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The gift of the Author } December 5th 1860.
at his residence in Hull } Edward Henwood

MEMOIR

4. 3

York. Friday Evening.
Dec-28th 1860. E.H.

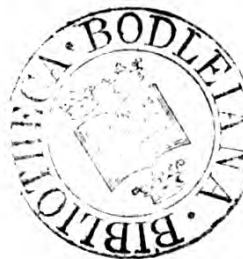
THE REV. THOMAS POWELL.

BY HUMPHRY SANDWITH, M.D.

EXTRACTED FROM

THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST MAGAZINE

FOR JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER, 1852.



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1852.

MEMOIR,

&c.

THE leading Wesleyan Ministers of the first half of the present century are eminently worthy of remembrance. They were cast on evil days. Next to saving souls, their office was to weaken the force of noxious principles sown on British soil for the first time since the Reformation. The source of those principles was the first French Revolution. Political expediency was gradually sapping the foundations of the British constitution, and removing those barriers which the piety and wisdom of our ancestors threw up around it to guard against the stealthy return of its ancient Italian foe; and in our national seats of learning a morbid appetite for patristic lore and mediæval antiquities was vitiating the healthy relish for Protestant truth. Hence the national recognition, at last, of Romanist teachers of religion, both at home and in the colonies. Hence, also, the supplanting in many of our national churches of the simple rites of Protestant worship, and the substitution of the mummeries of Romish superstition. The shock thus given to the national faith encouraged the spread of German Neology among the upper classes, and of a demoralising Socialism among the lower. To aggravate these evils, a population outgrowing its religious agencies was virtually inviting both the insidious aggressions of Rome, and the inroads of a rude infidelity. Wherever Tractarian opinions obtained a footing, there a withering High-Church exclusivism prevailed; while evangelical religion was equally branded by men of the infidel school as contemptible fanaticism. On times like these, and among such mighty elements of moral mischief, was the subject of our memoir thrown by the providence of God. But a heaven-born piety nerved him for a successful encounter with these gigantic foes. Energetic, indeed, must have been the sinews of that mental constitution, which could enable its possessor to surmount the defects of early education, and make his influence widely felt among the hosts of learned polemics whose principles he boldly assailed. Yet, seconding the gifts of nature by a sedulous cultivation of them so far as his means allowed, Thomas Powell was permitted to achieve more than many of his contemporaries who possessed far greater advantages; and therefore it may be truly said of him, that he "served his own generation by the will of God."

Mr. Powell was actively engaged in the Wesleyan Itinerancy about

a quarter of a century. During the last twenty of those years he was familiarly known to the writer of these pages. Their acquaintance began in 1829, during which and the following year Mr. Powell was stationed at Bridlington, where the writer then resided. A friendship was at that time formed between them, and an active correspondence subsequently maintained up to the period of his death. The survivor alludes to these particulars, simply to show what were his opportunities of knowing the excellent subject of this memoir, beyond what he derived from an acquaintance with his published writings. He feels that he is only discharging a debt of friendship in recording so much, that alike reflects honour on departed worth, and ought to stimulate the emulation of noble minds. "Our friendship," wrote Mr. Powell, in a letter dated "Harwich, September 27th, 1832," "commenced, I believe, without any mask. We saw and loved each other in the undress of life; and whilst our identity remains, I have no doubt our mutual affection will remain, yea, and heighten too." And again, in another letter, dated "Amphill, June 3d, 1834," he writes:—"By the by, I find I am under very great obligations to you for defending me against — and —. I commit my character to your custody with the most perfect confidence; and, seriously, if I die before you, *I wish you to write my obituary*; only do not forget my imperfections." How little did the writer anticipate, when he first read that sentence, that he should ever feel called upon to respond to that appeal! He commenced his task, however, from a spontaneous impulse, which the subsequent discovery of this forgotten wish of his departed friend invested with the authority of a sacred duty.

Mr. Powell was born at the village of Hasselby, near Howden, Yorkshire, on the 24th of October, 1791. His parents were of the class of English peasantry, and unable to give him much education. His only acquirement, while under the parental roof, was that of reading and writing. His parents were moral in their conduct, but not members of any Christian communion. Their son Thomas, as soon as he was able, went out as a farmer's servant. One of his surviving friends, Mr. Edmund Thompson, now of Scarborough, remembers his coming as a smart-looking youth of eighteen to the village of Armyn. Here he lived two years, and thence went for one year into the employment of the late Mr. Michael Clarkson, of Gunby, near Howden. During this period, urged by a sense of the want of education, he resolved on saving a portion of his wages for further instruction. Soon afterwards he put himself under the tuition of a Mr. Thurlow, and subsequently under Mr. Wood, of Hasselby. He next became himself a village-schoolmaster, at Thornton, near Pockton. He habitually walked from thence to Holme-House,

Spalding-Moor, the residence of the late Mr. Barnard Clarkson, to receive lessons in Latin from Mr. Clarkson's family Tutor. This gentleman ultimately recommended Mr. Powell to Mr. Clarkson as his successor. The recommendation was acted upon with the highest satisfaction to both parties; and, while officiating in the capacity of Tutor to Mr. Clarkson's family, Mr. Powell became a Local Preacher in the Howden Circuit. In that well-known Methodist family he was highly esteemed; and he won, also, the good opinion of the whole neighbourhood. In discharging the twofold duties of Tutor and Local Preacher, his zeal carried him so far, that the Clarksons became alarmed, lest his health should break down under his close application to study.

An autograph copy of a letter, dated Thornton, October 22d, 1818, lies before the writer, addressed by Mr. Powell to the late Mr. Barnard Clarkson, asking for his advice and direction on the subject of beginning to preach. The following extract gives so interesting a view of the self-reliance of a truly noble mind, and sheds so clear a light on his early history, that it ought not to be withheld:—

“Ever since I was a child at school, I have been a lover of books and of learning. From this, and the peculiar feelings I have had on the subject, I believe that my natural genius is that way inclined. But after I was converted to God, my thirst for knowledge greatly increased. Always, when it did not interfere with my duty to my master, it was my delight to be increasing in knowledge. But this was not all; for, having the love of God in my heart, I wished others to be blessed likewise; and, a kind of involuntary conviction pursuing me that the knowledge which I acquired was not for myself alone, I doubted whether it was not my duty to do something as a labourer in the vineyard of the Lord. These things following me very closely, and being persuaded of the usefulness of learning, and of my own great want of it, after much deliberation and prayer to God for direction, I determined to cast myself into what I believed to be the way of Providence. This was to give way to my natural inclination to learning, and to endeavour to qualify myself, by the blessing of the Lord on my labours, to be useful, if ever He should call me. What supported me here was a consciousness of the purity of my intentions, and of following the best light I could get: so that I thought, if I should find myself mistaken, or should fail in my attempts, I should still have the consolation to reflect that I had done my best. But, thanks to the Lord! He whom I have trusted has not hitherto forsaken me; nor have I repented of what I have done. For the accomplishing of my object, I spent, at school and in things pertaining thereto, nearly what little money I had saved, and then took the humble path in which I now am, to keep

myself out of debt, and at leisure hours to pursue my purpose. The plan I had laid down was this :—To acquire, if I possibly could, some knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew ; to acquaint myself a little with the art of speaking and reasoning ; to add something of geography, astronomy, chronology, and history, with what I could of divinity. To these things I have allotted three years more, if it shall please the Lord to spare me my health.”

But we must now more closely inquire into the circumstances of Mr. Powell’s conversion. The first decided impressions of religion appear to have been made at a comparatively early period by a remarkable dream, which teemed with images of eternal torment. He awoke in terror, sprang from his bed, at once fell upon his knees, and gave praise to God that the visions which had terrified him in sleep were not a reality. These religious impressions were deepened while attending the Wesleyan chapel at Foggathorp. He was then in his seventeenth year, and in the service of Mr. Massey, of Harlthorpe. During the service on one occasion he solemnly resolved to give his heart to God ; and, on quitting the chapel with two of his companions, he thus addressed them :—“ I have determined to go to heaven ; and if you are determined to go to hell, I will not go with you.” These words were spoken with the seriousness of a man who had made a covenant with God ; and the sequel will show that Divine grace enabled God’s faithful servant to keep that covenant inviolate. He at once joined the class of Mr. Thomas Laverack, who has been heard to speak in high terms of Mr. Powell’s piety. We have now discovered a higher impulse, stimulating intellectual movement, and adding force to every other motive to cultivate those talents of which he felt himself to be the favoured possessor. Yet the moral renovation of his nature stopped not with self-improvement, but quickly prompted him both to study and labour for the advantage of his fellow-creatures. Hence his toils as a Local Preacher, and the breaking down of his health from close application to study.

Mr. Powell has left on record, that “ about the age of nineteen he was brought to a saving knowledge of God.” He has, moreover, been heard to state, that one day, when at work upon his employer’s farm, he retired into an out-building ; that, while he was there pouring forth his soul “ with strong crying and tears,” Christ appeared before his mind in the fulness of His saving power ; and the weeping suppliant embraced his Redeemer in the exercise of simple, scriptural faith. He had then peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and was enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. From that moment he commenced walking in the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost ; and that humble out-building, into which he had retired with the

burden of his sins, but from which he bounded forth with a light heart and an elastic tread, was ever afterwards fondly remembered as his spiritual birth-place. When we hereafter trace Mr. Powell's life of eminent devotedness to God, and to the interests of His church, we shall revert to this part of his religious history with renewed satisfaction, from the persuasion that so solid a foundation alone could have sustained so goodly a superstructure. The Minutes of Conference for 1850 truly state, in their Obituary, that "his conversion was sound and scriptural, and gave a strong impulse (perhaps stronger than usual) to his whole moral and intellectual nature, making him at once a contemplative and an active Christian believer."

From the same Connexional authority we learn, that Mr. Powell was admitted on trial as a Wesleyan Minister in the year 1822. But we must here quote from a valuable letter furnished to the writer by Edmund Thompson, Esq., of Scarborough, (formerly of Armyn,) which gives many interesting particulars of Mr. Powell's history:—

"When Mr. Powell left Mr. Barnard Clarkson's, he acted as an Assistant in the school of the late Mr. Green, of Cottingham; but for what length of time I know not. But I perfectly remember, he was obliged to leave Mr. Green through a severe illness, which he contracted by sitting a whole day in wet shoes, made so by walking amongst wet grass. As he had no suitable home, (his father being very poor,) and no adequate means of support, I invited him to be a guest in my house, until his complaint (inflammation of the lungs, which threatened consumption) should take a favourable or an unfavourable change. You will smile, I dare say, when I state that, during the year that he continued with me, I made him a strict vegetarian and teetotaler, although I had not then heard these terms used, at least in the sense in which they are now applied. He was a very docile scholar in this new medical school, and, I am happy to state, with the most perfect and satisfactory success. It was at this period that I was more particularly acquainted with our late friend; but I can only remember that his visit to me was highly gratifying to myself, family, and neighbours. It was, I think, during this period that he made a visit to York, and was observed by the late excellent and Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Kirby-Hall, reading a Greek author. They had much conversation; and the Clergyman offered to prepare him as a Minister in the Establishment, and afterwards to provide for him. This was refused by our friend on account of his attachment to our system.

"I may further add, although I do it with reluctance, (as the naming of it will make me too prominent in the affair,) that Mr. Powell passed his examination at the Hull District-Meeting, as a

candidate for the Methodist ministry. The Conference, in that year, was held at Sheffield. On a Friday during its sittings the late Mr. John Cattle, of the Driffeld Circuit, came to my house in the morning, and so pressingly *insisted* that I should accompany him to Sheffield, although quite in opposition to my wish and intention, that I gave my consent. We called upon the Rev. Robert Newton, with whom Mr. Cattle had business in regard to the Driffeld Circuit. When this was settled, I asked,—‘What have you done with Mr. Powell?’ The answer was,—‘We have thrown him overboard.’ I stated my regret that we should lose a Minister of such high promise. To this he responded,—‘How could we receive him in his bad state of health?’ This led to explanation; and he then observed,—‘If I could rely upon you, I would bring the matter again before the Conference.’ He did depend upon me, and the consequence was, that Mr. Powell was received as a Minister. In the above statement I only give a general account, for I cannot recollect the *verbatim* particulars.”

Some other interesting circumstances connected with Mr. Powell’s history at this period, the writer happily has the means of supplying by an autograph copy of a letter of his, dated “July 4th, 1826, Oxon,” which was sent to the Rev. Messrs. Wheeler, Reece, Gaulter, &c. It consists of “reasons for requesting admission into full connexion;” and it appears to have answered the end proposed, as Thomas Powell’s name appears in the Minutes of that year as “admitted into full connexion with the Conference.” This document states as follows:—

“On the 16th of December, 1821, having given up my situation as private Tutor in Mr. Clarkson’s family, and this entirely on account of my being called out, I entered on my work in the Hull Circuit, and continued regularly in it till the Conference of 1822. The Committee then sent for me to pass my final examination in order to go out immediately as a Missionary. Everything stood fair but the views which I then had on the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship. As I could not come into their views at that time, they told me I had better return home for awhile, and examine the subject over: they would correspond with me, and, if the difficulty were removed, I was still to be at their call. I went home, and explained my views, perhaps more fully, to Mr. Highfield; when he told me he thought that explanation would satisfy the Committee, and wished me to communicate it to them. I did so on the 3d of September, 1822. In that letter I stated, that I thought in my circumstances it might perhaps be better to have my name transferred to the list of reserve for the home work. In Mr. Watson’s reply, dated September 5th, 1822, he acquiesced in the proposal. On the 3d of October

I was taken with a violent inflammation on the lungs, from which there was for a time little hope of my recovery. God was gracious and merciful to me, however, and I did recover.....By the Conference of 1823, I was appointed for the Colchester Circuit, and remained there two years, and have spent the last in the Oxford Circuit."

Colchester was Mr. Powell's first Circuit, and deserves mention chiefly as it yielded him an excellent wife, whose cheerful piety sustained him in many a trying hour, and whose laborious services as an amanuensis greatly alleviated his literary toils. Here, also, he met with many valuable persons of different denominations, and especially with that venerable Clergyman, the Rev. William Marsh, with whom a happy intercourse at Bible and other meetings gave a higher catholic tone to Mr. Powell's feelings. Of this gentleman he ever spoke with high admiration. His next Circuit was Oxford; and there can be no doubt that he profited much by a year's residence near that ancient University. His manners were highly conciliatory; and he obtained access to the college libraries with a view to promote his acquaintance with ecclesiastical literature. Probably his taste for patristic lore dates from this period,—a taste which he afterwards cultivated so successfully, that he not only surrounded himself by degrees, and at an unusually small cost, with a library which would have graced any graduate of Oxford or Cambridge, but also mastered the Greek and Latin fathers, and made much of their learning his own. His next appointment was to Rotherham, where, as at Oxford, he remained but one year. He was then appointed to Doncaster, where he laboured with much acceptance during 1827 and 1828. This period was memorable for the excitement which everywhere prevailed on the subject of Roman Catholic emancipation. The occasion powerfully aroused his religious patriotism, and tested the strength of his Protestant principles. It found him thoroughly prepared to enter the lists with the ultra-liberal advocates of that measure, and furnished him with the first fair opportunity for a display of his powers as a public disputant. His speeches, as recorded in the "Doncaster Gazette," display a power of logic, a depth of acquirement, and a breadth of comprehension, not often surpassed. Whether these identical speeches had met the eye of the late Earl of Eldon or not, the writer is not aware; but nothing is more probable, and nothing more likely to have elicited from his Lordship, in his place in Parliament, March 18th, 1829, the following well-earned eulogy:—"As to the junction of the Church of England with the Wesleyan Methodists, when those by whom Parliament were addressed were Protestants, he should like any one to tell him why the Wesleyan Methodists were not Protestants, and had not a right to join in

such addresses. For his own part, having had multitudes of provincial papers transmitted to him, containing reports of the debates which had taken place at numerous meetings in the country, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament against further concession to the Catholics, he had been astonished to observe the ability and knowledge manifested by the Ministers of the Wesleyan Methodists, who had taken part in those debates."* At all events, these speeches made a powerful and lasting impression on the inhabitants of Doncaster, by whom the name of Thomas Powell is still held in grateful remembrance.

During his stay at Doncaster, Mr. Powell ably vindicated what he considered the scriptural view of predestination; that doctrine having, as he believed, been represented to the community in a dangerous aspect by an Independent Minister, on occasion of the murder of the late John Dyon, gentleman. Two pamphlets were the result of this interposition to repudiate what he deemed an injurious exposition of the principles of the Divine administration. The controversy is just mentioned *en passant*, in order to show the vigilance of his mind, as also to indicate that its prevailing features were metaphysical acumen, and an untiring spirit of research.

Bridlington was Mr. Powell's next appointment, where he spent two happy years in the bosom of his family and in the society of his friends. He was then in his thirty-eighth year, in vigorous health, animated with a pure zeal for the promotion of the glory of God and the good of man. It was here the writer and the subject of this memoir formed an enduring friendship. Mr. Powell's pulpit efforts as well as private conversations were to the former a source of much edification. There was an unusual grasp of mind, and an elevated tone of piety, which gave weight to his opinions. Not that he was a popular or eloquent Preacher. His mind had too metaphysical a cast for easy and flowing language. This peculiarity in the style of his addresses having been hinted to him, he replies indeed:—"If I understand what metaphysics are, and if I understand myself, I must declare that I think I never preached a metaphysical sermon in my life. I have once or twice touched the subject of the being and attributes of God; but, even then, I studiously avoided too abstract a mode of treating it. In conversation I have occasionally indulged in a metaphysical discussion. Some have, I suppose, inferred from this that I preach metaphysics."† Previously to this, he had playfully attempted a solution of the peculiarity in question thus:—"Really, in the present eventful period, so many things rush upon one, that I am afraid some of them will be lost in the crowd. I

* Vide Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Session 1829, Part xvii., p. 1313.

† MS. letter, dated "Birstal, April 2d, 1838."

cannot resist telling you how highly I was pleased the other day with an observation of Dean Swift's, that the very *multitude* of one's ideas and words may form an obstacle to extemporaneous speaking,—illustrated under the comparison of a *thin* church emptying faster than a *crowded* one.* You'll call me a proud rogue. Well, in spite of all, I will have it that this is sometimes a disease of my own."† In after-years, indeed, and when he revisited Beverley towards the close of his career, he acquired a far simpler style of address, one which might be called colloquial. But, at the period of which we speak, he could scarcely be said to have formed a style at all. In truth, the want of early scholarship was a sad hinderance to him, both as a speaker and an author. Intent only on acquiring ideas, he was negligent of the language in which to clothe them. He was a patient student of God's holy word, and made the preparation of his sermons his first and chief pursuit. He once assured the writer that his rule was, never, except on very rare occasions, to preach the same sermon twice, his object being to break up new ground, and widen his acquaintance with the truths of Scripture. Conversant with the current literature of the day, so far as his opportunities enabled him, he had not only a respectable acquaintance with modern discoveries in many of the fields of human inquiry, but his mind was still further enlarged by a growing acquaintance with the wisdom of an erudite antiquity. He had, in short, already commenced those studies which ultimately enabled him to produce a work which reflects equal credit on himself and on the Connexion of which he was an ornament. On one occasion he did himself great honour at an Anti-Slavery Meeting held at Bridlington-Quay. It was one of a series in Yorkshire, originated by the late Daniel Sykes, Esq., Member of Parliament for Hull, who had taken up the cause of our enslaved Negroes in the West Indies, after the death of Mr. Wilberforce. The effect of Mr. Powell's speech was electrical, and elicited the warm applause of a very intelligent audience, including Mr. Sykes, Archdeacon Wrangham, and others. A most favourable impression of his talents was then made on the learned Archdeacon's mind, which was afterwards deepened by the perusal of an extremely clever letter, in the writer's possession, on that phase of the marriage-question which has since so much agitated the public mind. And here it may be observed, that Mr. Powell's letters are an exception to the above general censure of his style. Some of them, thrown off without premeditation, are expressed with equal clearness, force, and beauty.

After Mr. Powell left Bridlington, the following thirteen years

* Vide Chalmers's *Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. ii., p. 177.

† MS. letter, dated "Bedford, 1835."

were successively spent in Manningtree, Bedford and Ampthill, Derby, Birstal, Burnley, and Belper. At the end of nine years after leaving Bridlington, his well-known work on "Apostolical Succession" made its appearance, and produced a powerful impression. The Hon. and Rev. A. P. Perceval in England, and the Rev. E. A. Stopford in Ireland, attacked it with an earnestness which showed how much the Tractarian and High-Church party felt its power. The triumphant replies to both made these attacks subservient only to Mr. Powell's reputation. The cause of genuine Protestantism was much promoted by so successful an assault on one of the main bulwarks of a semi-Popish High-Churchism; and the evangelical part of the religious public owe their champion a debt of lasting gratitude for so important a service. It was a proof of his discernment, that from an early period he had felt the bias of the age to ecclesiastical supremacy, and seen that Oxford theology, in its onward progress to Rome, threatened the existence of civil and religious liberty. He therefore gave himself, heart and soul, to the study of those principles on which the ponderous superstructure of Popish and semi-Popish heresy ultimately reposes. He conducted this assault on the citadel of error with equal courage and success, and effected a breach in the bulwark of apostolical succession, satisfied that, by undermining so mighty a pillar of the ecclesiastical fabric, he was largely contributing to the downfall of the whole. One or two brief extracts from the work will show the author's leading design:—

"The High-Church scheme of an order of Bishops, *by Divine right*, distinct from and superior to Presbyters; possessing prerogatives incompatible with Presbyters; having the rights and authority of Apostles; which order of Bishops is to be traced by a *personal succession*, through an *unbroken line*, from Peter to the present Bishops of England; and whose *ordinations* are so *essential* to the validity of a true Gospel ministry, that without them all preaching and ordinances are 'VAIN' and *without 'the promise of Christ:'* this scheme has been examined in its fundamental positions, and has been shown to be a BASELESS FABRIC, calculated only to destroy the peace of the church, and to promote pride, bigotry, exclusiveness, intolerance, and persecution; in one word, *to destroy Protestantism, and to promote Popery.*" (P. 282.)

"What, then, is the wisdom of Protestants? The watchword of the enemy is, '*Divide and conquer.*' Let the motto of Protestants be, '*THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.*' Let no Protestants set up *exclusive, intolerant* schemes against their fellow-Protestants. He that does so is an enemy to Protestantism, and a friend to Popery. This Essay has been written to expose, refute, and put away a scheme of this kind, already sufficiently characterized.

The author requests the co-operation of every true Protestant in this design." (P. 295.)

No one can examine this monument of learned industry and patient research,* with its granite-like masses of testimony dug from the quarry of ecclesiastical lore, without a feeling of astonishment that a man, taken from the plough, should, by the sheer force of native intellect, have so triumphed over difficulties insuperable to ordinary minds, as to familiarise himself with a species of learning deemed accessible only to cloistered scholars. That he thoroughly mastered the learning essential to the success of so difficult an inquiry, is evident from the felicitous use he has made of the classical volumes which crowded his book-shelves. We may say of him what Holingshed said of Archbishop Grindal, that he was "so studious, that his book was his bride, and his study his bride-chamber." His was a *bibliomania*, under the control of severe habits of research and stern critical investigation, and not influenced by an ostentatious vanity merely to appear learned. He had a wonderful tact in exploring book-stalls, and singling out the rarest works veiled under the garb of a worn and dirty exterior. He was on familiar terms with the eminent London booksellers in this department of literature, and knew the modes of coming at continental treasures.† That his ruling passion exposed him to the temptation of incurring expenses somewhat beyond his means, is undoubted. But as he commenced his gleanings before the demand for patristic and mediæval lore had become general, he had amassed a most valuable collection of the Fathers and similar works at a cheap rate before this kind of learning became immoderately expensive. Nevertheless it will appear that Mr. Powell by slow degrees got into pecuniary embarrassment, towards which it cannot be concealed that his library expenses, as well as his publica-

* A Review of this important work will be found in Vol. XIX., Third Series, of the Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, p. 310. The reviewer thus speaks of the qualities of the Essay :—"The volume shows penetrating and extensive research, and great steadiness and coolness in argumentation. He" (Mr. Powell) "has brought together a vast quantity of important materials; and if at any time the same question is to be re-examined, Mr. Powell's labours will render his successor's task much more facile than his own has been. He has done well, too, in confining himself to what is essentially connected with the question. It will be easier to nibble at detached portions of his volume, or to treat it with haughty contempt, than fairly, on the main point of the argument, to grapple with the author."

† The following is a specimen of his tact in enriching his library :—

"The other day I got the *Enchiridion Theologicum* in exchange for some old books. The *Thesaurus* of Suicer is much the more splendid work, and I think by far the most valuable and important. I have also been exchanging away about forty volumes, with £2. 16s. in cash, for a handsome copy of St. Augustine's Works, eleven volumes folio, bound in seven, in vellum. The volumes I exchanged away did not stand me in more than about £2. 10s., and I have £4 allowed for them in the bargain." (MS. letter, dated Harwich, June 4th, 1833.)

tions, contributed. This eventually preyed much on his mind, which incessant and close study had ill prepared for the shock of anxiety from the *res angusta domi*. In truth, his nervous system was plainly much damaged by the literary toils incurred in completing his work on Apostolical Succession. Never can the writer of this memoir forget his painful emotions on a personal interview with Mr. Powell soon after the appearance of that volume, so pale and haggard was his countenance, and his frame so emaciated.*

The full value of Mr. Powell's book can only be appreciated by referring to the prominence given to the dogma of Apostolical Succession by the Tractarians, who had re-asserted it as the means of advancing the exclusive claims of a High-Churchmanship. Recent public measures had practically placed the Church of England, in some respects, in a new relation to the Government. The national Legislature no longer consisted of Churchmen only. The evangelical sects might now look for something more than toleration from a Parliament which incorporated with itself their own representatives. Hence the retreat of the High-Church party to mediæval traditions for support. But the Tractarian conspiracy against the rights of modern evangelical churches practically as well as logically involved the Reformation itself in its sweeping anathema. That glorious revival of primitive Christianity was accordingly described by the new sect in the Church of England as "a limb badly set," which needed to be broken afresh to complete a cure. Even Bishop Jewell himself was unceremoniously spoken of as an "irreverent Dissenter!" The Reformed Church of England, which in the sixteenth century had sympathised with Presbyterians as partaking of "like precious faith" with herself, and as equally signalised by the honours of martyrdom, was now to have her catholic zeal and love cooled down to the temperature of mediæval catholicism by the refrigerating processes of patristic lore. By such dogmas, in short, as that of Apostolical Succession, she was to be brought to approximate as closely as possible to Rome. What have been the sad fruits of this conspiracy, let the late outburst of national indignation against a daring aggression of the Pope, which Tractarianism virtually invited, attest. Verily the risk was great, that the battle of the Reformation would have to be fought over again; and then the broken limb would have been reduced in a fashion far less in harmony with Tractarian tastes than before.

The "Apostolical Succession" having been favourably reviewed in the "Watchman," though not by its editor, Mr. Powell made the writer the medium of communicating his thanks for what he calls

* Dr. Paul Henry tells us of Calvin, that "by night-watchings he acquired his vast and exact learning, and sharpened his natural powers of thought; but by the same means he prepared for himself bodily suffering and an early death."

“the generous praise of the reviewer.” He then runs on in the following strain:—

“The work was produced under some discouragements of a rather peculiar character. I saw, however, a vile attempt upon the liberties of the Christian church. I believed the attempt was hateful to God, and ought to be rendered hateful to man. I believed God had given me some power to crush it. In this belief, under this conviction, I buckled on my armour. God has helped me: to Him be the glory! My friends are pleased: this adds to my pleasure. The church of God is, and, I believe, will be, benefited. If I do nothing else, I have not lived in vain.”

Of the thirteen years before specified, we have yet to dwell on the events of the last four, during which Mr. Powell was stationed in Burnley and Belper. But we have by no means exhausted the period of the previous nine years, terminating with the production of his *Essay on Apostolical Succession*. We shall therefore cast a backward glance over the space already traversed, as well as explore what yet remains to be noted from 1839, the year in which the *Essay* was published, to 1843. This will enable us to group in one view all the leading events of his public life, because the period of Mr. Powell's greatest intellectual activity and most important ministerial labours may be said to have ceased in 1843. The following is an enumeration of his literary efforts and projects, finished and unfinished, in print or ms. The arrangement is a chronological one, so far as epistolary hints and internal evidence allow. But it can only be in this respect an approximation to truth, because such was the fertility of Mr. Powell's mind, that he had many irons on the anvil or in the fire at the same time. The list stands thus:—

Manuscript pamphlet on Pædo-Baptism. Two printed pamphlets on Predestination. Manuscript gleanings for a work on the Holy Spirit's Influence. Article on Christian Salvation in the *Wesleyan Magazine*. Published *Essay on Apostolical Succession*. Manuscript *Essay on the Pastoral Office*. Manuscript gleanings for a work on the Popish controversy. Published pamphlet on Socialism. Manuscript materials for a work on Wesleyan Ordination. Projected pamphlet on Church Principles, in reply to Mr. Gladstone. Project of a critical examination and exposure of the unsoundness of Edwards on the Will. Project of a Reply to Dr. Pusey. Manuscript pamphlet on Baptismal Regeneration. Published Reply to Mr. Perceval. Published Reply to Mr. Stopford. Project of a Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. An incredible number of sermons and skeletons of sermons in manuscript. And several actual newspaper controversies with intemperate Clergymen and other opponents.

The reader will have a most inadequate conception of the zeal,

energy, and patient toil devoted to these studies, from the naked enumeration of them. Justice demands that they should be contemplated in the vivid light thrown upon them by Mr. Powell's correspondence. The history of his opposition to Socialism, for example, may be adduced as an illustration of what is meant, forming as it does an amusing episode to relieve the graver realities of our memoir. His first encounter with the Socialists was in November, 1838, when he met Jones, the apostle of Socialism, in open discussion at Leeds. Mr. Powell's letter, which describes the affair, is dated "Birstal, November 20th, 1838," and is to the following effect:—

"Being a party in the matter, all mention of success would savour of vanity. You will probably never receive a correct account of it. I may not give it. The only reporter present, the reporter for the 'Times,' is over head and ears among the Socialists. Baines's reporter could not get in. I may state a few things. I felt my work quite easy. Jones was driven to acknowledge that they" (the Socialists) "could not on their own system talk common sense, but must talk nonsense, until they got a new *language* and a new world. He was also made to acknowledge that, whilst in words they denied man's responsibility and reprobated punishments, they actually do use punishments even in New Lanark, and that they cannot do without them, and therefore only advise that they should be used prudently. To which it was replied, that, if man be irresponsible, it is wicked and unjust to punish as mere expediency, and *fiat justitia, ruat cælum*. That as to advising prudence in the use of punishments, that was nothing new. I engaged that, if Robert Owen would observe the rules which he says every man can observe and ought to observe in acquiring knowledge, I would be bound to make him admit the Bible to be true, and then show how, the Bible being true, it follows that the miracles were truly Divine; hence the truth of its doctrines and promises; hence he would be bound to receive God's authority, or be punished as a sinner; to receive the salvation offered, or be condemned to lose it; and that hence the truth of that scripture they so bitterly curse,—'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' (Mark xvi. 16.) I then showed that all the good they taught they borrowed from the Bible, and that *nothing but their blasphemy was their own*. The effect was to break through all restraints about the expression of approbation, which had been forbidden by the rules of the meeting. I thank God, for the sake of His honour, and the good of the people, I was completely triumphant. Many who had before attended their lectures have since declared their determination never to have any more to do with them. The common people say, the Socialists were completely floored. I believe the discussion has done good. My

end is answered. I give God the praise of His truth and goodness, which I trust I shall always be ready to defend according to the ability He may please to give me."

Before Mr. Powell left Birstal, this loathed demoralising Socialism again crossed his path. His eye was offended by a placard on the walls in Leeds. Like St. Paul at Athens, "his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw" so many of the people entangled in the meshes of this diabolical scheme, and "wholly given to" the grossest sensualism. "In a visit to Leeds a few days ago," he writes, "I saw a placard on the walls, headed 'SOCIALIST MISSIONS,' importing that it was the design of those blasphemers to convert infidels, to reclaim the wicked, to establish peace and righteousness in the earth, and to preach a new gospel!

'I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue.'

The accompanying placard appeared the day before the Missionary Meeting of those wretches, *to unmask Socialism*. Such is its history. *You may probably guess its author*. This is only sent for your private inspection. The case was a *dark* one; the means of cure needed to correspond."

This flaming placard is printed on a gigantic scale, and the leading points stand out in variously exaggerated capitals. It is a terrific manifesto, purporting to have been issued by *Satan* himself, whose name is undersigned, and calling on all the sons of darkness to riot in the indulgences of the "New Moral World," wherein the vices of the old one are pre-eminent virtues. It excuses crime as the result of physical necessity, and vilifies the Methodists, whose organization it proposes to adopt. Its downright diabolism is calculated to stagger the minds of the most infatuated, and open their eyes to the evils of Socialism. This unique manoeuvre may appear somewhat *outré* to a sickly sentimentalism, and may even shock the sobriety of sturdier minds. But the case was an extraordinary one. Socialism was then at its height; and as in the natural, so in the moral, world, "diseases, desperate grown, by desperate appliance are relieved, or not at all." Like Milton, whom he quotes, Mr. Powell, too, possessed an intrepid spirit; and in the pursuit of a great object was sometimes singular in his choice of expedients, caring but little for the world's opinion. But he was doomed to yet another skirmish with the Socialists. While stationed at Burnley in 1841, he reports that "they published a deceiving placard, with a challenge to 'all the Clergy in Burnley.' I put out, anonymously, a smart opposing placard. They ascertained that I was the author, and sent for me to substantiate its statements. I went and did so,—and then took up their challenge. The general opinion is, that they will not meet me.

They are evidently afraid of a defeat. They want to change their man. I allow of no change, except they send his master,—him, or Owen, I demand. All parties seem glad I have taken them up. What will be the result, I cannot tell. They have my conditions, and are to send me theirs.”* The above opinion, that the Socialists would shirk the discussion, proved correct. Hence Mr. Powell writes in a subsequent letter,†—“The Socialists have found a way to avoid the discussion here; and I am busy preparing a brief tract entitled, ‘Socialism in its true Colours.’” This pamphlet having been submitted in ms. to a leading anti-Socialist in London for his criticisms, and his remarks having been sent to Mr. Powell, the following are the author’s reflections:—“There are some serious mistakes in the mode of managing Socialists. What, for instance, has the question of the evidences of Christianity to do with the absurdities, immorality, and sedition of Socialism? Nothing but this,—to lead you away from the question of these abominations. No, no! I know better than to be led off from the proper question. Then as to metaphysics,—the tract has metaphysics enough for the people and the purpose for which it is written; more would spoil it, and make it useless.—Some will call the language coarse. Who would hew a rock with a razor? Do not fear but I shall make a difference between Gladstone and Owen.”‡ The essay, when published, was able in its way, displaying great acuteness in the management of the argument, and being caustic and unsparing in its language. More brief and sententious in style, and less elaborate in reasoning, than his theological productions, it was obviously framed with a view to popular impression.

Dauntless, ready, and subtile, as Mr. Powell was in debate, no man relished learned leisure more than he. “I have an opinion,” he remarks in one of his letters,§ “that there are many advantages, if a man has skill and resolution to improve them, in travelling in retired stations, especially for several years in the commencement of his public life. *I certainly very much enjoy the opportunities it gives me for study.*” || “I feel no passion for large towns,” he remarks in another letter.¶ “I was tired,” he exclaims elsewhere,** “of the responsibility of the Circuit. The many interruptions caused by Superintendency do not suit me. I have no wish for any office or

* MS. letter, dated “Burnley, April 15th.”

† Ibid., “May 4th, 1841.”

‡ Ibid., “May 15th, 1841.”

§ Dated “Harwich, June 4th, 1833.”

|| Like Lanfranc, the great Romish scholar of the eleventh century, Mr. Powell genuinely loved the liberty of letters, more than vulgar power.

¶ Dated “Birstal, May 6th, 1840.”

** Dated “Derby, October 4th, 1836.”

station of public notoriety. I am not, therefore, disappointed at all, that I do not seem in the way of such preferment. I could assign many reasons for this feeling, but it is unnecessary. One is, however, that *a serious and to me distressing interruption of studies* is almost a necessary consequence of such situations. Somebody must attend to these things, I am aware. Many like it; some are fitted for it: let them do it. If they do it well, they serve well the interests of the church. I esteem them; the church esteems them; and their great Master will accept and reward them." Once more, he thus writes in reference to a great work which he projected on the Romanist controversy: "I am applying assiduously to the Popish controversy. I think a clear, comprehensive, powerful essay on the subject would be a public benefit. I know many able works have been written; but they are generally too long or too short. Some able writers draw the subject out to such a length that few can read them. Others are so brief and superficial, that they can be but of little avail with any who feel the difficulties of the question. I have not the presumption to believe, that I could write such a work, altogether, as I think is wanted: still I do think I could put the controversy with greater power in a smaller compass than I have ever seen done. It would, however, be a great labour. I should want a few more works of authority, especially Bellarmine, and an edition of the Councils. I have a good many excellent works in my possession on the subject. These I shall (*Deo favente*) carefully peruse, making reference to the topics I should discuss. *I almost long to be in some Prebendary's golden stall, wholly at leisure to devote my days and nights to this work of defending the faith.* If you should see a copy of Bellarmine, either his whole works, or his volumes *De Controversiis*, you perhaps will inform me of the edition, price, &c."* That Mr. Powell had long meditated writing a work on the Popish controversy, is evident in many parts of his correspondence, from which we shall cite the following additional passages. "My acquisitions as to the Essay on Popery go on very slowly. It will require the three years of another station to finish them."† "I sometimes reconnoitre as to future attempts; and perhaps it may be useful so to do. I find my plan as to the Essay on Popery will require so much time and labour, that it may be considered doubtful whether it will ever be executed. However, the studies will not be in vain in days like these, when every Minister should be well acquainted with the means of defending Protestantism, and defeating the designs of Popery."‡ "I am working hard, but whether I am doing much I cannot say. I have begun reading seriously on the Popish question; and I must

* "Birstal, March 5th, 1835."

† "Birstal, December 24th, 1839."

‡ "Birstal, May 6th, 1840."

read, long before I have done all I have proposed to myself to do." *
 "The Circuit, indeed, is neither hard nor unpleasant : still very little time is left for any particular studies. Not that our flocks care much about this : most of them are like sheep in a pasture ; the wolf may be behind the hedge, but innocently they reckon not. This cannot, however, excuse the shortsightedness of shepherds. Neither will the wolf come the less, but rather the more, for our silliness and neglect. But I hope yet to do a little, if I live, and a kind Providence favour me. I marvel at the little of finished theology against Popery in the Protestant writers of the day. Perhaps matters will improve in this respect. The warfare is hardly seriously begun." †

This is not the first time in the world's history, when a youth taken from the sheepfold has become a Prince in Israel, and when the sling and the stone of a heaven-inspired genius has smote in the forehead some Goliath, whether of Gath or of Rome, and left the blaspheming boaster an offensive spectacle to men and angels. It is true, alas ! that Mr. Powell did not live to complete the whole of his designs against "the Man of Sin." His "Apostolical Succession," nevertheless, subverts the arrogant claims of Papal ecclesiastical supremacy. But it was not in waging offensive warfare alone against Socialism, the Papacy, Tractarianism, and other errors, that he rendered himself honourably conspicuous ; but also in the equally needful services of defending and building up the walls of a dilapidated Protestantism. And, believing Methodism to be one of its strongest bulwarks, he laboured to give strength to this column of Christianity, standing in the midst of many a mournful scene of desolation. Like the builders of old, "every one of whom had his sword girded by his side," so *he* builded. "With one of his hands wrought he in the work, and with the other hand held he a weapon." His zeal for his beloved Methodism chiefly appears in his projected work on "Wesleyan Ordination." The first notice of this design in the writer's possession occurs in the year 1840. Mr. Powell first thought of writing a pamphlet only ; but the project seems to have gradually expanded to far ampler dimensions, the more his mind brooded over the theme. We shall give a series of extracts from his letters on this subject, in order to show the nature of the work in question, and his wonted habits of patient research in its composition.

"What think you of 'A Letter on Wesleyan Ordinations,' or on 'the Scriptural Validity of the Wesleyan Ministry?' Churchmen pretend that we cannot justify our proceedings in administering the Sacraments, on Mr. Wesley's principles. Doubtless the matter wants clearing. I should take my stand upon the argument of the Essay"

* "Burnley, November 5th, 1840."

† "Doncaster, July 1st, 1845."

(on Apostolical Succession), "referring to it on the identity of Bishops and Presbyters, &c.; and then proceed to prove our power to administer the Sacraments, both upon the principles of Scripture and of Mr. Wesley. It would be done in a shilling pamphlet. The matter is all ready. *Pray don't mention this at present.*"*

"I just scribble a line to say that I am not dead, but buried in the subject of ordination. I am hunting all the schemes of intolerance in their windings and doublings. I see them fast in their own nets. But more of this by and by."†

"I am just negotiating with — for the printing of the treatise on Ordination, which I am preparing for the press. It will be almost as large as the Essay" (on Apostolical Succession); "and altogether as important to the interests of Wesleyan Methodism. The folly of Churchmen, in construing our silence into something like an acknowledgment of the charge of schism, makes it necessary to speak out. Indifferent things are urged as essentials, and a State Church to be so Divine, that to separate from it is a sin. I plead 'Not guilty;' and claim the right to establish that plea, without any respect to persons, parties, or principles, farther than as they are supported by the word of God. I regret the necessity to plead at all to such a charge. But it is advanced and urged by the combined power of the Clergy from the pulpit and the press. Mr. Wesley always spoke out against such attacks on Methodism. We have crouched long enough. The Clergy are very anxious to persuade the public of the superiority of the Prayer-Book to the—Bible? well—to the services of the Wesleyans; of the superiority of the Apostolical Church to the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion. This latter point, and all, indeed, but that the Prayer-Book is more excellent than the Bible, they have a right to maintain. Comparisons, it is said, are odious. However, it seems they are anxious to press the comparison. This will be acceded to, and some views will be given on the ministry, doctrine, and discipline of each Church."‡

"I find you are anxious to see my forthcoming publication. Now, in the first place, as to time, it will be several months at the shortest before I can get it out. I expect it to be altogether as important a work as the Essay" (on Apostolical Succession). "The following is the rough outline. It will consist of two parts, about five chapters each.

" PART I.

"Chapter I. A brief history of Ecclesiastical Ordination, showing the pretensions, confusion, and contradictions connected with the subject.

"Chapter II. A brief history of the rise, progress, and establish-

* "Birstal, February 17th, 1840."

† "Burnley, January 25th, 1841."

‡ "Burnley, March 29th, 1841."

ment of Wesleyan Methodism, as a distinct Christian Church, showing the occasion, causes, and consequences of this form of Christianity.

“Chapter III. A brief view of Episcopal Authority and Apostolical Succession.

“Chapter IV. The question of Ordination discussed according to the sacred Scriptures.

“Chapter V. The question of Ordination discussed according to ecclesiastical authority.

“PART II.

“Chapter I. An account of the Appointment of the Wesleyan Ministry.

“Chapter II. Mr. Wesley’s views of the Wesleyan Ministry, embracing his statement, vol. vii., p. 277.

“Chapter III. A reconciliation of Mr. Wesley’s views with the present state of the Wesleyan Ministry.

“Chapter IV. An application of the principles established in the treatise in proof of the Divine Authority of the Wesleyan Ministry and Ordinances.

“Chapter V. An examination of the boasted superiority of the Establishment, in its Ministry, Ordinances, and Discipline, over the Ministry, Ordinances, and Discipline of Wesleyan Methodism.

“The materials of the whole are ready. The first three chapters of the first part are roughly written out. The fourth and fifth chapters of the same part are rough-cast. I could very soon have the whole written; but *Festina lente* must be my motto. I know the importance of the work. I wish it to be such a defence of Methodism as a work of God, as never yet has been given, especially, I mean, as to its ministry. I know, also, that many will be waiting for my halting. The time is important for its appearance. I will do my utmost to hasten it.” *

“I am working very hard; but I find it important to make many long and laborious excursions in all directions on the questions that arise in my course. The work will lose nothing ultimately by this labour. Strange things are going on in the Church with Puseyism, &c. I am not alarmed at it. Open enemies are less dangerous than false friends. Protestantism never can prosper upon worldly or Popish principles. We must have a Gideon’s army, and God will be with us.” †

“I find the work I have in hand requires researches so careful and so extensive, that, if I mean to get it out, I must obstinately put aside every other subject. Then as to your question, ‘Whence the Wesleyan Ministers obtain their orders?’ The answer is, ‘From

* “Burnley, April 15th, 1841.”

† “Burnley, December 7th, 1841.”

Presbyters of the Church of England.' If it be inquired, 'What Divine right had they to ordain?' I answer, 'The very same that Bishops have, as Presbyters and Bishops are, by Divine right, the same, and have the same authority.' " *

The length of these extracts will be pardoned, we trust, from the consideration that the aim of this memoir throughout is to make Mr. Powell speak for himself, and thus to invest his character with the attractions of auto-biography. They demonstrate at once the loftiness of his aims, and his indefatigable habits as a student. But here let us pause for a moment to inquire into the Divine philosophy of those enlarged and prolonged intellectual movements, on the part of a man whose natural bias for self-improvement received in the first instance an unwonted impulse from the love of God in his soul. A further reference to his correspondence will show, that that main-spring of all his actions maintained its elasticity unimpaired to the last, through all the vicissitudes of his chequered career. We may just observe, before adverting to his letters, that they who knew him always witnessed a cheerful piety beaming in his looks, giving an elevated tone to his conversation, and governing his whole conduct. His unwavering trust in God never forsook him, even under the most discouraging circumstances. He was what he seemed, as far removed from hypocritical whine as from undevout and vain language. His words were always "seasoned with grace," and such as could not fail to edify his hearers. He seemed never to forget that he was about his Master's business. When thrown into the company of strangers, or of such as he knew needed "a word in season," he sought to give a right turn to the conversation. But let us hear the effusions of his regenerated spirit, as whispered in secret into the ear of friendship.

"Before I was married, a friend presented me with a walking-stick, with this inscription upon it, in French, 'I fear God, and I have no other fear.' I acknowledged the compliment, and trust I am still governed by the same principle. In such cases as Mr. —'s, I thank God, I am so raised above all earthly considerations, that if I ever think I do suffer anything in consequence, my certain consciousness of rectitude of principle, and of devotion to God in the deed, affords me some of the purest pleasure which I taste on this earthly scene.

'And more true joy Marcellus exiled feels,
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.'

I think I never experienced more of the power of godliness, in the same time, than I have done since I came to Bedford. The changing

* "Burnley, February 7th, 1842." See also Wesley's Journal on this subject, January 20th, 1746. Wesley's Works, vol. ii., p. 6.

scenes of this life often remove to a painful distance the dearest friends. I frequently feel this acutely. But the Lord does all things well. And, what is the best of all, He is ever present; present, in the glorious exercise of His love, and wisdom, and power, to the souls of His servants; present also to guide us all to meet at last in the same eternal house above. O, what a glorious hope!" *

"How quickly time moves on! How soon we shall all be gone—gone to meet in heaven! What a glorious prospect awaits the Christian! I have not for years felt so much of the powers of the world to come, as during the last few months. To God be all the praise! The retirement of this place is indeed very pleasant. God can bless His servants everywhere. My studies are so devoted to the glory of God and the good of His church, in the purpose of my heart, that they quite promote my own personal piety. This, I am sure, more fully fits me to preach the Gospel to others." †

"You are, my dear friend, buried, I suppose, in professional duties; and I am by painful events totally unfitted for everything but the simple common duties of the day. Thank God, I can repose in Him, that all He does is right! I feel the rod, but I bow to Him who appoints it." ‡

"Well, but time rolls on, whether we live or die; and, blessed be God, it bears the Christian to the heavenly haven. I have had much Divine enjoyment lately in contemplating these blissful associations. Riding home in an evening, after preaching my Saviour to my fellow-sinners, I have sometimes dwelt in heaven with my friends in my Father's house. O, how rapturous the thought! What bodies! no weakness, disease, old age, or death. What souls! perfected in knowledge, and holiness, and happiness. What society! how pure, how wise, how good! O, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, and the beatific vision of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! *Gloria Deo, Optimo, Maximo!*" §

Extracts like these, if unduly multiplied, would only weaken the force of the sentiments expressed in this beautiful but unaffected language. Still we cannot quit the subject without adducing two or three additional examples of that tone of religion which pervades his correspondence generally, as it eminently sanctified his conversation.

"It occurs to my mind to transcribe a passage from the work of the Abbé Dubois, on the Manners, &c., of the Hindoos, which I have read since I left Bridlington. 'The Physicians themselves, who are not Brahmans, would be considered as ignorant beings, and unworthy

* "Amphill, December 14th, 1833."

† "Ripley, January 25th, 1843."

‡ "Doncaster, September 12th, 1844."

§ "Bedford, 1833."

of the public confidence, however much entitled to it in other respects, if they were unacquainted with the *mantras* (prayers) suited to each disease, as regularly as with the medicines which are applied in the cure. The cure is considered as arising from the *mantras* as much as from the medical applications. One of the principal reasons for which the European Physicians are held in such discredit in India, as far as regards their profession, is, that they administer their medicines without any accompaniment of *mantram*.' (Page 80.) I am aware that there may be much superstition mixed with this; but there appears much more of the acknowledgment of God in it, than in the ungodly deportment of a great part of the faculty in England. I do not suppose, indeed, that it would be either practicable or expedient always, or even generally, to pray with patients, though there are doubtless many cases in which it might and ought to be done; but every practitioner ought to pray for God's blessing upon duties generally." *

"As to books, I have lately been living much amongst the dead. The Lives of Oberlin, Sir William Jones, and Mrs. Hannah More have much interested me. Oberlin was a fine character, though far short of Fletcher. Sir William Jones was an illustrious scholar, but too secular. He knew little of the true glory of Christianity. Such a man is a subject, though a painful one, for a Christian philosopher. He shows the capabilities of our nature in a glorious manner; but he shows that their utmost application, without entire devotion to God according to the Gospel, leaves results at last almost like those of an ingenious child in a toy-shop;—much ingenuity, much promise, much lost labour, little permanent utility; blasted hopes, and ultimate disappointment. I am also frequently passing through transformations in distant ages: I am indeed an enthusiast in Geology, or rather (and find fault with me, if you dare) in Theo-Geology." †

"What an affecting mortality amongst our Preachers, and especially in London! Dr. Clarke gone, and Richard Watson gone! Alas, when will Methodism see their like again? We know, indeed, that all things are possible with God. He can raise up others equal to them, or He can carry on His work without them. But His ordinary way is to use instruments, and instruments, humanly speaking, fitted to the end for which He uses them. And it certainly is not His ordinary way to raise up such men as Clarke and Watson. They were as Princes amongst their people. They were both good and

* "Harwich, December 24th, 1831."

† MS. letter, dated "Bedford, 1835." We may say of Mr. Powell, what the biographer of the Rev. William Kirby, M.A., author of one of the Bridgewater Treatises, asserts of the latter, that "his earnest desire was to see God in all things here, his fervent hope was 'to see all things in God hereafter.'"

great men. The old adage was fulfilled in them, 'As they lived, so they died.' The circumstances of the Doctor's death prevented his saying much; but what little he did say was delightfully edifying. Some one speaking to him on his rapidly approaching dissolution, and on preparation for it, he promptly and cheerfully replied, 'O, thank God, that is already done.' Indeed, he seems in death to have had the same simple-hearted filial love, and the same delightfully confiding faith, in the exercise of which he appeared constantly to live. Mr. Watson, as I have said, was both great and good. He had a mighty mind. It humbly and firmly believed. It was distinguished by contemplation, and sublime, adoring generalization. In the salvation of the soul the mightiest intellect is as weak as the meanest. The Lord, and the Lord only, is our strength and our salvation. This he felt as death approached, and he was simple as a child. 'The Methodists' view of the atonement,' said he, 'is right, and is the short way to the mercy-seat.' Here he rested, and was happy—died happy. *Gloria Deo soli! Amen. O præclarum diem, cum ad illud divinum animorum concilium cætumque proficiscamur!*" *

Mr. Powell was a catholic-minded man; and, regardless of non-essential differences of opinion, he recognised as a Christian brother every individual in whom he traced the image of his Saviour. Towards the Church of England he felt as much respect as was compatible with a sober estimate of its merits, and of the abuses inseparable more especially from patronage. He preferred on conviction, however, the system of Wesleyan Methodism, which he believed to be happily exempt from many of the elements of corruption inherent in some other systems. "What think you," he exclaims in one of his letters, "of church reform? As to the abstract question of an Establishment, I have never seen a conclusive argument against it. But the establishment of the Church of England I consider quite another matter." † Again: "I never could get a sight of the documents in the 'Standard' on the union of the Church with the Methodists. *Friendship* with the Church, *in her best points*, I would cultivate; but *union*, I hope, is far distant, except a wonderful reformation should first take place in the Church." ‡ Commenting on a certain number of the "Watchman," he writes:—"I was much pleased that you had seized the view, that the *union* of state provision or establishments in religion and of the voluntary system may perfect what neither could do *alone*. I lately met with it in Dr. Chalmers, and cordially embraced it. The adjustment may be difficult; but I believe it practicable." § Had he lived to witness

* MS. letter, dated "Harwich, January 31st, 1833."

† Ibid.

‡ "Amphill, December 14th, 1833."

§ "Bedford, 1835."

the late Papal aggression, there can be little doubt he would have warmly advocated the closest possible coalition of Methodism with evangelical Churchism, such at least as would be compatible with the free and independent action of the former.

The opinion of such a man as Mr. Powell on the constitution of Wesleyan Methodism ought to be known, as due both to his memory, and as likely to prove beneficial to others at a time when so many are disposed to *agitate*, or sullenly to withhold an expression of goodwill in its favour. He was a man of most independent mind, and never shrunk from declaring his opposing opinions on any matter under discussion in the Conference. He was no party man. Whoever might be in the ascendant there, they could claim his suffrage no further than as he saw they had truth and justice on their side. Hence his attachments to our constitution have augmented value. Of the Church-Methodist schism in Beverley he expressed his strong disapprobation, after reading the entire controversy. He was opposed to it equally on the ground of its being inimical to Wesleyan independence, and on that of its imputing to Conference a disposition to grasp the whole power. On this latter point the late Mr. Mark Robinson's "Observations" on our system contain the germs of all the objections urged against the Conference by later ruthless and reckless agitators. The schism of the Associationists he equally condemned. What his opinion of our constitution was at a still later period may be clearly inferred from the following brief allusion to the "Christian Observer:"—"What is the opinion in London about the note of war from the 'Christian Observer' of last month? My own opinion is, that a simple statement of the power of the people, according to the constitution of Methodism, should be supplied them for insertion next month."* Mr. Powell's views of the more recent melancholy rupture of the Connexion, originating with the "Fly-Sheets," may be inferred from his signature appended to the Ministers' "Declaration." Mr. Powell thought for himself; but he never allowed his opposition to go to the length of rebellion. He knew the value of union too well, and its supreme importance at this crisis of Protestantism, to risk by any wanton interference the blessings of religious peace, and consequent prosperity.

As we have seen, he was intent on great projects. He had arrived at that maturity of judgment which, from the grasp of his vigorous and well-informed mind, would have enabled him to achieve still more brilliant conquests in the field of theological literature. With an amiable and excellent wife, a lovely and pious daughter, and six hopeful sons, the cup of his social bliss flowed over. The outlined

* "Birstal, 1840."

picture of his domestic joys might be richly coloured by extracts from his letters, if that were needful.

“ But mortal pleasure, what is it in truth?—
The torrent’s smoothness, ere it dash below.”

For purposes inscrutable to us, a series of calamities now overtook, and in rapid succession so overwhelmed, the servant of the Lord, that he needed the patience which Job exhibited under his well-known trials. And by the grace of God he exemplified it. Providence, moreover, soon beckoned him from this vale of tears to the fruition of an earlier reward than either he or his friends anticipated.

In 1843, while at Belper, he was rather suddenly pressed for the liquidation of certain debts, the slow accumulation of twenty-five years. They appear to have been contracted partly as the consequence of assisting some of his relatives when struggling with hard times; but much more from the expenses of his library and his publications. He had all along cherished reasonable hopes of some assistance by legacies from his connexions,—in regard to which, however, he was disappointed. An extract or two from his letters will show that he had struggled hard, by a rigid economy, to emancipate himself from this galling bondage.*

“ One of the difficulties is, that this embarrassment has gradually come upon us even whilst practising a general system of economy; and on this account the resources to be found from plans of retrenchment are almost tantamount to plans of real want. Still we must be honest, want or not want. Allow me to say, that we wish at present to try our best with these difficulties. We do not wish anything to be said or done beyond this private and friendly communication. Severer plans of economy we have adopted, and shall continue to adopt. The Lord blesses us all with health, for which we are deeply grateful. I can at present, without cutting the sinews of my endeavours in writing for the church of God, part with about £30 worth of books; leaving the remainder worth nearly £100.† I educate my own boys; and two others attend with them about half an hour in a morning, for which I have £1 per quarter each. Mary probably will take a situation as a teacher either in a school or in a private family.” ‡

“ If you see Mr. —, please remember me very kindly to him. I owe him something; but I believe he will bear with me in my

* Such apologies as friendship can suggest are offered in mitigation of the censures of rigid justice.

† Calvin’s necessity at one time was so great, that he was driven to sell his books.

‡ “ Burnley, April 18th, 1842.”

endeavours to get all right. The *res angusta domi* is my greatest trial. We are trying hard. May the Lord direct and help us !”*

Family affliction was now added to lacerate a heart already wounded. The first serious visitation of this kind, under which his spirit bowed, as he kissed “the rod,” and adored Him who had “appointed it,” was the dangerous illness of his daughter. She was a most intelligent girl, and had finished her education in the north of France, at a Protestant school, through the kindness of a Christian lady of fortune. She had a severe attack of rheumatic fever, which damaged the valves of her heart, and thus created grave apprehensions for the future. “We hardly allow ourselves,” writes Mr. Powell, “to hope anything about Mary’s health. We leave her in the hands of Him who knows what is the best, and will do what is the best. Blessed be His holy name for bringing her to the knowledge of His mercy through the blood of His Son !”† But a still heavier blow was soon to overtake him, and smite him to the earth. Mrs. Powell, soon after her confinement, was attacked by a complaint which proved rapidly mortal. The following brief letter announced the mournful intelligence :—

“*Belper, February 15th, 1844.*

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—How shall I write it? My heart trembles. I am a widower, and my children motherless !—My beloved wife was taken ill on Tuesday morning last, and departed for glory at one o’clock this day. She was unable to converse with us ; but I have no doubt that she is now a saint before the throne. O, pray for me, my dear friend. My bereaved children join in love.

“I am, my dear friend,

“Yours, in deep affliction,

“THOMAS POWELL.”

This was an irreparable loss. Under any circumstances, separation by death from so pious, pleasing, and intelligent a woman—who had long solaced him in his cares, sympathised with him in his joys and sorrows, and laboriously assisted him, as his amanuensis, in his literary pursuits—would have been a grievous calamity. But how was it aggravated by occurring at the very moment when his creditors were strongly urging their claims ! This fact is stated in his very next letter.

“We feel much comforted in our affliction by the true sympathy of dear Mrs. Sandwith and yourself, as well as of other friends. We have, indeed, many causes for gratitude to our heavenly Father. We

* “Ripley, January 25th, 1843.”

† “Belper, October 23d, 1843.”

most fervently praise Him for the mercy and grace that conducted my beloved wife to glory. Our joy is great, too, from the assurance that she will suffer no more; and that we shall, ere long, meet her to part no more for ever. My beloved daughter, now doubly valuable to me and to my dear family, will write more at large.....You were aware, my dear friend, that we had been contending for some time with pecuniary embarrassments. On the very day on which my beloved wife was seized with the fatal attack I received a letter from one of our largest creditors, wishing for payment at a certain time mentioned. I resolved she should know nothing about it, except the Lord should restore her to me. In a day after her decease, or on the day of her decease, I received another. The Lord, perhaps, removed her from the trial. When she was removed to that world where cares and anxieties come not, I thought it best to mention my circumstances to one or two of the most respectable, judicious, and confidential persons near me. They have taken a most affectionate and friendly interest in my difficulties; and encourage me to hope that means may be devised of helping me through. I have laid before them all my responsibilities, and have offered everything I have on earth to meet them. The plan they suggest is, to call together about half a dozen of my most sincere friends, in order to arrange the means of extricating me. It is proposed that an early day be appointed, affectionately requesting these kind friends to meet at Normanton or Belper for considering the whole matter. You may be sure that the whole adds greatly to my already heavy affliction. But they are just debts; and, suffer what will, I shall shrink from nothing I can do or suffer to meet them.” *

A day was soon afterwards fixed upon for a meeting of Mr. Powell's friends, which took place at Belper. All pledged themselves to do what they could, personally, as well as by obtaining subscriptions from others. It was, however, mutually agreed upon, that no part of the library should, for the present, be sold,—this effort of his friends aiming mainly to save Mr. Powell's feelings, and obviate the necessity of so great a sacrifice on his part. The effort was, however, but partially successful, and still left Mr. Powell under considerable pecuniary obligations. Six months after the meeting of his friends at Belper, he thus writes :—

“I am abundantly satisfied with what has been done, and am deeply thankful to the kind friends for their sympathy. I have good hope that we shall be able, with care and patient perseverance, to manage the rest. I wish you not to attempt anything more, as it will be much more agreeable to me to do all I can do, than to have

* MS. letter, “ Belper, February 28th, 1844.”

anything done by others which first properly devolves upon myself. My dear children, thank God, are all well. Mary seems gradually improving in her health. We intend to carry on the education of the boys at home between us." *

The characteristic energy of his mind is conspicuous throughout the above letter. Nevertheless, his misfortunes had cooled his ardour for literary pursuits. "I am doing nothing," he had written a short time before, "and do not expect to do anything for some time in any studies. My life is *strangely* altered. I cannot bear to describe it. My comfort is, that my beloved partner is in glory, and the Lord is with me in my way to meet her."† "Thank God," he also writes on another occasion, "my dear daughter continues in pretty fair health: all the rest, with the dear babe, are very well. These are great mercies. My sad loss, however, I feel every hour. It is indeed a heavy stroke. The world and life are quite different things to me now to what they were. My hands are also greatly weakened in my work. In my studies and labours my beloved partner was a help-meet of no ordinary character. Without her I never should have accomplished what I have; and I seriously apprehend I shall not make much out in any future effort."‡

At the Conference of 1844 Mr. Powell was appointed a second time to Doncaster, where his early anti-Romanist efforts were still fresh in the recollection of many. The cordial welcome which greeted him on re-visiting the scenes of his former labours, was not unmingled with sympathy with him for the loss of one whose name was still fragrant with a thousand sweet associations.

The spring of 1845 is memorable for the national outburst of Protestant feeling against the grant to Maynooth. The Wesleyans of Doncaster at once chose Mr. Powell as their representative on a deputation to London. "I dare say you have learned," says he, in a letter dated "London, May 3d, 1845," "that this is a very numerous Conference. The first day it was very full, consisting perhaps of fifteen hundred persons. Deputations from all the Protestants in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, with the exception of the Established Church of Scotland. But it is understood that they are moving against the measure in their own way. On the whole, the most delightful harmony has prevailed. The Baptists from Leicester made an effort to introduce the question of Church and State; but they were defeated, and retired from the Conference. The whole Conference is solemnly and enthusiastically determined never to cease

* MS. letter, dated "Belper, July 5th, 1844."

† "Belper, May 17th, 1844."

‡ "Belper, April 10th, 1844."

opposition to this and to all Governments that shall attempt to tax Protestants for the support of Popery. Almost to a man they, and the friends who have sent them, are resolved to vote for no man as a representative in Parliament, who will not pledge himself to oppose all such measures as the one now before Parliament. Many Members of Parliament have been waited upon by the deputations of the places they represent, with statements to this purport. Some have been induced to oppose the measure, and others not to vote for it. However, the LORD GOD omnipotent reigneth. To Him we make our supplications. 'He can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder He can restrain.' He has overruled the occasion to one noble end,—*the union of all true Protestants in their opposition to Popery.*" This passage is introduced for several reasons. 1. In order that the contempt shown by Parliament to the then strongly-expressed wishes of the Protestants of the empire may be kept in mind, as an incentive to the duty of voting for no candidate for our suffrages at future elections, who will not pledge himself to oppose the grant to Maynooth and all similar measures. 2. That the example of union among true Protestants on that occasion may operate to the present extinction of sectarian jealousies, and to the revival of a generous confidence and catholicity of feeling amongst all evangelical Christians. 3. That we may note the peculiar fitness of Mr. Powell for the work so honourably confided to him, as well as its salutary effect in rousing him from those reveries of morbid melancholy, to which his complicated troubles disposed him.—Towards the close of the same year he again reverts to the subject of Popery, and thus ominously expresses himself:—"The religious aspect of affairs is not cheering. Popery certainly seems to be gaining ground. It is a vast, mysterious power. But the LORD reigneth. Whether He intends it to prevail again for awhile, and then to overthrow it, is the opinion of some. The subject is difficult. I know not what to think."* But, alas! this diversion of his thoughts from their wonted channels was but temporary. The *res angusta domi* still weighed as an incubus on his spirits. His debts had been but partially extinguished, and he seemed to struggle unavailingly against over-mastering difficulties. His nervous system was terribly shaken by his successive misfortunes; and the discovery of a slight hernia completely unhinged his self-possession. He anticipated consequences, the prospect of which overwhelmed him. His noble mind, in short, had lost its equilibrium. "I fear," he writes, "you will think me obstinate and unadvisable. But, O, do not! I should rejoice to follow any practicable counsel for my salvation,—

* MS. letter, dated "Doncaster, December 15th, 1845."

for ruin to me and mine is before me! I do not mean the most distant allusion to any help. I do not desire another step to be taken that way. All such things must have an end. I am deeply grateful for the past. The future I must meet as the Lord may enable me." * Under a panic Mr. Powell summoned the writer to Leeds, only to witness in his alarmed friend a most exaggerated estimate of his malady. "O! what a noble mind was here o'erthrown!" The sequel may be anticipated. He was withdrawn from society upwards of two years. His general bearing during the greater part of his seclusion was such as to gain the affection and esteem of all whose duty it was to attend upon him. For the touching narrative which follows, the writer is indebted to the kindness of Mr. Oxley, of Doncaster. Mr. Powell, it should be premised, had just recovered.

"We were happy to see him return to Doncaster, and still happier when he was able to go to Bradford to assist in meeting classes and in occasionally preaching. But a trial was first to be encountered, which we very much feared might again disturb the balance of his mind. *I allude to the death of Miss Powell.* When it was thought necessary for him to come to Doncaster on that account, the Rev. Mr. Garbutt went over to York to accompany him hither, and to prepare his mind for her removal. Her end was not then thought to be so near. But before he reached Doncaster, she was an inhabitant of the invisible world. I went down to the coach to meet him; and I assure you the duty of making known the death of his daughter was not an easy one, remembering how he had been suffering. He hurried up to the house,—I accompanied him,—the scene I shall never forget. He looked first into one room, and then into another, exclaiming, 'Where are my children? Where are my children?' and then entering the room where the corpse of his dear daughter lay, he fell upon his knees, and gave vent to his feelings in loud cries, sobs, and tears. When, however, he was sufficiently recovered, the spirit of the true Christian was beautifully manifested:—not a murmur,—not a complaint,—a sweet acquiescence was expressed, and the whole of his subsequent conduct was eminently that of resignation to the will of Him who cannot err.—I believe his ministry here was owned to the salvation of several individuals, and to the edification of very many. He was a most excellent man, an agreeable companion, and an able Minister of Jesus Christ. From my own observation, it always appeared to me that the affliction he had at the Leeds Conference was the foundation of that most painful mental visitation which deprived us of his ministrations, and his family of his presence and counsels, for nearly two years. At the time referred

* MS. letter, dated "Doncaster, December 15th, 1845."

to,—that of his seizure at Leeds,—I think he was in considerable pecuniary difficulties, perhaps not just then pressing upon him; but he saw that they were increasing and coming; and the prospect of his being removed from his family in such circumstances preyed upon his spirits. He feared, too, that his complaint, which we afterwards learnt was of a very trivial nature, would prevent him from discharging his duties as a Minister, and providing for his family.”

Meanwhile, it so happened, in the good providence of God, that the late Rev. Thomas Garbutt then resided at Doncaster, as a Supernumerary. His discernment led him to appreciate the sterling worth of Mr. Powell, and deeply to sympathise with him and his family under the grievous pressure of these afflictions. He had ascertained what were the remaining pecuniary embarrassments of Mr. Powell; and, with a benevolence which reflects the highest honour on his name, he formed the noble project of representing the sufferer's case as extensively as possible to all likely to contribute to a fund for the extinction of his debts. In the pursuit of this object he was unwearied, waiting personally on numbers of well-disposed Christians in some of the principal towns in Yorkshire. God gave him favour in the eyes of those on whom he called, and he collected a sufficient sum both to pay off every demand on Mr. Powell, and to hold a small reserve-fund in his hands to meet future emergencies. Thus was a kind Providence smoothing the hitherto rugged path of His devoted but afflicted servant, prior to his restoration to the bosom of his family and the service of the church. And a mighty comfort it proved to the grateful heart of Thomas Powell to find himself, on his recovery, in more senses than one a free man, and to feel, as a crowning blessing, that he still possessed, unmutated by the claims of urgent creditors, that noble library which had been to him, since Mrs. Powell's death, as a second bride. We will only add, that whenever hereafter the name of Thomas Powell shall be mentioned, it ought to be associated with that of Thomas Garbutt, as his disinterested benefactor and friend.*

In a letter, dated “Doncaster, December 15th, 1847,” Mr. Powell thus concludes his account of his late daughter's mortal illness:—“She died in peaceful confidence in the mercy of God to her, through the atonement of her adorable Redeemer. My loss is her endless gain. To the Lord be endless glory for saving my very dearly beloved child!”

* The following passage occurs in a letter of Mr. Powell's to his daughter, dated York, May 29th, 1847:—“Remember me kindly to the Preachers, and all old friends, as Mr. and Mrs. Oxley, &c.; and especially give my warmest acknowledgments to Mr. Garbutt, for his benevolent and Christian attention to the interests of my beloved family.”

On returning to his ministerial duties, Mr. Powell was called to Bradford in the spring of 1848, to assist the Rev. Isaac Keeling, whose conduct he states to be "more like that of a brother than anything else,"—adding, "I hardly know how to manifest my sense of his kindness."* The Conference of that year chose Beverley for Mr. Powell's next sphere of labour. Towards this appointment the late Rev. Joseph Fowler, then Superintendent of Hull West and Chairman of the District, lent his powerful influence. No Circuit could have been better suited to the state of his health, bodily and mental, than Beverley, with its tranquil scenery and rural walks, and the salubrious air of Westwood. The Society, too, were kindly affected towards him, and quite disposed to give him a fair trial. The town was at no great distance from his native village, his early friends, and the scenes of his youth. There were soothing memories associated with a town in which, when first called out to assist the venerable George Highfield, then Superintendent of the Hull Circuit, which included Beverley, Mr. Powell had laboured twenty-seven years before. Accordingly he entered upon the duties of what proved to be his last Circuit with re-animated hopes of usefulness and happiness. The circumstances just adverted to were so propitious and salutary, that for awhile his bodily health seemed better, the temper of his mind serene and cheerful, and his intellectual activities to some extent restored. A tinge of melancholy, indeed, must have sometimes saddened his more hopeful musings, when he reflected how the desolating storm of "Church Methodism" had swept over the Society, and how death had thinned its ranks of many a disciple of the good old school. Fired with a hallowed zeal to build up the dilapidated places, and to consolidate the interests of pure and undefiled religion, he entered with renewed spirit and energy on the discharge of his ministerial duties.

Here, both at Beverley and in Hull, the writer renewed that friendly intercourse with Mr. Powell which had commenced in Bridlington about twenty years before. Their friendship had escaped the blight of time; and much as the writer had profited by the correspondence,—of which a few specimens have been given,—he now shared the gratification and instruction of equally memorable conversations. Mr. Powell's mind was still active, and expatiated through a wide range of literature. So ripe was his judgment, and so elevated the tone of his piety, that his opinions claimed more than ordinary respect and confidence. But the boon of so valued a friendship was soon to be resumed by "the Giver of every good and perfect gift;" and the writer's consolation now is, that he possesses so

* MS. letter, dated "Bradford, February 10th, 1848."

many mementos of the worth, learning, and affection of his departed friend.

The Rev. Samuel Brown, then his colleague and Superintendent, having furnished the writer with a sketch of Mr. Powell's character as observed by himself, and an account of his latest hours drawn up for his funeral sermon, the following extracts from that valuable document are here presented:—

“From the commencement of my acquaintance with Mr. Powell, the Christian graces in his character were evidently growing into ripeness: they were passing into the mellowed beauties of holiness. He had gone through a series of personal and family afflictions of long continuance, and deeply painful in their character. This dispensation, wisely and kindly permitted by Divine Providence, was indeed in itself impenetrably dark and distressingly mysterious. For a season his usual Christian cheerfulness and mental vigour yielded to the pressure: he sorrowfully passed under the cloud. But this hiding of the Lord's servant was but of comparatively short duration. He soon came forth from his trials with fervent gratitude in his heart, and songs of deliverance on his lips. From that time his devotedness to God was more entire; his love to Him and His people more ardent; his faith in the wisdom and goodness of the providence of God became unwavering; and, in his spirit and conversation, those that were near him impressively felt the blessed influence of his increased personal holiness. He ever spoke of his trials with cheerfully submissive and humble thankfulness, as having resulted in blessing to his soul. On one occasion, when in company with the writer of these lines, after having listened to a sermon on the scriptural and Wesleyan doctrine of ‘perfect love,’ he testified, with much humility and holy joy, that he had been enabled, ‘with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.’ That he enjoyed this glorious privilege of the saints, satisfactory evidence was given in the consistency and spirituality of his private and public life.

“Having an impression, at the commencement of his career, that it was the will of God he should be entirely devoted to the Christian ministry, he offered himself for the Missionary department of our work, and received an appointment for the island of Ceylon. This purpose of his heart appears to have been overruled by a serious affliction which he had at that time, and other circumstances which are not now distinctly known. He was ultimately directed to commence his itinerant ministry, by acting as assistant to the Rev. George Highfield in the Hull Circuit. The labours of Mr. Powell were principally devoted to what was then the Beverley side of the Hull Circuit: he consequently took up his residence in the former

town. It is worthy of remark, that *on this ground he commenced and closed his itinerant life*. After an absence of about twenty-eight years, at the Hull Conference of 1848, he was appointed to the Beverley Circuit. On re-commencing his labours in this town and neighbourhood, his heart was much gladdened and comforted by meeting with members and officers in the Wesleyan church of long and respectable standing, who hailed in him the return of their spiritual father.

“His preaching was eminently instructive and profitable to the people of God; and on some occasions it was attended with much Divine refreshing unction from heaven. His style was simple and familiar; and at times his appeals to the consciences of his unconverted hearers were very faithful and pointed. As a colleague, he was courteous, agreeable, and affectionate; and these traits were attractively exemplified in his general intercourse with society. He was ‘a good Minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up’ and nourishing up the people ‘in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto he had attained.’

“When Mr. Powell entered upon his work in the Beverley Circuit at the close of August, 1848, he appeared comparatively strong and fresh in bodily health. He evidently experienced much joy in the prospect of being again actively employed in the duties of the Christian ministry. But it soon became painfully evident that his constitution was so enfeebled by past toils and afflictions, as to render him unequal to the full work of the Wesleyan itinerancy. In March, 1849, he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, which laid him aside about three months. During this affliction his mind was calm and happy; and, though he ardently desired to resume his work, he peacefully submitted to the will of the Lord. He experienced a second severe attack in October following. This deprived him of the use of his right arm, and affected the whole of his right side and his speech. From the time of this seizure he appeared to give up all thoughts of ever being again employed in the active duties of the ministry. By different arrangements which he made, it was manifest that he felt he must ‘set his house in order;’ for ‘the time of his departure was at hand.’ His nature was highly sensitive and affectionate. He was deeply moved at the prospect of leaving his six children orphans, without much temporal provision for their support; having at that time no knowledge of any human guardians, to whose care they could be committed. Nevertheless ‘his heart was fixed, trusting in the Lord.’ His mind, in holy confidence and serene submission, rose above his circumstances; and, during the whole of his long affliction, he practically exemplified that text,—‘It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.’

“The last and fatal attack of his disease occurred on the evening of Christmas-day. He now entirely lost the power of speech, and was evidently near his end. About two o’clock the following morning, it was thought my late colleague was dying. I was called to his bed-side by one of his sons to witness, as was expected, his last moments. On my arrival in his room, he was calm and sensible. As a token of recognition, he soon stretched out the hand he was able to use, and warmly grasped and shook my own. When the attentions of his kind medical adviser had ceased for the time, he motioned for prayer. Having placed himself in a devotional attitude, he apparently engaged with faith and fervour in the supplications that were presented to Heaven on behalf of himself and his children. On rising from prayer, the scene was indeed affecting. Unable to speak, he put forth his hand to each of the persons surrounding his bed, to take farewell by shaking hands. While this was proceeding with his children present, all were overcome with sobs and tears. He now in sweet composure gathered himself up to die. His consciousness remained until within a few hours of his death. He was frequently asked if he ‘felt Christ to be precious;’ and he invariably and promptly gave the well-known sign of assent, accompanied with a look of hopeful assurance. He fell asleep in Jesus, January 1st, 1850.”

Few memoirs illustrate more forcibly than the above the power of justification by faith. We have seen it animate and sustain an innate love of intellectual progress, until the mere ability to read and write achieved a familiarity with classical literature, and extended its successive conquests through various departments of knowledge. Ever eager “to spend and be spent” in the service of his Lord, all these Mr. Powell gratefully laid at the foot of the Cross. We have also seen the same principle sustain him, when his passive virtues were put to the severest test in the fiery furnace of affliction. An undisturbed confidence in God, as his Father and his Friend, was still conspicuous. The same reverential estimate of the Divine attributes, the same filial grateful love, gave a charm to his conversation. That God would do all things well, was to his sanctified apprehension as settled a law of the Divine government, as gravitation in nature was to the observation of Sir Isaac Newton.

The subject of this memoir was one of those specimens of vigorous intellect which ever and anon Methodism develops from the quarry of nature, to be hereafter fitted and set apart for the Master’s use. One is tempted almost to call in question the decision which turned the Missionary Committee aside from their original intention of employing him as their Missionary to Ceylon—an appointment equally honourable to Mr. Powell’s rare talents, and to Mr. Watson’s early

and correct appreciation of them. For such a sphere of labour he was eminently qualified by his aptitude for acquiring languages, and by his patient endurance of literary toil. Nor was he deficient in habits of business: on the contrary, he evinced a versatile judgment peculiar to powerful and penetrating minds. From the beginning, the claims of India seem to have loudly demanded the sacrifice of the noblest minds of Methodism. Moreover, by that arrangement Mr. Powell might have escaped much of the misery of straitened circumstances, so peculiarly incident to the artificial state of English society, and thus have enjoyed a longer and more useful life. But such speculations are vain. On the other hand, he felt, as he tells us, and as all must feel who have carefully read and estimated the value of his *opus magnum*,—the Essay on Apostolical Succession,—that “he had not lived in vain.” In short, his varied anti-Romanist and anti-Tractarian efforts were a boon to evangelical Christianity, the value of which it is not easy to estimate.

Intellect without piety is a poor accomplishment. Mr. Powell's example is here presented for general imitation, chiefly as he reflected honour on his principles, and exhibited the graces of a regenerated man. Few have ever walked more worthily of their “high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” If we might venture on an epitome of his leading excellencies, we should point to an ever-watchful piety yearning over the desolations of sin in nations as well as individuals, a philanthropy too well regulated to be negligent of the claims of patriotism, a fervent zeal chastened by charity, a warm and generous piety, the very opposite of the cold and stiffened product of an austere asceticism, and a faith in God which never forsook him. The spiritual tone of his correspondence and conversation responded to his devotional intercourse with God, insomuch that his friends took knowledge of him “that he had been with Jesus.”

Such a memoir, it may be hoped, will not be lost on his surviving sons. Great as is their loss in being bereaved of such a father, the example he has bequeathed to them is of itself a rich and precious inheritance. Such a memoir, we trust, will also prove a blessing to the rising youth of Methodism, many of whom cannot fail to be stimulated by so successful an example of sanctified talent to cultivate “the gift of God that is in them,” whatever that may be. There is yet another and final lesson suggested to all readers. If Mr. Powell, by a rare intuitive sagacity, foresaw the coming storm of Papal aggression, and sought to fold the flock of Christ in safety from “the wolf behind the hedge,” it needs no far-fetched motives now to urge upon the men of this generation thoroughly to study the Romish question, with a view to a faithful discharge of the duties alike of a defensive and offensive warfare.

P.S. A surviving family of six sons, most of them very young, naturally awakened the solicitude of Mr. Powell's friends after his decease. Help most providentially came from an unexpected quarter. A strong impulse of Christian benevolence prompted Anthony Atkinson, Esq., of Beverley, to originate a fund for their relief, and personally to solicit contributions in several places where the subject of the above memoir was known and esteemed. In this way the noble sum of £343. 3s. 6d. was speedily realised, to which was added that of £117. 13s. produced by the sale of Mr. Powell's library; making a total of £460. 16s. 6d. The thanks of the Committee of that fund are hereby cordially rendered, on behalf of the bereaved family, first to Mr. Atkinson, for his indefatigable zeal in their service, and next to every individual who generously sought to supply their wants and alleviate their distress. To the honour of the Beverley Clergy, too, it should be emphatically recorded, that they liberally responded to the call on their Christian sympathy. It gives us pleasure also to observe, among the subscribers to the Powell fund, the name of the Rev. Dr. Marsh, of Colchester.

THE END.

