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Mary S. Scott

M E M O I R

OF

WILLIAM GORDON, M.D., F.L.S.,

OF KINGSTON-UPON-HULL.

By NEWMAN HALL, LL.B.

L O N D O N :
JAMES NISBET & CO., BERNERS STREET.

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The following Narrative is slightly abridged from "The Christian Philosopher Triumphant over Death." While repetitions in the conversations have been omitted, some selections from Dr. Gordon's Lectures have been introduced, for the purpose of throwing additional light on his character. The octavo edition in cloth, with portrait, is still published by Mr. SNOW, Paternoster Row.

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CHAPTER I.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BENEATH the venerable ruins of the far-famed abbey of Fountains, majestic even in decay, surrounded by the loveliest scenery, and embosomed in the luxuriant foliage of stately forest trees, stands the large ancient mansion called Fountains' Hall, in which the subject of this memoir was born, on the 2nd of August, 1801. From his parents, who were both possessed of superior intelligence, he early imbibed that love for study which distinguished him through the whole of life. He acquired the rudiments of learning at the grammar school of the adjacent city of Ripon, where the amiability of his disposition, combined with his extraordinary mental abilities, commanded the love and respect of his schoolfellows. Though so young, he often would sit up till one or two o'clock in the morning, pursuing his favourite classical studies. After leaving school, he was articled to a general practitioner at Otley, and there, as he continued through life, was the friend of the poor. His unaffected interest in their afflictions has left an impression too deep for time to wear away; so that, notwithstanding the changes which occur during so long a period, there

are many who to this day retain the memory of his benevolent and lovely demeanour. After studying some time in London, he went to Edinburgh, intending to graduate as a physician. Although furnished by various friends with letters of introduction to some of the first families in that city, he never allowed the pleasures of society to divert his mind from the one object for which he had entered the university. So great, indeed, was his devotion to study, that it was his constant habit to read till the clock struck three, before retiring to rest, and yet he was always in the college by eight. There is little doubt that these habits, which were kept up more or less through life, tended materially to undermine his constitution.

After remaining three years in Edinburgh, he was advised to delay taking his degree, his youth, and very juvenile appearance, being much to his disadvantage as a physician. He accordingly settled as a surgeon, at Welton, a beautiful village, nine miles from Hull, where his gentlemanly manners and cultivated mind soon gained him the respect of the whole neighbourhood, together with a large practice. In 1826, he was married to Mary Anne, the second daughter of James Lowthrop, Esq., of Welton Hall. The following "system of study," dated August 1827, which was found amongst his papers, will serve to illustrate the course of reading which he pursued at this time:—Monday—Natural Philosophy; Tuesday—Chemistry, Pharmacy, Mineralogy, or Geology; Wednesday—Zoology, Anatomy, Physiology, or Surgery; Thursday—Vegetable Physiology, Botany, Materia Medica, or Agriculture; Friday—Pathology and Practice of Medicine, or Midwifery; Saturday—Languages, Logic, Moral Philosophy, Political Economy, or Algebra. In 1828, he published a

small volume on the practice of Surgery, and in 1832, a "Critical Enquiry concerning a New Membrane in the Eye." He also frequently sent contributions to Loudon's Magazine of Natural History, and to various Medical Journals. In 1832, he was elected a Fellow of the Linnæan Society. In 1838, he returned to Edinburgh, where he remained with his wife and daughter more than two years, availing himself of every facility for acquiring knowledge. In 1841, he took his degree of M.D. with great honour, and settled as a physician in Hull. Here, while he devoted himself to the duties of his profession, and was surpassed by few in the diligent investigation of all branches of professional learning, and in the candid examination of every new opinion and discovery, he by no means confined himself to medical reading. "He intermeddled with all wisdom." For a long time the author enjoyed the daily privilege of reading classics with him, and was struck with the elegance and accuracy of his translations. With natural science, in all its branches, he was familiar. Poetry, history, and oratory, were his delight in his hours of recreation. He was indifferent to no topic of public interest. Especially he studied those questions which affect the welfare of the people at large. To the subject of Free-trade, and of the Currency, he devoted peculiar attention. He was soon known as a public man; was elected a Councillor for the borough; and in various political movements took a prominent part, always promoting what he thought to be the cause of popular progress. Freedom in trade, education, and religion, parliamentary and financial reform, extension of the suffrage, peace, and other kindred questions, found in him an earnest advocate. Tracing most of the poverty, disease, and crime which so largely prevail.

to the vice of intemperance, his benevolent disposition prompted him to do all in his power to check this great evil. The total-abstinence movement could not escape his notice; he studied it with impartiality, and becoming convinced of its truth on physiological as well as moral grounds, he at once adopted and advocated it. The following extract from one of his speeches will best explain his motives:—"When I looked around and saw the labouring community, who are the source and foundation of all our wealth—to whom we are indebted for the greater part of the comforts, as well as the elegances of life, hungry and naked, and destitute of education, with all the higher privileges that belong to man; and when I observed that intoxication was so greatly the cause of this calamity, then it was that I decided to apply myself more devotedly to the dissemination of the sacred truths of temperance, being convinced that this is a mighty lever by which the working classes of our country may be raised from their present unhappy, humiliating, and degraded condition."

In 1845, he was chosen the President of the Hull Christian Temperance Society. In connexion with this association, he laboured most indefatigably to promote the welfare of the working classes. He delivered, during several years, a succession of temperance addresses, in which all the stores of his richly-furnished mind were laid under tribute; and illustrations were drawn from every branch of learning, as well as from the objects of nature and the occurrences of daily life, to give interest to the theme. Besides these, he delivered courses of lectures on Physiology, Botany, Optics, and the Currency, with many single lectures, of which the following may be taken as a specimen:—"A Blade of Grass;" "A Drop

of Water ;"—“ The Bones ;” “ The Muscles ;” “ The Architecture of the Skull ;” “ The Cholera ;” “ Preservation of Health and Life at Sea ;” “ The Poetry of the Bible,” &c. Though these lectures were all gratuitously delivered, he devoted much time to their preparation ; and while for accuracy, beauty, and solid value they were fit for any audience, however gifted, they were always couched in terms which the most unlettered could understand. It was for the poor he chiefly laboured, believing that to refine their tastes and instruct their minds, was the best mode of rendering them solid and permanent benefit. In these addresses he dwelt with interest on the illustrations abounding in nature of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. As a speaker, he was distinguished for the clearness of his statements, the force of his reasoning, the chasteness and vigour of his language, and the manly elegance of his delivery. A refined humour pervaded his harangues ; but when he exposed falsehood, vice, or oppression, the withering keenness of his sarcasm was only equalled by the crushing weight of his denunciation. The following extracts from his speeches will, however, best enable the reader to judge of his general manner and philanthropic sentiments :—

“ If there is one thing which distinguishes the present from all preceding periods of the history of man, it is the strong desire which prevails amongst vast multitudes of the community to investigate the economy of human existence ; to ascertain the causes of human wretchedness ; and to employ safe and active measures for its amelioration or absolute removal. And such a period every true philanthropist must hail with unmixed satisfaction. It is the commencement of that golden age, when science and religion shall prevail over ignorance and vice ; when

exclusive privileges and unjust pretensions to superiority shall be abandoned; when the claims of mere rank and fortune shall be less esteemed, and a willing homage paid to intellectual and moral greatness. It is the beginning of that millennial era which the prophets have foretold, when nations shall become wise and good; when they shall no longer be misled by ignorance nor corrupted by sensuality or superstition; when there shall be no more war; when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; when man shall cease to find delight in the gross and grovelling practices of intemperance; and when purity, and peace, and knowledge, and love shall reign with undisputed dominion over all the empires of the earth. Men are discovering that this world has not been created that it might be the theatre only of guilt and misery. Their physical organization, their mental faculties, and the nature of the objects around them, proclaim, in language not to be mistaken, that the end of man's existence is enjoyment, peace, and love. And these blessings are intended not only for the few; they are meant for all—the labourer as well as the lord; the mechanic as well as the monarch; the peasant as well as the sceptred prince. Even the wretched negro, though his savage brother has consigned him to an ignominious slavery; though he has loaded his toil-worn limbs with heavy and goading manacles; though he has, with demon ferocity, lacerated his bleeding sides with his murderous whip, yet I say, even to this oppressed and insulted being, life was given that its blessings might be enjoyed. It has been taught that the great masses of the people were never designed to rise above their present condition of ignorance; and that it would be injurious to society to exhibit to them high and comprehensive views of external nature

and of their own mental capabilities. But I denounce most emphatically a doctrine so debasing and impious—debasing, because it withholds from the people the freedom of inquiry, and leaves them to the full domination of mental and social slavery ; and impious, because it virtually denies to the Deity his characteristic attributes of benevolence and justice. No ; the Creator has bestowed on all mankind—the Negro and the European, the Asiatic and the American—the same capacities ; and therefore it is clear that He intended every individual of the human race—whatever his country, whatever his colour—to advance higher and higher in the scale of rational existence.”

In a lecture on Physical Education, delivered in the Mechanics' Institute in 1838, the following passages occur :—

“Now, I beg you to observe most carefully that the brain is the organ of the mind, and not the thinking principle itself. As the mind is incapable, without the brain, of manifesting even the lowest attribute which it possesses, in order to bring the mental endowments to their most perfect state, we must employ every means of improving the brain, which, like every other part of the body, is subject to the dominion of the organic laws. * * It must be fed with a proper amount of pure and vital blood, which, to be nourishing, must be elaborated from nutritious food, and freely exposed to the influence of pure air. When the air is deficient in oxygen, the functions of the brain are weakened ; and if the brain receive for a few moments blood, which has never at all been subjected to the agency of oxygen, its energies are extinguished altogether. It is from the vitiated air of schools that children are often so slow in comprehending instructions, which in the open air they would understand with perfect ease. It is impossible

to conceive how justice can be correctly administered in our courts of law, when the bad air, which so generally prevails in them, must of necessity impair the perceptive and reflecting faculties, not only of the judge, but of the counsel and jury. * * As we exercise the eye by exposure to light, and the ear by exposure to sound, so we can only exercise any mental faculty by presenting to it its appropriate object. Thus, if we wish to cultivate the moral sentiments, it is not sufficient to be told that we must be pious; that we must feed the hungry and clothe the naked; and not defraud our neighbour nor suffer the strong to infringe the rights of the weak. All this would be addressing the intellectual organs, and would have but little effect in rousing the organs of the moral feelings. The ear is affected by sound, the intellectual organs perceive and reason, and we cannot improve the one by the other. So the moral organs cannot be cultivated by exercising the intellect. To explain justice, benevolence, and piety, is but to cultivate the understanding. Piety and virtue are to be attained by exciting the moral organs to perform pious and virtuous actions; and this, not occasionally, but daily and hourly. If our moral organs are called into activity only on extraordinary occasions, we shall fail of producing in them a high degree of improvement. We must therefore constantly be exercising them, either in promoting the comfort of all who dwell with us under the same roof, or in performing kind offices to our neighbours; in protecting the just from the unjust; in visiting the fatherless and the widow; or in doing some act or other of benevolence. In order that man may possess all the happiness of which his nature is susceptible, he must cultivate the several organs of his frame, and especially the moral organs, as from them he derives the

highest and most lasting enjoyments. The exercise of the intellectual organs does indeed impart an enjoyment vast and exalted; but the pleasures attending the exercise of the moral organs are far loftier and more complete. The philosopher, when he solves the great problems of science, reaps a bountiful harvest of exquisite delight; but it is only when he goes about to relieve the sorrows of misfortune, to minister to the helplessness of youth, or the infirmities of age, that he knows what it is to feel the consummation of human bliss. Does man wonder why he derives from this lovely and enchanting world so trifling an amount of pleasure? How can he expect to possess more, when by his wilful ignorance he converts the sources of his enjoyment into sources of pain and bitterness?

* * Besides this, instead of cultivating the moral organs, from which alone arise pure, complete, and lasting enjoyment, he cultivates the organs of the animal propensities, the pleasures from which are so short in duration as they are unsatisfactory in degree. The present system of education, though nominally directed to the cultivation of the moral feelings, is *virtually* calculated to excite and strengthen the lower propensities. The parent or tutor tells the child to be just and candid, and yet practises before him artifice and deceit. He warns him against vanity and ostentation, and yet brings him up in the admiration of rank and fashion. He tells him not to be avaricious, and yet early initiates him into schemes for acquiring wealth. He recommends virtue and religion, but impels him to the pursuit of honour, glory, and power. Well may men complain of the wretchedness of human life. Well may we see vice and sorrow reign around us, when children are educated on principles so inconsistent."

From a lecture on "A Drop of Water:"—

“ I have selected this subject, because I thought I could exhibit, through the medium of a drop of water, how much goodness is displayed in the works of that great and incomprehensible Being, who created all things; who built the skies, and stretched out the heavens like a curtain; and at whose omnipotent word the mighty globe sprang into existence, and became the abode of millions of living creatures. I cannot divest my mind of the persuasion, that if the attention of men were more frequently directed to the vast scheme of benevolence which displays itself in the administration of the universe, it would induce them to acknowledge man's natural equality; to regard with deeper reverence the sacred obligations of justice; and would inspire them with a more active zeal for alleviating the afflictions and advancing the felicity of their fellow-beings. In whatever direction you turn, you discover the principle of benevolence to be everywhere conspicuous. There is no arrangement of Providence, however minute, but is rendered subservient to the universal good. It is written, that ‘The mercy of the Lord is great unto the heavens.’ It is He who directs the seasons to return with unerring regularity; who guides the huge planets in their course; who causes the glorious sun to shine, and the fertilizing shower to descend; who fills the earth with food, treasures its mines with wealth, and decorates its surface with trees, and herbs, and flowers. It is He who bestowed on man his wondrous faculties, and has adapted them with exquisite skill to all the purposes of health, safety, and enjoyment. To impart happiness to His sentient and rational creatures, is the end and aim of all His designs. The misery which you see around you is the work of man. His ignorance, his selfishness, and his love of power have produced it all. It is

man himself who has desolated the earth with dissensions, and tumults, and sorrow. In the blindness of his understanding, he has preferred oppression and tyranny to kindness; folly to wisdom; and violence and war to love and peace. It is he who fashioned the murderous sabre, built the arsenal, and let loose the fierce and crashing artillery to destroy his fellow-man. It is he who has deluged the world with blood, and filled the air with the cries of the fatherless and the widow. Think not that nakedness, and hunger, and pestilence are the dispensations of gracious Heaven."

From a temperance lecture:—

"All the arrangements of nature are adapted to promote happiness. Every beast that roams the forest; every insect that dances in the summer's sunbeam; every breeze that fans the bosom of the earth; every cloud that floats beneath the vaulted roof of heaven, all tell of the benevolence of the Creator. Man's own wondrous faculties are bestowed, that not only himself may be happy, but that he may contribute to the happiness of all around him. Whoever, therefore, enfeebles those faculties, opposes the benevolent design of his Maker. We lament the lingering progress of civilization, the tardiness with which vice and wretchedness recede. But can we be surprised? They who are best able to judge, assure us that the use of intoxicating drinks is the chief cause of the suffering and corruption which afflict and disgrace mankind. Yet do we not see in almost every family a husband or a father, from the peer to the peasant, sanctioning the indulgence and perpetuating customs, which convert society into one vast scene of turbulence, depravity, and sorrow? It is idle and vain for men to deplore the licentiousness and destitution which prevail, unless they cease to sanction the cause

which creates those evils. If they would see the world grow better, let them reform themselves. By so doing, they will most effectually aid in the reformation of others. If they would see public order and domestic peace prevail; if they would no longer hear our streets resounding with maledictions; if they would see the human character purified and refined, let them banish from their tables those debasing drinks. * * Working men! fellow working men—for I am proud to say that I am a working man—I behold among you the ravages of alcohol. To this monster-idol you have sacrificed your best and highest interests; on the shrine of alcohol you have immolated your social and political prosperity. Consider your condition. Mark how poorly you are fed, and clothed, and lodged. Wander through the streets of your city, and observe the splendid mansions and comfortable houses which meet your eye. All these your untiring and skilful hands have reared, yet your abodes are in wretched and filthy hovels. For the princely and the rich you weave the purple and spin the silk; but your own garments are composed only of tattered sackcloth, to screen you from the howling night-winds and the biting frost. How can you account for such an anomaly? Listen! It is alcohol which has robbed and ruined you. Instead of providing such social enjoyments as would elevate and refine you, you have consumed your precious hours amid the polluted conviviality and the foul and frantic revels of the filthy tap-room. Drinking alcohol has been the great business of your existence. You have drunk it when you rose in the morning, and when you lay down at night, when you were employed at your labour, and when your work was done. You could not even choose your senators without besotting yourselves with alcohol;

and while they were legislating for you, you still continued to drink. Come, then, working men, burst asunder the fetters of sensuality, which enchain your souls. Remember who you are, and what wonders you achieve; and no longer disgrace, by your bacchanalian excesses, the distinguished class to which you belong! * * * *

How does the drunkard prostrate those mighty mental faculties which are capable of achieving such glorious triumphs! Those faculties were bestowed to enable us to become acquainted with our Creator. Talk of teetotalism leading to infidelity! On the contrary, it conducts to that magnificent Christianity, taught in the New Testament, which consists not in creeds, and fasts, and postures, but in loving God supremely; and doing to others, what we would that they should do unto us. How can we love God without knowing him? How know him but by studying his works and word? How can this be done with an intellect enfeebled by strong drink? Alas! the world knows nothing yet of real Christianity—of that great and glorious principle which the Saviour of mankind taught while on earth. We are too ignorant—too grovelling—too debased, to understand those ennobling truths! But a brighter day will dawn. It may be remote; but come it will. He whose laws are immutable, hath fixed the time; and, though I may not live to see it, yet I will not relinquish the pleasing thought, that I exerted my faculties to promote it. Join me in this great work! As a first step, forsake the tap-room; abstain from those dangerous and destructive drinks," &c.

An elaborate and lengthened physiological argument was relieved by the humour of the following recapitulation:—"Physiology proves that alcohol,

when received into the stomach, is not digested, but is absorbed by the veins, and carried into the current of the blood, unchanged in any of its properties. Circulating through the system, it permeates every part, so that there is not a blood-vessel however small, not a nerve however minute, that can escape its influence. But, instead of contributing to the support and growth of the various organs through which it passes, it irritates, corrodes, and poisons them. It contracts the veins, vitiates the blood, deranges the movements of the heart, impedes respiration, inflames the brain, and paralyzes the nerves. In short, it destroys the whole harmony of the system; exhausting its energies, disorganizing its tissues, and eventually consigning it to destruction and death. The man who indulges in the use of alcoholic beverages may smile at our statements, but let him smile! We know that, with his intoxicating draughts, he imbibes ideas as false as they are fantastic. Because he drinks the fierce and maddening wine, he fancies himself raised to a height of dignity and happiness unattainable by those who are content to quench their thirst at the cool and refreshing fountain. The wine-bibber would have us believe that alcohol is the prototype of all that is glorious and blissful. He seems to imagine that there can be nothing great without grog, that there can be no wit without wine, no benevolence without brandy, no righteousness without rum, no pleasure without punch! He looks down upon the total abstainer as a being worthy only of contempt, devoid of every manly and ennobling sentiment. The tippler tells us, that we are the sons of the sewer, and the daughters of the ditch; that we live on water-gruel and water-cresses; that the only flowers we admire are water-lilies; and our only friends jolly young water-

men. But we regard not taunts like these, being persuaded that when he comes amongst us, he will find us not what he supposed us to be, the mud and refuse of mankind, but the bright gems," &c.

During his last illness, but while hopes were entertained of his recovery, he was requested to preside at an approaching temperance festival, but was unable, from increasing debility, to fulfil the engagement. The following preparation for his intended speech was found among his papers, and possesses peculiar interest from being his last effort for a cause he loved so well:—"I am too feeble to speak to you for any length of time; but, closely as I have been allied to the temperance movement for several years, I could not forbear briefly to address you. My remarks will not demand the indulgence of your attention for more than a few minutes. This scene of rational festivity is an evidence of the progress of the noble principles which you have so long and so ably advocated. I shall marvel much if this crowded meeting does not perplex the admirers of the drinking customs of our country, who must begin to see that the belief in the beneficial effects of alcoholic stimulants is rapidly retreating from among the intelligent and the refined sections of society. In every way alcoholic beverages are detrimental; they undermine the health; they are the bane of commerce; and they constitute the greatest impediments, not only to the political, but to the intellectual and moral enfranchisement of the people. Look at communities among whom temperance prevails. Are they not found to be blessed with more abundant health? Are they not known to enjoy a happier and a longer life than those addicted to alcoholic potations? Who are the victims of apoplexy? Who fall a sacrifice to

cholera, and to the malignant fever? It is the dram-drinker; it is the tavern and tap-room devotee. The ghastly pestilence is ever found dwelling in the midst of those degraded hordes of human beings whose blood has been tainted by the noisome fumes of alcohol. Our opponents tell us we are pale and hollow-cheeked; but we are not all so, and even if we were, we should prefer a pallid face to a palsied hand; we should prefer hollow cheeks to a hollow skull. Those who are sceptical in the views we hold" (Here the MS. abruptly ends.)

During the latter years of his life, he was brought into much public notice, and perhaps took a more active part in political questions, than most of his fellow-citizens. He believed that the opinions he held were not only expedient, but in harmony with the sublime morality and lofty principles of the New Testament. He frequently illustrated his addresses by quotations from the sacred volume, and said, with a glowing enthusiasm, that "some day the Bible would be the directory of legislators, and that then the principles he advocated would be triumphant." To that incomparable compendium of law, "Do unto others, as ye would they should do unto you;" and to the command—"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," he would refer, as containing the leading principles of his political creed. Those who differed from him in sentiment, were compelled to admire the benevolence of his intentions, the sincerity of his convictions, and his disinterested avowal of whatever he believed to be truth. His benevolence made him political. He thought he saw that the lamentable condition of the working-classes of this country was owing to unjust legislation, and on this account he laboured so energetically to enlighten the public mind, and advance

those reforms which he judged to be necessary. It was this made him so zealous an advocate of total abstinence. Though he was abundant in his acts of private benevolence, yet he saw that far more good would be done, by enabling the poor to help themselves, than by any acts of individual charity, and therefore he laboured to elevate their condition, intellectually and morally. In this important work he spared no pains, grudged no time, and shrank from no sacrifice. Night after night he attended crowded meetings of the labouring classes, at which, till a late hour, he toiled in imparting information, and cultivating a relish for intellectual enjoyments, in preference to the degrading pleasures of the dram shop; in instilling those ennobling principles of freedom and independence, which might make them industrious, prudent, and self-relying, and in cherishing that love of virtue and benevolence, which might preserve them from the evil influences of vice, rendering them happy in themselves, and the promoters of happiness in others. He often in these addresses referred to the Bible and religion in respectful terms; but, as will be seen in the latter part of this narrative, his great regret subsequently was, that he had not distinctly urged on his numerous hearers the claims of the gospel, and its adaptation to bless, in both worlds, all who cordially embrace it.

So uncompromising was his love of truth, that it never occurred to him to inquire with reference to any principle or movement, "Is it respectable?" "Is it likely to succeed?" or "Will it injure my worldly prospects?" His sole desire was to gain an answer to the inquiry, "Is it true?" The course he thought it proper to take in public matters, was diametrically opposed to his professional interests. He saw the risk of losing, and to a great extent *did* lose, the

patronage of those who were best able to remunerate his medical skill. Early associations, pleasant friendships, pecuniary advantages, all of which would have led him in a totally opposite direction, were to him as nothing in comparison with truth. He refused to purchase any worldly good, and was unwilling to retain even the approval of those in whose society he delighted, and whose friendship he valued, at the cost of disguising his sentiments and sacrificing his convictions. Independent of the opinions which might be in favour with the public, he asserted and enjoyed the right of free speech, as well as of free thought. He felt with Milton, in whose magnificent prose writings, as well as in whose poetry, he took the greatest delight, as holding intercourse with a congenial spirit—"Give me the liberty to know, to utter, to argue freely, according to conscience, above all liberties." He regarded it a wrong done to society, for any man to conceal what he thought to be true and useful. He was willing to hold friendly intercourse with men of all opinions, and never threw away kindness from whomsoever it might proceed; though, to obtain it he would not sell his liberty or his conscience. Often has the author heard him say, he should feel himself degraded, if he occupied a position, however exalted, which his judgment condemned, and where he could not both think with freedom, and boldly utter what he thought. He was eminently one who, to use the words of an eloquent living author, "dares to take up truth, when trampled on in the streets, and say to all men, 'This is a holy and divine thing; foully as it has been treated, it is worthy of worship, and I am resolved henceforth to worship it.' A splendid falsehood may be riding by, in purple and gold, with all the world prostrate before it; but when it says to this man, 'Fall down and worship

me, and say that I am the truth,'—he straightway answers, 'I will not worship thee, nor call thee the truth; for thou art a lie.'" The outward splendour of any principle had no charms for him. Its being trampled upon could not make him ashamed of it. It was at a great and constant pecuniary sacrifice that he advocated the total abstinence question; but the loss thus entailed on him, and the contempt with which some affect to regard the holders of those principles, only made him the more earnest in their advocacy.

The following witty and ironical passage, from a letter to a friend who often counselled him to be more guarded in his views, strikingly illustrates the unworldly principles of which his public career was a constant development:—"I received your letter this morning. * * * * * But I think you carry your opinions a '*little* too far.' No doubt they are true; but then you must not advocate truth lest you should lose influence with the better class, the prejudiced, the rich, the dominant. Never advocate truth for its own sake. It is far better to have the respect of a few great people than to embue the minds of millions with knowledge that may lead to universal happiness. A few hundred years ago a man appeared, who was a mighty reformer; He said, 'Love your enemies,' 'Bless them that curse you,' 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,' 'When thou prayest, do not stand in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, but enter into thy closet.' He told the great people that they were hypocrites, and because he exposed their villany and preached truth, they persecuted him and put him to death; but the world has profited by his doctrines and labours. If he had said, 'Let your righteousness be like that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and then ye

shall enter into the kingdom of heaven,' the squires, and the bankers, and the aristocracy would have loved him and honoured him; and how much better! for he would have saved his life,—though he had left the world in pitchy darkness!"

Possessing the full confidence of the working classes, his denunciations of violence, and earnest support of peace, good order, and obedience to the laws, had such effect, that at a recent period of political excitement, no opportunity was given for the intrusion of those demagogues who went about for their own selfish ends, to stir up their deluded followers to acts of insubordination. Being remonstrated with by many of his friends on the imprudence of attending certain meetings at which he might be identified with individuals of questionable character, he replied, "If they are so bad, the more reason for us to go among them. Would you leave the people to the influence of dangerous men? If, because some are violent and unprincipled, you are to abandon instead of going among them to improve them, what hope can there ever be of their amendment?"

In Dr. Gordon's manners, bearing, and language, refinement and taste were always evident. He could not do a rude, a vulgar, or an unlovely thing. His sympathies might therefore have been expected to attract him to the more cultivated classes of society. But he thought that to do good, was far better than mere self-gratification; and therefore, indifferent to the favours and opinions of men of his own rank, he cast himself as a moral reformer among the working classes. Yet in the midst of men in humbler grades of life, he never ceased to be the gentleman. He did not descend from his own level, but sought to raise others up to his. Courtesy and kindness pervaded all his intercourse with them; yet he was never

familiar, and, acting towards them with respect, he was treated respectfully by them in return. Haughty condescension may often receive the stern rebuke it merits; but Dr. Gordon proved that it is only necessary for a man of superior station, character, and ability, to treat the humbler classes with genuine kindness and courtesy, in order to secure from them a hearty respect and love, which are not always found beneath the formalities of more polite society.

His constant visits to the poor in their own abodes gave him a vivid impression of their sorrows, which nothing but personal inspection can convey. In his own words, at a public meeting for the melioration of the condition of the poor:—"It is not in the power of language to convey a correct notion of the hardships to which they are exposed. You must witness their starvation—you must see their fireless hearths and bedless chambers—you must enter and examine their dark and dreary dwellings, before you can form an accurate conception of the accumulated miseries which are daily consuming and overwhelming them. Yet this is the condition of those who erect your dwellings and furnish your tables with food; who spin the silk, the cotton, and the wool, and with their magic fingers weave it into warm and comfortable raiment; who build your ships, and bring to your very door the wealth of every country under heaven."

He was, in a word, "The poor man's friend." Many hours every day were devoted to prescribing gratuitously for crowds who frequented his house, all receiving from him the most kind and patient attention. Numerous were the cases in which he not only gave medical advice, but relieved the pecuniary wants of his poor patients; and meals were constantly provided in his kitchen, to be sent to the abodes of want and disease. In many ways, of which the public

knew nothing, it was his delight to render help to the needy, and this so unostentatiously, that his left hand knew not what the right hand gave. Many a heart breathed for him the prayer, which the author remembers a poor Irishwoman whom he had befriended, offering on her knees before him—"May the blessing of the Son of God rest upon ye." "When the ear heard him, then it blessed him; when the eye saw him, it gave witness unto him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he made the widow's heart to sing for joy. He was a father to the poor, and the cause which he knew not he searched out." To how great a degree he gained the affection of the poor, was evident by the universal anxiety expressed by them, during his illness, and by the many thousands of true mourners who followed his remains to the tomb.

But it was at home and amongst his intimate friends, that the loveliness of such a character could alone be fully appreciated. There his equable temper, his kindness in little things, his constant endeavour to make all around him happy, endeared him to every heart. His servants loved him as a friend, as well as respected him as a master. He gave his orders rather as if requesting a favour than issuing a command, and never suffered the least service to be rendered him, without a kind acknowledgment. In his company, conversation never flagged. There was no subject in which he did not take interest, and few on which he could not throw light. His pleasantry and wit, combined with his affection, made sunshine and joy wherever he went. His professional and public engagements occupied the day, while his studies were often continued far into the night. His pleasures were all of the domestic kind, and, as a matter of taste, irrespec-

tive of principle, he never frequented places of public amusement. A family party, a pleasant conversation, or a good author over the fireside, with excursions for half a day into the country, were his principal recreations, and frequent and touching was his remembrance of them during his last illness.

As a father, all the tenderness of his character was peculiarly developed. His only child, who was born at Welton, in 1828, was his constant companion. When only four years old, he taught her the elements of Latin and botany, in addition to the usual subjects of early tuition. In his walks with her he sought to communicate useful knowledge respecting every object which attracted her attention; and to make even her writing lessons contribute to the furnishing of her mind, prepared for her a set of copies, enunciating scientific truths or great moral principles, in place of the frivolous sentences then generally employed for such purposes. Instead of treating her, as is too often the case, as a mere babe, to be pleased only with unmeaning nonsense, he made her his associate, conversing with her on subjects in which he was himself interested. He thought it a disgrace, that the education of ladies should be merely that of superficial accomplishments, and that it should be considered a mark of politeness, to avoid scientific and argumentative subjects in their presence. He therefore laboured to expand his daughter's mind, and to furnish it with solid instruction. But all this was associated with a tender affection, seldom equalled, and never surpassed. As an example of this, during the two years of her being at a school in the metropolis, not a day passed in which he did not write to her, generally inclosing with his letter, some botanical specimen, with a few sentences of explanation.

The veil is not uplifted from a still dearer and more sacred tie, in regard to the feelings of her who survives him, and who reciprocated all his tender affection.

It was in the spring of 1848, that the first symptoms of disease made their appearance. He complained of acute internal pain, which returned periodically, and gradually increased in duration and intensity. The disorder being internal, remained to the last so obscure, that neither he nor his medical friends could arrive at any satisfactory opinion upon it. On the 9th of September he went with his family to Harrogate, hoping that change of air might be advantageous. While there he revisited the scenes of his early life. On one occasion, with his wife, daughter, and her husband, he went to Otley, surveying the town with great interest, and on returning, spent a few hours at the house of a friend, whom he had not seen since he had left the neighbourhood when a youth. On another day, the same party went to Ripon, and Fountains' Abbey, walking over the scenes which had been so dear to him in childhood. How vividly will the writer ever remember his going into the old Hall, and pointing out the room in which he first drew his breath! Deeply was he interested and affected, and so were we all; for the distressing fear could not be excluded, that the weakness and pain he was then experiencing might be an intimation that he was visiting those places for the last time. He frequently referred to this day, saying, how remarkable it was, that, after so many years absence, he should have gone over the scenes of his early life, paying them a sort of parting visit. On the 22nd of September, he returned to Hull, the benefit of this excursion having been transitory.

For a few days there was evident amendment; but the emaciation had steadily progressed, notwithstanding the hearty appetite, which continued with him to the last.

On the 6th of October he went to Scarborough, on a visit to his brother-in-law, Sir William Lowthrop. For a few days he kept a diary of his symptoms and diet, of which the following is an extract:—"Friday, Oct. 20. Woke at five, with slight pain. After breakfast slight pain for three hours. Walked to Falsgrave.—Oct. 21. Woke at half-past four, with slight pain. Rose at 6, sponged and dressed, and lay down till eight. Walked on the Spa half-an-hour.—Oct. 22. Woke at half-past four. Great uneasiness in abdomen.—Oct. 24. Restless night, with a great deal of pain. After breakfast, little pain but great faintness.—Oct. 25. Awoke at two, with great faintness till five. The faintness of to-day and yesterday almost intolerable.—Oct. 26. Awoke at two in great pain, which continued all the night. Very ill indeed.—Oct. 27. Awake at half-past two till five. Very weak all day.—Oct. 29. Awoke at four, with severe pain till six. Excessively exhausted after breakfast.—Oct. 30. Awoke at two; in severe pain till four, and again from half-past five till eight." As the pain increased till within a week or two of his death, this brief diary will give some idea of what he suffered. Though the air of Scarborough seemed at first to revive him, it was soon too evident there was no real improvement. He occasionally was so much worse, that it was feared he might never be able to return. He, however, bore his journey to Hull, on the 6th of November, very well; and even resumed, to some extent, his professional engagements. This he continued to do till the close of the

year, often spending two or three hours together in prescribing for his poor patients, when he was suffering agonies of pain.

What he endured during many months, none could know but himself. He spoke of his sensations as indescribably distressing: and would often rise from bed and pace his room in agony, or endeavour to divert his attention from the pain by application to some abstruse study. Every remedy which medical skill could suggest was tried in vain. When his own prescriptions failed, he was willing to try those of others, but to no effect. His diet was frequently changed; but though he enjoyed his food, he derived no nourishment from it, and frequently suffered extremely an hour or two after taking it. He attentively watched, and often commented on the varying but ever progressing symptoms of his complaint, and kept a tape for measuring his arm, and noting its gradual emaciation.

He was perfectly tranquil and composed, and seemed to have a full conviction that he should never recover. He employed himself, as his strength would allow, in arranging his papers, &c., saying that he was putting his house in order. It was natural for his family and friends to make the most of every favourable symptom, anxious to put off, as much as possible, the conviction that his recovery was hopeless. He often expressed his surprise that they should ever think him better, pointing to his emaciated frame, and saying, with much depth of feeling—"How wonderful you don't see!" The author can never forget one evening, in the first week of January, when sitting with him and Mrs. Gordon over the fire, he held up his thin hand, and after attentively regarding it for some minutes, spoke of it in the most touching manner; address-

ing it as the implement he had so long used in writing prescriptions, lectures, and speeches, and which had served him so faithfully, adding—"And is it so soon to return to dust? It will all be scattered and disappear. How wonderful!" The same calmness was manifested by him to the very last. His medical attendants often expressed their surprise at his uniform composure, and feared not to mention whatever was unfavourable in his case, as there was no danger of its producing the slightest change in his feelings.

Sunday, January 7, 1849, was his last day down stairs. On the following Saturday, as will be seen in subsequent pages, he was very suddenly seized, to all appearance with death. He in some measure rallied for a few days, but from this time sank very gradually; not suffering acute pain, though occasionally troubled with vomiting. His appetite remained, but his increasing emaciation was daily observable. His mental faculties and power of speech continued in their full vigour, so that he was able to enjoy constant intercourse with his family and friends. His death took place on Wednesday, February 7.

The following extracts, from an article which appeared in a local paper, written by one of his medical attendants, will be read with interest, as confirmatory of the contents of this chapter:—

"Another great and good man has been taken away from the midst of us. The community at large can ill afford the loss it has just sustained. Connected with a profession distinguished for its broad sympathies, high intelligence, and comprehensive charities, his was, nevertheless, no merely official character; his daily walk no ordinary routine. No professional training, however severe, no educa-

tional advantages, however great, would have necessarily produced a Dr. William Gordon. Of him it was peculiarly true, that to know him was to love him; and yet (owing, perhaps, to his love of retirement, and of domestic enjoyment) few public men have been at once so much, and yet so little, known as the deceased.

“Endowed by nature with a power of readily expressing himself in elegant and persuasive language, and at the same time identified in sympathy and soul, with every thing which he believed to be conducive to the physical and moral advancement of our common humanity, he was almost universally known as a public character, whose influence was peculiarly felt in the noble effort to efface one of the foulest stains from the national character—that of intemperance. This effort, however, required great moral courage, and, perhaps, excited prejudices which, otherwise, had never existed; as, assuredly, it would call forth in many a breast a gratitude, which shall endure when the one shall be no longer required, and the other have long been forgotten. That nameless charm which exalts and beautifies every other personal attribute, was pre-eminently his. Naturally gifted, frank in his demeanour, approachable, patient, sympathising, intelligent, he was peculiarly qualified for the duties of a physician, for which a lengthened and diversified experience, a liberal education, and alas! a too sedulous application to study, further fitted him. That high humanity, which almost includes all moral excellence, was conspicuous in his general deportment, and together with a great openness, urbanity, and simplicity of character, rendered him an object of affectionate regard to all who really knew him,—especially to the poor, who have lost in him a sincere and sympathising friend, and whose

affectionate remembrance will form his best and most enduring monument.

“His death may be regarded as premature; and yet, if length of life is to be estimated by the effecting of great moral results, by the large alleviation of social misery and suffering, by the formation of friendships which death is unable to sever, and especially by the learning and showing to others how to leave it, full of hope, and love, and humble confidence in the alone merits of our Redeemer—assuredly his life has not been too brief, nor his removal premature.

“His practice was characterized throughout by a strong aversion to violent depletion, and to antiphlogistic treatment,—a feeling which is now happily becoming almost universal. His conversation betrayed great good sense, was enlivened with a playful and delicate humour, and exhibited a thorough knowledge of men and manners, and true kindness of heart.”

A few days after the funeral, at a public meeting which was very numerously attended, it was resolved to perpetuate the memory of so firm and fearless an advocate of temperance, peace, and social progress, by erecting over his grave a “People’s Monument;” towards which all classes were invited to contribute by a circular, from which the following sentences are an extract:—“The great aim of Dr. Gordon’s life was to elevate the taste, and reform the habits, of the working classes. To this high object the powers of his gifted mind and benevolent heart were most generously devoted. In these disinterested labours of love he was cheered with the satisfaction that he did not labour in vain; for hundreds of homes, once the abodes of intemperance and misery, are now blessed by temperance

and peace. The hand of death has taken from amongst us this distinguished man; but not until he had won for himself the lofty title of the 'People's Friend.' "

At this meeting many interesting addresses were delivered, chiefly by working men, in which Dr. Gordon was spoken of in the warmest terms of admiration and gratitude; many interesting anecdotes, previously unknown to his family, being related, illustrative of the benevolence of his character, and his considerate kindness to the poor. A large sum of money was speedily obtained, chiefly in small sums, for the "People's Monument;" a white marble obelisk, twenty-five feet high, which has been erected over the grave of one of a class, who, though they seldom obtain the admiration of their own generation, and though their names may be unknown to the next, are, if greatness is to be estimated by goodness and usefulness, far more worthy of remembrance than the majority of those for whom nations raise splendid monuments, and whose names are emblazoned on the pages of history. The monument bears the following inscription:—"Erected by public subscription, to William Gordon, M.D., F.L.S.—The People's Friend. Ob. Feb. 7, 1849, *Æt.* 47."

The foregoing chapter in some degree anticipates the sequel. But this was necessary to the accomplishment of the author's design of furnishing in one place a complete and condensed biography, so as not to disturb the unity of the following pages, which are solely devoted to Dr. Gordon's religious history and the conversations of his dying hours.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT. CAUSES OF ANXIETY.

DR. GORDON numbered among his connexions and friends many persons of earnest piety, who were deeply solicitous for his spiritual welfare. One inquiry, which some of them revolved with much anxiety, was this—*Does he acknowledge the Divine authority of Christianity?* They hoped the best, but not without painful doubts. His medical investigations had brought the question of materialism specially before his attention; and he had carefully studied all the philosophical objections of infidelity. His love of truth compelled him unhesitatingly to follow his convictions, at any cost of personal feeling. It was nothing to him that an opinion was sanctioned by antiquity, or general consent, or by the fashionable world; it was not sufficient that it was held by the wise and the good; he must be convinced for himself, and the proof must be complete.

Accustomed to demonstrative evidence in his study of physical science, it was a reasonable fear that he might seek the same kind of satisfaction in his investigations of moral subjects, and that scepticism might result from the disappointment which must ensue. In the demand often made for demon-

stration, it is apt to be forgotten, that there is no single action of life which is not performed merely on a balance of probabilities. No verdict given in any court was ever based on more than this. From the very nature of the subject, the argument in proof of religion can be of no other kind. Although that argument may be felt to possess a moral certainty, the balance of probabilities being so overwhelming, that the contrary hypothesis would be absurd; yet it must be admitted, as it was to be expected in the case of any revelation from God, that difficulties will occur to every thoughtful student, which, after all his efforts, he must confess himself impotent to solve, and mysteries which no power of human reason can enable him to fathom. It was feared that these difficulties might be effectual obstacles to Dr. Gordon's reception of the gospel. He might be so determined to clear up every point as he went along, as to be detained for ever on the threshold of the temple, and thus never enter the sanctuary itself—one glance at the inner splendours of which, would at once silence every objection, and prostrate the spirit in adoring homage to the truth.

In the course of his investigations, he frequently asked questions for the purpose of eliciting information, which engendered suspicions that he was not a believer in Christianity. There are many persons who, though secretly infidels, from motives of policy scrupulously disguise their disbelief under a profession of religion. Carefully avoiding any remark which might generate suspicion, they are often loud in their condemnation of those who give utterance to a doubt. But Dr. Gordon, being an earnest disciple of truth, and fearless of the opinions of men, exposed himself to injurious reflections by the very

candour of his inquiries, and the frank confession of his difficulties.

It is a fine remark of Milton's, "A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy." There are multitudes of such heretics in the world. They pass as genuine believers. But it is their very unbelief which preserves them from suspicion. Whatever may be the creed of their lips, their minds are torpid. Religion, for them, possesses no interest, and therefore prompts to no inquiries. "They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men." They have no doubts, because they have no convictions. But earnest faith stirs up many a secret foe, and provokes many a fierce assault. Few have attained to the highest order of belief, who have not first struggled with difficulties. Many who have eventually doubted least, have at some time doubted most. True spiritual life produces mental conflicts, by which, in the end, it is strengthened and matured; but which, while they continue, sometimes expose the combatant to the charge of scepticism. This was the case with Dr. Gordon, and from an intolerance of opinion, too prevalent in society, it became an impression in certain quarters, that Dr. Gordon was not a believer in divine revelation.

But this was not the anxiety of those who knew and loved him best. He told the author, that from a child he not merely admitted the truth of Christianity, but loved and honoured it; and ever felt convinced that the sincere Christian was the only truly happy man. The following extract from a

letter, dated September, 1829, will show the sense he then entertained of the necessity of seeking the divine blessing, in addition to human efforts. After giving various directions for the preservation of health, he adds—"But we must pray to the Almighty to assist us in the accomplishment of our wishes. It is He and He alone that can impart efficacy to all our remedies. Without His aid our boasted wisdom and knowledge are of no avail. It is He that can give and can take away." He manifested a marked preference for the society of religious persons, where intelligence and candour were combined with their piety; though the inconsistencies of many professors, and the indelicate, obtrusive, and ostentatious manner of some in speaking about sacred things, frequently disgusted him. He always spoke in the highest terms of the literary beauties and elevated sentiments of the Bible, which, on several occasions, he took to meetings of working men, whom he addressed on the splendour of its compositions, and often in conversation manifested familiarity with its contents. But while on these grounds his most intimate friends were convinced of his respect for revealed truth, they were apprehensive that he did not understand and experience the true spirit of evangelical religion,—self-renunciation, and sole dependence upon Christ. And there was ground for this anxiety. Gross offences against morality are too obvious to leave any doubt of guilt. But the inward corruption of the heart, as beheld by an Omniscient God, and the defectibility of motive accompanying actions the most praiseworthy in the eyes of men, are not so easily recognised.

There is a danger of estimating our obligations to our Creator by the same standard to which we appeal before the tribunal of our fellow-men. We are apt

to forget that in the former case we have to do with the infinitely perfect Jehovah; in the latter, with judges who are fallible like ourselves. We forget, too, that man can only take cognizance of the outward act, while God "searches the heart," and "desireth truth in the inward parts." Above all, we do not sufficiently consider, that however faultless our conduct may be towards our fellow-creatures, there is a duty paramount to all others, which we owe to our Creator: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and soul, and strength; this is the first and great commandment." All other obligations are subordinate to this. Failure here is the grand, condemning, capital offence; in extenuation of which, it is of no purpose to plead innocence of minor misdemeanors. And this is the great sin of the human race. "The God in whose hands our breath is, we have not magnified,"—"God is not in all our thoughts," though "in Him we live and move and have our being." This poison at the fountain taints all the streams of conduct. This disease at the heart enfeebles and corrupts the whole frame. It was to remedy this evil that the Son of God became incarnate, and suffered on the cross. But so long as we are unconscious of our ruined condition, there will be no earnest desire for the salvation offered in the gospel.

Mere natural disposition may produce much that resembles the "fruits of the Spirit,—love, gentleness, goodness, temperance." In the case of Dr. Gordon, it was feared that the very excellence of his character might be a hindrance to his simple reliance on Christ. Distinguished by an undeviating course of uprightness, benevolence, self-sacrifice, scrupulous honour, and ardent love of truth, such as are exhibited by few who have made the highest attainments in piety; often amazed at the spirit and conduct of

Christian professors, who could say and do things which he, without such profession, loathed; having no relish for the pleasures of the world, and finding his happiness only in his studies, in his benevolent enterprises, and in the midst of his family, whom he gladdened by his cheerful and tender affection, was it not to be feared that he might find it difficult to acknowledge himself worthless in the sight of God, to come as a little child to the feet of Jesus to be taught, and as a hell-deserving sinner, to rely solely on his atoning sacrifice?

These anxieties were more than set at rest by the explicit testimony contained in the following pages; but although it was not till the last few weeks of his life, that Dr. Gordon spoke of what was passing within his own breast, on the subject of religion, it would be a very erroneous inference that his was a sudden and death-bed conversion. Anxiously investigating infidel objections, and labouring by human reason to arrive at a full understanding of the mysteries of the faith, his mind had for years been unsettled and disturbed; and when his convictions became more established, it was only by a gradual process that he experienced that great transformation of which Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

A considerable change in his views had taken place, previous to his attendance on the author's ministry in 1842; else, to use his own words, "I should not have felt such pleasure in listening to his sermons." In the whole church there was not a more attentive hearer; and he often expressed the greatest satisfaction at the discourse, when the insufficiency of human virtues, and the absolute necessity of a change of heart and faith in Christ, were

the most plainly enforced. In the chanting of the sublime poetry of the Bible, and the singing of hymns at the fire-side, he took the greatest delight. He was frequently alone in his private room, when there is little doubt he was occupied in devotion and the reading of the Scriptures, though he took the most scrupulous and successful pains to conceal the nature of his engagement. When he prayed, he truly "went into his closet and shut the door, and prayed to his Father who is in secret." So great was his aversion to anything bordering on the display of personal religion, that he never uttered a syllable to indicate what was passing within his own breast.

It was natural, that as his friends saw him gradually declining under the ravages of disease, their anxiety to ascertain what was the state of his mind on the all-important subject, would increase. It was felt that to interrogate him in reference to it would elicit no information, but very probably might seal his lips for the future. He said, on one occasion, to a beloved and anxious relative—"I cannot understand that religion which friends extort from people when they are dying, urging them to say, 'I believe;' and thinking it sufficient if they can be induced to declare they have faith in Christ." It was evident from such observations, that it would be injudicious to attempt to elicit anything from him on the subject by direct inquiry. On this account, spontaneous remarks were the more eagerly watched for, and the more carefully cherished.

It was manifest for many months before his end, that he had no fears. Often, when the symptoms became suddenly more alarming, he would say, "Remember, I'm very happy; I've no fear of death." When at Scarborough, he one day said, "I'm very

ill, but not afraid to die." His wife having quoted the verse—"The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ;" he responded with emphasis: "And he has given *me* the victory. My views on these subjects have been changed for many years, though I do not talk about it." The account of the brazen serpent being referred to, as illustrative of faith in Christ, he said—"I've had my eye on that brazen serpent a long time." His brother-in-law, Sir William Lowthrop, at whose house he was staying, introduced to his notice the excellent little work published by the Religious Tract Society, entitled "The Philosophy of Salvation," and to large portions of it he listened with great attention, frequently expressing his admiration of the argument.

After his return to Hull, he made the most minute and considerate arrangements with reference to his decease, which he always anticipated as the result of his illness. While talking on these subjects, so unavoidably painful, he would often say, "Do not grieve; I feel so happy. It relieves my mind to talk on what so constantly occupies it."

Towards the end of the year he purchased a pair of thick "over-alls," as much for the purpose of concealing his extreme emaciation from his friends, as for additional warmth. A faithful attendant, entering the room as he was drawing them on, remarked, "They'll think you're going a journey, Sir!" He replied, "Yes, I am! and a long journey; but it is the happiest journey I ever took. It's a wonder to myself that I have no wish for this world. It's all very delightful, but I have no wish for it." On another occasion, some weeks before he was confined to his bed, he said, "I'm so happy! Indeed these

two last days I've had such delight in the prospect of eternity, that I've had to put it aside. It is almost more than I can bear." It having been remarked to him one evening, that he had been particularly well all day, he said, "Yes, and I dare say you would not think it, but I have been enjoying the thought of my long journey: it has never been out of my thoughts." This was the more remarkable, as he had been exerting himself to see several patients, entering fully into their cases, and receiving visits from various friends, with whom he had conversed, with his usual animation, on the general topics of the day. It might have been inferred from his manner, that he had quite forgotten his illness, so much did his deportment and conversation resemble those of a man in perfect health, and in reasonable expectation of a long life.

During the second week in January, the first in which he was confined to his bed, his brother-in-law, the Rev. Edmund Russell, Incumbent of St. Mary's, Pomfret, had several interesting conversations with him, although he found Dr. Gordon still very reserved on the subject of religion. Of these interviews, Mr. Russell says, in a letter to the author, "His words to me were very few, but full of affection, and always betokened a deep and increasing interest in the solemn truths of the gospel. Speaking of materialism, he said, 'I have studied the subject deeply; indeed I have read all the celebrated writings of Deists and Atheists. There *was* a time when I was beguiled by their sophistry. Then, I confess, some serious doubts arose in my mind; but they did not last long, and I have never been troubled with them since. Thank God, I have no doubts or fears now. I am not afraid to die.' He also made special reference to the opinions of Lawrence on Materialism,

saying that the reading of his arguments more fully convinced him than anything else of the unsoundness of the theory. All that could be said in favour of it, would be advanced, and in the most forcible manner, by so distinguished and clever a man. If, then, what even Lawrence could urge was so inconclusive, he felt satisfied that the doctrine of Materialism was altogether false."

During this week, he was for several days more than ordinarily cheerful. He said one morning, "I have been awake some hours, but I have been so happy, picturing myself in my coffin, and my funeral, with what you will all say and do." Though he thus frequently spoke with calmness and pleasure of his approaching end, his friends were anxious to hear him state with equal explicitness that this peace was not caused by any dependence on himself. Such an assurance, it was the privilege of the author to receive, on visiting him as usual, early in the morning of Thursday, January 11th, when the following conversation took place:—Dr. G.—"I very much wonder you all avoid the subject of my death. It is always in my thoughts. I had a happy day yesterday. Perhaps you would not think what made it so. It was the prospect of the delightful journey I am going to take." N.—"If we are trusting only to Christ, there is nothing in death which should make us afraid. It ought not to be terrible to a Christian. It is but going out of one room into another, to which our friends are soon to follow us." Dr. G.—"Not so. It is far better. It is a very *pleasant journey*," (with great emphasis.) After a pause he added—"I am astonished it should ever be spoken of as a difficult thing for men to acknowledge their own unworthiness. When I look back on my own life and examine it, I see it has been a life of imperfection

and selfishness. My best actions were unworthy, and a mixture of selfish motive was in my most benevolent efforts." Mrs. G. referred to a small volume containing the dying testimonies of eminent medical men, and alluded to Dr. Mason Good, who confessed that his own righteousness was but filthy rags. Dr. G.—"That is my doctrine. Not because Mason Good said so, but because the Bible tells me so." Addressing the author, he added—"Perhaps you and others may have fancied I have not *thought* much on these subjects, because I have not *said* much, but I have felt deeply, and for years."

Here was the explanation of a character so excellent, that it would have been most difficult to account for it, on any other supposition than that Divine grace was in operation to produce it. We cannot deny, that the Spirit of God sometimes visits a sinner so suddenly and powerfully, that, emerging from midnight darkness without any intervening twilight, into the full blaze of noon, he enjoys a clearness of sentiment, and a joyful confidence in God, which outstrip at once the experience of many an old believer. The summit of the mountain is gained without undergoing the toil and pain of scaling its rugged sides. But the process is generally more gradual. The spiritual birth, as well as the physical, has its anxieties and sore travail. There is often much toil in the seeking, previous to the much joy of the finding. So it was with Dr. Gordon. His was not a life of indifference to religion, closed by a sudden conversion and a few days of enthusiastic excitement. But after many years of earnest and anxious inquiry, with secret and constant prayer for the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, together with a conscientious discharge of every duty, he was favoured towards the close with such a view

of the all-sufficiency of Christ to meet the sinner's wants, and was enabled by faith so fully to rely on his merits for acceptance with God, that, rising above the vaporous atmosphere through which he had long been climbing up the craggy cliffs of the "hill difficulty," he basked in a cloudless sunshine at a higher elevation than Christians ordinarily attain. The rare privileges he enjoyed were not realized without a long fight of afflictions,—the crown was not obtained without the conflict,—the kingdom was not entered but "through much tribulation."

CHAPTER III.

BED-SIDE CONVERSATIONS FROM JANUARY 13TH TILL
HIS DEATH, FEBRUARY 7TH.

ON Saturday, January 13th, Dr. Gordon seemed even more cheerful than usual; and though he remained in bed, was mentally as active as ever, reading, receiving calls, and attending to a few matters of business. At four o'clock, the writer left him conversing with his brother-in-law on various topics, with more than ordinary interest. But not an hour had elapsed before the alarming message was received that he was dying. On hastening to his room the writer feared that all was over. The eyes were fixed, and a cold sweat was thick upon his brow. He had risen to have the bed made. While seated in the easy-chair at the fire, he suddenly called for assistance, and directed the attendants to place him on the bed. Syncope of the heart had ensued, from suddenly assuming an erect position in his state of weakness. All the appearances of death presented themselves to his distressed family. But while they stood anxiously round him, animation gradually returned. How great was the joy once more to listen to those lips, though in the faintest whisper, which it was feared were closed for ever without one parting benediction! After taking a

little food, strength returned sufficiently to enable him to speak with comfort. Then he said to his brother-in-law, Sir W. L., "If consciousness of my own unworthiness, and reliance on Christ alone, be a proper ground of peace, I have it, and have long had it. But you must not think that because I have not *talked* of these things, therefore I have not *thought* of them. I have long been feeling my way after the truth." Expecting he was at the point of dissolution, he seemed desirous thus explicitly to assure us of the foundation of his hope. In confirmation of this, when the beautiful hymn was repeated—"Jesus, lover of my soul," which so fully expresses the sinner's helplessness, and the Saviour's grace, he responded with much feeling, "I reiterate all that."

Dreadful agony now came on. He frequently raised himself in bed, and lifted up his arms in great distress, comparing his sensations to the effect of ten thousand screws tearing him to pieces. He once cried out, "O my friends, my children, can you do nothing for me? O my heavenly Father, help me! O my dear Jesus, take me!" Yet he perfectly retained his self-possession, feeling his pulse, remarking on his symptoms, and prescribing remedies as calmly as if for another. His intellect throughout the night retained all its clearness, his love all its tenderness, his consideration for others, all its delicacy. At intervals he spoke to those around him, recognising all with the tenderest affection: and though suffering so much, was as attentive as ever to the comfort of others. He entreated his beloved daughter, who was very poorly from excitement and grief, to sit down; and said to his brother-in-law, the Rev. William Knight, "You've hard duty to-morrow, you had better go home."

At intervals he made the following remarks: "Remember this pain is only bodily. I've no fear. Is this because I've no dependence on myself, but am trusting to Jesus alone? If I come, will he reject me? And will he put those white robes on me? This is indeed agony, *torture*: but what a mercy that my *mind* is at perfect peace!—Remember me to my friends. I hope they will keep me in mind. I wish to live in your affections. I shall be with you. I shall be there to meet you." He frequently spoke of re-union with those dear to him, his love to whom seemed to increase with his love to Christ and his hope of heaven. His human sympathies were not weakened by the strength of his religious emotions. The very contrary was the case. Being assured that he would still be with us, constantly in our thoughts, he said—"That's delightful. I wish to be missed. I should be unhappy if I thought it would not be so. You comfort me very much." As we stood round his bed, his eye tenderly passed from one to another, and he said, "This is what I have often pictured to myself, as I have lain awake at night. I've seen it all just like this, and seen myself in my coffin, and you at my funeral."

Referring to his past life, and the ground of his present hope, he said, "My natural disposition led me to do many things of a benevolent character, but this was not love to God. Mere natural disposition will not do. There needs something better for a holy God. I am quite unworthy, corrupt, corrupt." The distinction he thus made between impulse and principle is too often overlooked. It is the motive which gives the true quality to an action. "To love God with all our heart," is our duty at all times, and in all actions. In the neglect of this "first and great commandment," no other can be rightly

obeyed, and even if it could, compliance with a subordinate law can be no excuse for the neglect of that which is inclusive of every other. In the absence of this high motive, a deed otherwise good is essentially defective, and God, being forgotten, is thereby dishonoured. Following the bent of mere natural temperament, is not love to God, when it prompts to the relief of the afflicted, any more than when it leads to the investigation of a scientific truth. The generous man may be as indifferent to his Maker's claims as the miser and the churl. One is far more useful to society, and more deserving of its approval and love than the other; yet they may both be in the same condemnation at the tribunal of the Searcher of hearts. The smallest act of love is more acceptable to God, than the most scrupulous performance of religious rites, or the most profuse benevolence, when destitute of this motive. "Incense is abomination, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not LOVE, it profiteth me nothing." But alas! how many are trusting in the efficacy of pious and benevolent acts! How often is a man's amiability alleged as good evidence that he died the death of the righteous! The insensibility to the claims of God, which makes men so ready to build their hopes on their own actions, is one of the most striking proofs of human depravity. But when the Divine Spirit enlightens the mind to understand our obligations, then with Job we "abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes." This was the case with Dr. Gordon. All who knew him can testify, that if ever the hope of eternal life could be based on a blameless and benevolent life, it could be so by him. Yet most deeply was he sensible, that in all his actions, even the very best, he was "corrupt! corrupt!"

The following hymn, which had long been familiar to him, and which, at his request, was often sung in his room, was repeated—

There is a happy land,
Far, far away;
Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day.
Hark how they sweetly sing,
Worthy is our Saviour king,
Loud let his praises ring,
Praise, praise for aye!

Come to this happy land,
Come, come away!
Why will ye doubting stand,
Why thus delay?
On then, to glory on,
Be a crown and kingdom won,
Then bright above the sun
We'll reign for aye!

Bright in that happy land,
Beams every eye;
Fed by a Father's hand,
Love cannot die:
Oh, we shall happy be,
When, from sin and sorrow free,
Lord, we shall reign with thee,
Blest, blest for aye!

He said, "I think I see it as it were before me! I am going to Jesus. I have embraced him, and he will receive me. Our best actions are filthy rags. There is pride and selfishness mixed up with them all. I have thought and written and done a great deal, but it's all nothing. I feel the need of a better righteousness. It is in Christ, and so easily obtained! I have found it!"

The following hymn, which became a great favourite with him, was now repeated.

Just as I am—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone—
O Lamb of God, I come!

To this he responded with great feeling—"O beautiful! that's the way I come."

To the Rev. William Knight, who had recently been delivering a course of sermons to young men, on infidelity, he said—"There is a great deal of infidelity in young men. You have many of them about you. Tell them from me, I have read a great many sceptical books, ancient and modern, of all sorts. It is all very fine, but very fallacious. They are very plausible, but can give no consolation in a dying hour. The New Testament is the book. We must fall back on that. We can only obtain peace by casting ourselves on Jesus; putting reasoning

aside, and asking him to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit."

He gave a similar message to the author, who said—"Such a testimony and such a scene as this, will, I trust, make me a better preacher." He replied, "I am glad of it. Preach with an *earnestness*. Tell the people of the peace, and the joy, and the happiness, and the calm. It's no use reasoning." After a pause he added: "Preachers should dwell on the *mercies* of God. He is not a *severe* God. He is love." Being asked if he could send a message to two young men, for whose spiritual welfare much anxiety was felt, he said, "Assure them of my warm affection. Tell them to seek Christ, that he may pardon their sins, change their hearts, and present them to God. Tell them that wealth, ambition, and fame, are all vanity. Nothing will do but Christ."

He had been for a considerable time deeply impressed with the conviction, that all warfare was anti-christian and inhuman, and often expressed his astonishment that any good men could fight, as the precepts of Christ seemed to him so decidedly to condemn the practice. The subject now presented itself to his mind with peculiar force. He said, "How wonderful that men can go to war! How could I die now, hoping God would forgive me, if I would not forgive them, but sought to kill them in battle! How different is dying in my circumstances, to death on a battle field!" Striking indeed the contrast! In the one case, calm, quietness, the presence of dear friends, the voice of affection, the accents of prayer and praise. In the other, tumult, the roar of cannon, "the thunder of the captains," the fury of the combatants, the execrations and groans of the dying, rage, revenge, slaughter! Whatever may be said of the glory of dying on the

field of battle, surely it is an awful thing for a man to be hurried from the excitement and din of conflict, into the presence of his Judge, fresh from the slaughter of his fellow-men, and accompanied, perhaps, by the souls of those whom he has just slain! Are the combatants Christians? Then they whose mutual relation to their common Lord binds them to a special love towards one another, appear before Him, their last act on earth having been one of hostility even to the death. But if they are not Christians, then the blow which sent them into eternity, was one which for ever cut them off from the hope of salvation, which smote the soul as well as the body, and consigned it to eternal death. To slay a Christian is to smite Christ himself; to slay an unbeliever is to plunge a fellow-being into hell. Terrible alternative! Yet all who fight, not only strike such a blow, but expose themselves to the risk of dying in the very act of striking it. May all Christians soon acknowledge the universal obligation of the command, "Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you!" Without waiting for others, may they at least, by obeying the precepts, fulfil the predictions of the sacred book, and "beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks," thus manifesting that Christianity is indeed, as the angels heralded it, "peace on earth, and good-will to men!"

Dr. Gordon continued to suffer severe pain, and was in such a state, that any moment might be his last. As we stood round him, expecting his immediate dismissal, he raised his head, and with a solemnity of manner, which will never be forgotten, said, "I will tell you a prayer I have always been fond of. I have often used it. It is short, and so comprehensive: 'O Thou, to whom all hearts are

open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'” He afterwards marked some collects in the Common Prayer-Book, which were particularly admired by him.

This was an evidence that he had long felt the need, and earnestly sought the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit. It also showed that his decided opinions on ecclesiastical subjects, which, he stated, were more confirmed than ever as he drew nearer to his end, did not prevent his love of the good and the true, wherever found. He discriminated between essential Christianity and its forms, and recognised the truth of God, and resemblance to Christ, wherever exhibited. This obviously ought to be the temper of every Christian, and to be looked for as a matter of course. Yet how lamentably does a sectarian spirit narrow the sympathies of multitudes? Too many are apt to look upon their own, as exclusively the church of Christ, and to regard all beyond its pale as wanderers from the true fold. They avoid co-operation with those who are not of their party, and are as blind to the excellencies of other churches as to the defects of their own. But amongst all Christians, are to be found evidences of the presence of the great Head of the universal church, and of the Comforter, whom he promised to send, to abide with his people for ever. In proportion as we have evidence of “the mind that was in Jesus,” dwelling in any one, whether of our own church or not, we are bound to recognise a brother in Christ, a fellow-heir of glory. Perfect uniformity of sentiment can scarcely be expected in the present state. It did not exist in the times of the apostles.

They, themselves, tolerated and sanctioned discordant judgments. (Rom. xiv.) "Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same thing." How much more united, happy, and useful, would Christians be, if, while conscientiously differing on minor points, and frankly, and even earnestly discussing those differences, (for they should be earnest, wherever they think the truth, and therefore the honour of their Master is concerned,) they still recognised the features of their common Lord, under whatever garb, rejoiced in each other's zeal, holiness, and success, and thus proved that their very controversies were prompted only by love to the truth, and anxiety for each other's spiritual good. Then an outward uniformity would be far from being necessary to the accomplishment of the Saviour's prayer—"That they all may be one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me."

Dr. Gordon addressed most of those who were around him, individually, and bade them an affectionate farewell. To F. L., one of his nephews, he said, "Seek Christ. Don't be carried away by the world. It's all vanity. It will not comfort you at death. This can only be found by trusting in Christ. You may forget this. *I* have heard these things often, and forgotten them, but it is all true."

To another nephew, T. S. R., he said—"Good bye, my dear boy. You learn Latin. Let me tell you what Adrian said to his soul in prospect of death. You may, perhaps, read it some day:—

Animula! vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca—
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos?"

He then said, "I will translate it for you: 'Kind little wandering soul, companion and guest of my body, into what places art thou now about to depart?'" And then Adrian goes on to say, how dreary and forlorn it will be. O, my dear boy, remember what a much better hope the gospel gives your uncle."

It was remarkable to hear a man, suffering severe pain, and in expectation of immediate death, so correctly quoting, and so beautifully translating a Latin author, for the purpose of impressing an important truth on the mind of a little boy. In all he said, he studied to adapt himself to the peculiar cases of those whom he addressed. And there was such a calm solemnity, and so much affection in his manner, while all he said was so evidently uttered from the very depths of his heart, that these dying admonitions can never be forgotten by those who were privileged to receive them.

With similar remarks, in the brief intervals of pain, the night wore away, and to the surprise of every one, the Sabbath light dawned on our yet living friend. It had been throughout a season of mingled anxiety, grief, and joy. To witness sufferings like his, and be unable to relieve them, knowing too that very soon we must part from one so beloved, and now more dear than ever, was a cause of the deepest distress. Yet to hear such delightful reassurances of his peace, and a clear confession of reliance on Christ as the cause of it, from lips which had hitherto been sealed on the subject; to witness so wonderful an answer to our prayers, and to see death entirely disarmed of his sting, so filled every heart with grateful joy, that it would be difficult to determine whether grief or gladness preponderated. The full development of the spiritual birth was given us, as an antidote to the shock of physical death. As angels rejoice

over a sinner that repenteth, so did we rejoice over him. He was leaving earth, but he had been evidently fitted for heaven. Who would not willingly have surrendered him with so blessed a hope, rather than have retained him for the longest life without it? It was a night of weeping. But we could not "sorrow as those that have no hope."

In mercy to survivors, Dr. Gordon was spared for more than three weeks after the trying scenes of the preceding night, during the whole of which time his mental faculties retained their full vigour. The violence of his pain abated, and he was enabled to enjoy constant intercourse with his friends. He loved to have his family always around his bed, and to spend his waking hours in reciprocations of affection, and conversation or reading on the great themes of the love of Christ, and the glories of heaven.

Besides his immediate connexions, he saw all who desired an interview, delighting in the opportunity thus given him of commending that Saviour, who had in so remarkable a degree given him "the peace which passeth all understanding." He received nearly three hundred visits during the last three weeks of his life, from persons of all ranks; but whether rich or poor he welcomed them with equal courtesy, saying something appropriate and kind to each, and pointing to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The writer need not fear the charge of exaggeration, when there are so many persons who can testify, that no description can convey an adequate idea of the calm serenity, the vigorous intellect, the affectionate manner, and the joyful hope manifested by the sufferer. Words are impotent to depict that sick-room, which, to use the words of the Rev. Dr. Dobbin at the funeral, was "not at all the chamber of death, but the robing-room of heaven."

We were anxious to catch everything he said, that we might treasure it in our memory as a solace for the season of bereavement, and a feast for future years. It was originally for this purpose, but afterwards for a more extended use, that the writer took short-hand notes of almost everything that Dr. Gordon said, during the time he was confined to his bed. This was difficult to accomplish, as it was necessary to avoid the observation of his keen eye, which scarcely anything eluded; for, had he known that such a record was kept, the freedom of his communications would have received a great check. But by the position in which the author sat, he was able to secure a faithful report of what passed, without any suspicion on the part of his beloved father-in-law. This statement is necessary, in order to account for the length and number of the conversations recorded, and to correct the inference likely to be drawn from the precision and beauty with which many of Dr. Gordon's sentiments are expressed, that the phraseology was the result of subsequent careful revision, and not the unpremeditated utterance of a dying man. The biographer assures the reader, that the words, as well as the ideas, are Dr. Gordon's own, whose extemporaneous expressions were usually marked by the accuracy of studied compositions. To show the connexion of what he said, the remarks of others are occasionally recorded, though with a brevity which will account for whatever abruptness may be observed in the dialogue.

January 14th.—The severity of the pain having abated, the beloved sufferer fell into a doze. During the whole of this day, he seemed gradually sinking from extreme exhaustion; so that, as far as our feelings, and his own, were concerned, it was still a dying scene. Indeed, this was the case till his death actually occurred; for, notwithstanding the occasional

variations in his symptoms, he knew that the result was inevitable; and we were assured, both by himself and the medical friends who visited him, that his departure might take place at any hour. This imparted to everything he said, the interest of a last utterance. But though on the verge of the other world, and longing to be with Jesus, his tender heart clung to the objects of earthly affection. The sensibilities of the man shone forth the more brightly, in the hope and joy of the Christian. He delighted to be reassured of our affection, and to talk over the happy scenes of former years; but said, "I am going to a better country." He sent kind farewell messages to many friends. Among others, to the author's father, the writer of the well-known tract, "The Sinner's Friend," he sent this salutation—"Assure him of my strong affection; tell him I'm the sinner, and that I've found the Friend."

He requested that a nice spot should be selected in the cemetery for his grave; and that there might be flowers planted upon it. It was remarked—"This is a bright sunny day." He replied—"Yes, but I shall have a brighter one next Sunday. I've been thinking how busy you will be about my funeral; but I shall be far away." Suddenly stretching out his emaciated hands, and somewhat raising his head, his countenance beaming with rapture, and his eyes gazing, as on some vision of beauty and splendour, he said—"I see that bright region spread before me, where there is no night, and where no heat scorches. And I see Jesus too; he is waiting to receive me!" Then, after a pause—"It would not do for a worldly mind to enter. It could not enjoy heaven. There must be a change. The way to be prepared, is by self-abasement, and reliance on Christ."

Monday, 15th.—Soon after waking, he asked that

some Shrewsbury cakes might be sent for. When they were brought, though he only ate part of one, he regarded them with much interest, and said—"They were my favourites at school; I often spent my pocket-money in them." Many similar incidents occurred, illustrating the affectionate remembrance he cherished of former years. Though so near the heavenly land, which by faith he beheld so earnestly, he cast many a loving, lingering, look backward on the scenes of his pilgrimage; recalling past enjoyments, and especially delighting to refer to any circumstances which identified him with those he most dearly loved. He seemed to live his life over again in pleasant reminiscences; leisurely surveying and bidding it adieu. Far from regarding this world as a barren wilderness, without one flower to cheer the weary traveller, he looked on it as stored with happiness by a God of love; and his joy in departure arose, not from any weariness of it, but from a conviction that to be "with Jesus was far better." His own words, on his sister, Mrs. R., entering his room this morning, were—"I cannot express the joy I feel. I can leave you all, though no one has loved you more than I have done, or loved life more. It is all nothing to me. I am such an unworthy creature, God has been so gracious, and to *me*, more than any one."

He did not think a Christian should cease to love this life, because he hopes soon to enjoy a better. In reference to his residence, in furnishing which he had taken great interest, and exhibited an elegant taste, it was remarked by his wife, "You will leave your beautiful house." He said, "Ah! I hoped to get round it, but I have not been able. You must go round for me." Some one said, "But you have a better house to go to:" to which he promptly replied, "Yes—but I am not talking of that now. The things

are separate. *Now* I wish to talk of *this*. You'll look at the rooms, and think of me? Talk to me a little about it."

At different times, he said—"As I get weaker, my faith and prospects are stronger and brighter. The way to have strong faith is to think nothing of yourself. You have come to see me; I have many friends; but there is none comparable to Jesus. I thought I should have lived many years; but how little we know! And if I were to live twenty years more, perhaps my friends might be gone, and I might have no consolation like this, in having them all around me. I have no desire to get better, except to be of use in propagating the gospel; I would mix it with my practice. If I lived, it would be my whole delight to publish Christ." To the pew-opener, he said, "I am going to heaven, and hope to see you there. Seek Christ! I see my own unworthiness, and am trusting only to Him. Remember me kindly to your wife; I hope we shall all meet." He forgot no one, and made minute inquiries respecting the relations of those among his visitors who were in humble circumstances of life; mentioning them by name, with some message of affectionate interest in their welfare.

To a lady from Welton, who told him how much his friends there loved him, and would cherish his memory, he replied—"Tell them all what Christ has done for my soul. He is waiting for me. I am very happy. Christ is all. Say to my friends, how much I am indebted to them for their prayers." The willingness of Christ to save at the eleventh hour being mentioned, he rejoined "Ah! but it has not been the eleventh hour with *me*." The woman being referred to, who touched the hem of Christ's garment, he said, with great emphasis—"ut I have *embraced* him, and wish to be *like* him "

To Sir W. L. "I have just been thinking I shall be looking down from those happy realms on you, toiling with the storms and winters of life. I only regret I have not seen earlier that glorious gospel as I now see it, so as to have preached it to the multitudes of men I have addressed. If restored, nothing should I rejoice in more than this; I should never be ashamed of Jesus; I would preach Him to all. An infidel once said to me, after hearing N. preach, that if he believed such things, he could never cease praying for, and pleading with the people. That is just as I feel I should do, if I were spared. My physical strength might not be sufficient, but as to the interest and delight of it, I should never tire. At Harrogate I met a son of Mr. W., and was disposed to smile at him for relinquishing a lucrative business in order to preach the gospel. But I could delight to do the same thing now. I could relinquish everything for this. Not that I think worldly business incompatible with religion, but from the pleasure the other would afford me; I could do it with a zeal which would surprise myself."

Being asked by the author, if from his own judgment, as an attentive and inquiring hearer, he could give him any hints as to the best method of preaching, he said—"Preach earnestly, and simply, so as to be understood; but the best preaching is sincerity, and a consistent life. Men think much more of that than anything; there is no influence without that. I would not listen to a man whose life was inconsistent, though he were as wise as Solomon."—"What do you consider the best method of presenting the arguments in favour of Christianity?"—"I think little of evidences; Scripture is its own evidence—the great truths it contains. Men grant the truth of Christianity. Preaching evidences is like putting

up a man to knock him down.”—“You always acknowledged the historic truth of Christianity?”—“I did more: I loved and honoured it, and always felt the religious man was the happiest man; though I did not feel as I do now—the need of Christ for myself.”—“What were your principal hindrances?”—“Above all, the inconsistencies of professing Christians. I have met with persons who could propose and approve measures, from which I revolted. The folly and injudiciousness of some Christians in their mode of talking of religion, was another impediment; also the intolerance of many. I always thought seriously of religion, daily. I was very anxious about it. This made me ask questions I should not otherwise have thought of. But the very questions were put down as infidelity. Often, in the company of professing Christians, I have not dared to make free inquiries. This looked like a fear of truth, and as if they distrusted their own religion. I remember delivering once, some lectures on Physical Education, to which some one replied on behalf of Christianity, as if my views impugned it—as if the science and the religion could not both be true.”

Worthy of deep consideration are these remarks. The conduct of professors is narrowly observed. If there is any indication that they themselves do not firmly believe, or are not influenced by their faith, the effect cannot but be injurious. Instead of manifesting alarm, when startling discoveries are made, and denouncing such inquiries as having an infidel tendency, Christians should ever be among the most earnest friends of free inquiry. Let philosophers first settle among themselves, what is the truth in any science, and Christians need be under no alarm that it will be at variance with the Bible. God cannot contradict himself. Hitherto, every science,

the more fully it has been investigated, has the more clearly confirmed the sacred Scriptures. Our interpretations of both the great books of God may be false, but the declarations themselves cannot be. A deeper philosophy, or a sounder criticism, will ever prove an additional bulwark of the truth. To shun the philosopher as a foe to religion, and to feel alarm at the progress of scientific discovery, manifests a very defective faith. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

Still more important is a consistent life. Men judge of a system more by the actions of its adherents than the nature of its doctrines. Not that such reasoning is always legitimate. Advocates of liberty may themselves be tyrants, and eulogists of virtue be votaries of vice. Christianity, estimated by the character of its Author, and the tendency of its doctrines, would still be a religion of love, though all its disciples were murderers. The inconsistency proves a false profession—not necessarily an ineffective or injurious creed. Still, the inference, being easy and plausible, is general; and if the holiness of professed Christians is influential in favour of their religion, the effect of a contrary character will generally be the reverse. When those who are regarded as converted men, manifest a violence of temper, a rudeness of demeanour, an unkind and unforgiving spirit, a grasping and covetous disposition, a meanness and unfairness in their dealings, from which many men of amiable temper and a keen sense of honour, though without any profession of piety, revolt; is it not likely that the latter will be encouraged to think lightly of a religion which seems productive of so little fruit? Or if the true distinction is made, must not such inconsistency tend to deter from that "confession of Christ before men," which is as expressly enjoined,

as it is calculated to confer important benefits on the individual himself, on the Church, and on the world? To "name the name of Christ," and not "depart from iniquity"—to pay the homage of the lip, but "in works to deny Him," is an insult to God, and an injury to man, too seldom considered in this age of profession. It is only when Christians are "living epistles, known and read of all men,"—when the visible preaching of the church corroborates the oral preaching of the pulpit, and the daily life of its members presents a manifest transcript of the principles of its great Head, that any extensive and permanent effects are likely to follow from the publication of the gospel. Whatever the learning or the eloquence which may characterize it, preaching must ever be essentially defective, unless the whole church, as with a mighty, consentaneous voice, responds by its obvious acts to the word spoken. Then, and not till then, will that word, as of old, "have free course and be glorified."

Tuesday, 16th.—On awaking, he said, "Read to me something about heaven." Having listened to Bunyan's incomparable description of the passage of the pilgrims through the river, and their entrance into the celestial city, he said, "It's not half so beautiful as I have pictured it to myself."

His son-in-law mentioned his intention of having a mural tablet placed over his seat at church, and said the inscription should record that he was the friend of the working man, adding, after a pause, "and that your whole trust was in Jesus." To this he earnestly responded, "O yes, say that—be sure you say that!" N.—"Then you are anxious for Christ to be extolled?" Dr. G.—"O yes—that's it, that's it!"*

* In conformity with this wish the tablet bears the following inscription:—

To W., a pious working man, he said, "You see me better than you ever saw me before, Mr. W. I have sought the same Saviour you serve. I have asked Him to forgive my sins, and He has done so. He will present me to the Almighty. I am going a very delightful journey, to a very happy home, where I shall meet only with the wise and the good. I would not change my present condition for all the wealth in the world! How great is the goodness of God! And all to be had for asking! Nothing to do for ourselves—but to take what God gives us! All made ready for us. Only to humble ourselves and receive. Press on with vigour. You won't reach perfection here, but seek the Holy Spirit."

W.—"I've often prayed for you, Doctor, when I've passed you in the street. There's nothing like religion for such times as these." Dr. G.—'For *all* times. In health there's no pleasure like this.'

Dr. G. was much interested in listening to some of Cromwell's letters. The following extract especially delighted him:—"Salute your dear wife from me. Bid her beware of a *bondage* spirit. Fear is the natural issue of such a spirit; the antidote is, Love. The voice of Fear is, 'If I had done this; if I had done that, how well it had been with me!'"—I know

"In memory of William Gordon, M.D., F.L.S. By a course of varied philanthropy, and by self-denying devotion to the cause of social progress, in the zealous advocacy of the principles of liberty, education, peace, and temperance, having earned for himself the distinguished title of 'the People's Friend,' he rested from his labours, Feb. 7th, 1849, aged forty-seven years. After many years of anxious investigation, he acknowledged that the only true philosophy was the reception of the gospel in the spirit of a child. Faultless in the estimation of those who knew him best, he confessed himself to be the 'chief of sinners,' finding solid peace, and triumphing over death, by simple reliance on Him who said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

this hath been her vain reasoning. Love argueth in this wise : what a Christ have I ! what a Father in and through Him ! What a name hath my Father : ‘ *Merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth ; forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.* ’ What a nature hath my Father : He is LOVE ; free in it, unchangeable, infinite ! What a covenant between Him and Christ,—for all the seed, for every one : wherein He undertakes all, and the poor soul nothing. The new covenant is *grace*,—to, or upon the soul ; to which it (the soul) is passive and receptive : *I’ll do away their sins ; I’ll write my law, &c. ; I’ll put it in their hearts : they shall never depart from me, &c.* This commends the love of God ; it’s Christ dying for men *without* strength—for men whilst sinners—whilst enemies. And shall we seek for the root of our comforts within us ? What God hath done, what He is to us in Christ, this is the root of our comfort : in this is stability ; in us is weakness. Acts of obedience are not perfect, and therefore yield not perfect grace. Faith, as an act, yields it not, but only as it carries us unto Him, who is our perfect rest and peace ; in whom we are accounted of, and received by the Father, even as Christ himself ! This is our high calling. Rest we here, and here only.”*

Dr. G.—“ Does Cromwell say that ? Read it again. It’s what I’ve been wanting these two hours. I’ve been thinking, O, if I had not gone to Harrogate, or if I had not gone to Scarborough, I might have been better. How that suits me where he writes—‘ Fear says, if I had done this and avoided that : ’ but love says, ‘ What a Christ have I ! What a Father have I ! ’ ”

* Carlyle’s Letters of Oliver Cromwell, vol. ii. p. 377. The Protector, by Merle D’Aubigné, p. 202.

Another letter, which specially interested him, was one addressed by the Protector to his "beloved daughter, Bridget Ireton,"—in which he says, "Your sister is, I trust, in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind : bewailing it : she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker, is to be one of the best sect next to a finder ; and such a one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder ! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness ? Dear heart, press on ; let not husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. That which is best worthy of love in thy husband, is that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that, and love it best, and all the rest for that." *

In the course of the day, Dr. G. asked for Watts's Hymns for Children, which had been a favourite book from his earliest years. He frequently interrupted the reader with expressions of admiration. His case was beautifully illustrated by the hymn—

How fine has the day been ! How bright was the sun,
 How lovely and joyful the course that he run !
 Tho' he rose in a mist, when his race he begun,
 And there followed some droppings of rain :
 But now the fair traveller comes to the west,
 His rays are all gold, and his beauties are best,
 He paints the sky gay as he sinks to his rest,
 And foretells a bright rising again.

To Mr. K. "I have seen my own vileness, and sought the Saviour. I cannot tell the place and the time. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence

* Carlyle's Letters of Oliver Cromwell, vol. i. p. 277. The Protector, by Merle D'Aubigne, p. 79.

it cometh or whither it goeth.' But I know it proceeds from the goodness of God. Mine is a testimony which few can give. The course of my reading has been so curious and strange. I have met with so many quibbles and objections, and my mind has often been in a maze and confusion. But it has given me a strength I could not otherwise expect. I feel now on so firm a rock, that Satan cannot possibly shake me. I have been always a seeker after truth, though often bewildered in the investigation." Mrs. G. remarked, what a mercy it was that he had no clouds to darken, no temptations to harass him. Dr. G.—"The moment they are suggested I dash them away, and keep my eye fixed on my Saviour; I find him always near. If I had not him as my friend, what a dreary departing it would be; but now I am going to a dear, dear friend!" "You have exerted yourself to-day very much, in speaking to every one; but you are so anxious to preach Christ."—"Indeed I am! And I think and feel this may be my last opportunity. The only reason why I wish to live, is to preach the gospel. I should not be ashamed of Christ in public or private." During the night he said to his daughter—"I may live one or two days more; but I leave it with God, and wait His will. I have been picturing the flowers nodding over my grave. And when it is windy and rainy, you will perhaps think how dreary it is for me; but remember, I shall not feel that."

January 17th.—He expressed a wish to bid farewell to an elderly man, whom he had known for many years; whose kindness of disposition made him universally beloved, but for whose spiritual welfare Dr. G. felt much solicitude. Mr. * having come to his bed-side, the following dialogue occurred, which cannot fail of deeply interesting the reader, consider-

ing that a dying man, worn to a shadow by a long and painful illness, and who thought himself within a few hours of eternity, took so prominent a part in it:—

Mr. *—"I am very sorry, Doctor, to see you so ill." Dr. G.—"I am very *well*, and very happy. But I rest on Christ. When we pride ourselves on our own conduct"—Mr. *—"O Doctor! you have always lived a good life. Everybody respects you." Dr. G.—"But I must not think of myself; all the merits I have must be thrown aside. You don't understand that. I once did not. My course of reading has been of a very varied kind, but I can assure you there is a consolation in resting your hopes of future happiness on the merits of Christ, which the world has yet to learn." Mr. *—"I know that in these moments religion is everything, though I cannot see just as you. I know I must die, and am sensible I shall live again. That future state is a serious consideration. But some think there will be annihilation." Dr. G.—"So dreadful do I think annihilation, that I would rather live in pain, than not live at all. There is nothing more dreadful. But I have a better hope. It is beyond human reason—it comes without human reason." Mr. *—"I am sensible that it must be happy to think so. I have been on what I thought my death-bed, as you are, and though I don't pride myself, I thought there was nothing I ever did that I wished I had not done. I never hurt man nor woman, and if that were the last of me, I could die comfortable. But, then, there was the thought of rising again. Ah! I may *die* easy enough, but there's some chance of being called over to account, and there I was bothered; for I thought with Shakespere, that if dying was a sleep, I might have awful dreams." Dr. G.—"You said you thought

you had never injured any one. Why, my dear fellow, there was not a day, when I analyzed my life, that I had not done, spoken, or thought evil." Mr. *—"I reconciled myself by thinking, that, if I had done evil, I did not know it, and therefore there was no guilt." Dr. G.—"There is a right line and a wrong, which does not depend on you. You do not make the straight line." Mr. *—"It's awkward when there are two roads, and you don't know which to take." Dr. G.—"There is only one way. A man shows me a straight line; I say it is not straight. My knowledge of geometry proves there is only one straight line. So there is only one circle, right or wrong. So I act, kindly or unkindly. If I think an evil thought of a man, I act unkindly. Human beings cannot act perfectly; but perfection ought to be my standard; and when God requires it, and I don't come up to it, what am I to do? who is to make up my deficiencies? For if one man says he only spoke one unkind word, another may say he only spoke two, so that you may have a world of quarrelling." Mr. *—"Well, it is a consolation to see a man, as I never have before, say he dies in hopes of living again. I always felt miserable at such scenes." "Why?" Mr. *—"I thought they were dying without hope. One was a good man, as a member of society; he said—'To-morrow all will be over with me, *all* over, my boy, all over, dead and gone, that's all that can be said of me.' Yet he was a man of very strong mind." Dr. G.—"Did you ever see a locomotive engine?" "Yes." "Do you think it moves?" "Yes." Dr. G.—"I can prove that it does not, and I defy you to disprove my argument. A body only occupies a space equal to itself." "Well?" Dr. G.—"It cannot hold two spaces at one and the same time." "Well!" Dr. G.—"A

body cannot move where it is, and it cannot move where it is not. It is stationary where it is, and cannot move where it is not, therefore it does not move at all." Mr. *—"Ah! this is good argument, and sound too." Dr. G.—"This argument was employed 3000 years ago, and it is unrefuted yet. Nevertheless, this man says there is nothing after death! Is this man learned?" "In some things. Dr. G.—"Did you ever see a straight line?" "Yes." Dr. G.—"If you go to Cambridge, you will find men who will hail you as the greatest discoverer of the age. Have you ever seen a circle?" "Yes, I've seen what was called a circle, and I thought it was." Dr. G.—"Don't you see how ignorant men are? Were you to calculate the radii of a circle according to those you draw, what imperfect radii would they be! Some would be shorter than others." "But how can you prove there is no straight line?" "Easily. Draw one, and take a microscope." Mr. *—"Yes; there will be ins and outs." Dr. G.—"Such men should think more." Mr. *—"With all our thinking, we are very ignorant. Pope spoke of this, where he talks about 'teaching eternal wisdom how to rule,' adding—'then drop into thyself, and be a fool.' I've often thought there is truth in that passage where he speaks of showing a Newton as you show an ape. But Pope speaks of a man bursting as a bubble, which turns to water, and who can find it again? Yet great men may err. You are a very clever man, Doctor, quite a philosopher; but the best of us know very little." Dr. G.—"Nothing! and it is that utter ignorance which gives me this blessedness now. All my reasonings bring me to this—'I MUST REST ON CHRIST.'" Mr. *—"Well, I think Him the best person on whom we can rest; I always did. It's a pleasure to hear you talk, for it's

a very uncommon thing to be strong in opinion while very weak in body. To your family it must be very delightful to see you like this. I would give worlds to be the remainder of my life in the same state of mind." Dr. G., being greatly exhausted, said faintly, but very earnestly, "Try!" Mr. *—"I do in my paltry way. What you say is sincere. There is no humbug about you. What you have, no man could shake." "None!" "And he would be a vile man who should attempt. You have often said to me, the Bible told you this and that. I reverence the Bible. But in the Old Testament, though there are some things good and fine, there are others at which I have shuddered." Here Dr. G. was completely exhausted, and seemed to doze. To save him from further fatigue, the argument was taken up by the writer, who inquired what things those were that were so objectionable. Mr. *—"The historical accounts. The Jews being so bad, in spite of such kindness from God. What wickedness!" "Does not that prove the truth of the Bible, which says, that the 'heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked?' Besides, the Prophets who wrote those books, were very patriotic, mourning over the calamities of their nation; yet it is they who record their sins! Does not this prove at least that they were candid? Would they have said such severe things against their own party, unless they were sincere?" Mr. *—"Well, I see that. They were candid men. But then the plagues of Egypt! and it is said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart!" N.—"Just as mercies despised do harm. It was mercy to Pharaoh, to remove the plagues, but he abused it, and thus the mercy hardened him. A kind father makes still more callous the heart of a rebellious child, by the very tenderness which that child rejects.

So, if God sends us an affliction, brings us near to death, and then delivers us from it, if we do not profit by the warning and the mercy, we are the worse for it. Thus God hardened Pharaoh's heart by the very forbearance he showed him, that is, Pharaoh turned God's gifts into curses." Mr. *—"Well, I see your meaning. But how is it that there is no account in heathen writings of the miracles of Moses?" Dr. G. had now somewhat revived, and though his eyes continued closed, he had evidently overheard the objection; for he said in a whisper, "Do you understand the hieroglyphics?" "No." Dr. G.—"Do they contain no account of them?" "I should think not." Dr. G.—"But you said just now that you did not understand them. Therefore you cannot know." Dr. Gordon was now completely worn out with the effort he had made, and took leave of Mr. * with a tender grasp of the hand, saying, with a look of deep and affectionate interest, "May God bless you, Mr. *."

Though the narrator has given a faithful account of what was said during this most instructive interview, he feels it is quite impossible to convey any adequate idea of the peaceful composure, the happy assurance on his own account, and the tender solicitude for him whom he addressed, which characterized Dr. Gordon's manner during the whole conversation. It was a scene never to be forgotten. How infinitely superior did that philosophy appear which conducts to the cross for knowledge and for hope, to the scepticism which leaves its votary nothing to rely on but vague uncertainties, and self-righteousness! How touching the admission of Mr. *, in which the reader, whatever his opinion, must surely unite: "I would give worlds to be the remainder of my life in the same state of mind." Referring to this conversation,

in the afternoon, Dr. Gordon observed—"They call men learned and clever, who have a smattering of knowledge, and nothing deep." An aged Christian was spoken of, who thus replied to a clever sceptical opponent:—"I have an argument, I defy all the world to refute. Jesus Christ here in my heart, fills me with peace and joy, and enables me to hate sin and love holiness. Talk as you like, you can never shake me, for I *feel* Him within me." It was observed that this argument, though not enough to convince the sceptic, was quite sufficient to support the believer. Dr. G.—"That is *the* argument. The grand evidence of the gospel, is its adaptation to our wants. Learned lectures on the evidences, I mean the external, do little or no good. Oh! that learning and sophistry, which call in question the truth of Christianity, it's all nothing, child's play, a thing for an hour. I could laugh it all to scorn. But the votaries of this sophistry are not to be all denounced as deriders of Christianity. Many are anxious for truth, and unable to find it. They deserve pity. Intolerance is a curse to society. How many things there are, the mere inquiry concerning which would cast a man into the shade! As for Mr. *, I believe he will die a Christian."

An aged cottager, from Welton, who had known, loved, and prayed for him, for more than twenty years, made a great effort, in a weak state of health, to come and bid him farewell, and hear from his own lips the answer to her petitions. She brought him a nosegay of flowers from her little garden, but was too much overcome by her feelings to speak. He said to her, "I'm nearly gone, but I'm happy. I've found it where you always told me I should." Being informed, that on leaving him, Mrs. H. had retired to another room, where she had been praying that the

gates of heaven might be open wide to receive him, he replied—"That I'm sure they will. How unworthy I am to be loaded with so much love!" To one who said to him—"Every one will miss a friend. We all feel such sincere sorrow. You have been so kind to every one," he answered—"I am glad if I have been of service to any one, though nothing gives me satisfaction, but having Christ. All is imperfect; but He will present me to the Almighty, covered with His merits, and that is enough."

Thursday, 18th.—On awaking, he said—"I've had a very happy night; brighter visions than ever of the happy land." His attached servant and nurse said—"How I wish to be you. I am full of fear of not continuing faithful." He replied—"There is nothing to fear if you keep close to Jesus. I'll tell you what *I* did. I went *fervently* to Him, and took all my sins and cares, my heart full, and left all at the cross, and sweet peace followed. It's such love! But remember, constant watching is necessary. Thus go to Christ, and you have nothing else to do. It is all done for you. O what a night I've had! such happiness! I cannot describe it. When I fall asleep and when I awake it's always there. How wonderful!" To one of his tradesmen, who, in bidding him farewell, told him with tears of the love which people bore to him, he said—"I like to be loved, and live in the memories and affections of men. I have tried to love them, for we are all brethren. I am very happy. Hold fast to Jesus—that's everything." In the course of conversation, he said—"I see where Christians are wrong. We do not make a *companion* of God. We should treat him more as a friend, but not as a distant friend, but as always near, close to us, so that we are never alone, but continually in his company." This was a topic to which he frequently reverted.

Religion is too much separated from ordinary affairs. The special seasons for worship are too distinct from their intervening periods. Such seasons are necessary, but should never be substituted for a *life* of prayer. All things ought to be done religiously. God may be worshipped in the shop, the field, the ship, the exchange, and not merely in the church. The ordinary doings of daily life, however insignificant in themselves, may be elevated into solemn acts of worship, by being performed in a religious spirit. Thus, the professional man, the merchant, the tradesman, the mechanic, in their ordinary engagements, may, no less than the clergyman, when visiting the sick, and studying the Bible, and preaching the gospel, "walk with God." Dr. Arnold well observes, "The true and grand idea of a church, *i. e.* a society for the purpose of making men like Christ, earth like heaven, the kingdoms of the world, the kingdoms of Christ; all is lost, and men look upon it as an institution for religious instruction and religious worship, thus robbing it of its life and universality, making it an affair of clergy, not of people; of preaching and ceremonies, not of living; of Sundays and synagogues, instead of one of all days, and all places, houses, streets, towns, and countries."

Dr. G. remarked—"It is this having God with me as my companion, which has made me so happy. I dislike to sleep, because I lose the enjoyment. O to think I could ever have had a care when there was a God in the world! How wonderful! How wrong I have been! 'Behold the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not

much more clothe you, O ye of little faith !” Ah ! I did not understand that before. But I do now. How false are the judgments of the world. Many would pity me. They don’t know how happy I am.”

Saturday, 20th.—This day recalled the alarming seizure of the preceding week, and the unexpected mercies we had enjoyed in such delightful intercourse with our beloved friend, during the seven days he had been spared to us. In reference to this, he said, “I thought I should have been taken from you. We have had many mercies. What a glorious week it has been—the happiest I ever spent. The world cannot comprehend it. I now understand the meaning of the passage, ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ; *but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*’” One of his friends bidding him good night, with the wish that he might have pleasant thoughts, he replied, “Those I am sure to have. I am never afraid of the nights.”

January 21st.—He said, “To believe that God loves us, wishes us to love Him, and does everything to *make* us love Him, to regard Him as a Friend, a Brother, a Father—this must make us happy. As to doubts and fears, I could not have any. I might have many if I looked to myself ; but this is impossible, if I look to my Saviour. I have often been surprised that Christians seemed to be made so little happy by their religion. The reason is, they have looked for happiness to what is in themselves, instead of to what is in Christ. And looking to him is the best source of holy living. And then, if this salvation were only offered to a few, or to those who had committed only trifling sins,—peccadilloes, and had lived moral lives, there would be room for doubt ;

but it's so full and free, and offered to all, to the very worst, to every one!" Referring to trials of temper, he urged the importance of making Christ our model. It was suggested that Job was a most patient man, and yet uttered irritable words under provocation. Dr. G. rejoined, "Nay; we must not look to Job, but ask how *Christ* would act." About midnight, waking very faint, he said, "I think I am sinking. I feel the powers of nature giving way." Then, looking most affectionately at each, he added, "I think I have said all I wished to say." Then, after a pause, "I'm so glad they have made the cemetery a garden for my body to rest in, with all the beautiful flowers about." In reference to his approaching dissolution, it was observed, "This is what we must all come to." He responded emphatically—"Must all come to! Christians should look forward to it with joy." It was remarked, that some persons dreaded death very much, because they must go forth *alone* into the eternal world with none of their friends to accompany and cheer them. Dr. G.—"Ah, but I shall not be alone; Christ is my companion, my friend, my brother!" He was reminded how, when we had been absent from home, he had always made some kind preparation to surprise and please us on our return, and how he was always waiting to welcome us. Thus Christ was preparing for him and would be ready to receive him. Dr. G.—"He *accompanies* me on *my* journey! how wonderful to receive *me* there, one who has so rebelled against him!"

January 22nd.—He said at different times, "I am gradually sinking, but I am very happy. I have had such a peaceful night. I marvel at myself, that when in health I should have been so anxious about worldly things, and thought so little of what was to

be had so superior. I have always had a respect for religion, and when at school at Ripon, attended the cathedral with pleasure; but I knew nothing of the true way. O blind, blind, blind!—Make God your *friend*, and don't look on him as a God afar off—but as loving you and determining that you shall be saved. I think he has almost gone out of his way to save me. He has given me blow after blow, and his means have been so especially adapted to my case. In conversation with his brother-in-law, Mr. Anderson, W. S., of Edinburgh, who had spoken of eternity as incomprehensible, he said, "All things are incomprehensible, yet we presume to reason about religion. We know not what an infinitesimal atom of matter is. We can conceive of its infinite division, and yet every particle must have an upper and an under side. Neither do we understand matter in its larger bulks—the immense globes—and so numerous! We know not the end of space nor the end of time. We know nothing. We see with a very contracted view, and yet we reason! We must come to the Bible as little children, then we shall know! We must trust as little children, then we shall not live in dread. How strange that Christians should be afraid of diseases, accidents by railway, and such things, when God is always with them!" Mr. A. referred to St. Paul's conversion as illustrating the extraordinary way in which God sometimes arrests sinners in order to save them. Dr. G.—"*Magna componere parvis*, that is my case. God seemed determined to save me, and if I may so speak, has been running after me. God wishes us to dwell in the world with Him. He is always asking us to join Him, yet we refuse! Ah, we are foolish beings! 'He willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live.' I am never alone, by

night or by day, my companion is always with me. As to what some say, of my possible recovery, how true are the words of Milman!—

‘It matters little at what hour of the day
The righteous fall asleep—death cannot come
To him untimely who is fit to die—
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven;
The briefer life, the earlier immortality.’

January 23rd.—Though greatly enfeebled this morning, and scarcely able to whisper, he exerted himself to speak to the numerous visitors who came to see him. He said, “We must become as children. Only God could make me understand it. My affliction has been sent for this. But, how I murmured! I’ve been a stubborn child! The way is, think nothing about yourself. Give yourself to Him entirely; it is what He wishes. Then you will have perfect peace. I am thankful I did not first know this in the extremity of my weakness. It has been weeks, weeks! At first I rebelled at the affliction. O, the blindness! I did not see what it was for.”

January 24th.—To Sir W. L.—“What fools men are for caring so much for the world. Should I live, and ever become a poor man, never think me poor; I shall be rich. God is my friend. There is majesty in such a possession. There’s poor ——; * what a fool was I! I looked at him as a fanatic. But I don’t now. He’s a rich man. Never call him poor again. What folly there is in seeking money! The

* He referred to a Danish gentleman who, for conscience’ sake, had been obliged to come to England, and though entirely destitute, with no prospect of employment, was perfectly happy, expressing the fullest confidence that “his Father would provide for him.”

care to get it, and then the care to keep it! The abject degradation of it!"

January 25th.—To his family, who were sitting at his bed-side, he said, "What joy I have had! no one can describe it! I have often told you, when in great pain, that I could not have conceived any human being could suffer so much. I am sure I may now say I could not conceive any human being could *enjoy* so much! And to compare these pleasures with the pleasures of the world! O, how foolish! I now feel God is my friend; Christ has covered my sins, I am fit for heaven. I could not dread danger and death. I never disbelieved—but I did not feel, as I now do, the wisdom and goodness of the gospel! What a proof of its truth, that it can produce such a change, and give me such feelings! How its Author must have known the heart! Is not this the best proof that it is from God? How could man have invented a system which could do such things?" To his nephew A. A.—"Seek Christ early. There's no happiness in anything else. Don't care about argumentative books on religion. Take the Scriptures as they are." A. A.—"A poor woman stopped me at the door to ask after you; she was very poor, almost a beggar." Dr. G.—"I am very much obliged to her. I like to be remembered by the poor much better than by the rich. I love my rich friends, and am very grateful for their kind attentions, but the poor are my flock. I never courted the rich. Love the poor. BE GREAT, AND SEEK LITTLE THINGS; DON'T BE LITTLE AND SEEK GREAT THINGS."

Being asked whether his present feelings on religion had altered his views respecting the political engagements of his former life, he answered—"Certainly not. Were I to recover, I should do as I have done in those respects, only *more enthusiastically*

than ever, as the cause of truth and human happiness. I hope nothing I have said can give any other impression." This is very important, as increasing the strength of his religious testimony, which would have been less valuable, had all his conclusions on other topics been shaken. It might have been said that bodily debility had affected his mind, that he thought morbidly on every point, and, therefore, that little could be deduced from the confessions he made of a religious nature. But the perfect composure he maintained throughout his illness, the calmness with which he always spoke, the deep conviction he retained of the truth of those principles he had so long studied and advocated—this made the more emphatic the striking testimony he bore to the great truths of the gospel, and to the necessity of receiving it as a little child. Even to within a few hours of his death, incidents were occurring which brought out the characteristic features of his mind, and showed them to be elevated indeed, and illumined by his exalted devotion and strong religious faith, but not changed.

January 26th.—Being told of many persons of affluence calling to inquire after him he asked—"And what *poor* have called? The rich are very kind, but the poor are my flock." This led him to remark on the truth of the declaration—"To the poor the gospel is preached;" observing that their circumstances in life disposed them to receive a message of such consolation; that their freedom from the bondage of fashion gave them many advantages which its votaries did not possess; and that they were free from the pride of learning and reasoning which hindered others in the reception of a faith requiring child-like simplicity in its disciples, and demanding that "the wise should become as fools," in order that they might be truly wise. Such a system, he said, was too grand and

vast to have ever been made out by man's reasoning ; it could have come only from God.

"The Life of Dr. Hope" deeply interested him. So remarkable was the correspondence between many of their feelings, that the following extracts, among many others which might be made, seem as though written to describe his own case :—"It is very commonly said, that illness is peculiarly distressing to medical men, because they see their own symptoms, and, agitated by conflicting hopes and fears, are disqualified from prescribing for themselves. The very reverse of this was Dr. Hope's case. He observed his symptoms with as cool and accurate an eye as he would those of another. * * * He requested Mrs. H. not to mention the possibility of his recovery, for such conversations tended to unsettle his mind, while his spirits were more cheerful when he took an opposite view of the subject. * * * He kept a strip of paper, with which he used to measure the size of his leg ; and as it diminished, inch by inch, he used to smile, and to speculate on the probability of his going before or after July, the time which he had first named. He made preparations for death, as he had done for every important step that he had taken during life. His family could find no more appropriate manner of describing his conduct, throughout the seven months that he still lingered, than that it resembled that of a man who, expecting to set off on a journey, puts everything in order before his departure, and makes arrangements to supply his absence. * * * The remarkable peace and joy with which he was blessed, were unclouded by even one fear or doubt. One day, one of his sisters-in-law inquired, whether he found that illness enabled him to realize spiritual things in a greater degree. He answered, 'Yes, when we ap-

proach the invisible world, it is astonishing with what intensity of feeling we desire to be there.' She asked him from what cause. He answered, 'Oh! for the glories!'—and then she caught the words at intervals—'When we consider, too, what we now are: how continually we sin—pollution is in every thought—when we analyze our motives, we see sin in them.—I did this from such a motive—that, from such another—charity is given with a feeling of self-complacency—the only way is to bring the burden to the foot of the cross, and tumble it down there, saying, "Here I am." It is surprising how prominently the promises come out.' With all this joy, and peace, this eagerness to depart and be with God, there was no enthusiasm or excitement visible in his words or demeanour. His imagination had always been kept in subordination to his reason, and now nothing could have exceeded his sobriety of mind. He drew his hopes and consolations from the Bible alone. From that source he derived the joyful belief, that in another world his renewed faculties and purified nature would enable him to love God more singly, and to serve him more actively, than he had hitherto been able to do. He had also the most vivid anticipations of the reunion of friends." To these passages Dr. G. responded—"This is as if written for me! As Dr. Hope says, 'There is peace in Christ if we go to him at once, and tumble down our sins before him.' Here I am, a poor, unworthy, wicked creature, not deserving of being looked at by the Saviour, but I can go as I am."

To Mrs. G.—"What a happy life we have spent together. You will think of the many pleasant talks we have had over the fire alone. And how we've enjoyed our little excursions together! But we're going the same way, and shall meet again.

It's only a separation for a short time. When you visit my tomb, don't do it with grief. Perhaps my spirit may be permitted to be hovering round you; and remember how happy I shall be. What a mercy to think that I and those I most love, are all going the right way. I often picture heaven to myself, but I can't describe it. Then I shall have no more toil, no anxiety, no pain, no sin! Oh, that sin! What would have become of me now, if I had to appear before God in my own righteousness, which is indeed but filthy rags! But I shall be clothed in Christ's righteousness!" Mrs. G.—"If any one could rely on his own acts, you could; for you have always laboured to do good." Dr. G.—"But what sin is mixed with everything! I have been thinking of heaven, wondering who will admit us, and introduce us. But it will be a beautiful land! O what a glorious land! You must be happy to see me so happy." Reverting to former days, and those simple recreations in which he always took so much interest, he said—"I hope you will visit those places again, and think of me, and don't avoid anything connected with me. There are your songs, (addressing his daughter) my favourites, you'll sing, 'The last rose of summer,' and 'The light of other days is faded:' that will be very appropriate, you know." Then, continuing to look at her with inexpressible tenderness, he added—"I'd rather have died a thousand times than have seen you die, my child. I could not have survived it: the shock would have been too great."

January 27th.—He said to the writer—"I feel I am getting worse, more rapidly than you may imagine. My eyes are getting dim, and my brain shakes. I should wish none of you to be out of the way. Let me see any who call, for my end is certain, and I

wish to see my friends to the last. And don't be afraid of waking me; my time cannot be long, and I wish to enjoy your conversation while I can." To Mr. Smithard, a devoted temperance missionary,—
"I took wine for a few days, as it was urged on me. I complied for the satisfaction of my friends. I wished to perform my duty. But it did me great injury—my testimony is against it—it always was—but my friends would not have been contented, and I now feel more satisfaction myself. I am perfectly happy—anxious to go to that blessed country. I said, weeks ago, that I should not recover, and everything I predicted has come to pass." Mr. S. referred to his many benevolent exertions for the poor, especially in the promotion of temperance, expressing the grief that was felt at the prospect of losing so zealous and powerful a friend to the cause, with the confidence that God would reward him for all the sacrifices which he had made. He replied—
"I have felt the cause important, but I am a poor creature—how imperfect—I have no merits—I feel it most deeply. I regret I am too weak to say more at present. Don't forget me. I wish to live in your remembrance." It being remarked that he would do very badly now, without Christ, he replied—"O I could not do at all. I strip off my own doings and cast them down there, all in a heap. I see the heap just before me, and I see Jesus there too—who has accepted me. Death is rather a herald of good than of evil. In most subjects, when I have seen a thing once, I have no more misgivings. But I feel *this* is such *great* truth—I cannot see why Christians should have doubts; Christ comes to us, seeks us, runs after us, sends afflictions to bring us to him, and why should we doubt? I have been asking my dear wife, whether I properly understand the subject, as I have

no doubts, and Christians generally seem to have so many. I could not doubt. It's so plain.—Can men be so anxious to be exalted to the presence of royalty, when we may approach the majesty of Heaven? O it's abject! it's wretched! And we may have this honour even on earth! To think that I should ever have felt flattered, had I been sent for to the palace, when I might have enjoyed the presence of Deity himself! when I might have had hourly intercourse with Him! Was there ever such an imperfect creature!—All the consideration of my own mind, all the analysis I can make of it, proves the truth of Christianity. It so provides for all the wants of the soul. If I were to begin to reason, I could get into a maze, but I am told to come as a little child, and then I find perfect peace. Do you think man could have made such a system? Once receive it into the heart, and you have enough evidence there.—And can men be ambitious and avaricious? Instead of my own sinful deeds, I rely on Christ. How this would purify my deeds themselves, were I going to live—a thing I never saw before. I cannot tell what Satan might do, but I feel my faith such, that I could not do a thing contrary to the will of God. It would so shock me, that I think I could not exist under it. I should wish to be like Christ himself. Thus faith and good works become united. You may be sure I have been taught this in a way extraordinary. It seems all so clear to me." Being asked if he felt the least fear of dying, he replied—"I meet death as a friend—he will take me to that Saviour who has been so good to me. I feel as if I could stand up to-morrow in the market-place, and proclaim in a voice of thunder to all the town, what I feel.—How men can keep away from religion, or when once they have faith in Christ do what is

against his will, or how they can be unhappy when God is their friend, I don't know, but to me, at present, it would seem impossible.—I wonder how Christians can make a trouble of any thing. But O, the pride of the world, seeking after great things; if I could see God as my friend, how great should I feel above all the world!—O what sweet converse this is, to talk of the goodness of God, and to *me*, so undeserving! There is never any abatement of it. It's love throughout!—I hope I shall have a comfortable day to-morrow, and pass a happy sabbath with my friends." He fell asleep as we continued to talk, having had scarcely any rest throughout the day.

Sunday, January 28th.—On awaking, Dr. G. said—"I have been thinking of God as a shepherd. The shepherd sends out his dog when a sheep has wandered from the fold, to bark at, and frighten, and sometimes to bite the wanderer, in order to bring it back. So afflictions and pains are the dogs which our Shepherd sends to bring us back to Him. Some of us are stubborn sheep. I was one of these, and the dog had to bite me, but the barking and biting are to do us good, not harm, and to bring us to the Shepherd."

To the Rev. Dr. D.—"This affliction was all for my good, my happiness. I have had more enjoyment the few last weeks than in my whole life. I could not have a doubt. I trusted too much to human learning; but when I saw how to get this by coming as a little child, it burst on me in a way I cannot describe. But man could not have taught me this. It was the Holy Spirit of grace. Then it all rushed upon my view at once. I saw Christ my Saviour; stripped off all my filthy deeds, went to the foot of the cross, and Christ presented me to God." Dr. D.—"The people of God sometimes feel the

truth of what some may think too strongly expressed by Dr. Watts,—

‘The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is mine,
And whispers, I am his.’

You feel this.” Dr. G.—“Yes, in the most exquisite way. I have attended in many sick-rooms, and heard of doubts and fears, but I have no such things.” To the Rev. J. Stuart, and Mr. V., he said—“The suffering I have had is nothing, for it has brought to me a happiness I had no conception existed. I have found that God is my friend, loves me, and, through Christ, has pardoned me. I have sought Him through Christ. I have seen my entire worthlessness, and He, in his great mercy, has filled my heart with His Holy Spirit. Oh that gospel, how it understands the human heart! And to think we should lose such enjoyment when we might have it every day of our lives! How great and noble it makes us! How independent! It takes away all fear of the world, and of death, and you feel at once that God is your friend! No man could have taught me; it came through that great and gracious Being. As to seeking to be religious, I have always been doing that, but I did not seek in the right way. It must be *heart*, not head. Now I *feel* that ‘the Lord is my shepherd.’—I may be thought to use strong terms, but during my whole illness, my head has been as clear as at any former period, and I have taken no opiates.”

In the course of the day, the author said to him —“You have told us that had it pleased God that you should recover, it would have been your delight to preach Christ. I have been thinking that you

could do this very emphatically at your funeral. Many people, of all descriptions, will be gathered together, and your dying testimony would be very impressive. If you would like to say anything, I will write it down."

Dr. G.—"Oh, I cannot find words sufficient. I am afraid I cannot convey the thing sufficiently. I should be doing injustice to my Saviour."—He then, after a brief pause, very solemnly and emphatically spoke as follows:—"ALL HUMAN LEARNING IS OF NO AVAIL. REASON MUST BE PUT OUT OF THE QUESTION. I REASONED AND DEBATED, AND INVESTIGATED, BUT I FOUND NO PEACE TILL I CAME TO THE GOSPEL AS A LITTLE CHILD, TILL I RECEIVED IT AS A BABE. THEN SUCH A LIGHT WAS SHED ABROAD IN MY HEART, THAT I SAW THE WHOLE SCHEME AT ONCE, AND I FOUND PLEASURE THE MOST INDESCRIBABLE. I SAW THERE WAS NO GOOD DEED IN MYSELF. THOUGH I HAD SPENT HOURS IN EXAMINING MY CONDUCT, I FOUND NOTHING I HAD DONE WOULD GIVE ME REAL SATISFACTION. IT WAS ALWAYS MIXED UP WITH SOMETHING SELFISH. BUT WHEN I CAME TO THE GOSPEL AS A CHILD, THE HOLY SPIRIT SEEMED TO FILL MY HEART. I THEN SAW MY SELFISHNESS IN ALL ITS VIVID DEFORMITY, AND I FOUND THERE WAS NO ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD, AND NO HAPPINESS EXCEPT THROUGH THE BLESSED REDEEMER. I STRIPPED OFF ALL MY OWN DEEDS—THREW THEM ASIDE—WENT TO HIM NAKED—HE RECEIVED ME AS HE PROMISED HE WOULD, AND PRESENTED ME TO THE FATHER—THEN I FELT JOY UNSPEAKABLE, AND ALL FEAR OF DEATH AT ONCE VANISHED."

The thoughtful reader will place the legitimate interpretation on the expression—"Reason must be put out of the question." Similar remarks occur throughout the volume. Dr. Gordon did not of

course mean that reason and revelation were not in harmony. He would have been the last to discourage the freest and fullest scrutiny. His meaning, though expressed in the strong and unguarded terms of a man who feels deeply, was this: that all the efforts of reason are unavailing to produce that spiritual change of which the Holy Ghost is the author, and without which the gospel cannot be experimentally known. He was conscious of an influence totally distinct from the result of a merely intellectual process. He had "become a new creature." While with all the ardour of one who experiences what had hitherto been unknown, he referred to his feelings as constituting an all-sufficient evidence, none could value more than he, the written word; none could be more persuaded of its agreement with the dictates of enlightened reason, and none could more earnestly have recommended the enlisting of every mental faculty in its study. But none were more fully sensible than he became, from his own experience, that we can only understand that word aright, when in the child-like spirit which God bestows on all who seek it, we become learners in the school of Christ. Then the "inward witness" is felt to be superior to any external evidence, however valuable. The voice of the Spirit in the book, witnesseth with the voice of the Spirit in our own heart, that we are the children of God, and that Christianity is Divine. Yet even this evidence cannot be dissociated from reason, in the highest sense of that term, as Dr. Gordon himself clearly saw and often expressed. The inward consciousness of the believer is the spontaneous testimony of Reason herself, divinely enlightened and sanctified. And nothing is more adapted to impress the minds of unbelievers, than the suitability of the gospel to the

spiritual wants of man, and its visible effects in rendering its disciples holy and happy.

January 29th.—He said at different times, “I never used to understand the influences of the Spirit, for I sought to comprehend religion only by the reason; but I understand now, by experience, what it means. Oh! what a happiness it is to have communion with God! Love to God produces such love to others. Since I felt what I do, I have loved you all so much more, with a love I could not conceive of. Oh, my blessed Saviour, how can I serve Him enough! Were I to live, the Bible should be more my book.” In the evening he said, “Do come and talk on these delightful subjects. I cannot say much myself; I am too weak; but I love to listen to you. I feel an assurance of pardon. Am I not scripturally right in *knowing* it? I could not doubt it!” An interesting conversation followed, on the experimental evidence of Christianity, of which the following is the substance:—Actual experience is the strongest proof in every case. If a man professes to be able to do such and such things, the actual doing of them is a more conclusive and ready evidence than any chain of argument. Take an electrical machine; prove to a bystander that the wire is charged, and that by touching it he will receive a shock. The process is long, and may be disputed. An explanation may be asked of the nature of electricity, and of every part of the machinery. Evidence may be demanded that the process has been correctly gone through; that the battery is verily charged; and that its connexion with the wire to be touched is unbroken. Witnesses may be required to testify, that they themselves have experienced the predicted effects, and then their veracity or competency may be called in question. Would it not be a much speedier mode of attaining

conviction, to touch the wire and receive the shock? However interesting the investigation, actual experiment must be the strongest and speediest demonstration. Christianity is a machinery of truth, in connexion with which exists a mighty, though mysterious efficacy, experienced, when the soul is brought into contact with that truth, by faith. Evidence is demanded; you are asked to prove the harmony of all parts of the machine—the consistency of truth with truth; to demonstrate the unbroken continuity of the connecting line—the chain of historical evidence; to explain the precise laws by which the shock takes place—the mode in which the Spirit of God influences the heart. This process is necessarily long, and will suggest many an inquiry which it will be difficult to satisfy. Much will appear mysterious, of which no solution can be given. But if that questioner will by faith touch for himself, he will at once have an inward witness, which no sophistry can shake. Suppose a man who had never tasted bread, is told that it is good for food, and sufficient not only to sustain life, but to impart strength. He demands proof. He asks how bread is produced; how the seed-corn grows up into the blade and the full ear; how it is converted into flour and bread; whether the loaf before him is verily the identical substance which was grown in the corn-field, and not some other which has been substituted for it; what are its chemical qualities, and in what manner it is digested and assimilated. And should he refuse to eat till all his inquiries are answered, he may perish from hunger before the reply is complete. But if he tests that bread by eating it, and finds that he is nourished by it, no denial of its nutritive qualities by others, and no ignorance of the method in himself, can remove the strong conviction which that experimental test

has given him. Christian truth is the bread of the soul, imparting life, strength, gladness. Prove, says one, that it is really the same that originally descended from above, and that it has not been corrupted by human substitutions and additions; explain what seems mysterious about its origin, and make clear to us the method in which it influences him who receives it. However interesting such investigations may be, and even supposing they could be as fully satisfied as those respecting the bread that perisheth, (though even in that instance there are physical mysteries which no science can explain), the man who by faith receives into his soul the doctrine of the cross, "that bread of life," has in himself an evidence in the positive effects produced on his spiritual nature, which he feels to be stronger than any other. Instead of debating, let the questioner put the gospel to the test. He will then be more satisfied than by a thousand other arguments. "If any man *will do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Dr. Gordon often reiterated this expression: "If I had no other evidence of the truth of Christianity than my own case, it would be sufficient, if all the world were anti-Christians."

January 30th.—The night had been stormy. In alluding to it, Dr. G. said, "As I heard the wind blowing, I thought how peaceful and happy to be laid in the cemetery." The Rev. Joseph Green, rector of Owmbly, a brother-in-law of Dr. Gordon's, came for the purpose of bidding him farewell, and witnessing for himself that "triumphing over death," the reports of which had so interested and delighted him. Addressing Dr. G., he said:—"You now feel how little you can do without Christ." Dr. G.—"We can do *nothing*, poor, wretched, ignorant. He can do *everything*." Mr. G.—"This disarms eternity of

its terrors." Dr. G.—"It *has* no terrors." Mr. G.—"You must not look within yourself, but to Christ." Dr. G.—"Ah! but I do *look* within myself; but then I *cast* myself on Christ. I turn to the promises at once. I could not have believed there was such joy. How can I doubt, when God sent after us and sought us, when we did not seek Him? If He sought me when I was not seeking Him, He will not forsake me now I have found Him!" To the Rev. William Knight, the Rev. James Sibree, and the author, who were at his bedside, he earnestly said, "Preachers do not speak of the gospel as they ought, not in terms exalted enough. It is *such* a book! Had I strength to enter a pulpit, I do not know what I would not say of it. I have long been trying to learn it by reason. Never! never! I see what I saw not before, and feel what I never felt. When a man comes to that book as a child, he will find wonders in it to make him marvel. The love of God is what I cannot describe. So great is it, I could have no doubts and fears. To think that gracious Being has been seeking me and afflicting me, till he brought me to this happiness! I murmured; but I did not see what he designed—to bring me to that blessed Saviour. All the sayings of the Bible so accord with all I have experienced, that I feel it to be the most marvellous book there ever was in the world. Read *every word* of it, and take it just as it is." On leaving the room, Mr. Sibree said, "He knows much more than we do." Mr. Knight replied, that he had been in the ministry twenty-eight years, but had never met with so remarkable and wonderful a case. A testimony to the same effect was more publicly given by Mr. K. in a funeral sermon, delivered on Sunday, February 18th, in St. James's Church, from which, in corroboration of his own statements, the author grate-

fully avails himself of the permission to insert the following extract:—

“Having myself witnessed from day to day, the wonderful power of the Holy Spirit in his gracious work upon the heart of the deceased, I feel anxious to avail myself of the circumstance, as an occasion of illustrating those great evangelical truths, which I am constantly endeavouring to press upon your attention. I shall not speak one word in praise of the deceased, though I might speak many. How long he had been savingly impressed with Divine truth, I cannot take upon me to say: but one thing is quite certain, viz., that his was not a case of death-bed repentance. Repeatedly he said, ‘This is no new thing—these are no new feelings: I have known them long.’ I consider this to be a most important feature in the case. We see so many instances of apparent contrition, and turning to God in times of emergency, on a bed of sickness, and in the prospect of death; and we so often see the passing away of serious impressions with returning health, just like the morning cloud or early dew, that it is most difficult to feel anything like confidence in those cases where persons begin to be religious just when God takes from them the opportunity of being irreligious any longer. How peculiarly consoling then it is, in the instance before us, to know that the gospel was not made the soul’s last resource; that the last days of life were not all that was offered to God by our departed friend. It may perhaps be said by some, if the mind had for a length of time been thus savingly impressed, was it not somewhat singular, that it was not sooner followed by an open declaration, and especially by the act of Christian fellowship. To such, however, as were acquainted with the deceased, this

will easily be accounted for. He was a man who thought very deeply, and investigated the subjects which engaged his attention very closely: and thus it was with the claims of Christianity, and with the character of the gospel-scheme of salvation. He wished to prove all things, and to prove them by experience as well as conviction, before he made that open declaration, which in time, no doubt, would have been made by him, if his life had been spared. Besides this, we generally see, that when persons have lived much amongst those who are religious, without being religious themselves, they are more backward to acknowledge a spiritual change, if haply it takes place in their own hearts, than those persons are who have been differently circumstanced; and then, once more, the inconsistency of professors of religion is very often an occasion of hindering new converts in making an open profession so soon as they otherwise would. They fear, lest they too should dishonour the gospel; they hesitate to wear the soldier's uniform, though the loyalty of the soldier's heart beats within them.

“The last month of Dr. Gordon's life afforded ample time for the development of the real state of his mind, and nothing could be more decisive and satisfactory than such development was. All reserve was thrown aside; his very soul seemed to be laid open, and his communications were like the distribution of hidden treasures to those who stood around him. During the whole of this period, his delight was to dwell on the rich and glorious provision made for sinners in Christ Jesus. The gospel was always on his lips, and it was remarkable to trace the extreme clearness of his views on all the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. He spoke on the Trinity, the atonement, justification by faith,

the soul's renewal in holiness, with all the accuracy of the well-read theologian. I never heard him utter an expression which need be either corrected or guarded; and this circumstance shows, that he must have been very familiar with topics to which many thought him a stranger. He had evidently studied his Bible with the closest attention, and had drawn truth in all its freshness from the fountain-head; but more than this, it was God's truth in its direct and personal adaptation to man's necessities, which he had learnt, and learnt for himself, under the evident teaching of the Holy Spirit. This knowledge was not merely theoretic—it was deeply experimental. On one occasion, he said to me, 'I am a mass of corruption, but I revel in the atonement.' And, on another occasion, 'Christ is so near me, I seem to see Him, and I feel Him too.' His love for the Scriptures was most fervent. 'That magnificent book,' he would say, speaking of the Bible. I never saw a more decided instance of a person casting away his own righteousness, and trampling it under foot; Christ was everything to him; while the breathings of his soul after holiness and sanctification of the Spirit, were intense and fervent. To his dependence upon his Saviour's merits, may be attributed, under God, his uninterrupted enjoyment of spiritual consolation all through his illness. No cloud ever overcast his sky. The valley was irradiated with perpetual sunshine. His experience seemed to stand out to view as a living elucidation of that beautiful passage—'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.' In fact, such was the happy state of his mind, all the day long, and so constantly was he giving utterance to his delightful feelings in the near prospect of heaven,

that his chamber seemed like anything but the chamber of death. It was, indeed, good to be there; and no thoughtful person could leave that chamber, methinks, without breathing forth the silent aspiration, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

"And now, brethren, I leave this remarkable case to engage your serious meditation, as I trust it will do when you return home; it is full of instruction and rich with encouragement; it is not the case of one suddenly wrought upon in the hour of nature's emergency, a case of mere excitement and self-delusion, such as we too often see and hear of; it is the case of a man of literature and science, a man of talent and study, thought and investigation, becoming a little child, and sitting at the feet of Christ, to learn from Him what he could learn nowhere else; it is the case of one whose genuine and healthy faith exhibited its reality in the clustering blossoms and the mellow fruit which it produced; it is the case of one who had sought the Saviour secretly, confessing Him openly; it is the case of one who had over-estimated the value of human attainments, brought to the deliberate conviction, that they were all as dross and dung compared with the knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified; it is the case of one who had done homage at the shrine of Reason, now bowing to the supreme authority of Revelation; it is the case of a man who once thought he had resources sufficient in himself, taking up the Apostle's language, and breathing it out from the deep recesses of his heart, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am.'"

On awaking, after a long sleep, he took the writer's hand, and grasping it tenderly, said, "I feel I am hastening away very rapidly to-day. O

that blessed Saviour! How I love Him. Preach him *fervently*, Newman! Speak of that *blessed* book. I must have some more of it—read me some chapters in John.” Though his mind was so occupied with the great joys and hopes of the gospel, he was far from being indifferent to the most trivial circumstances passing around him. His room was always beautifully adorned with flowers, continually sent to him by kind friends from the country, in the arrangement of which he took much interest. His care to have the room always preserved in the utmost neatness, his attention to the convenience of all around him, and the kind inquiries he put to his visitors, so adapted to their peculiar circumstances, were features in his case, which gave a peculiar interest to what he said on the greatest of all themes. He was no spiritual hermit, notwithstanding his spiritual fervour, but was still the gentleman, the philosopher, the citizen, the husband, the father, the friend.

In conversation with his family, he said—“How can I help loving Him? I seem to see Him with His heavenly countenance smiling on me now. He has pardoned me, washed me, clothed me, is preparing mansions for me,—I feel I *could* not rebel against Him! What are men about when, with such a theme, they can preach such sermons as many of them deliver! There are not only joys to come, but joys in this world. Having Him so near, as a companion, takes from us evil thoughts, ambition, and avarice. He says ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments.’ And what are His commandments? Not grievous! There he was, seeking me out first, and not I seeking Him!—And whence came this? By grace we are saved! O think of Christ. How can any one think of himself? Analyze any one act of his life, how

imperfect, compared with that pure and spotless Being! But Christ says, though it is so, 'Though thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow!' and He has forgiven me, and clothed me with the robe of His righteousness. It has come to me in so mysterious a manner. I now see how full of love the whole Bible is! What do men reason for? Is it not to obtain happiness? Then if what is called philosophy and learning does not produce it, but this does, this must be the highest reason."

January 31st.—He had very little sleep during the night, and was much exhausted in consequence, but with his little remaining strength he exerted himself to write on the title pages of several books which he designed as mementos of his affection. To Mr. A. he said—"I am prostrate, but reconciled and happy. People have said that death is *frightful*. I look on it with pleasure. I see no monsters around me. Death! I see no death at my bed-side. It is that benign Saviour waiting to take me. This is not the testimony of one who has nothing to live for. I am in the prime of life, with comforts, and friends around me, but the prospect of heaven is more than all. It is a joy man knows nothing of. O what a magnificent book that New Testament is,—what wisdom there is in it!" A fear being expressed, that he had felt the preceding night very long, through wakefulness, he said—"O no, not long at all. I have been too happy. My thoughts have been in heaven, and in that beautiful cemetery. I fear I am sinfully impatient in so longing after heaven, but it is so glorious!—*Christ*, not death is about to take me from earth. There is no *death*, to the Christian—that glorious gospel takes away death."

By his request, the writer had selected a spot in

the cemetery for his grave. He wished it to be in a pleasant situation, with flowers growing near. A spot was therefore chosen beside a weeping elm in the centre of the grounds, and beneath the clustering branches of some climbing rose trees. He listened with much pleasure to a description of it, and examined, with great interest, a sketch which had been taken of it, saying—"I'm so glad you've secured such a beautiful place for me." His love of elegance and order was singularly exhibited in his request, that there might always be flowers growing over the grave, and that, if any palisades should be placed round it, they might be kept neatly painted.

February 1st.—After a restless night, he was moved to a mattress on the floor, that the bed might be arranged for his greater comfort. His body seemed so much reduced that it was astonishing how life and reason could be retained in it. This movement caused him much pain, yet not a murmur escaped him; and when replaced on the bed, he gratefully and cheerfully said—"Admirably done! I have a kind God, and kind friends."

Though in so exhausted a state, remembering some accounts which were unsettled, he called for them, and his memory was so unimpaired that he discovered a trifling error in one of them, though the transaction had occurred a long time previously. He said he was anxious as much as possible, to save trouble to those who would survive him. How different was his conduct to that selfish indolence, which often passes for a renunciation of the world, when the world is already beyond the grasp! He regarded attention to those trifles which might increase the comfort of others, as by no means incompatible with his exalted spiritual joys, and the near prospect of eternity.

He dwelt much on the text—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," adding, with much emphasis—"Ah, I am chief." The following letter from the author of the "Sinner's Friend," who wrote to him daily, drew from him many similar remarks:—"My beloved Brother,—now more dear than ever, I learn that you are still detained on this side the celestial city, the abode of our blessed, and, by us, beloved Redeemer. He keeps you here a little longer, that you may bear witness to his saving power, and to that sovereign grace which can change the heart, and cause it to *sing* in the way of holiness; for you *do* sing in tones which excite the joy of angels. Sinners, amongst whom I am the chiefest of the chief, (Dr. G.—'No I am the chief,') also bless our God on your account; and with adoring wonder gaze at the ransom of another soul, bought with the precious blood of the Son of God. What thankfulness does your case draw from those who have so often presented earnest prayers for your precious soul! *My* poor petitions have long been offered on your behalf, that God would unfold to you his love, and the abundant answer to them has filled me with wonder and praise. You are indeed a wonder to many, but the greatest to YOURSELF. (Dr. G.—'Ah! that I am!') This has been my own case, and a much greater wonder than you, my beloved brother. But, Oh! the magnitude of Divine mercy! Jesus came to save the LOST—therefore I have been found. I meet you, in spirit, with sacred joy every day at one o'clock at the throne of grace, and see the happiness beaming in your countenance, and hear you utter the name of Jesus. O this is joyful indeed; and I shall meet you in heaven; we shall be near

each other, and though *you* may sing loudly, yet *my* voice will surmount every other, because I have *more* to say of long-suffering and pardoning mercy than all the sinners in the world. God be praised, 'tis his *own* work. But I am not yet out of the battle, for I have a terrible conflict to maintain every hour; and were it not that the Lord has equipped me (Eph. vi. 11—18) for the war, I should become a prey to the enemy. But here (John x. 28, 29) is my strength, which can never fail. Your heart has long been in heaven, and now your soul only awaits the final summons to be for ever with the Lord. O my beloved friend, with what raptures shall we meet each other there! God be praised that we *know*, by inward evidence, that we are among those who have passed from death unto life, and that nothing can separate us from the Lord!" Dr. G.—"Write to him in reply, that *I* am the greatest sinner; yes, indeed! tell him that!" A deep conviction of sin is one of the best proofs of Divine teaching. It is neither singular nor extravagant, that eminent believers should, with the Apostle Paul, feel themselves to be "the chief of sinners;" for though the external life of one man may be far less criminal than that of another, yet, as guilt is estimated by God according to the degree of holy motive resisted, every one must necessarily be conscious of more sinfulness in himself than he can know to be chargeable to any one else.

February 2nd.—He suffered great pain and appeared to be rapidly sinking. As his family were standing round his bed in much distress, he said—"Don't grieve for me. I feel I could not murmur again. Talk about my blessed Redeemer. His marked kindness to me has been so great. Philosophy do this for me? Absurd! This gives me peace, to hear

him say—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Mr. and Mrs. J. V. H. arriving unexpectedly in the evening, from Maidstone, that they might have the melancholy pleasure of bidding him farewell, the following conversation took place:—Mr. H.—"You are a monument of mercy." Dr. G.—"I am indeed, I am as black as sin can make me." Mr. H.—"We grieve to lose you, but the will of God must be done." Dr. G., very earnestly—"I *love* it." Mr. H.—"Don't let me weary you, but I love to talk of the grace of God." Dr. G.—"I should like to hear it talked of from morning to night." Mr. H.—"I am afraid of exciting you." Dr. G.—"It does not excite me. No clouds, no doubts, no fears, peace unbroken. If He sought me when I did not seek Him, why should I doubt now I have gone to Him! O that magnificent book! Had I no other evidence than my own feelings, of the truth of Christianity, it would be sufficient. If all the world were anti-christian, I should be a Christian." Mr. H.—"This confidence is from God. Not all the books you have read could have given it." Dr. G., emphatically—"Never! No mere reason of man could have written that book. Reason may find *fault* with it, but could not have *made* it." Mr. H.—"How blessed it is to feel a thrill of joy within at the name of Jesus!" Dr. G.—"To know it in the *head*, is not to know it."

He was much fatigued by this conversation, the last of any length in which he was able to take part. The time of his departure was evidently near, and though he suffered no violent pain, seasons of distressing exhaustion became so frequent, that almost every hour was expected to be his last.

February 3rd.—His faculty of observation continued to be so keen, that on awaking this morning he

noticed that a vase on the mantel-piece, at the extremity of the room, was not exactly even with the corresponding one, and desired that it might be arranged properly. He shaved himself with a little assistance, and settled a few accounts. He said at different times—"What set of *men* could have written a book so adapted to our wants as the Bible, unless they had been taught by God?—It must be felt in the heart and not merely understood in the head.—I did think mine a hard lot, but since this came to me, I have deeply repented of that wickedness, and thought it a blessed lot. The Lord knew what He was doing with me.—It is only having Christ with me that takes away my fear. What a blessed thing to have Him for your Friend and Brother!—I have much to say but I cannot speak. Tell them what God has done for me." In the afternoon, he was so exhausted as to appear on the point of death. To the remark—"You are going home," he responded—"I feel at home already." Then at intervals he added—"What great things the Lord has done for me!—I love Him, and why? because of his love to me.—O what a book it is, meeting you at all points, adapted to all conditions!" It being observed that learning and wisdom could not have taught him this, he replied—"O my wisdom! a poor, degraded, wicked, ignorant, foolish child!" A fear being expressed that though able to say very little himself, so much conversation carried on by others at his bed-side would exhaust him, he said—"No, it does not—it strengthens me—it invigorates me!"

February 4th.—Dr. Gordon was now too feeble to bear any sustained part in conversation. What he said was chiefly an earnest response to what was uttered by others, but the intense feeling concen-

trated in his emphatic "aye," eloquently revealed how strong his faith and how bright his hopes continued to be. To Mrs. E.—"My gracious God has been very merciful to me. He has given me a joy I never felt before, an inconceivable joy!" Mrs. E.—"I hope we shall all meet in the New Jerusalem, where there will be no more dying." Dr. G., emphatically—"There is none *here*." The day following, he said to Mr. S., a friend who came from the country to visit him, and who was speaking of the state of his health, "I shall *live*:"—a reply which, to those unacquainted with the peculiar state of his mind, might be regarded as intimating the possibility of restoration to health, but which he meant as a declaration of his conviction, that there could be no death to a believer in Christ. He realized the full import of our Saviour's words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me, *shall never die*." This was a theme continually referred to in conversation around his bed, and on which he delighted to dwell. He felt that there would be no interval of unconsciousness, no cessation of activity, no intermission of enjoyment; and though the *mode* of existence would be changed, the existence itself would be neither destroyed nor suspended; that to be absent from the body was to be instantly present with the Lord, and that if life is to be estimated by the exercise of the spiritual faculties, as these will all be vastly augmented when the soul is separated from the corruptible body, that separation is rather to be designated life than death. How much happier would Christians be, did they thus realize the great truths made known to them in the gospel! Christ came to "destroy death, and him that hath the

power of death, that is, the Devil; and to deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." How very seldom is Death, as such, spoken of in the New Testament! The writers seem to regard it as annihilated in the case of the believer. We live here, surrounded by many mercies, but exposed to many sorrows, and conscious of much imperfection; and surely that great event in our history which transports us to the full possession of the promised inheritance, where no element of grief shall be mingled in the cup of gladness, where no lingering corruption shall interfere with our obedience and defile our worship, where no temptation shall ever demand vigilance and conflict, where no weariness shall suspend our service, but ceaseless activity shall be the rapture of repose, and where death, being for ever excluded, eternity will be stamped on every enjoyment,—surely the event which introduces us to such a state of being, cannot correctly be designated *Death*. No, it is rather *Life*. The dead are those who are left behind, not those who thus depart, and the moment of dissolution is the birth of the soul. The ordinary sepulchral emblems are most inappropriate to the case of a departed saint. The torch, instead of being reversed and extinguished, now blazes with a living light and quenchless energy it never before possessed. The column, instead of being shattered, is now firmly fixed, while its fair proportions and exquisite polish are only now completed. Death is the portal of life, the dawn of immortality, the transition into heavenly glory. Every Christian may say with Dr. G., "I shall live!" Being reminded that a few days before, he had said, that he did not see Death at his bed-side, and being asked if he saw him *now*, he replied,—“No! it is Christ, who has

washed us!" Then, after a few minutes' silence, he said spontaneously and with earnestness,—“I have Christ by me. See Death? I see nothing but Christ.” Sir W. L.—“You now see the beauty and glory of the plan of salvation.” Dr. G.—“I do—and more—I FEEL it.—I have nothing,—but God and Christ. I have laid hold on Him: I have embraced Him.—What love to have brought me to this!—I love to hear you talk of that merciful Saviour.” Mr. J. V. H.—“You must not let me tire you, but the love of Christ so fills my heart that it seems as if it would burst, if I did not speak of Him!” Dr. G.—“Let it burst on me!” While lying in a state of much exhaustion, he suddenly and earnestly asked for a cushion. We thought he wanted it to raise his head a little higher, but to our surprise he said—“For dear aunt to lean on;” having noticed that his beloved sister-in-law was uncomfortably seated and appeared fatigued. So considerate was he, to the very last, of the convenience of others. As the night advanced, his pulse became so feeble, that it was thought he would not survive till the morning. Yet, in all the intervals of dozing, he requested that hymns and passages of Scripture might be read, frequently uttering an expression of pleasure, and requesting that a mark should be placed in the margin of whatever specially interested him.

February 5th.—He was now unable to speak except in brief response to others. The following will serve as a specimen:—“Is Jesus precious to you now?”—“O yes!” “You won’t be wearied of singing his praises in heaven?”—“No! I shan’t!” “You are clothed with that white robe?”—“I am!” “Do you feel any fear *now*?”—“Not the slightest!” “Though you are going to a better Friend, you love us still?”

Looking round very affectionately at us all, he fixed his eyes on his wife, and said, "My dear one," and then holding his daughter's hand, he added—"My darling child!" After this, Mrs. J. V. H., taking leave of him for a few hours, he requested that his right hand might be lifted from under the bed-clothes. This was done hastily, from a fear that the position of the arm might be giving him pain, but his object was to clasp her hand, which he did very affectionately, saying—"You'll not forget it." Then he added—"I am a marvellous illustration of His goodness!" He complained of his memory failing, and of double vision. It was very distressing to witness his extreme exhaustion. He was now unable to turn himself, nor could he be moved for the bed to be made. As we stood beside him, thinking his end was at hand, he said very tenderly to his daughter—"My darling child!"—She replied—"O Papa, what can we do without you!" Dr. G.—"Trust in the Saviour!" He then requested some of those around him to seek repose, saying—"The living must not kill themselves for the dead."

February 6th.—Several friends called to see him, though he was unable to speak to them, except in monosyllables. Mrs. G.—"You are very weak, but are you able, notwithstanding this debility, to take pleasure in thinking of Christ?" Dr. G.—"O yes!" Mrs. G.—"Jesus can make a dying bed, feel soft as downy pillows are," and that's true in your case." Dr. G.—"Yes, indeed!" Sir W. L.—"You've no anxiety—no fear?" Dr. G., emphatically—"None!" The symptoms became very alarming towards evening; and about midnight, as we were all watching round his bed, fearing his consciousness was gone, his daughter, taking his hand, said—"It's your child, father!" Dr. G., with much tenderness—"My

great gem!" Then turning to his wife, he said—"And is this Mater?" fixing on her a look of indescribable affection. He afterwards, in like manner, recognised all present individually, with an expression of countenance which can never be forgotten. N.—"Christ is with you." Dr. G.—"*I feel Him!*" N.—"We are broken-hearted in the prospect of losing you." Dr. G.—"We shall all live together in heaven; cleave close to Christ—walk with Him." N.—"Then He will bring us to you. You see Him smiling on you." Dr. G.—"Yes, and *I feel Him.*" N.—"Though death conquers your frail body, yet *you* are the real conqueror, and more than conqueror, through Him that loveth us." Dr. G.—"O yes!" N.—"Your quick feeble pulse (generally at 120) is hurrying you away, but you are not afraid?" Dr. G.—"No, I never had a fear." N.—"There is nothing to fear, if Christ is ours. You can say—'O Death, where is thy sting?'" Dr. G., very emphatically—"I can indeed!"

February 7th, two o'clock, A.M.—He called for some refreshment, but the effort of eating was very exhausting to him. From a fear that the light on the tray might distress him, he was asked if it should be removed. Dr. G.—"Not while you are here:" implying his wish to look on the faces of his family. He then said—"But when am I to leave you?" N.—"One of your medical friends told us you would not see the day-light." Dr. G.—"No, I shall live longer than that." After an ineffectual effort to speak more N. said—"You cannot talk now, but we know what you would say if you could. Your heart is full of love to us and to Jesus." Dr. G., very earnestly—"That is it."

At six o'clock, A.M., it was evident, from the sudden change which had taken place in his appearance,

that his end was at length rapidly approaching. E.—“You’ll soon be in heaven!” Dr. G.—“Yes, and you’ll all follow me, and I’ll welcome you.” E. repeated the twenty-third Psalm, and on coming to the verse—“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Dr. G. responded—“Yes, if He were not with me, how dark it would be—but it’s all light!”

At eight o’clock, having awaked from a short sleep, he listened with deep interest to one of Lavington’s “Sacramental Meditations,” on the love of Christ in first inviting the sinful soul to come to Him for pardon, and then calling that soul to the possession of glory. Passages from the close of Baxter’s “Saint’s Rest,” were also read; Dr. G. manifesting in his beaming countenance, his full concurrence and heartfelt delight in the sentiments expressed. This was especially the case in reference to the following hymn of Toplady’s:—

TRIUMPH OVER DEATH.

“Deathless principle arise!
Soar, thou native of the skies!
Pearl of price, by Jesus bought,
To his glorious likeness wrought!
Go, to shine before his throne;
Deck his mediatorial crown;
Go, his triumph to adorn:
Made for God, to God return.

“Lo! he beckons from on high:
Fearless to his presence fly:
Thine the merit of his blood,
Thine the righteousness of God!
Angels, joyful to attend,
Hovering, round thy pillow bend;
Wait to catch the signal given,
And escort thee quick to heaven.

"Is thy earthly house distrest,
Willing to retain its guest?
'Tis not thou,—but it must die,
Fly, celestial tenant, fly!
Burst thy shackles; drop thy clay;
Sweetly breathe thyself away.
Singing, to thy crown remove,
Swift of wing and fired with love.

"See the haven full in view!
Love Divine shall bear thee through.
Trust to that propitious gale;
Weigh thy anchor, spread thy sail.
Saints in glory perfect made,
Wait thy passage through the shade:
Ardent for thy coming o'er;
See! they throng the blissful shore.

"Mount, their transports to improve;
Join the longing choir above;
Swiftly to their wish be given;
Kindle higher joys in heaven.—
Such the prospects that arise
To the dying Christian's eyes;
Such the glorious vista, faith
Opens through the shades of death."

His daughter, awaking from a short slumber, after watching all the night, was greatly distressed to see his altered features, and the obviously near approach of death. On her saying—"O what am I to do without you, Papa?" he replied, by directing his eye from herself to her husband, and looking at him most tenderly. About noon, Sir W. L. entering his room, was much shocked to witness his altered appearance, and said—"This looks like a *defeat*, Gordon, but it's a *victory*." Dr. G., emphatically, though in a whisper—"It is!" Sir W.—"We shall often think of you." Dr. G.—"Thank you!" Sir W.—"You can say—'Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory.'" Dr. G.—"Indeed I can."

N.—“ If sin be pardoned, I'm secure—
Death has no sting beside;
The law gives sin its damning power,
But—Christ my Saviour died! ”

Sir W.—“ That 's *your* consolation—Christ my Saviour died.” Dr. G.—“ Yes, it is!” N.—“ We are on this side the river, but Christ is on the opposite bank beckoning you to himself.” Dr. G.—“ He is!” N.—“ We cannot bear to part, but we shall meet in heaven.” Dr. G.—“ *Christ* is there.” He said this with peculiar emphasis, as if to convey the idea, that however great the joy which the reunion of friends would impart,—and none more fully entered into *this* than himself,—yet that the chief joy of the heavenly world would arise from the presence of Jesus, and resemblance to him.

He then asked the author to read some favourite hymns, and passages of Scripture, to which he listened with an expression of earnest attention and delight. Several friends having arrived, he beckoned all present to his bed-side, and placing his finger on his mouth, intimated his wish to bid us a final farewell. Such indeed it was felt to be, for those lips, to the affectionate and holy utterances of which we had so long delighted to listen, were already cold, and denoting the approach of death. He then said to his attached man-servant, “ God bless you, Tranmer.—He will be with you and be your friend. Persevere in godliness and purity of life.” Then to another faithful domestic, and his nurse, he added—“ You have been a kind friend to me.” He thus manifested to the last that gratitude for the kind offices of servants, and that appreciation of regard from persons of upright character in every grade of society, which had so eminently distinguished him throughout his life.

In order to secure quietness, and a free circulation of air, most of the party now retired to another room. When left alone with his nearest relatives, he said, as if carrying on some train of thought in his own mind—"It's what I like to hear!" Being asked if he meant that it was Christ and His love which he took such pleasure in, he replied earnestly, "Aye!" After a pause, during which his thoughts were evidently intent on the heavenly city he was so soon to enter, he said—"Repeat that about the great army!" Mr. Knight replied—"I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The author added—"What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Though he *said* nothing, his expressive countenance plainly manifested that his request had been understood. He was by faith beholding "that great army" whom he was so soon to join in celebrating the high anthem of heaven—"Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon

the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Prayer was then offered by Mr. Knight, in which we unitedly commended the spirit of our dying friend to the care of his Divine Saviour, praising God on his behalf, for the abundant grace and strong consolation with which he was favoured.

After we had risen from our knees, still considerate for others, he asked if his brother-in-law would take some refreshment,—fearing he had not breakfasted. This led to some remarks on the feast of bliss which Jesus was preparing for all his followers, and at which he was at that moment waiting to receive our beloved friend as a guest. To this he replied in a tone of earnest desire—"I wish He would come!"

He then took a most tender farewell of his afflicted wife. To his daughter, who bent over him, in great distress, he said, with inexpressible tenderness, "Bless thee, my child!" "You love me still, father?" "Yes, dearly." He then opened his hand, which had now almost lost its power of motion, for the purpose of receiving hers, which he tenderly pressed together with that of the writer. This was its last act.

After a pause, he said, suddenly, but not without considerable effort, "Bring them all." His meaning not being at first apprehended, various suggestions were made by those around him, respecting the probable nature of his wish, to all of which he expressed his dissent by a motion of the head. It was very painful not to be able at once to gratify his desire, as he was most anxious to make us understand him, though he now seemed to have entirely lost the power of speech. But making one more attempt, with a desperate struggle he whispered, "EVERY BODY!" These were his last words. They were an evidence how fully conscious he was of his being on the point of departure, as well as a final and striking illustration

of his thoughtful regard to others. We imagined he might yet survive an hour or two, but, judging from his own feelings that his departure would be immediate, and knowing the melancholy satisfaction of being present at the actual death of a dear friend, of which they might be deprived who had kindly quitted his room lest he should be inconvenienced by a crowd, his last effort of affection was to summon all in the house into his chamber, which was now filled with sorrowing but silent friends.

It was indeed a solemn season! Grief itself was awed into stillness, by the majesty of death. What event can boast such dignity? It was the exit of a soul! It was his entrance into glory! Angels were there waiting to be the escort! The Lord of angels himself was present, "He who liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore, and hath the keys of death and of hades." We felt, as we watched the departure of our friend, that, to use his own beautiful words, it was "no frightful monster at his bed-side, but that benignant Saviour waiting to receive him."

Increased difficulty of breathing was the only distressing symptom. He appeared no longer conscious of what took place around him. He gazed upwards as in a rapt vision. No film overspread his eyes. They beamed with an unwonted lustre, and the whole countenance, losing the aspect of disease and pain, with which we had been so long familiar, glowed with an expression of indescribable rapture. As we watched in silent wonder and praise, his features, which had become motionless, suddenly yielded, for a few seconds, to a smile of ecstasy which no pencil could ever depict, and which none who witnessed it can ever forget. And when it passed away, still the whole countenance continued to beam and brighten, as if reflecting the glory on which the

soul was gazing. Like Stephen, he was by faith, looking up to heaven, and with a clearer vision than may be hoped for, till the river of death is well nigh passed, was beholding through the opening gates of glory, "the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." It is not too much to say, that as far as the expression of holy rapture could contribute to it, like Stephen's, "his face was as it had been the face of an angel."

Though his emaciated frame, propped up by pillows, was incapable of the least effort, yet such was the effect on the bystanders of his upward, outstretching gaze, that even the motionless body itself seemed to be reaching forward, as if impatient for the summons to depart. We saw as much as mortal eye *could* see, of the entrance of a soul into glory. Nothing more could have been given us, but the actual vision of the separate spirit, and its angelic convoy. This glorious spectacle lasted for about a quarter of an hour, increasing in interest to the last, during which the soul seemed pouring itself forth from the frail tenement which had imprisoned it, into the embrace of its Lord. The breathing now became shorter and shorter—then after a long pause, one last gentle heaving of the chest—and, without a struggle, at two o'clock, the soul had fled!

Was this dying? All present felt that their departed friend had never before been so emphatically alive. How fully were his own words realised, that he should not *die*! There was grief, but no gloom in that chamber. The glory of heaven seemed to illumine it. The sun had gone down, while it was yet day, in full radiance, without a cloud, and the reflection still rested on those who had watched its setting. We could not look on that corpse and imagine for a moment it was our friend. It was

but the dwelling in which, for a little season, he had *lodged*. "He himself had now entered that "building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The weary pilgrim had landed on the shore of the celestial Canaan, and was welcomed by angels and by Christ. The CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER, having long been TRIUMPHING OVER DEATH, now, "more than conqueror," had exchanged the conflict for the crown of life which fadeth not away. It was rather a translation than a death. He was not, for God took him.

"Thus star by star declines,
Till all are passed away,
As morning high and higher shines
To pure and perfect day:
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light."

CONCLUSION.

READER, can you close this volume, with the deliberate conviction that the great subject it attempts to illustrate, is a delusion? It was not an ignorant enthusiast who manifested such joy, it was not a despiser of learning who so cast reasoning aside. It was a man of acute and powerful intellect, of varied and profound learning, whose whole life had been spent in investigation, whose independence of thought was proverbial, who during many years had pondered all the objections adduced by scientific men and philosophers, against the Divine origin of Christianity, and who pronounced the result to be so firm a conviction of its truth, that, "though all the world were antichristian," his faith would still be unshaken. He had found in the gospel, what everything else had failed to supply. The necessities of his nature were met. The cravings of his soul were satisfied. Apart from all external evidence, he affirmed the religion itself to be its own witness, in its felt adaptation to human wants and human woes. It made him happy in the midst of severe trials, and though life presented to him every attraction, he was not only resigned, but rejoiced to leave it.

Some meet death without fear, because they are thoughtless, and consider not the momentousness of it; or superstitious, and rely on frivolous ceremonies to prepare them for it; or self-righteous, and by a vain esteem of their own merits, think themselves in justice secure from all penal consequences

of it; or sceptical, and by the theory of sleep or annihilation, take away, in their estimation, the terror of it. It is not surprising that such men should meet death with little dread. But he, entertaining the most ample and vivid conceptions of the solemn consequences of dying; with the judgment-seat, and the final sentence, and the eternal award full in view; conscious of guilt in himself, as he was convinced of the stern integrity of the Judge before whom he must stand, and the righteous requirements of the law by which he must be tried; devoid of the least reliance, either on any ceremonies to prepare him for the great event, or on any goodness of his own, as entitling him to an acquittal before the tribunal of a holy God—he could still anticipate the approach of what some call the king of terrors, as that of a welcome friend.

Was the religion which recognised the justice of the Omniscient Ruler, and the holiness of His righteous law; yet, at the same time, allayed every anxiety, and imparted a blissful hope of endless felicity,—was this merely a delusion? If so, who might not reasonably wish to be the subject of an infatuation which elevates the moral nature, which dignifies humanity, which qualifies for the discharge of all the duties, and the endurance of all the trials of life, which gives comfort to the sorrowful, and fresh elation to the glad, which can throw such a halo of joy around the pilgrim throughout the journey of life, and enable him to anticipate its termination with hope rather than terror! The testimony of Dr. Gordon to the truth and power of religion, has substantially been given by multitudes besides, both of the dead and the living; of men in all countries, and of all conditions. Add to this experimental evidence, the external and historical

proofs of the truth of Christianity, which no subtlety has ever yet been able to refute, but which every fresh investigation tends to strengthen and multiply; and can you be *quite sure* that all is a mistake? You may *suppose* this, but can you *prove* it? Must you not admit that it *may* be true? Is there not a voice within, a moral nature which whispers, despite all your sophistry, that at least there is a *probability* that Christianity is Divine?

Ponder well what that probability involves before you treat it with indifference. It is probable that there is after death a righteous judgment, a heaven, and a hell; *probable* that the soul will live for ever, and that, unless it obtains the salvation provided in the gospel it will be lost! If this is a mere *probability*, since the risk incurred is so tremendously great, is it not the extravagance of folly to neglect the gospel? If men think there is a probability that their property or their lives may be in danger, do they not take precautionary measures zealously, and at once? How much more should you, when there is a probability that the *soul* is in danger? If there is a *probability* of success, in any path of commercial enterprise or worldly ambition, how many and how eager are the competitors, though it is only a *may be*, and some must certainly fail. And if men thus act in reference to the riches that are corruptible and the crowns that fade, should you not much more be earnest when there is a *probability* of winning heaven, with its imperishable glories and eternal joys? Should not the mere *chance*, if it be only a chance, induce you patiently to investigate such a system, and diligently to labour to make its probable advantages your own? For should it eventually prove a delusion, you would have been no loser; but should it be proved to be from God,

how infinite your gain, if a Christian,—how irremediable your loss, if not! But it is more than a probability. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but God’s word shall not pass away.” Be entreated, then, reader, however you may boast of the depth of your philosophy and the acuteness of your reason, to study the Bible, as did Dr. Gordon, in the spirit of a little child, seeking to be taught of God; and then, in answer to your prayer, “Open thou mine eyes”—you will “behold wondrous things out of God’s law.”

But if Christianity is indubitably from God, what does it teach? If we are to gather a reply from the preceding narrative, Christianity is not a heartless assent to any creed or formulary of faith—it is not the punctual performance of a routine of ceremonies—it is not zealous adherence to any particular system or church—it is not a mere course of human virtue, integrity, and benevolence. The Christianity of Dr. Gordon was more than this. Teaching him the evil of his own nature, it led him to seek the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God, by whom he became a “new creature, old things passing away, and all things becoming new.” Revealing to him his own guilt and his Saviour’s grace, it laid him low in self-abasement and godly penitence, while it enabled him to rejoice in the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, and, as he himself expressed it, to “*revel in the atonement.*” It displayed the Creator to his view as a God of love, his companion, his friend, his Father, rendering sin against such a being the object of intense abhorrence, and holiness his greatest desire and delight. The Bible became to him the best of books, prayer the most precious of privileges, the love of Christ the most engrossing of themes, and the prospect of heaven

the most transporting of hopes. Reader, if your's is a religion which allows you to think complacently either of your piety or your virtue; if it does not humble you in the dust of contrition, and cause you to rely on Christ alone for salvation; if it does not warm your heart with love to God, and render it impossible for you to live in the indulgence of anything which is displeasing to Him; if it does not make you delight in submission to His authority, and in the contemplation of His word—then your Christianity essentially differs from that described in this book. But was not Dr. Gordon's religion that of the Bible? If so, what is your's?

The preceding narrative also shows, that under the most distressing external circumstances, the gospel can produce a "peace which passeth all understanding," and a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Why should such a case be at all remarkable? What reason is there why *all* believers should not thus habitually rejoice? Have they not the same Father, the same Saviour, the same Sanctifier, the same promises, and the same hopes? May not *all* Christians "make a companion of God?" Has not the blood of Christ washed away their sins? Are they not "accepted in the beloved?" Have they not "received the earnest of the Spirit into their hearts, teaching them to cry, Abba, Father?" Do not all things, sorrows as well as joys, "work together for their good?" Do they not carry about a charmed life which nothing can injure? Is there not care for them in heaven? Are not angels their ministering spirits? Does not God himself ever watch over them to shield them from all harm, and supply them with all good? Is not the grace of Jesus sufficient for them, and has not He promised, that "they shall never perish?" Is not death deprived of its

sting in *their* case? Is it not true of them, that believing in Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life, they shall never die?" Are not mansions of glory preparing for them, to the enjoyment of which death is only the messenger? When that hour comes, will it not be "far better to depart and be with Jesus?"

If men of the world rejoice in those delights which are so unsatisfactory and brief, should Christians, who have such exalted privileges, such boundless possessions, such transporting hopes, ever appear with a sad countenance? Should they not always wear a smile of gladness, and stand on the tiptoe of delight and expectation? Should they not thus prove to the world how much superior is the Christian's portion even here? Should they not honour the Giver of such joy, by the fullest appreciation and reception of the gift? If the banquet is so plentiful, should they not comply with the invitation, "Eat, O friends; drink abundantly, O beloved?" We are not only permitted, but commanded to rejoice. "Be glad in the Lord, ye righteous; and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." "These things have I spoken unto you, that your joy might be full." Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord; rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

But how is this to be attained? By simple reliance on the word of God. If we believe what He has spoken, we can neither be afraid nor dejected. He has provided "strong consolation" for all who have "fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel." Instead of continually pondering our own guilt and frailty, let us contemplate the all-sufficiency of Christ. Instead of debating, and arguing, and resolving to have every mystery explained, before we derive comfort from the "exceeding great and

precious promises" of God's word, let us, in the humility of faith and with the simplicity of little children, take God at His word, believe that He loves us, and rejoice in His salvation. This was the secret of Dr. Gordon's peace. Without hesitation he threw himself on the promises of the gospel, and experienced that "perfect love casteth out fear." To conclude with his own emphatic words:—"I REASONED, AND DEBATED, AND INVESTIGATED, BUT I FOUND NO PEACE TILL I CAME TO THE GOSPEL AS A LITTLE CHILD. THEN THE HOLY SPIRIT SEEMED TO FILL MY HEART. I SAW MY SINFULNESS IN ALL ITS VIVID DEFORMITY, AND FOUND THERE WAS NO ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD AND NO HAPPINESS EXCEPT THROUGH THE BLESSED REDEEMER. I STRIPPED OFF ALL MY OWN DEEDS—WENT TO HIM NAKED—HE RECEIVED ME AS HE PROMISED HE WOULD—THEN I FELT JOY UNSPEAKABLE, AND ALL FEAR OF DEATH AT ONCE VANISHED."

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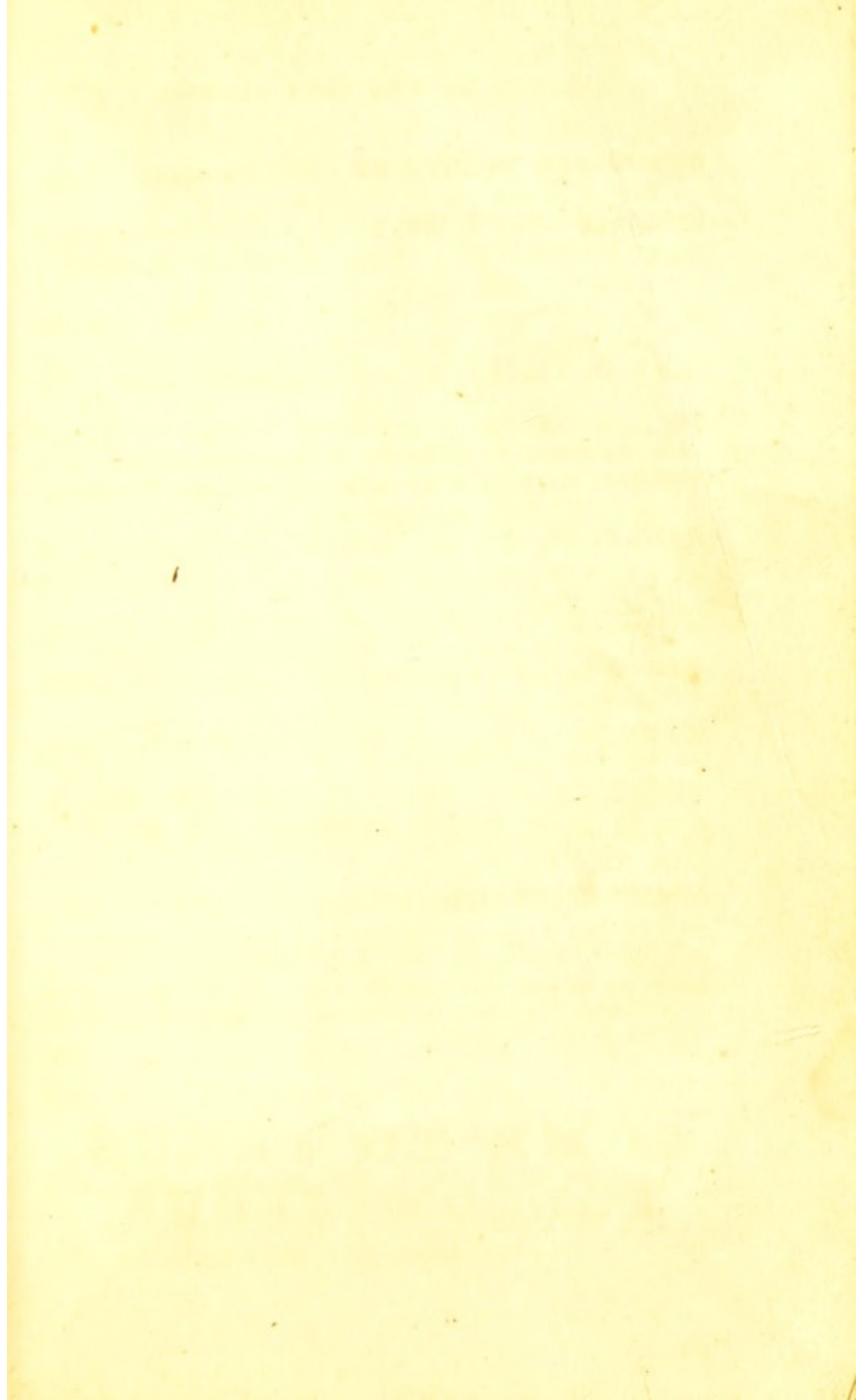
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