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"Whose faith follow."



THE
VICTOR CROWNED;

BEING THE
Funeral Address and Sermons

DELIVERED IN ST. JAMES'S, HOLLOWAY,

In Memory

OF THE LATE

REV. W. B. MACKENZIE, M.A.

WITH A PREFACE BY THE

REV. W. B. CARPENTER, M.A.

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3

BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.



URING a man's lifetime it is often difficult to estimate fully the strength of the hold he has obtained upon the hearts of men ; but when he falls, the upheaving of all things about him tells the depth and extent of his influence.

This is especially true of a man, who, like the subject of this sketch, spends the greater part of his working lifetime in the same spot, engaged in untiring and unobtrusive labours for the good of others. The child may fall as a flower, the blossom cut off in a moment, and the headless stem may be lost and forgotten amid the long grass which grows about it ; but when a strong man dies, he falls as an oak of the forest, tearing up in its overthrow the mossy home of many a floweret nestled at its base, and leaving a yawning pit to show how deeply, how firmly, and how widely its long and arm-like roots had wound themselves about the earth.

3 Of the Rev. W. B. Mackenzie we may say the same. It was well known that his influence was vast and varied,—in his own neighbourhood almost unprecedented. His crowded church, the extensive popularity of his literary labours, all showed how firmly his influence had laid hold upon the public mind. But those who were present when the accompanying discourses were delivered, and witnessed the thronging multitudes of weeping people who pressed into the church on these occa-

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sions,—those who saw the thousands of tearful faces which strained forward to take a last look into his open grave, will best understand the truth of the comparison we have made, and feel that his death was even more honoured than his honoured life,—that, deep and powerful as they knew his influence to be, the gap which his removal has made proclaims most eloquently the strength and intensity of that influence.

In prefixing a brief notice of his life to the Address and Sermons which follow, it will not be necessary at present to do more than indicate in outline the facts of his life, and such facts connected with his last illness which may serve to remove any false impression as may have got abroad.

Mr. Mackenzie was born at Sheffield in April, 1806. At the age of 16 he lost both his parents. The next few years of his life were years to try the energy of his character, but with indomitable perseverance he did battle with many adverse circumstances. He first turned his attention to the law; but, after a little, his thoughts were directed to the work of the ministry. Having once set his face towards the work of his Master, he esteemed no obstacles too great to be overcome; but, in a position most unfavourable to study, he gave every spare hour, and many of them were robbed from sleep, to the work of preparing to enter the University. At length, in 1830, he was enabled to give up his private pupils, and proceed to Oxford, where he entered Magdalen Hall, then under the direction of Dr. Macbride. The logical precision of his mind was soon noted, and a very high estimate of his mental powers formed by the College authorities. During his residence at Oxford he became a Sunday-school teacher, under the Rev. W. W. Champneys, now Dean of Lichfield, from whom he was wont to say he learned many useful lessons in the manner of teaching children.

At the close of his university course, he accepted a title for orders from the late Rev. T. T. Biddulph, and was ordained to

the curacy of St. James', Bristol, in 1834. This curacy he retained till he was presented by the present Vicar of Islington to the incumbency of a newly-built church in Lower Holloway. To this church, described in a paper of the period as a neat and elegant edifice, but which would have been more properly designated an ill-built and ungainly structure, he gave the name of St. James', in memory of his first and only curacy. Under his wise and fostering care, the church and the parish, after some difficulties, rose into a prosperous condition. The church, built to accommodate 1000 persons, was not found large enough for the crowds who thronged to hear him. Twice it was enlarged, till in 1850 accommodation was made for upwards of 2000 people. Under his direction, schools and other valuable parts of parochial machinery sprang into existence, and were maintained in the most perfect state of efficiency and order.

In 1868 the first symptoms of his last illness appeared. These increased, with some fluctuations, until the spring of this year, when he was completely laid aside. For some months it was thought and hoped, and he himself shared in this feeling, that he would be permitted to resume his long-loved labours. But afterwards it became apparent that his course was ended; and as the shining goal appeared, he felt no wish to turn his footsteps back to earth again.

The touching letters, sent from his sick bed to his much-loved people, breathe the spirit of unshaken confidence in his Master's care and his Saviour's death; and as the end drew near he could say, "My faith is as firm as a rock." The title suggested by the Vicar for his Sermon has been thought an appropriate one for the whole pamphlet, in which words of comfort, warning, and triumph are woven together as one tribute to his memory and memento to his people. Sorrowing friends can but cast the fading wreath upon his tomb; but they can look up through tears, and with the eye of faith see the victor better crowned by better Hands than theirs—the

Saviour encircling the brow of the soldier "faithful unto death" with the fadeless crown of everlasting life.

Few have laboured so wisely, so perseveringly, so unflinchingly as he did. We doubt whether another clergyman could be found who could say that he had had, in a course of thirty-six years' ministerial labour, but one curacy and one incumbency. To have maintained his position for so long, to have ministered, with but one exception, uninterruptedly in the same church, to a congregation of upwards of 2000 persons, for a period of thirty-two years, is evidence of mental endowments and preaching talents of no mean order,—to have remained loyally at his post to the end, when offers of a tempting character were made to him, argues a devotion to the interests of his people, and an unswerving attachment to the glory of his Master, which sorrowing friends may remember with joy.

Pre-eminently a leader amongst men, he made his influence felt wherever he went, and in whatever he did. Labours such as his—long, and earnestly, and wisely carried on—we feel sure will be lasting. Zealously building on the foundation which his Redeemer laid, he jealously took heed *how* he builded thereon; and we cannot but believe that the results will be found to be deep and abiding.

These are no words of empty panegyric. They are the utterances of the firm conviction and affectionate recollection of one who, in an acquaintance of but a few months, learned to venerate him as a father and value him as a friend.

W. B. CARPENTER.

50, Highbury Hill;

December 9th, 1870.

I.

THE ADDRESS.

BY THE
REV. W. PENNEFATHER, VICAR OF ST. JUDE'S.
Delivered extempore on Wednesday, Nov. 30, 1870.

“WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW.”—*Heb. xiii. 7.*



IN the epistle to the Hebrews the apostle addresses the Jews who had embraced Christianity living in Palestine, and he is writing to them in order to stimulate them to follow the faith of those who had entered into glory. He says, in the opening of this verse: “*Remember* them which *have had* the rule over you.” This is the true rendering of the text, because in the 17th verse of this chapter he says, “Obey them that have the rule over you.” Here it is, “*Remember* them which *have had* the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation,”—“considering,” looking narrowly into, investigating again and again,—pondering upon the end of their *conver-*

sation, their manner of ^{life} In a word, they were to call to mind how they had ruled over them, and spoken to them the word of God. It is as though he said, "You have watched them in their daily conversation, in their manner of life ; you have witnessed their holy example ; and you have seen the termination of it, through the portal of death, into glory and immortality."

There were some in that early church who had sealed their testimony to the truth by their blood. There were others who upon their dying beds had testified to the Lord's goodness. There were those whom they would doubtless remember as having often spoken to them the word of God, and ruled over them with holy diligence. There were some whom they had watched from the first moment that they lifted up the standard of the cross, until they had come to the close of their walk and conversation in the world ; and they had stood beside them upon the very threshold of eternity. These Hebrew converts had been told not merely to remember the manner of life of the saints and martyrs, but to gather up the lessons to be learnt by their deaths,—"*considering the end of their conversation.*"

My Christian brethren, it was not my privilege to have known your sainted and beloved minister for *many* years. I was not permitted to work with him in the earlier days of his ministry in Islington. There are those amongst us who will take up the interesting and instructive thread of that story. But it was my

privilege—and I shall esteem it all through life, yea, and I shall praise my God for it when I see my Saviour face to face—that I did observe and “consider” the latter months of his wonderful life, and his going out of life into glory. I cannot tell you why—except it was God’s rich mercy to me,—I cannot tell you why your beloved minister summoned me to his dying bed. But we had some happy, holy, blessed conversation together, for we spoke of Him whom he loved. And if there was one thought in his heart more than another in connection with you, it was that you might be assured of *his faith* in that living, loving Saviour who had died, but who now lives to bless his people, and who will come back again in glory to gather together his children which are scattered abroad.

You remember the words of the letter which he sent to you at the close of October. Will you forgive me for quoting them again? He says,—“I believe that God’s righteousness is mine, and Christ’s atonement is my perfect satisfaction for sin; and God’s holy indwelling Spirit is my support and my life now. In this faith I have lived, and *in this faith I die*. I have nothing else, and I want no more. My faith is firm on the rock: I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day.”

And he not only wrote these words to you, but repeated them again and again to those around his bed: “I know whom I have believed; the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my

course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day ; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.' I dare not say I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. Only *One* could dare to say that. For there are many, many sinners not brought to Christ : there are many souls which are not yet saved." Ah, dear friends, upon his dying bed he was thinking of some of you to whom he had preached again and again the glorious gospel of the grace of God, but whom his words had not yet led to Christ. O may it be that by his death, or rather by the words that he has spoken—you may now believe. . . . I call to mind at this moment an interview that I had with him shortly after I first went to visit him in his sick chamber. His mind was then somewhat in the condition of the apostle St. Paul ; he was in a "strait betwixt two,"—he had "a desire to depart and be with Jesus." And yet when he thought of you, his beloved people, he felt it would be more expedient for you were he to tarry. But after a while this feeling passed away, and he longed to go Home. On one occasion he spoke to this effect : "I have learned to think more about the *Person* of my living Saviour than about the *doctrines* that concern Him ; and if I were raised up again from this bed of sickness—while I should preach the doctrines that I have ever preached—I would set before my people the joy of present personal communion with Jesus ; for He hath said, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end

of the world.’” God was preparing him for the joys of heaven ; He was drawing him closer to the heart of His Son ; and your beloved minister felt that in that sick chamber he could open out his wishes concerning you, and his thoughts about his beloved relatives, to One who knew his every desire, and was “touched with a feeling of his infirmities.”

Like Abraham, who was the friend of God, your beloved minister delighted to converse with Jesus Christ, his Redeemer. He thought much of the words of our Divine Master, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but *friends*.” He again and again reiterated to me, “I think, dear brother, that we ministers of the gospel ought to set before our people more fully the joys of communion with Christ as a living and present Friend !” Yet he was one who brought religion to bear upon our daily life so practically that even the humblest mind could learn from his lips. “We are apt to preach *about* Christ,” he would say, “rather than to preach Christ ; about salvation, rather than to set forth *the Saviour*. We fail to deal with Christ as we would deal with an earthly friend, though the Saviour knows the intricacies of our whole life, and can measure out of His boundless grace help for every time of need.”

When we have prayed together, and spoken of our Divine Redeemer, I have seen his face lighted up with heavenly joy. I remember on one occasion he said, “I shall soon be with Him : I am going to see the King in his beauty.” And then it seemed as though the very reflection of glory was upon his face. It was a remark-

able fact that at the last Ladies' class which was held in his house, he took for his subject the story of Enoch—how he “walked with God ; and was not, for God took him.” And on the last time when the communion was partaken of in this church, he, of course, was not present ; but he said, “Before another Communion Service I shall be sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and shall just have entered heaven.” And then he broke forth into that hymn of praise,—“We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty!”—adding, “When you next meet in the church, though I shall be absent in the body, I shall be present in spirit, enjoying the sunshine of my Saviour's smile.” The very last morning sermon he preached was upon the text, “Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; living or dying, we are the Lord's.” He was faint and weary after the exertion of that sermon ; and when he went into the vestry, a person came to speak to him about confirmation, and seeing his great weakness, made some allusion to it ; upon which he said, “As my day so shall my strength be.” But that person left the vestry feeling that her pastor's public ministry on earth was ended.

But I am warned not to proceed further. I want you before we separate to bear in mind that what your beloved minister most desired was that you should have faith in Christ. If any person spoke to him of the thirty-two years of his ministry, of the many works he had

written, and of the good that had resulted, he would silence them by speaking of his Saviour. He would say, “What I want my people to follow is the *faith* which I have in my Redeemer.” And almost the very last words he uttered were these: “I thought nature’s climax would have come before this. Why should I be kept here? I am on the bourn. I am on the way to the heavenly Jerusalem: I shall soon be in heaven. I shall know Jesus: I shall know some of my people there.” He thought of some whom he had laid in the tomb, in the blessed hope of meeting them above. And he spoke of his beloved children who were already on the shining shore. And then he continued, “I shall see *Him*. Yes! I shall see *Him*! I do not know *when*—that I leave to Him. I should be sorry to turn mine eyes or my feet back again!”

“*Whose FAITH follow.*” May I ask you, beloved friends, as I may never meet you again till we meet at Christ’s judgment seat, Have you his *faith*? I do not ask you if you have your pastor’s intellectual power, or his indomitable zeal, or his untiring affection, or any other endowment which God gave him. But are you following his faith? Could he speak to you from the immediate presence of Jesus he would say, “Follow my *faith*. I have not built upon a false foundation: I did not grasp a shadow, but I laid hold on the hand of the crucified Redeemer. He has helped me in the world, and He has borne me through death, right up to the throne of His Father!” Again I ask, Have you his *faith*? Do you trust in the same Lord? Do you look to the same

Friend in trouble? Do you turn to the same Father? Do you feel the consolations of the same Spirit? Do you take the written word as a lamp to your feet, and a light to your path? O may it be so,—and that you may remember him who had the rule over you, who spoke to you the words of life—the word of God,—and that you may consider and dwell upon his holy conversation and manner of life here, and the winding up of that conversation when he entered within the gates of the heavenly city,—and that you may follow *his faith!*

These are times when the devil is trying to shake the faith of God's people. But we have not "followed cunningly devised fables" when we have made known to you "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." These are realities amid the mist and dust of earth. "He loved me, and gave Himself for me;" this is a reality, and your beloved minister grasped it. I want you to follow his faith. And then, with the white-robed multitude, you, too, will sing the anthems of praise—"Salvation to our God who sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!"

That you may follow his faith, and that you may meet him in glory, shall be our earnest prayer!

II.

THE VICTOR CROWNED.

BY THE

REV. DANIEL WILSON, M.A., VICAR OF ISLINGTON.

Preached on Sunday Morning, Dec. 4, 1870.



“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

2 TIM. iv. 6—8.



Y duty to-day is a deeply solemn and affecting one. I have been requested to address a few words of exhortation to you in reference to the removal of one who, for the space of thirty-two years, has, with singular power and efficiency, occupied this pulpit.

The death of a beloved pastor who has gathered around him a large flock, and has in an unusual degree awakened their sympathy and love, as was remarkably evinced in the vast funeral cortège on Wednesday, is no common event. It demands no ordinary measure of God's gracious Spirit, in order to enable us to render the occasion profitable. We meet here as mourners. To the sainted pastor himself, indeed, the change is all bright and

glorious. He is gone into the immediate presence of the Saviour whom he loved and honoured. He has entered into the joy of his Lord. "The watchman of Ephraim is with my God." "He was not, for God took him." But to the survivors, to the bereaved family, to the mourning relatives, to the desolated flock over whom he so long watched, the loss is heavy indeed. You will hear his well-known voice here no more. That fervid eloquence, that tender affection, those solemn warnings, that powerful exposition of God's Word—which rendered him one of the most eminent preachers of his day—will not again be listened to within these walls. Still, though dead, he yet speaks. Let us attempt to gather up some of those lessons which the occasion suggests.

St. Paul, in the passage before us, which you may recollect your late pastor to have quoted and applied in measured terms to himself in his recent letter,* is contemplating his own speedy death, and is exhorting Timothy in urgent language to make full proof of his ministry. I propose to employ the text, first as the animating testimony of the apostle himself, and then as applicable to the faith and experience of your late beloved minister.

I. Let us view it *in more immediate reference to the apostle*. You mark in it his calm anticipation of his approaching end; his thankful review of his long and patient labours; the joy with which he anticipates his

* See Appendix.

crown ; and the loving terms in which he embraces all true believers in the same blessed hope.

His *calm anticipation of death* is remarkable. That death would be a violent one. But he does not even mention it by name. He speaks like one preparing for a journey to some well-known abode. "The time of my departure is at hand." In reference to his martyrdom he calls it an offering, a libation, or, as he expresses it to the Philippians, the being "offered on the sacrifice and service of their faith." The language in the original is still stronger : I am already being offered.* My sufferings have already begun. I am like a victim selected for sacrifice. The libations of wine and oil are already poured out, and I await the final blow.

Then follows the apostle's *review of his past labours*. As a combatant, he had fought the good fight. As a racer, he had finished his course. As a steward, he had kept the faith. Perhaps no man ever passed through a greater conflict than the holy apostle. "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft." Yet it was *the* good fight ; a noble and successful struggle. He was made everywhere to "triumph in Christ." Satan received from him many a deadly blow. "Imaginations" were "cast down, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." As a racer, too, he ran not uncertainly. He had counted all things loss for Christ. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching

* σπένδομαι.

forth to those things which are before," he pressed towards the mark. Nor was he less faithful in maintaining the sacred deposit of God's Word. He had "kept the faith." He would not give place by subjection, no not for an hour, where the truth of the gospel was concerned. He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. Another gospel, which was not another, he would not tolerate for a moment. "Other foundation," he says, "can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."

Having thus reviewed his past labours, the apostle *turns to the future*. His eye is now fixed on the crown of glory. This he expected to receive from the hand of his Divine Master himself, "the Righteous Judge." The earthly judge might unjustly sentence him to the axe of the executioner, but the Righteous Judge, the Lord from heaven, He, who knew the faithfulness and love of His devoted servant, would crown his head with the chaplet of victory, the crown of righteousness, as attesting his fidelity and steadfastness. This crown was already laid up in reserve. It is elsewhere called a "crown of glory that fadeth not away." The chaplet of the earthly racer would soon fade. "They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible." This crown, I need hardly say, was not one of merit or desert, but of mere bounty and grace; but it would serve as a public attestation of the Master's approval of His servant's labours. This crown is reserved for the great day of account, the final advent of the Saviour, when He comes "to be glorified in His saints, and to be

admired in all them that believe." St. Paul describes the period as *that day*. It was not needful to name it more particularly. There is but one great day which fills the believer's soul with hope and joy. He enters indeed at death into the immediate presence of the Saviour; he sleeps in Jesus. "Absent from the body he is present," or at home, "with the Lord." His joy and peace are perfect. But I conceive that it is reserved for the last final account to complete the full glorification of the redeemed; when, as our Burial Service expresses it, we shall have our "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul."

But the apostle does not stop here; he is not so absorbed in his own anticipated joy as to forget his people. He stoops, as it were, from his chariot of glory to take up with him the weakest and feeblest of the true flock; and "not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." In the earthly strife "they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize." Here, all the faithful combatants are crowned, though not, it may be, in the same degree. As in nature "one star differeth from another star in glory," so in grace. The award may vary in measure,—one has gained ten talents, another five, and another two. We are told that "the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." But all who love the Saviour's appearing are crowned. All are victors. All receive their reward. All enter into the joy of their Lord.

II. *I now propose to apply the language of my text to the faith and experience of your late lamented pastor.*

It may be interesting to those who love to trace the first buddings of grace in the heart, to know that in this, as in so many other cases, a mother's early instructions were first blessed to your minister's soul. I pause to remark how great is the encouragement thus furnished to mothers of families. Contemplate for a moment the long and useful career of your beloved pastor, and then remember that you owe all this under God to the efforts of a pious mother. That mother he lost in early life; in fact, both his parents were removed when he had scarcely emerged from boyhood. He was thus left to brave life's billows alone. I understand that before he resolved to enter the ministry, he had evinced considerable mental powers, and great firmness and decision of character. It was in the year 1838 that he left the curacy of the late Mr. Biddulph, of Bristol, to come here. To his faithful and earnest ministry in this place you are yourselves the best witnesses.

If I were to attempt to trace the leading features of his character, I should say that *a deep spirituality of mind was strongly marked*. He walked with God. Worldly matters were comparatively of little interest to him. He was a man of much prayer. There was an intensity of supplication, and an earnest pleading with God at the throne of Grace, which indicated strong faith and great fervency of spirit. He was also, in the highest sense of the term, *an earnest man*. He was deeply anxious for the salvation of the souls of his people. There was at

times in his preaching an intense earnestness, a pleading with sinners which seemed to thrill through his whole being. This earnestness was evinced in the long and careful preparation which he made for the pulpit. He never gave to God that which cost him nothing. His sermons were the result of much thought, much study, much prayer. He would often shut himself up for the greater part of the day when any important subject occupied his mind, in order that his thoughts might not be distracted. So ardent was his desire to win souls for Christ, that he might be said with the apostle to "travail in birth again until Christ was formed in them." His *exhibition of the Gospel was very rich and full.* He embraced the whole compass of Divine truth. He did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. There was no attempt at mere pulpit oratory. No desire to please man, no wish to speak smooth things. There was a stern fidelity of spirit about him, like one "set for the defence of the gospel." The love of Christ constrained him. The value of such a ministry in these changing times cannot be over-rated. Again, *firmness and decision marked his entire course.* The novelties of the day had no attraction for him; nay, he set himself firmly against them. He kept to the "old paths" and the good way. I doubt whether, in any essential point, you could trace any difference of religious views between his first sermon and his last. There was, indeed, a growing ripeness and maturity of thought and power of expression, and a manifest softening down and mellowing of any severity of tone which might have cha-

racterised him in early life ; but he was the same man throughout, so far as the main features of his ministry were concerned. He ever kept his eye fixed on great practical truths. His one desire for his people was that they should be built up in the faith, that the work should be solid, that their conversation should be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. But, while dwelling on fundamental truth, your late pastor had *a great facility for introducing passing events in a way to render them useful to his hearers.* Though not mingling with the world, he was a keen observer of what was going on in it. You must have marked this in the sermons which he preached at the beginning or close of the year, when he took a survey of what had taken place during the twelve-month, and made it a subject of special remark. I must not omit to notice the *peculiar interest which he took in the young, more especially in young men.* He seemed to enter into their difficulties, and to sympathize with them in their trials. The consequence was that young men always constituted a large proportion of his congregation. I add only one other feature of your late pastor's character. His *uniform consistency.* He was the same devout faithful servant of God out of the pulpit that he was in it. This gave a weight to his ministry which nothing else could do. His people knew that he was in earnest, and that he practised what he taught.

Time will not allow me to enlarge on his pastoral work; his schools; his Bible and confirmation classes; his visits to the sick; his various valuable publications,—all

this your own experience will supply. In all these respects, with St. Paul, he "fought a good fight, he kept the faith."

And now, what shall I say in reference to *the closing scene*—the acute suffering of body at the commencement, the prolonged illness, the doubtful issue, as it was long considered. At one period your pastor had a great desire to recover; not so much, I think, from a wish to prolong life, as that he might have an opportunity of telling his people the experience which he had acquired on the bed of sickness. He intimates this in his first letter to you, in which he asks your prayers, that this sickness might not be "unto death, but for the glory of God." He told his family that he longed intensely to be permitted once more to preach. "He knew now," he said, "so many lessons which he had not learned before." On one occasion he said, "There are some members of my congregation," mentioning them by name, "they have listened for years, and I fear are hard still; I never saw a sign of life about them. If they could only come and stand round my bed, and I were strong enough to talk to them, I think that I could say something now that they would never forget, and that would bring them to Jesus. They are overwhelmed with the cares of the world. I want to rouse them and make an impression on them."

As long as he was at all equal to it, he would think for and advise any of his people who were in any trouble or perplexity. The last time he ever wrote with his own hand was in pencil to a member of

the congregation who was in circumstances of difficulty and anxiety, giving advice which has been the means of great relief. He said his first text, if he preached again, would be, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." At the beginning of his illness the prayer was constantly on his lips, "O spare me a little, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more seen." Sometimes grief for those left behind seemed almost to overpower the anticipation of his own happiness.

As his illness increased, and he saw that the prospect of recovery was becoming very faint, there was a growing meetness and desire for the great change. Like the apostle Paul, he could speak with perfect calmness of his approaching end. "The time of my departure," he could say, "is at hand." At one of my earliest visits to him, after his return from Ramsgate, he complained of the weakness of his faith. "I want," he said, "more faith to realise my hope." At one period a cloud was permitted to pass over him. He was visited by a clerical friend, who pointed him to Jesus. The effect of that visit was the entire removal of the temptation, and the restoration of peace. "It is a solemn thing," he said to me one day, "to die. I am hanging between life and death. If my people want to know whether the truths I have taught them are now sustaining me, tell them I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day." He greatly enjoyed united prayer, and would follow me audibly petition by petition. On

one occasion, when I reminded him of the joyful welcome which he would receive, "Well done, good and faithful servant," he stopped me and said, "No, not faithful." I replied, "Yes, faithful you have been, though amid much infirmity. There is no presumption in saying that;" and he acquiesced. As his departure drew near, his thoughts, as you heard in the funeral address, were mainly fixed upon the Saviour. Like the apostle, he was looking for the "crown of righteousness" which the Lord, the righteous Judge, would bestow. He liked to have the Four Gospels read to him, which had been harmonised in the words of Scripture into one continuous narrative by a former member of the congregation. When it was finished, he always went back to the beginning. "I want to hear all about the Lord's life here. I want to know Him more; to know what He did and what He said, that He may be more a personal friend to me, because I am going to see Him, and he must not be a stranger. I do love those four gospels." He specially delighted in the first few verses of the fourteenth of St. John: the "many mansions,"—and, "I will come and receive you to myself." "I shall not," he said, "go into heaven as a stranger, looking about for my mansion, and not knowing where to go, and the angels looking at me, and wondering who I am. But the Lord will come; He will come down from His throne to the very gates of heaven, as a host who has invited a number of friends to his house comes forward to the door to meet and welcome each. So He will come and receive and welcome me." As the end approached, his faith manifestly in-

creased in strength. "My faith," he said to his family, "is strong. It will bear the strain. When they built that bridge over the Holloway Road, I watched them testing it; and at length they pronounced that it was a good bridge, and would bear whatever weight had to be put upon it. So is my faith in Jesus. It is like that bridge. It will bear whatever trial He is pleased to lay upon it." He was fond of hymns. His favourite ones were simple gospel hymns. He used to say, "I don't want poetry. I want what will strengthen my faith; something about the Lord." He was never tired of "Rock of Ages," "Jesus, lover of my soul," "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Jerusalem, my happy home," "Let me be with Thee where Thou art." This last was read to him four times over one Sunday evening; and he shut his eyes and clasped his hands, and followed it in a whisper as a prayer. His deep humility was conspicuous to the last. He asked a friend, on one occasion, to read to him the words of the late Mr. Simeon on his death-bed, in which he spoke of himself as the chief of sinners, as one who would be the greatest monument of God's mercy in heaven. This, he said, just described his own state of mind. As his illness gained strength, his mind, from time to time, wandered; but the verse of a favourite hymn would instantly recall his thoughts. When I last saw him he was too weak to converse, he only asked for a short prayer. One night, when he was thought to be asleep, he was heard in prayer to say, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit; for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."

On Tuesday evening, November 22, at twenty minutes before six, he gently passed to his rest.

And now, brethren, what can I further say ?

My first thought is this : *How deep is the responsibility resting upon those who have sat under such a ministry, and had before them for so many years such a bright and shining light.* Few congregations have been thus highly favoured. "Whose faith," says the apostle, "follow, considering the end of their conversation : Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Earthly pastors die, but the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls lives. Are there any here who have not yet laid these things to heart ? May your minister's dying words and earnest prayers for your conversion be now fulfilled. He would have gathered some of you round his death-bed, in order to impart his dying counsels. Oh ! that his desires for you may be eventually answered. He was unable to collect you round his bed ; may he meet you as his joy and crown of rejoicing around the Throne at the last day.

Finally, see *what a reality there is in true religion.* Mark the full faith, and hope, and joy of your late pastor as he drew near to the eternal world ; and then say whether there be not a substance in true godliness ? Observe what the power of religion can do on a dying bed. See how it can sustain in moments of deepest weakness and depression. How many thousands of God's faithful servants have been thus sustained and comforted as your late pastor was. No genuine believer, however weak in faith, is ever left in the hour of need.

As their day, so their strength has been. The Saviour's presence is specially vouchsafed just when it is most required. The whispers of His love are heard amid the tossing billows: "It is I, be not afraid." It is true you must die, you must pass through the dark valley. The time may be very near. But the rod and staff of the Good Shepherd shall sustain the soul. "BEHOLD," says the Master, "I COME QUICKLY." Happy they who can respond with the apostle, "AMEN: EVEN SO,—COME, LORD JESUS."

III.

THE PREACHER AND THE WORD.

BY THE

REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S.

Preached on Sunday Evening, Dec. 4th, 1870.



“Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?”—ZECH. i. 5, 6.



SMALL and feeble band of exiled Jews had recently returned to their native land. Demoralised by long years of captivity, and dispirited by the opposition which they had to encounter, they seem to have abandoned in despair the work for which they were especially sent. It was impossible, they thought, under the circumstances,—or, at least, it was impossible for them,—to build again the Tabernacle of the Lord's house, and to raise it up from its ruined and dismantled condition. But, although these Jews thus neglected their duty to God, it appears that they were by no means backward in providing for their own comfort and well-being. Houses were built, and these of a somewhat costly and imposing character; lands were cultivated; flocks and herds were gathered together; and every attempt

was made to render their footing secure, and to bring around them once more the materials of a well-established and well-ordered worldly prosperity. Strangely enough, however, their expectations in every particular were doomed to disappointment. In whatever direction they turned, something adverse invariably confronted and thwarted them. The curse of failure seemed to rest upon every enterprise ; the dark shadow of a mysterious retribution to fall across every path in which they were disposed to advance. They sowed much, and reaped little. They ate, and were not satisfied. They drank, and were not filled. If they achieved success, the success somehow slipped, unaccountably, out of their grasp. If they acquired treasure, it was only, as it were, to put it into a bag with holes ; and, ere they could well look about them, the treasure was gone.

It was under such circumstances as these, Christian brethren, that the words of our text were spoken. Prophets were sent to explain to the Jews the cause of their calamitous state. They are suffering, these prophets told them, from the displeasure of God. God is angry with them for having disobeyed His commands and neglected their duty. Are they puzzled and perplexed about the events which have befallen them ? The interpretation is simple enough. It is to be found in their self-sparing, self-seeking, self-indulgent ways ; and in the fact that, whilst they are dwelling at ease in their ceiled houses, the Temple of the Lord—the symbol of Jehovah's presence amongst them, the centre of their civil and ecclesiastical polity—is lying waste.

This explanation, as you know, especially belongs to the prophet Haggai. Two months after comes his friend and companion, Zechariah, among these Jews, entreating them to beware of following the example of their rebellious fathers. It is only too probable that they, like their fathers, will be tempted to disregard the word of the Lord. Yet, let it not be so. Let them remember the calamities that have fallen upon the nation, and avoid the recurrence of them, by avoiding that obstinate resistance which brought them about. And if any should say that these prophetic threatenings belong to a bygone time, and have no force and no efficacy *now*, be it borne in mind that they took effect in the case of those against whom they were originally directed ; and be it borne in mind also, that the word of the Lord is a living thing, having a continuance of existence even when those who have been commissioned to proclaim it have passed away, and their voices are no more heard amongst the people.

“Your fathers, where are they?” They are laid in dishonoured graves in a foreign land. “The prophets, do they live for ever?” No! they die, like other men. Partakers of the common lot of humanity, they run their course, they accomplish their work ; and then the place which knew them upon earth shall know them no more. But no such stain of imperfection and failure attaches to the Word of God. “My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?” Neither is there any interruption of the work which that Word is carrying

on from age to age, from generation to generation. "Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

There are two leading topics suggested by our text. First, that the Word of God *overtakes*—for such is the meaning of the expression—those against whom it is directed ; that, however inefficient and innocuous it may *seem* to be, when disregarded and rejected, it never fails ultimately to accomplish that Divine purpose for which it was sent. And, then, that although the successive generations of the human race rise up, and pass over the stage of life, and disappear into the unseen, this same Word of God has a permanence which is denied to them ; and is as unchanged and as eternal as He is Who sends it. In these two thoughts we may find, I think, material for suitable meditation. Certainly they will harmonize well with the deep solemnity of the occasion on which we are met together within these sacred walls.

First, then, let me invite your attention to the fact here stated by the prophet, that the word of God—like a hunter, slowly, but surely, tracking down his prey—lays hold of, overtakes, at last, the persons to whom it is addressed. We need not hesitate, of course, about applying this statement to the Gospel. That is, emphatically, the "word of God." The story of Jesus Christ is the last, the grandest, the fullest utterance of the Divine mind and will. And whatever efficacy is attributed to detached Divine announcements, such as those with which we are concerned in the passage before us, must

be attributed in a much higher degree to the Gospel of the grace of God, which gathers into itself, as into a focus and a centre, all the announcements that have preceded it.

The statement of the prophet, then, as applied to us, and our present circumstances, amounts to this: that when a preacher, standing up in his pulpit, proclaims in the hearing of a multitude the doctrine of salvation through the Blood of a crucified Christ, his word fastens itself, as it were, upon every individual present, and influences that individual's future and eternal destiny. To many persons, as we well know, a sermon is a trivial matter. "It is only," as they tell us, "a man talking!" It is a thing to be canvassed, and discussed,—to be admired, or criticised,—and then to pass away from the surface of the mind, leaving no real and abiding impression behind it. With others, again, who have a love for the preacher's person, or respect for his character, the case is somewhat different. They hear with pleasure; they pay, perhaps, profound attention; oftentimes they appear much moved. Accustomed, too, to a clear and distinct enunciation of Gospel truth, they would be both shocked and pained by any deviation from the straight line of their pastor's teaching. But with this the matter ends. Their inner being is not reached; their heart is unchanged; their life is uninfluenced; and the preacher is to them "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument: for they hear his words, but they do them not."

Now, in both these instances (and how numerous they

are, even in the best congregations, I need not delay to point out to you), no effect whatever seems to have been produced. The voice of the preacher has come and has passed,—its pleadings have died away into silence,—its urgency is forgotten,—and nothing, apparently, has been done. Ah! but *this* has been done,—that the preacher's word has fastened itself—and so fastened itself that it cannot be shaken off—upon the man who has heard it. It cannot be for nothing that he has been told of his lost and ruined estate by nature. It cannot be for nothing that he has been told of a remedy offered, of a refuge provided,—of a Blood that cleanses from every guilty stain. It cannot be for nothing that Christ—Christ living, Christ dying, Christ risen and living again, Christ ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, Christ returning to take to Himself His kingdom, and to reign,—has been held up to him; and that the offer of all the blessings which pertains to those who are “in Christ”—has been pressed and pressed, and pressed again upon him. No! *It cannot be for nothing*. He may be careless and indifferent, and turn away with a smile of contempt; or he may be irresolute and procrastinating, and turn away with a saddened look, comforting himself, perhaps, with the secret thought that he hopes to believe all this, and to attend to all this, some future day:—but one effect has been produced. That Word and he are linked together for ever. That Word is not a dead thing, but a living thing. It has the vitality of God in it. And now—it begins to hunt the hearer down; and, unless repentance comes, if rejection continues, that Word will “take hold of” him at

last ; and, amidst the terrors of the judgment-seat, it will be the sinner's bitterest self-reproach, it will be his most agonizing reflection, that he despised and trampled under foot—not the preacher's statements,—but, in and through the preacher's statements, the Word of the living God.

The thought, Christian brethren, carries us away from man to God. He of whom we are all thinking to-day would wish it to be so. If he could return and speak to us to-night about his past ministry, he would say something of this kind :—“ My beloved people, I am anxious, most anxious, that you should remember the word which I spoke to you whilst I was yet with you. Then, I was conscious of the imperfection which accompanied my setting forth of Divine truth. I never came up to my own ideal. I am more conscious of that imperfection now. Still, although I see things in the clear light of eternity, I am anxious, most anxious, that you should remember and take heed to the word which I spake to you. And this because it *is the word of God* ; and because the consequences of rejecting it are so unspeakably and tremendously fearful to the soul.”

But there is a brighter side, thank God, to this portion of our subject. Many of you learnt the truth from your late pastor's lips. Many of you, if not brought to God by his ministry, have been built up in the faith by him ; have been led by him, with the most tender and assiduous care, to the green pastures and still waters of Gospel teaching. And you well know how often God spoke to you through him. You came here one day it,

may be, needing some especial consolation; and he, your pastor, knowing nothing of your condition, gave utterance to the very words you required. Or a heavy burden lay upon you. His fingers loosed the bands, and the burden rolled off. Or you were cast into terrible perplexity, you knew not how to turn. Duty and interest, conscience and affection, seemed to be most painfully at variance. And he, up in his pulpit here, as if guided by some mysterious, supernatural instinct, unravelled the complicated threads; poured a flood of light upon the subject; and made perfectly plain to you the path in which you were to go. Or you were troubled about some question of the day. Subtle arguments had been propounded to you, which you knew not how to answer; and, for the moment, the foundations of your faith seemed to have received a rude and perilous shock. He could not have been acquainted with your state of mind. Perhaps you knew little of him personally. Amidst so vast a crowd, you might easily have been unnoticed and unknown. It must have been so with many. And yet, on that memorable day, he handled that very subject. Laying on it a firm and masterly grasp, he grappled with its difficulties; and after exposing the subtle sophistries which had nearly confounded you, he put before you the truth of God in such a way that it seemed as if you would never dare to doubt again. And then you felt, brethren, that it was GOD who had been speaking to you through the lips of the man; and it was a Divine message to your soul. To use the language of

Zechariah, God's word had "taken hold of" you ; taken hold of you, not for your condemnation, but for your consolation, for your guidance, for your encouragement, for your instruction in righteousness.

In the next place, the prophet seems to remind us, by the statement of our text, of the perpetuity of the Word of God. The world in which we live is in a state of constant fluctuation. It must be so. It is well that it should be so. Congregations change. Possibly there are very few persons here—if any—who saw your late pastor enter upon his ministerial work in this church, thirty-two years ago. The pastor himself, too, fails and dies. The torch which he has so long carried, to be a guide to the footsteps of his people, drops from his hand, and has to be seized and held aloft by others. Yes ! preachers, and those to whom they preach, both pass away ; and, though it would argue badly for our Christianity, or even for our right feeling, if we could contemplate with stoical indifference the departure of any who are bound to us by ties of affection ; yet it becomes us not to grieve overmuch over that most wise and merciful appointment of God, which provides for a constant succession of the generations of men to do His work upon the face of the earth. But amidst all this incessant change and all this never-ending fluctuation, there is one thing that changeth not ; and that is the Word of God. The message is the same now that it was at first ; the same in our day of advanced civilization and intellectual progress, that it was when its first faint intimations were given to our fallen progenitors in the

garden of Eden. And in this dying world there is one thing which lives on through all ; and that is the Word of God, which endureth and abideth for ever.

But rather, brethren, let us rise in thought to Him of whom that word testifies. *There is no change in Jesus Christ.* He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Earthly friends fail and die. Pastors, who fed you with wisdom and knowledge, and upon whom you had learned to depend, leave you, going up to their rest and their reward. But JESUS ever liveth to make intercession for us. He alone changeth not ; and He alone abideth always. His righteousness is an everlasting righteousness. His Spirit is an eternal Spirit. He hath wrought out, and brought in, an eternal Redemption for us.

To speak of this Saviour—this Jesus Christ,—to set forth what He is to His people, and what He might be to all—if only they would come to Him—was, simply, the ruling passion of the pastor whom God has seen fit so lately to remove from amongst you. His was no merely professional life. His work was meat and drink,—aye, and more than meat and drink to him,—and he loved it, he was devoted to it, with an intensity and ardour of affection of which only strong, and deep, and silent natures like his are capable. Early in life he had embraced, I believe, another calling—a high and honourable one—which, to talents like his, offered no mean prospect of worldly prosperity and success. But all was abandoned, that he might be free to stand up, as the Lord's ambassador, and proclaim to his fellow-men the

unsearchable riches of Christ. If I may speak of the man himself, I think it quite possible that by many he may have been imperfectly understood. There was a certain amount of sadness, almost of severity, about his character: for he took a very earnest view of human life. To him nothing was light and trifling. Sin was a fearful reality. Judgment was certain. Eternity was possibly near at hand. The Saviour was a constant presence; watching the bad, and blessing the good. The life, then, that he himself was living in the flesh, was a life of faith in the Son of God, Who had loved him and given Himself for him; and he would have been untrue to his nature had he been otherwise than solemn and earnest in the presence of the tremendous realities of the unseen world. But, brethren, I believe that not everybody knew what a depth of exquisite, affectionate tenderness lay beneath the somewhat stern and severe exterior of the man. Ask those of his people who have passed through deep waters of affliction what a comforter he was to them in their time of sorrow. Ask the children of his school—who used, I am told, to troop round him, the tiny little ones holding up their innocent faces to receive his fatherly kiss—what they thought of the grave-looking pastor who came so constantly to look after the lambs of his flock. Their report will serve to convince you, if you need convincing, that unsuspected fountains of tenderness and consideration for others oftentimes lie deep in the heart of these strong, earnest, undemonstrative men. In addition to this, your late pastor—like many other men of real power—entertained

a very lowly estimate of his own abilities. Speaking of the success which, under God, he had achieved, not only in this place, but in the church at large, he was accustomed to say that he owed it, not to any talent he possessed, but to the "indomitable perseverance" with which God had thought fit to endow him. We, of course, do not accept the verdict which he passed upon himself. We recognise in him intellectual gifts of a very high order; sound judgment, logical arrangement, powerful and masterly grasp of his subject, apt expression, eloquent utterance of all kinds;—but not less pleasant is it for us to know that true humility crowned and adorned his other high qualifications.

I said just now that your pastor was *intensely* devoted to his work, and felt the responsibility of it. Let me mention a circumstance recently come to my knowledge, which, though slight and trifling in itself, will serve to corroborate the statement I have made. Years ago he was offered by a lady, a member of his congregation, a seat to view the funeral procession of the Duke of Wellington. It was a sight, he said, which of all others he should like to see; but he was afraid lest the excitement should unfit him to meet his people on the following Sunday. When it was urged that there would be still two days for preparation, as the funeral would be on Thursday, he said he should have a bad headache, and not be able to write a sermon. And when it was urged upon him, with friendly pertinacity, that he might preach an old sermon for once,—“Ah!” said he, “you are like Eve trying to tempt me,”—and then added very solemnly,

“I have before my eyes the image of those two thousand people waiting for me on Sunday ; *and I must not go.*” “A trifling circumstance,” you may say. Yes! a trifling circumstance; but it shows the man. It shows his love for his people. It shows his sense of responsibility. It shows his deep devotion to his Master’s work. And I think this little circumstance enables me, at least, to understand better what I have been told about certain incidents in his last illness. On one occasion he was overheard murmuring, “He will say to me, Well done, faithful servant.” “*Good* and faithful servant,” was suggested by the affectionate watchers standing round his bed. “No, no!” he said, “not *good*. But faithful, yes! I think I have been faithful. I have taught my people to know Him. I have been very unworthy ; very, very imperfect; but I have not been neglectful. No ; I have not neglected my work, or done it carelessly. I did as much as I knew how to do.” And in this, as well as in his intellectual power and in his force of character, lay the secret of the great influence which he was enabled to exercise over you, and of the deep, affectionate, devoted attachment with which, as we all well know, he was regarded by you. It was impossible for him to make acquaintance with every one of his congregation. Look round this vast concourse ; and, remembering that your pastor had but the strength, the energy, the health, and the time, of one man,—ask if personal acquaintance with every one of his flock could have been a practicable thing. He might be, and he was, the visitor and consoler in time of sickness and sorrow ; but he could

not be the guest at your tables, and the frequenter of your drawing-rooms. But this you knew, that his whole soul was given to you ; that his time was yours, his thoughts were yours ; that the long hours of brain labour which he spent in the study were yours ; that his prayers were yours ; and you loved the man, and deservedly loved him, because his whole life was devoted and consecrated to you — in the gospel of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Where shall we find his like ? Not easily anywhere, when we consider the intense concentration of Christian affection with which this pastor regarded the people whom the Lord had committed to his spiritual care.

But I pass away from the man to the minister. It will not be necessary for me, I think, to speak of the purity of the doctrine which he taught. That the truth which you heard from this pulpit was God's truth—the utterance of the mind of the Spirit ; that Christ, and Christ alone, was exalted here, it would be both superfluous and presumptuous, if I were to attempt to remind you. But this, perhaps, I may be permitted to say,—for it is the result of my own personal observation,—that *thoroughness* was one of the leading characteristics of your pastor's work. I have not myself had the opportunity of hearing him preach very often ; but I think I could venture to say that none of you, his habitual hearers, ever heard him handle a subject without feeling that it was one which he had taken the trouble to master, and had succeeded in mastering. He was never tempted to hasty production. He was too conscientious for such a

thing. He gave his time, his thought, his prayers, his mind to the theme which he had decided to discuss; and you felt when the task was accomplished, that you had before you the results of an honest, thorough, exhaustive, intellectual, and spiritual process. Christian brethren, this is much to say for a preacher. It is much to say that after thirty-two years' labour in the same congregation, your pastor's ministry was as fresh, and varied, and vigorous as ever,—capable of interesting and instructing both the hearers of his own age, and not less the hearers who were almost half a century younger than himself. What a testimony this is to the inexhaustibleness of Scripture! And what a testimony to the honour which God puts upon "indomitable perseverance," and upon honest, thorough, prayerful, Christian work!

Higher results, as we know, were largely vouchsafed to him. Working his way, in the first instance, through many difficulties and discouragements, waiting long for the advent of the blessing, the Lord rewarded him at last for his faith, and patience, and hope. Many were turned to the Lord by his preaching. Many were edified in the faith. The influence of a spiritual power was felt in the district,—in the parish,—in the metropolis,—and in a wider area still. And such a congregation was gathered together as has scarcely its parallel, if it has its parallel, within the pale of the Church of England, when we consider that it is the work of a single individual, and of a single generation.

I would hold your pastor forth as a bright example to the young ministers of the Church of England, and to

those who are preparing for her ministry. In his untiring labours; in his conscientious work; in his diligent painstaking; in his sober, solid judgment; in the width of his sympathy; in the depth of his devotion to the service in which he had engaged; in the earnestness of his student-like habits, which led him to lament in his last illness, when weary and enfeebled, that he had "only been able to read ten Psalms in the Hebrew;" in all this, as well as in the higher spiritual qualities which characterised him, I trust that he, though dead, will yet be found to speak to his younger brethren in the ministry words—words of power—that shall never be forgotten.

Yet let us not incur the risk of panegyriizing the man. What would he say of me if he thought I was occupying his pulpit to praise his virtues, and not to exalt Christ? How he would shudder at such a misapplication of opportunities, at such a degradation of the office of the ambassador of God! No, brethren, I would not willingly stand in his place to go so completely counter to the work of his whole life. I do not magnify the man; I magnify God's mercy; I magnify God's electing love; I magnify God's Spirit, who made him what he was. And I call upon you, as I trust I call upon myself, to "glorify God in him."

On Saturday, November 5, just a month ago, being reminded that the next day would be the Communion Sunday, he spoke of the privileges we enjoyed of the presence of Christ, and went on to say—"When Sacrament Sunday comes again, what a communion it will be for me. As for this body it will be laid in that tomb

with that blessed little lad" (as he always called a boy of his who died in childhood), "but I shall just have entered heaven. 'With angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name.' On earth this soon dies away into silence; and you go out of church talking of the weather, and all kinds of trivial subjects. But there it shall be 'for ever.'" Later in the evening he returned to the same train of thought, when some friends came in. "We have been talking," he said, "about our Communion Service. Another communion without me! Think of me to-morrow as a dying man, rejoicing in my Saviour. But think of me, the next Communion Sunday, as a saint in glory, in my Saviour's presence. You will look up from the corner of your pew, and see another face in my pulpit. But think of me as with you still in spirit."

These words of his have been verified. To-day, your Communion Sunday, other faces have been seen in his pulpit; other voices have been heard in it; and he has passed away to be a saint in glory. But may we not believe that his thoughts are with you still, you his people—his own people,—his people whom he loved with so profound and fond an affection whilst he was on earth? And may we not imagine his thoughts, if they were uttered, to form themselves into some such words as these:—
"My beloved people, you who are yet unconverted, who are yet resisting the grace of Christ, turn to the Lord, I beseech you, and no longer count yourselves unworthy of eternal life. You loved me on

earth, and listened to me. Let it not be that in the last day I shall have to stand up against you, and appear for your condemnation." Whilst to the followers of Christ amongst you he would say:—"Carry on my work here, my work which God in his mercy enabled me to begin, and to conduct so long. And oh! stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved and longed for. 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?'"



APPENDIX.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

THE REV. W. B. MACKENZIE, M.A.,

DURING HIS ILLNESS,

TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JAMES'S, HOLLOWAY.

19, CANONBURY PARK NORTH.

23rd May, 1870.

MY BELOVED PEOPLE,

Beloved for many years, but now immensely more endeared to my heart than ever, I want to send some message, though but feeble, to show how gratefully and with what tender sympathy I reciprocate your great love to me.

This Prayer-meeting seems to me everything we wanted. God was waiting, as it were, for it. I have myself longed for my people to meet for prayer. It seems to bring us nearer to Him as children. It is the disciples saying to Jesus: "Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick." May He give the answer: "This sickness is not unto death; but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby."

I have learnt much in these weeks of sickness. Much, I trust, for my own soul's abiding good; and much that I hope may make me one day to minister more as Christ ministered. I have been in the inner class-room; and learnt, I hope, something more of the mind of Jesus.

I am with you in spirit. It is a great and privileged gathering; and while you pray the Father for me, may the Father bless you with all spiritual blessings.

Farewell, my beloved flock, farewell,—until, as I trust, we shall join again in worship in that dear adjoining Church.

Your affectionate Pastor,

W. B. MACKENZIE.

19, CANONBURY PARK NORTH.

31st October, 1870.

MY BELOVED PEOPLE,

They tell me that you want to hear some testimony to the sufficiency of my faith in Christ. I have preached to you for thirty-two years the complete Atonement of Christ, His perfect righteousness, and salvation through His Blood. These truths are now my hope, my comfort, my stay. I believe that God's righteousness is mine, and that Christ's atonement is my perfect satisfaction for sin; and God's Holy indwelling Spirit is my support and my Life now. In this faith I have lived,—and in this faith I die. I have nothing else, and I want no more. My faith is firm as a rock.

“I *know* whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day.” “The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course;”—I dare not say, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.” Only One could dare say that. There are so many sinners not brought to Christ,—so many souls not saved; but “I have finished my course,—I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is,” I think,—I do think,—“laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

I hope you will always have the same truths preached to you which I find so all-sufficient. I have no more to say, I would if I were stronger,—but I am too weak.

Farewell, my beloved flock, until, as I trust, we shall meet

“Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end.”

Your loving Friend and Pastor,

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. These Letters were read at Prayer Meetings, held on behalf of their Pastor by the Congregation of St. James's Holloway, on the evening of May 23rd and October 31st, 1870.



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