

The exceeding riches of grace, and the care of divine providence : exemplified in the conversion and subsequent history of Benjamin Lawson, an afflicted youth, deprived of his speech by scrofula ... Part 1 / Written by himself.

Contributors

Lawson, Benjamin.
Royal College of Physicians of London

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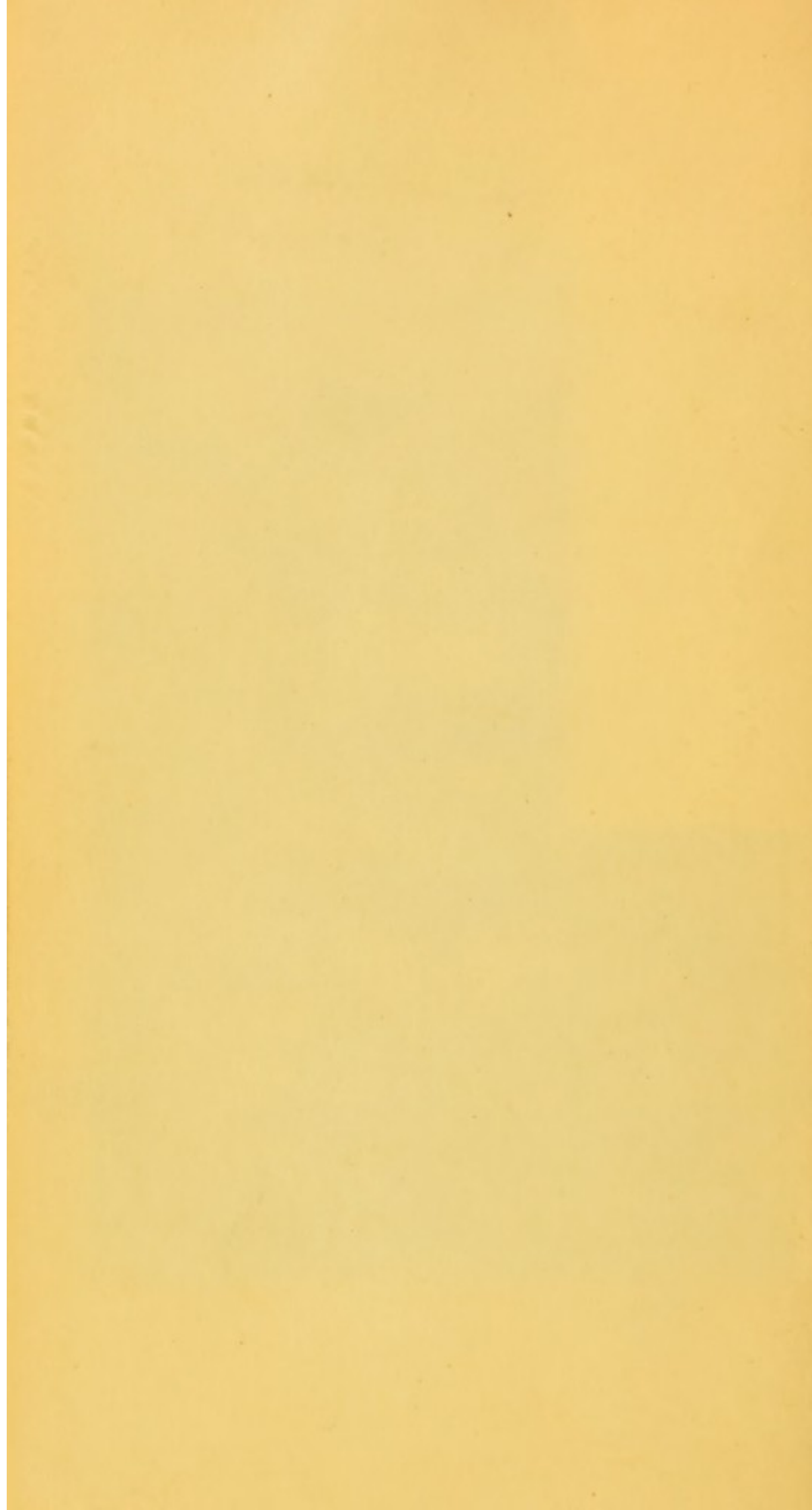
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1895-96
Samuel Wilks
Grossman 82.



This tract I found in my
father's library after his death

It is interesting as shewing
a well marked case of congenital
syphilis.

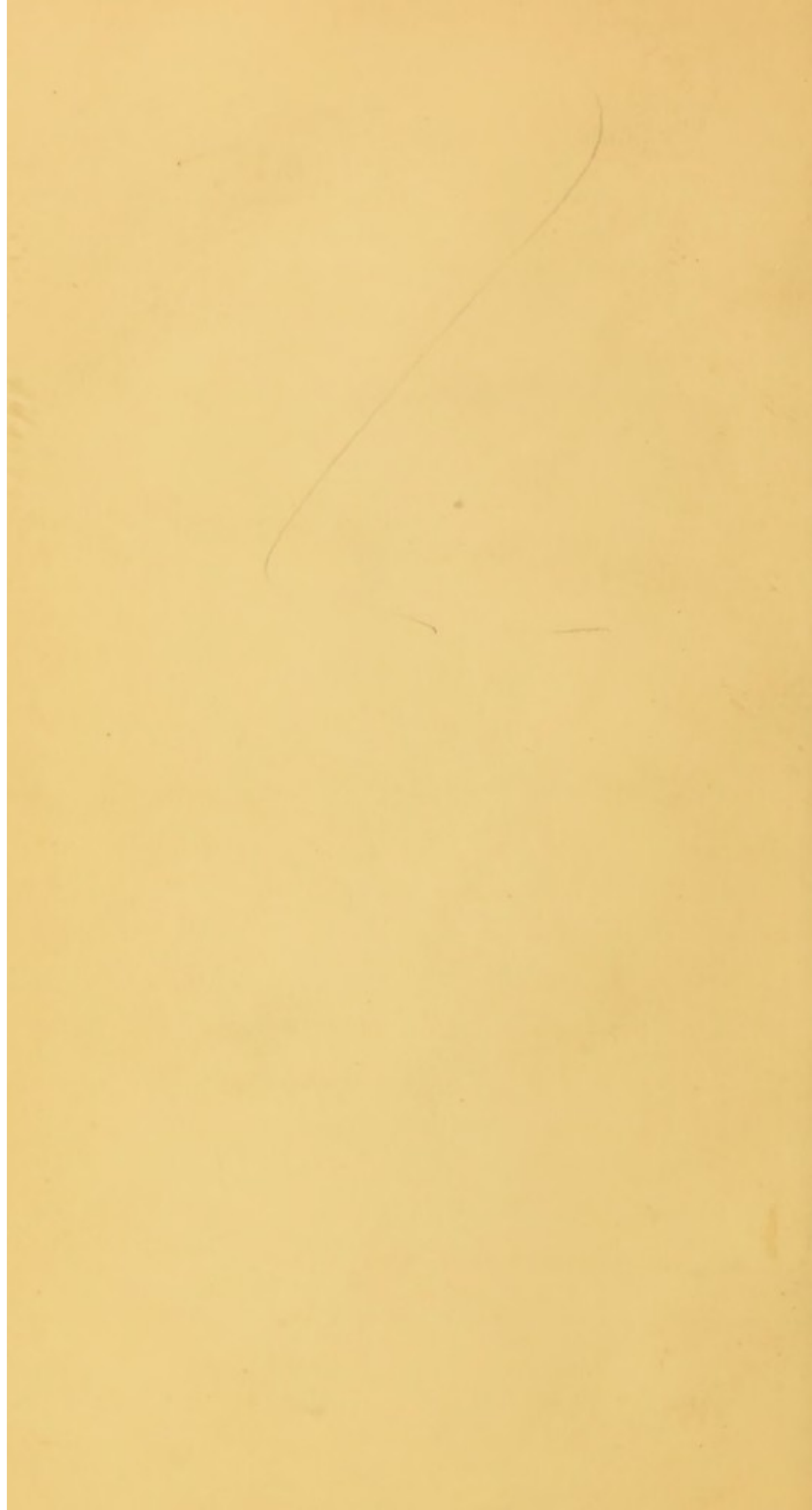
The disease was not at that
time recognized after the period of
infancy & all such cases were
regarded as scrofula as in the
present instance.

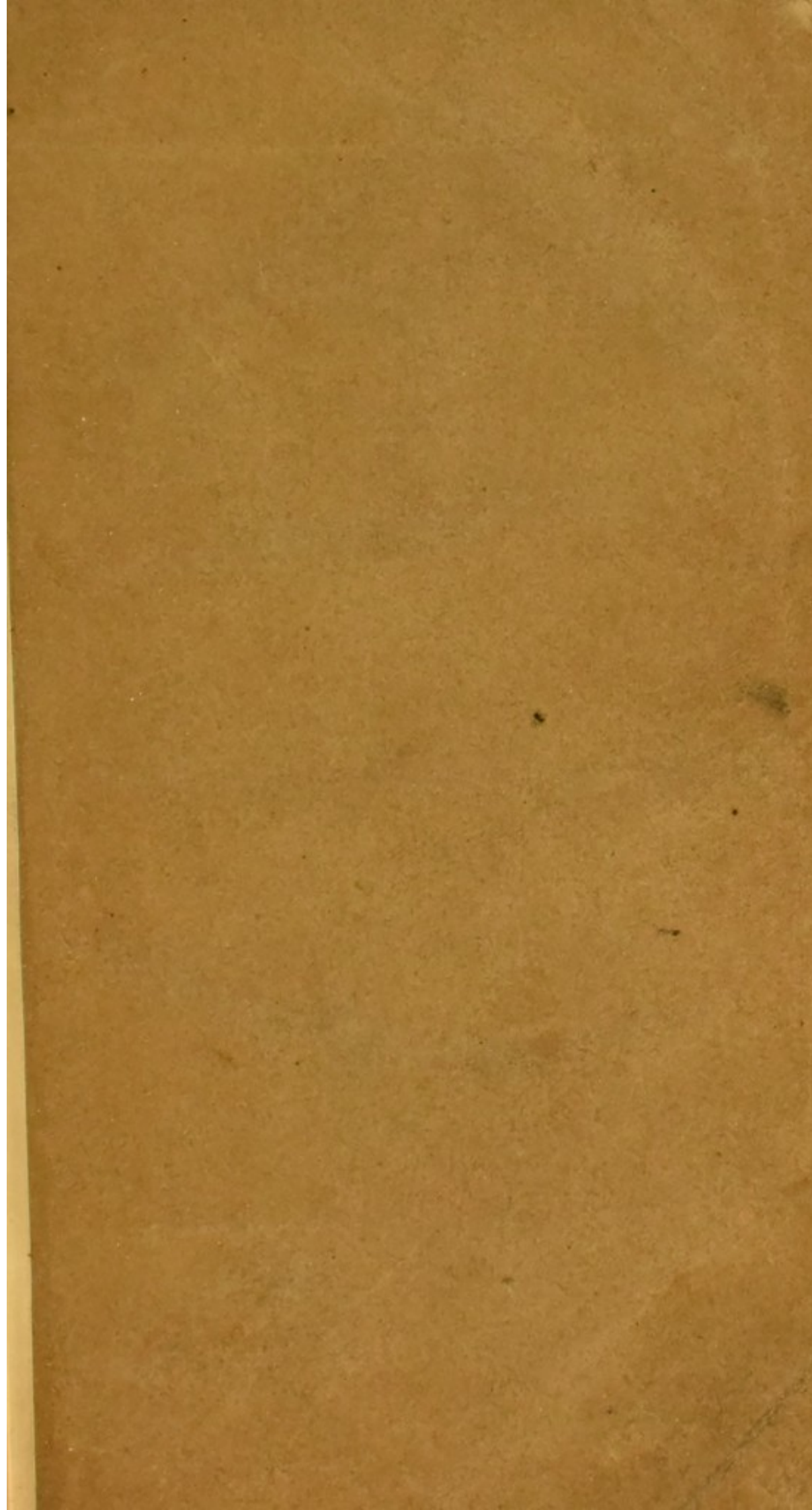
The picture in the frontispiece
portray, in a well marked manner
the characteristic features of syphilis

References to his disease are
marked with a pencil & on p 4 & 6 there
is mention of a piece of bone coming from
his nose - on p. 21 there is mention of a
paralytic attack - Other particulars p. 5 & 14
p. 15 & 16 of 2nd tract mentions father & of 2nd tract



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“ Exceeding Riches of Grace ;”
“ Mercy Manifested ;” and
“ The Endeavour of an Afflicted
Youth.”

PRICE NINEPENCE.

WRITTEN BY BENJAMIN LAWSON,
Who Died on the 20th day of August, 1826,
Aged Twenty-eight Years.

He had been a Member of Eagle Street Chapel Ten Years, at which place a Funeral Sermon was preached on the occasion by the Rev. Joseph Ivimey, on the 27th of August, 1826.

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JOHN LAWSON,
No. 10, HYDE STREET, BLOOMSBURY,

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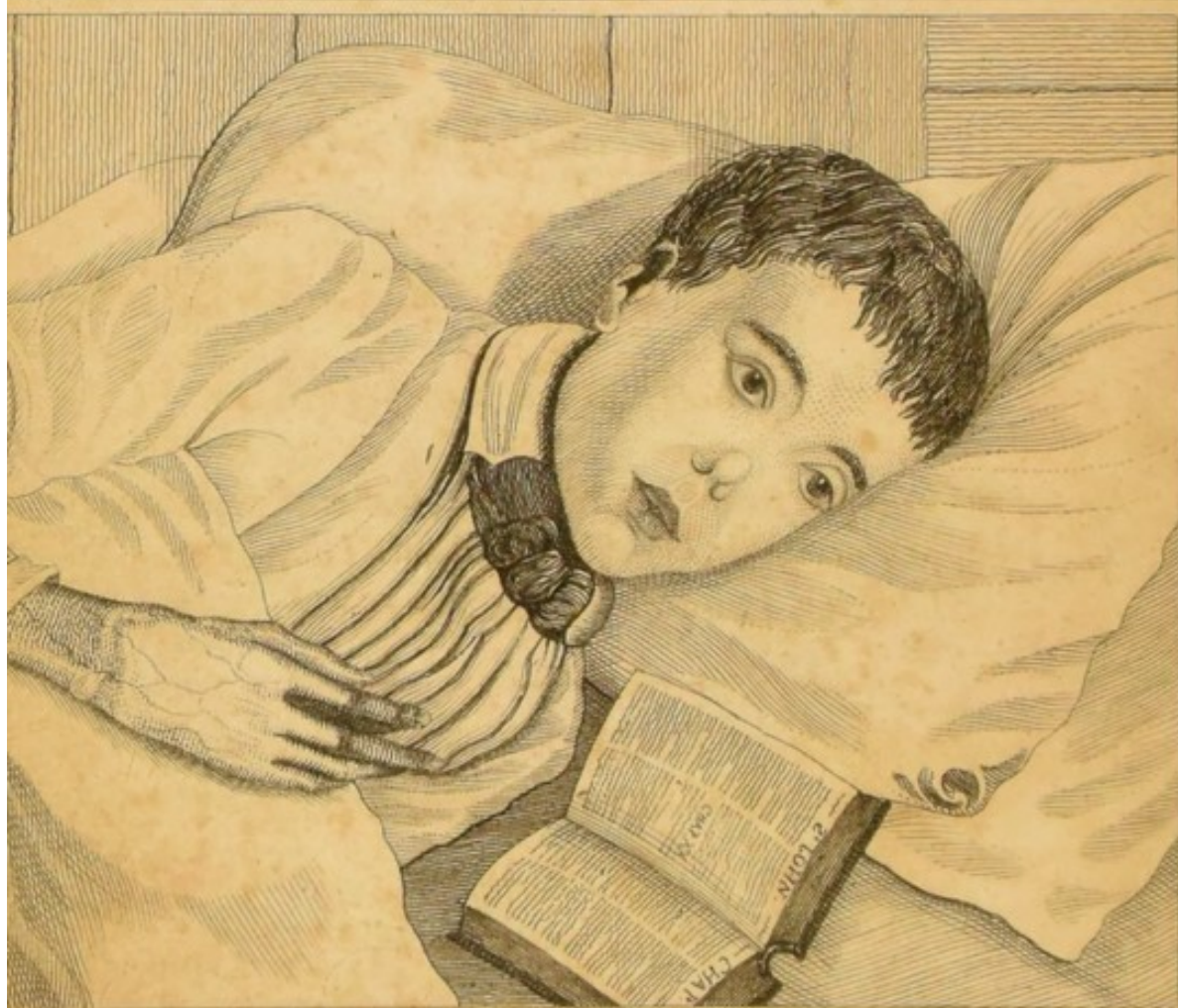
** * * Printing and Bookbinding executed with*
Neatness and Dispatch.

ROYAL COLLEGE
OF
PHYSICIANS
OF

Mr. John Lydenham

~~Mr. John Lydenham~~

Lydenham
Barnet



B. LAWSON.

THE
EXCEEDING RICHES OF GRACE,
AND THE CARE OF
DIVINE PROVIDENCE;

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE
Conversion and Subsequent History
OF
BENJAMIN LAWSON,
AN
AFFLICTED YOUTH,

Deprived of his Speech by Scrofula:

On account of which, he was, for Nine Weeks, an
In-door Patient, in King's Ward, St. Thomas's
Hospital, London, in the Year 1815.

PART I.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Jehovah-Jireh. GEN. XXII. 14.

142
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and may be had of all Booksellers.

1826.

15347

RECOMMENDATION.

My young afflicted friend, BENJAMIN LAWSON, having requested my opinion respecting the propriety of publishing the following pages, I perused them, with very great pleasure; and being fully satisfied of the truth of all the statements, and personally acquainted with most of the facts which are therein narrated, I have advised him to make the account public.

The restoration of this youth from the most afflicted condition of body which I have ever witnessed; the remarkable providence which appears to be over him, in enabling him to provide for his own wants, chiefly by the sale of his former TRACT; and especially from his being employed in disseminating the truths of the Gospel in such an artless way, by the relation of his own experience of the divine mercy; are so very wonderful, that I feel much as the multitude felt, when our Lord had restored one who was Deaf and Dumb:—"And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well—He maketh both the Deaf to hear and the Dumb to speak." Mark vii. 37.

20, Harpur Street,

JOSEPH IVIMEY.

August 2, 1822.

ACCOUNT
OF
BENJAMIN LAWSON.

CHAP. I.

I WAS born on the 24th of February, 1798, in Coppergate, city of York, of poor parents—honest and industrious, but destitute of the “one thing needful.” I trust I have learned by happy heart-felt experience, that the “one thing needful” is the only thing that makes poor afflicted people happy, because it bears up the spirits and supports the mind under the most distressing circumstances. When I was about five months old my parents removed to London, and took me with them.

PRINTING OFFICE.

Through the kind care and affection of my tender mother, I had got such a portion of learning as to be able to read in the Holy Bible, and to write a plain hand. When I was about the age of twelve years, my father, who is a printer, took me from school, and put me to work in a newspaper office, as a fly-boy—that is, to take off the newspapers as they are printed, and to call the men to their work, &c. It is a bad employment for youth, because of the wicked examples of drunkenness which they often see, and the profane conversation which they constantly hear. In this occupation I continued about three years: I was then taken very ill, which rendered it necessary for my master to get another lad instead of me, till I had recovered my strength. I had now a very sore throat; and my affectionate mother took me to Surgeon Thomas, in Leicester Square, who gave his advice three mornings a week to the poor gratis: through his means, in about three weeks I was so far restored as to be able to go again to my work, where I

continued till the year 1814.* My father wished me to learn some trade, and my mind was then fixed on being a compositor; but upon trial it appeared my education was not equal to that situation; so that there my hopes were disappointed, and my expectation was cut off. I then felt inclined to be a pressman, the same trade as my father; which led my father in June, 1814, to put me to a master-printer, Mr. Rayer, Hervey's-buildings, Strand: after I had been there upon trial three months, my master told me that he thought I was too weak ever to make a pressman: this was a very mortifying thought to me, as I liked my place and my master well; but I soon experienced the truth of what my master had said, for my work proving too much for my strength, I was soon after taken very ill, and obliged to stay at home for a few days. My affectionate mother perceived a very red spot on the side of my nose, and during the night there had been a great discharge on my pillow; I took little notice of this circumstance, and returned again to my work. A few mornings after, as I was working by myself, something pained my nose, and it began to bleed; on putting my hand where I felt the pain, I found it to be a loose piece of bone, and with much pain I took it away. When one o'clock came I went home to my dinner, and told my mother what had happened to me: she took me to the Surgeon who had before given me his advice gratis, who ordered me to use warm water, three and four times a day to wash my nose; and the use of these means afforded me great relief for some time. My master perceiving the weakness of body which I was labouring under, endeavoured to persuade me to give up my hope of being a pressman; this advice, though kind, I was determined in my own mind not to take, but resolved rather that my work should first give me up. In great weakness I continued to persevere, till at length my master told me he would not keep me any longer, for he saw the work was too much for my strength: he then sent for my father, to inform him his reason for discharging me, and gave me three shillings, as a token of his respect, when we parted.

I now continued to get weaker, and was not able to do any work for some time; but as soon as I felt a little

* Being now in the sixteenth year of my age.

better, I began to try to get a place in my former occupation as fly-boy. I was now under a surgeon in Chancery-lane, who gave his advice to the poor gratis ; and through the use of these means, got partially restored. My affectionate mother wished me, if possible, to get into some other employment, lest I should get more corrupted than I already was, and through the inexperience of youth, should be led away by wicked company : these reasons made no impression on my mind, because I loved sin and bad companions very well. Soon after, a place was offered me, at Bell's weekly messenger Sunday newspaper office, as a fly-boy, which I immediately took :—here I had to work on two Sunday afternoons out of four ; and, alas ! the effect of working on the Sunday afternoon soon manifested itself in making me more hardened in sin. I now paid no regard to the Lord's day,—and as every person is known by his actions, my wicked actions spoke louder than words in testifying the feelings of my depraved heart ; so that it might have been said, “ *There is no fear of God before his eyes.*” Psalm xxxvi. 1.

My affectionate mother, who attended the Meeting-house in Eagle-street, embraced every opportunity of taking me with her on a Lord's day, but it was very much against my inclination ; because when I was there, I felt completely miserable, as I would far sooner have been at work. When in this wicked course, I continued making rapid progress in sin, and took pleasure in ridiculing every thing that appeared to be serious, so as to glory in my shame. My mother entreated me, with all the kind affection of a tender parent, to leave my place, hoping by my so doing, I might escape from my wicked companions whom I associated with, who appeared to be leading each other on as fast as possible in the broad road to destruction. But O ! the base hypocrisy of my heart—I appeared to pay attention to the kind entreaties of an affectionate parent while in her sight, but, alas ! was no sooner out of it, than all her kind entreaties passed out of my mind : hence I got so hardened in sin, that I would not be controled—every opportunity I went to fairs ; and sometimes when it was not my turn to work on the Lord's day, I sought pleasure by going on the water ; but though I was so hardened

in sin, scarcely ever did I enjoy myself, in those sinful pleasures. I frequently felt the bitter remorse of a guilty conscience accusing me, and witnessed in several instances the sore troubles which frequently attended those who profaned the Lord's day. One Lord's day morning I was bathing with some more lads; we had hired a boat for that purpose, and I was left to mind it while they went to swim: amusing myself with the boat, I had got it into the middle of the Thames, and in this dangerous situation I continued for nearly an hour; I could not possibly get the boat back again to the shore; at length, trying every way I could imagine to get the boat to shore, through a kind providence I got so nigh, as for my companions to swim to me; when their tempers were so ruffled, and they were so angry to think I had served them so, that when they got near the shore they put me out of the boat, and I found myself up to my arm-pits in water; they then gave me my clothes to get to the shore as well as I could. Through a kind providence I got safe to shore, but with a terrified mind, and a guilty accusing conscience: that faithful monitor told me that such was generally the unhappy consequence of profaning the Lord's day; and that if I had been where I should have been, this affliction would not have happened to me,—how correct then is that proverb, "The path of duty is the only path of safety;" but seeking pleasure in sin, is adding one affliction to another, and thus I added a guilty conscience to an afflicted body.

I continued in my place, but under great weakness of body, having constantly an issue from my nose, with now and then a piece of bone coming away. My disorder baffled the skill of the medical men whom I had been under; for instead of my getting better, I grew worse and worse: at length my father, through the kind advice of a friend, and with my own desire, got me a letter as an in-door patient in St. Thomas's Hospital, in the Borough. I was then obliged to give up my place of work, and on Thursday, September 7, 1815, through a kind providence I was received as an in-door patient in King's Ward, under the care of Surgeon Cline. I was now in the seventeenth year of my age.

CHAP. II.

THE HOSPITAL.

IN my new habitation I had many seasons of serious reflection, being now shut out as it were from all my own society. I soon got acquainted with some of the patients, to whom I used frequently to say, "If they do not cure me, here they shall kill me." Three days having passed away, the surgeon came round the hospital; he came to me with a company of young men attending him, and when he had asked me a few questions, he said to his attendants he thought the disease must lay in the back part of the head, and must have originated either through a blow or a fall. "A blow or a fall:"—I pondered these things over in my own mind; when conscience, that faithful monitor, reminded me of two bad falls which I had met with when I was pursuing my sinful pleasures: the first was when engaged in a sinful game on the Lord's day on the coal barges, I fell on my head into one of the empty rooms of the barge, where I lay senseless till one of my companions lifted me up. The second was on Easter Monday, at Greenwich Fair: I was about to run down the hill in the Park, but just at the top I lost my footing, and fell, pitching upon my head on the gravel-walk; I thought I had received no hurt, only the mortification of having my new hat cut open. These things provided me with reflections very painful to my feelings. At length, after eight days, I received the pleasing news that I might now obtain leave to go out from ten o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon. Gladly I embraced the opportunity to return home once again to see my dear parents. After spending some time at home, I went to see my old companions before I returned, which soon passed away my allotted time. When the time arrived for me to return to the hospital, my mind was melancholy. What! thought I, if they should do to me as I have said—either cure me or kill me? I am afraid of dying—I am afraid they will kill me. Thus I arrived at my ward very gloomy, but endeavouring to stifle every serious conviction, and to appear as cheerful as possible before the patients.

On the Lord's day following, I was walking in the square of the hospital, reading a book, when through a

kind providence, I was accosted by a young serious sailor, who addressed me thus :—" Well, young friend ; what book are you reading ?" and so he turned his conversation upon religion, by saying, " Well, my young friend ; we are in a place in which there is every thing to afford matter for our serious reflection, therefore, permit me to ask you what is the state of your mind ?" I was quite confused at this short but serious address, and could make him no reply. The sailor proceeded, as I had no answer for him, and told me of the uncertainty of time, the certainty of death, and of eternal judgment to come : " And now tell me," said he, " what do you think of dying ?" I presumptuously replied, " It is time enough to think of that when we come to die." " No, my young friend," said the sailor ; " delays are very dangerous ; and many have found it so when they came to die. But what think you of hell ?" I answered, " I do not believe there is such a place." " My young friend," said he, " let me beg of you to read your Bible before you take that for a truth ; you will there see for yourself, that there is a hell for the wicked, and a heaven for the redeemed sinner—so fare you well."

This short but serious conversation from the young sailor, made such a deep impression on my mind, and operated so powerfully, that when I awoke in the night I was terrified, and when asleep I was dreaming that some dreadful calamity had happened to me ; and being ignorant of the Scriptures, therefore a stranger to my own heart, I formed this resolution in my own strength, that I would now begin to lead a new life, and if God would be pleased to spare me, and restore me to health and strength, I was determined to forsake all my wicked companions, and keep the Lord's day, and so make amends for my past wicked life. In a few days after this, October 8, 1815, I was amusing myself in the square of the hospital, it was the day they wash the squares, and those patients who are able, have to assist in fetching the water ; through providence it fell to my lot to be one, by which I got wet, and took a bad cold, which was followed by a sore throat, and a swelled head ; through which I was confined to my bed, and could take no food but thick milk for eight days. As my strength of body gradually decreased, so the fear of

death became increasingly painful to my mind. Death stared me in the face, and my sins pricked me to the heart; for sure I was *then* that there is a hell, which I had so little time before spoken so lightly about: my conscience then reproved me, but now it condemned me for my wickedness. Hear ye, my friends, who may read these lines:

“ When conscience speaks, its voice regard,
And seize the tender hour;
Humbly implore the promised grace,
And God will give the power.”

Thus I record that I very soon learned the truth of the serious young sailor's remark, by unhappy experience, “ that it was not time enough to think of dying when we come to die;” and I am persuaded those only who have been in such circumstances, and who have felt this dreadful state of mind, can form any conception of the misery that is endured, and which continues to increase by the mind despairing of its ever being made happy, neither can I describe it:—were there no other hell than a guilty conscience, as some persons ignorant of the Scriptures assert, I should fear all my life to be in such a hell as this again. But, my reader, hear him who only is able to deliver us from this hell; hear him who is the only refuge from the wrath to come; hear Jesus Christ say, “ *But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him.*”—Luke xii. 5.

After having passed a wearisome night, my affectionate mother came to see her afflicted and distressed son: I was so weak as not to be able to talk to her, neither did I feel inclined to tell her what I had experienced, nor the distress of mind which I then felt: she staid all that day with me, and would have staid all the night, but that being against the rules of the hospital, she was not permitted; she, therefore, went home, and came early the next morning, when I felt a little more composed. I now felt the rising desire to ask her to get some good man to come to pray by me;—I thought—will God hear prayer for me? I am afraid he will not shew mercy to me, because I know I have hardened myself in sin; surely I am lost and undone for ever! These were the

exercises of my mind when my mother came, so that I could not speak to her on this subject. Seeing my heart so full of grief, and prompted, I believe, by divine influence to accomplish the divine purpose towards me, she put the question to me in the following words: "My dear, shall I get some one to come and pray by you?" "Pray by me?" I answered; "what, pray for me?—Is there any possibility of hope for me?" When my tears had relieved my feelings, I replied, "Yes, do, and as soon as you can; get some person from Eagle-street Meeting." I did now scarcely any thing but weep, my sorrow was so great. My tears were my meat and drink for many days and nights. When I realised the thought of having conversation with some good man, my limbs trembled so that my knees smote one against the other. Feeling such sorrow of heart, arising from a deep sense of my actual transgression against God, my soul was constrained, for the first time in my life, to believe, by the Holy Ghost, to pray *God to be merciful to me, a sinner*; but I had no discovery at this time, how this mercy was to be obtained. Ignorant of the Scriptures, all my desire was to know, "*how should man be just with God?*" Job ix. 2. But, adored be the kind providence of God! (For HE is a God of providence, a God of grace, and a God of glory to his chosen people.) HE will provide means to accomplish his own divine purposes, and thus it was, he provided me with that Book, which, through his divine teaching, led me to receive the truth, as it is in Jesus. According to his own blessed word, so I found it, "*And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord.*" Isaiah lxiv. 13. And again, Jesus Christ has declared, that HE, that divine teacher, God the Holy Ghost, "*He shall glorify me.*" John xvi. 14. Dr. Watts has said, what is true of my experience—

"The Spirit wrought my faith and love,
And hope, and every grace;
But Jesus spent his life to work
The robe of righteousness!"

Having now a New Testament in my possession, I was prompted, by divine influence, to search it, with secret prayer to God. It was some comfort to my distressed mind, when God the Holy Ghost was graciously pleased to discover to me in reading the Scriptures, that

my experience was not singular, but that there was one instance recorded for my encouragement, to hope and quietly to wait for the salvation of the Lord. This was the Conversion of the Apostle Paul, in the 9th chapter of the Acts, where he, under distress of mind respecting the state of his soul, "*Was three days without sight—neither did eat nor drink.*" In a few days after this, as I was reading the 11th chapter of Matthew, that sweet invitation came with divine power to my soul :—"Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." I saw every thing in this sweet invitation so suited to my circumstances, and my character so plainly marked out: I did *labour* under the burthen of a sin-sick soul, and was *heavy laden* with affliction of body. I could scarcely think that I had possessed a book which contained such precious words as these in it, and to have let it be laid up as a book of no use; so that I was constrained to acknowledge, "*This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*" Matt. xxi. 42. I felt as one who had lost his burden, for the Lord was pleased to give me such a portion of faith in this sweet invitation, as to inspire me with so much hope in a precious Christ, as to keep my poor tossed, tempted soul, from sinking into despair; which rising temptation, in a few days after, I felt so powerfully, that if I had been able to have walked to London-bridge, I might have gone and destroyed myself there, as I was strongly tempted to do.

" Yet I was kept from full despair,
Upheld by power unknown;
That blessed hand that broke the snare
Shall guide me to the throne."

Blessed be God! who hath not suffered me to be tempted above the strength he gave me to bear it; he also made a way for my escape; "*He brought me also out of a horrible pit,—out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock.*" Psalm xl. 2. And though the tempter still said, "Jesus is the Saviour, but not *your* Saviour," yet I can, through grace, say, with humble

confidence, He is *my* Lord and *my* God. Yes, my cry was, and still is, "Lord, save me, or I perish!"

A circumstance which happened in my ward, was the means, through God the Holy Ghost, of conveying to my mind a lesson of instruction, so that it led me to a more clear discovery, how the justice of God was satisfied, sin pardoned, the sinner reconciled to God, and saved from the wrath to come! A poor man, a Roman Catholic, who was near death, sent for the Priest to anoint him. The Priest came, and ordered the bed of the poor dying man to be hung round with a screen; this was done, so that no person could see what the Priest did, or hear what he said. This being a religious ceremony, I was all attention till it was over. I then inquired of one of the patients, what the Priest (for so they called him) had been doing? The patient replied, he had been forgiving the poor man his sins.—"Well," said I "but, pray, what made him so ashamed, as to be afraid that any one should see him?" This, my bold question, I could get no answer to, so I was obliged to answer it myself.—"My friend," I said, "I will tell you what, I believe made him ashamed was, that he had no more power to forgive that poor man his sins, according to the Scriptures, than you and I have to climb the clouds.—Read the 5th of Luke, 18—26, and you will find, that none but God can forgive sins:—"

"He that can for sin atone,
Must have no sins of his own."

And it is evident, that this applies to God alone. How plain, then, to those who are taught of God, does it appear in this instance that Jesus Christ is God! See His almighty power and loving kindness towards us perishing sinners! "If you had been there," I said, "when he condescended to heal this poor man, you would have witnessed how very different he manifested his amazing love for the souls of perishing sinners. he did it openly, that none might doubt his ability to forgive them their sins; that none might have reason to doubt, that he was truly and properly God manifest in the flesh.—See him, condescending to work a miracle, in healing the poor sick man, taken with the palsy, that those unbelieving spectators might be eye-witnesses,

that he was truly and properly God, which they could not believe in their hearts." I record this as another token of the merciful goodness of the Lord to my soul, for "*Whatsoever doth make manifest is light*," Eph. v. 13., and the Lord can bring good out of evil. Thus this ignorant priest, the "*blind leader of the blind*," (Matt. xv. 14.) was the means of doing me some good. Whatever was his design, God meant it for my good, and for promoting his own glory he permitted it to happen. God the Holy Ghost had made me to feel, by his convincing power in my soul, that the righteous and holy law of God, which I, by my actual transgressions, had broken, extended its demands to the secret thoughts of my heart, which led me to trace sin up to its origin; "*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*." Rom. v. 12. Therefore, I was constrained to believe the doctrine of original sin, or how can I account for the language of David, the man after God's own heart? "*Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me*." Psalm li. 5. Hence I can say, by heart-felt experience, founded upon Scripture evidence, "*By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified, for, by the law, is the knowledge of sin*." Rom. iii. 20. God the Holy Ghost, who had convinced my soul of sin, now made way for my discovering the suitableness of Jesus Christ to be my precious Saviour, shewed me his all-sufficiency, and applied the promises to my soul, and enabled me, notwithstanding the ruined, lost state of my soul, to rejoice in the everlasting love of God, "*Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but now is made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel*." 2 Tim. i. 9. 11. Therefore, I am constrained, by the love of Christ, to "*Give thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we*

have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. i. 12, 13, 14.

"To him who on the fatal tree
Poured out his blood, his life for me;
In grateful strains my voice I'll raise,
And in his service spend my days.

The next Lord's day afternoon, my affectionate Mother, Father, and Sister, came to see me, and while they were all sitting around my bed, a gentleman came into the ward to inquire for Benjamin Lawson.—It was a kind friend from the "*Compassionate Society*," held at the Vestry in Eagle-street Meeting, for the purpose of visiting the sick, and conversing with them about the state of their mind, and kindly minister to their necessities. As the gentleman came down the ward, I trembled,—my fears became all alive. But he kindly spoke first to my parents, and then affectionately addressed himself to me, nearly as follows:—

Visitor.—"Well, my young Friend, what is the state of your mind?"

B. L.—"I am sensible, Sir, I am a great sinner."

Visitor.—"Well, it is our mercy if we are made sensible that we are sinners. Can you recollect any text of Scripture you have heard preached from, which produced that conviction on your mind at any time?"

B. L.—"Yes, Sir, I can one:—'*Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*' It was at Eagle-street, a funeral sermon for a young person who had died exceedingly happy."

Visitor.—"Well, these words are full of encouragement for you." This kind friend said much more to me, which I cannot call to memory. This friend was the first Christian acquaintance I had. I soon could make more free with him, and, at length, became quite familiar, so that I could open my mind to him, and tell him freely my hopes, my doubts, and fears. His mind was well stored with some sweet and precious promises, to which he directed my attention, or to some sweet verse of a hymn to encourage my hope.—He mentioned one, which I hope never to forget:—

"Grace will complete what grace begins,
To save from sorrows and from sins;
The work which wisdom undertakes,
Eternal mercy ne'er forsakes."

Through the goodness and mercy of my God I soon got much better ; but the change in my character and religion did not correspond with the religion of some in the Hospital.—They told me about their priest, but I could not bear to hear it.—Jesus Christ was my Prophet, my Priest, and my King ; my Prophet to teach me,—my Priest to atone for me,—and my King to rule and reign over me.

November, 1815.—I now received notice to go out, as soon as I could be removed, as the place was too cold for me. On the 9th of *November*, my Father got a hackney coach to fetch me home, and I bid the patients farewell, except two of them, who were insensible and dying,—a sight never to be forgotten by me. The shaking of the coach fatigued me, but my affectionate Mother got me to bed. After a short refreshing sleep, I awoke, and found myself at home.—I felt constrained to pour out my heart with thankfulness to the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort, who had thus mercifully preserved me, supported me, and brought me safe to my parents' habitation ; but rather blessed be the Lord, "*who hath delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*" Psalm cxvi. 8, 9.

December, 1815.—Through mercy, I began to get better at home ; but I had the battles of the Lord to fight,—fears within, and fightings without. But this text was constantly on my mind,—"*No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.*" Matt. vi. 24. Seeing the temptations with which I was surrounded, and feeling the plague of my own heart, I was almost afraid to get better, lest I should endeavour to serve two masters, which, I trust, led me to pray for grace, that I might manifest "*whose I was, and whom I served.*" Acts xxvii. 23.

"Thus shall we best proclaim abroad,
The honours of our Saviour God ;
When the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin."

CHAP. III.—THE HOUSE OF GOD.

THE Lord graciously heard my feeble supplication, and granted me that which I requested. I was now, for the first time since my affliction, able to go to Eagle-street Meeting, when God the Holy Ghost blessed the discourse for the comfort of my soul. Mr. Ivimey preached from the 2d of Cor. viii. 9. "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich.*" Oh, what else could it be! Nothing but free, rich, and sovereign grace, could have snatched me as a brand from the burning.

"Grace first contriv'd the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps *that* grace display'd
Which drew the wond'rous plan."

Christmas-Day, 1815.—I was favoured to go again to the House of God, when I heard a sermon preached on the subject of baptism, and afterwards saw the solemn ordinance administered to I think seventeen persons; the last of whom, who I shall never I hope forget, was a fine youth, in health and strength, only fourteen years of age, James Barnett, a son of the Rev. James Barnett, of Walworth, who has since died very happy rejoicing in the Lord. This brought forth my tears freely; thanks be unto the Lord, they were tears of grief, mixed with joy; tears of grief, when I thought of my having lived eighteen years without God, without hope, and without Christ in this world; a slave to myself, an enemy to God, a drudge for the devil; tears of joy, to think, in the fulness of time, the Lord had, in his merciful goodness, stopped me in my mad career, and given me precious faith to believe, that Jesus Christ died for sinners; and now I feel the love of Christ in my soul, constraining me to love him, because, I trust, he first loved me. I can now say, what RUTH said to her Mother NAOMI,—"*Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.*" Ruth i. 16, 17.

I hoped I should be able shortly to give myself to the Church, according to the will of God, and, through grace, take up my cross daily, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; who hath kept me in every temptation, supported me under every season of darkness, and preserved me to the present moment. Dear Jesus, grant a continuance of these favours, for thy Name's sake, and grant me thy holy Spirit, to lead me and guide me into all truth, that having his witness in my soul, that I am the called and chosen, I shall, through Christ strengthening me, prove faithful unto death. "*Now unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundant above all we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end,—Amen.*" Ephesians iii. 20, 21.

CHAP. IV.

JOURNAL.

December, 1815.—I WAS now pleasing myself with the thought of the pleasure I should have, in going constantly to the House of God, from the comfort I had received in public worship. But it pleased my Heavenly Father still to keep me in the furnace of affliction, as I took a bad cold on Coristmas-day, it being a very hard frost.

My mind became uncomfortable, as I was quite confined at home, and I could eat no solid food. Thus I continued for four weeks, having no Christian friend to speak to, which added to my sorrow ; "*My soul was much discouraged, because of the way !*" Num. xxi. 4. At length, my affectionate Mother wished me to send for Mr. Ivimey to come to see me, saying, she knew he would come with the greatest pleasure. I accordingly wrote a note to him, and sent it by the hands of my sister.

Mr. Ivimey, though we were strangers to him, very kindly came to see me. He asked my Mother if I wanted for any thing, to which she replied, no ; I thank the Lord I did not at that time, my Father then had strength, and plenty of work, and was able to provide me with every thing I wanted for my body. After some conversation with my Mother, Mr. I drew his chair to my bed-side, when he affectionately addressed himself to me thus :—

Mr. I.—"Well, Benjamin, what is the state of your mind? On what do you place your dependance for the salvation of your soul?"

B. L.—"Entirely on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, because he died for poor lost guilty sinners, that they should not suffer eternal misery, but have redemption through his precious blood."

Mr. I.—"Yes, Benjamin, he died, the just for the unjust, that we might have redemption through his precious blood, even the forgiveness of sins. But do you place your entire dependance on this sacrifice? Or do you place any on your own works?"

B. L.—"None, Sir; I find sin is mixed with all I do."

Mr. I.—"Well, shall I read a chapter, and pray with you?"

B. L.—"If you please, Sir." So my kind friend read part of the 2d chapter of the 1st Epistle of Peter, and explained some of the verses, and concluded his visit with prayer.

February, 1816.—My greatest trial was yet to come. I now gradually lost my speech, through the loss of the back part of the palate of my mouth. But as my speech left me, I began to increase in strength, and was able again to take some solid food. Thus the Lord, who took away my speech, graciously restored me a little in body. May I have grace to feel thankful for every thing, who am deserving of nothing! "*Wherefore doth a living man complain,—a man for the punishment of his sins?*" Lamentations iii. 39.

March, 1816.—I was now visited by two young Christian friends, whom Mr. Ivimey had been so kind as to send,—Mr. W. and Mr. S., and I mention it, because I think it may encourage young persons who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to visit the afflicted, and persevere in such "*Works of faith and labours of love; and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Thess i. 3. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*" 1 Cor. xv. 50.

April, 1816.—Through the merciful goodness of God, I was able to walk out a little, the weather being very fine; I longed to go again to the House of God.

June, 1816.—My God was pleased to strengthen me, to go again to His House, though I was in great weakness of body. It was the cause of great pain to my feelings, meeting my kind friends, and not being able to speak to them. They kindly took me by the hand, and asked me how I did, but I could not answer them. This was a new trial for my faith and patience. It was a "*thorn in the flesh,*" which I have often besought the Lord to remove; but, though He has not granted my request, yet, blessed be His most Holy Name, He gives me to experience, the consolation derived from His true promise, "*My grace is sufficient for thee! for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*" 2 Cor. xii. 9.

July, 1816.—I was "*Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair.*" 2 Cor. iv. 8. My Father's work fell off; and I did not know how I could do any thing towards my support; I could not work; and my greatest trial was, that I could not speak. I was, however, enabled, through grace, by "*Prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make my requests known unto God,*" Phil. iv. 6, though to no one else. My mind was fixed upon a plan to try to sell Religious Tracts, but I did not know how to begin about it; but the Lord put it into the heart of a kind friend to come and make the way plain to me. On the 18th of *July, 1816*, quite unexpected, Mr. — came to inquire what I thought of doing to gain a livelihood? Here I saw the hand of my God more than ever I did; my affectionate Mother replied, that I had said I should like to try to sell Religious Tracts. Mr. — replied, "If you will give it a trial, Benjamin, I will set you up with one hundred Tracts, and five shillings." Thus I was provided for; and on the 22d of *July*, I began my honourable calling of selling Religious Tracts in the street,—I say honourable calling, because it is honourable to do any thing in the service of God. I sold all my Tracts the first week, and the Lord continued to prosper the work of my hands, blessed be his holy Name. I also commenced serving Magazines, and periodical publications.

August 25, 1816.—I was now, I trust, through grace, decidedly on the Lord's side. I had given myself to the Church in Eagle-street, according to the will of God, by my written (as I could not speak) confession of

"Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts xx. 21. In great weakness this day I followed the steps of my precious Redeemer, by being baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. 19.

Dear Jesus, give thy unworthy creature, who is but as dust and ashes, fresh supplies of grace to follow thee, to look continually to thee for strength and support, and let the blessing of Abraham rest upon me. As thou hast blessed me, make me a blessing to those around me. May I ever remember it has been said to one, *"Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."* 1 Kings, xx. 11.

September 1, 1816.—I have lived to see this day. I never expected that I should be thus highly privileged. I pause and wonder, and stand amazed to think, that I should be the object of redeeming love. Surely, nothing but the application of the blood of Christ to my conscience, could give me such joy and peace as I now enjoy. I hope that I am one of the blood-bought family, and am, therefore, now sitting down at the Lord's table, with a few only, to commemorate His redeeming grace, and dying love; till, by-and-by, all the family will meet, and without any one afflicted among them.—

"Then shall we sing, more sweet, more loud,
And Christ shall be our song."

October.—The weather being cold, I was unable now to go out so much with my Tracts, and the following circumstance laid me quite up.

On the 5th of this month, I went out, as usual, about ten o'clock in the morning, and when I had travelled as far as Gray's Inn-lane, I was took with a bleeding in the mouth so profuse, that I thought I must certainly have been choaked. I was so far from home, too, that no one knew me. What to do I knew not. I wrote on a card to beg a drop of cold water, and went into a potatoe-shop for that purpose, but they bid me, in a very scornful manner to go about my business. Just so, I thought they served the precious Jesus, *"Who was despised and rejected of men,"* Isa. liii. 3, when he was on earth. Some young person in the street, who was more tender-hearted, led me to a pump in Hatton-garden. By this time a number of persons had gathered round me; there I was washing my mouth, I

think nearly twenty minutes, when, through the merciful goodness of God, the bleeding stopped.

I continued, for some time, subject to bleeding from the mouth, and was, through the weakness it brought on, soon confined to my bed.

January, 1817.—The Lord's presence is not confined to Churches, but is manifested to every seeking soul, whether confined by personal affliction, or by the afflictions of those around them; such circumstances shall be made profitable to the souls of those who desire to see more of "*The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" 2 Cor. iv. 6.

My dearly beloved pastor came to see me, and as I admire the providence of my God, who performeth all things for me, "*Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*" Ephes. i. 11. I record the following:

Mr. I. said,—“Well, Benjamin, if I am spared till to-morrow evening, I shall preach my annual Sermon to young people, from the 22d of Jeremiah, 21.—‘*I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear; this has been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.*’ Do you think you can write me a line that I may read to them, Benjamin?” I said I would endeavour to do so, which I did, and sent by the hand of my affectionate Mother. What I wrote I have now forgotten; but some Christian, a stranger to me, who heard Mr. I. read it to the congregation, learned by it where I lived, and came to see me on the Tuesday following. After he had conversed a little with my Mother, he affectionately bid me “good bye,” and put a one pound note in my hand! This was doing alms in the right way. “*But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.*” Matthew vi. 3, 4. My Father had not been able to work for six months before this, through a paralytic stroke, which made this present the more acceptable to us. I thought of that circumstance, that when the Lord Jesus borrowed Peter's boat to preach out of, he presently repaid him for the loan with a great draught of fishes (Luke v.;) and as it was through those few lines that this worthy Christian found me out, and

came to see me, I thought the Lord Jesus might have borrowed my poor earthen vessel, to speak a word out of it; if so, he presently repaid me for it, by sending this Christian to give me a one pound note; for sure I am, such a stream could flow from no other fountain than the love of Christ. The Apostle saith, "*The love of Christ constraineth us;*" (2 Cor. v. 14.) and I think this is a test to try a Christian by. Does he endeavour to act thus? "*As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*" Gal. vi. 10.

March, 1817.—I was, through the merciful goodness of God, so much recovered again, as to get to the House of God once on a Lord's day. I hope this is a fresh token for good, that the thread of life is yet lengthened, to fulfil some gracious purpose of my God. I hope to see my dear parents and sister brought to the knowledge of God, "*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent,*" (John xvii. 3.) for nothing is too hard for God, and I cannot ask, therefore, any thing too great.

"And since I plead for Jesus' sake,
No denial can I take."

June, 1817.—I went out a little now and then with my Tracts, and still hope to do so as long as I can.—"*Not my will, Lord, but thine be done.*" Luke xxii. 42.

Thus, through the merciful goodness of God, I was, at times, enabled to do a little towards my own support; but had it not been for the Christian kindness of a few friends, who visited me in time of need, and who ministered to my necessity, I must often have been but scantily supplied.

October, 1817.—I was now quite laid aside, as the cold weather was very much against my afflicted frame, but though these sufferings were very painful, yet the Lord has some gracious purpose of love in it, for "*He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.*" Lamentations iii. 33. No; He doth it "*for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.*" Heb. xii. 10.

"Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
The bitter is sweet, the med'cine is food;
Tho' painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

I wrote no journal after this time; I cannot account for it, but it was not because I had no mercies to record; for sure I am, they have been "*New every morning, great is thy faithfulness.*" Lamén. iii. 23. Every day has brought its new trials, so my God has graciously provided fresh strength. "*Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.*" Acts xxvi. 22. I trust I continue to love my Jesus still more and more every day, for he is exceedingly precious; "*The chiefest among ten thousand, yea, he is altogether lovely.*" "*This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*" Solomon's Songs, v. 10, 16.

"He saw me plung'd in deep distress,
He flew to my relief;
For me He bore the shameful cross,
And carried all my grief.

1818.—My Father had not been able to work at his trade, since he was afflicted with a paralytic stroke in 1816, and it was the opinion of the Surgeon and others whom he had been under, that he never would again. This led him, also, in November, to begin to sell Religious Tracts in the Streets. I thought it was a token for good to his soul. It will be awful indeed, for any one who has been useful, as many are at this time, in selling Religious Tracts, or the Scriptures in sixpenny and shilling numbers, if they remain ignorant themselves of their important contents.

Dear Lord, let not this be our unhappy experience. May we not be like the builders of Noah's Ark, who, after they had finished the Ark which saved others, were themselves drowned in the flood! Genesis viii. May we, being regenerated by the power of thy spirit, *hear thy sayings and do them, and be like unto the wise man that built his house upon a rock,—*" *And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."*

CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

Kind reader—Let me entreat you to “Search the Scriptures,” that you may, through the divine blessing, receive the *truth*, and thus be preserved from fatal errors which may prevent you from receiving “*The record which God has given of his Son.*” 1 John, v. 10. Men by nature, are born in sin, therefore they will naturally receive *error* before *truth*. “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*” Psalm, li. 5. I am a proof of this: you have read in my experience, how I went on from sin to sin, till God, through his free, rich, and sovereign mercy, arrested me the “*chief of sinners,*” by the power of the Holy Spirit, who then said concerning my soul, as at the creation of the World, “*Let there be light, and there was light.*” Gen. i. 3. Nature’s darkness was then removed, and spiritual light communicated, which set my sins in order before my face, and brought me guilty and condemned to cry out, “*God be merciful to me a sinner.*” Luke, xviii. 13.

Kind reader—Do you know any thing of this state of mind? It is that change that you must experience. “*Ye must be born again*” John, iii. 7. Has the Lord the Spirit discovered to you your state by nature, as a sinner, for unless you feel the disease of sin, how can you apply for a remedy? “*They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*” Matt. ix. 12. Have you, from a sense of the need of your sins being pardoned through the *blood of Jesus Christ*, cried earnestly to God, “*O visit me with thy salvation!*” Psalm cvi. 4. If you have, then the Lord the Spirit has began to work on your heart, and though you may be ready to give up your faint hope, yet, “*He shall glorify Jesus in your soul.*” John, xvi. 14. He will discover to you how your sins are pardoned, and your full, free, and perfect salvation obtained in bringing peace to your conscience, through the blood of that precious Jesus, “*Who came to seek and save that which was lost.*” Luke xix. 10. The love of Christ will now constrain you to take up your cross daily, and follow him. You will go to him as your Prophet, to teach you, acknowledge him as your King, to reign over you; and through precious faith, rest entirely on his sacrifice for eternal life,—you may then sing,

“He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet lov’d me notwithstanding all;
He sav’d me from my lost estate,
His loving kindness, O! how great.”

But I cannot finish my address without a word to those who know nothing about faith in the precious Jesus, nor of the pardon of their sins. You will have no support under affliction, how then think ye, can you meet death? “*Repent ye, and believe the Gospel,*” (Mark i. 15,) that you may know for yourselves that you are “*Redeemed from all iniquity.*” Titus, ii. 14. By the precious blood of Christ, let me urge it upon you to search the Scriptures, these are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, that dear friend, on whom my hopes of heaven depend. “*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.*” John v. 39.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

F. Warr, Printer, Red Lion Passage, Holborn,

MERCY MANIFESTED.

AN ACCOUNT OF BENJAMIN LAWSON, AN **AFFLICTED YOUTH,**

Who has been for Thirteen Years afflicted with

SCROFULA

IN THE HEAD AND SEVERAL OF THE JOINTS,

Which has rendered him entirely incapable of obtaining his livelihood;
and for the last Nine Years he has been

Deprived of Speech ;

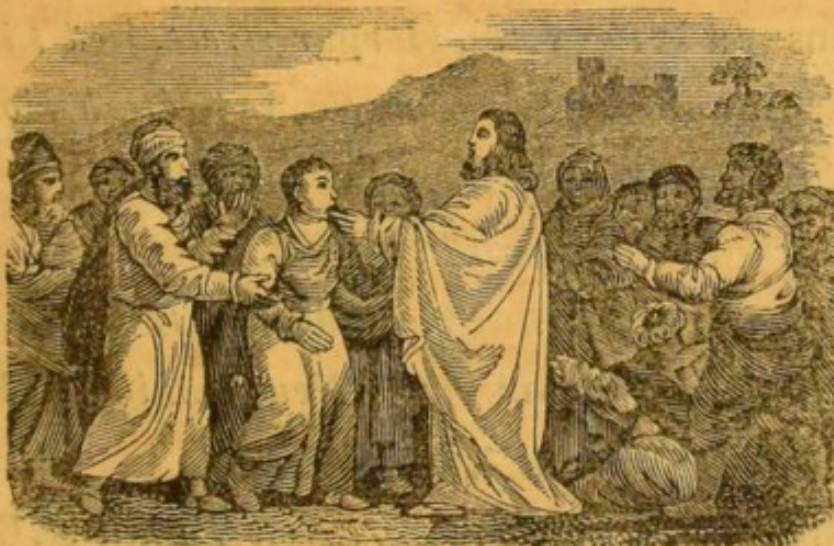
And who was entirely confined to his bed from July, 1819, to August, 1820,
Six Months of which time he was

ENTIRELY HELPLESS,

So as to be unable to move a Finger, or any of his Limbs; but
who has been so far restored as to be able to walk
several miles at a time.

—
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.
—

SIXTH EDITION.



What hath God wrought!—NUMBERS xxiii. 23.

He hath done all things well; He maketh both the deaf to hear, and
the dumb to speak.—MARK vii. 37.

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