principle which regulates this highest charity; they were learning the letter, but they had not yet fully appropriated the spirit. They were surpassed in this by one who had fewer opportunities of observing the Master's example, but who in the intervals of intercourse thought more than they did about the import of His words and acts. And the frequent separation from His side, a kind of experience which as yet they had not, had enabled her to see how much true benevolence depends on the spirit which inspires it, which prompts and sustains it. For her to do a

kind action, to relieve misery, or assist the needy, was the outcome of passionate attachment to Christ, the best method of letting her gratitude declare itself, when she could not manifest it in His presence. Noble as such deeds were, she felt they were at best only secondary, indirect, representative ways of proving her love; and as she was saved by her faith going directly to Him, and not circuitously through those bountiful works, so she judged rightly that love manifested itself primarily and most directly by presenting itself at His footstool as a whole thank-offering.

The offering was one for a king; but our Lord did not accept it, as if it were a kingly consecration. "It is," said He, "not for my enthronement, but for my burial." It is hardly possible that Mary should have consciously anticipated by her act a part of the Jewish ceremonial which was considered indispensable, but which was not to be observed in the case of Jesus. It is unlikely that she had been divinely informed of the crucifixion at the end of the week, and that the Sabbath day would prevent His receiving that anointing with which the Jews so scrupulously honoured their dead. But He knew that on the dawn of the first day of the week, when the sun was hardly risen, very early in the morning, there would come to the sepulchre in Joseph's garden, a little band of women, "bearing sweet spices for His anointing," and that they would find an empty grave. But here, in God's pro-

vidence, at the supper table at Bethany, He is anointed beforehand. "Thus it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren."

With the circumscribed view, which is all that our life from day to day permits, the murmuring guests might have rested content with no deeper explanation. Yet surely we do not violate the words of Divine wisdom, if we allow them to recall to us the inspired exposition of the truth taught us by Christ's burial. For Mary, as for all believers in Christ's work, that burial was fraught with the keenest interest, and made sure the greatest spiritual results. In that rock-hewn grave behold not merely the dead body of the fairest of the children of men; but know that there lies the dead body of your sins. Your sins have worked out their strength upon that pale and bleeding corpse, but now with it they are dead and buried for ever out of sight. They shall rise no more to be your terror and your shame. For the Christ who rises is the new Christ in whose life you too partake: "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "We also,"—so many of us as have been spiritually baptized into Jesus Christ,—“are buried with Him by baptism into death.” We cannot say that Mary had such precise thoughts of “baptism into death” before her mind when she anointed her Master's head and feet, according to His own interpretation “for His burial;” but of this we are certain that Mary had been spiritually baptized into

Jesus' death. And was it not that Jesus, by whose death her sins were to die, whom she now lovingly honoured,—and honoured as her Saviour in His death? “O woman, great is thy faith;”—need we wonder that Jesus should thus honourably commend her in turn? She was the Baptist by whose aid He has been brought nearer to the children of Adam,—the Baptist whom He suffered thus to act, at the end of His ministry, just as at His former baptism by the Jordan “He had fulfilled all righteousness.” Here indeed was a baptism with ointment,—an anointing by the hand of love. Here at last is the light which shone in darkness recognised as the true Light. Here is one representative of all believers who shall come after,—one who amidst the darkness has comprehended the Light.

II. In the SECOND PLACE, let us notice, *The Universal Publication of this Woman's Act, as a Memorial of her.*

You see from our Lord's words what the memorial is which this woman's good deed received. Her memory is to be indissolubly linked to that of Christ: her action firmly united with the destiny of His Gospel in the world. I do not think that our Saviour here asserts directly that His Gospel would be preached throughout the whole world. The expression is rather, “Wheresoever in the whole world it is preached,

there shall her deed be spoken of." There is no part of the world where it is preached so far removed for this tale of devotion not to reach it: no part too advanced in culture and civilisation for this humble woman's act not to find admirers and imitators: no part so sunk in barbarism and degradation that this act shall not awaken a sympathetic echo. Now, from other portions of the evangelists' writings we learn that Jesus knew there was no part of the earth from which His Gospel would be for ever banished: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Thus, when at the supper table at Bethany His mind's eye ranged over the surface of the earth, and pierced into the future, He foresaw the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom, not in isolated lands nor remote regions only, but gradually extended from country to country till it covered the whole earth. It was union with His person in this universal extension of His cause which He promised to Mary in that supper-room at Bethany.

I say it was a promise which He made. We have spoken of it as a prophecy; and a prophecy, majestic compared with the circumstances in which it was uttered, it undoubtedly was. But the reward would be all the more precious to Mary when she looked on it as a promise made to her personally. A prophecy does not always connect the person spoken of with

the prophet : but a promise does so connect with the promiser. The promise comprises all the benefits of the prophecy. For are not all promises prophecies in their way : they all imply vision into the future, and assertion of something that will happen therein. And perhaps this is the reason why human promises are in general so little to be trusted to, because our insight into the future is so short and hazy. How different with the promises of Christ, the true Prophet! He sees all the future in the transparent light of the ever present now, and all the forces that He beholds blending and intertwining have received their initial impulse from Him, and are under His guidance. Whatever promises He makes, and many He makes to all His people, they are as certain of fulfilment as His prophecies, being all "Yea and in Him Amen."

Jesus has used His power to redeem that promise. He inspired suitable men to prepare records of His life and teaching : and in these writings we find this incident narrated. Nowhere are Christ's doctrines taught and His work believed apart from these wonderful records of His life, which we esteem, next to Christ Himself, as God's best gift to man. They are to us a new life put alongside of the one we have in the body,—a new world beside the fair world of nature. They are essential to our being furnished unto all good works. It is in them that the anchor of faith is, originally cast. The Church's work con-

sists in extending the knowledge of them. Wherever he goes, the missionary carries them as a lamp to his path. And so wherever the tale of the Saviour's dying love is told to charm the soul away from sin, may be learnt the story of the woman who, at the supper table at Bethany, consecrated with the devotion of her heart the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of her soul. The tale will be told in the gospel history to the end of time. Men love to see nobility of heart and fidelity of devotion. It was a truly human act, though associated with divinity. The woman was representative of all who anoint Christ's body for burial, with the tears of repentance and the oil of faith.

This woman has obtained what is better than any marble figure or bronze monument. She has got what men admire in their most ambitious moments,—world-wide fame. Hers is a fame far above that of poet, or warrior, or statesman, unimpeachable and ungrudged. Her case is another testimony to the power of the human heart. The wise head plans and men honour and follow it; the skilful hand models and performs, and men praise and imitate its work; but the loving heart loves and shows tokens for good, and we are moved by it, when neither wisdom nor skill will move us. It has the great reward. Its memorial will never fall into dust or fade away. And it cannot be pilfered. The covetous and ambitious may say, This is what we want, a great and enduring

name; and they may feign love's ways and scheme to snatch its crown. But the reward is safe in the hands of the sincere. Love's memorial is in the word of God, who is jealous for His name's sake. The never-dying fame of love is not to be stolen; it can be got only by those who do sincerely love.

There are frequently different tastes and ideas as to what kind of memorial will be most suitable for certain persons or events. Perhaps some have a little difficulty in recognising this memorial as a suitable one. They may think it on too great a scale for the deed and the doer of it. It may seem an easy thing now to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ when He is confessed and trusted in by so many; it may seem to us a simple thing to pour ointment on the head and feet of an honoured guest: but eighteen hundred years ago this was a new thing to do to Jesus of Nazareth. It was no common thing, then, to commit the keeping of the soul for eternity to this Jewish Prophet; and the first examples of such absorbing devotion must truly be accounted notable. The attachment was great because of the grandeur of Him to whom it was shown; and He has made His greatness felt throughout all subsequent time. Mary was really a great personage in the spiritual world, and deserved to have her memory perpetuated. She deserved it in the estimation of incarnate Wisdom, the best and justest Judge; and I am sure she has deserved it in the estimation of all who have learned about her and

learned from her. To the end of time will Christians continue to be benefited by contemplating this splendid memorial of holy love.

III. And in the THIRD PLACE, let us look at *The Lessons which we may draw from this Woman's Conduct and Christ's Approval of it.*

I. The *first* of these lessons is, probably, one which you are expecting to hear mentioned,—*the acceptability of sacrifices to Christ.*

I do not refer to the great sacrifice which every believer must make at the outset of his profession—the renunciation of self and the world,—the formal cutting oneself off from serving self to serve Christ. That is no doubt the fundamental act of sacrifice which is indispensable in every Christian, and makes all other acts of self-sacrifice possible. But I refer at present to acts of self-sacrifice after this original self-surrender has been made. When Mary brought the alabaster box, it was not because she had newly made up her mind to be a disciple of Jesus, and wished to show her sincerity by bestowing a costly gift. She had been long known as one of His most teachable disciples who had chosen the good part. She had made such a complete surrender of her soul to this truth and will, that her sister Martha thought she was neglecting the ordinary duties of life. Yet she still thought she was justified in making other sacrifices for

Christ. It is quite possible that her friends might feel rather troubled at the expensive present she now bestowed on her Master. Ten pounds sterling would be a very large sum in that household; it does not seem to have been a very wealthy one, judging from the way in which the sisters engaged in housekeeping. Now, it is very far from the spirit of Christ's religion to encourage wastefulness or reckless squandering. Observe precisely the point of the lesson. It is not that we should give way to a wild spirit of charitable frenzy and strip ourselves of our property and possessions. It is this, that as we feel the life which Christ has bought for us waxing strong within us, and widening into new provinces of our nature,—as we feel more deeply the infinitude of His love and guiding power, we should let our hearts expand with true liberality and grudge no sacrifice too great for His cause: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." It is gradually to recognise more fully, that this world and all that it counts valuable are as dross in comparison with the riches of Jesus Christ.

It is indeed hard to part with what we have been educated to reckon as precious in this life. Hard it has been for the martyrs in by-gone ages to leave their homes and their work to face privations and pain and death. Hard it is for the intellectual to lay aside faith in their theories and the ambitions of reason, and to accept as a little child the wisdom that comes from

above. Hard it is for the commercial man to part from his rest and ease, or from his slowly amassed wealth. Hard it is for flesh and blood to give up what is endeared by the closest and tenderest ties at the call of the Master. But what helps us to rise over these trials is the thought of Him, for whose sake we do it all. It is partial blindness to His merit, His self-denial, His attractiveness, which makes us feel such sacrifices hard. Let us study Him more closely, and we shall get a proper view of His life in its true perspective, as seen from the heights of faith and hope and love. The ways in which we are called on to exercise this duty of sacrifice and true charity are innumerable as the phases of individual life; but what is common to us all is this which is brought out in Mary's anointing,—if it is for Christ, then nothing should be grudged. We have not Christ now, but we have the welfare of our own souls, which may require severe self-denial; we have the welfare of other souls, of the poor in spirit, and the poor in body committed to our care; and in giving up our time and energies and means for these purposes, let us do it with gladness, for in so doing we work a good work upon Him.

2. But this leads me to mention the *second* lesson which I would have you learn, *that in our charitable deeds, we need not care what the world thinks of us and of our actions.*

Mary did not let shame keep her from braving the

presence of the twelve disciples, who had different views of her actions from her own. She acted as she felt and believed. So let every one act under personal conviction. Religion concerns God and our own souls. Faith binds Christ to our hearts truly: the graces come to us from God directly: therefore let not the views of friends or neighbours interfere with our conduct, when the intercourse between God and our hearts is direct and true. There would be much more doing of good and right, if men were not so ashamed to do what they believed. And, on the other hand, action is the test of belief; and a belief is not worthy of the name which does not lead us out to act under its impulse. To believe that a certain course of action is right, and yet to refrain, through fear of man, from doing it, is to be guilty—is to be untrue both to God and our own conscience.

Of course we are not to shut ourselves up in our narrow selves, and refuse all guidance from our friends as to what we should believe, and what we should do. Let us take the best advice we can get, that we may escape the consequences of foolish and wrong actions. But if we are honest with ourselves in the sight of God, and have the approbation of our consciences, let us, when we have made up our minds, be brave and boldly go forward, respecting only the praise and judgment of our Lord. When heart and head are combined they will rarely lead us astray. Though boldness in the right may seem to us at the time mere

folly, it will bring a more splendid result than the compromise we are tempted to accept.

The ten pounds, which Mary paid for the alabaster box of spikenard, and spent on the Redeemer as her spiritual insight directed, have brought in a far richer return to the people of God than they would have done if the disciples, with their narrow time-serving minds, had got them and given them to the poor. The perfume that floated throughout the dwelling at Bethany, has been scented by thousands who would never have felt it, had it been sold to a Jewish merchant. The precious odours have spread, till the very garments of the Church smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia, whose fragrance goes out through the world, and up to heaven, where it is accepted as a sweet-smelling savour. So much has the boldness of one woman in right-doing helped to accomplish. Devoted to the person of her Master, she had devised a right form of service, and she had dared to do it. Let us be bold in obeying the dictates of our hearts; let us be brave for Christ's sake, and the reward of the brave loving heart will be ours. Act from personal conviction.

Finally, time forbids our lingering longer to recount and enforce the many thoughts suggested as we stand by this memorial. I commend it to your contemplation in all its many-sidedness. But I cannot close my sermon without urging one other view of it,—a view which should affect very encouragingly a certain

class who may be present. Allow me just once more to point you to that scene. Observe the sublime magnanimity with which Christ permits His anointing. There is Mary in her human weakness, conscious of the corruption of her nature, knowing how liable she is to err both in plan and thought, as well as in action. Yet she is believing. She comes and touches Him of infinite purity, the God of justice, the hater of sin, the creator of her soul and body. The incongruity between the two principal actors in the scene strikes the disciples, and they are troubled about the audacity of the woman.

Perhaps there are some here who are conscious of their frailty, who know how vacillating they are, who feel that their heart is stained with the corroding blackness of sin,—some who want to become purer and better and worthier, who would willingly take help in their struggles if they were sure it was offered, who see in Jesus Christ the Saviour they need, strong in His immaculate sinlessness, powerful in His grace and spirit, helpful and sustaining in His word of consolation and counsel. But somehow they do not get near Him: He is so awful in His spotlessness that they dare not approach Him. They do not like to go out to Him because of the looks cast on them by friends; or perhaps they have not sufficient confidence in their view of what He is. They may fear they are mistaken as to His willingness and ability to receive them.

But behold how, on that night in Bethany, the Son of God, strong to save, veiled His glory and descended

to the level of the thoughts that filled Mary's mind. Behold how He made her forget her liability to error; how He relieved her trembling and timidity as He mercifully recognised her humble endeavour; how He knit at once her heart and soul into more loving sympathy with His own, so that the cold thoughts and words of the onlookers had no effect on her. "Why trouble ye the woman? she hath wrought a good work upon Me."

Brethren, Jesus is to-day the same merciful Saviour that He was on that evening, watchful to relieve our poor humanity's fearfulness when we come into His presence, ready to say to our own misgivings and doubts, as well as to the persecutions small and great which afflict us from the outside, "Why trouble ye him?" He is ready to set our heart and mind aglow with the warmth of His own Divine yet human love, with the strength and fervour of life which will not only expand with the spread of knowledge in this world, but will in the world to come go on increasing for evermore. Here is the Saviour compassionate in His readiness to receive you, and supply all your need. Weak and trembling though you be, come forward with your offering of love. JESUS ROBES HIS MAJESTY IN MERCY.



