

John Frederick Stark's Daily Hand-Book for Days of Rejoicing and of Sorrow

by Johann Friedrich Starck

Starck's household manual, first printed in German at Frankfurt in 1727 and here in its American English edition of 1879. It is arranged not by the calendar but by the condition of the reader - prayers and meditations for days of rejoicing and of sorrow, for the sick and the dying, for the bereaved, for those coming to the Lord's Table. For two centuries it stood beside the Bible in Lutheran households.

78 Chapters

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01. Daily Hand-Book

FOR

DAYS OF REJOICING AND OF SORROW.

CONTAINING

Exhortations, Prayers and Hymns, for use,

1. IN HEALTH.

2. IN SICKNESS.

3. IN TROUBLE.

4. IN THE DYING HOUR.

WITH VARIOUS FESTIVAL EXERCISES AND MANY BEAUTIFUL

PENANCES, SHRIFTS, COLLECTS,

PRAYERS FOR GOOD WEATHER, MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

AND SERVICE FOR EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK, AS ALSO

PRAYERS IN TIME OF WAR, OF DEATH, OF PESTI-

LENCE, AND OF PEACE, BEING OF GREAT

USE ON ALL OCCASIONS, AND

Embellished with Prints.

With an Appendix of Morning and Evening Prayers, Exhortations, and

Hymns for times of Pregnancy and Labor.

Translated from the Original German Edition.

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PREFACE.

DEAR CHRISTIAN READER:—

THE present Hand-book of the learned, pious, and lowly-minded pastor and consistorial counsellor, John Frederick Stark, who was gathered to the bosom of his Lord on the 17th of July, 1756, at Frankfort on the Main, has, ere this, quickened and comforted many thousands of souls, and made of their dying hour an hour of joy. It therefore requires no further recommendation. Having been first published in 1728, it has now been regarded by rich and poor, for more than a hundred years, as an indispensable part of the family library, and read with eagerness and profit wherever the German language is spoken. This eagerness for such nourishment of the soul, has naturally led to numerous editions, published at various times and places. The edition from which this translation was made, is particularly remarkable for a careful revision made by a brother in the faith of J. F. Stark, in the course of which, besides the correcting of numerous errors of the press which had crept into former editions, obsolete words and phrases 1*

PREFACE.

were struck out, and some repetitions expunged. It was also augmented by the addition of some prayers referring to the weather, conceived entirely in the spirit of Stark, the want of which had been sensibly experienced. You have here, therefore, dear Christian reader, a correct English transcript of the same old Stark which has comforted the sorrows of your grandfathers and great-grandfathers, making, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a stark, strong man, of many a tottering, feeble one. May this volume, so visibly blest of God, become your hand-book also, and bring comfort to your drooping spirits, in hours of sorrow!

The publisher flatters himself that the fair, legible type adopted, by adapting the book even to those of feeble vision, as well as the low price at which it is offered, will show that he has spared neither pains nor labor to disseminate the work among all classes of the people, for the welfare of souls. This, Christian reader, is what I desired to tell you before you read the book itself. Let me only add, that I hope for the blessing of God on your reading and your prayers! Amen.

Soul.

Jesus.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Ps. xxiii 2.

"Knowest thou not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"—Ro-mans ii. 4.

![[img-0.jpeg]](img-0.jpeg)

If thou hast health and strength, and peace within thy heart,

Praise God, and of thy bliss let others have a part.

PART I.

EXHORTATIONS, PRAYERS AND HYMNS

02. The Eve of the Sabbath

The Believer's preparation for Worship.

EXHORTATION.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple." Ps. xxvii. 4.

Immediately after the fall, God taught our first parents the worship of sacrifice, and they transmitted the injunction to their children, Cain and Abel, for the sacrifices made by the latter two, are expressly mentioned in Gen. iv. 3, 4. These offerings were not made in silence, but with a confession of sins, a prayer for God's forgiveness, and a declaration of faith in the coming Messiah, whose blood was shed, like that of the sacrifice, for the redemption of man. At such times they also praised the goodness of the Lord, and preached his name. For this worship was set apart the seventh day, which the Lord himself had hallowed as a day of rest, when, after having created the world in six days, he rested THE BELIEVER'S on the seventh. This was the kind of worship observed ever after by all the patriarchs, until God caused the Tabernacle in the wilderness to be established, over which Solomon subsequently built the Temple. Under the New Testament, Christians also consecrate one day out of seven, Sunday, to God, that being the day on which Christ rose from the dead, and the Holy Spirit was poured out. On the approach of this day, the true believer shall 1. Lay down his work early on Saturday evening, and disentangle his mind from worldly cares and troubles.

2. Prepare himself for the coming Sunday with prayer, and praise God for the many mercies vouchsafed to him throughout the week.

3. Read the Gospel or the Epistle appointed to be read and expounded on the following day; reflect upon it, and thus prepare himself to a devout attention of the word of God. 4. Retire to rest betimes, with such good thoughts, so that he may be found punctually and with invigorated frame and active mind in the house of the Lord. Gracious and merciful God! I come before thee this day with praise and thanksgiving, that thou hast so kindly preserved me during

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP.

the past six days, and so freely blessed the work of my hands. Thou hast preserved me in my going and my coming, and hast done great mercies to my body and my soul; wherefore I thank and praise thee in the fulness of my heart. Hence, ye cares! I am building a temple unto God in my heart! It shall be a house of prayer, wherein I will serve my God alone. I "forget the things which are behind," I lay down my labors and my handicraft, and direct my thoughts to heaven alone, to God, that I may rejoice in him. O, the unspeakable love of the great God, who has appointed unto men a day of rest from all their toils! This rest is a token vouchsafed unto us in remembrance of the rest of Paradise, where our constant occupation would have been to serve God, without any grievous labor. This rest is an emblem of the rest in Heaven which is to come; for there is yet a perfect rest offered and promised unto the children of God, which will commence in the life that is to come; when they shall be free from all toil, all suffering and all sorrow, and free from sin. O gracious God! Let me spend the approaching Sunday in thy fear and favor. Preserve me

from evil company, lest Satan, with his instruments, deter me from attendance upon the worship of thee, and if he send them, help THE BELIEVER'S me to refuse to follow them. Guard me, that the holy day which thou hast set apart for my edification in the teachings of the Gospel, for thy praise and service, may not be spent in idleness, sloth, luxury, amusement and sin, to the greatest damage of my soul; but give me thy Holy Spirit, that I may devote the whole day, from morning unto night, to thy service. Keep my heart in unceasing devotion, so that no worldly cares may steal their way into it; and if any obtrude themselves, that I may banish them by thy power; or, if Satan should send me a bad neighbor, who should offer to bring worldly gossip into thy house, give me strength to turn a deaf ear to what he says, and to arouse and encourage him to thy service by my attention and silence. When thy Word is preached, open thou my heart, that I may apprehend it; gather it into my heart, and preserve it as a precious treasure. Help me that upon this Sunday I may grow in the faith, and increase in the knowledge of the truth, that what is spoken and heard, may alter, sanctify, convert and make of me a new man, so that as my years increase, my inner man may likewise grow in faith and piety, and become as a new creature, yea, a living member of the body of my Lord. Let me devoutly end the worship, carefully keep what I have learned, and close the day with PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP.

prayer and praises. Oh! let me ever remember the words I have heard, that my walk and conversation, my life and my actions, may accord with it, and prove me not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Word. Thus let me celebrate Sunday after Sunday and Sabbath after Sabbath, until thou shalt admit me, through Jesus, my only Saviour and Preserver, to the unceasing joys of Heaven, the eternal Sabbath.

I will to God's own house with God's own people go,

Before his altar stand, dressed in a robe of snow.

My heart beneath his will, shall nestle as a dove;

My hands shall nought essay, but works of need and love.

Enter into my heart this day, thou King of kings!

Thy blessing and thy peace, spread over me thy wings.

Let thy all-saving grace upon my soul alight,

That so the Sabbath may find favor in thy sight.

Amen

1. How lovely is thy word! It fills my heart with joy,

My soul draws from it still comfort without alloy.

It is the dearest prize in all the world I have,

It shall enrich me still, when I am in my grave.

2. Thy word it is the light that shines upon my way,

And warns me out of hand whence'er my foot would stray.

PREPARATION FOR THE SABBATH.

Unto this word I cling unto the bitter end,

I know 'twill guide me safe where all my wishes tend.

3. It is my honey-comb, with which I do regale me,

Whene'er the bitter gall of trouble doth assail me;

How sweet unto the soul, all loaded down with care,

Is the consoling tale thy Word doth still declare?

4. Thy Word it is my hoard, more worth than earthly treasure,

In life and death from this alone I draw my pleasure;

This prize no thief shall steal, no cunning foe despoil,

It lies too firmly locked within my spirit's coil.

5. Let folly love to search for silver and for gold,

The souls that worship thee, thy Word more precious hold;

If both thy Word and gold, be set before their eyes,

They stretch their hands to reach thy Word, the gold despise.

6. Some go to seek advice, who stand in fear to err,

Thy Word my counsel is, to which I still recur;

I ask what shall I do, for better or for worse?

And straight thy Word, the best advisement doth rehearse.

7. By this sweet word of life, I'll shape my travel here,

It shall my load-star be, by which alone I'll steer

EXHORTATION FOR PRAYER.

Fearless and prompt, whate'er it bids me shall be done,

And all it doth forbid with jealous care I'll shun.

8. Oh from my thirsty lips take not thy Word away

Until my dying hour let it my woes allay;

And when these earthly lips no more of food shall take,

Like living water still thy Word my soul shall slake.

9. Thus am I well bethought both while on earth I stay,

And when my spirit leaves its tenement of clay!

And what thy covenant doth promise here below,

Shall be most richly mine when unto heaven I go.

Exhortation for Prayer on Sabbath Morning.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God; for unto Thee I will pray."—Psalm v. 2-4.

All our life is nothing but prayer and thanksgiving, that is to say, we should cry to God every day in our prayers for his blessing, assistance, comfort and grace, and when these are obtained, we should give thanks unto Him with all our hearts. Therefore, O believer! when thou dost awake in the morning from thy slum

bers, let it be thy first care to raise thine eyes to heaven, think not immediately of thy business and thy toils, plunge not at once into the search of gain, but fall upon thy knees, thank God, and commend thyself to his gracious protection. Do not think it a loss of time to devote half an hour in the morning to prayer. Oh no! the time consumed in prayer will return with usury a thousand fold in thy labors, and what thou readest will lie in thy mouth all the day like honeycomb. When thou awakest, therefore, and arisest in the morning, hale and strong, reflect: 1. How many a devout Christian, more faithful, perhaps, than thyself, has spent the past night in fear and sorrow, in sickness, in suffering, in terror and great anxiety, of which thou hast experienced nothing. 2. Consider that others in the world have fallen into misfortune, loss, danger and trouble, which thou hast been spared, and thank God therefor. 3. Pray to God at daybreak to keep thee throughout the day in his grace, that thou mayest not sin against him nor against Thy neighbor. 4. Pray God to guide thee throughout the day, to preserve thee, and to bless thee in thy business and occupation

PRAYER ON SABBATH MORNING.

5. Yea, surrender thyself unto God, so that throughout the day thou mayest stand in his love, speak of him, think of him, and not offend him wittingly or willingly, and then doubt not that the Lord will be graciously pleased to hear thy sighs and prayers, and give and grant unto thee throughout the day the things that shall be profitable to thy body and thy soul. PRAYER ON SABBATH MORNING.

Lord, early wilt thou give ear unto my voice; early will I stand before thee. Almighty and most merciful God! Thou art worthy to receive praise, honor and glory. Who would not fear thee, thou King of nations, who would not honor thee, most loving Father? At the dawn of morning I appear before thee with humble thanks that thou hast flung thy mantle over me and mine this night, and hast renewed again thy goodness and thy truth. Fare with me and protect me this day also in all my ways. Let this day be a day of edification and blessing to my soul. In thy loving kindness thou hast disentangled this day from bodily labor, that thou mightest have thy work in me. O, then, instruct, enlighten and sanctify my soul, and help me to lay up treasures which may give joy unto my spirit in danger and in death, in sorrow and in 2*

PRAYER ON SABBATH MORNING.

tribulation, which neither moth nor rust shall corrupt, nor thieves dig up and steal. My God! this day it shall be my delight to hear thy word, to refresh myself in the thought of thee, to sing songs of praise to thy honor and glory, to pray fervently and to yield up my heart to thee. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul rejoiceth in the living God. But let me not be a hearer only, deceiving myself, but a doer of the Word. Open thou my heart, like that of Lydia, that with joy I may receive the seed of thy word, and then do thou seal it up that Satan may not rob me of it again. May I this day lay a firm foundation in faith, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, in love, in self-denial, in indifference, deadness to the world and in every Christian grace; so that during the whole of the coming week I may meditate upon it, act up to it, and bear good fruit. Preserve me from temptation; if Satan should send his emissaries, so that I may not give up to the world the hours sacred to thee, or sacrifice to its sinful intercourse the time I should devote to thy honor, and thus bring a curse upon my soul, which would weigh me down throughout the week. O let my public and private worship—my prayers, reading, hearing and singing be pleasing unto thee. Be thyself my teacher, Lord Jesus, that my inner man may thrive until I SABBATH MORNING HYMN.

shall be united with thee inseparably in the realms above.

Holy Ghost, thou heavenly teacher,

Mighty comforter and preacher;

Let thy tabernacle be

In my heart eternally. Amen.

MORNING HYMN.

1. Dark night has left the heaven,

Then let my heart be given

To prayer and to singing,

To God my service bringing.

2. As loving mothers oft

Their children cradle soft,

And come, times without number,

To see how sound they slumber.

3. E'en so his kind affection,

Has been my sure protection,

Wrapped up as in a manger,

I lay secure from danger.

4. His goodness passes showing,

My heart is overflowing
With thankfulness of feeling,
Thy love and truth revealing.
5. Give praise unto the Highest,
Who to our hearts comes nighest,
Who carefully arranges
Our life through all its changes.

SABBATH MORNING HYMN.

6. Until the day forsake us,
Let us to him betake us,
Keep faith and comfort by us,
And let no sin come nigh us.
7. Soon as my limbs are stirring,
Oh God! unrest and erring,
And doubt and dread and sorrow
Rise with the earliest morrow.
8. Make all lie lightly on me,
Turn grief and trouble from me,
And let the sun of gladness
Shine on my tears and sadness.
9. My walk and conversation
Preserve from all temptation,
Grant that where'er I wander,
My thoughts on thee may ponder.
10. My heart be thy dominion!
Deck it to thy opinion,
With the most holy savor

Of thy enduring favor.

11. Thine ear is ever willing

To prayer and to fulfilling;

Grant what my heart now prays thee,

And it shall ever praise thee. Amen

EXHORTATION FOR THE SABBATH.

03. The Believer spends the Sabbath in Devotion

EXHORTATION.

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2. Amid the many blessings which God has bestowed upon man, is this, that he has set apart one day of the week as a day of rest from all his labors, burdens and cares. Yea, he has especially blessed it, of which blessing those become partakers who keep it holy. To realize this blessing, the true believer himself is on his guard, 1. Not to misspend it in sloth and idleness; for in this manner horses and oxen and other beasts of burden keep the Sabbath. 2. Not to spend the Sunday in gluttony, drunkenness or luxury; for what is sinful on any day is doubly so on Sunday. 3. Not to desecrate the day by labor, by worldly business, by taking rides, collecting debts, casting up accounts, engaging workmen or the like; for such employments distract the mind. Those who do such things are not true believers. They are mere lip Christians, to whom, according to their own confession, no day is so long and tedious as the Sunday. The true Christian

EXHORTATION FOR THE SABBATH.

knows better how to improve this holy day to the honor and glory of God, and the good of his soul.

4. He improves it to the praise of God with praying, praising, singing, contemplation of the goodness and mercies of God, which he has experienced through the last week and during his lifetime. 5. To the good of his soul, in dedicating this day to the hearing of God's word, so that he may grow in the knowledge of God and in his Christian faith. 6. But all this he shall do, not for one hour merely, but for the whole day; for the third commandment speaks of the whole day. Oh surely, the devout observance of the Sabbath is of great importance, it is fraught with many blessings. Who knows why many men are weighed down as with a curse and the lack of blessings? The old saying runs, Who hears God's holy word alway,

Shall never know what 'tis to say,

I have no bread to eat to-day.

7. Having heard the word of God, keep it diligently in a good heart, live up to it, collecting at the same time a store of consolations and pithy maxims, which will be of service in times of offering and of death.

PRAYER FOR THE SABBATH.

This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be of good cheer therein. This is the Lord's day, and the day of rest vouchsafed unto me by God; therefore I will spend it in the worship of God, with thanks and prayer. I thank thee, O God! for the manifold gifts thou hast lavished upon me this day. On a Sunday, Jesus, my Saviour, arose from the grave, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Apostles; wherefore it is proper for me on this day to recall the thought of my salvation, which took place through Jesus Christ and of the infusion of the Holy Spirit, which was poured out over me abundantly in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. I thank thee for thy pure and holy word, which thou causest to be preached on this day for the instruction and edification of my soul. I thank thee for all the corporal and spiritual benefits which I have received at thy fatherly hand throughout my lifetime, that thou hast guided, led and preserved me from my youth up, and hast done me great good in body and soul. Oh who can name all thy mercies,

which are innumerable! But not only shall this day be my day of thanks, but also my day of prayer. I implore thee, my God and father, let me pass this day in the fear of thee. Preserve me from PRAYER FOR THE SABBATH.

seductions, idle thoughts and evil company. Oh that not an hour might pass away without my having spread thy praise. Seal in my heart the word I hear, that I may think of it assiduously, regulate my walk and conversation by it, and as I have become a week older than I was, grant that I may increase in thy knowledge, love and piety, and grow in my inward man. I pray thee give me thy Holy Ghost, who, during the coming week and all my future life, may keep me mindful of it, govern, lead and guide me. Give thy blessing to my labors and my business, and let me spend my remaining days in thy favor, until at last I shall attain to where, with thanks and praises, I shall offer an eternal Sabbath to thee in heaven. This is God's day of rest and peace,

Let all your toil and turmoil cease;

Let trouble not obstruct your ways,

But stand before your Monarch's face. Hallelujah!

SABBATH HYMN.

1. The Sabbath is the Lord's own day,

By God to us awarded,

That by each troubled heart it may

With pleasure be regarded.

O then let it be duly spent,

That every spirit, heavenward bent,

By nought may be retarded.

HYMN FOR THE SABBATH.

2. For worship and for rest and prayer

God hath this day intended,

And all the load of toil and care,

Most graciously suspended;

Here rest the mistress and the maid,

The man and master's work be staid,

And God alone be thought of.

3. Who grudges God his chosen time,

Shall forfeit all his mercies,
And labor done at such a time,
Shall profit nought but curses;
Who seeks for pleasure, gain or pride,
God's grace shall be to him denied,
And nought he does shall prosper.

4. But that the soul may taste its rest,
And hope of heavenly gladness,
It should be still to God addressed,
With prayer and holy sadness.

To God's own house we should repair,
And hear the doctrines spoken there,
And serve him with all fervor.

5. When'er thy looks abroad are sent,
Adore his mighty power;
How he has set the firmament,
As his most gorgeous bower;
The welkin curtains it about,
Most richly 'tis with gifts decked out,
For man's delight and profit.

6. Think, on this very day the Lord
Robb'd death of all his fetters;

HYMN FOR THE SABBATH.

That the fulfilment of his word,
Might stand in graven letters.

Whoe'er fails not to think of this,
Shall surely know the purest bliss,

And in God' sight be pleasing.

7. On Sunday was assuredly
The coming of the spirit;
Oh wealth beyond all price that we
By grace may well inherit;
The power by his breath infused,
Our gracious Lord hath not refused
To grant us for salvation.

8 That thou in God wert christened too,
This day shall well remind thee,
That thou the covenant renew
Which to the Lord doth bind thee:
And all the week remember yet,
Yea, while thou livest do not forget,
That thou hast been so favored.

9. And then be mindful evermore,
Of God's surpassing kindness;
How he behind thee and before
Has watched thee in thy blindness;
How well he keeps thee and defends,
And how his holy word he sends,
To point thy way to heaven.

10. Thou in thy faith and charity,
Shalt on this day improve thee,
That from thy truth and loyalty
Nor fear nor death shall move thee;

HYMN FOR THE SABBATH.

Thou shalt in the Lord's temple stand,
When others follow sin's command,
And read his holy Scriptures.

11. The word give in thy heart a place,
Let it bear fruit and flourish;
So shalt thou gather in these days,
A store that will thee nourish,
When care and sorrow, fear and dread,
Shall gather round thy dying bed,
And death no more will tarry.

12. God will most graciously look down,
On all thou shalt endeavor,
And never shalt thou meet his frown,
But always find his favor;
Till thou at last shalt enter in,
A child of God, relieved from sin,
To the eternal Sabbath.

The Believer meditates on the three-fold Sabbath.

EXHORTATION.

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Heb. iv: 1.

If the true believer would spend a Sunday pleasing unto God, he must remember that there is a three-fold Sabbath. 1. A weekly Sabbath, if he spends Sunday in contemplating the mercies of God.

2. A daily or spiritual Sabbath does not consist in an entire cessation from labor, but in a daily laying aside of our sins. As he foregoes his handiwork on Sunday, so he daily foregoes wantonness and malice. He guards against speaking evil of God or his neighbor, against doing evil alone or in company with others, against being seduced by others, and strives to keep his soul undefiled of the world. He is at pains to think of God often while at his work, to pray to him for the assistance of his holy spirit. 3. Whoever has kept the weekly Sabbath devoutly, and the daily one zealously, may be assured of the eternal Sabbath in the life to come, when the faithful and elect children of God will repose from all bodily labor, from all trials and sorrows, and from all sin, and will see God face to face, praise him, and serve him unceasingly. A holy and

glorious Sabbath, which will never be disturbed! Holy and merciful God! inasmuch as I this day observe the weekly Sabbath, which, according to thine own ordinance is a day of rest from labor, so that I may be edified by thy word and rejoice in thee. Oh grant me thy Holy Spirit that I may spend it in hearing, reading, and meditating thy word, and may avoid all sinful allurements, wantonness, evil company and sin. This weekly Sabbath also reminds me of that daily spiritual Sabbath, on which I am to renounce all sin, and sanctify unto thee my body and my soul, my life and my death. Now my God, this by thy grace shall be my daily task, hereafter to do thy will, not mine, to banish evil desires and thoughts by thy power, that thou alone mayest dwell in me, and enlighten and sanctify me more and more. Grant that this daily and spiritual Sabbath of my heart may never be destroyed, and take me at last to thy eternal Sabbath, where we shall in eternal rest and in heavenly, blissful joy, forever praise thee in the temple of thy glory. There shall I utter the Holy, Holy, Holy, with all the angels and cherubim. Oh my God! let me in the end attain to this felicity! Let me join the gladsome duty,

Where so many a happy band,

Crowned with rays of heavenly beauty,

Round Jehovah's footstool stand.

Where the brightest seraphs glory,

As they tell the wondrous story,

Holy, holy, three in one,

God the Father, Ghost and Son. Amen.

1. It is the Sabbath dawn, the day when true believers,

Are found with God alone, and of his grace receivers,

The Lord's own holy day, which he himself has blessed,

That all who love him well should there find peace and rest.

2. They offer up their hearts at morn upon his altar,

And all the day devote to prayer and to the psalter;

Their hearts are turned away from earth to God alone,

They bask them in the light that streams around his throne.

3. And when the earthly day of rest is past and over,

Spiritually then the Sabbath they recover;

Where they are free from sin and shame, from fear and spite,

And always do the things well pleasing in God's sight.

4. This Sabbath has no end, it lasts through life for ever,

The spirit from its rest no trouble more can sever;
There's music in the heart as when a harper plays,
And thus the Sabbath lasts throughout our earthly days.

5. And when these days are done, eternally returning,
The heavenly Sabbath comes, for which we all are yearning;
Where, shining like the sun, and all in glory dressed,
In endless joy and peace the chosen shall be blessed.

6 Whoever then would taste those coming Sabbath pleasures,
Must spend the Sabbath day in hoarding heavenly treasures;
Be still devout and pure, and in thy faith stand fast,
And this sweet Sabbath rest shall be thy part at last

04. EVENING PRAYER ON THE SABBATH

Lord, remain with me, for evening draws nigh and the day has departed. O thou living,

Almighty God! how inscrutable are thy works, how unspeakable is thy goodness which thou hast displayed unto men. I can speak of grace and truth, of love and mercy, inasmuch as thou hast vouchsafed many favors unto me throughout this day in soul and body; thou hast fed my soul with the bread of life, and given me to drink of the living fountain. Thy word was sweeter in my mouth than honey and the honey comb. O let my word remain through all my life a light upon my path, that I may direct my walk in accordance with it, then shall I never stumble nor fall from thy grace. Thou hast been my preserver, my support in corporeal things, so that I have reached this evening in health. I am unworthy of all these mercies which thou hast done me. When now my limbs shall lie down to rest, stand thou by me, watch over me, and enclose me in thy protection. Let thy word which I have this day heard and learned, spring up within me as a holy seed, whose fruit shall be seen in my life in piety, in fear of God, and indifference to the world. May I hereafter live for God, for heaven, and for souls. Shield and defend me against the machinations and the fiery darts of Satan. The Lord is my light and my health, of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord is the vigor of my life, whom shall I dread? Turn away every misfortune from me and mine, and let all the sick, the distressed and the dying taste of thy grace abundantly; so shall all our lips be filled with thy grace, and we will proclaim the good thou hast done us in body and in soul in the morning. Pardon me, if I have not served thee with such fervor as I should have done, and do not therefore take thy grace from me. Let all things become new with me during this new week. Give me new love and longing after thee, and a new desire to serve and obey thee. Let me avoid and flee from all the sins committed during the last week, so that all may perceive that I have not spent my Sunday in vain. Help me daily to consider that I have an immortal soul, so that I may be more concerned for the soul than for the body. Retire then thou, my body, to repose in thy chamber, but thou, my soul, into the wounds of Jesus.

Keep me from all vacillation,

Jesus, let me sleep in thee;

Be thy holy meditation,

E'en in dreams revealed to me.

When I sleep and when I wake;

Let the spirit never slake,

Up to thee to raise its yearning,

Till the morning dawn's returning. Amen

1. Me often Jesus has invited,

Upon his wounded breast to sleep,

There shall I be with him united,

And he his watch will o'er me keep;
No terrors of the night I dread,
While Jesus watches at my bed.

2. In sleep my soul with God converses,
My thoughts he never shall forsake,
I'll meditate upon his mercies,
Long after I have ceased to wake;
My spirit and my mind shall be,
With God in converse endlessly.

3. Oh, never let thy presence vanish,
My Lord and Saviour, from my head,
Be with me while I sleep, and banish
All care and sorrow from my bed;
Let fear nor sorrow, care nor pain,
Come near me till I wake again.

4. I fear not Satan's darkest cover,
Nor all the prowess of his arms,
For God himself will o'er me hover,
And Jesus hold me in his arms;
He may not harm a hair of me,
So well shall I protected be.

5. My lips break out in joyous numbers,
At every well-spent Sunday's end,
I give my limbs to peaceful slumbers,
When the dark shades of night extend;
Jesus brings back the morning's ray,
And thus I pass from day to day.

6. Where Jesus me has oft invited,
Upon his breast, I go to sleep,
My faith to him for life is plighted,
And even in death he will me keep;
When from my last deep sleep I start,
The marriage feast shall be my part.

The true Believer Gives thanks unto the Lord, after having heard His Holy Word. EXHORTATION.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."—Jas. i. 22. As all the good gifts of God are abused by the children of this world, so is it also with the hearing of God's Word, wherein they differ greatly from the true children of God. THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD.

1. The world's people think the Sabbath instituted for their luxury and amusement, in which, being free from labor, they shall seek the comforts of the flesh, which is manifestly wrong. 2. The world's people at best go to church in the morning, but amuse themselves in the afternoon with hunting, gaming and sinful recreations, and then come home, if not intoxicated, at least, with silly thoughts, sinful distractions, and worldly follies. 3. The world's people give no heed to the word which is preached, and if they were to be asked on Monday, what their going to church had profited them, and what they had heard and learned, they would not know; the devil has already snatched the word out of their hearts, to prevent them from believing and being saved. Luke viii. 12. 4. And if they do remember anything, they do not put it into practice.

But the true children of God, who have begun the day with God and with prayer, do otherwise. 1. They hear the Word of God with devout attention.

2. They repeat at home what they have heard, write it down, and rejoice over it, as over a great treasure 3. They think of it all the week, and endeavor to practise it.

THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD.

In the Old Testament the Lord had chosen those animals for sacrifice which chewed the cud; and those souls also are after his heart, which ruminate on the word they have heard and read, and derive new nourishment from it, for the sustenance of eternal life. O thou, gracious God! how shall I love and praise thee sufficiently for having spared my life to see the close of this Sabbath, on which I have heard thy blessed Word? How shall I believe, how live, and how die? Thou hast suffered to be made known to me thy gracious will, and taught me what to avoid, and what to do. Thou hast not left thyself without witness, so that all are without excuse. Thou givest us thy holy Word and sacraments, so that we may use them as means of grace for our salvation. Thy holy Spirit will enlighten, teach, sanctify, strengthen and ground us. Oh, merciful God, preserve me that I may not be a forgetful hearer, but a diligent doer of thy Word! What avails all I hear, if I do not do as I hear? Therefore, do thou thyself seal in my heart, what I have heard and read, and make it living, active, and powerful within me. Oh, thou Guardian of the portal! lock up my heart, when the word of life has entered for my edification, lest Satan rob me of it, and I return home empty. THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD.

Let me take warning by the example of so many thousands of men, who hear thy Word, O God! but do not repent. Of what use to them is their going to church, their singing, their hearing, their praying? Will not the Word condemn and accuse them all the more, that they have heard the will of the Lord, known it, and yet not done it? O my God! let me, this week, become more pious and godly; let me daily repeat the word I have heard, speak of it with those around me, rejoice in it, and always act up to it. Have I heard from thy Word, that I ought to become humble, meek and merciful: O give me grace that I may always remember it, and never lapse into anger, revenge, pride, and hardness of heart, but may love my enemies, deny myself, and gladly do good unto the poor and needy. Have I heard that I should lay off the old man and put on the new, and should struggle against my evil thoughts and desires, live soberly, righteously, and deny myself after God's will in this present evil world: O give me power and strength that I may daily exercise myself in these things, and fulfil thy commands. Though at first it be done in great weakness, let me still continue in sanctification, and purify myself more and more of every stain of body and soul. Oh, let me handle thy Holy Word as the children of the world handle their treasures, which they lock up and keep
THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD.

safely; so do thou give me power to preserve in my heart as a cherished treasure, the sacred truths, the precious doctrines, the vigorous admonitions unto sanctification, and to increase them day by day, so that I may draw forth from them, consolation upon consolation in dark and bitter hours, in trials and tribulations, sickness and death. Yea, Lord! Let me daily increase in age, wisdom, piety, godliness, knowledge of thy will, and grace before thee and before men. Holy Lord! we worship thee,

That thy Word to us was given;

Give us grace that we may see,

How it points the way to heaven.

And, lest thou the offering spurnest,

Let our works of faith give earnest.

1. Who hears the Word of God, must shape his conversation,

His walk and all his life by its divine dictation;

Hearing availeth nought, if still the heart be left,

Godless and full of sin, and of all grace bereft.

2 If in God's Word thou seest that to avoid the sentence,

Repentance needed is, go, quickly do repentance;

Become another man! Remain not as thou art,

Yea, mend while yet 'tis time, live after Christ's own heart.

THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD.

3. If with the sinful thou art told not to assort thee,

Then where they congregate beware how thou resort thee;

What sinners scruple not thou yet shalt never do,

But walk as knowing well God has thee in his view.

4. If thou art told the Lord himself has set example,

To live in dread of sin, and God give service ample;

Then follow thou the Lord's example evermore,

And always strive to be what Jesus was before.

5. A Christian, thou art told, must silence fleshly longing,

And raise his soul to thoughts, unto his soul belonging;

Then treasure in thy heart this most divine command,

And never do the works that flesh and blood demand.

6. If thou art told e'en as thyself to love thy neighbor,

And do for him what thou for thy own self would'st labor,

Then love him as thyself, and never do him ill.

And what the word commands implicitly fulfil.

7. Oh, Lord, grant what my heart so earnestly beseeches,

That it may ever do the works thy gospel teaches;

That while I walk below, and when I rest above,

I may enjoy the fill of thy enduring love.

MORNING PRAYER FOR MONDAY.

05. MORNING PRAYER FOR MONDAY

Let me hear thy mercy early, for I hope in thee. Show unto me the way that I shall walk, for my heart longeth for thee, holy, good and all-wise Lord! who hast created the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, and ordained that day and night should alternate,— that light should be followed by darkness, and labor by repose, that men and beasts may be refreshed. I praise and glorify thee this morning, for thy wisdom and fatherly care, that thou hast graciously heard my prayer, and hast preserved me during the past night, from sickness and every other evil, and hast cast thy protection over all that is mine! Lord! great are the mercies which thou showest to man. Thy goodness and truth extend as far as the heavens, and thy truth as far as the clouds extend. I slept, but thou didst wake; I was in the likeness of death, but thou hast permitted me again to behold the light of day. Oh my God! be thou also my helper and friend, my assistance and comforter, my refuge and almoner, to-day; let thine eyes be open over me, that under thy conduct I may undisturbed pursue my calling, and, if it be thy will, reach the evening once more unharmed. My God! let thy blessing be with me and near me in all MORNING PRAYER FOR MONDAY.

I undertake in thy name; give me thy counsel and assistance, and let me never wish for aught that is not thy will. As the sun has arisen upon the earth, so let the light of thy Holy Spirit arise in my soul, that I may spend this day in thy fear, love and obedience. Create in me a pure heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy sight, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; let Him lead, instruct and guide me, that I may not knowingly sin against thee this day, and if they would lead me into sin, let Him remind me of it, and deter me from it by His inward admonition. I put on my clothes, Lord Jesus! clothe me with the garb of thy righteousness. I wash my hands; Lord Jesus! wash me with thy holy blood from all sin. Guard me, that I may never "walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor sit where scoffers sit," whose friendship is thine enmity; and if I would be the world's friend, and walk in its sinful ways, thou wilt be my foe. Oh my God! impress upon my heart the words, "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." O how many who commenced a week are in their graves when it closes! Therefore, let me always seek after sanctification, without which no one shall see God. May I cultivate pious words, blameless walk, and holy thoughts, that I may always be found to stand in grace. 4*

THE DEVOUT BELIEVER INVOKES A BLESSING.

May the grace of the Father preserve me, the love of the Son sanctify me, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost make me fruitful in all good works.

Thy blessings on me shower,

Make of my heart thy bower,

Thy word be my collation,

'Till ends my long probation. Amen.

The devout Believer commits his ways to God and invokes a blessing at the beginning of the Week.

EXHORTATION.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father, by Him."—Colossians iii. 17.

If we have reason to pray at the beginning of each day, how much more reason has a true believer to lift up his heart and eyes to God, at the commencement of the new week! How many pass the Sabbath and commence the week in the enjoyment of health, who are already in their graves, before the ensuing Saturday arrives? How many have begun the week happy and blessed, but before its close, misfortune has overwhelmed them like a storm, so that they AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK.

have ended it in anguish and woe, with wailing, weeping, and wringing of hands? This, my dear fellow-Christian, may also be your and my lot, and hence we should always turn to God at the beginning of the week.

1. The true believer must call upon God for his holy Spirit to sanctify his heart and guide it, so that he may not lapse into sin, offend God, damage his conscience, wrong his neighbor, and load a heavy responsibility upon his soul.

2. He must not forget to pray and worship God during the week, but faithfully attend meetings for prayer and spiritual improvement, not on Sunday only, but also during the week.

3. As success does not depend upon his incessant toils and over exertions, he ought constantly to think of God, and implore his blessing, and think of God when engaged at his work, and begin and end his work with prayer.

4. He must speak soberly, walk as a Christian should, have God before his eyes at all times, and remember, that one week after another is gliding away, and that his dying week will soon come, when our souls must render their accounts unto God. He who does this, may begin the week in grace and end it under God's protection, even if God should make it a week of trial for him, he will still be and remain, his help, his preserver, and his stay. THE DEVOUT BELIEVER INVOKES A BLESSING.

O thou loving and merciful God! by thy assistance I commence this new week, but I do not know what may transpire before it closes. How great adversity and misfortune may overtake me in a single day!—how much more in a whole week? Therefore at the commencement of this week, I come and commend myself wholly unto thee. Oh, my God! Grant me thy Holy Spirit, to sanctify, lead and govern me, and bear witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. Bless thou me this week in my going out and coming in, in my daily business and occupation, and in all my steps. I lift up my eyes unto the mountains whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth. So thou keep me I shall not fall, so thou lead me I shall not go astray; therefore, let thy loving kindness ever attend me. Bless all that is mine, and let it flourish under thy blessing. O my God and faithful Father! protect and defend me from all harm, dangers, loss and misfortune; let me stand day and night under thy guidance and protection. Guard my house about like the house of Job, let the angels make a rampart around me and mine, then shall no mishap overwhelm us, how great soever it be. Hear my prayer when I call unto thee, and let AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK.

me not go unheard from the throne of thy grace.

Preserve me from grievous sins, and guide me by thy truth. Keep my heart to this one thing, that I fear thy name. Grant that this week I become more pious and godly, increasing in the knowledge and love of thee,

and as I leave week after week behind me, so may my inward man grow, that when the last week of my life arrives,

I may be assured of thy grace. Should this week prove a week of crosses, strengthen me by thy holy spirit, that I may bear and overcome everything by thy powerful assistance. Be thyself my help, and my preserver from all trouble.

Now I commend myself, body and soul, to thy fatherly protection, as all Christians should.

Amen, I say, forever

Believing in my soul,

God will with my endeavor

Be pleased in the whole;

Then with a lightened heart

Straight to the task I bend me

Which God was pleased to send me,

My calling and my art. Amen.

1. Week after week goes round, another and another,

Oh God! be with me still! bend o'er me like a mother!

Look on my daily toils and on my nightly care,

For 'tis my only hope that thou wilt hear my prayer.

THE TRUE BELIEVER INVOKES A TEMPORAL,

2. Oh yes, 'tis all in vain to rise at early morning,

And work till late at night, all rest and pleasure scorning;

Unless thy blessing still is with us day by day,

In everything we do, and everything we say.

3. In meekness let me spend this week most pure and lowly,

And let it be my task to praise thy name most holy

Preserve me from all sin, give me in Christ a share,

And if thy hand should smite, lend me thy strength to bear.

4. For all the mercies thou this week to me wilt tender,

To thee with all its power my spirit thanks shall render;

Oh keep me as thy child from all assaults of sin,

Until, through Jesus' blood, to heaven I enter in.

The true Believer invokes a temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessing.

EXHORTATION.

"God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."—Psalms lxxvii. 7.

Every man prays and asks something of God;

but every one should consider well how he prays and for what he asks. Oh, the prayer of most men concerns only earthly and transient things, which they often ask for to their own harm.

SPIRITUAL, AND ETERNAL BLESSING.

1. A true believer should pray for bodily health, blessing, daily bread, aversion of danger, help in need, assistance in suffering, extrication from misfortunes.

2. He should pray particularly for spiritual things, for the Holy Ghost, a pious heart, the Kingdom of God, which is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans xiv. 17 He prays for enlightenment, growth in good works, sanctification and the gift of the Holy Ghost, this is the most precious thing he can ask of God. 3. A true believer also prays for eternal things, that is to say, for a happy end, a peaceful departure from this life, and the much desired entrance into the life of bliss, that he may see God's face, dressed in white raiment, and that after the struggle is over, he may rejoice in God eternally. 4. He must lead a blameless Christian life, so that God may impart to him spiritual and heavenly blessings, which an unregenerate and wicked man cannot receive.

Oh, my God, so rich in grace! How great and glorious, how rich and mighty art thou, who hast all things, and canst give all things. Lo! I thy child come to thee and ask thee for thy gifts,

THE TRUE BELIEVER INVOKES A TEMPORAL, thou knowest that I have brought nothing into the world with me, that I have nothing of myself, but sin; wherefore, everything good that I have in me, cometh from thee, for all good gifts and all perfect gifts come from above; yea, what hast thou, Oh man, that thou hast not received? Oh, my God and father, make me especially rich in my soul. Give me thy Holy Ghost, give me a pious heart, convert me, enlighten me, that I may be a new man and a true Christian. Help me to struggle and to strive to conquer evil desires, renounce evil customs, separate myself from the world, and give my body and soul as an offering unto thee, which shall be living, holy, and well pleasing in thy sight. See, my God! to how many dangers and temptations I am exposed in the world, therefore, guide me by thy power, that I may not be seduced nor swerve from thee. Dwell in my soul, rule my heart, and lend me grace to become a living member of the body of my Jesus, and a new creature; then I shall be rich enough in the world, honored enough, happy enough. Have a care for me also, my gracious God and father! in earthly things, thou knowest what I need, thou seest what I lack, but give me not according to my will, but according to thy will. If health is well for me, Oh give me a hale and sound body for the better fulfilment of the duties of the SPIRITUAL, AND ETERNAL BLESSING.

station into which thou hast placed me. Give me food and raiment. Lead me in my paths, and preserve me from evil. Lay thy blessing upon my labor, for what thou dost bless, O Lord, is blessed indeed. Thou hast

created me, thou wilt sustain me. I cast all my cares upon thee. Care for thy child, preserve thy child, and let me taste abundantly thy fatherly care and kindness. But as thou hast not created me for the things of this earthly life, I hope for still greater blessings. For if I had nothing to expect from thee but what I have received here, I should be the most wretched of men. Therefore, give me also thy heavenly blessings, preserve me in the faith, to my blissful end. Oh, hear the voice of my cry, and deny not the prayer of my lips. Bless, O Lord, my going forth,

Bless, O Lord, my homeward wending,

Save from hunger and from dearth

My beginning and my ending.

Bless my death with thy endurance,

Giving me of heaven assurance. Amen.

EXHORTATION FOR EVENING PRAYER ON MONDAY.

"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, O Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."—Psalm iv. 8.

If gratitude is a fair Christian virtue, pleasing unto God and man, a true believer shall be

EXHORTATION FOR MONDAY EVENING PRAYER.

mindful of it, when God has permitted him to reach the close of day. It is to be deplored that many men suffer days, weeks, months, and even years to pass, without calling to mind what God has done for them; they enjoy the divine protection and do not even thank him therefor, think it must be so, God must thus sustain them and let them prosper. Therefore, O true believer, separate thyself from such unthankful souls. When thou hast happily passed the day under the protection and assistance of God, when the sun begins to sink, and evening approaches, lift up thine eyes to heaven with thanks and prayer. 1. Thank God that he has guarded thee from misfortune through the day, and call to mind, how many men, perhaps, have been overtaken by the greatest misfortunes on this day, whereon no harm has reached thee, how they have been laid on their beds at night, sick and in great pain, when they were fresh and hale in the morning. 2. Pray God to forgive thy sins, examine thy words and actions, if, during the day thou hast said aught against God or thy neighbor; if thou hast committed anything against thy conscience and the gospel, O then remain awake and pray God's forgiveness before thou retirest to rest. 3. Bethink thee that God may be pleased to ask thy soul of thee this night, therefore, make thy peace with God before thou close thine eyes

PRAYER FOR MONDAY EVENING.

4. Pray God for his protection, and the watch and ward of his holy angels, that they may keep all evil afar from thee.

5. And in the night, if thou chance to wake from sleep, think of God, and thank him, and thou shalt sleep soundly and sweetly in his arms, under the protection of his holy angels.

"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, O Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." O thou Eternal and Almighty God, these are the evening thoughts with which I am about to give myself to rest this evening. O, how shall I sufficiently thank thee, that thou hast escorted me in going out and in coming in, so that I have not dashed my foot against a stone. Thou hast given me to eat and to drink, thou hast refreshed and comforted me. Thy look has preserved my breath, and through thee and thy grace I stand to this day. All these and other mercies are so many living voices to exhort me to thy praise; therefore, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Forgive me, Oh Lord! forgive me in mercy, if to-day I have not had the example of Jesus before mine eyes, if I have lost sight of thy commands, have lived after the world's ways PRAYER FOR MONDAY EVENING.

and with the world, have given free vent to the desires of my heart. If thou wert not a long suffering God, I should be no longer among the living. O Lord I repent in dust and ashes. The day is now past and gone; do thou also disperse my sins as the mist, and never more remember them. I hereby vow unto thee in true sincerity of heart, to serve thee faithfully, and to regulate my walk by thy Holy Word. Guard me this night from all persecution of the enemy, from misfortunes and from harm, and even in sleep let me still be thine. When I fall asleep, do thou thyself close my eyes. In darkness be my light; in time of need my defence. My heart recalls the word thou hast spoken, "Seek ye my face;" therefore, Lord, I seek thy face. Locked in the protection of the triune God, I shall sleep securely as Jacob, and comforted as a child on its mother's bosom. I sleep protected like Peter. Think of me, O Lord! in this darksome night, and give me mercifully the protection of thy care. I lay me down, mine eyes I close,

And gently fall asleep;

What dread could trouble my repose,

When angels vigil keep?

THANKS GOD FOR THE BLESSING OF HEALTH

06. The true Believer thanks God for the blessing of health

EXHORTATION.

"It is better for a man to be poor, and hale and hearty withal, than to be rich and unhealthy. To be hale and hearty is better than gold, and a hale body is better than great wealth. There is no wealth to be compared unto a hale body, and no joy like the joy of the heart." Jesus Sirach xxx. 14, 15, 16. As God dispenses various gifts among men, spiritual and corporal, so of corporal gifts, health may be reckoned as one of the chief. A hale man is a happy man, if he be pious also; but he is most unhappy, if he be ungodly. That a hale man is happy, appears in this, that he can serve God and his neighbor without hindrance, follow his occupation, and do much good. But if a man does not add piety to his health, he most grossly abuses this precious gift for the commission of sin, shame and wickedness. O how wholesome would it be for many a man to be lame, dumb, blind, or afflicted with suffering, so that he could not practise so many sins with his feet, tongue, eyes and body, for a heavy responsibility and chastisement waits on such abuse of hale and sound limbs. A true Christian acknowledges this great blessing of health. 1. When he looks at his hale limbs, he thanks God therefor.

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THE TRUE BELIEVER THANKS GOD

2. He turns his health to account in the service of God, and in constant attendance at the House of God, and in growth in the faith.

3. He serves his neighbor.

4. He fulfils the duties of his occupation faithfully and honestly.

5. He understands that health is not an everlasting or permanent blessing, and that the beck of the Lord may bring on pains, sickness, prostration and disease. 6. He is therefore on his guard not to abuse his health in wantonness, recklessness or malice, lest, when the day of disease and suffering arrives, the voice of conscience should say: This is a chastisement of God for the abuse of thy health. 7. A pious Christian prays diligently in the days of health, because he knows not whether he shall have strength do so in the days of evil; and thus his health is turned to good account. Oh, thou gracious and merciful God! How great is thy love and goodness which thou dost manifest unto me, not only in keeping me in thy protection and favor, but in permitting me to close and to commence year after year in health and strength. Well, my God! I acknowledge that this is one of the good gifts which come from FOR THE BLESSING OF HEALTH.

above, from thee, Oh, father of light! Lord! Lord! Who am I, that thou should'st send such mercies down upon me? Do I not daily see before my eyes, men who are sickly, weak and feeble? Do I not hear many complain that they are compelled to spend their lives in painful and tedious diseases on a sick bed, who yet, are perhaps much more godly and pious than I, and pray more devoutly than I, while to me thou givest good health and strength. Oh Lord! I am far too lowly for the mercies which thou hast heretofore done and still doest unto me. Preserve me, O my dear Lord, that I may not abuse this precious gift in luxury, wantonness, pride and insolence, but let me know that thou wilt thereby encourage me to thankfulness

and piety. Help me that to the end of my days I may apply my health to thy honor and praise, to the profit of my neighbors, and the accomplishment of the duties of my occupation. Keep my health and strong limbs for thy good will and purpose, that I may visit thy house freely and zealously, and may raise hymns of thanks and praise in thy temple. Oh my God! give me power and strength also to increase in my inward man, to be whole in the faith, lusty in the spirit, patient in trial, devout in prayer, sincere in the love of thee and of my neighbor, Christian in life, cheerful in hope, and unterrified in death. O THANKS GOD FOR THE BLESSING OF HEALTH.

sanctify me, bless me, and let thy good spirit lead me on an even path. O God! thou pious

God! thou well spring of all good gifts, without whom is nothing which is, of whom we have all things, give me health of body, and that in my hale body may dwell an untarnished soul and a pure conscience. Amen.

1. If the clouds of sorrow leave thee,

Fortune's sunshine thee betide,

Tremble lest thy heart deceive thee,

With the lying voice of pride.

On thy fortune's giddy tower

Think of thy old lowly bower;

Think, when thou art proud and glad,

Of the times when thou wert sad.

2. When thy cheeks are bright and rosy

Think they once were blanched with pain;

When thy couch is smooth and cosy

Think thou hast in anguish lain.

When the fever has departed,

Bear in mind how thou hast smarted;

Think, when thou art proud and glad,

Of the times when thou wert sad.

3. Or if wealth in currents golden

Enter at thy open door,

Oft bethink thee of the olden

Bitter times when thou wert poor

MORNING PRAYER FOR TUESDAY.

Do not think the wretched greedy

That remind thee thou wert needy;

Think, when thou art proud and glad,

Of the times when thou wert sad.

4. Thoughts like these, so pure and holy,

In the mind still entertain;

Let them keep thy spirit lowly

And preserve thee from disdain.

Watch thy heart, that thou reliest

Not on self, but on the Highest.

Those who to themselves are small,

God doth rate them over all.

MORNING PRAYER FOR TUESDAY.

"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." O thou merciful God! whose goodness and truth are near every morning, with heart and mouth I give thee thanks and praise, that thou hast let me rise this morning from my bed in good health, and hast preserved my body from harm, and my soul from sin. How great is thy goodness, Lord!

that men are so surely guarded under the shadow of thy wings. After the darkness I behold once more the light of the sun; give me grace that I may walk all this day in thy light, and shun all the works of darkness. I look upon that day as lost, on which I have served the world, and have shaped my lips, my body and

MORNING PRAYER FOR TUESDAY.

my thoughts, by the habits and follies of the world, for which I shall be called to give a dread account one day before thy tribunal. I would rather offer myself entirely to thy service, in soul and body; let me wish nothing, do nothing, and think nothing but what is pleasing unto thee, that the whole day may be hallowed unto thee. Let me always live, speak and act, as though I must die before nightfall. Give me good counsel when I need counsel, direct my purposes and undertakings by thy will. Kindle the flame of divine love in my soul, so that this day I may show my faith by my works, and persevere in the love of thee and my neighbor, and reach the evening with an unscarred conscience. Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee. Let the prayer of the afflicted, the downcast and the sick, and the prayer of my house, and of all the pious, find a hearing at the throne of thy grace. Yea, direct all my life forever according to thy will, and when I come to surrender it unto the jaws of death, let me die in peace and joy, and after death inherit the bliss of eternal life. Amen. REJOICES THAT HE WAS BORN AGAIN.

07. The true Believer rejoices that he was born again

EXHORTATION.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—1 Peter, iii. 4.

If any man glory, let him glory in the Lord; and if any rejoice, let it be over that which will make him eternally happy. Now if there is anything in which a true believer may glory and rejoice, it is his being born again, that he was baptized, and thereby became a child of God. We have obtained innumerable blessings by the rite of holy baptism.

1. God is our Father, who will sustain, preserve and care for us as for his children, and will not forsake us.
2. Jesus Christ. All that Jesus has earned by his sufferings and death, has been imparted to us as our own by holy baptism.
3. The pouring out of the Holy Ghost, who will dwell in our hearts to enlighten, sanctify, and direct them. By such indwelling power of the holy spirit, we are daily removed farther from sin, and grow in faith, piety and godliness, as a new born babe increases in years and strength.
4. We shall have a part, after this life, in the

THE TRUE BELIEVER REJOICES bliss of heaven. He who ponders these things, must needs rejoice in God with all his heart. But let the believer also most carefully watch and pray,

1. That he do not lose the grace bestowed upon him.
- 2 That he walk worthily in his calling.
3. That he do not again love the world, and that he sin not wilfully with unregenerate and worldly people, and become like them.
4. That he be obedient unto God as a loving child, and follow the Lord Jesus, and withstand not the baptism of the holy Spirit. Then he may rest assured that he will enjoy the love, favor, support and assistance of the triune God here in time, and hereafter in eternity.

Great God, and dearly beloved Father, how can I love and praise thee enough, that thou hast had mercy upon my soul, that I might not perish! What honor hast thou shown me in imparting unto me the right of holy baptism, wherein thou hast acknowledged me to be thy child! Do men boast the great happiness derived from their high birth, the possession of dignities, riches and domains; much more do I prize my happiness in being thy child, for if we are children, we also are heirs, that is to say

THAT HE WAS BORN AGAIN.

heirs of God, and brethren of Christ, provided we suffer with him, and are elevated to glory with him. If I am a child of God, my heavenly Father will preserve, govern, guard, and defend me; yea, he will never

forsake me in the time of need. If I am a child of God, I have not only an unfailing stay in him in this life, but great cheerfulness in death, for he will refresh me as his child, love me, comfort me, and, after my departure from this world, he will lead me to the life of bliss to come. If I see any one do evil, if I hear evil spoken, let me remember that I am a child of God, to whom such things are not becoming; let me joyfully say, in thy power: World, know that my birthright and my heritage in God, are not to be sold for thy pleasures and thy vanities. Blessed Jesus thou knowest that I love thee, and am greatly distressed when I do not always and in very truth love thee as I should. O, be graciously pleased to take my will for the deed and let me lead a life of faith and piety, holiness, purity, and childlike humility, let me love, honor, fear and obey thee, that I may live and die as thy child, and attain everlasting joys in heaven. I have put on Jesus long ago in holy baptism, therefore did thou love me, and hast adopted me to be thy child, O God! I beg for the sake of the blood of Christ, let my end be well. Amen.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD

08. The true Believer prays God to continue and increase the faith awakened in Him

EXHORTATION.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—Romans x. 9. "Lord, increase our faith."—Luke xvii. 5.

As unhappy as is an unbeliever, so happy is a soul which stands in the faith and true knowledge of God, of Jesus Christ, and of its own salvation. For an unbeliever is like a room in which there is no light, wherein it is dark and disagreeable, but a believing soul is like unto a room wherein it is light, and wherein a taper is lit, which taper is faith. This faith man cannot give unto himself, but it is God that lights it within us. 1. Therefore, a true believer shall thank God, that he has brought him to the faith and to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and thereby made him happy above Jews, Turks, or Heathens. 2. He shall be mindful of his covenant of baptism, and the glory thereby conferred upon him, and shall not wantonly transgress the covenant entered into with God. 3. He shall diligently and devoutly hear God's Word, that he may be constantly more enlight

TO INCREASE THE FAITH AWAKENED IN HIM.

ened, and brought to a better understanding of his will in his works. 4. Therefore, a true Christian must not be satisfied with saying, I believe, but he must also let the fruits of faith, as piety, charity, chastity, patience, meekness, and others, shine forth throughout his life. Then he has the consolation that he will secure the end of his faith, eternal salvation. O thou gracious God! what great mercy is it, that thou has brought me to the true knowledge of thy salvation. I know the foundation of my eternal welfare, which is Jesus Christ, with his atoning merit, blood and death. I know the means of salvation, which are the Word of God and the holy sacraments. In these I set all my hope and my reliance, and now know the true way to heaven; for who would come to God must believe. By this faith am I distinguished from infidel, Jews, Turks, and Heathens. O thou gracious God! bestow upon me thy Holy Ghost, that he may give this knowledge life within me. Blessed are ye, if ye know, but blessed are ye if ye do it also. Give me power that my faith may be not a lifeless faith of the brain and of the lips, but a living faith. What thy Word forbids, I will eschew and flee from, THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD but the duties and virtues it enjoins, I will seek to perform by thy grace, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Communion shall sanctify me out and out. I will often partake of it to strengthen my faith, and make me happy, as a food of sanctification and devotion, and will persevere in this sanctification. O my God! Increase within me faith, sanctification and obedience, that I may become every day more pious, more devout, more godly, and more true to the image of my Savior. And preserve me in this faith to the end of my days, so that I may live as a true and pious Christian, and die happy. Lord, I believe! help my weakness, let me not despair; thou canst give me strength when sin and death assail me; in thy goodness will I tread until I shall joyfully see thee, Lord Jesus, after the struggle, in the gladness of eternity. Amen.

1. I believe, O Lord! but yet my

Faith is weak and oft doth swerve,

Satan ever to upset my

Strength exerts his every nerve.

Storms and tempests gather o'er me,

No one offers to restore me.

Lord where are thy mighty arms,

To protect me from these harms?

TO INCREASE THE FAITH AWAKENED IN HIM.

C8

2. Where is thy all conquering glory,

Where thy all commanding mien,

Of which others make such story?

Am I then alone unseen?

Knowst thou not my grief and trial?

Canst thou give my prayer denial?

Is my wretchedness too great

For thy goodness to abate?

3. Help my unbelief in pity!

I believe, undoubtedly,

That the voice of meek entreaty

Never goes unheard from thee.

Still aloft I know thou soarest,

And the gift of mercy pourest

In abundance over all

Who on thee as children call.

4. I believe that me, a sinner,

Jesus' blood has purchased too;

Of my soul to be the winner,

Nothing will he fail to do.

In my bitterest repining
Jesus at my side was shining,
Though I knew him not, because
Blind and weak my eyesight was.
5. O be patient with my blindness,
Let me see thee as thou art,
Let the knowledge of thy kindness
Never from my soul depart.
Let despair itself betoken
That thy faith remains unbroken;
That thy love which never dies,
Waits to bear me to the skies.

6*

PRAYER FOR TUESDAY EVENING.

PRAYER FOR TUESDAY EVENING.

The Lord is with me, therefore I do not fear, what evil can men do unto me? This, O loving and merciful God, is the language of my experience this evening; and I heartily thank thee that thou hast suffered me to pass this day under thy fatherly care. Lord, thy goodness is great, and thy mercy endureth forever. The Lord is near unto them that cry unto him, unto them that cry unto him with earnestness, he does what the godly crave. Lord, how soon is a day past; as an arrow is shot from a bow, so do our years depart; therefore teach me that it is appointed unto me once to die, that my life has an end, and that I must away. Behold, my days are as an handbreath, and as nothing before thee. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Therefore I judge myself, and ask: My soul, how hast thou spent this day? Hast thou had godly thoughts? Has God remained united with thee, or hast thou driven him away with intended and conscious sins? Has the praise of God been spread abroad by thee, or hast thou overflowed with follies and scandalous conversation?—Whither have ye sped, ye feet? What have ye

PRAYER FOR TUESDAY EVENING.

plied, ye hands? What have ye heard, ye ears? Ye eyes, whither have ye looked? What has been this day thy desire and thy yearning, my heart? O my God, if I should answer all these questions, how would I stand? Lord, with the passing away of this day, do thou blot out all my trespasses. O Jesu! wash out my sins in thy holy blood. O Holy Spirit! assure me of the forgiveness of all my sins, before I fall to sleep, so that, if this should be my last night, I may not be lost. Acquitted of my guilt, O triune God, I shall sleep with great composure, and shall to-morrow avoid with greater care, whatsoever may displease thee. Lord, let thy love cover me and mine. Blessed Jesus, in thy wounds I rest; so shall I sleep in peace. O Holy Spirit!

breathe the last sigh into my heart before I fall asleep, with which I commend my spirit into thy hands, O God. Though I have fallen off, yet I return to thee, for thy son has reconciled us by his sufferings and death; I do not deny my guilt, but thy grace and tenderness is much greater than the sin which I ever feel within me. Amen.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS TO GOD

09. The true Believer prays to God to sanctify his heart

EXHORTATION.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Hebrews xii. 14.

1. In view of his natural perversion, the true believer calls to mind that he himself cannot make himself holy, but that this is a work of God.
2. Therefore he uses the means ordained by God for sanctification. He remembers his holy baptism, in which the Holy Ghost was poured out upon him, and has taken up his dwelling in his heart, and diligently enquires whether he has forfeited this good spirit in after years by wanton sins. He knows that the holy communion is a food of sanctification, therefore, he tries, when he receives it, to make it sanctify his soul and body. He listens devoutly to God's word, and treasures in his heart what he has heard, so that he may progress in sanctification.
3. For sanctification should take place as well in the body as in the soul, through the power of God and the efficacy of the Holy Ghost. When the soul is sanctified, life must be led entirely in true sanctification.
4. This sanctification should take place betimes, not in old age or on the death-bed, but

TO SANCTIFY HIS SOUL.

while we can still pray, and use with appreciation the means of sanctification.

5. Such sanctification must then be manifested at all times, on all occasions, when in the presence of the children of this world; there our gestures, words and works should show that we have a sanctified heart, and that the Holy Ghost governs our lips and all our lives. Such sanctified souls may be sure of attaining the home of sanctification in the realms of light.

O most holy God! I am seized with dread whenever in my ears the voice is heard which says, "Be ye holy, even as I am holy;" and again, "Without sanctification no one shall see the Lord." When I reflect upon these words, and contrast them with my unsanctified heart, unsanctified thoughts, unsanctified words, and unsanctified works, I am seized with dread and shame of my former wicked and unsanctified life, when, alas! I followed the desires of my heart, and turned with the people of this world and offended thee with unsanctified words and deeds. Oh! if no one shall see thee but by sanctification, how few shall be saved, how many condemned! Help, then, O Lord! the saints have become fewer. O, therefore, most holy God! let me well know all this, that I may

THE BELIEVER PRAYS TO GOD.

study true holiness outwardly and inwardly. O Jesus! sanctify me by thy righteousness, thy merit and thy blood. O give me, who am by nature unholy, thy sanctification, that I may appear and stand therein, as in my finest raiment, before thy heavenly Father. Sanctify my life by thy holy word! Sanctify my heart that it may converse with holy thoughts forever. Sanctify my mouth that it may speak nothing unbecoming, unchristian and evil. Sanctify my will, that I may will and execute only the things well pleasing unto thee. Let this sanctification be genuine, that I may not only be holy and strive after holiness, in church, in the

communion, or when engaged in religious exercises, but that I may also be holy and strive after holiness at all times and places, and on all occasions, and when compelled to live among the children of this world and in their company, that I then may speak, live and act as a child of God, and may remain in that holy state until death, when thou wilt bring me to the troops of the saints, and the chosen in the unfading light of life. Thou art holy, thou art to be found where men are pure and undefiled, but fleest from shame and sin as a pigeon from stench and decay; make me, by thy ablutions, pure and clean; let me flee what thou fleest, and give me what is pleasing in thy sight. Amen. MORNING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

MORNING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

I awoke, and I am still with thee, O gracious and loving God, my rock, my strong tower, my shield, and the horn of my salvation. To thee will I raise my voice, at this early hour. Blessed be thy name, that during the past night, I reposed in peace and safety beneath the shadow of thy wings, and that my body has been protected from all evil and all harm. Praised be the Lord every day, and praised be his name eternally. Thou makest one day after another of my life to appear and hasten away; may I be diligent in preparing for eternity, and give thee my soul as thy birthright and thy habitation. Thou hast created me for eternal life, and it is not thy will that I should be lost, but that I should repent and live: therefore grant that this day also may be spent in working out my own salvation with fear and trembling. I am now in the middle of another week; may I reach its end in safety. Should I be called to walk in the midst of trials and anguish, then do thou support and comfort me; if mine enemies surround me, do thou stand in the midst and help me. Blessed Jesus! thou Mediator, take up thine abode in my heart, that I may run to thee for counsel in every trouble, and obtain help from thee. If God be for me, who can be against me? Be present with me in MORNING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

my daily business and occupation. In the fulness of faith I say it. Lord, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. Bless my sleep and my waking, bless my going and my standing still, bless me in all things, pour thy blessing upon me. Let me be blessed before thee, and do not take thy blessing from me. In all the avocations of life, let me often direct my heart to thee, and should its affections ever begin to entwine themselves around the perishing objects of this world, help me to tear them loose, and sink them, Father! into thy love, Jesus! into thy wounds, that they may not stray from thy fellowship, and may still be found there in the evening. If a struggle awaits me to-day, help me to overcome; if a sinful thought make its appearance in my heart, or a sinful word upon my lips, strengthen me that I may dismiss it by thy grace. To thee I commit myself, with all that I have and am. Bless the sick and afflicted, and let them see the light of thy grace in the midst of their sufferings. Lead me, O my God, and guide me,

That thy word may be fulfilled;

Stand from morn to night beside me,

My protector and my shield.

But in thee and thee alone,

Safety and content are known. Amen.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS TO GOD.

10. The true Believer prays God to wean him away from the world

EXHORTATION.

"And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."—Rom. xii. 2. When the Christian reflects that the love of the world, like a weed, is of spontaneous growth, in the soul, but the love of God, like a fragrant plant, requires care and trouble, he will see how much labor and pains are needed. 1. He must therefore remember that the world is within and without him. Within he has sinful thoughts, lusts, and desires; and without, the example of bad men, temptations and seductions. 2. This two-fold enemy the believer must oppose; the rising desires and thoughts by prayer and supplication, and the charms of the world by avoiding its society, manners and fashions. 3. As this is not in his own power, he must pray diligently to God for his aid and assistance.

4. This renouncing of the world does not consist in an abandonment of human society, and our becoming recluses; but in our not yielding to the sinful example and ways of the world. For, as Paul says, if we are not to associate with wicked men at all, we must needs go out of the THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD TO world. We must live in the world as Joseph lived in Egypt, Lot in Sodom, and Daniel and his companions in Babylon, who all avoided the evil manners and deeds of the people among whom they lived. 5. We must thus renounce the world not a little season only, or upon especial occasions, when we are about to confess our sins to God, or to prepare for the celebration of the Lord's supper, but it must be done constantly. When the world is turned out of our hearts, Jesus enters in. Most merciful God! thou lover of men! how loving to us art thou that thou hast patience with our many errors and short comings, and will not punish us in the act, and according to our deserts. Through the truth of thy word, thou hast opened my eyes, and enabled me to know myself, and understand the deep depravity of my own heart. I feel the world within me and without me. I feel the world within me, in the shape of lusts, passions, and evil desires; and without I feel the world in the shape of wicked men, who seek to allure and to seduce me by their sinful examples and temptations. Alas! my sinful heart finds more pleasure in the world and its ways, than in thy holy word and a life led according to its precepts. O woe is me that so long, so often, and so much, I have WEAN HIM AWAY FROM THE WORLD.

permitted myself to be deluded and led astray by the world! I am ashamed to lift up my eyes to thee, when I remember the sins and follies of my youth. Alas, I favored the world more than thee, clung to the world more than to thee, served the world more than thee, my God, but thereby also offended thee, damaged my conscience, and aroused thy anger. Behold, my God! I return, and repent in dust and ashes. May thy holy spirit sanctify me through and through, and drive the world out of me. Present to my view the lamentable condition of the children of this world. that I may love thee and not the world, follow thee and not the world, hear thee and not the world. Draw me back when I offer to run after the world, and sin with it again; keep me always in the fear of thee, and remind me that thou hast created me for thy service; that I must daily put on the new man, who is created after God's image, in righteousness and holiness. Grant that I may constantly despise the fleeting pleasures of the world, and flee it, because its pleasures and joys are succeeded by dread, and evil conscience, and the perdition of the soul. Pluck from my heart what worldly seeds still linger there, and plant thy holy fear therein. Thou creator of all things, thou fatherly

power! that ruled from the beginning to the end, powerfully in one strength, turn our hearts to thee, and turn THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD away our thoughts that they stray not away from thee. Amen.

The true Believer prays God to direct and guide him.

EXHORTATION.

'Teach me thy ways, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth, unite my heart to fear thy name.' Psalms, lxxxvi. 11.—

Life is nothing more nor less than a way; when we are born we enter on the way, and when we die the way ceases with life, and we find ourselves in eternity. The question is, which way to take in this life of ours. If we choose the good way of faith, piety, and godliness, it will end in the glories of heaven. But if we take the broad road of infidelity, malice and ungodliness, it will lead us to hell and eternal damnation. 1. In consideration of this the Christian must reflect that in this life he has two ways before him, the narrow way to heaven and the broad way to hell, but he must diligently pursue the way to heaven. 2. In order to remain upon this way, he must often pray to God for his direction and guidance.

3. If he prays God for his holy guidance and direction, he must not stop to look around him

TO DIRECT AND GUIDE HIM.

to see how the other people of the world live, and on what ways they travel, for if he undertakes to follow them, the spirit of God will cease to lead him, yea it will even depart from him. Now, just as a traveller needs a guide to show him the true road, so a true believer is in need of the Spirit of God to point him on the way, in which he should walk. But for this purpose the indwelling of the holy Spirit is required in the heart, that it may be said, "know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you;" 1 Cor. iii. 16. If we have this faithful guide in us and with us, he will also direct our thoughts, lips, minds and desires. 4. The true believer never resists this holy guidance, but suffers himself to be led, encouraged, and guided, assured that he will be well directed here below, and above eternally. O happy guidance! Happy he, who is led by God. Lord! thou searchest me, and knowest me; thou knowest all my ways. O thou seest and knowest well, also, beloved Father, that I heartily desire to walk in thy ways, and so, as thou hast enjoined upon thy children, and whereof Jesus has given us his blessed example. But alas! experience shows me how, now here, now there, temptations lead me astray. Sometimes the evil 7*

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD desires of my own heart seduce me; sometimes

I am tempted by the evil examples of the world, if I follow the one or the other I anger thee, my

God and Lord; I offend my conscience, and the more I approach the world, the farther I remove from thee. O, therefore, I beseech thee to guide me and lead me after thy counsel. Thou hast said, I will lead thee with mine eyes. Lord, here

I am; let thy good spirit lead me on an even path.

Lo, I surrender myself unto thee wholly, my God!

who hast led thy people dry shod through the

Red sea, and unharmed through the wilderness into the land of promise. Oh guide me through the dangers of this life with a good and unsullied conscience, to eternal life. I resign unto thee my heart, my

lips, my limbs, and all my life.

Govern thou my heart, and fill it always with holy thoughts. Govern my limbs, that my hands may not reach forth after forbidden things, nor my feet walk the ways leading to sin and to hell.

Govern my mouth and my lips, lest they utter curses or unchristian or unseemly words. Govern all my life, that from henceforth I may not knowingly sin against thee, that I may be called and may be in truth a true and pious Christian. O do not leave me if in my weakness and folly I contend against thee, and do not leave me to my own will and guidance. When I lead myself I am misled. Yea, lead me with thine eyes, and

TO DIRECT AND GUIDE HIM.

constantly direct all my life according to thy wish, and when I am called on to surrender it into the jaws of death, when it is over with me here, let me die happy, and after death inherit the mansions of eternal life. Amen. 1. Give me what, most loving Father,

Thou wouldst have all men receive;

I would have this bounty rather

Than all else e'en thou canst give,

'Tis the gift I chiefly covet,

O'er all else my heart doth love it,

What it is thou truly know'st,

Father, send thy Holy Ghost.

2 Let him teach me well the sentence,

While I wander here below,

Which shall teach me true repentance,

And the way that I should go.

Which would never let to dwindle,

What thy word in me doth kindle,

Which would give me faith and make

Faith alive for Jesus' sake.

3. In the days of dread and sorrow,

This good spirit shall be near;

Ever show a hopeful morrow,

When my heart would sink with fear.

When the tempest roars around me,
And the thunder peals confound me,
It shall whisper, small and still,
That my Saviour loves me still.

EVENING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

4. And, as oft my soul with double
Strife and contest, must be tost,
Thou shalt on my crowding trouble,
Doubly shed the Holy Ghost.
Then my heart shall surely vanquish
All the woes that feed its anguish,
And the hopes that never fail,
Help me stem each rising gale.

5. From thy throne, O Holy Spirit,
Where thou and the Father's Son
Do the Father's power inherit,
One in three, and three in one,
Come to me, my heart's endeavor
Is that thou shalt dwell for ever,
In its chambers all alone,
E'en as on thy heavenly throne.

EVENING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

Holy, gracious, and only wise, God! the experience of another day has shown me that thou art the true father over all that have the name of children, in heaven and on earth. In thy infinite bounty, thou hast cared for me, that I have been in want of nothing good. O Lord, I am too lowly for all the kindness thou lavishest upon me. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits, I, who am but dust and ashes? Despise not the humble thank-offering I bring thee, and continue to look on me with favor. Forgive, O gracious God, whatever thine

EVENING PRAYER FOR WEDNESDAY.

eyes have seen amiss in me this day in thoughts, words and deeds; help me to lay aside with my daily apparel, every remaining sin and evil habit, to put off the old man with all his corrupt lusts and deeds,

never to put him on again. Let me and my house to-night sleep softly and sweetly under thy gracious protection. The sun has concealed his face, but do thou, O Jesus, thou sun of righteousness, never permit the light of thy countenance to be hid from my soul. May

I be invigorated by sleep, so that in the morning

I may arise refreshed and cheerful. As the shepherd watches over his flock, so do thou watch over my repose in soul and body. But shouldst thou see fit to send any affliction or distress upon me this night for the trial of my faith, patience and hope, give me the obedient mind of

Abraham, and the pious patience of Job. Let thy omnipresence and all-seeing eye preserve me daily from sin. At the coming of night, mine eyes are directed to the hills whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Lord, another day of my life hath fled; teach me now to see whether

I have been pious, and thyself show unto me if I have done anything amiss, and help me in all things to have a clear reckoning at close of day

Amen

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS THAT THE

11. The true Believer prays that the Love of God may be kindled in his heart

EXHORTATION.

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. We love him because he first loved us."—1 John, iv. 16, 19.

God is love, and because he is love, he wills that all his children and believers should stand in true love. Love is the tie which rivets our hearts to God, but also to the hearts of our neighbor. 1. A true believer prays to God that he will fill his heart with his holy love.

2. He must not despise the means whereby the love of God can be commenced and increased in him, devout attention to, and reflection on the Word of God, and the proper use of the communion. 3. If he stands in the love of God he must prove it by a holy Christian walk, becoming speech, and works well pleasing unto God.

4. But he must be well on his guard, lest, like Demas, he come to love the world again; for who so loves the world, the love of the father is not in him. Therefore, out of love to God, he must eschew the world, which would lead him away from God again. LOVE OF GOD MAY BE KINDLED IN HIS HEART.

5. In such love he must remain till death.

6. The love of God must increase constantly with increasing years; it is a shame to spend twenty, thirty, or forty years in the pleasures and follies of the world, forgetting the love of God. O thou loving and gracious God! thou alone art amiable; thee alone I ought to love with all my heart, with all my soul. O, I bewail and acknowledge before thee with great contrition of spirits, not only that the love of thee, my loving father, of Jesus, my Redeemer and Saviour, and of the Holy Ghost, my Guide and Teacher, has been extinguished in me by original sin, but also that I have not always made room for thy calling and efficacious mercy, to light again in my heart the flame of a true love of thee. I beseech thee to change my heart, to pluck from it all the love of the world and of sin, and to let mine ears hear the words, "Love not the world nor what is in the world, for if any one loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Expel from my heart the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, to which, alas! I am disposed by nature, and illumine by thy holy Spirit, within my heart a love of thee, that I may love thee, as the highest good, for thine own sake alone, and may eschew all the vanities of the world. For if I would be a true child of God, the world of sin, and the love of self, must leave my heart, and thou must be loved above all things. Therefore, I come to thee, O God! and pray thee to give me thy holy Spirit, to plant this Christian virtue in my bosom, in whose power I will love thee my God, with all my heart, and constantly; my soul shall think of thee, my lips shall speak of thee, thou shalt be more dear to me than all the world and pleasures of the world, than all happiness and glory. For love of thee I will sin knowingly no longer, for love of thee I will renounce all sinful companionship, for love of thee I will begin to be truly pious, and direct my actions by thy will and example alone, thee will I honor and fear, thee serve, follow and obey. Give me courage, if I am to suffer anything for thy sake, and strengthen me then by thy mighty aid. O let me be united in the bonds of love with thee, in time and in eternity. I love thee, O my God! aye, thee, for thine own sake; nothing in this world, neither scorn nor temptation, shall damp my love; and if

there were no hell or heaven to impel me to love, thou wert enough alone, to love thee and thee alone.
Amen. LOVE OF GOD MAY BE KINDLED IN HIS HEART.

1. Would that to its inmost fountains,

Love of God would fill my heart:

Swelling upward high as mountains,

Heavenward drive my soul to start

O that when I walk and tarry,

What I wear and what I carry,

Heart and Spirit, mind and soul

Would the love of God control.

2. That my heart this love would sever

From the world's temptations quite,

It would only seek forever

What is pleasing in thy sight.

That the world would hate and scorn me,

And God's love alone adorn me;

Never would I do a deed.

That his spirit would forbid.

3. In such love's embrace enfolded

All my heart new made should be,

To a better image moulded,

Worthy, gracious Lord, of thee.

In the field and on the fallow

Still this love my heart should hallow.

All I do and all I seek

Should the love of thee bespeak.

4. O then to its inmost fountains,

Love of God, fill thou my heart;

Swell it upward, high as mountains,

Heavenward drive it to depart.

MORNING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY

When I walk and when I tarry,

What I wear and what I carry,

Heart and spirit, mind and soul,

Let the love of God control.

5. And when love on earth is ended

When I yield my mortal breath,

Let the heavenly love be blended

Closely with the fear of death.

Let it so pervade my very

Spirits' inmost sanctuary,

That the only change may be

From thy love, thyself to see.

12. MORNING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY

"Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my king and my God: for unto thee will I pray."—Ps. v. 1-3. O thou good and most merciful God, I would praise and adore thee in this morning hour, not only that thou hast vouchsafed unto me thy fatherly protection from my youth up, but also that thou hast so kindly and faithfully watched over me during the past night, and hast again brought me to behold the welcome light of this new day. O thou Lever of Life! what is man that thou art mindful of him, and what is the son of man that thou visitest him? I lay and slept in unconsciousness; but thy sleepless eye preserved my breath, and thine MORNING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY.

angel guard was around me and my house, to preserve us from every harm and danger. Thou hast refreshed me by a soft repose, while many others have been sick, and in pain, want and distress, when I perhaps deserved chastisement as well as, yea, more than they; for I have not been so thankful for the unspeakable mercies received at thy hands as my duty would have required. At this early hour I promise to serve thee with body and soul. I will forbid my feet to walk in sinful paths; mine eye shall not look upon evil, nor my hands do that which is displeasing to thee. Mine ear I will turn away from loose doctrine and idle speech, which corrupts good manners. On the contrary, O Thou triune God, I will consecrate myself wholly to thy service. O dwell in my heart, enlighten my mind, and sanctify my soul more and more by thy grace. Let me be associated with the pious and good to-day; and if, in the discharge of my duties, I should be brought into contact with the wicked, preserve my heart and conscience from their evil deeds. Smile upon the labor of my hands, so that I may perform it with childlike reliance upon thy providence, and experience thy blessing. Now mine eyes are directed to the hills whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth, who shall bless me here in time until I attain eternity. THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD TO

Bless, O Lord, my going forth,

Bless, O Lord, my homeward wending,

Save from hunger and from dearth

My beginning and my ending.

Bless my death with thy endurance

Giving me of heaven assurance. Amen.

The true Believer prays God to inspire him with love to his neighbor.

EXHORTATION.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also."—1 John iv. 20, 21. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Thus does Christ designate the true mark of his disciples, in St. John xiii. 34. Let no one imagine that he

may stand in the love of God, if he hate his neighbor. O no! 1. Our neighbor means our friend, benefactor, or kinsman.

2. Also our neighbor, stranger and fellow-citizen, even if he envies, overreaches and hates us

INSPIRE HIM WITH LOVE TO HIS NEIGHBOR.

3. As against our enemies we should banish from our hearts all bitterness, implacability, hatred or malice, and should prove by words and works that we have a loving heart towards them, and should do in deed and in truth what Christ says: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."—Matthew v. 44, 45. O thou loving God! who dearly lovest us, but hast also commanded us to regard our neighbor with the same love with which thou lovest us. O I lament before thee that my heart has not yet surrendered itself to this sincere and perfect love to my neighbor. According to thy commandment I ought to love my neighbor as myself, I ought to rejoice when thou givest him happiness, health, and prosperity, as if the same had been accorded to me. I ought fervently to love my enemy, who hates, despitefully uses, persecutes, and oppresses me. I ought to wish him well, and to pray that thou wouldst grant every blessing to his body and his soul. But, omniscient God! thou seest and knowest how my heart is estranged from these duties, how, 8*

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD TO alas! when thou doest good unto my neighbor, when thou givest him happiness, honor and benefits, and not to me, I am ill content that thou doest not the same to me. Thou seest how feeble and how tardy are my prayers for my enemies. O my God and Father! I recognize herein the sinful depravity of my heart, and how far I am from that true condition of a disciple of

Jesus which is known by this, that they have love to one another; not only to their friends and benefactors, but also to those that envy them, to their enemies and persecutors. Therefore I beseech thee to change my revengeful and rebellious heart, that through thy favor I may love my neighbor heartily and sincerely, as myself. Give me strength to see with pleasure the good gifts thou vouchsafest unto my neighbor, and not to repine if thou dost not rejoice me with a like favor. Preserve me from being false, that I may not pretend to be his friend and kiss him, like

Judas, and yet betray him, but that I may be sincere with him. And if I must experience the persecution, the spite, and the wrongs of enemies, give me strength to overcome with gentleness, not returning evil for evil, and revilement for revilement, but wishing them prosperity and every happiness. Lord, my God! thou seest how hard this duty is to the flesh, but by thy favor and assistance I shall succeed. Amen.

INSPIRE HIM WITH LOVE TO HIS NEIGHBOR.

1 And must I see indeed that love and truth have vanished

From the fair Christian world, and from all hearts are banished?

Are these the latter days when every heart grows old,

And youth and age alike grow fickle, dull and cold?

2 Once truth and charity on every forehead hovered,

Where now are love and truth or works of love discovered?

What rankles in the heart leaps not upon the tongue,
And words of smoothest sound to wicked thoughts belong.

3. O false, deceitful world! God knows thy wiles and cunning—
Smooth spoken, while thy heart with thoughts of crime is running.
Knowest thou not that he who loves his neighbor not
God loves not, and of God will surely be forgot?

4. Lord! purify my heart, that like thyself, most truly
I may love even those who hate me most unduly;
The image of thy love keep still before my view,
That I may do to all, as I would have them do.

THE TRUE BELIEVER

5. And let thy Holy Ghost, of love and truth the spirit,
Dwell in my heart, that naught beside may move or stir it.
The angel of thy love still hold my hand in his,
Until he bears me up to thy eternal bliss.
The true Believer resolves to follow Christ.

EXHORTATION.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

A careful traveller enquires frequently whether he is still in the right road; and so the Christian traveller often asks whether he is still in the path to heaven. Many deceivers have gone out into the world, says St. John, and therefore we must constantly watch that we be not deceived. 1. A believer must not follow the world, which would entice him into its sinful ways and manners. Nor dare he follow the desires of his own sinful and corrupt heart. But whenever some thing presents itself to his mind, he asks himself, Is it right? 2. But he must follow the sacred Scriptures,

RESOLVES TO FOLLOW CHRIST.

which tell him what he must believe, experience, avoid, and do. This is his rule of faith and practice. What it forbids he carefully avoids.

3. He especially sets before him and labors to imitate the holy example of the blessed Saviour, Lord Jesus, who hath set us an example, that we might follow in his footsteps. His footsteps are his benevolence, humility, patience, meekness, sincerity, friendship, purity and zeal. 4. He also observes the pious example of other Christians. If he sees in them zeal, devotion, charity, and other virtues, he strives to imitate them.

5. He must follow Christ until death, and then he shall be taken to heaven and numbered among those who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.—Rev. xiv. 4.

O Lord my God! my only desire is that I may so live that after death I may attain to the joys of thy heavenly kingdom. I greatly rejoice when I read in thy word, that in heaven all thy dear people shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; but I well know that all those who would follow him in glory, must also faithfully follow him here in time, while yet they live upon the earth. This fills me with anxiety for the safety of my own soul: for I am surrounded by THE TRUE BELIEVER numerous advisers, and know not which of them to follow. Satan by his seductions invites me to follow him, and the world spreads its riches, honors, and pleasures at my feet. But I fear that if I follow them now, I will also have to follow them hereafter to hell and to perdition. Therefore, Jesus, help me to follow thee, and then I know that I shall be on the safe and happy way. I will follow thee in faith, love, humility, obedience, piety and chastity. Christ has set us an example, that we should follow in his footsteps, and this example shall be constantly before my eyes. After the holy example of Jesus, I will strive to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and will do his holy will. After his example, I will love my neighbor and do good unto him. After his example, I will heartily forgive all my enemies. After his example, I will be lowly, for he says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." O give me grace to fulfil these solemn and holy resolutions. Whenever I look upon the wicked works and ways of the world, may I remember whither these things lead. May I constantly reflect upon what I am, and what I ought to be. I ought to be a child of God and a follower of Jesus. I ought to keep myself untarnished by the world. Help that I may persevere in following thee, unto death. Amen. RESOLVES TO FOLLOW CHRIST.

1. Jesus is my flowery meadow,

Where no desert heats extend,

Jesus like a cooling shadow,

Overhangs me to the end.

When I long for joys to cheer me,

Jesus' glad'ning smile is near me;

He alone shall ever be

My diversion and my glee.

2. When all else is dark and dreary,

Jesus brings the light of day;

Still he shineth, never weary,

When the sun has passed away.

If, upon my night of sorrow

He, my sun, brings back the morrow,

Nothing can disturb my peace,

I am full of perfect bliss.

3. Troops of friends may crowd around me,

He is still my dearest friend;

Hosts of enemies may wound me,

He will never me offend.

Unto him my faith is plighted,

With his heart my heart united;

Where he calls my wishes tend,

Where he sends I gladly wend.

4. Therefore, let us cling to Jesus

Where we go and where we stand,

Nought but he alone will please us,

In this cold and bitter land.

EVENING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY.

Let the world despise and chide us,

What from Jesus can divide us?

Care and suffering will fail

If we follow Jesus well.

EVENING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY.

When I lie down at night I think of thee, and when I awake I speak of thee, O thou loving God and Father! here I come again, loaded with thy mercies, with a thankful heart, before thy face, at this evening hour. O how graciously hast thou looked upon me in permitting me to reach this evening unharmed; thy long suffering has spared me, that thou hast not punished me according to my deserts. O pardon all the transgressions with which I have secretly or openly offended thee. I ought to grow stronger, to contend against sin, to be more zealous in good things, more devout in prayer, more pious in my walk; but who can see how oft he errs! Forgive me also my hidden faults. May I be enabled hereafter carefully to avoid

whatever was wrong or sinful in me to-day. My sin is great, but thy mercy is greater; if thou wert not so merciful a God, who, Lord, would yet be living! I now retire to rest; O do thou thyself lock the door behind me, as at Noah's ark, that the waters of tribulation may not overwhelm me. Give thy

EVENING PRAYER FOR THURSDAY.

holy angels charge concerning me, that no evil, seen or unseen, may befall me. Help me to remember that as I now lay my body upon my bed of sleep, so I will soon have to be covered with earth, but waked again on the morning of the resurrection. Let every day of my life be spent in such a manner that I may enjoy the consolation of a loving God and a good conscience, so that I may be prepared to depart. O triune God! under thy shield no dread of death can assail me. Thy love and providence, O Father! thy wounds, O Jesus! thy favor, O Holy Ghost! are the sure defence wherein I softly rest and am well secured. Before them Satan must flee and depart. I would crave the same blessings for every member of my family, and for all that are near and dear to me, that I ask for myself. Remember graciously all the sick and afflicted, and administer to their wants. May I be invigorated and refreshed by sleep, so that if it be thy will, I may behold the coming morning. Amen. THE TRUE BELIEVER UNDERSTANDS

13. The true Believer understands that God alone is the chief good

EXHORTATION.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."— Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26. Men in every age have desired and sought after what they supposed to be the highest good; but they have nearly all failed in this, that they did not understand what really is the chief good. It must be something that is eternal and exhaustless, and that will be able to elevate and comfort us in suffering and in death, in fortune and misfortune. 1. Accordingly the chief good is not riches, which many have considered, and still consider the chief good, for they desert us in death.

2. Nor does the chief good consist in worldly honor and applause, for how often do the righteous fall into contempt and disgrace; fortune gives place to misery and wretchedness. 3. Wisdom and skill have this advantage beyond all other worldly gifts, that they cannot be taken from us, yet they vanish in death.

4. Wherefore the true believer seeks a true per-

THAT GOD ALONE IS THE CHIEF GOOD.

petual good, which is God alone; if God be our portion, then we possess the greatest honor, the chief riches, and the highest wisdom for time and eternity. God cheers the believer in prosperity, comforts him in sickness and affliction, refreshes him in death, and remains united with him in eternity. 5. This good is to be attained by prayers, hearing God's Word, meditating upon it, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

6. We must beware against thrusting God out of our hearts again, and making a chief good of the love of the world, vanity and sinful pleasures.

O thou eternal God! how rich, great and glorious art thou! He that has thee possesses all that is great, good, wise and excellent—he has all things. O thou God, so rich in mercies, how glorious art thou, how perfect! O engrave this truth deeply upon my heart, that I may seek thee alone, and find thee; preserve me from the folly of the world's people, who fondly think that in having great honor in this world, or riches, or pleasure, or glory, that they had attained the chief good? Fools! Fools! these forsake them in death! follow them not into eternity, comfort not their last hour! They pass into eternity naked and comfortless, with THE TRUE BELIEVER UNDERSTANDS out God. Therefore give, that I may well distinguish the true chief good from the transient and fleeting one. O thou triune God! thou art alone my chief, dearest, true, and most precious good; thou wilt give thyself to me, wilt unite thyself with me, then unite thyself with me in time and in eternity. While all earthly things are obnoxious to foes, to moths and rust, while a mishap may destroy them, my God, as my highest good, is mine forever, with him I go out, with him I enter in, him I take with me when I travel, with him I lie down to rest, yea, with him I shall once attain a glad eternity. Therefore, O my God, when I possess thee, I care not for heaven or earth; when I have thee, I have eternal life. O do thou dwell in me, stay with me for ever. Then I shall have a help in time of need, a supporter in trials and afflictions, riches in poverty, comfort in sickness, and the sweetest of refreshment in the final hour. Then, when the children of the world are deserted by their fancied good, my God will not

forsake me. Amen. 1. Every joy and every pleasure

In the thought of God I see;

God is greatness, God is treasure,

Happiness itself is he.

THAT GOD ALONE IS THE CHIEF GOOD

Therefore let the world be shattered,

Let the thunderbolts be scattered,

While the Highest sides with me

I am still from terror free.

2. Since his wrath no more pursues me

I have rest and peace in him.

While so fondly Jesus woes me,

Nothing can my gladness dim.

I can die without distortion,

Knowing joy will be my portion,

Joy while here on earth I live,

Joy which heaven alone can give.

3. His embrace allays the galling

Of the world's fierce agony;

Like the pigeon at the falling

Of the night to him I fly.

Rest at evening, rest at morrow,

Rest in trouble, rest in sorrow,

Rest in hunger, rest in dearth,

Rest in silence, rest in earth.

4. God, from ample stores and lavish

Pours profusion all around;

Pleasures that the soul might ravish.

Peace and solace here abound.

Even in this vale of trial

All may come without denial;

How delicious must it be,

Where he smiles eternally!

MORNING PRAYER FOR FRIDAY.

14. MORNING PRAYER FOR FRIDAY

My heart is prepared, I will arise and bless thy name. Gracious and most merciful God, my Father, my Redeemer, and my Sanctifier, unto the throne of thy majesty, whence flow all my blessings, I lift my heart and voice this morning. During the past night, thou hast been my strength and shield, my deliverer and strong helper and comforter, yea, my all and in all. Of all these mercies, O God and Lord, I acknowledge myself unworthy. In the midst of the darkness thou didst think upon me, and while the shadows of night encompassed me, thou didst protect and defend my body and soul from all harm and danger. For this I will praise thee and magnify thy holy name. The Lord hath done great things for me whereof I am glad. Do thou, O loving God, also stand by me this day. Lead and guide me according to thy counsel, and at last accept me with honors. I ask not for heaven nor for earth if thou art mine. Suggest to me to-day and every day what I shall speak, so that I may not grieve thee with the words of my mouth. Teach me what I shall do, so that I may avoid all that is evil. Let the chastisement of the Holy Spirit visit my soul, when my thoughts would stray from thee. O Jesus, let thy bleeding image be constantly before my eyes, THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR HUMILITY. 103 that the thirst of sin within me may be destroyed. May I die to the world and sin, and walk after the spirit. When I labor, strengthen me; when I pray, hear me; when I go out, accompany thou me; and when I come home, leave me not nor forsake me. May thy protection be around me and my family, as around the house of Job; defend me as Jacob; watch over me as over Elijah; and under the guidance of thy merciful providence may I pass the day in safety. Amen. The true Believer prays for humility.

EXHORTATION.

"And be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

Among those sins against which a believer must daily watch and pray, is pride and haughtiness of heart, which breaks out in words and works. We are naturally proud, as one of the results of the fall, but we must become humble through grace. No person can be Christ's disciple or be pleasing to God, who does not become humble. 1. Hence a true believer earnestly prays for

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR HUMILITY.

humility of heart towards his God. For "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."—Micah vi. 8. He will become humble towards God, by meditating the grandeur, majesty, and glory of God, and reflecting that he himself is but a worm, nothing but a poor wretched man, whom God can destroy in an instant. 2. But the Christian also acts humbly towards his fellow men. He remembers that his neighbor is probably much holier and better in the sight of God, and that in the grave he will fall to ashes like the meanest beggar.

3. He is consequently humble in his own estimation. He remembers that all his gifts, talents, graces, life and prosperity, are not from himself, but from God alone, who may soon take it all away from him, therefore he should not boast of it. To guard against all pride, he frequently calls to mind the example of the lowly Jesus, who lowered himself before God and all his creatures, and cries to us, "Learn of me, for I

am meek and lowly in heart." Great, holy and merciful God! who art the high and mighty, and before whose throne all

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR HUMILITY. 105 the elect humbly veil their faces. I confess with sorrow that I am by nature inclined to pride and selfishness. The fall of Satan so poisoned my heart with pride, which is the root of all evil, that I sometimes forget that I am but dust and ashes. O my God, give me an humble heart, that I may ever remember that all that I have, my body and soul, life and health, gifts and talents, I have received from thee, so that I may humble myself under thy mighty hand, and not offend thee in thought, word or deed. Teach me to understand my own wretchedness and thy majesty, that I have nothing of myself, but sin, death and damnation; but that all that I find good in me, I have received from thy bountiful hand, so that I may boast of nothing, but may regard everything as thy gift, which thou canst soon take from me again if I should forget thee. Implant that true humility in my heart, which will ever lead me to fear, obey, honor, love, and serve thee. Give me also humility towards my neighbor, that I may never be disposed to degrade him and elevate myself, or prefer myself to him. The proud have never yet found favor in thy sight, but that upon the lowly soul thou hast richly poured out thy light, thy comfort, thy grace, and thy goodness. O deliver me from proud and lofty thoughts, grant that I may guard against vain-glorious words, preserve me 106 THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR HUMILITY.

from ambition and boastfulness, which only lead to a contempt of one's neighbor. Stamp upon my heart the image of my meek and lowly Redeemer, who humbled himself before angels and men. If my neighbor is humbled, O preserve me that I may never exalt myself above him; and when he is exalted and honored, or becomes rich and great, may I so regard it, as if thou hadst made him so, hadst elevated and called him, and may I not complain of this to thee, or grudge him his good fortune, but on the contrary rejoice over it. Give me thy Holy Spirit that I may daily die to the sin of pride and selfishness, may not esteem myself worthy of thy honors, nor desire honors of any man, but may give all the honor and all the glory to thee alone. May I, with a truly humbled heart, know and acknowledge, that everything that I have and am, is the gift of thy grace, and that I have nothing whereof to boast but my weakness. May such a view of my own unworthiness dispose me to peace and humility towards all men. May my heart at all times be the dwelling-place of the lowly Jesus, and then I shall never exalt myself. Pride and high-mindedness is the sin of Satan, against which protect me in mercy. And if thou shouldst see fit to permit me to fall into disgrace and contumely, give me strength to bear all with humility, calmness and patience, and to THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR HUMILITY.

turn it to my humiliation and improvement in the blamelessness of my walk. Lord! Lord!

give me strength and endurance to accomplish this by thy mighty aid. Amen.

1. He is happy, who is humble,

He is peaceful, he is glad;

He shall neither fall nor stumble,

Never weep, and ne'er be sad.

Do not even high and holy

Preachers praise the poor and lowly?

Lowliness is far before
Gold and every worldly store.

2. Jesus too was poor and lowly

As the Word of God doth state;

He was loving, kind, and holy,

Never seeking to be great.

All his life doth bear the token

Of a spirit soft and broken;

And he says to me and thee,

Be of lowly heart like me.

3. Though the silly world supposes

Humbleness is fraught with shame,

It is wreathed with lovelier roses

Than the brightest crowns proclaim.

Pride itself cannot dissemble,

Lowly Christians more resemble

Jesus when he walked below

Than the proudest monarchs do.

108 THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR MEEKNESS.

4. Like a pure and snowy vesture

Humbleness doth grace the heart,

Humbleness in word and gesture,

Humbleness in every part.

Humbleness when troubles fret thee,

Humbleness when woes beset thee,

Humbleness to God above,

Is what he doth most approve.

The true Believer prays for meekness.

EXHORTATION.

"For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."—1 Pet. ii. 21-23. When an individual has made a good beginning in his faith and his conversion, in purifying himself of gross external sins, such as profane swearing, desecration of the Sabbath, luxury, recklessness, oppression, gaming, worldly associations, and the like, he must endeavor in the same manner to purify the inner man, of pride, envy, wrath, hatred and revenge, and must cultivate meekness. 1. Meekness consists in not returning evil for

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR MEEKNESS. 109 evil and in abstaining from threatening language against our neighbor from hatred, anger or revenge.

2. Whether we are meek and possess this noble virtue or not, we cannot tell until an enemy assaults us, and endeavors to rob us of our honor, property or good name. He who then is thrown into a violent rage, and swears, chides and threatens, has not the meek spirit of the Lord Jesus. 3. It is not, however, an offence against meekness, to invoke the protection of the authorities against our enemies. The Apostle Paul appealed to Cæsar, and claimed the emperor's protection, when his life was threatened.—Acts xxv. 11.

4. It is very unbecoming in professed Christians to bite like dogs, tear each other like lions, and persecute each other with the bitterness and ferocity of wild beasts.

5. In such persecutions God desires to test our faith, and to lead us to a knowledge of the sins we have previously committed, perhaps in wringing sighs from others by our unjust conduct.

6. The evidences of meekness, are hearty forgiveness of injuries, praying for our enemies,—Matt. v. 54, wishing all well and doing good to all, envying none, turning a deaf ear to idle and slanderous reports, and being ever ready to be reconciled.

'10 THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR MEEKNESS

O thou loving God! thou who art love itself, and who desirest that thy love should be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. O I complain to thee with deep sorrow of soul that I often find my heart refractory and unbending to thy will. Humility, love, meekness and patience ought to dwell therein; but alas! instead of these indispensable Christian virtues, I find obstinacy, hatred, anger, revenge, and animosity, which impel me to revile again him who reviles me, to return evil to him who does me wrong, and to wreak my revenge upon him who has unfairly attacked me. But knowing from thy holy word, O God! that those who do so will not come to the kingdom of God, and that such conduct towards enemies is not the manner of the children of God and of true Christians, I am frightened at myself to see that I still have the wickedness of the devil in me, who is revengeful, malicious and implacable, and beseech thee, have mercy upon me, O thou loving God, and give me thy Holy Spirit to sanctify my heart and purify it of all malice and revenge. May I ever regard the example of my Jesus, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered, he threatened not to revenge himself upon his enemies in future THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR MEEKNESS.

but on the contrary committed all things to him who judgeth righteously. O give me this same quiet, meek and forgiving spirit, that no anger, malice or sinful passions may ever find place in my heart, and that the sun may never go down upon my wrath. Give me grace and strength to be like a deaf man who hears not, and like a dumb man who opens not his mouth, when my enemies revile me. Guard me against manifesting any enmity in words, gestures, or works, but may I rejoice with them when they are prospered, and be disposed to aid and assist them when they are afflicted or distressed. But as to all men, so also to my enemies, enable me at all times to entertain good will and compassion of heart, show friendship and honesty in my conversation, gentleness in my gestures, and beneficence in works, so that implacability may not hinder my prayers and tarnish all my worship and devotion. Help me daily and from my heart to forgive those who trespass against me, as I hope and pray that thou wilt forgive my trespasses, so that I may not be daily praying against myself. May the blessing which thou hast promised to the meek come upon me—Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. May thy Holy Spirit conquer and subdue all those lusts and passions in my heart which are opposed to this virtue, so that I may believe, live and die
112 THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR MEEKNESS.

as thy child, and hereafter by thy grace be translated to the mansions of peace. Amen.

1. How my angry foe annoys me,

God in heaven, hearest thou!

How he speaks foul names, and how

He doth threaten to destroy me.

How he wars and mutters grim,

And would tear me limb from limb.

2. Hear him, Lord, but O preserve me,

From returning ill for ill,

Give me grace, that I may still

With unfailing patience nerve me,

Hearing him, but answering not,

Though his wrath be e'er so hot.

3. Let me follow the example

Of my Jesus, mild and meek,

Who would never vengeance wreak,

Though on sinners he might trample.

Let his spirit hover o'er

All I do for evermore.

4. Let me conquer by submission,
Heaping many a burning coal
On my foe's distempered soul,
'Till he sinks in deep contrition.

Let thy angel from above
Turn his hatred into love.

EVENING PRAYER FOR FRIDAY.

5. Let him taste of thy forgiveness,
Blot the record of his sin,
Let it in his heart begin
A most blissful sensitiveness,
Which may lead him on in grace
'Till we both behold thy face.

15. EVENING PRAYER FOR FRIDAY

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

O thou great and Almighty God! if in the day thou hast commanded the angels to guard me in all my ways, so let them also stand around my bed at night. I am now about to retire to rest; blessed Jesus let nothing evil approach me, I am not afraid when thou art with me, and when I sleep in thee, and when thou hast sent thy blessing upon my labors. Everything I have undertaken in thy name to-day, thou hast crowned with success. O that this day my constant maxim had been the word of Joseph: "How should I do such great evil, and sin against God." Lord, in mercy forgive me that I have been guilty of many short-comings and failings to-day. Lord, if thou shouldst be strict to mark iniquities against us, who could stand before thee? But what I cannot afford myself, I will pay with the blood of Jesus. My Jesus is mine, his atonement, his righteousness, his 10*

THE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR THE heaven, are all mine. O acknowledge me, my guide, my shepherd, accept me; from thee, the fountain of all good things, much good have I received; may thy goodness and love lead me to repentance. May thy glowing blood warm my cold heart, that I may never more offend thee, who hast done me so much good. I now lie down to rest; I know not but that this may be the night of my death. I well know how I lie down to sleep; but I know not how I shall arise, that is with thee alone, thou Lord of my days and of my life. But this at least I know, that if I lie down in thy name Father! in thy wounds, O Jesus! in thy communion, O Holy Spirit, I shall die happy, even though I may not wake again to this transitory life. Amen. The Believer prays for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

EXHORTATION.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me."—Ps. li. 10, 11.

A prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit is a most necessary and important petition.

1. In this life we indispensably need a leader, teacher and comforter; such is the Holy Ghost,

GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

who will lead us into all the truth, make us acquainted with Jesus Christ, will comfort us in all our afflictions and trials, and sustain us in the solemn and trying hour. He who has not the Holy Ghost in his heart, cannot be saved.

2. Hence all who live without the Holy Spirit are most unfortunate and miserable; they never can become truly pious, or lead a godly life, but will sin and stumble. But if God has given us the Holy Spirit, we must not grieve him away by wilful sin or a godless life; but daily pray, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

3. All such persons are truly united to God, and in a state of grace.

Great God and holy Father! I thy unworthy and sinful child, come to thee to crave a most necessary blessing, even thy Holy Spirit, which thou hast promised, to all those who ask thee. Therefore, send him down from above, from thy holy dwelling-place into my heart, that he may be my guide, who shall lead me

according to thy counsel, that I may at all times do that which is well pleasing in thy sight. How many ways of error and sin do I see around me and thousands of my fellow-men walking in them, and inciting me, sometimes with pleasant, and sometimes with spiteful words, to sin with them and do THE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR THE evil. O God! lead me in thy truth, preserve my heart in the one thing needful, that I may fear thy name. May I constantly remember, when the world would allure me into sin, that this is "the broad road which leadeth to destruction." Oh! give me thy Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, that he may instruct me; thy Spirit of joy, that he may gladden me in sorrow; thy Spirit of consolation, that he may comfort me; thy Spirit by which we are "born again," that he may make me a new creature; thy Spirit of adoption, that he may assure me that I am thy child. O Holy Spirit do thou sanctify me; for thou seest how unholy—how full of evil thoughts, lusts and desires my heart is by nature. But thou also seest that by thy grace I earnestly desire to be entirely delivered from my sins. I mourn that I have ever grieved thee, and have slighted thine admonitions. I now give myself entirely to thy guidance and counsel. Thou shalt be the main spring of my life, the consolation of my heart, the light of my mind, the force and firmness of my will, the source, the beginning and end, of my new and spiritual life. Sanctify me wholly, "that my whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Take my heart for thy temple and dwell in it. Thou sacred fire, do thou burn and banish from my heart all fleshly lusts GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

and desires. Reign in me and lead me on ever paths until thou bring me to heaven. When the flesh and blood and the world, under the troubles of this life, would deprive me of the comfort of being thy child, O assure me by thy vigorous consolation, that neither life nor death shall separate me from the love of God, and that though the children of God have sorrow and tribulation, they are his children none the less; bear witness unto my spirit that I am a child of God. Comfort me, especially in the hour of death, and when the help of man is vain, assure me that I shall partake of the glory which my Jesus has merited by his sufferings and death. Amen. 1. O come, most Holy Spirit,

And enter into me;

Inspire my soul, and stir it

With heavenly sympathy,

And dwell forever there.

I long to have and hold thee,

And in my arms to fold thee,

And in my breast to wear.

2. From every worldly trifle

Direct my wayward will;

Suppress in me and stifle

What thou dost not instil.—

THE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR THE SPIRIT.

I would be wholly thine—
Watch over all my wending,
My starting and my ending,
Make of my heart thy shrine
3. Yes, heart and soul must alter,
And all be sanctified;
I must not swerve nor falter
Nor wander from thy side.
Give me thy impulse strong
To look on sin with terror,
And shrink from every error
And all to thee belong.
4. I from myself will issue
When thou dost enter in;
Thy wonder-working tissue
Shall blot out all my sin.
In thee alone I have
Comfort, and firm reliance,
In which to bid defiance
To death and to the grave.
5. And when my days are ended,
And death at last draws nigh,
Thy loving hands extended,
Shall draw me up on high.
Short-lived the struggle seems,
That from the earth me severs;
The goal of my endeavors

Across my pathway gleams.

MORNING PRAYER FOR SATURDAY.

MORNING PRAYER FOR SATURDAY.

Lord, teach me that there must be an end of me, and that my life has a period, and that I must away. Strong and Almighty God! I praise thee at this early hour that thou hast so gloriously defended, so mightily protected soul and body, that no danger and no suffering can disturb me. Make my heart a temple for thyself, that I may not speak, or do, or think anything this day that is contrary to thy will. Blessed Jesus! thou who art the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, and who by thy grace hast brought me to see the last day of another week, help me to remember that soon the last week and last day of my life will have arrived, that I may spend all my remaining days and weeks in such a manner, that in the last hours of my life I may not be sorry or ashamed that I have lived. Let me spend this day also in the holy fear of thee, watch over my going out, and my coming in, bless the work of my hands, assist me in all things, and direct all my endeavors and undertakings according to thy will. I already rejoice in anticipation of the coming Sunday, when I shall rest from all my labors and cares, that thou mayest perfect the work of repentance, sanctification and grace in my soul. Amen. THE TRUE BELIEVER ACKNOWLEDGES

16. The true Believer acknowledges the unending goodness of God

EXHORTATION.

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."—Lam. iii. 22, 26. Everything in this world has its appointed period, but the goodness of God endureth forever. David, in his 136th Psalm, ends every verse with the expression "for his mercy endureth forever." God's bounty is like a mother, who, when her child is born, takes it into her arms, and nourishes and rears it; so does God also unto men. 1. The true believer acknowledges that this goodness is undeserved. If God would deal with us according to our deserts, destruction would visit us in soul and body. 2. It is perpetual. When a true believer recalls his past life, from his birth, childhood and youth, to his riper years, all is the goodness of God. All the good that is in us, God has wrought there. All our worldly possessions the bounty of God has given us. 3. And what is most wonderful, this goodness is extended also to the unthankful and wicked. God maketh his sun to shine upon them; he gives them food and raiment, but the indwelling THE UNENDING GOODNESS OF GOD.

of the Spirit the wicked do not obtain, because they close their hearts against it.

4. The goodness of God leads the believer to daily repentance, and to the love and fear of God, and he knows that this goodness shall follow him until death. How excellent is thy loving kindness, God! that the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They grow intoxicated with the good gifts of thy house, and thou dost give them to drink of pleasure as of a stream. Goodness like this, O God, I too have experienced. It has been with me every day, and new every hour. Like a nurse, thy goodness took me to its arms when I was born, and reared me. In youth, thy goodness led me by the hand, and followed me everywhere; it fed and clothed me, and supplied all my wants of body and soul. Yea, to this day and hour, thy merciful providence has been over me, thy light hath shone upon my path, and thy blessings, consolations and grace have cheered my soul. This goodness of thine has protected me from misfortune and harm, has attended my going out and my coming in, so that no evil could befall me. This goodness of thine has also sanctified my soul by the Holy Ghost, and brought it to the true and living THE TRUE BELIEVER ACKNOWLEDGES knowledge of thee. O my God, let this same goodness still follow me, and do not forsake me in old age, when my hair turns grey; let thy goodness and faithfulness accompany me until death; until it has brought my soul into thy bosom, and my body into the rest of the grave. May the contemplation of thy goodness and mercy lead me to unfeigned repentance, and to an entire consecration of my body and soul to thy service. And if through weakness I should fall into sin, in the greatness of thy goodness and love, have mercy upon me. Lead me back in thy benignity, to the path of repentance and of peace. For all the goodness vouchsafed unto me I thank thee and praise thee from my inmost heart. Not only will I praise thee here while I live, but I will extol thee, O good and merciful God! in all eternity. Amen.

1. Every night and every morning,

God! thy mercies are renewed.

Never spent, and still returning,

All my steps have they pursued.

He has done me more to bless
Than my words can e'er express;
Life and health and strength he's given,
Joy and love, and hope of heaven.

THE UNENDING GOODNESS OF GOD.

2. Happiness, of angel savor,
Love, that from his bosom flows,
Grace, that comes of Jesus' favor,
Comfort, as the Spirit knows.
Solace, when my heart would fail,
Help, when Satan doth assail;
Goodness, when I stand before him,
Grace, when I for grace implore him.

3. What my memory rehearses,
Speaks of mercies such as these;
I was cradled in his mercies,
I was fondled on his knees.
When at morn I rise with zest,
When at eve I take my rest,
Never does his goodness falter,
Never fail and never alter.

4. O that this celestial kindness
Never might my steps forsake;
'Till from this unbroken blindness
To the joys in Christ I wake.
I will praise this heavenly cheer
While my voice endureth, here,

And, when earthly shadows leave me,

Where his goodness shall receive me.

THE TRUE BELIEVER MEDITATES ON THE

17. The true Believer meditates on the coming Afore of the Children of God

EXHORTATION.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—1 John iii. 2, 3. A true Christian should daily consider three things: what he is, what he possesses in God—a father, a benefactor, and the best of friends—and what has yet to expect at the hands of God, heavenly pleasures and bliss. Such contemplations tend to keep alive in his soul the flame of love to God, and cause sin to lose its charms and power over him. 1. True believers have great glory even in this life; they have the pardon of their sins, are the sons of God and heirs of heaven, have peace with God, consolation in affliction, bliss of the soul, rest in God, and a Mediator; compared with this, silver, gold, money, and kingly crowns are as nothing. 2. They have great glory to expect in the life hereafter. They shall enter into heaven, see the triune God, associate with the saints and angels, COMING GLORY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

and, freed from all sin, sorrow, toil and pain, rise in the body to eternal life.

3. The true believer anticipates this with joy, draws consolation from it in sorrow, and is assured that the time will come when all trouble will turn to endless rejoicing.

4. He must not forfeit this glory by a sinful life in this world's sins, but must consider that he is destined for something better.

5. He stands fast in faith and regards the things of earth as a fleeting show, which he must leave behind, but often sends his heart before to where he longs to dwell for evermore.

How good and gracious art thou, O eternal

God, that thou hast not only created man for great glory at first, but that even after his fall thou hast again promised exceeding glory to all who would accept of thy grace, and follow the impulse of thy Holy Spirit in faith and holiness. For such regenerate and sanctified souls may rejoice over great glory even in this present life. They are the children of God, invested with the righteousness of Christ; the Holy Spirit dwells in them, they are at peace with thee and have thy favor, grace and love, which they are always at liberty to claim in their prayers, and to obtain thy help and thy mercy in their troubles. This 11*

THE TRUE BELIEVER MEDITATES ON THE glory will be still increased in the life hereafter; for when the soul is severed from the body, it shall joyously attain the sight of thy face, it shall be presented to thy saints, and filled with the joys of heaven. And after the resurrection, the body likewise shall reach this glory; it shall be transfigured and shall shine as the sun. O my

God! give me thy grace always to have this glory before my eyes. O preserve me in faith and piety, that when the world would seduce me I may consider that I am thy child, and that I have still to expect at thy hands eternal glory and happiness, so that I may never love the world again, to the neglect of the glory of heaven. Help me to act cautiously, so that at the end of my life I may truly say, I have fought the good

fight, I have run my course, I have kept faith, henceforth I shall wear the crown of righteousness, which the just judge will give me, and not me alone, but all who love his coming. Amen.

1. What boundless store is mine! God's love, God's very essence

Falls to my happy lot, e'en in this mortal presence. The glad, the joyous thought! 'tis mine, all, all, is mine!

It fills my beating heart with rapture most divine. COMING GLORY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. 127

2. For o, the Lord is mine! his fatherly affection Returns each morn anew, and gives me fresh protection. He is my sword, my shield, my comfort and my guide, True friend and champion bold, whatever me beide.

3. And Jesus, too, is mine, to save and to redress me; Can suffering or tears, the grave or death, distress me? His righteousness is mine, his merit and his grace, His blood and saving death; what can all these efface? 4. The Holy Ghost is mine; he leads me to the portal Which I shall enter when my life no more is mortal; He is an earnest of the peace that is to come

When I with Christ shall dwell in his eternal home. 5. For heaven itself, is mine, with all its bright enjoyment, The purchase of my Lord's wounds, death, and sore annoyance. Alive or dead, I know that Jesus for me died,

And by his sacrifice I shall be glorified.

EVENING PRAYER FOR SATURDAY.

EVENING PRAYER FOR SATURDAY.

When I walk in darkness the Lord is my light

O most merciful and gracious God! another day has come to a close, and with it also another week; but thy mercy endureth forever. The mountains may be removed and the hills may fall, but thy grace shall never depart from thy children. This eternal grace has preserved me during another week. Now I know, what I did not at the beginning of this week, that in health I should be spared to see its close. Thy mercies have been many during this week. Thou hast heard my prayers, directed my steps, and richly loaded me with blessings. Thou hast watched over me, given me good counsel, and guided me; not a day has passed that I have not received gifts of grace, love and mercy, from thee, yea, not an hour has gone by that the stream of thy blessings has not been poured out upon me. How great are thy grace, love and mercy! But I also remember my sins at the end of the week. My trespasses have been many. I have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by failing to do right and often doing wrong. I feel that I have not been as watchful, prayerful, and devoted as I ought to have been. I have not devoted as many hours to thee as I should have done. O

EVENING PRAYER FOR SATURDAY

Lord, forgive me these sins; rebuke me not in thy wrath, nor chastise me in thy sore displeasure. Be thou a wall of fire round about me this night, and graciously preserve me and my family from all harm and danger. The end of this week reminds me of the end of my days, that I am one week older, and so much nearer to eternity. The last week, day, and hour of my life is rapidly approaching, upon which a long eternity is to follow, therefore help me so to spend all my weeks, days, and hours, that I may never dread thy sight. Here I am but a pilgrim; but in heaven is my native land, where thou wilt wipe away all tears from the eyes

of thy children, and delight and satisfy them with eternal joy. I would now lay aside all my earthly labors and cares, and prepare myself for the approaching Sunday, which I mean to spend in praying, singing, and the contemplation of thy Holy Word. Grant me the grace of the Holy Spirit, that all its sacred hours may be consecrated to thee, and that my devotions may not be hindered by the intrusion of the world and sin. Amen. THE TRUE BELIEVER THANKS GOD

18. The true Believer thanks God at the end of the week

EXHORTATION.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me"—I's. cxvi. 12.

One day and week after another passes away, and we are brought nearer and nearer to our graves; yet our God is still so merciful as to vouchsafe unto us many benefits in soul and body, and fill our hearts with gladness. Such should be the reflections of the believer at the end of the week.

1. He thanks God for the blessings which he has received, for the care and protection exercised over him, for the help extended to him, and for all the tokens of his love given him in answer to his prayers. If he hears that others, during the week, have been overtaken by distress, he sympathises with them, and thanks the Lord for having so mercifully preserved him. 2. He remembers that the goodness of God should lead him to repentance; wherefore, on the last day of the week, he repents the evil he has done each day, and thus makes the last day of the week a day of confession of sin, humiliation, repentance, and prayer for pardon, as well as of thanksgiving. AT THE END OF THE WEEK.

3. He beseeches God for the continuance of his protection and care, his mercies and blessings during the coming week. 4. He ponders the fact that one week after another of his life is rapidly passing away, and that his dying week will soon come. For this he endeavors to prepare himself by a life of repentance, faith, and prayer. He constantly strives to become more holy and devoted to God. Such meditations ought to make us more pious, watchful, thankful, and zealous. They should lead us constantly to look up to God as the author and giver of every good and perfect gift, and to commit ourselves to the spirit of his grace, that we may continue in his love, and live according to his will, and be ever ready to leave the world in peace when the dying hour, dying week, and dying year shall come. The Lord hath done great things for me whereof I am glad. Hitherto the Lord hath helped me. Truly, my God and King, I may use this language now, since thou hast so mercifully brought me to the close of another week. "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Thou dost watch over, protect, and keep them, and every THE TRUE BELIEVER THANKS GOD morning thy goodness is new to them. O, my God, thou hast extended thy wings over me, and preserved me, guided me, protected me, hast done me great good in body and soul, and hast allowed me and mine to enjoy the comfort of thy grace.

Wherefore "bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name! Bless the

Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits?"

How many during the week have fallen, whilst

I, by thy grace, yet stand! How many have passed this as a week of affliction, pain, and suffering, while I have enjoyed peace and happiness! How many have spent their days in trouble and distress, and moistened their pillows with tears of sorrow at night, while joy and gladness have filled my heart! For all this I would magnify and praise thy name from the bottom of my soul. Thanks to thee, O God, for thy protection and grace, thy assistance and love, and all the blessings bestowed upon my body and soul. O my God! forgive me also in mercy the wrong that I have done this week. For the sake of the bleeding

wounds of Jesus Christ spare me, and do not deal with me according to my deserts. By the mighty assistance of thy Spirit,

I will endeavor during the coming week to avoid all the sins of the one which is now past, and that in holiness and righteousness I may serve thee all the days of my life. Amen.

AT THE END OF THE WEEK.

1. Soul! another week behind thee

Sinks into eternity!

Let reflection well remind thee

Of thy God's benignity.

Still his open hand outpours

Wealth and happiness in stores;

Still his unremitting kindness

Guides thee in thy tottering blindness.

2. As the living water courses

From new fountains forth with speed,

So the current of his mercies

Brings thee all that thou dost need.

Who can tell, beneath the sun,

All the good that God hath done;

For his wealth is like a mountain,

And his grace flows like a fountain.

3 Pray that like a failing ember,

He may fan the flames afresh;

And that he will not remember

The short-comings of thy flesh.

Yea, my Father, do not think

Of the sins 'neath which I sink;

As the week is gone and vanished,

Let my sins be also banished.

4. May I further taste thy favor

In the week that is to be;

Grant that the delightful savor

Of thy grace may make me free

THE TRUE BELIEVER CONFESSES HIS SINS

From the sin that bears me down,

From the cares that on me frown;

Ever let thy goodness aid me,

And thy mercy overshadow me.

5. If it be thy will to send me

Care and trouble in this week,

Let it not too fiercely shend me,

Let thy goodness for me speak;

Or if thy decree be passed

That this week should be my last,

Let thy mercy not forsake me,

I am safe if thou dost take me.

The true Believer confesses his Sins, and prays God to forgive them.

EXHORTATION.

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."—Pa. li. 1-3. To have a merciful God, is, without doubt, the greatest privilege of a Christian. The world, indeed, supposes that wealth, honor, luxury and amusement, constitute happiness; but it is not so, for all this must pass away. True believers, therefore, AND PRAYS GOD TO FORGIVE THEM.

1. Examine their consciences daily, to see whether they are still in grace with God.

2. When they take shrift, they do not only remember their sins, but they earnestly pray God to forgive them, grieve over them, and seek refuge in the goodness of God, and the bleeding wounds of Jesus, and humbly pray for mercy. If God is pleased to forgive their sins, they take comfort, but nevertheless 3. They endeavor to retain the favor of God by permitting the Holy Ghost to control them, they try to lead a Christian life, and manifest their zeal in words and works; they fly from vice and from their former sinful

practices; and then they know that in life and in death they will have a merciful God. Holy, triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, a sinner comes before thy most holy face, and begs thee earnestly and humbly for the forgiveness of his sins. Alas, my God! I have offended thee in various ways, with evil thoughts, words, and works. Lord! Lord! thereat am I greatly grieved, and all my soul regrets it. By holy baptism, thou hast made me a lamb of thy fold and a member of thy body; therefore, I ought to hear thy voice alone. Aye, as thy possession I ought to give my limbs as a sacrifice, living, holy THE TRUE BELIEVER CONFESSES HIS SINS, and well pleasing unto thee. But oh! what shall I say? I have listened to the voice of the world and of the flesh more than unto thy voice, and have done many things against thy will. O the blindness of my heart! O the follies of my youth! If now thou wilt enter into judgment with me, I am lost forever; for my conscience testifies against me, and my sins are more numerous than the sands of the sea. But O, have mercy upon me, according to thy loving-kindness; do not account with me for the evil I have done, but give me credit for what Jesus Christ, my Saviour, has done for me; for the sake of Jesus, be merciful to me, a sinner. I will lead a new and godly life, and not again sin wantonly or wilfully against thee, thou triune God. Amen. 1. To condign judgment, Lord, go not with me a sinner!

Of thy forgiving grace let me be found a winner.

I know my weight of sin; that nought is good in me,

Yet a forgiven child in mercy let me be

2. My eyes are on the ground, my step is slow and fearful,

My knees beneath me sink, my eyes are dim and tearful;

AND PRAYS GOD TO FORGIVE THEM.

O do not look upon my vile deformity;

I know thou see'st it all! Think I am saved by thee!

3. I have forgotten thee, alas! my heavenly Father!

And have gone in and out in sinful places rather;

Sin, with its dazzling toils, has so obscured my sight,

That thus my soul has sunk into this woful plight.

4. But will not Jesus' blood of all these stains relieve me,

And let the matchless grace of God once more receive me?

O Jesus, cast upon my woe thy pitying eyes

And let me taste the bliss of thy dear sacrifice.

5. And thou, God Holy Ghost! by whose chastising rigor

My penance was provoked, endow my soul with vigor

To serve the cause of God with unremitting zeal

And in that service quite forget the grief I feel

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THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD

19. The true Believer prays God to give him strength to resist sin

EXHORTATION.

"Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof: neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—Rom. vi. 12, 13. Sin is a departure from God, a transgression of the divine law; it is the essence of all that is wrong. But a true believer is loath to depart from God, or to transgress the divine command, or to do wrong; but it is his desire that Jesus should live in him, and that the Holy Ghost should direct him, but as he cannot entirely accomplish this at all times, he must contend against sin. 1. The true believer knows that he who is born of God does not sin, that is to say, wilfully and designedly, and therefore he is on his guard not to offend God with design or intention.

2. But as this is not enough for him, as he desires to consecrate and sanctify all his heart, soul, spirit and life to his God, so he is often disturbed at a single sinful word which has escaped him, or at a sinful thought which suggests itself, and if he really offends God, or his neighbor, he is deeply grieved. TO GIVE HIM STRENGTH TO RESIST SIN.

3. In these straits and troubles, he takes refuge with Jesus Christ, and implores him for his powerful aid, to vanquish sin and the world.

4. He must not only pray with the greater devotion, the more he feels the force of temptation, but must also keep a watch upon his rising thoughts and desires, and avoid the places and the persons through whom and through which he may be led into sin.

5. If he preserves this state of holy effort, and endeavors to serve God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, he may be assured that he who has bestowed the will, will also give the power; that the blood of Jesus will cover his failings and shortcomings, and that the Lord will be well pleased with his anxious desire to serve him. Strong and almighty God! thou who knowest everything that is in man. O thou seest what a fierce struggle I have against sin. I would fain be and remain truly pious of heart, regulate my life according to thy holy word, and execute thy holy will; but I feel another law within my members, which resists the law that is in my mind. When I seem to myself to stand firmly in my good intentions, I suddenly find to my humiliation, that pride, self-will, ambition, envy, THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS GOD perverseness against my neighbor, manifest themselves, that sinful thoughts enter my heart, yea, that I sin with thoughtless words and unseemly works. O I grieve to be so full of uncleanness; do thou purify me, Lord, and I shall be clean. By thy grace, I understand that sin is a great evil, of which I would gladly be rid, wherefore I resist it with thy strength, and yet I am sometimes overthrown. But this miserable condition in which I am, greatly grieves me; what will become of me at last, if I am pious to-day and wicked to-morrow, and if my piety has no endurance? Thou seest, my God! how I am frightened at myself, but that I cannot help myself with my own powers: therefore I come to thee, and beseech thee to give me strength to resist sin; let thy holy spirit dwell within me, and cleanse my heart. Give me the performance also, strengthen my inward man, that by thy power I may throw off sin after sin. Make me stronger and stronger to overcome the world within me, and without me. I can do all things through him who makes me powerful, even Christ. O help me, my God, and grant that I may be pious in heart, that my

religion may be sincere and righteous, and not seeming or hypocrisy. Amen. TO GIVE HIM STRENGTH TO RESIST SIN.

1. From the world let me be covered,

Though still in the world I hide;

For in it I have discovered

What I never can abide;

Insolence, deceitful, smiling,

Pride and haughtiness, beguiling,

Hatred, envy, wrath and feud,

Quarrels, strifes, and thirst of blood.

2. I will look with detestation

Ever on such things as these

By the Spirit's ministration

Keep afar from such disease;

Unto God alone I'll tender

My affections, and surrender

All my heart unto his will;

It is his, 'twill serve him still.

Though for some time, to my sorrow

I must hold this world of sin,

Yet my heart shall never borrow

Form from what it settles in.

I will ask the Lord's protection

'Gainst the world's despis'd infection;

Howsoever my life may go,

Be my conscience pure as snow.

4. For if thus I strive unceasing

From the world to keep away,

Unto God I will be pleasing,

He will ever with me stay.

THE TRUE BELIEVER OFFERS HIMSELF

Though my form on earth remaineth,

Yet the spirit heavenward straineth;

So my body is at peace,

And my soul in endless bliss

20. The true Believer offers himself as a Sacrifice to God

EXHORTATION.

"I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Rom. xii. 1.

Every Christian must frequently call to mind that we belong not to ourselves, but to God, and this should encourage us to offer ourselves, and all we have, to God in return.

1. The offerings of the Old Testament had to be voluntary. Man must lead a godly life in the world, not from fear of hell, but from love to God; otherwise the sacrifice is but compulsory.

2. The offerings were required to be presented wholly, and not in part; therefore we must not give one half of our hearts to the world and the other to God, but must love God, and surrender ourselves to him with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our might. AS A SACRIFICE TO GOD.

3. These offerings were required to be without a flaw; nothing blind or lame could be sacrificed to God. We must take care not to stain our souls or our bodies, for a soul tarnished with sin God will not admit into heaven. 4. God had a peculiar partiality for young sacrifices:—for lambs one or two years old; this was to show that we must not postpone our conversion to old age, but must give ourselves as a sacrifice to God in good time, in the bloom of youth. 5. What was once sacrificed to God, could not afterwards be changed or taken away; so must a Christian be steadfast in his purposes.

Lord, Lord God! thou who didst command thy people Israel to bring thee daily sacrifices, which were to be entirely hallowed and sanctified unto thee,—lo, I bring thee my believing and penitent heart, thou wilt not despise it. I sacrifice to thee my will, henceforth I will no longer do what I will, but what thou wilt. I offer thee my lips, with which I will praise and extol thee, and which I will never again abuse for shameful words or idle gossip. I offer thee my heart, which do thou fill with a living faith, with thy grace and thy love, and with vital godliness. If it is a heart by nature unclean THE TRUE BELIEVER OFFERS HIMSELF and unfit for sacrifice, O cleanse it with the blood of Jesus Christ, which I accept in true faith, O purify it by thy Holy Ghost, sanctify it for thy habitation, and do thou reign and govern therein I offer thee my life, which I will lead according to thy holy word, according to the good impulse of thy holy spirit. I offer to thee my limbs, help that they may be instruments of righteousness, that I may not abuse them for sin and shame, but that they may remain consecrate unto thee. As the law required that an offering should not again come into contact with other things, so I too will separate myself from the world. Yea, I will sacrifice myself to thee while I yet live and enjoy health, and not wait until I fall sick, for then it might be too late. O Lord! thou didst accept offerings at all times, at morning, noon, and eve; look in mercy also upon my sacrifice. If I bring it to thee but at the noon of life, or if perchance the evening approaches,—if I have suffered the morning of my youth to pass by, still thou wilt not despise my offering, for it is brought in faith, like the faith of Abel. O look upon it in thy mercy; I will be and remain thy property during the remainder of my life. Lord, my Shepherd, source of all joys, thou art mine, I am thine, no one can separate us; I am thine because thou hast given thy blood and thy life unto death for my advantage. Thou art mine, AS A SACRIFICE TO GOD.

because I hold thee, the light of my steps, and do not suffer thee to vanish from my heart; let me come to where thou wilt embrace me, and I thee, in heaven. Amen.

1. O Lord, vouchsafe me the fulfilment

Of what I sigh for day by day;

That I may keep thy word's instilment

And never from thy counsel stray.

Give me a godly life below,

That I to heaven may surely go.

2 Grant that the Saviour's blood and anguish

May hold me firmly to my trust;

And that my love may never languish,

Until my dust returns to dust.

Give me a godly life below,

That I to heaven may surely go.

3. And may sin's shadow never darken

The light that streams from thee to me.

And may to nought I ever hearken

That could divide my heart from thee.

Give me a godly life below,

That I to heaven may surely go.

4. That while in darkness here I falter

I may persist in godliness;

And never with my conscience palter,

Nor miss the time to sue for grace.

Give me a godly life below,

That I to heaven may surely go.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS.

.5 Then may I die with easy spirit,

And seek the tomb with cheerful face

Assured that I shall then inherit

What I was promised by thy grace.

Give me a godly life below,

That I to heaven may surely go.

21. The true Believer prays on partaking of the Lord's Supper

EXHORTATION.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. ii. 26.

The Lord's Supper is one of the means to strengthen faith and love. In it Jesus enters the believer's heart. He dwells in his soul to reign over and sanctify him, and keep him faithful to the end. 1. Hence no true Christian can neglect this ordinance like the people of the world, who are so much distracted by their vanity, love of the world, wrath, malice, pride, and luxury, that they have no time to think of this pledge of the soul. 2. The true believer does not come to the Lord's table as a matter of mere custom, but with an humble, penitent, and believing heart,

ON PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

full of good resolves to be steadfast in the love of Jesus and the fear of God.

3. After partaking of the Lord's Supper, the believer strives more than ever to surrender himself entirely to God, to become, by virtue of this nourishment of the soul, daily more pious, devout, and zealous, in godliness and in the performance of Christian virtues, and to be faithful to his God even until death. My Jesus, how can I sufficiently praise thy exceeding mercy, that thou hast not only given thyself unto death for me, a sinner, but hast ordained thy holy body and blood to be a nourishment to my soul in thy holy supper! O Love! thy death brings me life, and thy body and blood fortify and refresh me for eternal life. Therefore, I remain in thee and thou in me; thou livest in me, and in thee I attain to righteousness and strength, so that my sins can no longer terrify, nor Satan condemn me! for in thy holy communion I receive the ransom of my sins. Here I receive the body, given unto death for me, here I receive the blood which was shed for me for the forgiveness of sins. This is the blood of redemption, whereby my sins and the sins of all mankind were cancelled. In holy baptism, the first sacrament I have received, thou gavest me the Holy Ghost as a pledge, and the new life, which assures me that I am thy child and heir. In the holy communion, the other sacrament, thou givest me the pledge of thy body and blood, whereby thou wilt uphold and strengthen the spiritual life within me. O my God, sanctify my soul, strengthen my faith, purify my heart, so that I may partake of this feast of love in a manner worthy of thee. Jesus, the true bread of life, help me that I may not come vainly, or perhaps to my own harm, to partake of this meal of grace. In this feast of grace, let me measure the depths of thy love, that as I am thy guest here on earth, so I may hereafter be eternally in heaven. Amen. ANOTHER.

O Jesus! as I now receive this holy feast of love, I receive it in memory of thee. I recall thy love, by which thou didst come into the world for my benefit, to make me inherit eternal life. I recall thy martyrdom, thy suffering blood, and wounds, whereby my sins and chastisements were taken away, and thy righteousness was bestowed upon me. I recall thy death and resurrection, whereby life and happiness fell to my lot. I know, O Jesus, that for thy sake, I shall attain to the grace, the childhood, the peace, and the joy of heaven. I shall not be ON PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

lost, for I am in thee, O Jesus, and thou in me.

O remain in my heart, dwell in my heart, live and reign in it, let me be thine in time and in eternity. As the manna was laid in a clean vessel, so do thou cleanse my heart by true faith, repentance, love and humility, so that I may worthily receive this pledge vouchsafed unto my soul, and keep it constantly for the strengthening of my, faith the sanctification of my life, and the assurance of my bliss in heaven. O Holy Ghost, preserve me thus in grace unto the end. Guard me from falling wantonly back into sin, lapsing from grace, and at last becoming worse than I was at first. Let me persist unto death in the faith of the triune God, in love to my neighbor, and in piety, so that I may attain to the end of faith, and the bliss of the soul. Jesus be my meat and drink; Jesus be the burden of my song;

Jesus be my all, be my shout of joy; at last, O

Jesus, let thy precious blood, thy wounds and thy sufferings, be my rest in death. Amen.

1. All thanks, and all Hosanna,

For this thy heavenly manna,

Of which I taste the savor

By thy most gracious favor.

2. That body which, distorted,

My soul from death extorted;

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THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR PIETY.

The blood shed for my living

Have I been now receiving.

3. Jesus is now beside me,

His heart has occupied me,

He now is mine forever,

And nothing can us sever.

4. In him is now my gladness,

He banishes my sadness;

I am of his preferring;

No more can I be erring.

5. My Jesus! soul and spirit,

That thou dost richly merit,

O take them as thy treasure,

And use them at thy pleasure.

The true Believer prays for piety.

EXHORTATION.

"Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."—Psalm xxxvii. 37.

Next to faith piety is one of the holiest of virtues, not only because it is the fruit of faith, but also because it preserves from sin and shame, the soul, the body, and the honor of man. This virtue is an ornament of youth, and becomes old age no less. God himself urges it upon Abraham when travelling in a strange land: "Walk with me, and be thou pious."—Gen. xvii. 1. THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR PIETY.

1. A mere external propriety does not constitute this virtue, for such is found even among the heathen; it must arise out of faith, the love of God, and the inner emotion of the soul. 2. It does not consist merely in sincerity and honesty of heart towards God and our neighbors, but in an unblemished walk, and abstinence from all unbecoming words and unchristian works. 3. This piety must endure to the end. "Till I die, I will not remove mine integrity from me." Job xxvii. 5.

4. Being the product of the agency of God's Holy Spirit within us, it is fraught with the richest promise of eternal life.

Holy God! I hardly know whether I dare appear before thy holy face, when I reflect upon my natural unholiness and sinfulness. Thou callest upon me also to walk with thee and be pious, and tellest me that if I am pious I shall be accepted; and that the end of the upright man is peace. But alas! my piety has hitherto made but little progress; I have been till now implicated in the doings of this world, its habits and its vanities; yet where the world cometh in, Christ goeth out, and where the love of the world is found, there is no piety. But as I cannot be well pleasing in thy sight while in this condition, THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR PIETY.

O give me a pious heart! Grant me grace to strive after true piety, to love thee above all things, to serve thee, and to do thy will, like a dutiful child, which does nothing without first seeking the eyes of its parents, to see whether they approve of it, so may I undertake nothing without first looking into thy Holy Word, to see whether it accords with my duty as a Christian. If my heart shall thus become pious, my mouth will also grow pious, so as to say nothing unbecoming, yea, my words and deeds shall then also be pleasing unto thee. Now, my God! in thy name I have formed this resolution, give me grace, strength, power, and mercy, to carry it out. If in years past I have not striven after this precious gem, pardon me for Christ's sake; what I have neglected through want of understanding and blindness, I shall now compensate with the greater zeal, and live according to thy will. Thus, Lord, my God! I will become heartily pious, and remain pious, that as a pious Christian, I may hereafter die in peace. To this end, give me for Christ's sake, the power of thy Holy Spirit. Give me a pious heart, thou Giver of all good gifts; this shall be the wealth I covet, this shall be my ornament, my glory and my pride, for piety is highly esteemed by God and by the angels. Amen. THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR PIETY.

1. Henceforth my most determined striving

Shall be to walk before the Lord;

That I may hope for the arriving
Where tears and sighs no more are heard;
The wicked mock the pious wight,
But God rejoices at his sight.

2. God is a refuge for the pious;
Where is a better safeguard found?
No threatening foe can e'er come nigh us,
Nor treason drive us from our ground.
God knows whate'er might do us harm,
And shields us with his mighty arm.

3. At times, indeed, we are berated,
And sorely harassed for a while;
But in the end we're extricated
From trouble, from distress, and guile.
Our bitter cup is turned to joy,
And foes can us no more annoy.

4. The pious have especial graces,
And free admission to his face;
Their every grievance he redresses,
Defends them with unfailing grace;
God from the pious never swerves,
He loves him best, who best him serves.

5. Their sufferings have speedy ending,
Their sorrows early find relief;
God's blessing over them extending
Must soon dispel all thoughts of grief
The Lord with fire will soon destroy

The rod that doth his child annoy.

PIOUS PARENTS PRESENT THEIR

22. Pious Parents present their Children to God in prayer

EXHORTATION.

"Behold, I and the children which the Lord hath given me."

Isaiah viii. 18. "And none of them is lost."—John xvii. 12.

The welfare of their children lies very near the hearts of pious parents; for they are a sacred trust which God will demand at the hands of the parents.

1. Hence pious parents consecrate their children to God even before their birth by much fervent prayer. Whenever they appear at the throne of grace, they remember their children. They pray especially that God would early sanctify their hearts, and send his Spirit to sanctify, direct, and guide them, for such is the true source of happiness.

2. But they not only pray for them, but also labor to bring them up in the fear of the Lord. Hence they do not permit them to have their own will, for they know that they are by nature inclined to evil, and that if left to themselves, they cannot but become wicked—they instruct them in the knowledge of God, and teach them to pray and lead Christian lives.

3. Those parents who neglect properly to train up their children, will have a heavy account to

CHILDREN TO GOD IN PRAYER.

render to God at last—he will require their blood at the parent's hands. Besides, by such neglect, parents very often bring shame, disgrace and sorrow upon themselves; for their children do them not honor, but shame. Over indulgent parents bring themselves and their children to hell, and so their over kindness is no real service in the end.

Lord, almighty God, thou Father of mercies! Among other gifts of grace thou hast given me children, for which I thank and praise thee, but which I regard as precious pledges entrusted to me by thee, and which thou wilt ask again at my hands. I look upon them as souls purchased by the holy blood of Jesus, which the Holy Ghost has sanctified in holy baptism, and which thou hast accepted as thy children. Therefore, I am much concerned, that not one of them may, through my neglect, be lost. Thou sayest to me and to all parents, Take care of this child; if it be missed, thy soul shall answer for its soul. Therefore, Father of all mercies, I come before thee, and commend these children to thee in fervent prayer. I will do my utmost to rear them to thy honor, to admonish, chastise, and instruct them, and to pray for them. But, O Lord! do thou thy utmost also. In holy baptism

PIOUS PARENTS PRESENT THEIR

I have laid them into the arms of thy mercy; behold, I now do the same in this my prayer. O bless my children, preserve them in the holy fear of thee, and let sin never weigh upon their consciences. Give them a believing, humble, obedient and pious heart, that like the child Jesus, they may increase in years, in wisdom and in grace before God and man. Impress the image of Jesus upon their hearts, that they may keep a gracious God and an unstained conscience to the end of their days. O let my children be devout in

their prayer, well grounded in their religion, steadfast in faith, zealous in worship, chaste in their lives, godly in their conversation, never giving offence by word or deed, and never amenable to judgment. Preserve them from temptation and evil company; remind them always by thy Holy Ghost of thy most holy presence. May thy angel lead them when they go out and when they come in; may he guard them when they travel, when they pursue their occupations, or are far from home; may thy holy angels be their companions, as unto young Tobit; guide them out of all danger, like Lot, and let them enjoy the protection and guardianship of the holy angels, like Jacob. But if it should please thee to try me through my children, then give me patience under such affliction, and let me consider that nothing occurs without thee

CHILDREN TO GOD IN PRAYER.

If it is thy will to draw me to thyself by the sufferings, misfortunes, or deaths of my children, in order that I may see in them the mutability of all visible gifts, and be encouraged to love thee alone as the true and chief good, then keep me on this path of thorns in firm reliance and hope in thy omnipotence, and in the constant reflection that thou canst change all things, even the sufferings of thy children. Bestow thy blessing upon them also in worldly matters, take charge of them, cherish them, give them food and raiment, and be a mighty father unto them. Be their help in danger and misfortune, their physician in disease, their counsel in difficulties. Implant in them true piety, and keep them in thy grace, that they may be my consolation and my joy. At the last day, let me stand at thy right hand with all my children, and say to thy praise, Lo, here am I, my God and Lord! and the children which thou hast given me, not one of them is lost. O God, bless my children, be a kind guardian unto them, do no less unto them than thou hast done unto myself. Bless all their steps, give them thy blessing, let it be well with them, and let them stand in thy grace. Amen

PIOUS CHILDREN PRAY FOR THEIR PARENTS.

23. Pious Children pray for their Parents

EXHORTATION.

"Children obey your parents in the Lord! for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.—Heb. vi. 1, 2, 3.

Among other grievous sins, by which a man may load the curse upon himself, is that also, of sinning against our parents. Although parents have trouble and vexation with their children from the hour of their birth, yet it is their most bitter pang to find their children perverse, unkind, rude, or ill-disposed towards them in riper years, when they have a right to expect nothing but joy and comfort from them. 1. Pious children should often pray for their parents, that God may grant them health, long life, and much peace and happiness.

2. Pious children must **love** their parents, be mindful of their wants and seek to supply them, and be very attentive to them in sickness.

3. They must **obey** them, suffer themselves to be educated to good things, never contradict their parents when they give a direction or command; and never marry secretly, without the consent and knowledge of their parents, for this has no other results but evil and disaster.

PIOUS CHILDREN PRAY FOR THEIR PARENTS.

4. Pious children must **hono**— their parents, and understand that God has placed the parents in his own place and stead, as God gives the children all things by the hands of their parents.

5. Children must remember that they can never repay their parents what the latter have done for them.

6. Ungrateful and perverse children are real faggots from hell, who can never prosper, unless before their death, they repent in tears the sins and wrongs they have done to their parents.

O thou gracious and merciful God! I praise thee from the bottom of my heart, that thou hast caused me to be born of pious and Christian parents. This was the first of the benefits thou hast done me. As it was the first care of my parents after my bodily birth, that I should be laid into thine arms, O heavenly father, by holy baptism, wherein thou didst give me the Holy Ghost as a pledge of my childship and heavenly inheritance, so let this thy good spirit ever lead and guide me, that I may look well to my duties towards thee and towards my parents. I lie before thy most holy face in prayers, and beseech thee to suffer my parents to retain good health, guard them against misfortune, bless their nurture, their labor and occupation, give them a

PIOUS CHILDREN PRAY FOR THEIR PARENTS.

long life, requite unto them the faithful care bestowed upon me, for which I can never repay them, with spiritual and heavenly gifts. Give me, O heavenly father, an obedient heart, that I may not offend my parents, or grieve them wittingly or willingly. May I constantly have before my eyes the example of my Jesus, who not only obeyed thee, his heavenly father, but also his foster father Joseph, and his mother Mary, so that my dutiful conduct may give joy and pleasure to my parents at all times, and even in their old

age. Guard me against bringing upon myself the curse pronounced on wicked children by disobedience or perverseness, but let me obtain happiness here and hereafter. Give me a new heart filled with reverence towards them, so that I may encounter them with humbleness, may receive their commands with a smiling face, and submit to their chastisements without disaffection. Take heed that I do not come to resemble wicked children, who mock, despise, and insult their parents, but who will also put on the curse as they would a garment, and will forfeit all the blessings promised by thee to dutiful children. Give me thy grace, that I may not sin against my parents, but may constantly reflect upon the pangs I have caused my mother, and with how much trouble I have been reared, so that I may acknowledge this all my THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS, ETC life with a thankful heart and mind, and that my parents may experience not disgrace, but pride in me. If in the years of my indiscretion,

I have done my parents wrong, I humbly ask thy forgiveness, O God! and that of my parents and promise by thy grace to endeavor to rejoice them with my obedience and Christian deportment. Give me thy Holy Ghost, so that I may walk in faith and piety, as beseemeth a child of

God, and so that at the last day I may stand with my parents at thy right hand, and may enter into thy glories with them. Thou shalt honor and obey thy father and thy mother, wheresoe'er thy hand can serve them, and thy life shall be long. Amen.

The true Believer prays when a Storm arises.

EXHORTATION.

"He made darkness his secret place; his pavillion rouned about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. As the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed;

hail-stones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire."—Psalm xviii. 11, 12, 13.

External occurrences sometimes frighten the children of this world, and induce them to pray.

Among these are thunder-storms. When they

14* arise, the lips, usually so wanton, are eager to pray, not from love to God, but from fear of punishment. True believers indeed, understand,

1. That thunder and lightning proceed from natural causes, and
2. That they execute the commands of God. Just as God can arm all evil creatures against wicked men, so is it easy for him to slay men and cattle, and with his lightnings to set fire to houses, towns and cities.
3. Therefore, pious Christians should never use the abominable curse of swearing by thunder and weather.
4. When a storm arises, they should not lose heart, or despair from fear, for that argues a want of confidence in God.
5. They should remember that God holds thunder and lightning in his hands, and can well protect them, even if they were in the open field and under the open sky.

6. They should turn with the greater devotion to God, and should understand that they are nothing and God everything; that God is a mighty God, and men powerless worms, dust and ashes, whom God can consume with a beck or a flash.

7. They should fear and dread this majestic God, not only when he thunders, but also when his sun is shining, and should take heed not to

WHEN A STORM ARISES.

offend him by words or works, but should so live that they may be always assured of a gracious God, even if he should be pleased to call us away from the world in a thunder-storm.

O thou strong and almighty God! I hear thy voice in the clouds; I see thy lightnings flash, and hear thy thunders roar. Strong is thy arm and great thy power, and if it were thy will thou couldst in a moment strike to earth me and all mankind and all thy creatures. But O Lord! Lord! remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions, but think of me according to thy mercy and thy goodness. O do not punish me in thine anger, nor chastise me in thy wrath. I acknowledge with true humility of heart, that I have deserved nothing less than to be destroyed and crushed in thy just indignation. But O, thou long suffering God! spare me in this tempest. God! be gracious unto me according to thy goodness, and take away all my sins according to thy great mercy. O I grieve deeply to have so often offended thee, and angered thee with thoughts, words and works. O I beg thy grace and forgiveness for all my sins and trespasses. Consider, O heavenly Father, that I am thy creature and thy child; whither shall thy children fly in their troubles, but to their Father? THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS, ETC.

Therefore, I come to thee, O my Father, and beseech thee to be gracious unto thy child, to defend me, to protect me, to place a guard of thy angels around me, and to let no evil reach me, and no bolt consume me. O Lord Jesus, thou Son of God, my sole Mediator, Advocate and Saviour! be not far from me, for danger is near; be my strong defence, forsake me not, and take not thy hand from me. God, my salvation! Lo, I stand deserted by all men and all creatures, but O do thou not desert me, but have mercy upon me; and save me. I cling to thee, O Jesus! I cry with the disciples: Lord, help us, we perish! O most precious Holy Ghost! vivify my heart to prayer and devotion, that this tempest may make me truly pious. Grant that I may take care, when thou knockest at my heart by thy holy word, to do penance, be converted, and renounce sin, so that I may be a patient hearer, and not imitate the world in its sinful words, habits and customs. O holy trinity, have mercy upon me, and upon all pious Christians, cover with thy almighty hand my body and my life, my house and curtilage; guard the fruits of the field, let not the lightning fire my house or injure me; be thou my safeguard in peril, for the help of man is of no avail. O thou mighty protector of thy children! let me live in safety under thy guardianship. O Lord! who is like unto THE TRUE BELIEVER RETURNS THANKS, ETC.

thee? who art so majestic, so almighty and so terrible, and also so good and merciful, who dost wake us and cover us. O spare me, and let me once more find grace and salvation in thee. Lord God, Father in heaven, have mercy upon us! Lord God, Son, thou Saviour of the world, have mercy upon us! Lord God, Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us! be gracious unto us, spare us, dear Lord and God! from fire and inundation defend us, dear Lord and God! from sudden death deliver us, dear Lord and God! from lightning and hail deliver us, dear Lord and God! Thou holy Trinity, defend us in soul and body, guard our houses and our possessions. Spare us, dear Lord and God! and ward off this danger, and we will ever praise thy goodness. Amen.

24. The true Believer returns thanks to God after a Storm

EXHORTATION.

"God thundereth marvellously with his voice: great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend."—Job xxxvii. 5. God thunders with his thunder. He governs the clouds charged with vapors and fire. He conducts them according to his will. In the clouds he passes over the habitations of men; THE TRUE BELIEVER RETURNS THANKS they tremble; even the dumb cattle take fright;

for God thundereth marvellously with his voice.

He does great things. Strong trees he causes to be shivered with his lightnings; houses to be fired; men and beasts to be slain; but he also purifies the air with his tempest, and refreshes fields, meadows and gardens. Great things doeth he with his thunder, which we cannot comprehend. While the lightning darts through the clouds, and the thunder roars, most men are timid and cast down, but no sooner does the tempest pass away, than all the great things are forgotten which the Lord God hath done in his thunder storm. O vile insensibility! O shameful ingratitude! The true Christian does otherwise. He admires the majesty, the greatness, and the glory of him who thunders in the clouds.

When the thunder rolls over his head, and the lightnings flash, he cheerfully resigns himself into the hand of the Lord, and when the storm has happily passed away, he praises and extols the goodness and truth of his God.

Praised be God, who hath warded off the danger! I was afraid when I heard thy strong voice in the clouds, thou Lord of Lords. Great was the danger in which I hovered, with those who are dear to me, but thou, Lord! hast heard

TO GOD AFTER A STORM.

my childlike prayer, turned away the danger, and screened with almighty hand my house and home, and the teeming grain of the field.

It is by thy goodness that we may dwell at ease in the shadow of thy wings. This my soul doth well perceive. Touched in spirit, therefore,

I come before thee, and give thee praise and thanks, for the great things thou hast done me, even now. I shall never forget thy goodness, and in all danger that may befall me, I will remember that in thee we have a God who helps us. Thy storm, good God! has happily passed over us, and has left nothing but marks of thy bounty, instead of the harm we feared. Elsewhere, perhaps, it has done damage; O then be pleased to look in mercy on the sufferers!—

Arouse all those whom thou hast protected, to pity and assistance, for the best gratitude for thy assistance is to help those who are in need.

Let me deal with my possessions like a good husbandman. Be pleased to take them all into thy further protection. Grant us wholesome and fertilizing weather, and guard us against all misfortune. Lead us on even paths, and let us enter into eternal life on the great day of judgment. O do not withdraw thy attention

from me, when the last day shall rise, the day when all things shall be brought to judgment, even those which pass unnoticed here; let me stand

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS WHEN HE at thy right hand, and go in unto the wedding of the Lamb. My Jesus, take me into thy care, and I will praise thee evermore. Amen.

The true Believer prays when he undertakes a journey. EXHORTATION.

"The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."— Psalm exxi. 5-8.

Various matters may induce a believing Christian to travel away from home, such as the exigencies of his occupation, the love of his neighbor, or the condition of his health; journeys for mere enjoyment and pleasure are unbecoming to a true child of God. 1. If a believing Christian has good cause for leaving his home for a time, he must enter upon his journey with God, and consider that God will always be with him in strange countries, and that he sees and hears all things; for which reason he must also conduct himself, honorably, becomingly, and in a Christian manner, as being in the sight of God. UNDERTAKES A JOURNEY.

2. A true believer must commend himself to the favor and protection of God when he undertakes his journey, and pray that he may be permitted to return home in good health, with hale and straight limbs. 3. He must also commend to God those whom he leaves behind, as well as his house and goods, and pray him to put them all under the watch and ward of his holy angels, and guard them against fire and flood, and all misfortune. 4. He must pray that God will favor him to find his family and his household in good order and condition when he returns. Gracious and merciful God! I have resolved for a time to leave my house and home; therefore, I come to thee and beseech thee to bless my going out and my coming in. In thy name I will undertake my journey; under thy escort let me accomplish it, and under thy protection wilt thou bring me safely back to my home. Let troops of angels surround me, like Jacob; let thy angels follow me through all danger, like Paul; let the host of thy angels travel forth and back with me as with Joseph and Mary, and the boy Jesus, so that I may be preserved from all harm. O thou guardian of Israel! thou who dost neither sleep nor slumber, be by day and by night a fiery ramTHE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS WHEN HE part round about me, as around Elisha, that no evil or destruction may approach me. Lead me by day and night, through fields and woods, with a guard of thy holy angels, as thou didst lead the children of Israel through the desert with a pillar of clouds. Grant that every day and every hour the words may sound in my ear, which thou spakest to Abraham when he was setting out on his journey: Walk before me, and be thou pious. Guard me, that when away from home, evil desires may not assail me, preserve me from gluttony, wantonness, insolence, malice, worldliness, sin, and shame. Help me to return home with an unstained conscience. Turn away mine eyes when they see evil, turn away my heart when it is visited by evil desires, and help me that I may neither damage my body nor my soul upon this journey. I commend to thee all I leave behind, guard it from thieves, from fire and flood, and let me find it all again unspoiled. I commend unto thee also, the persons I leave behind; O my God! I leave them, but do thou remain with them, avert all danger, harm, misfortune, and sickness from them in mercy. Be their sentinel, keep them, guide them, guard them, and let no sad news from them reach my ears. O Lord Jesus! thou who didst travel with the two disciples in the form of a wayfarer, be with me in my journey also, and fill my heart UNDERTAKES A JOURNEY.

with good thoughts. Let my fellow-travellers be pious, that we may not offend them as we go, with shameful words and sinful speech, but may think of thee and thy most holy presence, and discourse of thy goodness and thy miracles, thy faithfulness and truth. O my God! in thy name I have undertaken this journey, in thy name let me happily end it, and I and mine will praise and thank thee all our lives. Send thy angel on before me, to prepare my path; bid him to resist Satan and all evil men. Take me into thy protection, O Lord! so that their cunning and their violence may never harm me. Remain with mine also constantly, who are anxious to see me again, let thy eyes of mercy follow them, as thy children; lead them, wherever they go, by thy Spirit, so that they may never lapse into danger or sin. Amen. Prayer of one who sojourns in a foreign City

1. Lord, I am in a land of strangers

Far distant from my father's house;

Who here will screen me against dangers,

When foes lie wait, who will me rouse?

On thee alone my hope is based;

O do not leave me here to waste!

PRAYER FOR ONE SOJOURNING.

2. With thee I did resolve to travel,

And all my friends approval gave;

Thou must my journey's maze unravel,

And bring me home, as much I crave.

Lord, here abroad be still with me

I never can depart from thee.

3. Bring many cordial friends around me,

Where'er I stay my foot to rest;

Let not mine enemies confound me,

Give them to know I am thy guest

Thou art my friend, to thee I cling,

In every land thy praise I sing.

4. Preserve me whole in every member,

My strength, my senses, sight, and speech;

And should I sicken, O remember,

That thou art here, my household leech;

Think that it is thy child that lies

In sickness under foreign skies.

5. Keep me from shame and from transgression,

Preserve my conscience undefiled;

Let me still cling to the possession

Of knowing that I am thy child;

Let me forget it never more,

Thine eyes still see me as before.

6. O bless my sleeping and my waking

And bless my every walk and tread;

Bless me in every undertaking;

Bless wheresoe'r I need thy aid.

And bless me with a heavenly zest,

Then shall I be most truly blest.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS, ETC.

25. The true Believer prays for an unscarred Conscience

EXHORTATION.

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."—2 Cor. i. 12. Most men are at great pains to keep their bodies in good health; they work hard to obtain or to keep wealth; but O that they would make the same efforts to keep their consciences pure and unstained!

1. The conscience is like the eye, which cannot endure a particle of dust, it is the accuser, the witness, and the judge of the wicked; the remembrance of sins remain in the conscience, like scars in the face. 2. On the day of judgment, God and our consciences will bear unanswerable testimony.

3. A true believer will preserve the integrity of his conscience by frequently hearing and reading the Word of God, and directing his life in accordance with it; and by reflecting, in whatever he resolves to say or do, whether God in his holy word permits it? 4. He must also avoid evil company and temptations; for as he who dabbles in fire or water is

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THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAYS FOR easily burned or wetted, so the conscience is easily injured by intercourse with unprincipled people.

5. Nothing better preserves the purity of conscience, than sincere and fervent prayer, and the recollection of the ever-present God, who looks upon all our steps.

Lord, my God! how great is the love and goodness thou dost manifest towards us. Thou givest us life and health and prosperity according to thy mercy. Yet, O my God, all these thy good gifts shall be turned to hvenbane, if they are not accompanied with a pure and unharmed conscience! Therefore, have mercy upon me, and keep me in the fear of thee, that I may not violate my conscience. O I long to bring a pure soul and an untarnished conscience before thy holy presence, therefore lead me by thy Holy Spirit to guard my conscience as the apple of my eye. O what a precious jewel and soothing pillow is a good conscience! Who will accuse me if my conscience acquits me? For if our heart does not condemn us, we have cheerfulness in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Who can grieve me when my conscience makes me rejoice, who can disturb or vex me, when my conscience consoles and cheers me? O my God, AN UNSCARRED CONSCIENCE.

let me carefully keep this treasure. May I never say what might cause a qualm of conscience; may I never assent to a sin whereby I would load a heavy burden on my soul, oppressing me through life, or on the bed of death, or pursuing me with thy wrath and chastisement. O preserve me from the sting of conscience! Give me grace to deport myself as a true Christian wherever I go. May I constantly remember thy most holy presence, and dread to do evil before thee. May I bear in mind that thou art a knower of hearts, from whom nothing can remain concealed. Grant me to follow in the holy footsteps of my Saviour. Grant that I may not wound my conscience by denying my faith. O Lord Jesus! Purify my conscience with thy holy blood, forgive me all my sins, and give me quiet and true peace of mind and of conscience. O let

thy Holy Ghost evermore conduct me on even paths, that my conscience may remain unharmed, and thy dwelling in my heart undisturbed. O God! thou pious God! thou Source of all good gifts, without whom there is nothing which is, from whom we have all things, give me a healthy body, and that in this body may ever dwell an untarnished soul and a pure conscience Amen 1. If conscience chides me not, why should I heed the spiteful

Disparagements of those, to whom it is delightful

To pin a wicked thought on every harmless deed?

My witness is above, and he will speak at need.

2. If conscience chides me not, let slander pour its chalice

Of poison o'er me all, I am above its malice!

The world is nought to me, God is my only judge;

Therefore I little heed my haters and their grudge.

3. If conscience chides me not, nothing will damp my prayers,

And prayer will give me strength against my would-be slayers.

God plainly sees my heart; to him 'tis all disclosed;

He knows that to this sin, I never was disposed.

4. If conscience chides me not, I can await the season,

When falsehood and reproach shall yield to better reason.

Sland'rers, remember well, God hears when you traduce,

Therefore, let not your tongues run insolently loose.

5. God give me patient heart, to hear, without repining,

The bitter words of all, misguided or designing;

My real sins forbid thy angels to record,

And guard my peace of mind and comfort in the Lord.

Soul

"When wilt thou comfort me?"—Ps. cxix. 82.

Jesus.

"Fear not, for I am with thee."—Isaiah xliii. 5.

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If thou art sick at heart, look upward to the sky;

God is thy comforter, and he is ever nigh.

26. PART II

EXHORTATIONS, PRAYERS AND HYMNS for the Afflicted.

The afflicted one is comforted at the thought of the omnipotence of God.

EXHORTATION.

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea,

I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—

Isaiah xli. 10.

If anything can cheer the heart of a true believer, it is the omnipotence of God; this is the anchor of the afflicted, to which they cling.

1. With God, nothing is impossible. No misery is so great but that God can end it, no burden so heavy but that he can take it off, no misfortune so severe but that he can avert it.

2. The afflicted one must bear in mind, that others have borne much heavier burdens than his own, and that God has relieved them nevertheless. Therefore, they should say, with joy,

THE AFFLICTED ONE IS COMFORTED AT THE

"O God! thou art as rich to day as thou hast ever been, my confidence is all in thee."

3. The afflicted must remember that the omnipotence of God knows no bounds, and must not let their courage sink, though they do not know how and by what means, and in what manner, they can be helped. "Your thoughts are not my thoughts, saith the Lord, nor are your ways my ways."—Isaiah lv. 8. This reflection must confirm the hope and confidence of the afflicted, inasmuch as they are assured that God can and will deliver them. They should therefore be at peace, hope, pray, trust in God, bear affliction patiently, and joyfully lift up their eyes to heaven, saying, "Our help cometh from the Lord, that made heaven and earth." Gracious and most merciful God! thou seest how my heart is filled with sorrow;—a stone which I cannot throw off, a load of affliction too heavy to be borne, presses me to the earth.—Therefore, I come to thee, almighty God! I pour out my heart into thy bosom, for thou art my refuge and my salvation. I cast my troubles from myself upon thee, and beseech thee to save and to assist me. The little bark, driven by fearful winds and waves, is held by the anchor; and so my soul clings to thee, thou living and

THOUGHT OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

almighty God. The timid roe pursued in the chase hastens to the mountains for deliverance, and I lift my eyes to thee, my Rock, my Rescuer, and mighty Defender! I will not despair, for I know that thou art an almighty God—thou canst help me. O send deliverance now, and I am helped; speak but a single word, and my help has come. O my God! I know that thou art merciful, and therefore I do most earnestly and

devoutly beseech thee to have mercy on me, thy poor and afflicted child. Thou knowest my heart and art acquainted with my sorrows—thou hast laid this burden upon me, and wilt thou not also help me to bear it? Thou art a wise God, and wilt find ways and means to help me, of which I know nothing. O show me some well of consolation, as thou didst to Hagar in the wilderness. Promise me the assistance thou didst promise to the widow,—help me as thou didst help the deserted Elisha, and manifest thy goodness, as thou didst unto the imprisoned Peter. Break the bands of my affliction and distress, Lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and give me thy peace. Hast thou not said, “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.”—Is. liv. 7, 8. I know thou THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT IN art a faithful God, and wilt not forsake me. I lie low at thy throne of grace; send me now help from thy holy place, and strength out of Zion. Lord, I will not let thee go, till thou bless me. Thou art my God and Father, and if thou dost not help me, to whom shall I go? I am thrown upon thine arms from my very birth, and until this day, those arms of love and mercy have been around and beneath me, and surely thou wilt not forsake me now. O God, hear my sighs and lamentations, and let me not entirely despair in my distress; thou readest my heart, thou knowest my pain; what thou hast imposed, thou wilt help me to sustain. Amen. The afflicted one takes comfort in calling to mind the love of God.

EXHORTATION.

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Is. lxiv. 7, 8.

When affliction and distress overtake a believer, he can receive no better consolation than to be assured that God still loves him. For one of the first and severest temptations with which

CALLING TO MIND THE LOVE OF GOD.

Satan assails a troubled soul is th.s: God is your enemy—he loves you no longer—if he were still your friend would he afflict you and withdraw the light of his countenance from you, as he now does? To such suggestions, the afflicted believer must give no heed, but on the contrary, remember that God never leaves nor forsakes his children.

1. He should remember that to live in tribulation and yet to be a child of God, are entirely compatible; for Christ, the well beloved Son of the Father, suffered enough of trouble, and yet did not cease to be the Son of God.
2. Afflictions are not sent out of wrath, for our destruction or harm, but for our good, and are designed to teach us the goodness, power, wisdom, and faithfulness of God.
3. The love of God is active in our afflictions, to support, strengthen and comfort us—we are sometimes wonderfully quickened and rejoiced thereby, and our burdens are lightened,—all constituting so many proofs of love.

The Lord is with me, therefore I will not fear. Thou art my rock, my rampart, my salvation. Therefore, in my present distress, I sigh to thee, my God. O Lord! Lord! thou knowest my afflictions and the distress of my heart; but I

THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT know, also, that this affliction will not overpower me, if thou art with me. O do not longer conceal thy face from me! From my infancy thou hast crowned my life with loving-kindness and tender mercy: O let thine arms of love still be around me in my present tribulation. A lamb, when it is pursued, runs to its shepherd; a child, when it is frightened, goes to its father; therefore I come to thee, my Shepherd and my Father. Thou hast encouraged me to hope in thee, in thy blessed word;—"Fear thou not," is thine own language, "for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." I will not leave thee nor forsake thee! And now, O gracious God! I am in trouble and need thy help—now thou wilt not forsake me. Enfold me in thine arms of love, hold me, that I may not sink. Quicken me in my sufferings; make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou has broken may rejoice. Show to me that love which thousands have experienced in their deliverance from trouble, that I may join with them to praise thy excellent name. O thou God of love! seal upon my heart this blessed truth, "that as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Faithful Father! see thy child is distressed; AT THE THOUGHT OF THE HELP OF GOD.

wilt thou not comfort me? While I live, I will gladly take up my cross and follow thee. Prepare my heart for this, my God! I am assured it is for my eternal peace. Amen.

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27. The afflicted one takes comfort at the thought of the help of God

EXHORTATION.

"I lift up mine eyes to the hills, whence my help cometh. My help cometh from the Lord, who has made the heavens and the earth."—Psalms cxxi. 1, 2 To be without resource in trouble and distress, is even worse than the affliction itself. But such can never be the state of the believer. 1. God can help him.

2. God will help him.

3. God has often helped in times gone by.

4. The afflicted must await such assistance with prayer and sighs, with hope and confidence; for what the Lord has promised he will certainly fulfil; let his word be more credited than the misgivings of your heart. 5. Even when the afflicted do not see how help is possible, they should remember that God can do far more than we may ask or understand; he 16*

THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT will be their help, their Father, their Comforter, and their assistance. It is even a boon of God that he alleviates our sorrows by time and oblivion.

When I am afflicted, I think of God. O, where else shall I turn, of whom else shall I think, in my cares and sufferings, but of thee, my God! O thou hast never yet permitted me to leave thy most holy presence with a sorrowful heart. O therefore, hear this my prayer, hearken to the voice of my cry, my King and my God! and when I call, do thou hear me. The evil I suffer was sent by thy hand; so canst thou in thy mercy deliver me again. Thou, Lord! Lord!

dost slay and make alive, thou ledest down into hell and up again. Thou, Lord, makest rich and poor, thou dost lower and exalt. Thou dost lift the needy from the dust, and elevate the poor from want, therefore, I say unto thee trustingly, Lord, help me. Thou hast said, Before they call, I will answer, and while they yet speak, I will answer, my heart is breaking for thee, and I must have mercy upon thee: therefore, I will not prescribe the time for thee to deliver me. Strengthen my faith by thy Holy Spirit; strengthen my faith, my hope, my confidence; give me patience and strength to bear AT THE THOUGHT OF THE HELP OF GOD.

my troubles. O my Father! thou hast never forsaken any one, forsake not me; thou hast always rejoiced the afflicted, rejoice me also; thou hast assisted the wretched, assist me also; when where, and as thou wilt, that all shall be according to thy wisdom, love, goodness and mercy. Be thou at peace, O my soul; why art thou sad and so disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet thank him, that he is the help of my countenance and my God. Lord Jesus Christ! great is the load under which I sink; O help me, dear God and Lord, sleep not, but be aroused. There is no one who can help me, no creature can assist me, and none to whom I may complain. Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, my trust is in thee, thou art the real throne of grace; whoever counts upon thee will be safe in all affliction; thou wilt help him in life and in death. Amen.

1. Am I left thus unfriended

In my bitter cross and woe?
Is no helping hand extended,
Comfort shall I never know?
O my God, where art thou now,
When affliction does me bow?
Whither shall I turn to find him?
Has he left no trace behind him?

THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT

2. If thou pitiest not my anguish,
Bear in mind I am thy child;
Let me not, forgotten, languish
In my woes, so fierce and wild.
Nothing more it is I seek
Than what thou didst freely speak:
But to give thy word fulfilment
Will be comfort's best instilment.

3. Yet, what will these tears avail me,
God would only try my faith;
That it never more may fail me
In afflictions or in death.
Though he seem to wander far,
He is still my guiding star;
His uncircumscribed affection
Cannot niggard its protection.

4. Then my trust shall never totter,
Though my hopes grow less and less
Scalding tears, prayers, hot and hotter,

Shall come forth at each distress.

He, my sufferings understands,

I, the prowess of his hands,

Which can turn my grief to pleasure,

And relieve me beyond measure.

5 I with God, in faith will wrestle,

As each true believer ought;

In his love my heart shall nestle,

All is good as he has wrought.

Though, at times I feel his rod,

He is still my loving God;

And his sacred word discloses

All is well as he disposes.

AT THE THOUGHT OF THE MERCY OF GOD.

28. The afflicted one takes comfort at the thought of the mercy of God

EXHORTATION.

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psalm ciii. 8, 9, 13. How painful it is, to have unkind and hard-hearted people to deal with in trouble and distress! But a true child of God may rest assured,

1. That his faithful God in heaven knows all his sufferings and crosses, however great they be, however long they endure, and however deeply they wound the soul.
2. Nor does God only know them, but he takes pity on them also.
3. In view of this great mercy of God, the believer must not despair, but must have recourse to his merciful God; for all they that are in affliction shall be comforted.
4. God manifests his mercy to the wretched; partly by giving them cheerfulness and courage, partly by giving them strength to suffer and be patient, and partly by taking away their grief entirely. If a father has mercy on his child, God will surely not allow the afflicted one to perish in his misery. THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT

O thou merciful God! whose mercy has no end, whose goodness is new every morning; Lo, I, a suffering and afflicted soul, come before thy most holy face, and pour out my heart before thee. Thou well knowest the misery and great distress which has befallen me; my soul is stricken, my spirit disturbed, and unnumbered evils beset me. I look about me for succor. Men partly refuse to help me, partly they know not my trouble, partly I will not reveal it; but to thee, O God, I recite my grief with a troubled heart, knowing that thou art merciful, and wilt not turn a deaf ear to my lamentations. Thou didst take pity on the afflicted widow, who mourned for her child; thou didst take pity on the people who had not what to eat, and thy pity was associated with mercy and assistance. Therefore, I come to thee, and say, have mercy upon me, O God! I am thy creature, thou wilt not suffer thy handiwork to perish. Yea, I am even more, I am thy child, which thou didst take into the arms of thy mercy in holy baptism. Therefore, I say, O my father, have mercy on thy poor deserted child. My Jesus! I have been purchased with thy holy blood; therefore, thou wilt have mercy on what is thine. O most precious Holy Ghost, bear witAT THE THOUGHT OF THE MERCY OF GOD.

ness unto my soul, that in all my sufferings I am still a child of God; and when I grow faint, and hardly able to pray, do thou cry within me, Abba, dear Father! Behold I sink, O stretch forth thy hand. O Lord, according to thy great mercy do thou strengthen my faith, preserve me in my wretchedness, renew my powers daily, that my faith may not cease, nor my hopes languish, nor my confidence in thee be impaired. Thou hast never yet deserted me; O do not desert me now; help thy child, which resorts to thy mercy alone. O I know his father's heart; he is planning succor even now; my distress, my woes and cross, and all that disturbs my mind, will vanish at once, when he will send his help. Come Father, come, my heart weeps for thee. Amen. 1. Happy is he who trusts to God all his commissions,

To him who ever makes the best of dispositions;
Who only lays his head in his dear Master's lap,
Shall be secure from much distress and sore mishap.

2. Who trusts in God shall find no limit to his powers,
His omnipotent arm can save, whatever lowers;
What unto us seems hard, to him is but a toy,
When he commands, all things must cease us to annoy.

THE AFFLICTED ONE TAKES COMFORT

3. When he who trusts in God is left without resources,
And seems misfortune must o'erpower all his forces,
His faithful God is near, who has all help in hand,
Whose counsel and whose might, no prowess can withstand.

4. Happy who trusts in God! the bounties he disperses
Are far beyond the praise of him who tastes his mercies;
Who clothes the lilies gay, who does the sparrows feed,
He will not let thee die, though at thy utmost need.

5 Happy who trusts in God, and not in mortal kindness,
The children of mankind are ever struck with blindness;
Often they but do harm; and often, when they know
What we do need, they yet neglect the doing so

THE AFFLICTED ONE MEDITATES, ETC.

29. The afflicted one meditates upon the Divine Promises

EXHORTATION.

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."—Psalm xci. 9-16.

As on the one hand, troubles, misfortunes and sufferings are calculated to overwhelm and crush us; so, on the other, are those precious promises of God's grace and assistance calculated to support and comfort us.

1. Hence the afflicted believer should remember that God's promises are left on record for his benefit, as well as that of others. He ought not to suppose that they were given alone to Moses, David, Daniel, and other eminent saints; no, afflicted soul! they were intended also for you, as St. Paul plainly teaches,—Rom. xv. 4. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

2. He should remember that all God's promises will be fulfilled in his own good time. It does not become us to prescribe to God, and in

THE AFFLICTED ONE MEDITATES our afflictions to set the day and hour when he must send us deliverance; on the contrary, in humility and faith, we must patiently wait for the salvation of God.

3. The distressed believer should remember that God's promises of help, salvation, deliverance, relief from grievances, are sometimes fulfilled in this world partly, so that the sick are made whole, the afflicted comforted, the wretched delivered; but that often God only fulfils his promises in the life to come.

4. Wherefore the afflicted believer should be at peace, and set his hopes on the goodness of God, who has already fulfilled his promises to so many thousands.

Lord God! my heart pleads thy word, "Seek ye my face," and now "thy face, Lord, will I seek." In my distress I know not where to find consolation or counsel but with thee, with whom my heart has ever found comfort, help and counsel. Especially do I seek my consolation in thy precious promises, which contain the true and living fountain for the refreshment of my sinking spirit. I look to thy holy place—I seek in thy word for the bread and water of eternal life. Thou hast said, "I am with thee in trouble and will deliver thee." Now, Lord, I am in

UPON THE DIVINE PROMISES.

trouble; thou seest how great the anguish of my heart is; deliver me from mine affliction. Hast thou not said, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness?" And again, "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee." Therefore, O Lord, have mercy upon me, and forsake me not. Cast me not away from thy presence, and uphold me with thy free spirit. Thy word presents thee as an almighty, all-wise and most merciful Father, as a strong Rescuer,

and merciful Protector, and upon thee I cast myself, and here I find consolation. Wherefore, be at peace my soul, for the Lord will not cast thee off forever. He afflicts thee, but still he will have mercy upon thee again, according to his goodness. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God. From one morning watch to the other my soul waiteth upon the Lord; yea, my soul waiteth upon the Lord until his salvation appeareth. Still surround me with thine arms, and refresh me, and do thou never leave nor withdraw thy helping hand, my salvation! On thee is my dependence in this time of trial; thou dost avert all afflictions; be all commended

THE AFFLICTED ONE CONSIDERS THEE to thee, my body, my soul, my life, and all that thou hast given. Do with it according to thy pleasure. Amen.

The Afflicted one considers the Design of God in his Afflictions.

EXHORTATION.

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Heb. xii. 11.

When a child is punished, it weeps and thinks it is made to suffer too severely. Is it strange then that the afflicted are often at a loss to know how they should support their sorrows?

1. Let the afflicted believer therefore remember that God chastises him not to destroy, but to save him. When the surgeon cuts into a wound, and applies irritating liniments, it is done to heal it; and so God sends upon us sufferings and sorrows to wean us from the world and draw us nearer to himself and to heaven.

2. When God sees that our hearts and affections are too much wedded to any earthly object or being, he often finds it necessary to remove

DESIGN OF GOD IN HIS AFFLICTION.

the idol, so that he alone may have our supreme love, and that we are to seek and have our chief delight in him. It often happens that when uninterrupted health, happiness, and prosperity are granted to us for a length of time, we become weary in well doing, and negligent in prayer. This is a very great evil, and God sends some calamity or affliction upon us to bring us back to him. In all this, however, he still remains a wise, gracious, and merciful Father, who loves us sincerely.

My God! Thou hast plunged me into such sorrow and tribulation, that my heart is disturbed, my lips full of sighs, and my eyes full of tears! What shall I do, or whither shall I flee? Was I not happy once? Did I not enjoy peace and rest? Whence then come my present sorrows and sufferings? O my misery is great! But I will not therefore attempt to flee from thee, my Shepherd. Hast thou not cast me down with this heavy blow? O raise me up again with thy mighty word! I know full well that this affliction has been sent upon me, not for my misery and destruction, but that by putting me into this condition, thou wouldst prove my love, whether it is true, and will remain the same in adversity as in prosperity. Thou wouldst prove

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THE AFFLICTED ONE PRAYS my faith, whether I truly believe that thou art an almighty, wise, and merciful God, capable alike of rescuing me from this trouble, and of leaving me in it. Thou wouldst prove

my patience, whether I will honor thee by bearing the cross without murmuring. Thou wouldst prove my confidence, whether it is ready to trust thee above all things, and count upon thy grace, love, and mercy. Thou wouldst prove my hope, whether it will continue even where there seems to be no ground for hope to trust thy word and promise; yea, my gracious God and Father! thou wouldst by this means draw me away from the world—its lusts, sins and wicked ways, that I might fix my heart upon thee alone. Well, thou God of love, be it so. I will submit to thy will, and cheerfully bear whatsoever thou mayest see fit to lay upon me. May the Holy Spirit give me strength, power, and endurance. I will be patient, let it last as long as it will. I will break with the world and worldly company, and be one in spirit with thee. May this affliction purify me, and be profitable to my soul. Thy help will come in its own good time. God will not desert me; though I be deserted of all others, I will cling to God. My heart and mind shall be faithful to him and trust in him, and consign all things to the care of him who never will forsake me. Amen.

FOR PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE.

30. The afflicted one prays for Patience and Endurance

EXHORTATION.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience; that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."—Heb. x. 25. 36.

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit; it comes from God, and must be asked of him in prayer. An afflicted one must pray the more zealously and eagerly, the more his sufferings beset him, as it is written of Christ, "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly." 1. It is patience to remain quiet under affliction, and submit to all the ordinances of God. The believer knows that the evil comes from God, who is able again to remove it. He knows that even while he smites him, God loves him, and that he has not ceased to be his heavenly father, although he has imposed the yoke upon him. 2. Therefore the afflicted one must not murmur against God, how long or how severe soever his afflictions may become. On the contrary, he resolves to be silent and speak not, knowing that God will make all things well.

3. If perchance the violence of pain or the multiformity of sorrow should impair his trust

THE AFFLICTED ONE PRAYS fulness, he must implore the Lord to give him strength. God administers consolation in various ways; sometimes he awakes a consciousness in our hearts that our sufferings will shortly cease; sometimes he declares he will not forsake us; and occasionally he assuages and mitigates our woes. 4. This will invigorate the afflicted one, and once more imbue him with the vigor of the Lord.

Lord, my God! my sighs are not unknown to thee, and thou art well acquainted with my wretchedness and sorrow. My consolation is, that I know it comes from beloved hands. I have not brought it upon myself, but thou hast imposed it, and wilt help me to bear it. And as patience is one of the good gifts which come from above, from the father of light, O bestow it upon me according to thy mercy. If thou strengthen me, if thou help and bestead me, I can do everything, nothing will be impossible for me, nothing difficult; I can do all things by him who fortifies me, even Christ. And do not seize me too violently, so that I may endure it. Have patience with my weakness, strengthen my sinking hands, brace up my tottering knees, and say to my faint heart, "Thy Jesus is near FOR PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE.

thee; thy king cometh to thee, he is a righteous and an almighty deliverer." Yea, Lord, if thou dost help me, I am well helped; therefore, help me, O my salvation. Teach me to consider that it is thy holy will that I should suffer as I do. I will cheerfully acquiesce, and say, "Father, not my will, but thine, be done." Call to my mind thy love, that thou lovest me in suffering and affliction, that my griefs will last but a little while, and that the sufferings of this little span are nothing beside the glory which is to be made manifest in us. Help me to consider that thou art my gracious God and loving father, and that this present cross is not a sign of thy wrath but of thy mercy. Remind me of the example of my dear Savior Jesus Christ, who patiently bore all things. Grant that by thy grace I may follow him in this composure; let me suffer with him, that I may be also elevated to glory with him. Let my affliction not tear my word out of thy heart, nor impair my faith, nor prevent my prayers, but give me new power and courage, whenever I am called upon to weather another storm. Give me to think that thy help will soon make me glad, and thy strong assistance give me joy. Thou art my rock, my rampart, my fastness, my shield, my power; so says thy word, my help, my deliverance, my life; my almighty God, who can withstand thee? Amen. THE AFFLICTED ONE PRAYS FOR

1. My God, do not delay! O see my lamentation!

When wilt thou, O my light! send down thy consolation!

At home I suffer much, and when abroad I wend,

My troubles with me go, and with me homeward bend.

2. From day to day I hope there will be less of trouble,

But every day, alas! affliction seems to double;

My strength is giving out, my heart beset with fears,

My face is never dry of overflowing tears.

3. Such endlessness of care doth even lessen patience;

When all my hopes of ease are idle expectations;

I wait from early dawn till come the shades of night,

And all the night I yearn to see returning light.

4. And wilt thou longer still, my God, delay assistance?

What, then, will be my fate? O what is mine existence?

O do not linger yet, O hasten now to me,

And from these fetters set my wounded spirit free!

5. Comfort is all with thee, 'tis in thy presentation,

Thou with a word canst turn aside my lamentation.

O look upon me now! Come, and thy help afford!

Relieve my bitter cross! have mercy, gracious Lord!

THE REMOVAL OF HIS AFFLICTION.

31. The afflicted one prays for the removal of his Affliction

EXHORTATION.

"Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" —Is. xxxviii. 14, 17.

Our afflictions must have an end, either in this life, or at death, and hence we are permitted to ask God to remove them; but yet we must be entirely resigned to his will.

1. A Christian may therefore pray for the removal of his affliction, when he feels oppressed by its severity, bitterness and long duration. For Christ, our Saviour, did so himself, when he besought his heavenly Father to let the bitter cup pass from him; by doing so, the afflicted one manifests his devotion and confidence in the omnipotence of God. 2. It is better, however, to bear the infliction submissively and willingly.

3. He must pray for the removal of his afflictions from proper motives; that he may be brought nearer to God, and by their removal may have more strength and time given him to love and serve God. Let not that man suppose THE AFFLICTED ONE PRAYS FOR that his prayer will be heard, who, from impatience, or a love of the sinful pleasures and lusts of the world, asks the removal of his afflictions. As long as our hearts remain carnal, sensual, and earthly in their desires and affections, he permits the cross to continue, until, like a holy fire, it has consumed all stubbles and impurities of sin. O thou most gracious God! who regardest the afflicted and distressed, and whose tender mercies are over all thy works; behold, before thy throne of grace, a poor, sorrowful, suffering mortal humbly bows, to implore thy mercy and aid. The hand that wounded must heal; he that killed, must make alive; wherefore, O most merciful God! I come to thee, and cry out: "Lord, help me!" O have mercy upon me! let my prayers and supplications find favor before thee. O let me find relief in thee; if thou wilt not yet entirely remove my misery, remove a portion of it. Thou wilt forsake thine only for a little moment, and then with everlasting kindness, thou wilt have mercy upon them. O God! how long wilt thou forsake me? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? Is thy mercy gone forever? Have thy promises failed towards me? No, my God! unworthy as I am, I confiTHE REMOVAL OF HIS AFFLICTION.

dently plead those promises, and trust in thee. Let me experience that thou art still my Father, who hast mercy upon me. Show me that my prayer is not rejected. O how long, how long, does the heart crave and yearn for thee! Nothing is impossible with thee. Lord of hosts, is thy name; great in majesty and mighty in deeds. Thou art the Comfort of Israel, and their Deliverer; wherefore, forsake me not, but be merciful unto me and deliver me. Comfort my soul once more, after my sufferings and sorrows have continued so long. O no not remove thy helping hand from me, my God and my salvation. But if the hour of relief has not yet come, let thy grace be sufficient for me, and strengthen me with might in the inward man, that I may be enabled to bear my afflictions patiently; for if thou, beloved Father, dost help me to carry, or dost mitigate it; if I am permitted to walk forth in thy strength, I will regard it as a deliverance, and will thank thee for the same; and if it be thy will that they should not be removed in this life, but that I should bear them until death, thy will be done. If I am still to suffer here, Lord Jesus, assist me with thy power as a knight and

champion; help me to vanquish all my adversaries. Amen. THE AFFLICTED ONE PRAYS, ETC.

1. When will God extend his mercies,

O how long does he delay!

Would he shorten my reverses,

Take my heavy yoke away!

O must not I surely perish

If my Lord will not me cherish?

If the Almighty does me spurn,

Peace can ne'er to me return.

2. God has promised me securely

That he will extend his grace,

When his hour has come, he surely

Will determine my distress.

To this word I fast will hold him,

That alone has e'er controlled him;

What his promise speaks, he will

Most assuredly fulfil.

3. I will clamor, notwithstanding,

"Father, look upon thy child;"

Unremittingly demanding

Comfort, like the lost, exiled;

I will follow wheresoe'er he

Turns, e'en to his sanctuary;

I'll pursue him with my cries,

Till his grace relieves my sighs.

4. In Gethsemane's sad garden

If still longer I must hide,

My distress shall never harden

To despair, or swell to pride.

THE AFFLICTED ONE MEDITATES, ETC.

I will bear with patient sorrow,

And in calmness wait the morrow;

In this garden, where I groan,

Jesus suffered, all alone.

5. I am well content and cheerful

In God's holy will to rest;

E'en if he does make me tearful,

Still I know 'tis for the best.

At the last, my thanks and praises

Shall be heard in heavenly places;

Telling unto every one

What the Lord for me has done.

The afflicted one meditates on the happy issue of his Afflictions.

EXHORTATION.

"For the Lord will not cast off forever, but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."—Lam. iii. 31-33. All afflictions are comparatively light under the influence of a strong hope that they will soon terminate.

1. So let the afflicted believer remember that his sufferings must certainly have an end, and perhaps even in this earthly life; as God ended

THE AFFLICTED ONE MEDITATES ON the banishment of David, the sickness of Heze kiah, the misery of Job, the tears of the widow, and the pains of the palsied one, even in this life. But most certainly will God terminate the sufferings of the pious after death, and wipe all tears from their eyes. 2. In our afflictions we should remember that our souls are to be diverted from the world, and directed to God. If this purpose is attained, the issue of our afflictions is a happy one, whether they end in time or in eternity. Great and eternal God! thou seest how grievous are the afflictions which I suffer; yet shall my faith and hope not fail, but in the midst of my severest trials, I will lift up my eyes to the hills whence my help cometh, even to thee, thou almighty, all-wise, and most merciful God. I know that after my sorrows, thou wilt again fill my heart with joy—after the tempest is over, the sun will again shine out. Thou hast said thou wilt give rest to the weary and heavy laden, and I now come to thee, and claim the fulfilment of this precious promise. O

grant me now the desire of my heart and an answer to my prayer, if it be consistent with thine honor and my soul's best interests. For in thee was my trust, Lord, Lord, from my youth up. I THE HAPPY ISSUE OF HIS AFFLICTIONS.

know that thy right hand can change all things. Therefore, alter, if it be thy holy will, my sad condition. I now see thy gracious design in my afflictions—thou wouldst make me more humble, meek and holy—wouldst draw my heart and affections more to thyself, that I might hope in God, and seek my pleasure in him alone; and when this benevolent and glorious design is accomplished, thou wilt remove the affliction and again fill me with joy and happiness. O what blessed fruit will I gather from this bitter tree! what great advantage will I reap from my sufferings! David's persecutions, led to the composition of his most beautiful Psalms; so shall my tears yield a harvest of the most precious fruits, and the thorns with which my path is now strewed, shall bear roses. After the battle shall come the victory, after the conflict the crown of glory—after sufferings, the deliverance, and after the night of weeping and sorrow, the joyful morning. For this I will praise and bless thy holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. How glorious at the last day, shall be that happy deliverance, when, free from all evil, I shall enter upon the life of heavenly gladness. Surely this is not the fruit of our afflictions? What have we known upon earth before, but sorrow and resig¹⁸*

THE AFFLICTED ONE MEDITATES ON, ETC.

nation? We have been greatly grieved, and yet God has given us an hour of bliss. Amen.

1. O has my Jesus quite and utterly forsaken

This hapless heart, and must I ne'er to bliss awaken?

O, if my dearest friend will not return again,

Who will stretch forth his hand to mitigate my pain?

2. O when will Jesus come? Others are blessed to see them,

In honors and in wealth, with favors thick upon them.

And I alone must sigh, and I alone must weep

In my dumb, speechless woe, and let God's mercy sleep!

3. Patience from my distress has almost wholly vanished,

For all my hopes are turned to nothingness, and banished;

Where'er I seek his face, his face no more is known;

When I stretch forth my hand to clasp him, he is gone.

4. Be calm and still, my soul, forego thy lamentation,

It is the will of God; submit with resignation.

The absence of thy Lord doth give thee bitterness;

But soon he will return to silence thy distress.

AFFLICTED WIDOWS PRAY TO GOD.

5. Thy Jesus soon will come, and in his arms enfold thee;

Rejoice, his mercy soon shall cheer thee and embold thee.

He sees what thou dost bear, and in a little while

His never failing grace upon thy path shall smile.

Afflicted widows pour out their hearts before God.

EXHORTATION.

"Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry."—Ex. xxii. 22, 23.

"I am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead."—2 Sam. xiv. 5; thus doth the wise woman of Tekoah describe a widow.

1. The widow's lot is a state of sorrow, inasmuch as she is deprived of the help, advice, presence, and affection of her husband, which is a severe loss even to rich widows; poor ones suffer the more grievously, because death has robbed them of the person whose duty it was, with the assistance of God, to support them and their children. 2. The widow's lot is a state of affliction,

AFFLICTED WIDOWS PRAY TO GOD.

because unchristian people often do violence to widows, rob them of their own, oppress, despise, and wrong them.

3. But it is also under the protection of God. He has commanded all men to do no harm unto widows and orphans, and has threatened to revenge every wrong perpetrated against them. God has promised to be the husband of the widow, her judge and deliverer. 4. In view of this, pious widows must not despair of God's assistance, for though their husbands be dead, God is not dead.

5. They must regard their afflictions as trials of their hope and trust in God.

6. Therefore they must persevere in prayer, serve God faithfully, lead a pious, quiet, and Christian life, and God will surely provide for them, nourish and sustain them.

O thou gracious and most merciful God! who art the refuge of all the bereaved and afflicted. It has pleased thee, in thy wise and inscrutable Providence, to place me into the dreary state of widowhood. My sun has set at mid-day, and the crown has fallen from my head. I am indeed a widow woman, and my husband is dead. What shall I do, or whither shall I go? To whom shall I look for counsel and direction? AFFLICTED WIDOWS PRAY TO GOD.

Lord! I come and cast myself upon thee. Thou hast promised in thy holy word that thou wilt be the Judge of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless—"I the Lord, am thy husband; the God of Israel is my name." O therefore, be thou my judge, my help, my deliverer, my refuge, and the Father of my children.

Behold my tears and hear my sighs, and have mercy upon me. My God and Father! I believe most firmly, that thou canst protect, sustain and provide for me and mine without a husband. Lord! Lead me as thou didst Naomi; and take care of me and provide for me, as thou didst for Ruth. Bless me as thou didst the widow of Zarephath, that my "barrel of meal may not waste, nor my cruse of oil fail." Have compassion on me as thou hadst on the widow of Nain, and wipe away the tears from my weeping eyes. Lord! Provide for me, and for those intrusted to my care our daily bread. Bless my going out and coming in; keep me in all my ways; preserve me from every evil; and let me realise the fulfilment of all thy precious promises. Thou art the living God, and my only refuge, and I will confide and trust in thee, with all my heart and soul. Thou art all-wise, and knowest what is best for me; powerful, and able to protect me; hast all riches, and art therefore able to provide for me and supply all my wants; AFFLICTED WIDOWS PRAY TO GOD.

merciful enough to give me everything I need;

and thou art everywhere present, and therefore art acquainted with all my wants, sorrows, and afflictions, and art ever near to help. Shall a traveller depend upon his guide to direct him in the road in which he should go? Shall he that is sick trust his body and life in the hands of his physician? and shall I be afraid to trust in the living God? Have mercy upon me, O Lord

God of my salvation, and help me for thy name sake. Father and mother leave me, O do thou take me up. Behold, O Lord, how great are the sorrows of my soul! but thou hast ever looked in mercy on my soul, that it might not perish.

Assist me to my lonely life of faith and piety, ever to rejoice in thee, and to offend no one. I know that those that serve God shall be comforted in all their troubles, and delivered from tribulations, and after the chastisement they shall find grace. Widows are in the arms of

God, orphans are in his lap, he will have mercy upon them in the depths of affliction; for the unrighteous man who wrongs the orphan or oppresses the widow, offends the apple of God's eye. If they remain in the limits God has assigned them, and never swerve, they shall reach the heavenly mansions where all sorrow ceases, and where the wail of the widow shall be heard no more. Grant that joy may succeed

AFFLICTED WIDOWS PRAY TO GOD.

my sorrows, peace my troubles, and consolation my tears and distress. Convert all my enemies into friends, and give me grace in the sight of all men. Amen.

1. Widows be comforted, and lay aside your weeping,

The God of comforts now will take you in his keeping.

The widows' husband, he forbids you to despair,

And bids you trust in him with confidence and prayer.

2. The widows' husband, he will never more forsake you;

When you appear to sink, he in his arms will take you.

He is your husband, he, the Lord of many Hosts;

He steers your fragile bark round cliffs, and stormy coasts.

3. The widows' husband, he will clothe you, and will feed you;

How could he hear your cries of anguish, and not heed you?

He knows your hapless plight, the troubles that you toss,

And he will bear you up through all this bitter cross.

4. The widows' husband, he is still your best defender,

Unto your foes he will the direst justice render.

He hears your voice of woe, he takes you to his arms,

And with his mighty hand protects you from all harm.

5. The widows' husband, he will give to overflowing

Whate'er your sustenance shall need of his bestowing;

If in his wisdom your bereavement he ordained,

His doubly bounteous care you thereby have obtained.

forsaken Orphans complain to God.

EXHORTATION.

"When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."—Ps. xxvii. 10.

The situation of children, left orphans by the death of their parents, is often one of deep distress. Deprived of father and mother, they are often compelled to live, to serve, to help themselves as best they can, among strangers. Sad as is their lot, however, it often produces much good in the hearts of orphans, when they fear

God.

1. Let, therefore, orphans remember, that though deprived of their earthly parents, they have a rich Father in heaven.

2. They should remember that God often bereaves children of their parents, in order to teach them how richly and abundantly he can provide for them and take care of them without the assistance of earthly parents. How many thousand examples of this kind has God given to the world! where children left destitute, were nevertheless taken care of and blessed, and became rich and great, and were respected and loved. They might adopt the language of Jacob, and say; "with" (nothing but) "my staff I passed over this Jordan;" I left home with the wanderer's staff of poverty and life, and what I now have God hath given me. 3. Orphans must also persevere in their trust in God, be humble towards all, diligent in business, devout in prayer, zealous in attending divine worship, attentive as listeners, chaste in their lives, godly in their walk, faithful in their avocations, upright in all their dealings, must have God before their eyes and in their hearts, assent to no sin, and never transgress the commands of God. If they remain within these

limits, God will certainly not forsake them; he will lead them marvellously, but gloriously, so that they will have cause to praise his power and goodness all their lives. Gracious and merciful God, and Father! at thine exalted throne, I, a poor, forsaken, and afflicted orphan, would now humbly bow, and beseech thee to take me under thy fatherly protection. It has pleased thee, in thy wise and mysterious Providence, to deprive me of my earthly parents; ah! whither shall I now flee?

I am left an orphan; I have no father more, who will take pity on me! Blessed Father, I come to thee; do thou have mercy on me, and own me as thy child. Thou hast brought me into the world, and hitherto provided for me, in thee

I have set my trust from my youth up. Dost thou not feed the fowls of the air, and clothe the flowers and grass of the field, and provide for the deer of the forest, and wilt thou not also feed and clothe me as a faithful father, and have mercy upon me, and be gracious unto me? Mine eyes yearn for thee. I lift up mine eyes to the hills whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. I know that though all men should forsake me, thou wilt not cast me off. How many examples do I see around me of persons who were deprived of their parents in their childhood, whom thou hast led, supported, and provided for in the most wonderful manner. Great God! thou didst deliver the infant Moses, when exposed on the banks of the Nile; and shall I not also be rescued from beneath the waves of affliction which now roll so heavily over me, and threaten to swallow me up? O, Lord Jesus! who didst suffer little children to come unto thee, and forbid them not, bless me also, take me into the arms of thy mercy, carry me, and protect me from harm. O most precious Holy Ghost, the leader of the faithful, do thou lead me also. Teach me thy ways, O Lord, guide me in thy truth, unite my heart to fear thy name. O thou triune God! Be my defender, who will keep me; my helper, who will best read me; my escort, when I go abroad and when I return home. Bestow upon me friends wherever I go; raise up patrons and benefactors who will take pity on my loneliness; let my guardians be filled with love towards me. Do good unto them also according to thy grace: preserve them from misfortune, and reward them with temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings, for all the kindness they show me. Give me an humble and obedient heart; so that my perverseness and sinful faults may not forfeit the favor of my well-wishers. Preserve me from temptation, that I may not be induced by poverty to deny thee, but help me to increase constantly in the knowledge and love of thee. Let thy good spirit direct, sanctify, govern and guard me at all times, so that evil company may not seduce me into wanton sin. Let me not lapse into unchastity, and save me from perverseness of heart. O gracious God and Father, frighten me away from the paths of ungodliness. Reprimand me when I am seized by the lust of evil. Uphold me when I stumble, raise me when I fall, turn my steps when I would err; strengthen me when I am weak, make me whole when I sicken. O faithful God and Father! if at any time thou shouldst see me about to give way to sin, may I hear thy warning voice. I consecrate to thee my soul and body, and commit all my ways into thy hands. O how will I thank, how will I praise thee for thy benefits! my tongue shall say, this has God done. God has blessed me, kept me; clothed, led, sustained me; aye, I will proclaim to all the world thy fatherly goodness. O Lord, Lord! Hear the prayer of the forsaken orphan, hear the voice of thy child. I know thou canst help me; help me, Lord, for the sake of thy mercy, so that I may say to thy praise, the Lord has done great things to me, whereof I am glad. For, as thou art my God and father, thou wilt not forsake thy child. I am a poor clod of earth, on earth I have no comfort Amen. 1. Orphans, do not repine! Be not so spirit-stricken,

Rely upon your God, he will your sadness quicken;

Although your parents both no more your sufferings heed,

God lives and while he lives, ye nevermore shall need.

2. God feeds the orphans still, and gives them entertainment,

Protection, and support, shelter and food and raiment.

Resign yourselves to him, he will you well defend,

He will your bulwark be, your guardian, and your friend.

3. God is a God of wealth, and will most richly lavish

His comforts upon you. Distress shall never ravish

The little that ye have. Although the store be small

His husbandry will make it large enough for all.

4. Be of good cheer! Ye have a share in the prediction

That he will rescue all the wretched from affliction.

Arise and look around, and soon you shall behold

The word shall be fulfilled, so mercifully told.

5. Be pious, never leave the pathway strait and narrow,

And let impatience not your spirits chafe and harrow;

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THE AFFLICTED ONE COMPLAINS

Put still your trust in God, and swerve not from his side;

Then here and there above great bliss shall you betide

The afflicted one complains of the Weakness of his faith.

EXHORTATION.

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."—Is. xlii. 3.

"Lord, increase our faith."—Luke xvii. 5.

If anything is capable of frightening the soul of a true believer, it is when he imagines that he does not pray in a proper manner, or that his faith is not a living faith, which leads to doubts of his salvation. In such cases, the following reflections may be of service.

1. Let the desponding Christian be assured, that the prayer which is offered up in the name of Jesus, in reliance upon his blood and merits, is a prayer correctly spoken.

2. The fact that he has a desire to believe is an evidence that he has already believed; for this desire is a work of the Holy Ghost; a godless man does not desire to believe

OF THE WEAKNESS OF HIS FAITH.

3. Satan cannot extinguish the light of faith in our hearts.

4. The fact that a believer does not at all times feel the same degree of happiness in prayer, is no evidence that he has no faith, no more than coals concealed beneath the ashes prove the fire to be extinguished. 5. The best evidence that we have faith is the fact that we strive against sin, and that the fruits of the Spirit appear in our lives. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 22, 23. For such frightened souls are afraid to speak or to do evil. 6. Our faith may be strengthened by prayer, reading God's word, patient continuance in well-doing, hope in God.

7. Christ has died for the weak in faith as well as for others, and prays for them, that their faith fail not; and even if they should feel themselves unable to believe this, it is still true, because taught in God's holy word. O thou most merciful God! I know from thy blessed word that it is by faith alone that I can be saved, and that "without faith, it is impossible to please thee;" and as I desire to please thee THE AFFLICTED ONE COMPLAINS OF FOUL, and to be saved, I am greatly alarmed and distressed on account of the weakness of my faith. O therefore, kindle anew the light of faith in my soul, that I may know thee, the true and living God, as thou hast revealed thyself in thy word. O that I may be enabled to trust thy word and promise fully, which assures me of the pardon of sin through Jesus Christ. For at times, methinks, I do not pray aright; I have no faith, or shall not persevere in faith to the end. This I confide to thee, my God, because I know that all good and perfect gifts come from above. As faith is not common property, but is thy gift, I beseech thee to strengthen my weak faith. A bruised reed thou wilt not break, and the smoking flax thou wilt not quench. O God! engrave upon my heart the consolation that a prayer founded upon the merits and death of Jesus is a true prayer, and that a weak faith which clings to thee, O triune God! that is, to thee, O heavenly Father as a Creator, to thee, O Jesus! as our only Saviour and Redeemer, and to thee, O Holy Ghost! as our Sanctifier and Comforter,— is a saving faith, well pleasing unto thee. O my Jesus! pray for me as thou didst intercede for Peter, that my faith fail not. Seal in me the consolation that I have been purchased with thy precious blood, and have become thy child in holy baptism; and that my weak faith and SINFUL, AND BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS.

prayer is not rejected, for the sake of thy intercession. And O thou gracious Spirit! work in me the real fruits of faith, impel me, sanctify me, reign in me and rule over me, yea, dwell in me; bear witness unto my spirit that I am a child of God; and greatly increase my faith; may the fruits of a living faith appear abundantly in my life, and be seen of all men. If thou wilt vouchsafe me this, O triune God, I will gladly be content with my feeble faith. O my God, before whom I appear in this my great affliction, hear how I pray, and let me not be forsaken; demolish the works of Satan, strengthen my weak faith, let me never repine, but still wear Christ in my heart. Amen. The afflicted one complains of foul, sinful, and blasphemous Thoughts.

EXHORTATION.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me, and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Cor. xii. 7-9. It is distressing to hear the groans and sighs of one who is suffering severe bodily pains; but much more so to see one overwhelmed by an-

THE AFFLICTED ONE COMPLAINS OF FOUL, guish of soul, on account of sinful and blasphemous thoughts. Now such tempted and sorrowful souls may find some consolation in the following reflections:

1. These temptations, depression, fright, and spiritual trials are sent by God, according to whose will they must suffer these things. Not a hair of our heads falls to the ground without his notice; much less can so heavy an affliction come upon us without his will. 2. Pious Christians perceive these foul and wicked thoughts with alarm. Unconverted people have them too, but they laugh over them.
3. The fact that the pious are alarmed by them, is a sign that they love God in their hearts, and are in a state of grace and faith.
4. This fright on account of sinful thoughts is a proof that Jesus and the Holy Ghost still dwell in our hearts; if Satan occupied them, as the afflicted ones think, they would not be disturbed by them. 5. Believers must never permit sinful thoughts, to keep them from prayer, and the reading and hearing of God's Word, on the contrary, they should pray and read much and often. 6. Even if the evil thoughts will not permit them to pray nor to think of God, their very complaint is in itself a prayer, and their groans

SINFUL, AND BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS.

a sure sign of the presence of God in their hearts; for this desire springs from the grace that is in them; and in weeping and wailing, they pray most fervently and effectually. 7. Although they imagine that they offend God in everything they do, God will not judge them harshly, but considers their effort and their desire.

8. They must bear patiently to the end, for God will at last release and refresh them.

9. These trials make the afflicted one humble, devout, cautious, pious, loth to say or do evil, and purify the heart of evil habits and faults, and lukewarmness in prayer and in the hearing of God's holy Word; is not this great gain? 10. These reflections should be entertained and meditated on, and further expositions requested of the friends of God. Besides, corporal medicine should be taken, as well as exercise, in the open air in the society of Christians, and solitude avoided. It may be well at times to sing with those around. It is also advisable frequently to read the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the 27th and 88th Psalms. Most holy Lord! thou who dwellest in the praise of Israel, and whom angels and the heavenly hosts unceasingly praise and adore, I,

THE AFFLICTED ONE COMPLAINS OF FOUL, a poor afflicted soul, prostrate myself before thy throne of grace. I am greatly distressed by sore temptations and by sinful and blasphemous thoughts, which almost daily assail me, and hinder my prayers and communion with thee. Thou, omniscient God, knowest well, how these "fiery darts" strike and wound my soul, how they torture and harass me. But they are contrary to my will, and I daily strive and pray against them, and weep and mourn over them. O my God, do not make me accountable for that which takes place against my will. Thou seest how I struggle, how I wrestle, how I sigh, how I detest them, and would fain expel them from my heart. O Lord! Let not thy hand be too heavy upon me, lest I perish. Be gracious unto me, for I am feeble. O how do I tremble, when I see that the evil hour is on me. Refresh me, O thou triune God, and when the evil hour with its terrors has passed over, let me experience again the abundant consolation of thy holy presence. In the midst of my sufferings, speak a word of comfort to my soul, to which I may cling, and by which I may raise myself, and bravely renew the fight. If my woe is to be of long duration, O give me great patience and power of endurance. Preserve me from unbelief and despondency; but let thy Spirit bear witness unto my spirit, that I am thy child. Thou hast

said, those shall never SINFUL, AND BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS.

be put to shame who trust in thee: Lord, in thee alone do I trust, let me never be put to shame; but deliver me by thy righteousness, and hasten to my assistance. Be thou my rock, my strong tower, and deliverer. Guide and protect me for thy name's sake. Thou hast said, that thy grace shall never depart from me, but that eternal grace shall be mine. Lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and grant me thy peace. O my father! let thine hour come, when thou wilt remove these terrors, strengthen me, preserve me, protect my heart with a rampart, surround it like the house of Job, so that at last evil thoughts shall no longer enter it, and that, by thy power, I may be enabled to despise them. Thou, faithful God, wilt not permit me to be tempted beyond my power to resist. Assuage my fear, and I will receive that also as a relief, until at last, in thine own good time, thou wilt relieve me entirely. Jesus, thou fountain of mercies, thou who dost discard no one who is afflicted, but dost extend comfort to all; even where faith is no larger than a grain of mustard-seed, thou dost still think it worthy to remove mountains. Let me find consolation for my sorrows, in thee; help me to conquer, whenever I must fight; daily increase my faith, honor the sword of thy Spirit, so that I may smite the foe, and turn aside the arrows of his wrath. Amen. COMFORT UNDER BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS

Comfort under blasphemous thoughts.

1. Avaunt, out of my soul, ye thoughts foul and Satanic,

God is my guiding star through terror and through panic.

With all your hideousness, you cannot make me fear;

Ye but prepare my soul to dwell in better cheer.

2. God will not hold me for the things of my aversion,

Which I detest and spurn, and seek with great exertion

To banish from my soul! God knows my real mind,

That here I am not free, but governed and confined.

3 This horrid blasphemy goads me almost to madness;

I sigh, and weep, and wail, with groans beyond all sadness;

But it is all without, it enters not my heart,

Against that I contend, till sweat-drops from me start.

4 So long as I contend, with God's divine assistance,

And meet the poisoned darts with undismayed resistance,

Their venom enters not the currents of my soul,

In Jesus' blood I still am undefiled and whole.

COMFORT UNDER BLASPHEMOUS THOUGHTS. 231

5. Though Satan's messenger forever comes to smite me,
And to his deeds of sin endeavors to incite me;
His buffets are my hurt, and not my evil deeds,
And to be spared them all my heart sincerely pleads.

Jesus.

"I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."—Joshua, i. 5.

Soul.

"Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul."—Psalm, xxv. 1.

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Still at thy sick bed stands thy Jesus to regale thee,
Of this be well convinced when sufferings most assail thee.

PART III.

EXHORTATIONS, PRAYERS AND HYMNS for the Sick

32. Morning Prayer in Illness

EXHORTATION.

"As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me. Evening, morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice."—Psalm lv. 16, 17.

Although God permits illness to befall us, we must not on that account abstain from prayer, but must pray the more; and the more our sickness increases in severity, the more fervent should our prayers become, as Luke testifies of Christ: "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly."—Luke xxii. 44. 1. When laid by God upon a bed of sickness, we should raise our hearts to God at break of day, and praise him for the protection extended during the past night. If the night's rest has been disturbed and broken, we should pray for relief; if it has been quiet and calm, our thanks are due to God. MORNING PRAYER IN ILLNESS.

2. Having thus directed our hearts to God in the morning, we should bring our prayers to the throne of grace, recommend ourselves to the divine protection for the day, think of God, and suffer patiently what he inflicts upon us.

3. We must remember that Jesus stands at our bed of sickness, to refresh and watch over, and also to teach and instruct us. Possibly, while in health, we have not been properly assiduous in our attention upon divine worship and in prayer; God desires to make us conscious of this remissness, so that we may learn to pray more devoutly, and to see that comfort fails us because in times of health we have not laid in a sufficient store of comforts and Bible passages. If we have loved God and his word, sickness is to be regarded as a dispensation to enable us to make a practical application of what we have heard of patience, trust in God, calmness, and resignation unto the will of God. O most holy triune God! Father, Son and Holy Ghost! I come before thy most holy throne, and thank thee that thou hast let me live to behold this day. Thou knowest, Lord, how I have spent the night upon my bed of sickness; yet I cannot sufficiently praise thee that thou hast suffered me again to behold the light MORNING PRAYER IN ILLNESS.

of the sun, and all my pains and pangs to pass away. O thou God of love! I thank thee for thy boundless love. O mighty God! I thank thee for thy blessing and assistance. Thine eye has watched over me this night; thy hand has covered me, thy grace has kept me. O my God! the sun rises again: O let thy grace also rise over me anew; give me this day new powers, new grace and new patience, to bear my woes willingly and calmly. Lord, my God, it has pleased thee to lay me upon this bed of sickness; I will remain upon it as long as it pleases thee. Perhaps it is thy purpose to separate me from my accustomed sins, and to speak with me alone, to teach and direct me how I shall serve the interests of my soul. I now have time to review my past life, to inquire whether I have served, honored and obeyed thee. I am grieved and ashamed, and desire to be truly penitent, and to make a new covenant with thee, and to work out my salvation with fear and trembling.—Grant, O Jesus! that I may have my heart with thee all day, that I may pray devoutly, think of thy wounds, blood, and death, and meditate the true salvation and eternal welfare of my soul. Remind me of the comforts of thy holy word; assure me of thy fatherly kindness; seal the promise of thy grace upon my heart, and make me certain of thy speedy deliverance. Guard me to-day against sudden attacks, new pains, sorrowful hours, and all sorts of suffering. Refresh me in my prostration, and strengthen me in my weakness by thy Holy Ghost. But if it be thy will that I should have

pain and suffering this day, O remain with me, and do not forsake me. Help me to end the day in peace and bliss, and to accept in calmness and resignation whatsoever thou layest upon me. Behold, here am I, Lord, do with me according to thy will; thou art my Father, I am thy child: thou canst preserve my life, and make me rejoice with thy comfort. At evening, I will extol thy goodness, and heartily praise thy mercy for all thy benefits. My body and my soul, with my mind and understanding, I consign to thee, great God! into thy mighty hand. Lord, my Shield, my Glory and my Greatness, take me for thine own. Send thy angel to me, to avert the power, cunning and designs of the evil one, and to watch over me, and at the last, to lead me to the rest of thy saints. Amen. 1. In distress, and pain, and sickness,

I have spent the weary night;

Now, I feel a flush of quickness,

With the sun's returning light.

Therefore, to begin the day,

Let me read, and sing, and pray;

Though 'tis faint and feebly spoken,

God will not disdain the token.

2. Lord, it is by thy appointment

That I here am racked with pain;

And thy Spirit's best anointment

Rests on all thou dost ordain.

When a father smites his son

For his welfare it is done;

I receive thy dispensation

Gith a glad anticipation.

3. By thy grace, another morning

I have now been spared to see;

Let me see the night returning

If thy gracious will it be.

Give my spirit rest and peace

And my body's anguish, ease.

Shed thy grace, in all its splendor,

Gladness to my soul to render.

4. Yet thy will shall be the measure

Of my wishes, Lord I alone;

Yes, thy sovereign will and pleasure

In all things be surely done.

If my sufferings must be long,

My obedience shall be strong.

Life and death, together knitted,

All are to thy will committed.

EVENING PRAYER IN ILLNESS.

33. Evening Prayer in Illness

EXHORTATION.

"I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted."—Psalm lxxvii. 2, 3. In view of the thousand accidents which may befall a man by day and by night, he must never rise or retire to rest without consigning his body and his soul to the strong guardianship of a gracious God. This is particularly important in times of sickness. 1. When God has helped a sick man to reach the close of a day, he must thank him for his merciful support.

2. At the approach of night, of which the sick often have a peculiar dread, he must again draw near to God in prayer, and beseech him in mercy to avert all dangerous attacks and pains.

3. Having thus given body and soul into the Lord's keeping, he must not doubt that the triune God will be, throughout the night, his Light and his support; that he will stand at his bedside, will watch and nurse him, forgive his sins for the sake of the death of Jesus, and be gracious unto him. With thoughts like these the sick man must resign himself wholly to the divine wisdom, love, care and protection. EVENING PRAYER IN ILLNESS.

O thou merciful God! I have reached the close of another day. Thou, Lord! Lord! hast prolonged my life to this hour; therefore, I give the thanks and praise of a warm heart to thy fatherly love and truth. Especially do I praise thy name for having aided me to bear my cross and sufferings this day. Oh Lord, thou dost impose a burden, and thou dost also assist in bearing it. We have a God who helps, and a Lord who delivers from death. The Lord afflicts, it is true, but his mercy returns in virtue of his great goodness. The Lord is a gracious and a kind friend to all who call upon his name. He hears the cries of the distressed, and does not refuse their prayer. O great God, the night approaches, and I turn to thee in prayer, saying, "My father, remain with me, and do not depart from me this night." Aye, command thy angels to come and defend thy property in me, give us those brave sentinels to secure us against the assaults of Satan, then shall we sleep in thy name, while the holy angels guard us, and praise thee, most holy Trinity, for ever more. Avert this night all sudden and dangerous attacks and spasms, soothe my pains, preserve me against fright, fear, and misfortune. O heavenly father! Remain with thy sick child; when thy gracious presence hovers over me, I am not afraid. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is the vigor of my life, whom should I dread? O Jesus! the sun is setting, but thou, O sun of righteousness, wilt not depart. O my Jesus! take me into thy arms this night. Lay my head upon thy left hand, and thy right hand upon me. O most precious Holy Ghost! thou comforter of the afflicted and resource of the wretched, do thou stay with me, strengthen me, preserve me in the true faith and in Christian patience. O thou holy trinity, take me into thy protection. The Lord bless me and keep me; the Lord let his countenance shine upon me and be gracious unto me; the Lord lift up his countenance over me, and give me peace. And if this night should be my last in this vale of sorrows, Lord, take me into heaven, into thy happy mansions. And thus I live and die for thee, thou mighty Lord of Hosts, in life and death thou wilt deliver me from all evil. Amen. 1. For rest and peace I'll look around me,

For I am weary of distress,

Till Jesus in his sleep has bound me,
I shall not know true happiness.
The sleep that Jesus gives, alone
Brings rest when we have weary grown

2. My bed, so silent, sad, and lonely,
Is little better than the grave;
But if I have my Jesus only,
No better resting place I crave.
Upon his faithful bosom laid,
My doubts and troubles all are stayed.

3. When I dispose the clothes around me,
I think the earth will soon be cast
Upon me, when the grave has bound me,
And I am laid to rest at last.
But if my Jesus there I see,
The grave is but a bed to me.

4. When I suppress the burning taper,
I think that, as the night is dark,
So all will be dissolved in vapor,
When life deserts my little bark.
But Jesus, beacon of my soul,
Shall never fail to keep me whole.

5. As I throw off my clothes, I ponder
Upon my last disrobing day,
When I shall leave the world for yonder
Small chamber in the house of clay.
Farewell, farewell, my earthly dress,

I wear the Saviour's righteousness.

PRAYER FOR PATIENCE IN ILLNESS.

34. Prayer for Patience in Illness

EXHORTATION.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God?"—Psalm, xliii. 5. Patience is necessary, to fulfil the will of God; for surely he who would fulfil God's will, must not be perverse or self-willed, but patient and calm. There are many inducements for a Christian to be patient. 1. The example of Christ; in all his sufferings he opened not his mouth, but was meek as a lamb. 2. The patient should remember that the disease is a dispensation of God.

3. The love and omnipotence of God are inducements to patience; what God imposes, he can also remove. 4. The patient must consider that his sins have merited far greater torments and severer sufferings; instead of growing impatient, therefore, he should rather humble himself in penitence before God, and invoke his grace and mercy. PRAYER FOR PATIENCE IN ILLNESS.

Merciful God and gracious father! behold me on this bed of sickness, unable to rise; nevertheless, I come to thee and stand before thy lofty throne. It has pleased thee to deprive me of health, and send this illness upon me; even so, my God and Father! let thy will be done; but give me patience to bear all without murmurs or discontent. In my better days God has often gladdened my heart, and should I not now endure in patience? God is good, he chides in moderation; his judgments cannot entirely forsake me. If I have received good things at thy hands, if thou hast often refreshed me in my days of health, I will accept these days of suffering likewise, in thy power and patience, and will humbly remember how many happy hours the Lord has given me, compared to which these short intervals of suffering are insignificant. I know, my God! that thou art loving and gracious; therefore, thou wilt not impose more upon me than I can bear. I rely upon thy word, which says, "God is true, and will not suffer you to be tempted beyond your power, but puts an end to temptations, so that you can bear it." Look upon thy feeble, emaciated child, and bestow thy fatherly love upon me. I do not refuse to suffer, because suffering will redound to 21*

PRAYER FOR PATIENCE IN ILLNESS.

my sanctification. My God! here I am; do with me as thou wilt; let me fully understand thy holy counsel, which is, that this disease shall be as a fire to consume and destroy the impurities with which my soul is tainted; and to cleanse it wholly, that it shall be as a tocsin, reminding me of my sins, and of the necessity of repentance; as a call to prayer for the forgiveness of all my sins, for the sake of Jesus, and of his blood and death; as a voice commanding me to put my house in order, and to prepare for death, the grave, and eternity. Make me fitting to please thee, in thy heavenly mansion, for I know that these temporal sorrows, are to be succeeded by surpassing glory. Therefore, be quiet, my soul; why art thou cast down, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope in God for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God. Why wilt thou grieve, my poor soul? Love him alone who is bright Immanuel, trust in him alone, he will do all things well; he will advance thy welfare. For God forsaketh none of those who put their trust in him; though things look strange and doubtful, never give way to dread and doubts. Thou shalt be astonished to see how God will deliver thee. Amen. HYMN

SOUL.

1. How long must I stand in battle?

Will there be no end of strife?

Will the darts forever rattle,

Must I still despair of life?

Will I never be relieved,

And the victory achieved?

O I fear 'twill not be ended,

Till I perish unbefriended.

GOD.

2. Fight the fight without repining,

I will never let thee fail,

My strong shield is o'er thee shining,

Courage! thou shalt yet prevail.

I am with thee evermore,

Follow where I go before;

Thou shalt have my full assistance,

Overcoming all resistance.

SOUL.

3. O my God, I know the forces

Of thy heavenly power full well;

Thy omnipotence discourses

Wonders such as ne'er befel.

Then convince me that thy aid

Will my struggles still bestead.

Let me know that thou wilt never

Leave my side but help me ever.

THE PATIENT PRAYS FOR

GOD.

4. Lo, the dazzling crown allures thee!

Hasten, let thy course be run;

My extended hand adjures thee,

See the mansions of the Son;

Dwellings of eternal light,

Where the angels wing their flight,

Where is ended toil and burden,

Are the faithful champion's guerdon.

GOD AND THE SOUL.

5. SOUL. All my troubles now are over,

I have conquered by thy grace.

GOD. And my panoply shall cover,

Thee e'en in thy last distress.

SOUL. And where wilt thou carry me,

After death has set me free?

GOD. Heavenward, where, for what thou yearnest,

Is transformed to truth and earnest.

35. The Patient prays for the Divine Assistance

EXHORTATION.

"Behold, God is mine helper; the Lord is with them that uphold my soul."—Psalm liv. 4.

It is the greatest comfort in affliction to have a good and ready friend. Although it may occur that an unfortunate man or stranger, or a

THE DIVINE ASSISTANCE.

penniless one, has no friend to ask him "how do you do?" yet we know with certainty that God will befriend all the wretched.

1. God has promised his gracious protection to all his children; therefore a patient, instead of repining, must firmly believe that God will not forsake him, but will help him in his own good time.

2. This assistance may consist in the preservation of the patient's life, in the assuagement of his sufferings, or in the strength conferred by God to enable him to bear up under the most bitter assaults. God is true, and is near us when we suppose him far away O faithful God! thou seest the wretchedness of my condition. My powers fail, my form dwindles away, and the weight of the cross becomes more intense from moment to moment. Lord, Lord God! thou hearest my prayer and my sufferings are not unknown to thee. Remain with me I beseech thee, and forsake me not; I rely upon thy promise, Fear not, for I am with thee, fail not, for I am the Lord thy God; I will strengthen and keep thee, and help thee with the right hand of my righteousness; and again, I will not forsake thee nor forget thee. Upon these words, O my God, I put my trust. I THE PATIENT PRAYS FOR am sorely in need of thy comfort; I cannot bear my sufferings, if thou wilt not remain with me, and help me to bear them; the disease will soon destroy me, if thy hand does not keep me. O how soon is the earthly tenement of my body ruined, how soon will I sink, how soon will my life be ended, if thy divine power and thy fatherly hand do not sustain me! If it is consoling to see some of my friends at my bedside by day, and even at night, how much more consoling is it if thou, Lord God, art with me. Men may pity and bewail me, but thou, Lord, art my Help, my Deliverer, my Physician. Thy most holy presence will refresh and keep me, soothe my anguish, and allay my dread. O, then, do not leave me, nor withdraw thy hand from me, God, my salvation! As a loving mother will not leave her sick child, so thou, my God, wilt not depart from me. Let me perceive thy presence by an inward joy, a powerful solace, sweet thoughts, and relief in my distress. O my God! strengthen my faith, keep my powers, help me to strive and to conquer. Thy assistance makes me strong when I am weak; I can do all things by him who maketh me strong, even Christ. Most dearly do I love thee, Lord! I beg that thou wilt not be far from me with thy gracious assistance; all the world gives me no pleasure, I care not for heaven and earth, if I can but THE DIVINE ASSISTANCE.

have thee; and even though my heart should break, yet thou art still my only trust, the comfort of my heart. Thou hast redeemed me with thy blood; O let me never be confounded. Amen.

1. My God, forsake me not! Such is my constant prayer,

Until I feel no more the wrath of the dismayer.

I know thy father's heart, that when the wretched cries
Thy help is never slow to bid him walk and rise.

2. My God, forsake me not! without thee I must perish,
And have in this wide world no other hope to cherish.

O hasten hither soon, my hope and only trust,
Show me thy countenance, and raise me from the dust.

3 My God, forsake me not in this my present anguish
Thou art my help, and thou caust never let me languish.
The time of need has come, O friend in need, be near,
Untie these cruel bonds, and set me free from fear.

4. My God, forsake me not! help me to be victorious,
And in me, Father, make thy mighty name most glorious.
Deliverer, appear! Such is my ceaseless cry,
And let the hour of thy relief come quickly nigh.

THE PATIENT CALLS TO MIND THAT

36. The Patient calls to mind that he is human and therefore Mortal

EXHORTATION.

"Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."—Job xiv. 1, 2. Although all men are mortal, and men die and are buried every day, yet very few reflect upon their mortality, particularly while in good health, and while fortune favors them; therefore, it is necessary for God sometimes to remind them of their mortality, which is done by sickness, for when he suffers the strong to become feeble, the rose to fade, they become aware of their transitory condition. Righteous Christians should never spend a day without thinking of their mortality. It is a delusion of Satan to think that if we do not think of death we shall not die; whether we think of it or not, our end will come when God is pleased to send it. My God! in thy holy will and counsel it has pleased thee to lay me on this bed of sickness, and thereby to remind me that I must die. Lo, my days are as a handbreadth in thy sight, and my life is as nothing before thee. O how nothing HE IS HUMAN AND THEREFORE MORTAL.

are all men, who live in such fancied security. My God! I am dust, and to dust must I return. Therefore, I look upon my open grave as a mother's lap, where my body shall gently rest and sleep. I also know that it is the lot of man to die, and after that the judgment; therefore, in my days of health I have often prayed, "Lord, teach me that there must be an end of me, and that my life has a period, and that I must away." I also know that I must leave all things behind, my house, my goods, my honor and my fortune, and all that I have in the world. Here I have no resting place, but seek that which is beyond. Thou didst remind king Hezekiah to set his house in order because he must die, and his life have an end. If by this disease thou wouldst in like manner remind me of my end, grant that I may cheerfully meditate upon my mortality and my coming end. Perhaps this is my last repose, and the last year of my earthly being; perhaps this illness denotes that the days of life written in thy book are numbered; that with prayer and penitence, and a conscientious investigation of my past life I must prepare for death. Here I am, my God and Father! take my soul into thy bosom, but first prepare it well, that I may die in thy grace and be happy. I have left my fate to God's disposal; he will do with me according to his holy will; if I am to live longer here THE PATIENT CALLS TO MIND, ETC.

below, I will not murmur at his dispensation.

My hours are at his choice, I do not presume to limit him; the hairs of my head are numbered, great and small, and none falls without his will.

Amen.

1. How great our nothingness! who does regard this rightly,

Will worship God alone, and hold all others lightly;

For who his nothingness does fully contemplate,

He will within himself thus humbly meditate:

2. "What am I? Nothing; for God gave me life and being:

These are of his free gift, and not of my foreseeing.

I was not, 'till the day when his creative hand

Drew me from nothingness, and set me in the land.

3. What have I? Nothing; for I came in destitution,

And when I leave I must of all make restitution.

From God comes all I have, or be it great or small,

What I have not from God, I do not have at all.

4 What know I? Nothing; for the light of life within me

Is but my faith in God, and nothing else shall win me.

Should he withdraw his word, and take away his light,

My senses would be left in everlasting night.

THE PATIENT RESIGNS HIMSELF, ETC.

5. What can I? Nothing; for from God are all the forces,

The strength which through the soul and through the body courses.

In him alone I have life, being, motion, thought,

Should he withdraw his hand I soon would come to nought.

6. O world of nothingness, farewell! thou hast no pleasures

For those who can discern thy dross from better treasures.

My God shall be my all! for him I live and die,

And by him I shall find comfort and bliss on high.

The Patient resigns himself into the will of God for life or for death.

EXHORTATION.

"And he went a little further, and fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. xxvi. 39. The will of God is best at all times. This we all profess to believe, but when the time comes to submit wholly and unconditionally to his will, we often find ourselves perverse and discontented. This state of mind should be dispelled by suitable reflections. THE PATIENT RESIGNS HIMSELF

1. The believer whom God has laid upon a sick bed, must therefore reflect that it is the will of God, which has placed him in this situation.

2. He must contemplate the example of Jesus Christ, who, in the height of his agony, when his sweat was in drops of blood which fell upon the earth, still cried, Father, not my will but thine be done. 3. It is best for the patient to say, Lord, here am I; do with me according to thy pleasure, I will live longer if it is thy will, and I will die if it is thy will.

Gracious, good, and merciful God! With prayers and sighs I come before thy most holy throne. I see that it is thy will that I should be here sick, and forego for a time, the precious gift of health. I was born according to thy will, and will die when it is thy pleasure. According to thy will I have long enjoyed health, at thy desire I will now submit to sickness. Aye, if I could recover health against the will of my God, I would not do so, but would fulfil thy holy counsel on my bed of sickness. Therefore, in this condition, I will say unto my Jesus, Father, not my will but thine be done. And again, the will of the Lord be done; if I am to continue in the land of the living, I will continue to praise INTO THE WILL OF GOD.

thee, and the coming years which thou wilt give me, shall be devoted to thy honor and to true piety. But if thou shouldst be pleased not to raise me from this couch again, and to let me die of this present illness, then prepare me for a happy death and a glad eternity. I know that I must leave this mortal tenement, but I also know that thou hast prepared a mansion for thy faithful, which was not made with hands, and which shall be eternal in heaven. In heaven is my inheritance, my birthright, my allegiance; should I not rejoice to come into my inheritance, to hasten to my home, and to enjoy the glory of the children of God? If I have reason to pray for a longer lease of life, I cannot but hesitate and reflect, whether it would not be better to be dissolved and with Christ, to behold my Jesus, whom I have loved when I did not see him. Therefore, my God, I resign all things into thy care, thou best knowest the things that are good for me. Here I am, O Lord! do with me according to thy pleasure. Lord arrange all things for me in life and death, for this alone is my desire, suffer me not to perish. But keep me in thy gracious favor, and then do with me as thou wilt, give me patience to submit to thy will, for it is best. Amen. 22*

1. I will what Jesus wills. Such still shall be my motto,

While I must linger in this dismal earthly grotto,

Mine is a wayward will, which often runs astray;

Therefore, on Jesus' face it shall be bent alway.

2. I will what Jesus wills. If he would have me tarry

Upon this nether earth, his angels will me carry.

The waving of his hand my life and death decides,

He guides my steps and I still follow where he guides.

3. I will what Jesus wills. If he would have me languish,

So be it! I am here, prepared to bear all anguish.

If Jesus goes before, I gladly follow him;

His presence smooths the path, and makes all sorrow dim.

4. I will what Jesus wills. If he would have me weeping,

So be it! I still know that I am in his keeping;

After the clouds are past his sun will shine again,

For still his mercy comes to banish every pain.

5. I will what Jesus wills. If he from earth will take me,

'Tis well! I know that then his grace will ne'er forsake me.

I shall derive the rich fulfilment of his word;

And hold my entrance to the kingdom of the Lord.

THE PATIENT REFLECTS, ETC.

37. The Patient reflects that Suffering and Distress come from God

EXHORTATION.

"The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up."—1 Sam. ii. 6.

God is love, and loveth men fervently. True believers experience daily proofs of this love, in his gracious assistance and numberless benefits. They also see it in the great works of creation, redemption and sanctification. This truth, that God is love, is richly fraught with consolation, to those afflicted by sickness.

1. It teaches the sufferer that his troubles were sent, not by an enemy who hates, but by a friend who loves him.

2. Therefore, the patient must commit himself to God, diligently call upon him in prayer, trustingly look up to heaven and think, he who has brought my ill can drive it away, he well knows how to end all my sufferings.

3. He must not suffer himself to be disturbed by the violence of his disease, or the apparent imminence of the danger, for here again he has the consolation, that God who imposes the burden, will help to carry it.

THE PATIENT REFLECTS THAT SUFFERING

Lord God! Merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth, thou who dost pardon trespasses and sins! Behold me at thy feet, beseeching thee to look down upon me from thy lofty throne, and hear my prayer. I believe and know that my suffering and sorrow come from thee; thy hand smites, but it also heals, it wounds, and it binds up; and if my sickness comes from heaven, to heaven I look for comfort. I lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth. Health, life, and prosperity, I have received at thy hands; should I not accept this sickness also! The trees of the orchard are sometimes filled with blossoms, or beautifully adorned with leaves and fruits, fresh and shining in the sun, yet in winter they appear to be dead and sapless, and the storm and the frost assail them. All this comes, O God, from thee. Therefore I will also bear in mind, that this my time of distress and suffering is of thy sending. Thou knowest of every star, whether it stands high or low in the sky, so dost thou also know how it stands with me. Thou knowest the weight of my burden, thou art acquainted with the duration of my sufferings, thou art aware of the extent of my powers of AND DISTRESS COME FROM GOD.

endurance. O then, dear Lord, impose whate'er thou wilt, but give me the strength needed to sustain it. I know that without thy will, not a hair can fall from my head; how much less, then, can I fall sick? If not a sparrow can fall to the earth without thy will, how could I, without thy will, be subjected to pains, and disquietude, and even death? If my troubles come from thee, they come from my father; if they come from my father, they come from a loving heart, not for my destruction, but for the good of my soul. Chastise me, my father, yet in moderation, and do not entirely destroy me. Afflict me, but make me glad again; if thou dost awhile conceal thy countenance, let it shine forth again; let the light of thy countenance shine upon me, and I shall be whole. Willingly will I fall into the hands of my father, if I have deserved punishment, for his wrath endureth but a moment, and he loveth the living. Without thy will nothing can befall me; thou

canst curse and bless again, I am thy child and have deserved thy discipline; send thy warm sunshine after the bleak rain. I know that thou hast never yet forgotten me; in the midst of my tribulation I think upon the Lord, even though he press me with crosses and fears. Amen. 1. To be a child of God, and yet oppressed with sadness,

Is quite compatible, for an interior gladness

Remaineth in the soul, with faith and piety,

Though to the outward eye, 'tis ruin utterly.

2. He who here gathers thorns shall once be crowned with splendor,

And who here weeps and groans, shall there all grief surrender.

He is a child of God, e'en in the midst of care,

The Lord still loves him well, and keeps his mansions there.

3. Still to thy God be true, in faith and firm reliance,

And thou shalt soon perceive the worth of his alliance;

And even should thy life on earth be full of woe,

What matter? At the end to heaven thou'lt surely go.

4. Thy father loves thee, though his chastening rod annoy thee,

And though thy heart should bleed, yet he will not destroy thee.

God loves a child that looks to heaven with steady gaze,

And still its prayerful eye doth to its Lord upraise.

THE PATIENT APPRECIATES, ETC.

38. The Patient appreciates the Utility of Disease

EXHORTATION.

"Sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

The natural man refuses to believe that sickness is of great utility, for not only, says he, does it weaken the body and endanger life, but the vital powers are diminished, to say nothing of other difficulties and expenses brought on by sickness. But in spite of all this, diseases are useful, sometimes even to the body, in consuming the impurities of nature, and leading to a sounder state of health than was enjoyed before. But it is especially beneficial to the soul. 1. It is often the means of reclaiming a man from the ways of sin. How many a wanton sinner neglects God and his Holy Word, and heaps sin upon sin, until God draws him away by force, as it were, by sickness, pain, or suffering, recalls him to his senses, and snatches him from the clutch of Satan. 2. It is, however, no less useful to the pious, in making them acquainted with the omnipotence, goodness, wisdom, love, and mercy of God, in which they had believed before, but

THE PATIENT APPRECIATES THE without having practically experienced them. They learn to resign themselves to God, to meditate upon death, to prepare for their final departure, to think diligently of heaven, and to commit their souls into the Lord's holy keeping. The patient who gives proper weight to these reflections will be well satisfied with God even in sickness. Beloved Lord and Father! I perceive that it is thy holy counsel with me, to make this my time of suffering, to let the sun of my prosperity be obscured for a while, my health impaired, and my vital powers diminished. I thank thee, my Lord and God, for having first given me to understand, that the way of the cross is the way to heaven, and that in sickness thou doest great good unto our souls. I see that thou wilt draw me off from the world; thou wilt make the world bitter to me, and heaven sweet; thou wilt induce me to renounce all ungodliness and worldly desires, and to lead an honest, righteous, and godly life, to examine my past career, and to turn to thee in heartfelt penitence. Alas! it is but too true, that while we are all well and know nothing of trouble, we are apt to suppose that all our business in this world is to amass UTILITY OF DISEASE.

earthly treasures, or to share in the amusements of the world, seek its company, and acquire its habits, manners and customs; but as that would end in the perdition of our souls and eternal damnation, thou in thy goodness dost at times lead us apart, and speak with us alone. Thus, it seems, thou wouldst now speak with me alone, and warn me against the world and its sins, seductions, malice, and evil practices. Thou wilt exhort me to repent of my past sins, no longer to associate with the world, and with an altered mind to understand what is the true and perfect will of God. Well, my God! I will do so, if thou wilt restore me to health. I will become more pious, pray more diligently, avoid all evil, renounce my bad habits, eschew the places and the people where and with whom I have sinned, and become a new man. Whoso loveth the world, the love of the father is not in him. If then, O Lord, thou hast found me negligent in religion, and slow in prayer, but willing to sin and ready to enjoy the pleasures of the world, it is thy design in this sickness to rouse me, to make me concerned for my salvation, and awake from the sleep of sin. Wake up, thou who sleepest, thou sayest to me, I will cleanse thee of thine impurities. I see that thou dost intend to remind me of death, so that, when health returns I may acknowledge thy power, THE PATIENT APPRECIATES THE love, and goodness, which I should not have done, hadst thou not thus visited me. Lord! Perfect the good work thou hast begun within me; make my spirit whole with this bitter medicine. By

this strong surgery remove the sore boils of sin; with this sharp infusion, wash out mine iniquities, and grant that I may humble myself in true penitence before thee, and may find counsel, comfort, consolation, and forgiveness of sins in the wounds of Jesus. Ever make heaven luscious to my thought, and the world bitter as gall, so that in the turmoil of this world, eternity may be constantly before my eyes. In the name of the blood of Jesus, I beseech thee, Lord, to give me a peaceful end. Amen. 1. Sickness, pain, disease, and trouble,

And whatever ills I prove,

Never darken the remembrance

Of my God and of his love.

Though it be his sovereign pleasure

To distress me beyond measure,

I will love him none the less,

He is mine through all distress.

2. By this cross he would withdraw me

From the world and all its toil,

So that sin may not destroy me,

And I may not risk to spoil

UTILITY OF DISEASE.

My immortal soul's salvation

By obedience to temptation.

He would have my heart to be

His domain eternally.

3. In thy open wounds, my Jesus,

Hold, and lock my feeble soul;

Let them be my dearest shelter

When the clouds around me roll;

All my wishes, hopes, and yearnings,

Are thy dearly purchased earnings;

Strengthen, guard, and comfort me,

In my sufferings graciously.

4. With thy Spirit's heavenly patience

Dearest Lord, my mind endow;

Into thy most faithful keeping,

Jesus, I commend it now.

Spread before my sight the azure

Golden fields of heavenly pleasure,

When the toil and strife are done

Let the victory be won.

THE PATIENT RELIES UPON

39. The Patient relies upon the Omnipotence of God

EXHORTATION.

"O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit." —Psalm xxx. 3, 4.

Nothing is more pleasing and consoling in times of misfortune, than to have a good friend of whom we know that he is able and willing to help us. In sickness, we cannot say this of any mortal man, but of God we know it with certainty. 1. This omnipotence of God is perceptible in the examples daily occurring around us. The dead are brought to life, the sick healed, and the almighty God who does all this, is living still. 2. The patient must remember that God is not without the means to aid us. At his word, the disease must vanish, his blessing will enable the most petty herb or simple to remove the ailment, and restore us to health. In view of this, a patient must be at peace in the Lord, must persevere in prayer, await the hour of God's coming, take physic, and avoid all superstitious rites, charms or mumbling, and rest assured that the Omnipotent will help him when his hour has arrived. THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

O my Lord and God! thou seest me encompassed with pain and suffering, and how a new trouble visits me every morning; my disease will not depart, and for all I know this bed may be my last. All this do I commit unto thy holy will; I will live and die when it is pleasing unto thee. My days are as a handbreadth before thee. My years are in thy hand; thou hast set my mark, and I shall not exceed it. In thy book didst thou number the days of my life, when not one of them had passed. Nevertheless, I do not repine, but lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord. I know that thou art an almighty God, and that life and death are in thy hand. Aye, the Lord's hand is not yet shortened; the Helper in Israel can avert all sorrow; he can do vastly more than all we know or understand. He can deliver all who approach him. Therefore, upon this sick-bed, I do not look about me for the feeble help of man, not upon myself, who am sick and feeble, but above, to thee, my God and Lord. I say, with the nobleman, who believed, Lord, if thou speak but a single word, thy servant shall be made whole; aye, speak this one word, and I shall be cured of all my sufferings. I know that before the 23*

THE PATIENT RELIES UPON

Lord nothing is impossible. Lord, my God thou who didst heal the sick Hezekiah, thou who didst deliver the sick woman from her wretchedness, thou who didst heal the palsied, raise up the widow's son,—look upon me also in mercy, thou mighty defender of thy faithful! Help me also, have mercy upon me, make a sign in me, that it may be well with me, yet all as thou wilt; I know thou canst do so in thy omnipotence, and wilt do so in thy goodness, when it shall be well for my soul. Meantime, I pray to thee in faith and humbleness. In my dear Lord have I set my trust in all my tribulation; he can save me from all sorrow and distress; to end my misfortunes is in the hollow of his hand. Amen. 1. Trust the turn of your affairs

To the Lord's direction;

Give your troubles and your cares

Under his protection:

He alone is well aware
What is meet and needful,
Of your health, how, when and where,
To be fitly heedful.

2. Do not venture to dictate
Time or just occasion,
Nor insult his sovereign state
With inapt dictation;

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

This is not his first essay
To assist and cheer you;
Not a pulse shall beat astray,
So you keep him near you.

3 Would ye counsel him who sways
Heaven in his balance,
Whose all-seeing eye surveys
Life in every valance,
How the little grains of sand
In your hour-glass shifted,
Should be made to fall and stand,
Overturned and lifted?

4. What his wisdom doth ordain
For all earth and heaven,
Every linklet of the chain
Must support and leaven,
And if ought appears awry
To our feeble senses,

'Tis that we cannot descry
All his hand dispenses.
5. God of wisdom! unto thee
Be all things commended;
Let thy goodness deal with me
As thou hast intended;
Lead me on from pole to pole
At thy own opinion;
I shall come, by thy control,
Into thy dominion.

THE PATIENT REMEMBERS

40. The Patient remembers his Baptismal Covenant

EXHORTATION

"Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God."—1 Peter iii. 21.

If there is consolation in a name, it is in the name of the father, and if there is a great glory, it is to be a child of God. This glory of the children of God, is attained in Holy Baptism, when a covenant is made with the triune God. 1. This covenant is a source of comfort and of gladness, but it also enjoins upon us the duty of resigning all things that befall us to the guardian hand of our heavenly father, not to murmur against the father, but to rest assured that God will approve himself a faithful father. 2. Those who in their days of health have angered their heavenly Father, and lived like the children of the world, on falling sick, must humbly ask God's forgiveness, and resolve to become altered men, firmly believing that God will have pity on his stricken child. Lord God Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! behold, I, thy child, am in such a condition, that help in this world for me there is none; I look about me, and ask for aid, but no one has mercy

HIS BAPTISMAL COVENANT.

upon me; yet I will not repine, but will go to my heavenly Father, and pour out my heart to him. As in the hour of need the lamb seeks its shepherd, the child its father, the subject his king, so, my King, my Father, and my Shepherd, I come to thee. O thou triune God! remember that I am thy child; that in holy baptism I made my covenant with thee. Lo, here cometh a hapless child, my friends and those I love cannot help me; therefore, O heavenly father, do thou receive me. If the nobleman wept for his son who was sick unto death, O my Father, do thou look in pity upon me, and help me to rise. If the father whose daughter was at the point of death, came to Jesus, saying, "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live;" so will I come to thee, my God and Father, saying, "It is thy will, restore me to health, and give me life." I know that thou art an almighty, wise, gracious, and loving Father; whither shall a child flee in trouble but to its father? Lord God Father in heaven, have mercy upon me! Lord God Son, the Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me! Lord God Holy Ghost, have mercy upon me! As a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him; O pity me also. If I have been a disobedient child, I most sincerely repent it; and although I THE PATIENT REMEMBERS have swerved from thee, yet I return. If the father helped his prodigal son, so do thou also be gracious unto me, for I come in penitence and faith, saying, have mercy, have mercy. If thou wilt make men accountable for sin, who, Lord, will stand before thee? In this reliance, O my father, I await thy coming; I have long understood that to be a child of God, and yet to be sick and weak, and visited with manifold afflictions, is entirely compatible; therefore, Satan shall not disturb my childlike confidence. But let me also soon perceive thy father's heart; let me know that thou hast not forgotten me; let me feel thy paternal hand. Afflicted heart, be patient, though a thousand troubles beset thee; the heaven which thy Jesus promised, shall be thy portion still; though distress and sickness assail thee, God will be thy father none the less. Amen. 1. I am baptized! I am united

And have a covenant with God;

And thus, in gladness and in sorrow,
And though I sink beneath the sod,
I have what I can never lack,
The joy that of the Lord doth smack.
HIS EAPTISMAL COVENANT.

2. I am baptized! I have the garment
That of me makes a wedding guest,
Wherein I may appear in glory
Among the legions of the blest;
For Jesus' blood and righteousness
My beauty is, my gorgeous dress.

3. I am baptized! to me was given
The blessing of the Holy Ghost;
To cleanse my life and conversation,
And that I never may be lost.
O gift beyond all thanks and praise
That gives me everlasting days!

4. I am baptized! My name was written
Into the Lamb's own book of life;
My father evermore will love me,
And guard me well in every strife.
God knows my name, and whispers it,
For in his book of life 'tis writ.

5. I am baptized! And though I perish,
O grave, where is thy victory!
My patrimony is in heaven,
And it shall never fall from me.

When death arrives, I shall receive

Far purer joys than those I leave.

THE PENITENT RELIES UPON THE

41. The Patient relies upon the Benefits of the Triune God

EXHORTATION.

"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."—2 Tim. iv. 18. Pious Christians can never be without comfort in their afflictions, if they only remember who they are, and with whom they have to deal. They are children of God, and must therefore be convinced that the triune God will not forsake them in their cares and sorrows.

1. Their creator, who was their guardian in youth, and their resource and refuge in after years, will not desert them. 2 Their Saviour, Jesus Christ, will not desert them; for, for their sake, he has endured sufferings, torments and the cross, and poured out his holy blood; should he leave them unbefriended in sickness? 3. Nor will their Sanctifier, the most precious Holy Ghost, desert them. On the contrary, he will comfort, refresh, and gladden their hearts, and bear witness to their spirit that they are the children of God, although their sickness and sufferings continue. With this threefold consolation in their hearts, they will bear their sufferBENEFITS OF THE TRIUNE GOD.

ings in patience, and firmly believe that his help is not far off. O holy, triune God! though I am infirm of body, yet I will not grow faint in the trust and reliance upon thee, for they who hope in the Lord shall remain unmoved as Mount Zion. At times, indeed, the load of my unremitting disease almost makes me despair, but straightway I am encouraged by thy Holy Ghost, and especially by calling to mind the numerous benefits thou hast already bestowed upon me. Could it be that thou wouldst forsake me, O my Creator, who didst fashion me out of nothing, and didst sustain my life up to this very hour! Has the hand of the Lord been shortened? O no, the hand that has hitherto led and preserved me, will preserve me even in my present sickness. It is of thy love, that thou hast heretofore preserved me in health so long. It is of thy love that thou hast averted misfortunes, pains and dangers. It is of thy love, that thou hast vouchsafed thy mercies unto me up to this day, yea, so great mercies and so great goodness. Therefore do I resign myself to thee wholly in my sickness. Shouldst thou forsake me, O my Redeemer? Thou who by thy holy blood hast redeemed me from sin, death, and the devil? THE PATIENT RELIES UPON THE

Thou hast been heartily kind unto my soul, that it might not perish, and so thou wilt also bestow thy help on my poor sickly body. O thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon me in my present trouble.

Shouldst thou forsake me, O my Sanctifier! thou who hast hallowed my body and my soul, and in holy baptism hast consecrated them to be thy temple, and hast hitherto dwelt within them!

Thou wilt surely remain my friend and comfort in my present weakness, and wilt bear witness unto my spirit that I am a child of God, though surrounded by troubles and sufferings. I will be of good cheer in my anguish, and will say unto my soul, "The heavenly Father has folded thee in the arms of his eternal love, the Son of God has chosen thee for his own, the Holy Ghost has given thee sweet assurance of his comfort and indwelling,—therefore, all is mine: the grace of

God is mine, the merit and the righteousness of

Jesus are mine, the strong consolation of the

Holy Ghost is mine,—yea, all the heavens are mine, with all their glory." O I will not heed my sick body, but will cast my cares upon the

Lord, and trust to that God at whose hands I have received so many mercies. O my Father!

I rely upon thee. O Jesus! I pray to thee. O

Holy Ghost! I commend myself to thee. Lord

God Father, what thou has created; Lord God

BENEFITS OF THE TRIUNE GOD.

Son, what thou hast redeemed; Lord God Holy Ghost, what thou hast sanctified, I resign into thy hands. Unto thy holy name be honor, praise and glory, now and forever. Amen. 1. If God is with me, though I suffer,

I am in comfort none the less;

And e'en in death itself I revel

In Jesus' blood and righteousness.

God is with me, I know it well,

And more rejoice than words can tell.

2. If God is with me in the tempest,

The bolts glance harmless from my head;

Although the cross is hard and bitter,

God keeps my soul from every dread;

God is with me, at his behest

Troubles depart, and I have rest.

3 If God is with me in affliction,

Although my pangs increase and grow,

They nevermore can overwhelm me,

Because his hand can lay them low;

God is with me, his constancy

From all distress will set me free.

4. If God is with me, all my sorrows

Will lose their stings, and be allayed;

My God will not withhold his mercies,
His helping hand cannot be stayed.
With God, my heart is of good cheer,
He comes, and he dispels all fear.

THE PATIENT RESOLVES TO BEAR

5. If God is with me, my departure
Shall be as gentle as my sleep;
The hour is fraught with brightest promise,
Of glory, as the angels keep;
God is with me, and when I die
I shall behold his face on high.

42. The Patient resolves to bear his Sufferings without a Murmur

EXHORTATION.

"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it."—Psalm xxxix. 9.

"How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord! for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me."—Psalm xiii. 1. Thus do pious bedridden Christians sigh to heaven. God's chosen hour sometimes appears to be too long delayed, when it tarries for days, weeks, and months; and many do not entirely avoid the sin of murmuring against his dispositions. But a pious Christian should never suffer himself to be brought to such a pass. 1. God never deserts us in suffering, trouble, or disease, for that would be against his promise. 2. Even though the yoke should gall, it is not

HIS SUFFERINGS WITHOUT A MURMUR.

right to murmur, for that would be to forget the omnipotence, love, and mercy of God. 3. Therefore, we must await the hour of our deliverance, in unremitting faith, prayer, hope, and confidence. Holy and all-wise God! I see thy holy will, that I am to lie on this bed of sickness as long as it shall please thee. I will not oppose thy holy will, nor murmur against thee. I am here, let the Lord deal with me according to his pleasure; shall I not drink of the cup which my father has given me? My father will not pour out poison for physic. Let me bear the wrath of the Lord, for I have sinned against him. The severe suffering must be beneficial to the soul, although flesh and blood abhor it. Thou hast been my father and my God from my youth up, and so wilt thou be in my present sickness. If I am to lie and suffer thus much longer, O Lord, give me at times an hour of respite, in which the pain may be remitted, and my sufferings assuaged. If I am to undergo great suffering, give me great powers of endurance; thou knowest how weak I am, and how little I am able to bear; do not seize me too vehemently, lest I perish. Deal with me as a mother with a feeble child, help me to carry my burden, yea, carry 24*

THE PATIENT RESOLVES TO BEAR me, and take me upon thy knees. If my sufferings are to become still more severe than they are, do thou not depart from me with thy gracious help and comfort. If I am to have more comfortless nights, let me experience thy consolation, and know that thou art still my father and my friend. I know that when thou dost send down affliction upon thy children, it is not to destroy them, but to draw them towards thee. Then let this sickness draw me away from the evil habits and pleasures of the world to thee, to sanctification, to piety, to heaven, and to eternal happiness. Aye, my Lord and God! Although thou dost make me thus to suffer, I will not flee from thee. My shepherd, guide me through these thorny paths, which lacerate my body and my soul, I follow thee most willingly. If the head was crowned with roses, the members cannot walk upon thorns. I loved thee when thou gavest me health and prosperity, and I will love thee now, in sickness and suffering; I know thou canst and wilt help me. Amen. 1. If God has sent thee an affliction,

And if thy face is bathed in tears,

Patiently bear his dispensation

And let no murmurs reach his ears.

HIS SUFFERINGS WITHOUT A MURMUR.

In unreserved submission stand,

Awaiting his supreme command.

2. The God who hath ordained thy illness,

Who throws thee on thy dying bed,

For him it is a very trifle

To make thee well and comforted.

The Lord can sicken and make whole,

The springs of life own his control.

3. O murmur not; the Lord hath promised

To be thy shield and sure defence,

To rescue thee from every trouble,

And to abridge thy long suspense;

O cease not yet to trust his power,

His help may come this very hour.

4. To God thou must thyself surrender,

And say, "Dear Lord, behold me here;

My life and death to thee are offered,

To thee without reserve or fear.

Deal with me, father, to the fill

Of thy most high and holy will."

5. Who thus eschews all disaffection

And patiently sustains the load

Which the Lord's providence imposes,

On him assistance is bestowed.

He will be comforted in time

And gladdened in the eternal clime.

THE PATIENT PREPARES TO

43. The Patient prepares to partake of the Lord's Supper

EXHORTATION.

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."—1 Cor. ii. 28. Every Christian should so live, that he may die happy at any moment. If this applies to the healthy, how much more important is it for the sick. 1. A patient will do well, therefore, at the first attack of illness, to remember his sins, and strive to be reconciled with God. 2. This reconciliation can only be effected by a trusting prayer to God for the forgiveness of sins. 3. He should not postpone his penitence and participation in the Lord's Supper, until death is at the door, until mind and strength are gone; but in time, while yet in a condition to pray and to be reconciled to God. By thus turning to God from the bottom of his soul, he will attain to saving grace in life and death, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord, Lord God! merciful, good, and of great truth, I, a poor sinner, will seek grace and the PARLAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

forgiveness of sins in the wounds of my Jesus, and prepare for a happy departure from this life. Thou hast been pleased, O God, to lay me upon this bed of sickness. As I know not whether I shall leave it in health or in my mortal shroud, I will be mindful of my soul, and commend all other things to thee, my loving and merciful God. I will be reconciled with thee, while yet I am capable of being reconciled. I will ask thy forgiveness while I am yet able to pray, as I know not whether my illness may not increase, and my powers of mind and heart decay, so that I can neither pray nor think of thee. I know that he who prepares for a happy death, does himself the greatest service. If he recovers, he will guard against the sins confessed and repented of on his bed of illness; and if he dies, he is assured of the happiness of his hereafter. Such are my present thoughts, O God!

After receiving thy forgiveness, I will receive thy holy communion, and then await thy coming in patience and trustful reliance. O be merciful unto thy child! Do not hold me to account for the sins of my youth and the follies of my early years. O Lord be merciful to my great misdeeds for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Saviour. Give thy grace to my holy purpose, fortify me for this work, so that I may finish it to thy honor and my salvation. Amen.

1. To the Lord's holy board I humbly would betake me,

So that his precious blood and body may awake me,

To better hopefulness and firmer trust in him;

Lord, give thy blessing here, let not my love grow dim.

2. Banish out of my mind all thoughts of sin and folly,

And let thy spirit keep my soul from melancholy

Into my inmost heart in:plant thy own desires,

Thy pure and holy love, to which my wish aspires.

3. Let nothing frivolous disturb my meditation,

But fill my heart and mind with holy exultation

O Jesus! be my friend! Pray for me all the while,

Uplift my prayers to God, and cheer me with thy smile!

4. O sanctify my heart, O sanctify my senses,

My Jesus! conquer them, and make them thy defences.

Make them all beautiful, and holy, just, and pure,

And in them let thy home and fortress still endure.

5. And also spread upon my soul the peace of heaven,

Which is beyond all thoughts, and out of which are given

True happiness in thee. forgiveness of all sin,

Present and future bliss, and all that faith may win.

THE PATIENT PRAYS, ETC.

The Patient prays for the forgiveness of Sins.

EXHORTATION.

"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—Job xlii. 6.

It is a fine and laudable practice of true Christians to place themselves before God every evening, and reflect upon what they have said, thought, and done throughout the day, asking his pardon for sins committed, and obtaining a reconciliation with God before they retire to rest. If this should be done at all times, how much more important is it in illness. 1. A patient should, on these occasions, examine, not one day, one week, or one month only, but his whole life; he should ask himself what use he has made of his days of health; whether he has spent them to the honor of God and the well-being of his neighbor. He must investigate where, how often, and how heavily he has sinned in his days of health. 2. After this inquiry, the patient must pray to God fervently to forgive all the sins committed. 3. If the bed of sickness thus brings him to the understanding of his sins, the patient should thank God for his disease, whereby his eyes have been opened, his wretchedness made manifest, and an opportunity afforded him of seeking THE PATIENT PRAYS FOR grace, which, without it, perhaps, he would never have had.

4. The vows made on such a bed of sickness must be faithfully kept when health returns, lest a still greater misfortune ensue upon such faithlessness. O gracious and loving Father! I live, and know not how long; I must die, and know not when; therefore, I approach thy throne of grace, and humbly beseech thee to forgive the manifold sins and transgressions of my life. Alas! I have not always devoted my days of health to thy honor, to the worship of God, to growth in the faith, and to piety; and thou hadst good cause to visit me with sickness, and give me an opportunity of conversing with my own heart, and repenting of the abuse of my health and my other sins. Forgive me for not having loved thee more fervently and lived more piously than I did. O Lord, do not bear in mind the sins of my youth, but think of me after thy great mercy, for the sake of thy goodness. O how am I terrified to hear that before thy judgment seat I must account for

every idle word I have spoken. O how will I stand before thee with my thoughts, when thou art also a judge of thoughts! And who can stand before thee, if THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

he must account for all his life, works and deeds?

Therefore, I come before thy throne of grace in trustful reliance upon my Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ, and beseech thee to have mercy upon me for the sake of his wounds, to forgive me all my sins for the sake of his precious blood, and to help me by his agony and bloody sweat!

I am ashamed to lift up mine eyes before thee,

O God; I am ashamed of my past years, and my unforgotten sins; O that I had lived more piously and more like a Christian! Therefore, I promise, O Lord, to begin a new life. If thou wilt restore me to health, I will spend in faith and true piety the years which thou wilt suffer me to spend on earth hereafter, and will ever remember this present illness and the anguish of my soul, and also thy mighty hand. O Lord!

be gracious unto thy child, and quench all my sins according to thy great mercy, for the sake of thy goodness. Amen.

1 Again I come, a contrite sinner,

I leave again the path of ill;

I fall upon my face before thee,

And beg thee for thy mercy's fill.

O think not of what I have done,

But of the merits of thy Son.

2. Now first I see that I have trespassed

More flagrantly than thou canst brook;

O let me find thy boundless favor,

Let me not die without a look.

O think not of what I have done,

But of the merits of thy Son.

3. For I am overwhelmed with sorrow;

Look down upon thy erring child,

Who comes in tears, worn out with weeping,

To win the smile thou once hast smiled!

O think not of what I have done,

But of the merits of thy Son.

4. Thy precious bleeding wounds, O Jesus,

Are my reliance evermore,

Where I have ever found forgiveness,

Comfort, and peace, and bliss in store.

O think not of what I have done,

But of the merits of thy Son.

5. Another life be mine henceforward,

Give me thy Spirit to sustain,

All men shall see and be persuaded

That I have burst sin's heavy chain.

O think not of what I have done,

But of the merits of thy Son.

THE PATIENT PRAYS, ETC.

44. The Patient prays before partaking of the Lord's Supper

EXHORTATION.

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."—John vi. 54, 55.

To partake of the Lord's Supper in a devout and becoming manner, is the duty of every true Christian, in sickness no less than in health.

1. For this purpose a rigid self-examination is the first of requisites.
2. In sickness it is important to reflect that the present may be the last opportunity for partaking of the Lord's Supper. This reflection must lead to a doubly strong resolution to improve in faith and in true piety.
3. If it has been the most ardent longing of pious men, that the name of Jesus might be the last word on their lips, the holy communion their last nourishment, and the crucified Saviour their latest thought, how then shall a patient do otherwise than rejoice when one of these blessings is extended him on his sick bed, and be of assured hope that God will not withhold his favor to supply the others? 4. But let every one beware of the iniquitous

THE PATIENT PRAYS BEFORE superstition that the Lord's Supper will restore him to health.

Dearest Jesus! I long to receive the love feast instituted by thee, because I know not when I shall leave this world. But that I may not appear before the judgment seat of God without thee, I would once more unite myself with thee, so that thou mayest be and remain in me, and I in thee. I will receive the Holy Communion at home, assured that there also thou wilt gladden and refresh me with thy gracious presence. O lover of souls! thou art near to the wretched, thou dost rejoice the afflicted; thou dost help those who are stricken in spirit; let my heart also be cheered, and my soul quickened by this heavenly meat and drink. O dearest Jesus, as I desire to partake of thy heavenly meal in pure and holy devotion, grant that this frame of mind may not be disturbed by unrelenting pains and sufferings, but hold them in check until the time be passed! I proclaim thy death, and call to mind thy sufferings and death, thy wounds and torments; thy agony and bloody sweat; thy death upon the cross, and all that thou hast done for me; and I will thank thee for all, to all eternity. I also remember the institution of thy Holy Supper, in which thou dost give me to eat PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

and to drink for life eternal. I believe thy words, as being spoken by an omniscient, almighty God, who is just and true; I believe that in the holy sacrament I receive thy body indeed, and thy blood indeed. This heavenly meat and drink shall strengthen me in the faith of my reconciliation with God; this heavenly meat and drink shall comfort me with the assurance that I am not lost, but have eternal life; this heavenly meat and drink shall convince me that I am in thy grace, that I have the forgiveness of sins, and am united with thee, who art the redemption from my sins and for the sins of all the world. This heavenly meat and drink are to remind me of the heavenly board, of the eternal joy and glory to which thou wilt lead me after death. O shepherd of my soul, do thou lead thy lamb on a green pasture, feed me with the bread of life, refresh me with thy blood. Then I shall have a ransom for all my sins, which thou hast paid for me at the tree of the cross, whereby I am saved Amen. 1. A pledge is by the Lord's own hand now unto me awarded,

Most precious pledge beyond compare, how am I so regarded!

25*

The greatest bliss the heavens afford,

The blood and body of the Lord

To me shall now be given.

2. The God of love delights in me, and that his high affection

May be more manifest and ne'er forsake my recollection,

He doth this sacred token give,

And promises in me to live

And dwell with me forever.

3 This pledge gives me assurance strong of all my sins forgiven,

But by the power of his grace my terrors forth are driven,

That henceforth he shall never cease

To give me comfort, joy, and peace,

Until my work is ended.

4. Yea, by this token, I am sure I shall not die forever;

But shall arise out of my grave to joy that endeth never;

Because this food and drink are mine

The grave cannot my limbs confine

So from the faith I swerve not.

5. Give thanks and praise unto the Lord, for in this rich collation

He his most holy, precious self, has given for my salvation;

And, in return, what can I do,

But give myself unto him too,

In life, in death, and after.

THE PATIENT PRAYS, ETC.

45. The Patient prays after having partaken of the Lord's Supper

EXHORTATION.

"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."—Gal. ii. 20.

While a good Christian always has reason to thank God after having received the holy sacrament, how much more should a patient praise God from his inmost heart when he has been favored to enjoy it in the full possession of his faculties.

1. But it must by no means be supposed that the Lord's Supper will produce a change in the disease; it was not ordained for this purpose, nor have we any such promise.

2. Neither must a patient partake of it as a means of ascertaining whether or not he will recover, but simply to fortify his faith, and assure him of the forgiveness of his sins, of the grace of God, and of his soul's salvation. Having thus received it as ordained by Christ, it is his duty to praise God, commending himself, with a subdued heart and a believing mind, unto his holy keeping. THE PATIENT PRAYS

My Jesus! I was greatly desirous to receive thy holy sacrament before my death. This desire is gratified; thou hast given me to eat of thy precious body, and to drink of thy holy blood, wherefore I praise thee from my inmost heart. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. O Jesus, dwell in me, and give me a heart entirely devoted to thee. Keep me constantly in pure and holy thoughts, and let thy sweet and lovely image never fade from my heart. If thou wilt now call me away from this life, thy will be done. I know that my sins are forgiven, and that I need not fear to stand before thy throne; for where there is forgiveness, there is life and happiness; I know that Jesus has bestowed upon me his righteousness; if in this wedding dress I come before thee, O God, thou wilt remit my judgment for the sake of them. I know that Jesus is my advocate with God, and I die in the grace of God, and at peace with God; I am assured of the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Thus am I happy, thus I die happy, thus happy I depart from this world, and shall be and remain happy forever. It was of thy great goodness to my soul, O God, that I was ON TAKING MEDICINE.

favored to hold this heavenly love feast with my Jesus in the full possession of my faculties; may this heavenly food and drink strengthen and preserve me in the true faith which leads unto eternal life. This is the fulfilment of my wish, that my repast before departing might be the holy communion. Grant also, that the last word I utter in this world may be the name of Jesus; the last thoughts I have, of Jesus' blood, death, suffering, and cross, and of his atoning merit. Then I shall know that I must die happy. Amen. The Patient Prays on taking Medicine.

EXHORTATION.

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."—James v. 14, 15.

If a devout prayer is indispensable even in times of health, how can a patient neglect it, particularly when he takes medicine?

1. The patient must not despise the physician, nor his medicine, nor think that if he is destined to recover, God can restore him without medi-

THE PATIENT PRAYS cine, and that if he is destined to die, the medicine will be of no avail. No, to think thus were to tempt God. God has not promised to help us without means; and what God has not promised, we cannot ask of him. Those who despise medicine and die, are guilty of their own murder

2. Yet he must not set his trust upon the physician and his medicine, but upon God; as it is declared to be one of the sins of King Asa, that in his sickness he did not seek God, but the physicians, and trusted them more than God. 2 Chronicles, xvi. 12.

3. Between these two extremes, the patient must select the golden mean. With his lips and his heart he must pray, and take the medicine in firm reliance upon the helping hand of God; then he may know that there is a blessing upon it.

Great God! thou seest my condition, for nothing is concealed from thy all-seeing eye; thou dost search the most secluded nooks, thou lookest also upon my bed of sickness, and my frame of mind is known to thee. In thy name, O my God, I will make use of the medicine prescribed for me, but my sole hope is in thee, for thou art the Lord, my physician. But inasmuch as thou dost suffer the herbs to spring from the earth, ON TAKING MEDICINE.

and hast thyself created the substances from which medicines are prepared, I will take this prescription with fervent prayer, and calling upon thy name. O do thou speak thy blessing upon it! Bless the medicine I receive in thy name and in the firm reliance upon thee; let it prosper according to thy will, in restoring me to health, in palliating my sufferings, and in invigorating my weakened system. If thou dost give thy blessing, the smallest herb can cure me. I do not take the medicine for the purpose of forcing a recovery, but as a means, permitted by thee, of regaining health at thy hands. I raise mine eyes to heaven in taking the vessel into my hands; I sigh to thee before and while I swallow it, and after I have swallowed it. If thou dost permit it to work, I shall be healed, for my days are in thy hand. Without thy blessing, nothing can prosper; therefore, O God of blessings, do I cry unto thee; what thou dost bless, O Lord, is blessed indeed. If thou dost help me by means of this medicine, I will thank thee for this means of grace, but will also bear in mind that not simples and plasters, but thy grace, have kept, and thy hand healed me. Like Hezekiah, I will spread thy praise among all people. Amen. 1. He who suffers woe and anguish, heavenward let him often look,

When he tastes the bitter portion which no human lips can brook;

But if to his tears and cries

Not at once the Lord replies,

Never let the thought o'ertake him

That the Highest will forsake him.

2. He should well bethink him rather, that the hour is fixed above,

When God, like a loving father, will the bitter cup remove;

When all anguish will depart,

And no more distract the heart;

When, released from pain and sadness,

We shall praise the Lord in gladness.

3. E'en his bitter physic gladly does the true believer quaff,

Knowing that the heavenly blessing will invigorate the chaff;

As he drinks the bitter cup,

Unto heaven his eye looks up,

And the virtue in devotion

Helps the weakness of the potion.

4. Father, on thy benediction all in all it does object,

Whether my severe affliction shall attain a happy end:

THE PATIENT PRAYS, ETC.

Into this thy unction fuse,

O do not thy bliss refuse!

Let the weary sickness vanish,

All my qualms and tortures banish.

5. Unto thee do I surrender death and life, and hope and fear,

Whether I shall stay or whether lingering shall be ended here;

Whatsoever thou dost command,

Still I know thy father's hand;

After all this grief and sorrow

Thou wilt send the endless morrow.

46. The Patient prays for some Abatement of his Sufferings

EXHORTATION.

"Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged; and though I forbear, what am I eased?"—Job xvi. 6.

When a patient is attacked by pains, he must not murmur against God, but must receive everything patiently and submissively. 1. But he may pray that his pangs be assuaged, as Christ did, in his sufferings. Children complain to their parents, why may not a child of God do likewise? THE PATIENT PRAYS FOR SOME

2. When his pain becomes very severe, he should remember the heinousness of his sins, and acknowledge that his pain is well deserved; but he must also think of the great mercy of God, and of his omnipotence, by which he may relieve him. 3. If it is impossible, at such a time to pray much or for a length of time he must sigh to God, and rest assured that such brief sighs of the heart will not remain unheard. 4. Impatience, instead of soothing, will aggravate suffering.

Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my cry, my King and my God, for I will pray before thee. I will pray and beseech thee to look in pity on this my wretchedness, and to soothe my fierce anguish. Thou hast promised not to suffer us to be tried beyond our powers of resistance, but wilt put an end to the temptation, so that we may bear it. Behold, O God, my pains prevail, my body is weak, my powers dwindle away, my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth, my bones are burned as by a fire, my sight fails, so long must I wait for the coming of the Lord. O how long, how long, must the heart be strong, and not see thy face. Do not tarry, my God, thou knowest the great number ABATEMENT OF HIS SUFFERINGS.

of my days and nights of suffering, thou hast heard my moans, sighs, wails, and cries.

Whither shall I flee in my distress and pain?

Where is my refuge? Where can I go? Only to thee, the Lord my God. O dearest Jesus, thou who hast commanded the tossing billows to be still, O command my pains to cease! Thou who didst heal the palsied with a single word, let thy mercy be made manifest in me. Refresh me again after I have suffered so long, and borne so much. From the deep I cry unto thee, O

Lord; my soul waiteth for the Lord and for his help from morning watch to morning watch;

for I know that with the Lord there is help.

Help me, God of my salvation! for thy name's sake deliver me, and forgive me my sins for the sake of thy mercy, yet not according to my will, but according to thy will. Amen.

1. O Lord, come to my aid! thou seest mine affliction,

Thou knowest how I writhe in anguish and constriction;

Better than I can tell thou knowest the pain I bear,

Then hasten to my aid, or I must all despair.

2. O Lord, come to my aid! In thee is my reliance;
O let my fervent prayer be blessed with quick compliance!
Help cometh from the Lord! It comes from thee alone,
Then send it down to me from thy most lofty throne.

3. O Lord, come to my aid! Where else shall I betake me,
If thy preserving hand and mercy do forsake me?
I surely will not fail, and never from thee fly,
If thou wilt only help, and keep thy angels nigh.

4. O Lord, come to my aid! I know thou canst deliver,
And where thy bounty falls, it courses like a river;
Thou canst, for nothing is thy power cannot do,
Thou wilt, because thou art my loving father too.

5. O Lord, come to my aid, that I may sing the story.
And whereso'er I go, disseminate the glory;
Assuring all mankind our God is living still,
Though sometimes he delays his help, yet help he will.

THE PATIENT IMPLORES GOD, ETC.

47. The Patient implores God not to forsake him

EXHORTATION.

"Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she cannot have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."—Isaiah xlix. 14, 15, 16. If a poor man rejoices greatly in a rich benefactor, a deserted one in a powerful patron, so may a sick man be greatly comforted in his sufferings by the promise of God that he will not forsake him.

1. But he must remember that every delay of help is not necessarily a desertion. Many patients are ready, so soon as God's help is not promptly afforded according to their calculation, to cry that God has forsaken them. It is not right to think thus. What is prorogued is not always dissolved, and if the Lord does not help every day and hour, he always helps when his help is needed. 2. The believing patient must persist in saying, "God cannot forsake me for I am his child—God cannot forsake me, for so he has promised—God cannot forsake me, he has often helped me heretofore. If he will thus rest his soul in God, he will be favored to suffer pati26*

THE PATIENT IMPLORES GOD ently to the end, and at last to be gloriously convinced that God did not forsake him.

Dearest God and Father! thou who has loved me from all eternity, and out of thy great love hast drawn me to thee, behold I come to thee in sickness, and humbly pray that thou wilt not forsake me in my feebleness. Men tell me they cannot help me, and thus all human help has forsaken me. But I know that by thee I am not forsaken, for God forsakes none of those who put their trust in him; he remains faithful unto his own; though things look strange, yet never fear, thou shalt see with joy how thy God will deliver thee. O my God, do not forsake me! See how long my sufferings endure. In the evening I hope to be better in the morning, and at noon I already long for the close of day; at night I often cry, "Watchman tell us of the night!" My soul yearns for thee from morning watch to morning watch. O my God, do not forget me! thou seest how my sufferings increase. O let not the burden overbear me quite; remove the stone that rests upon me, the rod that smites the pangs that distract me. Whither shall I go, if thou wilt forsake me? If thou wilt not help me, no creature can help me; if thou wilt forsake me, I am without resource and shall remain NOT TO FORSAKE HIM.

so. But I know thou wilt not forsake me; I remind thee of the promise thou hast made: I will not forsake thee, nor forget thee. Those who wait upon the mountains shall not fall, but shall stand firm as Mount Zion. The Hero in Israel doth not deny, he will give strength unto his people, and will save the wretch who has no help, and will be gracious unto the souls of the poor. In this, thy word, I trust, and hope that thou wilt faithfully keep thy word in heaven. Thou canst not forsake me for I am thy child; I am thine own inheritance, purchased by thy precious blood; I am thine, and thou canst and wilt not forsake me, thy child and thy property; thou hast never yet forsaken me in my troubles and sorrows, when woes unnumbered had assailed me, when the waves of affliction beat over my head; and thou wilt not desert me now. In view of this, I am content; on this I rely. I am of good cheer, and say, "Lord, I will not let thee go, except thou help me," in such way and manner as is most pleasing unto thee. Amen. HYMN,

1. I do not bear my cross unaided,

My Jesus carries it with me;

In sickness he is still my brother,

In death and in captivity.

I do not bear my cross alone,

This comfort sweet is still my own.

2. His promise is, that he will help me

And comfort, in his own good tin

And when his hour arrives, my son

Will vanish, as it had its prime.

Then is the comfort all my own,

I do not bear my cross alone.

3. 'Tis God alone, by whose great mercy

I have been spared this day to see;

'Tis he who makes my sufferings harmless,

Although it sorely tortures me;

Yes, I remember, while I groan,

I do not bear my cross alone.

4. And I will suffer all in patience,

Through many a long and weary day,

Why should I doubt the Lord's assistance,

His help will not too long delay;

For heretofore I oft have known,

I do not bear my cross alone.

5. My dearest Lord, I have confided

To thy protection all in all;

Thy love shall be my full reliance,

Until thy welcome voice shall call.

Am I not evermore thine own?

I do not bear my cross alone.

THE PATIENT MEDITATES ON DEATH.

48. The Patient meditates on Death

EXHORTATION.

'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, 7, 8. It is of great use frequently to recall the thoughts of death.

1. We thereby wean our hearts from vanity and sin, and school ourselves to regard earthly matters as things which we cannot take to heaven with us, which we cannot keep, and which will not avail us in the dying hour.

2. It is also needful, because those accustomed to think of death as of a remote casualty, are apt to become insolent, luxurious, and wicked, to be absorbed by the world, and to associate with it; if death comes upon such men unawares, they are hopelessly lost. 3. It is not to be regarded as a fatal symptom, if a patient speaks of death, orders his funeral, makes his will, and prepares for his blissful departure. For all this no one will die a moment sooner than God has ordained. 4. Nor must the last hour be regarded in so fearful a light as it is by many. Heathens,

THE PATIENT MEDITATES ON DEATH.

indeed, have said, that of all dreadful things, death is the most dreadful; but Christians die in the grace of God, in the arms of Jesus, in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, and of what should they be afraid. Is not this rather comfort, sweetness, and joy? Lord, it is enough, take my soul away! Thus do I cry unto thee, my God, perceiving, in my great and increasing feebleness, that the end of my life is attained. I desire to depart and be with Christ. I have no fear of death and dying, I have often thought of it when in health, and therefore it has no terrors for me now. Even as the dove of Noah gladly returned to the ark; as a traveller longs to return to his native land; so do I regard my approaching death as a passing from disquietude to perfect rest; as a happy arrival at home after a long pilgrimage in foreign parts, bringing with it, in place of eager yearnings, the fond embraces of my Jesus. I know that to the believing Christian death is a gentle sleep, and a transit to eternal life. The Lord is my light and my salvation, of what should I be afraid? The Lord is the vigor of my life, whom should I dread? God is my father, Jesus my advocate, the Holy Ghost my guide and comforter; to him I shall come, him I shall see THE PATIENT MEDITATES ON DEATH.

whom should I fear? When my Jesus spoke of his approaching death, he was wont to say, "I go to the Father." Dearest Jesus, I will repeat thy words. When I die, I shall go to the Father, to heaven, to joy, to bliss unspeakable. Why should I be afraid to die? Jesus is mine, his righteousness is mine, his merit is mine, his heaven is mine, why should I not be glad! The body goes to the earth, but the soul flies to God; it goes from this world to heaven, from vanity to bliss, from sadness to joy, from suffering to happiness, from weeping to glory; is not that a happy passage? I go to rest, to joy, to bliss, to the sun, to eternal joy. I see Jesus spreading out his arms and preparing to receive me as his child; I see thousands of saints anxious to bid me welcome. Therefore, I am of good cheer; I forget the things which are behind, even the earth, and all earthly matters, and reach after that which is before, after the heavenly gem which is laid up for us in heaven. How happy shall I be when lifted up; how shall I rejoice when in the arms of Jesus; how glad,

when I have passed through death unto eternal life. Amen. 1. Who as a pious Christian would
Delight his Lord in dying,
Having the seal of Jesus' blood
To vouch for his relying.
Must struggle hard while here below.
That when his summons comes to go,
He may not weep at parting.

2. First let him fall upon his knees,
Bemoaning his transgression;
Thus Jesus he may hope to please,
And gain his intercession.
Let him abhor each wicked thought,
And all that he amiss has wrought,
Since he was of the living.

3. In Jesus Christ let him believe,
Then will his wounds restore him,
For he a sinner will receive,
And spread his mantle o'er him.
Then will he be relieved from sin,
And Jesus' grace shall lead him in
To realms of endless glory.

4. Then let him lead in piety
A godly conversation,
And thoughts of God dwell constantly
In every meditation.
And never let him turn aside,
But ever in the faith abide,

As God himself has ordered.

THE PATIENT MEDITATES, ETC.

5. But most of all let him eschew

The paths of sin and sorrow,

And all that shuts out God from view

Let him not plough the furrow

That false and wicked men pursue,

But to his covenant be true,

And hate what God despiseth.

49. The Patient meditates upon his Grave and Resurrection

EXHORTATION.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die."—John xi. 25, 26. Whoever contemplates his grave as a Christian, will not be frightened, how dark soever it may appear. 1. It is a chamber of rest, where we shall be relieved from all pain, sorrow, care and tribulation. 2. The body shall not remain in the grave, cut the bones and weary limbs, after a long rest, shall rise again on the day of judgment, brilliant as the sun, and be reunited with the soul. 3. Though loved ones must be left behind for

THE PATIENT MEDITATES UPON a time, yet there will be a joyous meeting hereafter in heaven. If those we love persevere in the faith and fear God, they will follow us, and then we shall nevermore be separated from them. As regards the good things of this world, God will replace them with heavenly gifts. In view of all this, there can be nothing dreadful to a patient in the contemplation of the grave. Gracious and merciful God! Behold, I am prepared to live or to die according to thy holy will. I do not fear death, because I know that after much sorrow and tribulation, it will bring me to rest. Neither do I fear the grave, for lo, it shall be my bed of rest; the misery and sickness of life will not follow me into the grave, but must remain behind. O quiet spot, O welcome resting place! when will my weary limbs and my feeble body be laid into thy womb? Jesus himself has hallowed my grave, he has made it an easy couch, by being laid therein himself after his sufferings were past; when all his pains and sorrows were at an end. In like manner has the Lord provided a resting place for my body upon earth, and a place of refreshment for my soul in heaven. If men seek soft beds to rest upon, yet their rest is not to be compared to mine when in the grave. Many a one must HIS GRAVE AND RESURRECTION.

bear pain and trouble in his bed of down, but in my grave no mishap will reach me, no distress will approach me. Thus the grave is a bed, free from all suffering and evil. Why should I fear the grave? I shall not remain in it. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and he will afterwards wake me again out of the earth. Whoso believeth in me, says Jesus, has eternal life, and I shall call him at the latter day. The grave is therefore but a short sojourn, wherein my body shall sleep, until Jesus will come and say, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment. The hour will come in which all who are in the grave will hear the voice of the Son of God, and will come forth. When I shall hear that voice, I, too, shall arise from my grave, my body shall be reunited with my soul, it shall be made immortal and glorified. I shall shine as the sun, all my weakness shall be put away. As the grain of wheat sprouts up again when it appears to be dead in the earth, so shall my bones be gathered again. It shall be sown in corruption, but shall arise without corruption; the natural body shall be sown, and a body endowed with spiritual and heavenly gifts shall arise. What sighs, groans, weeps, and struggles here, shall there arise in fresh, unspotted glory. Because thou didst rise from the dead, I shall not remain in the grave; thy resurrection is the chief of my comforts, and can banish the fear of death itself.

For where thou art, I, too, shall come, with thee to make my endless home; therefore I go rejoicing. Amen.

1. Why should the grave inspire my terrors,

I rather long to reach its goal;

For there, true rest shall be my portion,

There springs the comfort of my soul.

Whoever fears the quiet grave,

The world yet holds him for its slave.

2. The grave is where my limbs so weary

With rapture find their resting place;

For thither, sorrow, care, affliction,

And illness, carry not their chase;

Who speaks in terror of the tomb,

Knows not what peace dwells in its gloom

3. The grave takes all the heavy burden

Of trouble and distress from me,

And gives me sweet repose and quiet;

O God, for this be thanks to thee!

From sin and sorrow, dread and fear,

I shall be disentangled here.

4. The grave is laid with downy pillows,

And Jesus spreads the drapery;

And no one will disturb my slumbers,

While angels keep their watch o'er me.

The body rests from all annoys,

The soul ascends to heavenly joys.

THE CONVALESCENT RETURNS THANKS.

5. Then soul and body both reposing,

In Jesus, and beneath the sword,

Have each attained the safest shelter,

To wait the coming of the Lord.

Whence the good Shepherd in his own

Good time shall lift them to his throne.

The Convalescent returns thanks to God for his Restoration to Health.

EXHORTATION.

"Behold thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."—John v. 14. It is not to be denied that most men are ready to pray in sickness, and that they frequently make great promises to God, of what they will do if he will restore them to health; they mean to become new creatures, pious Christians, zealous in prayer, and assiduous in worship. But alas! daily experience shows that but very few of them adhere to this promise. 1. A true Christian, delivered from illness by the hand of God, should therefore understand, praise, and extol the omnipotence of God, which not only cast him on his bed of sickness, but also raised him up again, and graciously released him from the danger of death. 27*

THE CONVALESCENT RETURNS THANKS

2. A patient who has thus been restored, must keep the promises made on his death-bed. For it is better to make no promises, than to break them after they are made. 3. Having, like Hezekiah, regained new powers, he must not only thank his almighty deliverer when alone, at home, and on his knees, but also hasten to the house of God, and abase himself before the Lord, thereby also giving others an opportunity to see the goodness of God, which has been extended to him. 4. He must frequently recall the anguish of his soul, consider the danger in which his life was placed, and lead a pious and godly life, in honor of the omnipotent, triune God. Almighty and gracious God! I come before thy holy face, and thank thee from the bottom of my heart, for having raised me up again from my bed of sickness. I still think of the hours of anguish, of the sorrowful nights, of the great danger in which I hovered. But lo, thy mighty hand has graciously raised me from my couch; thou hast set me on my feet again, and enabled me to go out and to come in. Thy grace has transformed my complaints into a dance; thou hast taken off my sack-cloth, and girt me with joy. Lord! Lord! thou hast done great things TO GOD FOR HIS RESTORATION TO HEALTH.

for me, whereof I am glad; thy love and mercy have helped me to this hour. For this I surely know that whoso serveth God, he will be comforted after affliction, and released from trouble;

and after chastisement he will find grace. For thou, O God! dost not rejoice in our perdition;

after the storm thou permittest the sun again to shine; after the weeping and wailing thou dost overwhelm us with joy. This mercy and fatherly care I too have experienced in my sickness; therefore, while I live, I will think of the anguish of my soul, but I will also proclaim before the great congregation, what thou, almighty God, hast done for me; thou hast blessed the medicine, thou hast assuaged my pains, thou hast given me strength to overcome my suffering, thou hast given me days of refreshment after the wretched and weary nights, and hast had pity on me like a father in my tribulation. Therefore, praise the Lord, O my soul, and what is in me praise his holy name; praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Praise the Lord with me, all ye who have ever been in pain, sickness, or suffering, and let us unite in extoling his holy name. For when we cried in our wretchedness, the Lord heard our cries, and helped us out of all our troubles.

They who look upon the Lord in their wretchedness, in faith and with prayer, shall not be con-

THE CONVALESCENT RETURNS THANKS founded; he does not suffer them to walk away in sorrow from his throne, but has mercy upon them. O my God! let the grace and mercy thou hast thus extended to me, be constantly before my eyes and in my heart. Now I know and have discovered that thou art a mighty God, for thou canst restore the dead to life, the sick to health, the feeble to strength, and the afflicted to gladness. O in my pains and sickness, I have discovered that silver and gold, honor and glory of the world, and even kind friends, did not avail to lift the cross from my shoulders, and if thou hadst not helped me, I should have perished in my misery. Therefore, I will no longer strive after vain and fleeting things, but will rejoice in thee; I will avoid the sinful converse of the world, and cling to thy altar, where is heard the voice of thanksgiving, and where thy wonders are told; I will renounce ungodly things and worldly lusts, and live chaste, righteous and godly in this world, so that when thou shalt come with my dying hour and the end of my life, I may be prepared to enter into the joys of heaven. Amen. TO GOD FOR HIS RESTORATION TO HEALTH.

1. How can I praise thy goodness,

As fully as I ought?

How pay the just thanksgiving,

For all thy wonders wrought?

Thou hast released, unchained me,

From what oppressed me sore;

My spirit bounds with lightness,

Wrestling with death no more.

2. Nor shall my lips be idle,

For they have voice again

To sing the fitting praises

Of him who broke my chain.

My heart shall join the anthem

And everywhere it goes,

Tell how his loving kindness

Delivered me from woes.

3. I sat apart, deserted,

And thou didst raise me up;

How can I fairly think it,

That thou didst give thy cup,

Thy cup of heavenly vigor,
That came at trying hours,
And strengthened my endurance
With more than earthly powers!

4. I knew no place of refuge,
I had no help to seek;
Yet saw I deeds of wonder
When thou didst take my weak
And sorely harassed body,
And laidst it on thy knee,
Saying in soothing accents,
"Fear not, I am with thee."

5. Yea, truly thou wert with me,
And by thy strong right arm
I overcame the terror
That would have done me harm.
Praised be the Lord of Glory,
He saw me in distress,
And sent his serving angel
His suffering child to bless.

Jesus.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father."—Matt. xxv. 34.

Death.

"They rest from their labors."—Rev. xiv. 13.

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How sweet my body rests, no more by sufferings riven;
How doth my soul rejoice, in the delights of heaven!

PART IV.

EXHORTATIONS, PRAYERS AND HYMNS for the Dying.

50. The Dying one appears before the Judgment Seat

of God.

EXHORTATION.

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 10. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged," is the admonition of the Apostle

Paul, in 1 Corinthians, xi. 31; and truly the man who examines his own life, accuses himself, and prays for grace in the name of Jesus, will not be condemned by God, but will experience his goodness and mercy; for he who acknowledges and renounces his trespass, shall have mercy. This, therefore, should be the care of the dying.

1. He must remember that sooner or later he must appear before the judgment seat, for it is

THE DYING ONE APPEARS BEFORE appointed for man once to die, and afterwards the judgment. 2. Therefore a dying one will do well to be reconciled to God in time, to ask his forgiveness in the name of Jesus' blood, and thus attain unto grace; then he may rest assured, that, die when and as God will, quickly or slowly, God will graciously accept his soul, and that on the last day he will enter into life eternal, justified by the blood of Jesus. I know, O God, that it is appointed for me once to die, and afterwards the judgment. Therefore, I now appear before thy judgment seat, while yet I live; I would be reconciled to thee before I die. O righteous God! I know that I am a great sinner! I have broken all thy holy commandments, often designedly, I have not loved thee with all my heart, nor with all my soul, nor with all my might; I have not always followed in the footsteps of my Jesus, nor suffered the Holy Ghost to lead and guide me as I ought to have done. I remember that I was made thy child in holy baptism, but that I have not always lived as a child of God, that in confession and at thy holy table, I have made many promises, of which I kept but few, and again associated myself with the world. Lord, I have THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD.

done amiss; the load of my transgressions presses me down; I have not walked in the way pointed out by thee; my sins rise over my head, and like a weighty burden they have grown too heavy for me. O gracious God! thou who hast declared that thou dost not seek the death of the sinner, but that he should turn and live, behold, I come and desire to make my peace with thee. O, I repent of my sins, and fall down before thy judgment seat, and beseech thee, Lord God Father in heaven, to have mercy upon me! Lord God Son, the Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me! Lord God Holy Ghost, have mercy upon me! I invoke thy great mercy, O Father! I have sinned in heaven and before thee; I am not worthy to be called thy child, yet O be merciful unto thy child, and do not disown me! I fly unto thee, O Jesus, my Advocate! O intercede for me, a sinner, now, and in the hour of my death! For the sake of thy precious blood, forgive my trespasses; for the sake of thy holy wounds, let me find grace before the austere judgment seat of God! Lord, be gracious unto me according to thy goodness, and wipe out my sins after thy great mercy. O most precious Holy Ghost! I pray to thee to create a new heart within me, sanctify and purify it, give me thy testimony that I am a child of God and in favor with God. Yea, work in me a true THE DYING ONE APPEARS BEFORE repentance, a living faith, and holy resolves to live only to thy honor, and to die in childlike obedience. O produce in me holy thoughts, devout sighs, acceptable meditations on death, and give me a refreshing

foretaste of heaven and of the glory that is to come. Let me hear thy consoling words in my heart, "Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee." O most Holy Trinity! have mercy upon me, let me find favor in thy sight when I leave this world, and do not take me into judgment for the evil I have done, but have mercy upon me according to thy love. Amen. 1. "Rise from your graves, ye dead!" Thus shall the call be sounded, Which on the latter day shall find us all astounded;

Which to the faithful flock shall promise rare delight,

And fill the trembling hearts of sinners with affright.

2. "Rise from your graves, ye dead!" Your sleep at last is over, Ye blessed of the Lord, no more without shall hover.

The garments are prepared, the crowns are for you stored;

Enter into the joy and comfort of your Lord!

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD.

3. "Rise from your graves, ye dead!" Come from your earthly cover; Ye wicked all the pangs of hell shall now discover

Ye once rejected me, I hold you nothing worth;

Wailing and gnashing teeth shall be your lot, henceforth.

4. "Rise from your graves, ye dead!" Lo, here are bone and tissue, Flesh, sinew, hand, eye, foot! from earth and air they issue. That wherewith you have served the Lord is glorified,

That wherewith you have sinned, consumed and cast aside.

5. "Rise from your graves, ye dead!" Ye faithful now shall glory In halos like the sun, undimmed, untransitory.

Immortal bodies with immortal souls shall blend,

Ye shall enjoy the rest of saints that hath no end.

28*

THE DYING ONE FORGIVES

51. The Dying One forgives and asks forgiveness

EXHORTATION.

"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. vi., 14, 15. A true preparation for a happy death is not complete without a reconciliation with our neighbour; this reconciliation should not be delayed indefinitely, but set about while in sound mind and understanding. 1. If a Christian has suffered much injustice at the hands of others, he must be sure to take no ill-will towards his enemies into his grave, but must forgive them with all his heart. 2. If he, however, has wronged others and insulted them, he must not rest before being reconciled with them, nor be ashamed to call them to his dying bed and ask their forgiveness, with heart, lips and hand. If they are absent, he must do this in writing; if dead, he must pray to God for forgiveness. In doing so, he must also make restitution of what has been stolen, purloined, or wrongfully taken, either to the injured one himself, or to his heirs or representatives, for the sin cannot be forgiven without restitution. AND ASKS FORGIVENESS.

3. To all this he must be impelled as well by considerations of his duty as a Christian, as by the divine command and warning, "that as he shall deal with his enemies, so will God deal with him." My God, I live, and know not how long; I must die, and know not when; therefore I will be reconciled betimes with my neighbour, so that I may depart this life with my mind at rest. Heaven is called the house of peace, where implacable, revengeful and angry souls are not admitted; therefore I will cleanse my heart of all wrath and enmity; I will forgive and ask forgiveness, so that God may take me into his favor as a lover of peace, for Jesus' sake. On this account I forgive all my enemies from the bottom of my heart, and all those who have ever injured me in words, works or gestures; I forgive them not with my lips alone, but in the presence of God, and with my heart; henceforth I will never think of what they have done: I will forget it, and in proof of my pacification, I will wish them every happiness, and do good to them where and whensoever I can; yea, for them I pray to God to bless them, and to let them and their children enjoy health and prosperity in time and in eternity. As I have thus forgiven THE DYING ONE FORGIVES and do forgive all those who have ever angered or thwarted me, so do I herewith crave the forgiveness of all of whom I have ever spoken evil, whom I have injured, or to whom I have caused harm or trouble. O forgive me, beloved friends, for the sake of Jesus; bear me no ill will! I know that I have done you wrong, I beg you to forgive me from my heart, with my hand and with my lips, and would to God I could see you all here at my bedside, so that I might crave all your forgiveness face to face. O merciful God! be pleased to forgive me all the harm I have ever done my neighbour, whoever he be, from malice or from weakness, knowingly or unwittingly! Forgive me for the sake of thy great mercy. O do not remember my sin and wickedness! O my heavenly Father, have mercy upon me! O my Jesus, wash me of my sins and pray for me! O Holy Ghost, sanctify my heart and purify it of all evil! Thus I die happy, thus I die rejoicing. Amen.

1. I will offer full forgiveness

To my wrongers, great and small;

Lord, vouchsafe to me the favor

To forgive them, one and all;

And that I, thy erring child
May with them be reconciled.
AND ASKS FORGIVENESS.
I forgive them most sincerely,
And my promise binds most nearly.
2. My desire, my wish and yearning,
Father! it is this alone,
To be well at peace henceforward
With all those who me disown.
Though their hatred will not end,
I henceforth must be their friend;
Would they knew how much it grieves me,
That their anger will not leave me.
3. O forgive me, friends and brethren,
If I oft have angered you;
Harbor not unkindly feelings,
Let the grave our love renew;
Well I know that I have done
Evil unto many a one;
Wipe it from your recollection,
And revive your old affection.
4. Lord! this duty well accomplished,
I appear before thy face:
Look upon me with the cheering
Aspect of thy heavenly grace;
Take away my load of sin,
Thy assistance let me win.

Let the spite of foes not harm me,
Nor my weight of guilt alarm me.

5. Now my troubled soul is quiet,
As I am restored to peace,
To the will of God commanding
Whether life shall last or cease.

THE DYING ONE TAKES LEAVE

Peace with God, and peace with men,
Rifles death of all its pain;
Thus, forgiven and forgiving,
I can die without misgiving.

![[img-5.jpeg]](img-5.jpeg)

The Dying One takes Leave of his Kindred and friends, and gives them his Blessing.

EXHORTATION.

"Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."—Acts xx. 32. It is well known in Holy Writ, that persons at the point of death take leave of their relations and friends, as is clearly to be seen in the case of Moses, Isaac, Jacob, Tobit, Christ Jesus, and others. 1. The blessing thus bestowed is not fruitless; for as it is a prayer rendered up by the dying one for those he loves, it will not remain unheard if done in faith and in the name of Jesus Christ. 2. The last words spoken on the bed of death, do not usually fail of making an impression on those remaining behind. The admonition of a dying father or mother is not easily forgotten, but remains as a thorn in the Spirit. OF HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS.

3. Children should be admonished not to grieve their parents in days of health, and thereby make it impossible for their parents to leave them their blessing. The parent's curse often transforms the prosperity of the children into misfortune; pious Christian parents would rather bless than curse their children. I now take leave of all my kindred, acquaintances, benefactors and friends. I commend them, almighty God, into thy protection, love, and favor; do good unto them for the kindness they have shown me, and as I cannot recompense them for all they have done, do thou see to their recompense. I must leave my friends, relatives and acquaintances, but thou, O God, wilt never leave them; keep them in the fear of thee, in faith and piety, so that we may behold each other again in the life to come. I go the way of all the world; I go before, but in heaven the faithful and the children of God will meet again. But those whom I leave behind, great God! and those to whom my departure from the world will be a cause of sorrow, give them thy blessing abundantly. The Lord bless you, my beloved! The Lord bless you in body and soul! May he take you into his protection, may he, in his fatherly love and kindness, give you plentiful THE DYING ONE TAKES LEAVE sustenance, and preserve you from all evil. Fear God and be pious,

place your trust in him, and know that he will have mercy upon you and be gracious unto you. Turn not away from him in unbelief, malice, or unchristian walk, but be faithful to him even unto death, and he will give you the crown of eternal life at last. Do not forsake the Lord, and he will not forsake you. Honor, serve, love and obey him. May the God of all grace and mercy bless your going out and your coming in, so that ye may be and remain the chosen of the Lord. Great God! I have blessed them; do thou make them truly blessed. And now, O triune God! take my soul unto thee, lift it up unto joys eternal. I desire to be dissolved and with Christ. Lord Jesus! to thee I live, to thee I die; living and dead, I am thine. Make me and mine happy forever. Amen. 1. My dying hour is drawing nigh

When I must leave these shadows,

To seek the everlasting rest

That dwells in heavenly meadows.

Therefore I for my death prepare,

And pray my God to take me where

His pasture blooms forever.

OF HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS.

2. O God, I bitterly repent

That I have, to thy sorrow,

Clung to the pleasures of the world,

And suffered sin to borrow

The hours I should have spent for thee,

O from that evil set me free,

Forget what I have trespassed!

3. Of Jesus, I appropriate

The all-atoning merit,

'Tis the sole comfort of my heart,

The wealth that I inherit.

O Jesu, Jesu, I am thine,

Then let me nevermore repine,

When death comes with thy summons.

4. Therefore I do resign my house

Into the Lord's good keeping;
I give my blessing unto all,
And bid them cease their weeping:
God will protect the fatherless,
The orphans do his love possess
And will not be forsaken.

5. Then unto God I will upraise
My heart and voice in prayer;
I have no fear of death, for Christ
Has overcome the slayer.
Lord, I am here! O quickly come
And take me to my cherished home,
Where is no more of parting.

THE DYING ONE

The Dying One Commends himself to God.

EXHORTATION.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."—Luke xxiii

Persons about to die often have many things to order and arrange. In their anxiety to set their houses in order, they frequently forget what is most valuable, their souls. 1. Every righteous Christian should daily commend his body and soul to the protection of God, as well when he retires at night, as when he rises in the morning. 2. While pious Christians should always do this, they must also remember it when they die; they have the example of our Saviour before them, who said, when death was approaching, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Stephen did the same, in sighing, while the stones pelted him, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 3. This is of the greatest necessity. Great and sudden alterations frequently take place in the condition of sick persons. How well is it, then, to make use of the hours of health for commending our souls to God, and to bring the most valuable part of ourselves into safe keeping, resigning all else, for life or death, to his holy will. 4. This done, we shall die happy.

COMMENDS HIMSELF TO GOD.

Merciful and loving God! thou who dost suffer men to die, and sayest, Come again, ye sons of men! Thou who dost draw thy loved ones unto thee by death, and givest them a share of the glory acquired for us by the bitter sufferings and death of Jesus! I see that my weakness is becoming an audible voice, which cries unto me, to set my house in order, for I must die. I must prepare to meet the bridegroom; keep the light of thy lamp fresh and burning. As I do not know when my hour will come, I will resign myself into thy hands in

time, and will consign my soul to thee. Let my heart be void of all worldly conversation; drive out all worldly and sinful thoughts, so that I may delight in thee alone, rejoice in thee alone, speak of thee, meditate on thy glory and the bliss of the elect. Fill my heart with the Holy Ghost, so that he may produce a good stir within me. Help me to remember Jesus Christ, and at all times to fix my eyes upon his blood and death. When the hour of death arrives, keep me, if it is thy holy will, from assaults, sad thoughts and acute pains, and leave me a sound mind to the last, so that heart, lips and mind may think and speak of thee, and pray to thee; and if speech should fail me, let me enjoy thy loveliness in my heart, and be THE DYING ONE conscious of thy most holy presence. By thy grace, let me have joy in dying; let me look into the bliss of heaven, and give me to taste a few drops of the heavenly sweetness, so that I may depart this life in gladness and comfort. To thee I commend my soul when it leaves the body; O then do thou take it into thy hands! Cover it with thy perfect righteousness, and lead it into the joys of heaven. I also commend to thee my body, resting in the cool earth; give it a gentle rest, until the last trumpet shall sound, and call, "Arise ye dead, and come to judgment!" and then, in the name of Jesus, let me joyfully arise and enter into eternal life. Amen. 1. The breath that thou, O Lord, hast given,

Still animates my body's life,

But now to thee I must resign it,

There is an end of earthly strife.

But when I meet my mortal lot,

O then, my God, forsake me not.

2. As yet I live; I still am able

To send my prayers up to thee;

Therefore I pray that at the passing

Thou wilt be there, and comfort me;

When death doth quench my life and thought,

O then, my God, forsake me not!

COMMENDS HIMSELF TO GOD.

3. When the last fearful hour approaches

And I grow faint and ghastly pale,

When all around are lost in wailing,

When the cold sweats of death prevail,

When all is flitting and forgot,

O then, my God, forsake me not.

4. When reason fails, and I no longer

Can know myself, and scarcely thee,
Then let thy Spirit's self direct me,
That Jesus still my eyes may see,
And if the thought of sin grows hot,
O then, my God, forsake me not.

5. When the cold lips are closed forever,
When I have said my latest word,
Then let this comfort richly meet me,
That this, my prayer, shall be heard.
When earth deserts my every thought,
O then, my God, forsake me not.

THE DYING ONE

52. The Dying One meditates on Heaven

EXHORTATION.

"But Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." —Acts vii. 55, 56.

Nothing can be more sweet and pleasant to a believing soul, than to meditate upon heaven. In heaven is their residence, their country, their comfort, their heritage, their crown, their glory; their body is on the earth, their soul rests with God, their work upon earth, their thoughts in heaven. If it is thus with a believer, how much more should it be so with one who is dying! At the point of death many mournful things occur; separation from those we love, the tears of those around, and others. But all this will be sweetened, if the dying but sends his heart, whence he never would depart. 1. When separation pains him, he must recall the holy angels and the elect in heaven, with whom he shall dwell for evermore.

2. When he sees others weep, he must remember the eternal joys, the bliss and happiness, which await him in the life to come, where there shall be no tears nor groans, and no more weeping. **MEDITATES ON HEAVEN.**

O gracious God! how great is thy love and mercy to all mankind! Not only dost thou help us, hear our supplications, have mercy upon us, and pour down thy blessings upon us while we live, but thou hast also stored up glorious gifts for us in heaven, for in heaven we shall have, O Lord, the things of glory. Therefore in humble reliance I appear before thy great majesty and glory, before the splendor wherein thou dost dwell, where so many seraphim, with all the angels and all the elect, that is to say, all the pious who have ever lived upon earth, stand before thy throne, praise and extol thee, and sing the Holy, Holy, Holy, in thy honor. I call to mind that shortly I, too, shall stand among them, after my gentle and blissful death. I remember that I shall then wear a brilliant crown upon my head, and shall be arrayed in a white robe; yea, I shall shine as the sun. O glory, O bliss, which the Father of all mercies will confer upon me, for the sake of Jesus! Therefore I am not afraid of death, because it will open the door to all this glory. I gaze joyfully upon the heavens, for they are my eternal dwelling-place; here we have no lasting sojourn. This dwelling place, Jesus, my Saviour, has purchased for me by his sufferings and death; thither I shall **THE DYING ONE** come through faith in him. If I look upon the heavens, I recollect that there is my country, where all pious Christians and all the faithful are assembled. While I remain in the world, I am a pilgrim and a wanderer, but when, after a blissful death, I shall have arrived in heaven, then I shall come to rest, to peace, and to eternal welfare. I look upon the heavens with joy, and bethink me that they are my heritage; if my heritage on earth has been small, in heaven I shall enter upon an eternal and unspotted heritage. Heaven is the paradise wherein God will make the faithful glad, of which the earthly paradise was but the shadow. When I see thy glory in heaven, O my God, I shall say to thee as the queen of the east said unto Solomon, "O my God, O my Jesus, behold the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard; happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Amen. 1. "Happiness is here!" The chosen

This proclaim from where they roam,

Carrying palms, and crowned with glory,
Joyous in their blissful home.

MEDITATES ON HEAVEN.

O 'tis gladsome to be here:

We are filled with heavenly cheer,
Free from anguish and from terror,
Free from grief, and sin, and error.

2. Happiness is here in seeing

God Almighty face to face;
Happiness, to stand and revel
In the splendors of his grace;

We are glad for evermore,
We have rich delights in store;
Light surrounds us brightly shining,
Joys of heaven banish pining.

3. Happiness consists in tasting

Bliss, and peace, and comfort here.
Here the fountains of all pleasure
Flow forever bright and clear.

Here the voice of weeping ne'er
Beats upon the lambent air,
Here our faces beam in splendor,
Such as sunbeams cannot render.

4. Happiness is where ten thousand

Shining angels hover round,
In whose converse now we saunter,
Honored wheresoever found.

Here the praise of God is sung
Ever by the choral throng;
Here the church triumphant hails us,
And their comfort never fails us!"

THE DYING ONE RECALLS

6. Then in faith I will be steadfast
And in heavenly piety;
Nothing shall therefore deter me,
While the earth still fetters me.
I shall listen to the song
Of the heavenly choral throng;
And, when I have passed all sadness,
Enter on those realms of gladness.

The Dying One recalls the Promises of God.

EXHORTATION.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matth. xxv. 34.

In death there is need of refreshment, as well for the body as for the soul. But what can refresh the soul? Not gold and silver, honors or earthly splendor, but the word of God, of which David says, "Thy word is the comfort of my heart." Therefore we ought to collect comforting passages of the Bible in days of health, so as to have a store of them in the memory when distress assails us. 1. A dying Christian should particularly call to mind the glorious and divine promises found

THE PROMISES OF GOD.

in the Holy Scriptures, of the divine help, assistance, presence and favor.

2. He must appropriate these consoling passages to himself, as if God had addressed them to him, for in the Holy Scriptures, the Lord speaks with all men and with each in particular. 2. In view of these promises, he must rely on their fulfilment; though the Lord should defer his coming, he will gloriously redeem his word in his own good time. Thou gracious God! how sweet are those promises thou hast given me in thy words, in saying, "I am with him in distress, I will deliver him;" and again, "Fear not, I am with thee, be firm, I am thy God;" and yet again, when Jesus says, "Where I am, there shall my servant be also. In my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare for your coming; I will come again and take you with me, so that ye may be where I am." Yea, I am assured that Jesus is my advocate and prays for me, and that the Holy Ghost will defend me with unutterable sighs. O gracious God fulfil these thy promises in me;

O my troubles increase from day to day, be and remain with me in my last distress. O forsake me not, stand by me. O Jesus, let me attain to glory, and to the place which thou hast THE DYING ONE RECALLS prepared. O Jesus, be my Advocate; pray for me, a sinner, so that I may find grace and mercy. O most precious Holy Ghost! stand by me in my weakness, and give me strength and power. When my lips can no longer pray, bear up my feeble sighs to God. I cling to thy promises and believe that in thy great mercy thou wilt fulfil them. I believe in thy word, I trust to thy word, my heart reminds thee of thy word, bidding me to seek thy face, wherefore, Lord, I seek thy face. Throughout my life thy word has been my comfort and my joy, let it be my refreshment in death. Refresh me when the sweat of death breaks out, gladden me when my lips grow pale, comfort me when hearing and sight depart. O triune God, then let me hear joy and peace in my heart, as a foretaste of the glories of heaven. Amen. 1. I gladly die; why should the grave

Inspire my soul with terrors?

My faith delights to contemplate

The period of all errors.

I know that in a better world

Celestial bliss shall be unfurled,

Before my dazzled gazes.

THE PROMISES OF GOD.

2. I gladly die, for after death

My trouble, care, and sadness

Shall, by the Lord's surpassing grace,

Become unmingled gladness;

The cup in which my sorrows swim

Shall flow with joyance to the brim,

In those bright realms before me.

3. I gladly die, for well I know

I shall not die forever;

But from the dark and gloomy ground

The trumpet shall me sever.

Transfigured, I shall stand in light,

And my once blinded, dazzled sight

Shall look upon the Highest.

4. I gladly die, this is my word
Until my race is ended,
Until I reach the homes of peace
Where welcome is extended
By sainted lips and angel hands.
O when will the sublime expanse
Of heaven stretch out before me
THE DYING ONE ANTICIPATES

53. The Dying One anticipates joyful Converse in Heaven

EXHORTATION.

"After this, I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—Rev. vii. 9, 10. What more sweet and delicious could a dying man choose for the subject of his meditations, than the joys of heaven, and the communion of the saints, the thought of which so often encourages a pious Christian here on earth. 1. At the approach of death we must learn to look upon the things of earth, as things to be shortly left behind. 2. We should therefore cherish heavenly contemplations of the joys of heaven, which will fall to our lot, when, after departing this life, we shall be transferred to the raptures of the skies. 3. We should also reflect upon the converse we shall enjoy, in beholding God face to face and mingling with the angels and the elect. In thinking upon these heavenly associations and our prospect of happiness, death grows sweeter and a holy emotion is experienced in the soul. JOYFUL CONVERSE IN HEAVEN.

How lovely are thy mansions, O Lord of hosts! my soul yearneth for thy courts, O when shall I arrive there to behold thee face to face, and stand before thy throne with all the angels and thy chosen saints! O what great glory and bliss shall I meet with, when released from this mortal coil! O what glory awaits me! I shall see the triune God face to face; what I have here believed, I shall there behold, what I cannot understand, I shall there fully know and comprehend; there I shall be penetrated and filled with heavenly light. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God! My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? It is the chief joy to look upon God, in whom we believe while here below, but without seeing him. In this sight will consist the highest pleasure, the most delicious sweetness, and the most perfect bliss. Here I am among men, here I have been constrained to wear out my life among friends and foes, but in glory I shall meet many thousands of angels, who hover in splendor and light around God's throne, and sound the Holy, Holy, Holy God, the Lord of Hosts There I shall meet all the pious and the chosen who have ever dwelt upon earth. I shall THE DYING ONE RECALLS meet my dearest friends who have died before me, with whom I shall remain forever in sweet communion. O then how shall my soul rejoice! Then yearning shall be succeeded by enjoyment, I shall be with the Lord alway, where troubles shall no more assail me; and this will not last for an hour or a year, but for ever and ever, without cessation. Amen. 1. What surpassing strains of glory

Burst upon my ravished ears!

What superb and splendid mansion

To my dazzled sight appears,

On the pleasant lawns of heaven;

Where to those sweet rest is given,

Who were stedfast in the faith

Through all trials, unto death.

2. Truly 'tis the land of goodness

For the wicked come not there;

He alone shall there be welcomed,

Who has learned with Christ to bear

God himself on all dispenses

Light and life, who seek his glances;

Here the faithful all enjoy

Peace and bliss without alloy

3. God himself, whom mortal vision

Never on the earth beheld,

Stands confessed to the delighted

Gaze of those whose hearts have swelled

THE PROMISES OF GOD.

85s

At the strange and thrilling story

Of the greatness of his glory;

Eyes and ears unceasingly

Feast upon the sight they see.

4. Myriads there of angel servants

Hover round the lofty throne,

Some to stand and wait, some pacing

Here and there, some giving tone

To the gush of their devotion,

Some at rest and some in motion,

All arrayed in heavenly sheen;

In their midst shall I be seen!

5. There the joyous church triumphant

Heavenly converse still maintain,

Thinking rarely of the sorrows

Which they cannot taste again;

Like the sun their garments shining,

Bliss is theirs beyond defining;

Crowned, and bearing palms in hand

At the Lamb's high throne they stand.

THE DYING ONE CONSOLES HIMSELF IN

The Dying One consoles himself in thinking of the Assistance of the Triune God. EXHORTATION.

"Comfort me with apples. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me."—Song of Solomon, ii. 5, 6. True believers are sure of the assistance of the triune God.

1. The heavenly Father will be constant in his fatherly love, and not forget his child. 2. Jesus Christ, who has purchased the soul with his blood, will not forsake it in its last struggle. 3. The Holy Ghost will strengthen them with his holy comfort. Though hearing and seeing fail, though all the senses die out, yet the dying Christian rests securely upon the promise, "I am with thee in trouble." Happy he whom God permits to experience all this in his dying moments. Come, Lord Jesus, and take my soul to thee. I have already tasted thy sweetness, therefore I yearn and thirst for its full and flowing streams. I do not look upon death with terror, for I die in the love of the heavenly Father. The Father who throughout my life has provided for, nour

THINKING OF THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

ished, led and guided me, should he now depart from me, when the end of my life is at hand?

O no, he loves me too well. If a father clings to the bedside of his sick child, and helps him wherever he can, how much more can I be assured of the aid of my almighty Father in heaven? Now my heavenly Father will allot to me the heritage which Jesus purchased for me by his death. He will bid me enter into the kingdom which he has prepared for me from the beginning of the world. Dying is not dreadful in my sight, I die united with Jesus Christ; this communion I have entered upon here in the faith, and it shall never be dissolved. In this communion I am a living member of the body of Jesus Christ, of which he is the head; if the head knoweth how fare its limbs, so does Jesus know of my fate. I am in him and he in me, and in this holy communion I now will die. If he has said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," he will be with me also in my last struggle. As he loved his own even unto the end, having given himself unto death for their sake, so doth he love them also when they are about to die. If, therefore, I am in the arms of my Jesus, death is not dreadful to me, because I have him with me, who, by his death, has cured death of all its bitterness. I do not dread death, I die in the fellowship of the Holy

THE DYING ONE CONSOLES HIMSELF IN

Ghost, who has chosen my heart for his temple in my life, and who will remain united with me in death. He who has so often comforted me in affliction, gladdened my heart in sorrow, refreshed me in distress, and preserved me under trial, he will not leave me in my final hour, but will bear testimony unto my spirit that I am surely a child of God. Yes, because he is the pledge of our inheritance, therefore he assures me even now that I am an heir of glory, and shall enter into full possession. The Father hands me my crown; Jesus leads me by the hand to bliss; the Holy Ghost adorns me with light and joy; the holy angels rejoice at my coming into eternal gladness; all the elect and the faithful receive me with delight. Amen. 1. With pleasure I look forth to death,

Free from alarm or terror;

It brings me to the arms of God,

And keeps me safe from error.

Then I shall see him face to face,

And always revel in his grace

In heavenly pastures roaming.

2. Then I shall come to Jesus Christ,

And sink in his embraces;

Who here my solace was, and light

Shall there receive my praises;

THINKING OF THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

As to the groom the bride repairs,

So unto thee my spirit fares,

Jesus, my sole salvation!

3. The countless host of angels there

Shall gather to receive me;

A portion of their dazzling light

They will delight to give me;

I shall be like the seraphim

That chant the never ending hymn,

Of Holy, Holy, Holy!

4. And there my bounding steps shall meet

The chosen countless legions,
Who saunter, in surpassing bliss,
Around those heavenly regions;
Their sufferings and their toil are o'er
And now they rest for evermore,
Where they desired to enter.

5. O comfort, joy and happiness,
That thenceforth shall surround me:
No sorrow and no bitterness
Thereafter shall confound me.
Rejoicing, bliss and wonderment,
Rest, peace, refreshment, and content,
Shall take their true beginning.

THE DYING ONE RESOLVES

54. The Dying One resolves to die in Jesus Christ

EXHORTATION.

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"—Acts vii. 58.

Dying men often complain of thoughts which they would fain banish, but which persist in haunting them. A believer will do well to drive them away.

1. The best means of doing so is to call to mind in faith and holy contemplation the form of Jesus on the cross, reflecting that, inasmuch as the wounds of Jesus were struck for him, Jesus should be his only refuge in death. The blood of Jesus was shed for him. Jesus died upon the cross that the death of the sinner might be calm, and he introduced by death into eternal life. 2. He must place all his reliance on this Saviour of the world, appropriate the justice and merit of Christ to himself, stand before God, and say, "Be gracious unto me for the righteousness, the blood, wounds, death and merits of my Jesus! In these I live and die, and by these I will enter into the joys of heaven."

Jesus, dearest Saviour, in quitting this world, I turn to thee alone, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." O my Redeemer! thou hast re-

TO DIE IN JESUS CHRIST.

deemed me from sin and from the power of the devil with thy holy blood, with thy guiltless suffering and death. O let this thy blood bestead me, so that I may be justified before thy judgment seat. In my agony I cling to thy atoning sacrifice. Thou art my beatifier! O forgive me my sins, give me thy all-sufficient righteousness, take me to eternal bliss. Thou art the life, and therefore I shall not die, although my life must come to an end, because I live in thee and thou livest in me. Thou art the way; O lead me through the valley of the shadow of death into eternal life. Thou art the truth; thou hast heretofore fulfilled in me all the promises of thy grace; O fulfil those also which I am yet to prove. Thou hast promised that where thou art, there shall thy servant be also, and that when thou shalt be lifted up from the earth, thou wilt draw us all after thee. Now take me to thee, where thou art. Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, as thou hast said. I call to mind thy death upon the cross, how thou didst spread out thine arms, how thy holy blood was shed, how thou didst leave thy life for me. O let thy holy blood cleanse and purify me from all my sins; for the sake of thy holy wounds, let me find grace and mercy. Thou art the Lamb of God, which has suffered itself to be slain on the cross, and by thy blood I have been reconciled to God. Thou art my high priest, who prays for me; thou art the hero, my deliverer; the prince of peace, who receives me into the mansions of peace. O Jesus, I shall come to thee soon; meanwhile I cleave to thee, and will not let thee go. Aye, I will think on Jesus, he shall be the light and the salvation of my soul, the vigor of my life, my sun and my happiness, my desire and aim, my thought and reflection, and my all. Depart, ye idle thoughts; the merits and the blood of Jesus shall be my pastime, his holy wounds my study, his sufferings my consolation; my last word shall be the name, and my last thought the image of my Jesus. Amen. 1. With joyful spirit I in Jesus' heart will burrow,

When the dread course of death ploughs deep its horrid furrow;

Open thy heart to me! O let thy chicken find

Shelter and comfort there, from the relentless wind

2. The image of thy wounds shall occupy my spirit,

His blood and bitter death, and all-atoning merit,

His blood I call my own, on it I will rely,

And though my heart should break, my faith can never die.

THE DYING ONE PRAYS, ETC.

3. O blood, O seething blood, that never ceasest flowing,

On all believing hearts, that none can fail or knowing

Who honestly repent; O blood, O seething blood,

Forever be thou mine, thou chief and only good.

4. Lapped in these open wounds I have the best of shelter;

My covenant with thee, O Jesus, cannot waver.

Sorrow, nor joy, nor death, can ever part us more,

Thou ever shalt be mine, as thou wert heretofore.

5. And henceforth never will I from these wounds be parted,

Until the goal is reached, for which my race has started;

Forgiveness, peace and joy, the hopes for which I've sighed,

Draw my heart after thee, e'en through thy open side.

55. The Dying One prays for a Blissful End

EXHORTATION.

"It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers."—1 Kings xix. 4. When sacrifices were made to God under the old covenant dispensation, they had to be voluntary gifts, not compulsive. So it is also with death; a man must not die murmuring and discontented, but must call upon God to vouchsafe unto him a calm, gentle, rational and blissful end. Merciful and gracious God! I perceive that the time of my departure is at hand, when I shall go in peace, and lie down to rest; my sight fails, my strength gives out, and it appears as if a change were coming over me. Therefore I bring my dying prayer unto thee. My life and soul I commend to thee, O Lord; give me a blessed end for the sake of Jesus. Lord God, Father in heaven, thou who hast created, maintained, and kept me, O take my soul into thy favor. O Jesus, thou who hast redeemed and purified me with thy most precious blood, let me die at peace, in the true faith in thy merits and blood. O Lord Jesus! into thy hands I commend my spirit. O most precious Holy Ghost! my comfort and deliverance, do not forsake me, but give me the joyful assurance that I inherit the life eternal, pray in me and with me, and take my place before God with unutterable sighs. O my Jesus, open the gates of heaven, read and guide me into eternal life, to the society of the blessed. O my God! keep me in holy and FOR A BLISSFUL END.

good thoughts, so that Jesus Christ may dwell constantly in my remembrance! and if my eyes should quickly break, refresh me internally in my soul with thy heavenly comfort and light. Let Jesus ever be present to my soul, grant that I may rejoice in his blood, may take comfort in contemplating his atoning merit, and may grasp his righteousness in true faith. Give me, if it please thee, a gentle and quiet end. O triune God, bless my going out of mortality, and my coming into the glad eternity that lies beyond. The Lord bless me and keep me! The Lord let his face shine upon me, and be gracious unto me! The Lord lift up his countenance over me, and give me peace! In the name of the triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I live and die, in his name, I close my eyes, and commend myself to God and to his grace. Amen.

1. Soon to be resolved and hover

Upward, is my heart's resort;

I rejoice to leave this nether

Darkness, for a better port;

For e'en here the Lord hath given

Me a sweet foretaste of heaven:

With my Jesus at my side,

I can die unterrified.

2. Break, ye purblind eyes! O quickly

Let your earthly light be spent;

Jesus sheds the rays upon me
Of a higher firmament.
In the dark and shaded valley
In the straight and narrow alley,
Jesus is my eye and hand,
Pointing out the promised land.
3. Ye red lips, be red no longer,
Close, and be forever still!
Jesus! sweet repose awaits me
There, upon the heavenly hill.
Jesus, by his mediation,
Will present my supplication.
Jesus is my heart and speech,
When my dying hour I reach.
4 Ears, ye may forego your duty,
I have no more need of you;
I must live on inward senses,
Where sweet comforts whisper true;
Hark! the sounding heavenly paeon!
Lo, the boundless empyrean!
What are those high tones I hear?
What bewildering sights appear?
Heart, my heart, O burst with triumph,
Life, my precious life, depart;
Nothing shall from Jesus drive me,
I am settled in his heart.
Unto him my faith is plighted,

We forever are united;

Knot which nothing can untie—

Burst, my heart, in triumph high!

PRAYER OF THE BY-STANDERS, ETC.

56. Prayer of the By-standers at a Death-Bed

O holy triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost! thou dost lend thine ear unto prayer, and therefore all flesh cometh to thee; behold, we come before thee also, and present this dying man in our prayer. Lord God, Father in heaven, have mercy upon him; he is thy child, adopted by thee in holy baptism; lo, thy child is sick, thy child is about to die; O let him receive his portion, the inheritance of heaven, the salvation of his soul; forgive him all the sins committed against thee throughout his life, and look upon him with favor. Lord God Son, the Saviour of the world, have mercy upon this dying one; thou hast redeemed him with thy precious blood, thou hast died for him, O do not call him to account for his transgressions, but endow him with thy righteousness and merit, wash him with thy holy blood, cover him with thy justice and truth, and let him appear before the throne of God purified by thy blood. Lord God Holy Ghost, have mercy upon this dying man; keep him in the faith, bear witness unto his spirit that he is truly a child of God, and take his place before God with unutterable sighs, sanctify, strengthen, and guide him into eternal life. O holy Trinity, take this dying man into thy 31*

PRAYER OF THE BY-STANDERS, ETC.

gracious favor; think not of the sins of his youth or of his transgressions, but regard him in the light of thy great mercy for the sake of thy goodness. Take his soul into thy hands, and let it enjoy eternal bliss. Awake the body also, on the last day, in splendor and glory. Meanwhile, Lord, Lord, as his agony increases, let him not lose the image of the crucified Jesus, when his eyes break, let a brightness arise in his soul; O Jesus, thou Star of the morning, illumine his path into eternal life. When his closed lips no longer avail to pray, do thou pray for him, O Jesus! Be his advocate with the father in heaven, help him to strive and to overcome, and let the sighs of his heart be well pleasing unto thee. When the death-sweat comes, O strengthen and sustain him! Triune God, do thou remain with him, and preserve him in the faith, until his course shall reach its blissful end. Lord God the Father, what thou hast created, Lord God the Son, what thou hast redeemed, Lord God Holy Ghost, what thou hast sanctified, we commend into thy hands; unto thy holy name be honor, praise and glory, now and forever. Amen. Verses, Texts and Prayers with which the Bystanders at a Deathbed may comfort a Dying One.* "Zion said, 'The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.' 'Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, but I will not forget thee.'"—Isaiah xlix. 14, 15. The Lord is ever faithful

To those who doubt him not;

Who gives him full reliance

Is never more forgot.

Though strange thy lot appear,

Let it not once alarm thee,

All evil cannot harm thee,

So long as he is near.

O merciful, gracious God! help me in my sufferings and my dying hour; my God, thou hast ever been my God and comfort, O be so still. O Jesus, abide with me for it is toward evening, and the day of my life is far spent. O my precious Holy Ghost! strengthen me, keep me firm in the faith unto my end, enlighten me unto eternal life. I will die in the blood and wounds of Jesus; unto him I live, unto him I die, on his salvation I rely. * Pious Christians will do well also to memorize them when in health, so that they may derive comfort from them, even if the disease should deprive them of sight and hearing. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?"—Psalm xlii. 1, 2 Let thy angels, in the chariot

Of Elijah, bear me on

To the soothing breast the stricken

Lazarus reclines upon;

Let my soul thy peace enjoy

Evermore, without alloy,

'Till the body from corruption

Rises unto incorruption.

Jesus, thou light of my soul! when my eyes grow dim, let the heavenly brightness arise within me; do not depart when my eyes break. Although I walk in a dark and narrow valley, I fear no evil, for Jesus is with me. Aye, my Jesus, abide with me, fortify me in the faith, let me be thine own, here in time and there in eternity. "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God."—Psalm xl. 17. O whither, whither shall I turn?

Jesus, for thee alone I yearn;

In thee my heart has ever found

Repose and comfort most profound;

No one was e'er forsaken yet

Whose trust on Jesus Christ was set.

Aye, my Jesus, on thee I rely from the bottom of my heart; bring to rest my weary limbs, and lift up my soul to the unceasing joys of heaven. Give ear unto my feeble sighs, O Jesus. Be my support in trial; thou, my Beatifier and Saviour, deliver me, release me, and make me happy. Come, quickly, redeem me, refresh me, bless me, have mercy upon me. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Isaiah xlii. 10. Jesus Christ, the Morning Star,

Brightly beaming from afar,

Be thou nigh unto my soul,

For thy blood hath made me whole;

Help me, that without dismay

Hence I may depart this day;

Pour thy light where I betake me,

Let thy comforts not forsake me.

Jesus, my sole advocate with thy heavenly Father, thou who sittest at the right hand of God, O pray for me, a poor sinner, now, in the hour of my death; I am not afraid, because thou art with me; yea, most precious Holy Ghost, thou Comforter in all distress, abide with me even unto the end. I have strong assistance; my Father is with me, my Jesus is with me, the Holy Ghost is with me, the angels are with me, and I will die with joy.

"I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me to counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."—Psalm lxxiii. 23, 24.

O let me never waiver

From thee, Lord Jesus Christ;

Give strength unto my weakness,

Let me not be despised.

Help me to battle stoutly

And give thy utmost heed,

That I at last may triumph,

And in the Lord succeed.

By thy agony and bloody sweat help me, dear

Lord and God! I will not swerve from thee, O depart not from me. Jesus! when my struggle begins, help me to strive, help me to conquer and to overcome. I am thine own, then guide me through every terror, to joy, to bliss and to glory. If thou art with me, I am not afraid, I shall be happy, I shall enter into life eternal.

"Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matthew xxv. 23.

O I wait, with trepidation

For the joyous time to come,

When thou, from the gates of heaven,

Shalt arrive, to take me home.

Come, let my old sins not grieve thee,

My heart yearneth to receive thee,

Hasten, hasten to my side,

As the bridegroom to the bride.

Jesus, by the help of thy Spirit I will be faithful to thee until death. I will not swerve from thee, Friend of my soul, my Shepherd! I will not leave thee, bridegroom of my soul! Without thee, nothing can make me rejoice. Guide me, Friend of my soul, from wretchedness to joy, from wailing to bliss. "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."—Job xix. 25, 26, 27. My better life is Jesus,

Death is my surest gain,

I meet it with rejoicing,

For what I shall attain.

I will depart most gladly

To Christ, sweet brother mine;

To him when I am gathered,

I shall no more repine.

I commend myself, O triune God, into thy kind protection, my dearly purchased soul I resign into thy hands; I die, and shall rise again; I die, and shall live eternally in heaven. triune God, take me to thy rest and to glory, shorten my pains, soothe my dying hour; comfort me with the inward comfort of thy Holy

Ghost, and do not take it from me. In the merits of Jesus I live and die. Let me soon see thy glad face in the eternal bliss of heaven.

"I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalm xvii. 15.

O, already I have witnessed

This surpassing gorgeousness;

Now they beautifully robe me

In my snowy wedding dress;

Now they crown me with the golden

Crown ne'er on the earth beholden;

Now upon such joy I gaze

As no human tongue can trace.

O my Jesus! my soul rejoices in thinking of the glory which thou hast prepared for me. I gladly leave the world, for I go to my Jesus, to the bridegroom of my soul. O how joyous and happy shall I be when thou wilt refresh my soul after its many sufferings, sorrows and trials.

"We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—2 Cor. v. 1.

There shall be the life of gladness,
Where so many thousand souls,
Stand in the primeval brightness
That from God's high throne outrolls,
Where the seraphim in glory
Still repeat the wondrous story,
"Holy, holy, three in one,
God the Father, Ghost and Son."

O dear Lord Jesus, seal this comfort upon my heart, that I shall reach the glorious mansions of heaven. When I shall leave this house and this my dying bed, what a splendid dwelling, what a blissful retreat will Jesus have prepared for me! There shall be no more dread, wailing, or sorrow, but joy, comfort and happiness. Do not depart from me, I will never depart from thee; unto thee I will cleave, upon thy grace I rely, in thy comfort I die, justify and save me. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and lamentation shall flee away."—Isaiah xxxv. 10. Spite of doubts and spite of terror,

Well I know that I, ere long,
Shall behold my Lord and Saviour
Sitting in the heavenly throng.
Here our life is overcast
With distress, and death at last;
But above are only peace,
Peace and joy that never cease.

O Jesus, take me quickly to thy heavenly Zion. Long enough have I eaten the bread of tears: let me soon taste the sweet bread of the angels and of heaven. Sighs and sorrow were my daily companions here; but give my soul a glimpse of thy glory, give me joy after my sorrows, refresh me in thee and through thee, eternally. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, and 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. 7, 8. Now I have fully

vanquished

Cross, suffering, dread and pain;

By the five wounds he languished,

God is my friend again.

O Jesus, help me to overcome, when the last struggle begins, bestead me, and it will be easy; sustain me when I am powerless, my helper! Help me in my dread and feebleness. Let thy grace strengthen me, thy blood refresh me, thy hand keep me, thy merit cover my sins; keep me, wretched one, in thy arms, refresh me when I faint. After the battle comes the crown, after the contest the victory. O how gloriously shall I be adorned and crowned by my Jesus after death! Show me the crown which is laid up for me, and gladden my spirit with thy consoling presence. " Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. ii. 10. " He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."—Ib. iii. 5. Behold the wreath triumphant

That girds a victor's brow,

Behold the shining radiance

That beams around me now;

I wear the crown of glory,

I shine in heavenly light;

The Son of God, my Jesus,

He has me thus bedight.

The love of Jesus I will never leave; I have loved him in my days of health, and will love him even to the end. O Jesus, for the sake of thy five holy wounds, preserve me in thy love, I will remain faithful unto thee, and die faithful unto thee. Jesus in my heart, Christ in my mind, in the name of Jesus I close my eyes. " I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."—Rom. viii. 38, 39. Jesus I will love forever,

Here and in eternity;

Though I be severely harassed

By distress and agony,

What care I for death or dread?

Jesus will my soul bestead,

And conduct me through this sadness

To the realms of heavenly gladness.

This is my resolve: not to leave my Jesus. I remain in the faith, I cleave to him; death severs soul and body, but it cannot separate me from the love of God. Jesus is mine and I am his; I lay me in the arms of Jesus, therein I will live and die, blessed and happy.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—James i. 12.

Most anxious is my longing

To have a blessed relief;

For I am here surrounded

With trouble and with grief;

I long to leave behind me

This wretched world below,

To seek the joys of heaven

O Jesus, let me go.

O come quickly, Lord Jesus, come quickly to me, and take me into thy peace; give me patience and strength, I resign myself to thee entirely, body and soul; keep me in the faith, even unto my blissful end. O Jesus, by thy grace and mercy help me to eternal joy and happiness.

Lord God, thou art my refuge evermore, my comfort, my deliverer; take the soul that sighs for thee.

"Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me O Lord God of truth."—Psalm xxxi. 5.

E'en as a scared and timid bird

In hollow trees takes cover,

When darkness broods upon the woods,

In air the tempests hover;

E'en so, dear Lord, thy wounds afford

A comfort and a shelter;

When sin and death, with poisoned breath,

Would make my spirit welter.

Thus well I know, though here below

Body and soul must sever,

Yet I shall be at last with thee

In bliss and peace forever.

My sole refuge in death art thou, O triune

God! the mercy of the Father, the bloody wounds of Jesus Christ, and the goodness of the

Holy Ghost. Unto this triune God I commend my body and my soul. O receive thy pigeon, I come in haste; spread out thy wings, O Jesus, and receive thy chicken; if Satan would devour me, then let thy angels sing, this child shall not be harmed.

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"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."—Hebrews xii. 22, 23. Lord, I am ready quite to doff this mortal cover,

And in transparent sheen before thy throne to hover;

What longer should I seek here in this world of woes,

O take me to thy bliss, and give me sweet repose.

Lord, hie with me away! I would be carried rather

To heaven, where the joys of light shall round me gather.

And where thy presence still upon my soul shall glow;

O hie with me away! I am prepared to go.

My Jesus, how beautiful will be the sight when I shall behold thee in thy glory, and meet all the angels and the chosen in heaven. I rejoice in this anticipation. I leave the earth, and come to glory; I leave misery and come to joy; I leave the society of men, and come to the holy angels.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never verish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."— John ix. 27, 28.

I of thy body am a part,

This is my joy forever;

And from thee neither life nor death

Nor sorrow can me sever.

For where thou art there I shall be,

And evermore abide with thee;

Therefore I go rejoicing.

Aye, Jesus, my Shepherd, take thy lamb to the joys of heaven, and let not Satan pluck thee from my hand. Satan has no part and no right in me, but thine I am, and thine I will ever be.

Take my weary soul into thy arms, and carry it into eternal bliss. O how happy shall I be with Jesus!

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

Lord, with my bitter gall of death,

Mingle a drop of gladness,

And grant that my poor flickering heart

May break with gentle sadness;

Quenched like a taper, in the flood

Of thy beloved atoning blood,

Poured out for my redemption.

O Lord, assure my soul of this comfort that I shall die in thee. Jesus, thou hast lived in me and I in thee; in thee, therefore, will I die, in thy love, in thy wounds, in thy grace; bring me to eternal life, where I shall rest from all my labors, from my sufferings and pains. O Jesus, hear me! Come, Lord Jesus!

"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."—2 Tim. iv. 18. Praise God! The hour of gladness

Hast burst upon my sadness:

To Paradise I fly.

Ye must not weep, ye pious;

Grief shall no more come nigh us.

Glory be to the Lord on high.

The Saviour does not tarry,

But hastes his own to carry

Out of this vale of tears;

A quick and happy ending

Shall be our joyous wending

To what afar so bright appears.

Great God! think on me with favor, and have mercy upon me; O give me a rational, quiet and gentle departure. The day of my death is the day of my redemption, and the hour of my dissolution is the hour in

which I am to enter upon joys eternal. O preserve my reason to the end of my life; let me joyfully hear the consolation held out to me, and grant, if it is thy holy will, that I may yet manifest to those around my faith and hope, and thus, by a happy end, deliver me from all evil. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xxv. 34. In heaven, are happy mansions,

Where, with the wedding dress,

My Jesus shall compensate

His loved one's wretchedness.

There doth the body twinkle

Brighter than precious gems;

Light streams, without a shadow,

From skies of diadems.

O my Jesus, when I quit this frame, let me also hear this voice say to my soul, "Come, thou blessed one," let body and soul be taken with these words on the last day to eternal glory. Meantime I cleave to thee in faith, and in thee and through thee attain the blessing and the inheritance. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."—Isaiah lxi. 10. Zion, fair, and bright, and beauteous,

Thou dost wear most dazzling sheen;

Sounds of music, full of sweetness,

Issue from thy bowers serene;

See how brightly breaks the morning,

Rosy red the hills adorning;

Now the gladsome day is here,

Which shall never disappear.

The joy of heaven sweetens all the bitterness of death. Death is not bitter, Jesus is with me, he comforts and preserves me. O my God! gird me with the robe of heavenly gladness, thou who hast covered me with the robe of righteousness. Thy righteousness is my righteousness, and therefore I know, that because I have grown righteous by faith, I have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, aye, I have the anticipation of life and salvation; how beautifully shall I then be adorned before thee. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16. I believe, Lord! Help my weakness,

Let me nevermore despair;

Thou canst give me strength and courage,

When assailed by sin and care.

Thy desert is my abiding

Trust, nor shall I cease confiding,

'Till I see thee face to face,

In thy eternal resting place.

O, dearest God and Father, let me depart hence gently and softly in Jesus; I know that thou hast loved me, and given me thy Son, in whom I have believed and will believe to the latest moment of my life. O give me, through thy Holy Ghost, the assurance that I shall not be lost! Strengthen my faith, that, what I have beheld, I may soon behold in the life eternal! O Jesus, stand by me, and do not forsake me. "Know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—1 Peter i. 18, 19. Thou, thou hast paid my ransom

From fiends, hell, sin and death;

It was thy blood so precious,

Whereon I rest my faith;

Why should I look with terror

On death, and all his crew?

Because thou art my refuge,

I know my bliss is true.

I come before thee, great God! not in the reliance on my own righteousness, but on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which I have attained by his precious blood. O thou Lamb of God! that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. O righteous God! look not upon my sins and impurities, but the righteousness and holiness of my Jesus, to which I cling, and on which I die. For his sake be gracious and merciful unto me. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. For me, Jesus died and suffered,

Of his death I reap the gain;

He has purchased my salvation,

Therefore I rejoice in pain;

I rejoice to flee the annoyance

Of the world for heavenly joyance,

With such bliss my spirits swell

As no earthly tongue can tell.

Jesus, my sole salvation and my refuge, I come to thee in my dying hour, and beseech thee to have mercy upon me, and not to forsake me. The sweet name of Jesus and the memory of his blood, his wounds, and his holy person, shall henceforth dwell on my lips, and in my heart and thoughts. Lord Jesus, for thee I live, for thee I die, dead and living I am thine. Amen. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 1, 2. And thus I go to Jesus Christ

Where all my wishes center;

No hand of earth shall rouse me from

The sleep on which I enter.

For Jesus Christ, on whom I wait,

Will open wide the heavenly gate,

And usher me to glory.

O great God, the time is at hand for me to leave this world, and to appear before thy judgment seat; O heavenly Father, have mercy upon me, and graciously receive me as thy child, which thou hast created and loved. O Jesus, pray for me, thou art my Mediator, Advocate, and Saviour. Take away my sins and clothe me in thy righteousness, and I shall be saved.

O most precious Holy Ghost! dwell in me and in my heart, so that thou mayst bring me to the happy mansions of heaven.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in times of need." —Hebrews iv. 12.

Invigorate me with thy grace,

Heal me with thy contusion;

Wash me with thy atoning blood,

And save me from confusion.

And, when it likes thee, take me off

In silence from this world of chaff

To where thy chosen linger.

O yes! for the sake of Jesus I shall obtain grace and mercy. Lord God Father in heaven, have mercy upon me! Lord God Son, the

Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me!

Lord God Holy Ghost, have mercy upon me, and be gracious and merciful unto me. Amen.

"God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21.

Into thy open side I hasten

When death shall take me by the hand;

Thy wounds shall be the spreading portals,

That guide me to the promised land,

To the bliss of paradise,

Which the thief did exercise;

Thither thou, dear Lord, wilt lead me,

And with heavenly manna feed me.

Jesus, thou hast taken away my sins, thou hast conferred thy righteousness upon me;

whereof I am glad, and take great comfort.

Christ's saving blood and righteousness

My comfort is, and gorgeous dress;

Therein by God I shall be seen

When into heaven I enter in.

In the new Jerusalem, God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of believers; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."—Rev xxi. 4.

Thrice, thrice happy are ye, true believers,

Who through death are of his grace receivers;

No more embarrassed

By the troubles by which we are harassed.

Christ himself doth dry your eyes of weeping,

Yours the badge, no more the vigil keeping.

Ye are delighted

By the songs to which no mortals are invited.

Come, O Jesus, come, unwarp, unwind me;

Take me quickly from the chains that bind me.

In thy environs

The faithful clasp their hands, unclamped with irons.

O Jesus, I rejoice in anticipation of the hour when I shall behold thy joy-inspiring face.

Then shall my body shine as the sun, and mine eyes no more be wet with tears, but beaming with light and glory; in thee I find joy and comfort. My sojourn here is fleeting, but with thee I have my true and eternal home.

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellow ship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John i. 7.

When I at last shall see what now

I but behold in story,

Thy blood shall be my purple robe,

Thy cross my crown of glory.

This crown of glory I will don,

And come before thy Father's throne,

Where angels stand and wonder.

Thus, as thy glad and blooming bride

I will be standing at thy side,

In those bright regions yonder.

I am in the communion of my Jesus, and therein I live and die. There is nothing damnable in me, because I am in communion with him. Jesus' blood sanctifies and cleanseth me.

O heavenly Father, see this is the righteousness of thy Son, therefore I come to thee.

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John i. 29.

O Lamb of God! All guiltless

Upon the cross defeated;

Evermore meek and patient,

Though scoffed and sorely treated.

But for thy saving mercies

We should have died in curses.

Jesus! have mercy on us!

Christ, thou Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me!

Christ, thou Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, leave me thy temporal and eternal peace. Amen.

"Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."—1 John xvii. 24.

If 'tis thy will, O come at once,

And happily transport me!

O to be with thee evermore

Alone can now support me.

Swing open wide, ye heavenly gates,

That, after my probation straits,

I may repose in Jesus.

What a glad and happy meeting it will be when I shall come to thee in heaven, O Jesus!

and behold thee face to face! I have loved thee even here below, ere yet I have seen thee; with what unspeakable joy, then, shall I hasten to where thou sittest among the saints and the chosen. O how great is thy glory! O draw me up to thee, and prepare me for a happy entrance into thy glory!

"None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."—Romans xiv. 7, 8.

Most fervently I love thee, Lord,

O to my prayers and tears accord

Thy grace and thy salvation!

For all the world to me is nought,

Nor heaven nor earth I give a thought,

Wrapped in thy contemplation.

And though my heart of clay should break,

My spirit's faith can never shake;

Thou art my consolation still,

Whose blood has saved my soul from ill

Lord, all my hope is set on thee,

Confounded let me never be!

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VERSES, TEXTS AND PRAYERS

Great God, I have become thine in holy baptism. I have remained thine through faith, let me be thine in death also. O Jesus Christ, the Son of God, thou who hast done so much for me, lock me up in thy wounds; thou art alone my comfort and my help. "Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead."— 2 Tim. ii. 8.

Present thy lovely image

For comfort in my need,

How thou, most gracious Saviour,

For me didst faint and bleed.

My eyes shall rest upon thee,

And I undoubtedly

Unto my heart will clasp thee,

Dying most happily.

The name of Jesus is deeply graven in my heart. Jesus, I embrace thee, I press thee to my heart; O depart not from me, I pant for thee, my Saviour! Would I were with thee. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

Thou to thy Father didst commend,

O Jesus, at thy bitter end,

Thy most adored Spirit.

FOR THE DYING

Then, dearest Jesus, take my soul,

That yearns to dwell in thy control,

And thy repose inherit.

Dip it into thy open side,

And, by thy blood all purified,

Keep it as thine forever.

Jesus, my only wish is thy grace and mercy.

O take my soul, purchased by thy crimson blood, into thy holy hands. O be it commended unto thee, that it may be with thee in paradise.

Lord Jesus, remember me, I am thy child, I was purchased for thine own with thy precious blood. Let me be with thee this day in thy glory.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. i. 15. Jesus, all my sin and sorrow,

Thou hast flooded in thy blood,

O Redeemer! let it profit

For my true eternal good,

And if thou, by thy contrition

Hast defeated my perdition,

O release me then at last,

That my sufferings may be past.

Lord, I await thy salvation! Jesus saves sinners, he will save me also. Jesus accepts sinners, he will accept me also. I am the property of Jesus, and so shall remain. I lift up

VERSES, TEXTS AND PRAYERS mine eyes to heaven, and behold Jesus calling me.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."—Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26. When my last call is sounded,

O be thou surely near!

When death gives his rude summons

Do thou thyself appear.

When my heart shall be shaken

With greatest fear and dread,

With thy still greater suffering

Thyself wilt me bestead.

Jesus, my life is drawing to a close, O take me up to thee. My Shepherd, take thy sheep, my Father, take thy lamb, my Jesus, take the soul thou hast purchased with thy blood. This I desire, thus I pray, and thus I close my eyes. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white

robes, and palms in their hands. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—Rev. vii. 9, 14. Who are those so greatly gathered

Round the throne and round the Lamb?

On their heads are crowns of glory,

In each hand a waving palm.

FOR THE DYING.

Hallelujah all they sing

To the Lord and heavenly King.

O what great and blissful wonder

When, upon the lofty throne

We shall look on God, the Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost, in one!

God! for thee are still in store

Songs of praise for evermore.

My Jesus, I anticipate with rejoicing the white robe and the golden crown which thou wilt give me. Meantime I wash my soul in thy holy blood, and appropriate it to myself; O for its sake take me up to the joys of heaven. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."—Luke xxiii 26. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—Acts vii. 58. Jesus, to thee I give my heart,

My God, my God, do not depart,

Into thy hands receive me;

O God indeed, from every need,

From death and sin relieve me.

O my Jesus! thy last word upon the cross shall also be the last word of my life. Jesus, I live to thee, I die to thee, dead and living I am thine. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Pet. iii. 13. City of God, O golden light,

O dwelling of all gladness!

When shall I see the face of God,

When reach the end of sadness?

When shall I taste the luscious savor

Of his divine and thrilling favor?

With anxious longing here I sigh;

O friend of souls come quickly nigh.

O Lord, how great will be my joy

When this sad life is ended,

And I shall pass into the home

Thou hast for me intended.

O will the happy hour still tarry

That up to heaven my soul does carry?

O Lord, when will the time arrive

That Zion makes my heart revive?

Most holy Trinity! take my soul into thy realm of heavenly joys. O come, Lord Jesus, I wait for thee; O take me to thy glory. Lord God the Father, what thou hast created, Lord God the Son, what thou hast saved, Lord God the Holy Ghost, what thou hast hallowed, I commend into thy hands; to thy holy name be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen. SIGHS AND PRAYERS OF A DYING MAN.

57. Sighs and Prayers of a Dying Man

From the Hymn, "When my departing hour has come."

1.

"When my departing hour has come."

—And, O Lord, how very near may its coming be! Preserve me, therefore, in the faith, so that I may rely upon the triune God, in whose name I was baptized, and rest my hopes upon thy merit, blood, and wounds. Protect me in this my last hour against the assaults of Satan, let thy left hand be under my head, and thy right hand cover me. Awaken me in the hour of my death by the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and abide with me, when my end approaches, "And I away must hie me."

Yea, Lord Jesus, I must travel the dark road of death, but I am not afraid if thou art with me. Death is a journey to the Father; O how I rejoice at the prospect of coming to my heavenly Father, to Jesus, where I shall find peace, joy, comfort and bliss. O how happy shall I be! Be with me, O Jesus, on this darksome journey to eternal life; give me the confidence of faith, and the sweetness of thy consolation, and to enable me joyfully to begin and end this journey, " Lord Jesus Christ, escort me home."

Travel with me from this temporal into eternal life. If the road is sombre, yet I shall walk in light, if thou art my light. Stand at my death-bed, and receive my soul when it issues from the body. When my bodily eyes are closed in death, let the eyes of my soul behold thee. Conduct my soul until thou shalt bring me to the dwelling of the saints, to the holy angels, and to the cohort of the elect. Lead me to the throne of thy heavenly Father, as thine own, so that I may find favor in his sight, and be received as an heir of salvation. Help my parting out of this world, " And evermore stand by me."

In my dying hour no one can help me but only thee, O Jesus. Help me, and strengthen my faith; help me and give testimony unto my spirit that I am truly a child of God, and shall now receive the heavenly inheritance; do not forsake me when I grow pale in death; do not forsake me when my eyes break, but be and remain the light of my soul. Forsake me not when my hearing fails, but teach comfort and refresh my spirit from within. Forsake me not when my speech departs, and I can no longer pray, but pray for me. Holy Ghost, pray within me, and represent me before the Father with unutterable sighs. Forsake me not when I expire, but carry me to the joys of heaven; take

"My soul at this my latter end"

into thy care and protection. Jesus, thou hast purchased my soul with thy holy blood, O cleanse and purify it, so that it may be a clean vessel, well pleasing in the sight of God. When the end of my life arrives, give me a rational end, if it is thy holy will, so that I may direct my heart, eyes, and mind to thee, praying while yet my tongue can stammer, sighing while breath remains, and gladly receiving the encouragement and condolence of those who stand around me; give me a blissful end, if thou art so minded, so that in dying I may enjoy thy communion, O Jesus, and be refreshed by the comfort and assistance of the Holy Ghost. Give me a blissful end, that I may fall soundly asleep in the faith, and remain united with thee before death, in death, and after death. To this end, O Lord, my soul "Into thy hands I do commend."

O how well will it be protected there. Take it to heaven and its eternal joys, to bliss, to glory, where it shall fare well. Thy hands are mighty hands, no one can pluck my soul out of thy hands; not the world, for it has no part in me;

not Satan, for him thou hast overcome. Thy hands are faithful hands, where my soul shall be well bethought.

"Thou wilt not let me perish."

I give it into thy custody until the judgment day; then shalt thou reunite it with my transfigured body, and then let soul and body enjoy the bliss of heaven. After the disturbance give me rest, after suffering, joy, after terror, consolation, after misery, refreshment. Let my soul behold thy glory among the angels and the chosen, which thou hast prepared for thy children.

2.

"My sins will exercise me sore."

Yes, I remember my sins, and am deeply grieved that I have so often offended thee, in thought, word and deed. From the bottom of my heart I deplore having wronged my Creator,

Redeemer and Sanctifier. O that I had not done it! But, Jesus, wash away my sins with the purple current of thy wounds, bind up my heart with comfort, and think of them no longer, but cast them into the sea. When my sins presented themselves at my bedside, frighten, condemn, and accuse me, O then do thou come to my aid, and seal in my heart the forgiveness of sins by thy Holy Ghost. This shall be my comfort when

"My conscience will alarm me."

I feel the great dread and terror I must suffer because of my sins. O sin, how bitter art thou upon the bed of death, how dost thou harass and disturb me! but, O Jesus, for the sake of thy precious blood forgive my trespasses, for the sake of thy holy wounds have mercy upon me. For the sake of thy eternal love, take me into thy favor. I do not deny my transgressions and sins, I acknowledge, before Almighty God, the countless number of them. "For they are like the sands of the shore."

I have sinned much in thoughts, much in words and idle speech, and much in works and deeds, from my youth up; if then, thou, Lord, wilt make us answerable for sin, who will come forth unscathed? If thou wilt bring the thoughts of my heart to judgment, I must be ashamed; if I am to account for every idle word, I am lost; if thou wilt judge me and deal with me according to my works, what will become of me? What shall I do, sinner that I am? What shall I begin? My conscience accuses me!

"Yet shall despair not harm me."

And why should I despair? The heavenly Father will surely not disown his hapless, penitent child. I will not despair, for Jesus is my Saviour, my Mediator and Advocate, with his heavenly Father. Who will accuse the chosen of God? God is here, who maketh just; who will condemn? Christ is here, who is dead, who rose again, who sits at the right hand of God, and intercedes for us. I will not despair, for the Holy Ghost will remain my comfort in the death struggle, and will bear witness unto my spirit that I am truly a child of God, and that my sins were forgiven me for the sake of Jesus. "I call to mind how thou hast died."

In dying, I will remember thee, O Jesus, upon the cross, how thou didst shed thy blood and die for me. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

O Lamb of God! All guiltless

Upon the cross defeated;

Forever meek and patient,

Though scoffed and vilely treated!

Nothing but thy contrition

Has saved me from perdition;

Jesu! have mercy on me.

Thus the bitter suffering and blood of Jesus shall dwell forever in my heart; thus

"The crimson fountains of thy side,"

shall course forever into my veins. Thy wounds were suffered for my sake also, in them will I take refuge.

E'en as a scared and timid bird

In hollow trees seeks cover,

When gusts of air the storm declare,

That o'er the fields doth hover,

Right so when death, with poisoned breath,

Would make my spirit welter,

Jesus, to thee, dear Lord, I flee,

And in thy wounds take shelter.

The blood, wounds and death of Jesus shall be my latest thought, and Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, my latest word. O Christ Jesus, Son of God, thou who hast done so much for me, lock me up into thy wounds, thou art alone my comfort and salvation. Yes, Lord Jesus, thy wounds

"Shall rescue and preserve me."

For their sake I shall find favor before. God, justification and eternal happiness. When they

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SIGHS AND PRATERS inclose my body in the coffin, I will lock my soul into the wounds of Jesus. There it will be preserved, thence no enemy can expel it; in these wounds it rests, and will be carried to the brotherhood of the blest.

3.

"I of thy body am a limb.

O what comfort will there be, at the hour of death, in the thought that I am a member of thy holy body! In holy baptism I was born again, I became a member of the Christian church, the head of which is Jesus, but if Jesus is my head and I his member, I know also that I shall be where my Jesus is. Jesus is in the glory whither I shall come also. He has promised that when he should be lifted up from the earth he would draw us all after him. O Jesus! thou hast been lifted up to the right hand of the heavenly Father, O draw me after thee, bring me to thy eternal heavenly joy; aye, as thy member thou wilt make me a partaker of thy glory. "This is my consolation."

Delicious comfort! Because I am the child of God, I am an heir, even God's heir, and a co-heir of Christ, who shall attain the heavenly blessings, and be lifted up to glory. Should I then not gladly die, not gladly suffer and endure, so that I may also share his life and his greatness? This shall be my unceasing comfort. Jesus, my head, will glorify me, his member; Jesus, my Saviour, will save me; therefore I say, my Jesus! "With thee, I am united still."

Though on earth the head may be severed from the body, yet no one can separate me from Jesus; I know that neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor high nor low, shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Nothing, nothing shall sever me from Jesus, neither cross nor sickness, struggle nor agony of soul, nor death itself. Body and soul may part, but Jesus and my soul shall never be parted; the world and my friends I must leave behind me, Jesus never. O Jesus, I have inclosed thee in my heart, therefore I will hold thee in true faith, until thou shalt bring me to thy heavenly glory. Jesus is mine and I am his forever, even "In death and consternation."

for thou hast promised, O Lord, that thou wilt be with me in the time of need; O fulfil thy gracious promise! If the struggle of death is the final struggle, thou, my Saviour, wilt sweeten it with thy presence. Let thy image appear to me, as a consolation in my sorrow, bleeding for me, let me strain thee to my heart. Lord Jesus,

I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. I die for thee, I live for thee, dead and living I am thine. Who dies thus, dies well, for

"E'en though I die, I die to thee."

I gladly die, for I know that I shall come into thy glory. I will die in faith, and rely upon thy merits, blood and death. I die happy and blessed, for I die to thee, I long for thee, I die as thy child, which thou hast loved heretofore; I die as thy lamb, which no one can snatch from thy hand, I die as thy heir, for whom thou hast prepared the heavenly joy and gladness.

"Eternal life thou hast for me"

secured and purchased. With what joy do I look forward to this life, to this glory; if here my happy days were few and far between, if my daily bread has been wailing and tribulation, in heaven I shall enjoy the sweet days of repose and of refreshment; there my Saviour will wipe away all tears from my eyes. Blissful hour when I shall attain to this happiness! and that

I shall attain it I surely know, for this life of gladness thou hast for me

"By thy atonement purchased."

Lamb of God! thou diedst for me, thou art the redemption of the sin of all the world; for me thou wert spit upon, crucified and slaughtered; thy death sweetens my death, all advantageth me; thy shame and degradation turns to my honor; a thousand, thousand thanks for this to thee, dear Jesus. As thou livest, so shall I live also. Therefore be comforted, O my soul, and look joyously toward heaven. Jesus has purchased heaven, and prepared a place there for thy coming. Though I have no abiding sojourn here, though my life comes to an end, and my heart breaks, yet I well know whither I am going: to Jesus, my Saviour. For I know that when this house of the earthly tabernacle of my body is demolished, we have an edifice which God has built, a house not made with hands, which is eternal in heaven, and this my Jesus has purchased for me by his sufferings and death. 4.

58. \\"Because thou didst arise from death,\\"

thy word gives me the heavenly consolation that though I die, yet I shall rise again. Is not that great consolation for me? And it arises from the fact that my Jesus arose from the grave; he died for me on the tree of the cross, as the innocent Lamb of God, and was buried, but rose triumphant on the third day. Jesus arose, and I shall arise also. Jesus lives, so shall I live. Jesus did not remain in the grave, and

"The grave shall not contain me."

Jesus will restore me to life; body and soul, severed by death, shall be reunited in the bliss of eternity. As little as the grave has contained my Jesus, so little will it contain me when the last trump shall sound, which shall pierce the graves. Thus the grave is harmless to me, my body resting there from all care, toil, and pain, and my soul will be comforted and refreshed by God in the joys of heaven. Yes, my Saviour! not alone does thy triumphant resurrection make my heart rejoice, but "Thy ascension is my highest bliss."

When Jesus had risen from the dead, he ascended to heaven, and entered into his glory. Behold, Jesus has gone before, I follow him; I too shall have a glorious ascension. On quitting this present life my soul will come to God, and in the happy and blissful resurrection of the dead, we shall be carried towards the Lord in the clouds, when body and soul shall jointly enter into the gladness of their Lord. In death it shall be my highest and sweetest consolation that Jesus lives, and therefore I shall live also.

Jesus has gone to heaven, and I shall follow him. Jesus has entered into glory, and on my entrance into heaven, I too shall become a partaker of it. What can be sweeter or more delicious than the ascension of my Jesus, which has been, or than my own, which is to be?

"Death's terrors cannot chain me."

I know that I shall die, but I am not afraid, for my soul will go from its fragile earthly tabernacle to eternal glory. Does a child fear to go to its father, or a bride to come to the bridegroom? By death, I shall come to my heavenly

Father, to Jesus, the bridegroom of my soul;

shall I then be afraid? I do not die, but my wretchedness dies, my soul throws off its cross, and attains the heavenly goods, forsakes humanity, and comes to the holy angels and elect. And what still more dispels all fear of death, is the most holy communion with thee,

O Jesus.

"For where thou art, there I shall be."

O what comfort flows from that reflection!

After my happy departure from this life I am to go to heaven, and be with my Jesus in glory.

The sheep, with its shepherd, the disciple with

SIGNS AND PRAYERS his teacher, the servant with his Lord. Even thus has he promised, "Where I am, there shall my servant be also." O what joy, when Jesus shall take me into his arms, and introduce me to his glory! O I am happy, in knowing that I shall thus repose,

"And ever, ever dwell with thee."

He will take me to himself, that I may dwell with him in heavenly bliss. This union shall never be followed by a separation. I shall stand before the throne, and behold his face, which shall give me the most unspeakable joy; I shall live with him, and by him be eternally refreshed; because I am convinced of this,

"Therefore, I die rejoicing."

My sins are forgiven me, for the sake of the blood and death of Jesus. From the grave I shall be roused to eternal life; I shall have a blissful ascension, and shall come to my Jesus. Therefore, I joyfully depart to Christ, my brother, that I may come to him, and be forever with him. I gladly go to heaven, I leave this vale of tears for realms of joy, for out of tribulation, I shall come into the happiness which ear hath not heard, and eye not seen. 5.

"Thus do I go to Jesus Christ,"

Says my Saviour, "I go to my Father and to your Father; to my God and to your God." So do I say likewise in dying, I go upwards to my heavenly Father, to Jesus, to the Holy Ghost, to the triune God, to my Immanuel, to the friend of my soul, to my brother, to my redeemer. And O, how do I long to see Jesus in his glory, Jesus, whom I never saw, yet love to clasp; therefore, I

"Stretch out my arms in wonder"

towards my Jesus, to strain him to my heart, and never to let him go. I stretch out my arms, crying come, Lord Jesus. I remember how my Jesus stretched out both his arms on the cross, and died, as if he would embrace me. So will I now expire, to embrace Jesus with outstretched arms. O bridegroom of my soul, embrace me too, and present me, transfigured and glorified, to my heavenly Father. O what a happy entrance will it be, thus to enter into heaven, accompanied by Jesus! In such thoughts I will die, for then "I go to rest, and sweetly sleep"

in the arms of Jesus. Jesus in my heart, Jesus in my mind, in the name of God I yield my breath. Blessed rest, which no one can disturb! I rest from my cross, I rest from all sorrow, from mourning and sadness, from all pain. A blissful, heavenly rest! If a child sleeps gently in its mother's arms, why should not I rest gently in the arms of Jesus.

"Men shall not wake me yonder."

To rouse the dead is a work of God, therefore no man has the power of waking the dead. But thy voice, O Jesus, shall pierce the earth into the graves, and the dead shall rise. O Jesus, rouse my body on the last day to eternal life. I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. What is beyond the power of man, my Saviour will do. "For Jesus Christ, thrice glorified,"

is the foundation of my trust. He is the Saviour and beatifier of men; he is Christ, the promised Messiah; nor is he very man alone, but the Son of God, yea, God himself. In this Jesus Christ

I will die happy; the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, shall cleanse me of all sin. He

"The gates of heaven will open wide,"

when the door of my earthly life is closed. I have thought diligently of heaven during life; by faith I have striven for heaven in holiness of life, therefore, O Jesus, open the gates of heaven, O say, "Well done, thou good and faithful soul; enter into the glory of thy Lord. Come, thou blessed one, and inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the beginning of the world." O how happy shall I be, when thou wilt speak those soothing words, "And usher me to glory."

As a bridegroom conducts his bride to the altar, so do thou conduct me, O Jesus, into eternal life. Now I am with Jesus, and he with me. Out of the earthly vale of tears, I have been transported to the happy mansions of heaven. From believing, I have passed to seeing.

The Bystanders cry to the Departing One.

Keep in mind Jesus Christ, think of his bitter sufferings and death. Be comforted by the love of the heavenly Father, who in holy baptism has adopted you as his child, and is now ready to receive you, as his child, into eternal glory. Be comforted by the bloody wounds of Jesus Christ, undergone for your sins; be comforted by his holy blood, shed for your sins. Be comforted by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, who has hallowed you, and in this triune God die happy. Amen.

Benediction over the Dying One.

Farewell, thou soul, dearly purchased by Jesus Christ. Pass away to thy beloved God and Father in Jesus Christ, who has created and loved thee, whom thou hast held in childlike reverence and trust. Pass to thy Lord Jesus, the most precious and faithful shepherd and redeemer, who has bought thee as his sheep with his holy blood, to whom thou hast clung in faith. Go to meet the comforter, the Holy Ghost, who hallowed thee, and chose thee for his temple and tabernacle. Depart from the body into joy. Depart from tribulation to the living God, may he bless thy going out and thy coming in, and by his power preserve thee for salvation. Depart and enter into the kingdom prepared for thee from the beginning of the world. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance over thee, and give thee peace. Amen.

Prayer of the Bystanders at the Bedside of One who has departed.

Holy and just God! It has pleased thee by temporal death to call away from this world the dead man who lies before us. Let us learn by this death that we too must come thus to die, and leave the world behind us, and to prepare for it in time by true penitence, a living faith, and avoidance of the vanities and sins of the world. Rejoice the soul which has now departed with heavenly comfort and gladness, and fulfil in him the gracious promises of thy holy Word to those who believe in thee; let the body have in earth a sweet and gentle rest to the last day, when thou wilt reunite soul and body and lead them to glory, so that the whole man, who has served thee here, may there be filled with heavenly joys. Comfort those bereaved by his departure; be the father, provider, guardian, friend, and comforter of those he has left behind; do not forsake them nor withdraw thy hand from them, but let them richly enjoy thy goodness, grace, love, comfort, and protection, until the time arrives when thou wilt permit them also to die a happy death. Hear us for the sake of thy great mercy. Amen. 35*

Festival Devotions.

At the time of holy Advent the devout Christian contemplates the coming of Christ into the flesh.

EXHORTATION.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass."—Zech. ix. 9.

If there are times which souls devoted to God love to spend in contemplation, they are those festival days on which Christendom calls to mind the various benefits of God.

1. A devout child of God rejoices in the anticipation of these festival times, to make all things the subject of devotion which God's goodness has given him.
2. In the time of holy Advent, he reflects upon the love of the heavenly Father, who did not spare his only begotten Son, but sent him into the world to obtain the salvation of mankind.
3. He regards the burning love of Jesus, who assumed our fallen flesh and blood to bring us to heaven and to eternal life.

THE COMING OF CHRIST INTO THE FLESH.

4. He extols the grace of the Holy Ghost, who so vividly and powerfully presents to the soul of the believer the divine benefits, as if they had but just taken place.
5. He applies these festival hours to devotion and prayer, begun and ended with hearing and reflecting on the word of God, with singing festive songs, and with a quiet and godly walk and conversation.

O gracious Jesus! thou who didst come to save the lost, I thank thee for having permitted me, under thy protection, once more to witness the return of this holy time. O give me the power of thy Holy Spirit, enabling me to spend it in the fear of thee, with holy contemplation, for the edification of my soul. Thou eternal Son of God, who wert before the foundations of the world were laid, who didst enter into the flesh and become a true man, for our salvation! Because of our heinous fall in Adam, we could not come to thee in heaven; therefore come to us upon earth, so that thou mayest introduce us all to bliss. By sin we had become enemies of God, but by thy most holy coming all shall be retrieved. O holy Advent! whereby we, who were condemned to death, shall attain life, and we, who had fallen from grace, shall be invested with decorations and honors. For this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Dearest Jesus, save me also, take me up into thy happy kingdom. Give me, at this holy time, an attentive and obedient heart, to hear thy holy word with diligence and devotion, to carry and cherish it in my heart, to grow in faith, in thy knowledge and love during these holy days, and to show, in my life, the fruits of faith, which are chastity, lowliness, meekness, obedience and piety, so that thy advent may be a happy and holy coming for me also. O preserve me, lest it be said of me, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not." Come into my heart, I will clasp thee as my only Saviour, Redeemer, and Sanctifier in the faith, and appropriate thy merits and thy righteousness. Come into my heart! For love of thee I will gladly renounce all worldly vanities, pleasures, aye, sins and wickednesses, so that thou alone mayest dwell in my soul, and rule in my heart. O dwell in me, sanctify me in thee, keep me in thy grace. I repent of my sins and seek mercy in thee; therefore they shall no longer condemn me, for if the Son makes me free, I am truly free. If God is for me, who can be against me? O Jesus, thou camest as a king; O rule in my heart, that sin may rule in me no longer. THE COMING OF CHRIST INTO

THE FLESH.

Thou camest as a just one; make me just, and give me the robe of thy righteousness. Thou camest in poverty, to enrich my soul with faith and heavenly gifts. Thou camest lowly-minded, make me humble, let me learn humility and meekness from thee, and practise them on every occasion of my life. O thou king of honors! enter into the gates of my heart; open them widely by thy power, govern me with thy Holy Spirit, so that I may abide in thy dwelling and temple to the end of my days. My heart yearns for thee, thou Son of God, thou Star of David, thou true Seed of the woman, thou Siloh, Saviour, Shepherd and Salvation, my Brother, Throne of Grace, and Portion, come in the name of the Lord! Come, O King, Prince of Peace, Hero, Redeemer, Mediator, Ransom of my soul, Light and Comfort of the Gentiles! O Beatifier, Help, Protection, Atoner, Counsellor, Prophet, and Dependence, hold thy triumphant entry into my heart! Amen.

1. Here is Immanuel! be this our declaration;

It is the accepted time, the day of expectation.

Here is Immanuel! comfort and peace he brings,

For which all Christendom joyful hosannas sings.

2. Here is Immanuel! he comes by God's own presage,

God's holy heart itself the burden of his message;

Here is Immanuel! behold, what love is this!

God offers his own Son to bring us back to bliss.

3. Here is Immanuel! the curse is rest of terror;

The sacrificial blood has blotted every error;

Here is Immanuel! we are released from sin,

No fall shall e'er destroy the bliss we now begin.

4. Here is Immanuel! the stain of our transgression

Is utterly wiped out by Jesus' intercession;

Here is Immanuel! God does vouchsafe his grace,

And Jesus' precious blood does all our sins efface.

5. Here is Immanuel! from ill we are delivered,

The forces of the foe are overthrown and shivered;

Here is Immanuel! come all distress that can,

We have the help of him who was both God and man.

59. At Christmas, the devout Christian contemplates

the Birth of Jesus Christ.

EXHORTATION.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his

Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

—Gal. iv. 4.

If the birth of a royal prince gives joy to a whole kingdom, the birth of Christ cannot be other than joyful to mankind. The angels re

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

joice in the air, and proclaim great joy unto men, and why should not the children of God be glad?

1. They have reason to congratulate themselves on the merciful love of God, who did not spare his only begotten Son, but gave him up for us

2. There is reason to rejoice in the loving-kindness of Jesus, who, although he is God and the Son of God, did not refuse to assume the guise of humanity in the womb of a poor virgin, and to become a little child. 3. The faithful must wonder, in believing silence, at the mysterious counsel of God for our salvation, of which no man and no angel would have thought, that the Son of God was to suffer in the stead of men, and reconcile them to God. 4. They wonder at the undeserved goodness extended by God to men, albeit they were his enemies, Rom. v. 10, for which men did not ask, although they greatly needed it.

5. They thank God with all the greater fervor, for having proclaimed to them the counsel of God for our salvation; they gladly submit themselves to the order of salvation, accept Jesus in the faith, and follow him in godly and pious walk and conversation. On this account, they spend the days of Christmas in prayer, rejoicing, praise and thanksgiving. This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad. Help us, O Lord, let us be richly successful; praised be he who cometh in the name of the Lord. Arise my soul, devote this festival to the honor of God, and thine own edification. O that every drop of my blood had a tongue, that I might praise the love, grace and mercy of the triune God. God is love; this my heart knoweth, and remembers on this holy festival day. Thy love has found a means of bringing men to grace, of which no angel or man could ever have thought. O thou gentle and loving Jesus! to thee be praise and thanks eternally for thy humanity and birth; thou makest thyself a child of woman, that we may become children of God. Now is humanity truly elevated; thou hast united it with thy godhead. O love! O grace! so surely as human nature is associated with the divine, so surely is there eternal friendship between God and man, eternal atonement, eternal peace, and eternal love. When God regards us in his Son, he cannot but be gracious unto us; if he did not spare the beloved one, but gave him for us all, why should he not, with him, give us everything—forgiveness of sins, righteousness, peace, life, and happiness? O the boundless love of Jesus! he was born as a

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

little child, to sanctify our sinful birth, increased in age and wisdom, to sanctify our youth. Welcome, noble guest, thou who didst not despise sinners, thou who comest down into my wretchedness! How shall I thank thee? O dearest friend of my soul, my brother! In thee I have a

Saviour in suffering, a deliverer in tribulation, a beatifier when my sins distress me, a help in trouble, a comfort in death. Thou art the light which overshines me, the way to the Father, the truth I learn, the life that recalls me from death.

Thou art my righteousness, which justifies and saves me, my high priest who prays for me and blesses me, the sacrificial lamb offered up for my transgressions, the ransom for my trespasses.

From the bottom of my heart I rejoice on this holy festival day. Jesus is mine, his merit is mine, his heaven is mine, the child was born for me, the Son was given for me also; for me also, has he purchased and dispensed the grace of

God, the childhood and eternal inheritance, which is laid up for us in heaven. O Jesus!

thou whom in spirit I behold and contemplate in the manger, how lovely art thou, how kind art thou! O give me grace that I may nevermore forget thee, but may always wear thee in my heart, on my lips, and before my eyes. O Salvation! sanctify me, I commit myself to thee with all I am and have; Bridegroom, embrace me, I will live for thee. I will serve thee; for love of thee I renounce the world and all the pleasures of this life. O let my heart be thy dwelling-place in time and in eternity. Enclose me in thy love, and keep me there, so that in thee I may have rest, peace, comfort, security, and the salvation of my soul. I am not lost, for Jesus was born a man. God is my friend, because through faith I am in Jesus, and Jesus lives in me. I do not fear death, for in it I have life, not the accusation of my conscience for my sin, for here is Jesus, my advocate. Therefore, O Bridegroom of my heart, my hope, my joy and life, my Branch of the stem of Judah, what shall I give thee? O take my body, soul and spirit, all that is man in me; I will transfer myself all to thee, I will be true to thee forever. Amen. 1. O joy beyond compare! Welcome, adored stranger,

Jesus, the Son of God, thus lowly in a manger,

For this beloved child my very heart doth yearn,

And from his humble bed my thoughts refuse to turn.

2. O love, transcendent love! beyond all comprehension,

That God his only Son should give for our redemption.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS.

O what a father's love! that places us so high,

And to us gives himself, that we may never die.

3. O faith! that he should come down to our depths from heaven,

Assume our flesh and blood, all but the sinful leaven,

To bring us to the crown, the robe, the inheritance,

The glory, and the sight of God's own countenance.

4. O bounteousness of grace! to all so freely offered

That will accept in faith the boon so kindly proffered;

O grace that gives us life, and consolation true;

Richly dispensed to all that will of Jesus sue.

5. O joy! our heinous sins are freely all forgiven,

Forgiven here below, and in the book of heaven;

The sacrificial lamb now at the altar stands,

Our ransom and our hope is placed in holy hands.

At the Close of the Year the Devout Christian Prays and returns Thanks to God.

EXHORTATION.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."—Psalm ciii. 1, 2.

If devout hearts and thankful souls rejoice heartily in God, when he permits them to pass a

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS week or a month in safety, why should they not double them on having passed a whole year by his assistance? How many evils can befall us in a single day! How many more in a whole year! When a devout Christian perceives the close of the year, he lifts up his hands, his heart and his lips to heaven, and ends it with praise, thanks and prayer. Nor is he satisfied with merely ejaculating the ordinary words, "Thank God, the year is over!" He goes more thoroughly to work. 1. He thanks God for having suffered his holy word to be preached to him throughout the year for the salvation of his soul, showing him the way to heaven; as well as for having given him renewed strength in godliness and execution of the fruits of faith by the holy sacrament. 2. He asks himself, whether he has become more pious during the year, how old he is now in the inward man, and according to his regeneration, being a year older according to the old sinful birth. 3. He fervently asks God's forgiveness for his past sins, which he has committed wittingly or unwittingly.

4. He then praises God for the many temporal benefits received, for the nurture, providence, protection, deliverance, preservation, blessings, and guidance extended to him.

AND RETURNS THANKS TO GOD.

5. If God has sent him a disease, suffering, or tribulation, and again released him from it, he must especially thank him for it, and call to mind at the end of the year, as much as possible what happened to him and his during every week, so that the last days of the year may be days of praise, prayer, thanksgiving, and repentance. 6. He beseeches God further to vouchsafe his grace during the coming year.

How shall I repay the Lord for all the goodness and truth manifested towards me? The Lord hath done great things in me, whereof I am glad. Under his protection and assistance, I have once more passed a year in safety. O God, how precious is thy goodness, that the children of man repose under the shadow of thy wings! They become intoxicated with the rich goods of thy house; thou dost give them to drink of pleasure as of a stream, for with thee is the living fountain, and in thy light we behold the light. My God! the days of the year are many, but thy benefits are many more; the hours and minutes of the year may be counted, but the benefits thou hast done me are innumerable. I thank thee that during this year thou hast suffered thy holy word to be preached to me in its purity, showing 36*

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS me the way to heaven and to my eternal salvation. O seal upon my heart all I have heard, and give me thy Holy Spirit to arrange my life in accordance with it. I thank thee for having given me to eat of thy holy body and to drink of thy holy blood, in holy communion; O let it profit me in the strengthening of my faith and the sanctification of my life. I thank thee for having forgiven my sins and averted the merited punishment; O give me power to guard against them in the coming year, and not commit them again. I thank thee for having blessed my occupation, given me food and raiment, health and strength, averted misfortune, alleviated my troubles, and looked mercifully upon me in my wretchedness. Thou hast kept me as the apple of thy eye, thou hast screened me from the foes that plot against my soul. In trouble thou hast heard me, and suffered my prayer to penetrate unto thy throne. Thou hast poured out thy blessing over me, and hast not concealed thy face when I cried to thee. Thou, loving Father, hast led me by the hand as thy child; thou, mighty King, hast protected me against mine enemies, as thy subject; thou faithful Shepherd, hast pastured me, thy sheep, on a green meadow; thy goodness and truth have conducted me from the beginning of the year to the end. Thy wisdom has guided me, thy love has covered me, AND RETURNS THANKS TO GOD.

thy help has rejoiced me, thy grace has preserved me, thy omnipotence has succored me at all times, thy Father's hand has given me all things, thy all-seeing eye has watched over me and protected my going out and my coming in, so that no evil overtook me. Therefore O see and taste how kind is the Lord, and how much good he has done unto my soul. If at times I had great trouble in my heart, thy comforts have gladdened my soul. If danger and trouble were often near, thy help was nearer, and thy angel kept me in all my ways, and delivered me from the lion's maw. O my God! be graciously pleased to pardon all the sins I have committed during the past year. Do not punish me for them in the year to come, but forgive them for the sake of Jesus. Lord, do not think of the sins and transgressions of my youth, but think of me according to thy mercy, for the sake of thy great goodness. Lord! Lord! thus I close the year with thanks, prayer, and praise, and humbly pray thee to continue thy grace and protection through the coming year, to hold thy hand over me, and take me to thy love and mercy. Praise and glory be to the chief good, the Father of all goodness, the God of every miracle, the God who fills my mind with the riches of his comfort, the God who soothes all lamentation. Praise and glory be to the Lord! Amen. 1. How much am I rejoiced when memory has recorded

The blessings of my God to me this year awarded;

How his paternal care and kindness on me rained,

And how in health and strength this hour I have attained.

2. How can I rightly praise such grace and condescension!

O could my happy heart display its bursting tension!

O that each drop of blood were gifted with a tongue,
And each pulsation of his endless glory sung!

3. Great benefits untold this year thou hast extended,
The river of thy grace upon my path expended;
Of needful food and drink I never once was scant:
Yet who can count thy stars, thy mercies who descant?

4. How greatly am I grieved when memory reminds me,
And when in penitence thy warning summons finds me,
Of the ungratefulness I have so oft displayed,
And that I have not lived as Jesus wished and said.

5. For O the load of sin lies heavy on my spirit,
The sinfulness of lust receives its evil merit;
O take away my pain, destroy it utterly,
And in the coming year therefrom unburden me.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS.

60. The devout Christian prays at the Beginning of the Year

EXHORTATION.

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish thou it."—Psalm xc. 17. Though froward minds, at the beginning of the year, often desire to know, whether the year will be a fortunate one to them, yet it is not in the power of a human being to answer such a question; for the Lord alone sees into the future. 1. Children of God should enter upon a new year with thanksgiving; they should praise the goodness of the Highest, who has carried them in safety through so many tempests of suffering, and so many floods of tribulation. And if a ship is fortunate that baffles the winds and waves, surely we ought to thank God upon our knees whenever he has safely conveyed us through the dangers of a year. 2. After having given thanks, devout souls should turn to prayer, that the goodness of the Highest may further protect, govern and keep them. They commend unto God their bodies and their souls, and all they have, to receive the protection of his grace. 3. They also take great pains in the new year

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS AT to become more devout and pious. With God they resolve that this year shall be counted in their regeneration. When old people boast of their years, and yet are earthly-minded and addicted to the world, it is assuredly not to their honor; for piety, the fruit of faith and indwelling grace, is decorous to young and old. 4. Devout hearts also resolve, with God, to listen diligently to God's word throughout the year, to carry it in their hearts, and to adapt their lives to its teachings. Lord! Lord! merciful, patient, and of great truth, who art from everlasting to everlasting, and with whom there is no change nor alternation of light and darkness; behold, under thy protection I once more enter upon a new year. Lord! how great is thy goodness, that the children of men repose under the shadow of thy wings; thou dost intoxicate them with the profusions of thy house; the fountains of God have waters in plenty. All this, my God and Father, I have experienced in the year that is past; therefore I will begin the new year also in thy name with prayer, sighs and supplications. Lord, early wilt thou hear my voice, early wilt thou heed it. O Lord, I know not what this year may bring forth; the year is long, the THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

days are many, human misery is manifold, and the accidents liable to befall us innumerable.—

Therefore I come to thee, strong and loving God, commending myself, even from the first, to thy grace and truth. All things are renovated, the land gives prospect of fresh verdure, the sun rises higher in the heavens, all things manifest new vitality; so let thy goodness and mercy be renewed over me also. I commend my soul to thy fatherly protection, guard it, and let me not stain it with wanton sins. Lord Jesus, sanctify, wash, and purify me with thy precious blood;

God, the Holy Ghost, dwell in me and let me be thy temple. O what a blessed year will this year be, O heavenly Father, if I remain in thy grace and live as thy child. How happy shall I be, if I stand in thy communion, O Jesus! how beautifully shall I be arrayed, if thou, O Holy

Ghost, wilt dwell in me and rule me. But if it should please thy holy wisdom to impose sickness or suffering upon me, do not depart from me, and if I suffer pain, assuage it, and let the hour of thy refreshment arrive, when thou wilt relieve me of it all. Lord, my God, hold thy hand over mine and all that is mine; be a fiery

wall around us as around Elijah; guard us round about, as the house of Job. Give me the power of thy Holy Ghost, so that during this year I may become pious and a true child of God, devout in

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN PRAYS AT prayer, and a diligent hearer and doer of the word. Grant that it may be said of my soul in the year to come, that all old things have passed away and that everything has become new; that I may perceive within myself a new desire for thee, new love to my neighbour, a new impulse to unite and abide in union with thee. Sanctify me wholly, that my spirit, soul and body may be preserved immaculate to the day of Jesus Christ. Give me new zeal in the faith. Bless my occupation and labor, bless my going out and my coming in, give me what thy hand hath prepared for me. Let me also reflect, at the beginning of this year, that the last year of my life must come, so that I may be constantly prepared, may stand in penitence and faith, may keep my lamp burning, and my loins girt, to receive thee joyfully, my Bridegroom and gracious God, and to enter into the kingdom prepared for me from the foundation of the world. Give me, according to thy will, a new mind and spirit, teaching me to fulfil implicitly what thy commandment prescribes, so that my spirit, soul and body may be and remain the dwelling of thy Spirit. Jesus, let me gladly end the year that is now begun, carry me in thy hands, and stand by me in the time of danger. Help me in distress, and in death do not forsake me; I will clasp thee joyfully, when I leave this nether world. Amen. THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

1. Thank God, another year has come,

Another year of mercies;

O help my lisping, stammering tongue,

When it thy grace rehearses;

To thee I give myself, O give

Thyself to me, with thee to live,

And evermore defend me.

2. Thy Holy Spirit let me have

To comfort and to warn me;

In faith and in the fear of thee

To clothe and to adorn me;

To fill my heart unceasingly

With hope, and love, and piety,

And be my guide and leader.

3. Of the assurances of faith

Give me renewed impression,

And by the hard, victorious strife

Subdue each fleshly passion;
That henceforth I may stand in grace
At every time, in every place;
Still govern and direct me.

4. Almighty God, forsake me not,
When I appear before thee;
Turn not thy loving eyes away,
I beg and I implore thee.

O hear, O hear, my humble prayer,
Thy kind assistance let me share,
Give me to taste thy mercy.

AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT THE DEVOUT

5. E'en more than this I ask of thee:
The blessing, gracious Saviour,
Thy love and goodness must impart
Unto my whole behaviour;
Thy blessing, Father! give it me,
My eye regards no one but thee!
O ever be my Father!

61. At the Beginning of Holy Lent the devout Christian meditates the Sufferings of Christ

EXHORTATION.

"God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. v. 21.

Among the early Christians the holy time of Lent was a time of devotion and prayer, spent in contemplating the sufferings of Jesus, as is the custom of all the true children of God to this day. Although Satan has brought the children of the world to such a pass, that they begin the holy time of Lent, not with prayer and devotion, but with drinking, masquerades, gluttony, luxury, and ungodliness, testifying that they care nothing for the crucified Jesus, yet the true children of God think otherwise, and have a dread of such abominations. CHRISTIAN MEDITATES CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

1. They not only commence the season with prayer and singing, but unshackle their minds as much as possible of all earthly things, so that all their joy may be in the blood of Jesus.
2. They think over all the sufferings of Jesus, his agony in the garden of Gethsemane, his appearance before the judgment seat, at Golgatha, on the cross, and in the grave, calling to mind at every scene that this was suffered for their salvation.
3. They do not allow their devotion to disappear with the season of Lent, but as they mean to be comforted all their lives by the blood of Jesus, so they remember, all their lives, the crucified Jesus, who rose again.
4. This remembrance impels them to crucify the desires of the flesh, no longer to live according to the course of this world, nor wantonly to sin, but to die to sin, and be born again in the spirit.

Jesus, my Jesus! how great is thy love, extended to me in thy bitter sufferings. Thou art the only begotten Son of God, thou art the immaculate Lamb, the Lord of Glories, the Most Holy, who has never committed a sin; and behold, thou dost commit thyself to the most disgraceful death and unto the most cruel sufferings AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT THE DEVOUT for me, an unjust one, a sinner, and a slave of death. How great is thy unspeakable mercy! The holy one takes away my unholiness, the pious one takes away my wickedness, the just one my injustice, the innocent one my guilt. My sins are laid upon thee, so that thy righteousness may fall upon me. My Jesus! in thy sufferings I can see the wrath of God against sin, the abomination of sin, the punishment of sin. For it was in chastisement of the trespasses of others, and shifted sins, that God tortured thee, innocent Lamb, on the Mount of Olives, and suffered thee to be so wretchedly maltreated by the hands of thy foes. How severely then will those be punished hereafter, who do not allow themselves to be moved, by such sufferings, to faith, to repentance, and to sanctification. Jesus! I approach thee, and believingly regard thy sufferings. Thou goest to the garden of Gethsemane, and bloody sweat drops from thee to the ground; alas! for me, that I may be delivered from the power of the devil. Thou art brought to judgment, accused, and condemned to death, alas! for me, that I may be acquitted after death, and on the last day, before the judgment seat. Thou art scourged, and thy body seamed with blood, deep furrows are drawn upon thy back; alas! for me, that I may not be punished for my sins. Thou art led to death, alas! for me, that my CHRISTIAN MEDITATES CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

death may be wholesome to me and a passage to heaven, aye, a journey to the Father. Thou art crucified; alas, for me: thou, the Lamb of God, hast taken away all my sins. Thou diest upon the cross; alas! for me, that by thy death I may have life. Thou art buried; alas! for me, to sanctify my grave. Is not this love, is not this mercy, that by thy bitter suffering I am to attain life, grace, and the forgiveness of all my sins? The punishment of all my sins is upon thee, so that I may have peace, and be delivered from them. These sufferings I will have before my eyes wherever I am. Thy death and sufferings, until soul and body sever, shall dwell within my heart. If Israel was free from all guilt and punishment, upon believingly sacrificing a lamb to God, and seeing its hot blood flow: I know that because thou, O Jesus, thou innocent and immaculate Lamb of God, wert slaughtered for me, and thy hot blood was richly poured out for me, that, if I receive it in faith, I am reconciled with God through grace. Thy blood is the true sacrificial blood, the blood of atonement, the blood of purification, the blood with which to sprinkle our sills and door-posts. O Jesus! I will think of thy sufferings and of thy blood when my heart is tempted to sin, I will have before my eyes thy holy image on the Mount of Olives, when thou wert scourged, and at the 37* cross, whenever the world with its evil example, would make me like itself. Into thy wounds will

I flee when my sins oppress me, thy blood I will claim as my ransom, when conscience besets me, aye, in my dying hour I will know nothing but

Jesus; thy holy name shall be my latest word, thy bleeding form my latest thought, thy last word upon the cross my expiring sigh, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" In that last hour, O Jesus, be my comfort, my joy, my refreshment, my assistance, and appear to me in thine image, a consolation in my need, how thou,

Lord Christ, didst bleed to death. I will look towards thee, and in faith clasp thee to my heart. Who dies thus, dies well. Amen.

1. My best of friends departs; my Jesus, my salvation,

Already bows his head, and leaves his high vocation;

His face is deadly pale; from the accursed tree.

He sinks into the grave; my bridegroom parts from me.

2. My best of friends departs that I may never perish,

But in eternal bliss his loved remembrance cherish;

For me, for me he dies, to clear my guilt and shame,

To bring me to the grace of God, and end all blame.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN MEDITATES, ETC.

3. My best of friends departs, yet is my life unsmitten,

Deep in my soul the name of Jesus still is written;

I love him while I live, I love him when I die,

I love him on the cross, and when he sits on high.

4. I follow when my friend in his dear grave they bury,

See with believing eyes how they the ritual hurry.

My friend, here is my heart! O sink into it deep,

Let it thy dwelling be, the bed where thou dost sleep.

5. I sacrifice my heart to thee alone forever,

Thy precious death from mine no difference shall sever.

O while I live, live thou, friend of my soul, in me,

And when I come to die, let me but die in thee.

On Good Friday the Devout Christian meditates the Death of Jesus.

EXHORTATION.

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."—Isaiah lvii. 1.

Although Good Friday, the dying day of our most precious Jesus, is spent in quietness even by the children of the world, for they have ex-

440 ON GOOD FRIDAY THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN ternal shame and fear of men, yet the true children of God have fixed upon it for their peculiar devotion.

1. They then reflect upon the sufferings of Jesus as sufferings assumed by him because of his love for men. O love beyond all bounds, that has brought thee upon these paths of suffering! Love impelled him to become a man; love moved him to give himself for us and die upon the cross. 2. They also remember that it was an undeserved suffering. For he was holy, pure, and without sin, neither has he committed sin, nor was any deception found in his mouth.

3. It was a suffering imposed by his heavenly Father, for as he suffered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Acts ii. 23, Jesus must have known all that was to befall him.

4. The suffering of Christ was a real suffering, he having well felt the wounds, and groaned under the pains. All this a believing soul contemplates, and makes it a mirror of the divine wrath against sin, and a mirror of the divine love for the salvation of mankind. Loving and merciful Jesus! I come to thee to contemplate thy bitter suffering with heartfelt

MEDITATES THE DEATH OF JESUS.

devotion. O let thy bitter suffering ever induce me with all diligence to avoid sinful lusts, so that I may never forget how much it has cost thee that I am saved. O Lamb so innocently slaughtered! thou hast suffered that all my sins, yea, the sins of all the world, might be laid upon thee, so that thou mightst stand before the judgment seat of God as the chief of sinners. But if our sins were cast upon thee, immaculate Lamb, so did our punishment fall upon thee like torrents; contempt, revilement, and calumination befel during the years of thy prophetic teaching; in the season of thy passion all these were doubled, then it was not

enough that thou wert falsely accused and condemned to death, dragged before two judgment seats, a temporal and a spiritual one, and by both condemned to death; but after the staff was broken over thee, and the final sentence spoken, thou wert compelled to suffer grievous bodily pain. Thy holy body was wounded, scourged, torn and made to bleed. Look, ye children of men, and see whether pain was ever like the pain of Jesus! His head was crowned with thorns, his body ran with blood, and wounded by the scourge, mounted with iron hooks. At the cross his hands and feet were nailed, his side pierced with a spear, so that he could justly say, "I am a worm and not a man." But not alone was his holy body thus wretchedly ON GOOD FRIDAY THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN abused, but his soul also was racked by the most bitter pangs. The flood of wrath and the agony of hell so seized him on the cross, that he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" At last death came to his relief. O, slaughtered lamb! This hast thou borne and suffered for my good, for my peace, for my redemption, for my salvation. For if Christ had not come into the world, and assumed our fallen nature, and died willingly for our sins, we should have been damned eternally. But now, if I believe in thee, and appropriate thy holy blood to myself in the confidence of faith, I am not damned, but saved by thee; if I follow thy holy walk, and bear true fruits of faith, I am not lost, but shall have eternal life through thee; O, my Jesus, let thy bitter sufferings ever dwell before my eyes, and in my heart, so that I may be comforted, saved and made just and pious by them. Let me never spend a day in which thy holy image is not before my eyes, to withdraw me from the world: sanctify, cleanse, and purify me. My Jesus! Even as thy sufferings sustain, comfort, and edify me, so do also thy seven words upon the cross. It was for me that thou didst pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Forgive my soul for having sinned against thee. For me didst thou exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" MEDITATES THE DEATH OF JESUS that I might never be forsaken in cross, trouble, or death, before the judgment seat, nor at the last day. For me didst thou say, "I thirst." Grant that I may thirst after thee in faith, pant after thee as the hart panteth after the water brooks, and rejoice in thy love. For me didst thou provide, in saying to John, "This is thy mother." Though I stand under the cross in tribulation, like Mary, deserted of all men, thou wilt be heartily concerned for me, and have mercy upon me. O, in dying, let me hear thy voice, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." For me didst thou declare, "It is finished." Now all is done that I should have done, now all is suffered that I should have suffered. Now I have acquired peace, joy, comfort, salvation, the crown of life, and the white robe of righteousness. Thy last word upon the cross shall be a word of comfort and of joy to me: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Thus will I pray, thus will I speak after thee, as thou hast spoken before me. When, at last, I come to enter into the joys of thy kingdom, thy blood shall be my purple dress, the crown upon my head, with which I will appear before the throne of the eternal father, and appear at thy right hand, as the blooming bride of him whom I have chosen. Amen. 1. Let us do honor to the death of Jesus,

Stand at the cross, and let his image please us:

Let us devote the day to prayer and singing,

Praise and thanksgiving.

2. He dies for us, he suffers what we merit,

He dies that we salvation may inherit,

And see, when we forsake this earthly sadness,

The life of gladness.

3. He dies, the thorns upon his temples wearing,
Set on his head to mock his lowly bearing,
And all that we might wear a crown of brightness,
And robe of whiteness.

4. He dies, behold, his blood still flows in rivers,
Wherewith our souls from torment he delivers,
Wherewith he will refresh us well hereafter
In death and after.

5. O, Jesus, hadst thou fled this condemnation,
My soul and body had not known salvation!
But now I need not dread the future's curtain;
My health is certain.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN REJOICES, ETC.

62. The Devout Christian rejoices in the Resurrection of Christ

EXHORTATION.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18.

The holy season of Easter is a time of joy to all the children of God, who heartily rejoice in the resurrection of their Lord. 1. They rejoice in the perfection of their salvation; God is reconciled; he has accepted the death of his son in the place of our death, and has given us life for his sake. 2. The faithful rejoice in the glorious evidences of the resurrection of Jesus. Is it not a glorious sign that he was seen ten times after he rose from the grave, that he appeared to five hundred of the brethren at a time, 1 Cor. xv. 16; that he even spoke and ate with his disciples, Acts, x. 41; and permitted them to touch him, John. xx. 25, 1 John, i. 1? Testimony which must dispel all doubt at once. 3. They rejoice that the forgiveness of sins is sealed, and ensured to them, as well as peace with God. That in the faith of Christ they may fearlessly come nigh to God, knowing that he will also come nigh to them. THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN REJOICES IN

4. They are assured that the resurrection of Christ will refresh them, even in the agonies of death. In dying, Jesus has sweetened their deaths, and sanctified their graves; they, too, shall arise to eternal life. 5. Therefore they spend the days of Easter, like other festivals, in devotion, prayer, singing, and contemplation of the benefits of God. 6. They endeavor to rise every day in spirit from their grave of sin, from their evil habits, faults, and sins, and to spend the rest of their lives to the honor of the Lord in faith and sanctification. There are joyful songs of victory in the tabernacles of the blessed; the right hand of the Lord is lifted up; the right hand of the Lord has overcome. Resurgent Jesus, mighty prince of victory, vanquisher of death! Thy resurrection fills my heart with joy, I celebrate this festival by thy gracious permission, and exclaim on bended knees, and with folded hands, "God be praised, who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus has risen from the dead, such is our glorious gospel; the hostage is released from the prison of the tomb, wherefore sin must be wiped away, God reconciled, and the debt discharged. Who will condemn us? THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

Christ is here who died for us, yea, who rose again, who sitteth at the right hand of God, and pleads for us. Jesus has taken away the power of death, and brought to light life and indestructible essence. Jesus, dearest friend! Thy resurrection affords me threefold consolation. It is my victory; sin can no longer condemn me now. Death cannot harm me, because Christ has overcome death, and made my death a gentle sleep, yea, a passing to the father. Satan is a defeated foe; though he roar, yet he cannot devour. Hell disturbs me not, for Christ has rescued me from hell; whoso believes in him shall not be lost, but have eternal life. A glorious day, a day of rejoicing! My delivery is assured, and my salvation confirmed. Jesus lives, and I also shall live here united with him in faith, and there in glory everlasting. The resurrection of Jesus is my own resurrection. If the head has risen again, the members cannot remain in the tomb. Not only shall I rise again on the day of judgment, like all mankind, but I shall rise as a child of God, as a co-heir of Jesus Christ, by the power of his merit and atonement. Therefore I do not fear the grave, but regard it as a chamber of rest, as the mother's womb, where my Saviour will let me sleep until he shall say, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." O, the glory which my Saviour has THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN REJOICES IN acquired! Uprisen Jesus, how can I sufficiently praise and extol thy grace and

mercy? Now all is made good that was ruined by Adam's fall. O, my Saviour, thy resurrection shall be a strong comfort in my sufferings, Thou wert locked in the grave, but didst gloriously issue forth; so will the night of my sufferings pass away, and the sun of thy joy, grace, help, and comfort shine again. Three days wert thou buried; so the period of my tribulation is fixed and determined, the weary years of life shall yield to the joyful year of release. Thou didst arise with a transfigured body; thy wounds and the marks of the nails upon thy hands and feet were no longer bleeding, but resplendent as the sun. Thus shall my body be transfigured and glorified, when thou shalt wake me from the dust. I shall receive my pristine body, and be shrouded in my skin; the body and the members which have served thee, and been hallowed unto thee shall also partake of the splendor of heaven. Because thou livest, O, Jesus, I have in thee a true and constant friend to provide for me in life. Keep me in distress, comfort me in sadness, refresh me in death, preserve me in the grave, and thereafter bring me to glory, and place the crown upon my head. If Christ lives, why do I grieve? I know that he loves me tenderly, though I die to all the world. He nourishes, pro

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

tects, and comforts me; when I die, he will take me to himself; where now he is, there I shall be, because I am a member of his body. Amer 1. Jesus lives, the jaws of death

Burst, unable to contain him;

From the grave he rose again,

For its fastenings could not chain him.

Like a mighty hero, he

Set himself from durance free.

2. Jesus lives, he is not dead,

Howsoe'er the fiend may bluster;

He is free from doubt or dread,

He has foiled the foeman's muster.

Toil and danger now are done,

For the eager strife is won.

3. All my sin and deadly guilt,

Now is quenched in his endurance.

Of the Lord's eternal grace,

Now I have the full assurance.

Every fault and every vice

In his grave forgotten lies.

4. All my dread of death is gone,

Of the grave I am not fearful;
I shall rise again in time,
And I rest content and cheerful.
Thickly cover me with earth,
'Tis a sweet and easy berth.

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1. Jesus lives! The word shall give
Courage to my soul in dying,
Sweeten every grief and pain,
On this word I die relying.
After death I shall arise,
And rejoin him in the skies.

The devout Christian contemplates the Ascension of Jesus Christ.

EXHORTATION.

"I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."—John xx. 17.

The contemplation of the ascension of our Saviour cannot but be consoling and grateful to a believing heart.

1. It reminds us of the certainty of our redemption. In returning to the heaven whence he came, the prince of victory finished the work on which he was sent, to obtain for mankind the forgiveness of sins, justification, and salvation. 2. It reminds the believer that he has no abiding place on earth, but must seek that which is to come. If men have no abiding place upon the earth, they send their hearts where they wish to be eternally. THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

3. Whenever they see their houses, their habiliments, their goods, or their friends, they remember that all these they must leave behind. 4. Being desirous of finding a place prepared for them in glory, when the hour of their release from the trouble of the world arrives, they diligently strive after a spiritual ascension; they wean their thoughts from earth, and fix them upon the things of heaven; they withdraw their love for the world, and cling to Jesus in faith. They forsake the world with their lives, living not after the custom of the world, but after the will of God. 5. Therefore, in looking up to heaven, they say to themselves, "There is my country, and my eternal home."

God mounts upward with rejoicing; and the Lord ascends with the sound of trumpets. Praise God, extol our King. Thus I sing, great Jesus, of thy ascension. After accomplishing the redemption of mankind, thou didst return to thy glory. All our foes, the devil, the world, sin, and death, are under thy feet; thou hast delivered us from them all. After thou didst wash away our sins by thyself, thou didst seat thyself in

heaven, at the right hand of the majesty of God. All this, my Jesus, is a consolation unto me, and I rejoice thereat from the bottom of my soul. Thou sittest at the right hand of God, and pleadest for us; therefore, when I pray, I pray not alone, thy spirit prays in me, and thou prayest for me; therefore, my poor feeble prayer will be graciously heard for thy sake. I rejoice in thinking of thy Word, "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also." This refreshes my spirit, for I know that thou hast prepared a place for me, so that when I die, I shall find a place wherein I may dwell forever. Thou art crowned with honor and glory, and thou hast laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which thou, as a just judge, wilt give those who love thy coming. Thou hast come into thy kingdom to rule over heaven and earth, in nature, in grace, and in glory; in time, thou wilt say to me and to all the faithful, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Thou didst receive gifts for men according to thy human nature, to distribute among thy brethren and the faithful. O Jesus, give me a double gift, for I need double power and comfort. Give me thy holy spirit, piety, chastity, meekness, humility, righteousness, the childhood of God, life, peace, and eternal happiness. Because thou, the head, art lifted up, thou THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

wilt draw me, thy member, after thee. Because thy spirit impels me, I shall be with thee forever. O what joy, what comfort, what glory in the thought! My Saviour has promised his faithful followers, that where he is, there shall they be also. Let me be where thou art, draw me to thee, bring me to the host of the angels and the elect, let me see the glory prepared for thy faithful. Although thou hast withdrawn thy visible presence from me, still thou art with me invisibly, for thou hast promised to be with me always, even unto the end of the world.

Therefore, I am of good cheer, whatever betide.

I know that thou art with me in trouble, thou dost deliver me from danger, thou dost refresh me in sorrow, thou dost comfort me in sadness, and protect me in all adversity. Though I see thee not, I love thee, and know that once I shall see thee, and be filled with unspeakable joy at thy sight. I shall see thee when my soul makes its ascension after death; and I shall see thee with my bodily eyes on the last day, when I shall rise from the dead. For this purpose I will daily strive after a spiritual ascension, and contemplate my future dwelling and anticipated crown with the eyes of faith; I will withdraw my heart and my life from the world, flee the world with its vanities, ways, and sins, which obstruct this ascension. Thus, while I live, I

THE SPIRITUAL ASCENSION live to the Lord, and when I die, I die to the

Lord;

For then I go to Jesus Christ,

Stretch out my arms in wonder;

I go to rest and sink to sleep,

None shall disturb me yonder;

For Jesus Christ, thrice glorified,

The gates of heaven will open wide,

And lead me in to glory. Amen.

The Spiritual Ascension.

1. Jesus upward soars to heaven,
And forsakes this vale of tears,
And I strive to follow Jesus
Through these long and dreary years
Though the body still must tarry,
Till the trump my grave does harry,
Yet the heart will not have nay,
But be with him day for day.

2. Though upon the earth I linger,
Yet from earth I do depart;
No enjoyment and no comfort
Is so weighty to my heart,
As to wait upon the presence
Of my Lord in heavenly pleasance,
And in spirit to repair
To the home he does prepare.

THE SPIRITUAL ASCENSION.

3. With my love I make ascension;
Earth, I care for thee no more;
Jesus is my occupation,
And his love my only lore.
Vanities of earth, and pleasures,
Pride of life, and hoarded treasures,
All are nothing now to me,
Jesus all alone I see.

4. Dost thou ask where my reflections

Rest? In heaven is their discourse.
Worldly things no more attract them,
They are drawn with higher force.
They regard the crown of glory
On the bright depository,
And the robe of driven snow
Ready for me ere I go.

5. Therefore, O my soul, be joyful,
Lift above thy drooping wings;
This obstruction is a cavern,
Which but little gladness brings.
Wing thy flight, with steady pinion,
To the starry bright dominion,
Where the crown of glory waits
For thee at the golden gates.

63. At Whitsuntide the devout Christian contemplates the pouring out of the Holy Ghost

EXHORTATION.

"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"—Luke xiii. 13. The merciful love of God has not only provided good things for us from the beginning of the world, and Jesus purchased us with his holy blood, but the Holy Ghost, the most holy, necessary and precious gift, is ready to guide, sanctify, and govern us in this vale of tears. 1. The Holy Ghost is the most glorious of all gifts! What more and greater could God do for us, than to communicate unto us his Spirit as our guide and instructor? 2. The Holy Ghost is also the most necessary of gifts. We can live happy in the world without riches, without great honor or possessions, but without the Holy Ghost we can never be truly happy, here or in eternity. 3. He is also the chief of gifts. He is the pledge of our inheritance, the badge of our childhood, assuring us that we are children of God, and heirs of eternal life. 4. This glorious, needful, and happy gift God

THE POURING OUT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

offers to all who seek it. This promise is not made of bodily and earthly things, because they are not always advantageous to us; but the gift of the Holy Spirit God will deny to no one. 5. The devout Christian must purify his heart of the love of the world and of sin, so that the good and true spirit may take up his abode within him. I will pour water upon the thirsty, and streams upon those who are dry; I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, so that they grow as grass, and as the willows by the water's side. This gracious promise, dearest Jesus, thou hast fulfilled at holy Whitsuntide, when thou didst pour out thy holy spirit upon thy apostles, fitting them to proclaim unto all people the forgiveness of sins in thy blood and salvation. O most precious holy Ghost! pour thyself out upon me richly. Thou wert revealed in flames of fire to thy apostles; light me to eternal life, illuminate my understanding to know Jesus Christ, sanctify my will to wish and desire nothing but what is well pleasing in thy sight. By thee, O spirit of power, the apostles were endowed with power from on high; strengthen my faith, give me courage and strength to walk in thy ways, to overcome the world, to withstand sin, and to live as a true child of God. Thou spirit of grace and of prayer! Seal in my heart the comfort and the joy that I stand in the grace of God. Pray in me and with me, and teach me to pray with fervor. Rest upon me, thou spirit of wisdom! let me know and do what is pleasing unto God. Rest upon me, spirit of the understanding! let me walk in the truth; keep my heart in the one thing needful, to fear thy name. Rest upon me, spirit of the fruit of the Lord! implant thy holy fruit in my heart, let me never sin wittingly or willingly.

Rest upon me, spirit of love! pluck out of my heart all wrath, obstinacy, envy, malice, and revenge. Be my comforter in crosses and troubles, when the waters beat over my head, and the waves meet above me. Be my strength when I am weak, help me to subdue the lusts of the flesh: let me grow in faith, truth, humility, hope and patience. Be my guide, lead me in an even path; let me not act against the commandment of God. Be my teacher, guide me into all truth, and magnify Jesus in me. O thou purest of waters! Cleanse me; grant that I may grow in all good things, and bear much fruit.

Help me by thy power to call Jesus my Lord, of a truth, my redeemer, my beatifier, the cause of my salvation. Behold, thou light of my soul!

with how many temptations I am surrounded;

THE POURING OUT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

for many tempters are abroad; therefore let me not swerve from thee; show me the way in which I shall walk, for I long after thee. When

I undertake to lead myself, I go astray. But when thou leadest me, I walk in the way of thy commandments. If I have offended thee heretofore, most precious Holy Ghost, I heartily repent it. Behold, my heart is open unto thee.

O enter into it with the rich gifts of thy good ness, fill it with every Christian virtue, fortify me, ground, and preserve the good works thou hast commenced within me. Get me a pure heart, expunge all impurities, evil passions, and dominion of sin. Remain with me in trouble and in death; cry out within me, "Abba, dear

Father!" give me a glimpse of glory, and a foretaste of eternal happiness, of the crown prepared for me after the victory. Holy Ghost, thou vigor of the pious, enter into my poor feeble heart, let me be thy temple, purify the tabernacle of my heart, cast out all that can shut me out from heaven. Adorn me with thy gifts, make me new, pure and lovely, let me have true love, and stand in thy favor. Give me courage to overcome flesh and blood, teach me to appear before God, and to pray in spirit and in truth.

Amen.

1. O precious Whitsuntide, when Jesus' love dispenses, With lavish hand, the gifts so grateful to my senses; And also, Jesus, give thy spirit pure and just,

To lift my flagging soul to heaven from the dust.

2. I wander far astray whenever the firm guidance

Of thy good spirit fails; a dreary prospect widens

Before my aching sight, and I am all forlorn.

O cast thy light upon my path, thou endless morn!

3. I grope in darkness thick, bereft of the instruction Of him the Holy Ghost; my heart, in cold obstruction, Feels not the warmth of grace, but through his beaming ray, Yet all is clear and bright when he points out the way. 4. Myself in my distress can find no consolation,

I need assistance most, when most in tribulation;

Therefore stand by me with thy consolation strong,

Make me assured that I to Jesus' flock belong.

5. And when my pilgrim staff on my last bed is broken, Thou of a happier road, wilt give me then a token;

Through Jesus' blood I then shall up to heaven fare, And rest transfigured in the arms of Jesus there.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

64. The devout Christian considers the mystery of the Holy Trinity

EXHORTATION.

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."—1 John v. 7.

If a believer desires to enter a sanctified contemplation of the Holy Trinity, he must do like one who desires to derive light and heat from the sun, and make use of them. If he looks straight into the sun he blinds himself, sees darkness, sees nothing, but if he keeps his eyes cast down, and thus avails himself of the light and brilliancy of the sun, he sees much—indeed, all he should see. 1. The mystery of the Holy Trinity is a mystery incomprehensible to reason. For this reason many have taken offence at this article of faith, and argue like the Jews even to this day. 2. Nevertheless it is a mystery clearly described in Holy Writ; the most beautiful texts of the Old and New Testaments speak of it. The works and attributes of the triune God are also plainly pointed out. The devout Christian believes this word of life, until believing shall be changed to seeing in the life eternal. 39*

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN CONSIDERS

3. Meantime he prays to the thrice holy God in humility of heart. He praises his Creator for all the benefits lavished upon him in soul and body. He thanks his Redeemer for having released him from death, from sin, from the devil, and from the power of hell. Unto his Sanctifier he dedicates his heart, and all his life, endeavors to obey the triune God, and is assured that he shall come to see in glory what here he believes. For happy are they who do not see, and yet believe. Holy, Holy, Holy is God the Lord of Hosts, all the earth is full of his glory. Thus, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I join in the hymn of the seraphim and Cherubim, to exalt thy honor and thy majesty. O thou inscrutable and incomprehensible being! my faith clings solely and alone to the Holy Word, in which thou hast revealed thyself to us. This is the eternal life, to know thee, the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I pray to thee, I honor and praise thee, O father of all grace and mercy, thou who hast acquitted thyself as a loving father to me, Not only didst thou beget thy only son, Jesus Christ, from all eternity, but thou art the true father of all who are called children in heaven and on earth. As a gracious and loving father thou THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

hast hitherto nourished, provided for, guarded, and kept me, and dost nourish, provide for, and keep me to this very hour. Merciful father!

look upon me in fatherly kindness as thy child.

Lord Jesus, the Son of God! I have learned to know thee in thy holy word as the other person of the holy trinity, begotten of the heavenly father from all eternity, God of God, Light of

Light, generated in an incomprehensible manner;

I have learned to know thee as my brother and kinsman, who assumed human nature to redeem me and all men from sin, death, the devil, and hell. Therefore I rejoice in thee, and adore thee; thou art my

righteousness, my redeemer, advocate, high priest, mediator, Immanuel, beatifier, and shepherd, in thee I have life and the fulness of life. Thou art the sacrificial lamb offered up for my sins; thy blood is the purification of my evil deeds; by thee I have access to grace and life. In thee I am happy here temporally, and there eternally. Most precious

Holy Ghost! Thou hast revealed thyself in thy word, as the third person of the deity, issuing from the father and the son, a spirit of the father and the son, of like essence, of like majesty and glory. Thou hast regenerated me in holy baptism; by thee I have been brought to grace, to light, and to the life that is from God.

Thou art my sanctifier, who enlightens me,

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN CONSIDERS sanctifies me, and keeps me in the true faith. Thou dost comfort me in all suffering, thou dost make me rejoice in sadness, and dost give me refreshment in tribulation. O spirit of grace and of prayer! seal upon my heart the comfort that I am in grace, bear witness unto my spirit that I am a child of God. Rouse me to prayer, give me devotion in prayer, give me peace after prayer. Come, let us pray, and kneel down, and prostrate ourselves before the Lord, the triune God, who made us, for we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture; he is inscrutable in his ways, and incomprehensible in his acts. Of him and through him, and in him are all things; unto him be praise, honor and glory for evermore. O triune God and Lord! grant that I may seize thee in faith, and hold fast to thy holy word as the rule of my faith and practice, until from believing I shall come to seeing. Meantime, my father! cover me with the wings of thy grace, and bless me. Jesus wash me with thy holy blood, and bless me; make me just and eternally happy. Lord God! Holy Ghost, enlighten and bless me, that I may walk in thy light, and perceive the eternal joys which are beyond. Here we must believe and trust what God says of himself; there seeing begins, true belief admits no doubt. Have I not been baptized in God the father, son, and Holy Ghost? His THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

words conduct me to Jordan, where from the open gates of heaven the voice of God testifies of Jesus, and the spirit hovers down. Amen.

1. I trust in God, of whom the Scripture teaches,

That his descent eternity outreaches;

Who called creation out of nothing forth,

A God of endless power and greatest worth.

2. To give this God his rightful nomenclature,

Go ask his word, trust not unwritten nature;

He is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

As such his true disciples him accost.

3. The father of all heaven and earth made tissue,

The son from out the father's self did issue;

From both alike the Holy Ghost comes forth,

Equal to both in power, and bliss, and worth.

4. The father gave the world and us existence,

The son poured out his blood for our assistance

The Holy Ghost enlightens and befriends,

And thus the kingdom of his grace extends.

5. Upon a single throne they all are seated,

Alike eternal, great, and unrepeated;

Their common majesty we all adore,

God is, and was, and shall be evermore.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN MEDITATES UPON

65. At Michaelmas the devout Christian meditates upon the Protection of the Holy Angels

EXHORTATION.

"The angels are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."—Hebrews i. 14. The holy angels were created by God for his service and honor; they constantly stand about his throne and execute his mandates. 1. Therefore a devout Christian must thank God for his especial goodness, in giving the holy angels as guardians of men. 2. He must not drive them away by wanton sin, but please them by a penitential and godly walk and conversation. 3. He strives to be like the angels on earth, daily to adore, praise, and thank God, and to render him pleasing service. 4. He endeavors to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven, if not with the same perfection, yet with the same willingness and sincerity. 5. He does not worship the angels, for that honor is due to the Lord of the Angels alone, not to fellow servants. Rev. xix. 10. 6. In this state of faith, love, piety, and holy fear, the true believer continues to the end,

THE PROTECTION OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

knowing that the holy angels will not only watch over him in his occupation, and protect him from danger, but stand around his bedside in the hour of death, and after death carry his soul into Abraham's bosom. The angel of the Lord encamps around those that fear him, and helps them. Merciful and loving God, how am I rejoiced that thou hast ordered the holy angels to my protection! Lord, Lord, what is man that thou art heedful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him and settest him on high. God of love, in thy unspeakable goodness, thou hast not only given for our enjoyment, all visible creatures, the heavens, the earth, sun, air, and sea, and all the fruits and herbs of the soil, but hast also commanded the invisible angels to serve us, that evil may not befall us. Thou knowest, loving Father, that thy children on earth are encompassed by danger and distress; therefore, thou hast set a watch over them to guard them day and night, and avert all evil. Thou knowest how many and how powerful are the foes of thy children, the prince of darkness, Satan and his host; therefore, thou hast sent strong heroes to resist them, and protect thy beloved. O my God! when week after week, month after month, and THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN MEDITATES UPON year after year passes by, and my straight and bale limbs remain unharmed, my house and home uninjured, my walk without fall or stumbling, and no hurt comes near me, should I not ascribe all to thy fatherly truth, love, and mercy, which have preserved me through thy servants?

How many dangers hast thou averted through the agency of thy holy angels, of which I knew nothing! For this, my God, be thanks and praise to thee to all eternity. I also beseech thee, loving Father, still further to bid thine angel come and watch over thine own. Let thy angel avert all danger and misfortune from my head, as from the head of Jacob, who was met by the hosts of God traveling by his side, when the ill-will of his brother Esau pursued him.

Gird my house round about with a cohort of thy holy angels, like the house of Job; let them be with me in trouble, as with Daniel; let them drive misfortune from me, as they rolled away the flames from the men in the fiery furnace;

let them watch my nourishment and daily food, as the angels brought bread and water to Elijah;

and accompany me on my journeys, like Tobit.

Good God, give me thy Holy Ghost, so that I may not grieve these holy creations of thine with my sins, or drive them from me with a ruthless life, to make them stand afar off and yield to my malice. Grant that even in this life I may grow

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like the angels in thy service, so that I may be like them also in the happiness of eternity. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Let thy holy angels be around my death-bed also, and carry my soul into Abraham's bosom, and escort it into thy glory. Let me be there forever in their society and brotherhood, with them to rejoice in thy glory and majesty, with them to sing the Holy, Holy, Holy, is God the Lord of Hosts, and with them to thank thee for every good and perfect gift for evermore. God, Spirit of all Spirits, Lord of all the Seraphim! who commands his servants to serve as men, to thee alone, Lord of Hosts, be thanks and praise, therefor. As we go out and in let them escort us; when we fall asleep in thee, place at our side the guards of thy throne, the troop of Solomon. See that they always lend a hand, and let us never fall from their laps; let their camp surround us when we are beleagured. When released from vanities, we sing our dying anthems, let them carry us into Abraham's bosom, and in thy kingdom, make us like unto the angels. Amen. 1. The bright angelic choir, that ever stand in waiting

Before the burnished throne, and sing, without abating,

The Holy, Holy Lord, are sent to do us good,

And from our path divert all harm and influence rude.

2. Whitherso'er we go, the angels round us hover;

By day and night our steps with their broad wings they cover,

When at our daily toil they share in all we do,

And when we homeward wend, they travel with us too.

3. When Satan and the world, and other foes assail us,

The angels with their shield and rampart never fail us;

They turn from us away, danger, grief, sorrow, care,

Their eyes are never closed, but wakeful everywhere.

4. And when the pilgrim's staff at last is bruised and shivered

By them from its hard cage, the spirit is delivered;

They lift it then above to happiness and rest,

To gladness after dread, to heavenly mansions blest.

5 The angels are rejoiced, when to the Lord we tender

Our hearts, hopes, wishes, thoughts, and all to him surrender.

Aye, most assuredly the angels there abound,

Where pious souls in prayer and love of God are found.

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN THANKS GOD, ETC. 471

66. Prayers on Particular Occasions

The devout Christian thanks God after the harvest is gathered.

EXHORTATION.

"She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore will I return, and take away my coin in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and I will recover my wool, and my flax given to cover her nakedness."—Hosea ii. 8, 9. Of all the manifestations of the munificence of God, that which most strikes the eye is the annual harvest. God preserves the seed in the bosom of the earth in winter, lets it bloom in the days of summer, causes it to grow and bear fruit, averts hail, rain, and storm, and fills the barn and the cellar by his blessing. And yet if there is one favor for which the Lord is defrauded of his full measure of gratitude, it is that of harvest, for ungrateful men suppose that it must be so of necessity—that it is by the course of nature that all things must grow; that God has been of no assistance there. In just anger, therefore, God frequently causes a failure of crops, so that all may see that the THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN THANKS GOD land can bring forth nothing, except the Lord commands, and that nothing can grow without his blessing. A true believer thinks otherwise.

1. On beholding the full ears of corn, and the vines overhung with grapes, he lifts up his eyes to heaven, and praises the Almighty Giver of all good, who has made so many grains out of one, such luscious fruit out of so plain a twig. 2. He praises the divine providence, which has given rain and dry weather in proper season, averted drought, hailstones, and inundations, and protected the harvest. 3. When the time arrives for the sharp sickle to mow down the corn, and for the wain to carry it to the farmyard, and the grapes into the press, he receives all these good gifts with a thankful heart. 4. He makes use of them also, and appropriates them with thanksgiving. He acknowledges and appreciates the goodness of God in sustaining, providing for, and keeping him. 5. He suffers the goodness of God to lead him to repentance. If we thank and refrain from angering a benefactor, who gives us a garment, or some food, why should we not praise the first of benefactors, who gives us everything? AFTER THE HARVEST IS GATHERED.

Give thanks unto the Lord for he is of great goodness, and his mercy endureth forever. Thus I speak, O my God, on re witnessing the fulness of the harvest. Gracious God, how great is the goodness which thou dost manifest in us; thou hast planted the soil upon its foundation, so that it remaineth for ever and ever. But in this very soil thou hast concealed thy precious treasures, and it brings forth the fruits which serve for our nourishment and health. Especially, O loving father, hast thou crowned this year with thy goodness; thy steps still drip with fat, thou hast moistened the hills from above; thou hast filled the land with the fruits of thy production. Thou hast caused grass to grow for the cattle, and grain for the use of man, so that thou bringest bread out of the earth. O faithful father! thou hast guarded our harvest, the heaven has heard the earth, and the earth has brought forth corn and wine; thou hast given us early rains and late rains in due season; therefore our fields have bloomed, and have held forth the blessing arising out of them. By thy grace our trees have borne sweet and beautiful fruit, and the vine has made us glad. Loving God and Father, thou hast covered the whole field and the whole country with the wings of 40*

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN THANKS GOD thy grace; thou hast made the sun to shine at the proper time, so that all things have come to maturity; thou hast protected all things from hail, fire, drought, and

inundation. When we slept thou didst watch; thou wert the sentinel and guardian of our fields. Lord, thy works are many; thou hast ordained all things wisely and the earth is full of thy goodness. All creatures, men and cattle, look to thee, that thou mayest give them food at the proper time; when thou dost give they gather, and when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things. Truly, O God of riches, thou hast richly blessed us with thy good gifts this year. Therefore we thank thee from the bottom of our hearts. Come, let us pray, and kneel down, and prostrate ourselves; let us come into his house with thanks, and into his courts with rejoicing. With thankful hearts let us declare, "The Lord hath done great thing in us, whereof we are glad." Lord, Lord, let us not abuse thy gifts and benefits, but in them appreciate thy love to us, and thy fatherly truth. O God! If indeed, some ungrateful ones should abuse thy gifts with gluttony, do not on that account withdraw thy favor, but preserve it unto us according to thy mercy. O father! thou who hast loved us for ever and ever, who dost desire to draw us toward thee by these temporal benefits also, so that we AFTER THE HARVEST IS GATHERED.

may perceive the benefactor in his benefits; let thy goodness lead us to repentance, so that when we see thy gifts before us, we may ever lift up our eyes to thee, thou fountain of every blessing.

And as thou dost sustain and nourish our bodies by these gifts, let us also increase in the inward man, in faith, love, and piety, by thy appointed means of grace. Let us grow in good things, and attain from one clearness to another, until we shall be admitted to the enjoyment of the good things of heaven in eternal life, through Jesus

Christ. Amen.

1. Behold, God's ample blessing

Is gathered in with great delight;

Should we not then consider

How to extol the Lord aright?

God on the year has lavished

The bounty of his grace,

And on us cast in showers

His wealth in every place.

How many are the favors

Which he to us has shown!

Which his paternal kindness

Into our laps has thrown.

2. The fields, the woods and gardens,

Gladden the heart to look upon.

Be praised, O great Creator,
For what thy loving hand has done!
They were severely laden
With fruits on every hand;
God did produce such plenty
To brighten all the land;
When we came to the harvest,
There was far greater store
Than we had e'er imagined;
Come, then, the Lord adore.

3. The earth, with all the people
Can now be fed, and beasts as well;
All with the wondrous plenty
Can be supplied, that us befel;
The great Creator's bounty,
Gives all both meat and drink;
Therefore each mind and spirit,
Shall of his goodness think.
To such unnumbered creatures,
To furnish all they want,
Is the most certain token
Of God's divine command.

4. This multitude of blessings
Bestowed upon us from on high,
O let us not abuse them
With aught that does his will defy
God can at once withdraw it

By drought, or hail or rain,
If we do not behave us
As followers of his train.
'Tis at the Lord's disposal,
And still remaineth there;
He can at once refuse it
If we despise his care.

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5. Then let us be more thankful,
The more his mercy does abound;
And as when richly laden,
The ear of corn bows to the ground,
Let us receive in silence,
And prayerful humbleness,
The wealth which in his mercy
He kindly deigns to bless;
The more the Lord hath given,
The more should lips and heart,
Extol the great Creator,
Who doth such bliss impart.

1.

67. The true Believer prays in times of War

EXHORTATION.

"Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress, my bowels are troubled; my heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled; abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is death."—Lamentations i. 20. "The Lord hath bent his bow like an enemy."—Ib. ii. 4.

"He hath swallowed up all the palaces."—Ib. ii. 5.

"The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword."—Ib. ii. 21. The three troubles with which God visits whole cities and towns, are war, hunger and pestilence, Jer. xxxiv. 17; to which God subjected David also, 1 Chron. xxii. 12. War is a severe chastisement; when God withdraws his

THE BELIEVER PRAYS IN TIME OF WAR.

protection from a country, the foe is straight at hand. The reasons for which God punishes a land with wars, are various. 1. Disobedience.—Isaiah i. 19.

2. Living according to the desires of the flesh, without having the fear of God before their eyes.—Judges iv. 1; vi. 1. 3. Contempt of God's word, either in not listening to it at all, or in not conforming to its precepts.—Levit. ii. 6, 27. 4. Idolatry.—Judges ii. 12–14. This may be committed in a gross or in a subtle manner, as by indulgence in luxury, fornication, murder, shedding innocent blood, oppression of strangers, widows, and the poor. But God calls the sword, and takes away peace—Jer. xv. 6. He also takes away the power of the sword.—Psalm lxxxix. 44. So that many nations and a great army obtain no victories, but must flee before their enemies.—Psalm xlv. 11; bringing about destruction, plunder, oppression, lamentations, and wretchedness. Angry God! we appear before thy most holy face with contrite hearts, and bewail the great misery which our grievous sins and thy just wrath have brought upon us Lord, Lord, we dwelt serenely under thy protection; no sword

THE BELIEVER PRAYS IN TIME OF WAR.

could affright us, for thou wert the foe of our foes, and the adversary of our adversaries; we went quietly in and out of our doors, and enjoyed, unmolested, the fruits of the land. But now, great God, thou hast withdrawn thy peace and protection, and the foe has arisen and drawn the sword; he threatens to burn and to destroy, to plunder, to despoil our cities, and to overrun our fields. What shall we do in this distress.

We must confess that we have long deserved these rods of chastisement; we have made evil use of peace and of prosperity. When we should have been edified and walked in the fear of thee, served and obeyed thee, the desecration of the Sabbath, abuse of thy holy name, unrighteousness, security, malice, and the most abominable vices, have run rank among us. We are ashamed, O God, to rehearse our own wickednesses, which cry to heaven. O merciful God! think not of the multitude of our evil deeds, which are like the sands of the sea shore, but think of us after thy great mercy, for the sake of thy goodness. We lie here before thee in prayer, relying, not upon our righteousness, but upon thy grace and long suffering. We have sinned; we have led ungodly lives, and have departed from thy commandments. O do not punish us in thy wrath, nor chastise us in thine anger. Father of mercies, have mercy upon us;

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if thou wilt deal with us according to our sins, and thy justice, the foe will destroy us, and there will be no deliverer. Mighty patron of the wretched, arise, that man may not prevail.

Thou canst give us strength for the fight;

thou canst cast under our feet those who withstand us. In thee is all our hope and trust in this great need. When men rave against thee, thou dost derive honor from it. O God! how long shall the adversary revile, and the foe abuse thy name, as if no one could snatch us from his hand? Deliver us, God of our salvation! and forgive us our sins for thy name's sake. Take away the courage of the enemy;

drive him away, and watch over our land, our houses and curtilages. Let peace soon return, and avert the impending danger. Lord, thine is the honor, that thou dost break the sword, crush the spear, and burn chariots with fire.

Hear our cries, O loving God! the cries of those who are now in danger, and in the hands of the enemy, and suffer many cruelties and indignities. Have mercy upon the poor, the widow, and the aged, on children and sucklings, who cannot escape. Put a speedy end to the destructive contest, and hear our prayer for the sake of thy goodness and mercy. Amen.

1. What affright and lamentation

Comes upon the wings of war?

Like a summons from afar,

To repent of our transgression.

Wretchedness and terror grows,

Lord, have mercy on our woes!

2. O, the sword is keenly whetted,

That is sent to hew us down;

And the foeman's angry frown

With our blood alone is sated.

He has set his fearful goal,

To destroy us all in all.

3. Cries of horror, loud and stifled

In the cities, on the plains;

Refuge nowhere doth remain;

Hidden nooks are racked and rifled.

In sequestered wilds and woods

Carnage with red hand intrudes.

4. Hear the wretched cry and clamor,

Harried of their little all;

Dragged to bondage, great and small,

Even sold beneath the hammer.

Flames consume their last abode,

And still further ill forbode.

THE TRUE BELIEVER PRAISES AND

5. Lord, who can withstand thine anger,

Thy chastisement doth destroy

All who dare thy heart annoy,

Yet no longer dwell in languor.

Save us from the foeman's wrath,

Pluck us from the jaws of death!

The true Believer praises and thanks God after the Return of Peace.

EXHORTATION.

"Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."—Psalm xli. 8-11. After a severe and bloody war, there can be no more joyful news than the report of peace. Then the fugitives return to their dwellings, the exiles have hopes of coming back to their own, the land itself recovers, because no longer trodden under the foot of the enemy. The true believer understands that this gift is sent from above.

1. Therefore he praises God for having put an end to destruction, pillage, murder, and arson, and that the inhabitants of the company are delivered from the power of the enemy. THANKS GOD AFTER THE RETURN OF PEACE. . 483

2. He thanks God for having protected him and his throughout the danger of the war. 3. He sees that sweet peace is like the sun, which revives all things, like the dew, which refreshes all things. 4. He prays to God to make the peace permanent, and to contend against all peace-breakers. 5. He does not devote the time of peace to luxury and pleasure, but to improve in the faith, and to serve his God, undisturbed and unmolested Lord, Lord, merciful, kind, and of great goodness, in the justice of thy wrath thou hast hitherto withheld peace from our land, because we abused the good days of peace. Thou hast called in foes for our chastisement, who drew the sword, slew, ravaged, and filled us with affright and terror. Though we well deserved to be utterly destroyed by this war, yet in the midst of thy wrath, thou hast thought of grace,

and given thoughts of peace to the kings, wherefore we thank thee with great joy. The kings of hosts have come to terms, at thy command the sword has returned to the scabbard. The fugitives return, and we may once more go out and in, in peace. Jerusalem, praise the Lord, extol thy God, O Zion, for he fastens the bolts of thy gates, and blesses thy children who are within: he gives peace to thy frontier. What a precious gem is peace, in which all the land rejoices! To-day dost thou renew thy gracious promise, "Ye shall dwell securely in the land; I will give peace unto the country, so that ye may sleep, and be not waked with affright, and that the sword may not pass through your land from henceforth." Lord, perpetuate this peace; lift up thy countenance over us, and give us peace, as a glorious portion of the divine blessing which thou hast cast upon thy people. Let our peace be like a stream of water which is never diminished, but constantly runs and wells forth, for thou alone shalt have peace according to thy certain promise. Let justice and peace kiss each other, and righteousness look down from heaven. Give us thy holy spirit, that we may not abuse peace in luxury, gluttony, or security, but may edify ourselves, and walk in the fear of the Lord. Refresh the ravaged land with thy blessing. At the end of our days, let us depart in peace, and be gathered into the mansions of peace. Amen. 1. Peace is at last concluded,

God to our prayer has given ear;

There is an end of bloodshed,

Destruction dwells no longer near.

The sword is in its scabbard,

The bow no longer bent;

The foe no more assails us,

Peace gives us all content.

Therefore to-day, of all things,

After these evil days,

Jehovah shall be worshipped,

To God we render praise.

2. O Peace, good gift of heaven,

Most precious jewel that thou art,

By thee to us is given

Of what is ours, a double part.

When thou to us art given

We do receive beside,

Life, plenty, comfort, pleasure,

Throughout the country wide;

The warring minds of princes
Are now disposed to peace.

The loving, gentle shepherd
Has made all discord cease.

3. The sun of peaceful labor
Once more illumines hill and dale,
Makes comfort and rejoicing,
Comfort and happiness prevail;
Once more a-field the ploughman
At early morning hies;
The shepherd on the pasture
His old recorder tries;
The sheep browse on securely,
Fearing no foeman's hand;
The blessings of profusion
Spread over all the land.

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4. O make this peace enduring,
Dear Father, many and many a day;
That on our fields and meadows,
War and destruction may not stray.
O let thy thoughts of concord
Aye hover o'er us still;
Subdue the wrath of princes,
Make them obey thy will.
And though we sorely grieve thee,
Take not our peace away,

And let us find forgiveness
E'en in thine angry day.
5. And as in these, our seasons,
Thy peace thou fully dost accord;
Let us declare in wonder,
Behold the goodness of the Lord
He has withstood the carnage,
And made the war to cease;
His grace to us extended,
And given back our peace.
Then sound bright hymns of gladness,
And with your hearts upraised,
Cry with united voices,
The Lord's great name be praised!
PRAYER IN TIMES OF FAMINE.

68. The true Believer prays when God visits the Land with Dearth and famine

EXHORTATION.

"Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem; and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care: and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment."—Ezek. xiv. 16. As tame and wild beasts are punished with hunger to make them learn something, or to break their wildness, so God is accustomed to put a like bit and rein upon mankind, when they refuse to come to him. God long allures them with benefits, but if persuasion will not bring them to repentance, he sends famine into the land, either from a failure of the harvest, or from war, or from dearth or waste, or by taking the virtue out of the bread, so that those who eat are not satisfied. 1. This punishment is usually inflicted when men disregard the word of God, and only seek after ease and pleasure.—Isaiah v. 13. 2. For persecutions against the pious or the Church of God.—Jer. xi. 22.

3. For listening to the voice of false prophets.—Jer. xiv. 15, 16.

4. For obstinacy.—Jer. xxiv. 10.

5. For disobedience.—Ezek. iv. 16.

6. For oppressing the lowly.—2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2. Famine is accompanied with poverty, misery, and disease.

7. When spiritual hunger is superadded, Amos viii. 11, misery is complete.

Righteous God, thou who givest unto all according to their works, and sufferest wrath, trouble, and dread to come upon those that do evil, we come before thy most holy face, ashamed of having so grievously sinned against thee, that thou art constrained to bring us to obedience and prayer by starvation. O richly didst thou feed us in years gone by! We had bread in plenty; the earth brought forth the loveliest and fairest fruits. These good gifts should have drawn us up to thee as cords of love, and attracted us to repentance. But how shamefully were these gifts abused in gluttony, luxury, and waste, so that nature herself groaned at being bestowed upon thankless men, who received her with ungrateful hearts. Where is the wonder that a fertile country will not bear fruit on account of the sins of those who live in it? Thou dost chastise us with dearth, want, and drought; the earth brings forth her fruit sparingly. Lord, hear the cries of the poor, who beg for bread, and are not IN TIMES OF DEARTH AND FAMINE sated. Take to the heart the wail of the children, the lamentation of the parents, the complaints that fill every house in the city, and in the country; we eat, and are not satisfied; we take food, and well nigh expire with hunger; and the cattle cry for food. Lord, Lord, gracious, merciful, patient, and of great goodness, have mercy upon us; turn again to us with thy blessing, which thou hast withdrawn from us. Thy fountains are full of water: therefore visit the land, and water it; let the sky give ear unto the earth, and do thou also give ear unto our prayers from thy sanctuary. Let the dearth cease; restore us to thy favor, feed the hungry, rejoice the poor, bless our scanty bread. Now we understand that we live not by bread alone, but mostly by the word which cometh out of thy mouth, and whereby thou dost invigorate our food. Let the field soon be refilled with grain; increase our small stock of flour, as of the widow of Zarepath; let the little suffice to sustain many. Meantime let thy word be our food, for it is the comfort of our hearts, our honey and honeycomb. For this, thy goodness, we will praise and adore thee all our lives. Amen. 1. With the sources of starvation,

Angry God! thou dost make bleed
Our obdurate hearts, and threaten
To forsake us in our need.
Hunger's fierce and fiery breath
Fans our constant fear of death.
Suffering and disease have bound us,
Misery settles all around us.

2. Almost it outruns description,
How starvation weighs on all.
'Tis enough to make one shudder,
To behold the sombre pall
That upon the land is spread,
Overwhelming every head.

We are lost, O King of mercies,
If thou dost not stem these curses.

3. Want oppresses great and little,
All our stores have found an end,
Want emaciates our forces,
Want redoubles all we spend.
Want, the poor in anguish cries,
Want, the wealthy exercise.
Want of all things has bereft us,
Until nothing now is left us.

4. 'Tis our sins that wrought this danger,
O they mounted up to heaven!
Now the chastisement has settled
On us with a threefold leaven;

PRAYER IN TIMES OF PESTILENCE.

Insolence and hardened hearts

Brought the sore so fiercely smarts;

Disobedience, pride of living,

Their requital now are giving.

5. Hark, the children wail and clamor,

Give us more of bread! More bread!

On the fields and in the houses

Many languish, worse than dead.

Here the poor a morsel crave,

That the givers scarcely have;

E'en the cry of beasts arises,

Of their hunger which advises.

The true Believer prays in times of Pestilence.

EXHORTATION.

"If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord, thy God, all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he save consumed thee from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish."—Deut. xxviii. 15, 21, 22. When the wicked are to be visited with wrath, tribulations and terror, Rom. ii. 8, 9, infectious diseases and pestilence form a part of the infliction. 1. This is imposed particularly when men refuse to believe the words of warning and exhortation.—Deut. xiv. 12. 2. When God receives lip-service only, without the worship of the heart.—Jer. xiv. 12, xxvii. 8. 4. For contempt of the servants of God.—Jer. xxix. 17.

5. When the people grow insolent and factions.—Ezek. xiv. 19.

6. When fornication and murder flourish.—Ezek. xxxiii. 26, 27.

7. When admonitions to repentance are no longer heeded.—Amos iv. 10.

8. For adultery.—Numbers xxv. 9.

9. For blasphemy.—2 Kings xix. 35.

10. For high-mindedness, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, and for other sins. When this punishment is felt, it is necessary to do repentance, because the Lord in his mercy is open to prayer, on which account also, David preferred

this among the three great evils. Strong and Almighty God! great is thy wrath against wanton sinners, which do not suffer themselves to be brought to repentance by thy goodness. For a time thou dealest with the children of men like a loving father, who allures IN TIMES OF PESTILENCE.

the disobedient to his side with long forbearance, but if they wantonly trifle with thy kindness, thou dost also approve thyself an austere judge.

This, just God, we now experience. We are told that in many places an infectious disease is spreading, which sweeps away thousands of men, so that the dead are to be found almost in every house, and hands are wanting to bury them. Have we not great cause to fear that thou wilt send the devastating evil into our neighborhood also? We must not suppose,

O jealous God, that those who have already experienced this chastisement were alone or pre-eminently sinners; we must rather remember that we, ourselves, deserve to perish even as they did. Among us, likewise, are to be found, security, contempt of thy holy word and sacraments, obstinacy, luxury, fornication, unrighteousness, pleasure, and pride; indeed the fear of God is hardly left in the land, the saints have diminished, and there are but few believers among men. If thou wilt call sinners to account, who, Lord, will stand before thee? O

Lord, Lord, we plead thy word, seek my face:

therefore, Lord, we seek thy face. Thou dost not desire the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live; therefore we accuse ourselves, and do penance in dust and ashes. Do not regard the heinousness of our sins, but free us from them in mercy. Stand by us in our distress, and make us free from all punishment. We have sinned with our fathers; we have done amiss, and lived ungodly lives. Command the destroying angel, who carries the avenging sword, to cease, and say, It is enough. If we are not worthy of grace, yet we greatly need it. If we are all children of death, yet thou hast promised the penitent to do mercy instead of justice. Give us thy mercy, and spare our lives for the sake of Jesus, our eternal mediator and advocate. Have mercy upon us, have mercy us upon, thou God of mercies. Be gracious unto us, and spare us, dear Lord! help us, dear Lord God! Have mercy upon the poor and wretched, assailed by this violent disease; who suffer hunger and pain; who are uncared for, and deserted by all men; stand by them with thy comfort, and let thy spirit bear witness unto their spirit, that they are children of God, although fated to fall by this disease. Lord, hear our prayer, protect our country, and let us say that the Lord has done great things in us. Amen. 1. Distress and danger visit us,

Despair, and deadly languor;

We almost witness, face to face,

The archangel in his anger.

IN TIMES OF PESTILENCE.

The towns and hamlets, like a swath,

Are strewn with corpses in the path

Of pestilence, down-stricken.

2. There lies a poor, forgotten wretch,

His house already haunted,
Receives no healthful tenant more,
All fly whence they are wanted;
Another dies for lack of food:
Such are the visitations rude,
When men forget God's anger.

3. No wonder! For of piety
The name was scarcely noted;
All dwelt in fond security,
To waste and gain devoted.
Contempt of God, hypocrisy,
Fraud, swindling, pleasure, luxury,
Alone were sought and worshipped.

4. If thou wouldst judge us by our sins;
Who, who would meet with kindness?
Yet O consider not of this,
Nor of our wanton blindness,
But on our sufferings pity take,
And look upon us, for the sake
Of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

5. Give us a pure and healthful air,
Our lives no longer jeopard,
Dispel the venomous fumes of ill,
And be again our shepherd,
And we will raise our lips and eyes
In thanks unto thy beauteous skies,
And praise thy name for ever.

The true Believer prays to God in Times of continued Rain and wet Weather.

EXHORTATION.

"Behold I will bring a deluge of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life, under the heavens; all on earth shall perish."—Gen. vi. 17. Then did God speak to the pious Noah, and as a true God he verified his threat, in suffering all things on earth to perish except the few living things which had gone with Noah into his ark. Although God has promised not again to punish the world with a general deluge, yet to refresh the humility of men, he often suffers inundations, heavy showers of rain, and protracted seasons of wet weather to take place. 1. When the rain pours unceasingly from the heavens, true Christians remember that these showers come from God—which gives them good cheer. 2. They also call to mind that God is angered by their sins—which brings them to repentance IN TIMES OF WET WEATHER.

3. They are aware that such showers may easily prove ruinous to them—which makes them attentive of the fact that in all things they are in the power of the Lord. This drives them to God, to whom they cry in their distress, and call upon him with child-like and believing prayer. If they do this, God will have mercy on them, and give them seasons of fertility, so that their hearts shall again be filled with joy. Great and majestic God! thou who hast spread out the heavens, and founded the earth, and created all things that live and move, and are; how quickly canst thou change the form of the earth, and take away its beauty and loveliness! This we learn especially when, as now, thou openest the windows of heaven, and sufferest the rain to fall without cessation. The sun withholds his warming and refreshing beams; the eye sees nothing but dark and heavy clouds, which cover the earth with water; the fruits of the field are in danger of decay; all things wear a disquieting aspect. Lord, Lord, look upon this, our distress, and be pleased to have mercy on us. By our sins we have richly deserved to lose thy blessings, but let mercy take the place of justice, and think of us at the best. Thou hast promised not again to destroy the earth 42* and its inhabitants with water. O God of mercies, close the windows of heaven, that the rain may cease to fall upon us. Clear up the murky sky, and let the beautiful sunlight shine again, that the grass may grow for the cattle, and the corn for the advantage of men. Soften the hardness of our hearts by thy goodness and truth, so that we may mend at last, and persevere unto the end in the things well pleasing unto thee. And at the last receive us mercifully into thy kingdom in heaven. Amen. 1. Shall the heavens weep forever?

Shall they still be overcast?

Shall the sun no more regale us?

Is his day for ever past?

God of mercies, in thy wrath,

Wilt thou cause a watery death?

Lo, the swelling of the water

Makes the river ripe for slaughter.

2. Everything is inundated,

Grasses rot upon the field;

Still the rain is undimished,
Never promising to yield.
Ripeness comes not near our fruit.
For there is no warmth to do 't;
All things for the sun stand waiting,
But the rain shows no abating.

3. O the heavens weep thus sadly,
Because no one weeps for sin.
Who is left, of great or little,
Having love of God within?
Where is penance, piety,
Godliness, sincerity?

Therefore, though we cry untiring,
Nothing answers our desiring.

4. Lord, upon us all have mercy!
Bid the endless rain to cease;
Hear the wail of the afflicted,
Give us sunshine, give us ease.
See, we come while yet is time,
Of our sins cast off the slime,
We acknowledge, in our madness,
Thrice to have incurred this sadness.

5. If thou to our supplication
Wilt vouchsafe a pitying ear,
If thou wilt again accord us
Warmth and thriving comfort here,
We shall praise thy providence,

That thou didst to us dispense

Sunlight, and anticipation

Of a glad emancipation.

69. The true Believer prays to God in Times of protracted Seat and Drought

EXHORTATION.

"Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."—James, v. 17. How much the earnest prayer of the righteous avails, we see in the examples of Elias, as set before our eyes by St. James, the apostle. But we would be much mistaken, did we suppose that it was in the power of Elias to take rain away from the land, and give it back. No! God alone is lord of the rain. God alone can do all this. To God, therefore, the Christian must ascribe every protracted season of drought. It is by the grace God that rain generally falls at the right time; when he omits to send it, we are to regard the omission as a punishment. For what distress prevails wherever rain is wanting, and heat and drought oppress the land! In the midst of summer the whole country is covered as with a shroud. A severe infliction, indeed! Who could remain indifferent at such a spectacle? Therefore, let us pray, like Elias, that the thirsty land may once more be refreshed with IN TIMES OF DROUGHT.

grateful rain. A just and heartfelt prayer the Lord has never yet despised. The Lord is near to all those who call upon him—who call upon him in earnest; he does what the godly desire; he hears their cries and helps them. O help us also, Lord our God! thou art gracious, merciful, patient, and of great love and truth; help us in the great distress which has overtaken us, and graciously deliver us. Thou didst threaten thy people of old, that if they would not listen to thy voice, thou wouldst make the sky above their heads of brass, and the soil under their feet of iron, and give the land dust and ashes instead of rain. It would almost seem as if over our heads the sky were of brass, and the soil of iron. How dreary are the fields and meadows! the earth opens wide her mouth, and pants for refreshment. Men and beasts cry out with thirst; the trees and the grass wither, the fruits refuse to grow; streams and fountains are dried up. O Lord, look in upon us, and put an end to our sufferings. True it is, that when we think of our sins, we see that we deserve even heavier chastisement. But O, father of mercy, be merciful to us, poor sinners, and turn again thy gracious countenance upon us; refresh us with a fruitful and penetrating rain, so that men and beasts may again find nourishment and sustentation. For the sake of Jesus Christ, hear our supplications, and have mercy upon us. May thy justice bring us unto true repentance! Sanctify us wholly that we may be preserved undefiled to the day of Jesus Christ. Hear us, dear father in heaven! for the sake of thy love, for the sake of Jesus Christ, hear us. Amen. 1. Now the sky is barred and bolted,

Angry God! for many a day

Not a drop of rain has fallen,

And it fills us with dismay.

Men and beasts, leaves, trees, and grass,

Groan at what has come to pass;

Gracious God be pleased to help us,

Or a dearth must overwhelm us.

2. Lo, the earth, with lips distended,

Fairly cries to thee for thirst;

Here and there, deep, yawning fissures,

With the burning heat have burst.

Fruits of orchards, grain in ear,

All is withered, wilt, and sere;

E'en the timid deer lie pining,

In some shady nook reclining.

IN TIMES OF DROUGHT.

3. True, we richly have deserved it,

That the sky should be of brass,

And the soil beneath of iron:

For our sins were of a class,

That the evening heard with fright

Of the orgies of the night,

And the night was struck with sorrow

At the plottings of the morrow.

4. O we fall to earth before thee,

Think upon our sins no more!

We bewail them with contrition,

And thy mercies great adore.

O for Jesus' sake forgive

What we did to make thee grieve;

We devote our whole endeavor

To thy service hence forever.

5. O look down in pitying mercy,

On us and our thirsty land
Let us feel no more the anguish
Of the sunbeam's burning brand.
Make the sky to yield again
Freshening showers of living rain.
Let us look once more in gladness
On the skies in healthful sadness.
COMMUNION PRAYERS.

70. Communion Prayers

Prayer before Holy Communion.

O great God, who now callest me to thy holy table, I humbly beseech thee to make me a partaker of the divine vigor of the blood shed by my dearest Saviour for the forgiveness of my sins. Out of thy heavenly dwelling place send me thy light and truth to lead me to thy holy table, and give me the experience of thy peace, and the grace of the Holy Ghost. Purify my heart, so that I may offer it to him who gave himself for me. Fill my soul more and more with repentance, faith, love, fervor, joyfulness and gratitude. O God, my heart tells me for thy sake to seek thy face. I seek thy face, O Lord, save thy servant (handmaid) who hopes in thee. Amen. Prayer after Holy Communion.

All-sufficient God, thou sole chief good and greatest delight of all the pious! in thee alone does my heart find its rest, and in thy grace its COMMUNION PRAYERS.

highest joy. The world with all its glories, is like the apples of Sodom, which outside were fair, and inside full of ashes. Sin with its brief pleasure produces disgust, and draws after it hell and damnation. Let me consider all things well, and not love the world, nor that which is in the world; the world passeth away with the pleasure thereof, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Lord if I have but thee, I have enough, though I have nothing in the world beside. Happy is my soul, if I have in thee a gracious God, and in myself an uninjured conscience. The world knows nothing of this peace of conscience, which thy saints estimate more highly than all the treasures of the earth. Rest content, my soul, for the Lord is kind unto thee. He has fed thee at the table of his grace with the crucified lamb, and refreshed thee with the precious blood of his only begotten son. O infinite goodness! Therefore praise the Lord, O my soul, and what is in me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Preserve, great God, this peace in my heart, and continue to do good unto my soul. Fortify me in all suffering by the comfort of thy holy spirit. Our adversity, which is temporal and easy to bear, nevertheless produces a surpassing glory for us, who regard not the visible but the invisible. For what is visible is temporal, what is invisible is eternal. A time will come when thou wilt bring me to the place of perfect rest. There I shall behold thy face in righteousness, and be satisfied when I awake in thy image. Amen. The True Believer praises God at the return of his Birthday. EXHORTATION.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Psalm cxvi. 12. Birthdays should be days of thanks and praise, to be spent in singing and prayer, and inward and external devotion. 1. True children of God, as often as their birthdays return, praise God's truth and goodness, in having permitted them to be born of Christian parents, who brought them to a knowledge of salvation in Christ Jesus. 2. They also thank him for having given them sound limbs and healthy minds. 3. For having preserved them from evil, and delivered them from peril 4. They humbly pray God to forgive their

ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

sins, and promise to spend the remaining years of their life in childlike obedience and piety. 5. They know that if they thus persist in faith and love, God will continue to overshadow them with the wings of his grace. 6. They remember that this may well be the last return of their birthday on earth. Eternal, good, and merciful God; by thy grace I once more behold the return of my natal day. It shall be my day of praise,

prayer, and thanksgiving. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and what is in me praise his holy name; praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Praise the Lord with me, and let us together magnify his holy name. I will praise the Lord at all times; his praise shall be forever in my mouth. Should I not praise and adore thee, my God? Thou hast suffered me to be born, not only with sound limbs, but of Christian parents, who brought me to the knowledge of thee, O triune God, from my youth up. Brought up in thy arms, thou, in later years, hast led and guided me, given me food and clothing, and graciously preserved me to this day. I am unworthy of all the love and truth which thou hast manifested in me. Come and listen; I will tell the good which the Lord hath done me in body and in soul. Yet how can I tell all? It were easier to count the stars of heaven, than the gifts of grace which I have received at thy hands. From how many perils hast thou delivered me? How much misfortune hast thou averted? Thy spirit, has taught, guided, and led me, and when I would have sinned, chastised me inwardly, and drawn me back. As my years increase, and thy favors multiply, O Lord, I am also reminded of the sins I have committed. Forgive me them for the sake of Jesus, expunge them with thy holy blood, and let me find favor for his sake. Give me thy mercy, that I may spend the days still allotted to me upon thy book, in true godliness and piety, so that all my doings and omissions may be well pleasing unto thee. And as I know not how many days are assigned to me, but am certain that thou hast set me a goal, preserve me from shortening my life by anger, intemperance, sin, recklessness, or sacrilege, but let me reach the fulness of my time in health, under thy blessing and protection, until thou shalt exchange this temporal and transitory for the heavenly and eternal life. Till then I will celebrate every return of this day with praise and thanksgiving in thy honor.

ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

BIRTHDAY HYMN OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING.

1. This is the precious day God hath to me awarded,
Wherein my life on earth is every year recorded;
On which my grateful heart recalls with thanks and praise,
The mercies of my God bestowed throughout my days.
2. Upon this day I was upon the earth admitted,
At the baptismal font for grace carefully fitted;
Where, by his precious blood, Jesus did make me whole,
And sent the spirit down to educate my soul.
3. A weak and helpless child, the sunlight first beheld me,
Naked, and very poor. Yet has the Lord upheld me
In body and in soul; I of myself am nought,
But all I have and am, was by his goodness brought.
4. Thou rich and loving God! How oft hast thou imparted
Blessings which without thee had soon again departed;

Health, happiness, and wealth, the Holy Spirit's light,
Gladden me every day, more than I can indite.

43*

5. More than I can indite, for words would ever fail me.

To tell what thou hast done to comfort and regale me,
Therefore unto the Lord give praise and thanks in fee,
Whose benefits are more than sands upon the sea.

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FOR

WOMEN WITH CHILD, IN LABOR,

AND IN CONFINEMENT:

CONTAINING

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS, EXHORTATIONS,

AND HYMNS,

AS WELL AS

TEXTS, MAXIMS, SIGNS, PRAYERS, TO BE SPOKEN AND

PRONOUNCED IN THROES;

TOGETHER WITH

Prayers of Remembrance and Consolation for the Barren.

FOR THE

HONOR OF GOD AND EDIFICATION OF THE CHURCH.

PUBLISHED BY

JOHN FREDERICK STARK,

Formerly Evangelical Pastor at Frankfort on the Main.

DEVOTIONS

FOR

71. WOMEN WITH CHILD

The Woman with Child offers up her Morning Prayer.

EXHORTATION.

Every true Christian is bound, before going to his daily work, to commend himself to the divine protection and mercy, so that God may keep his body and his soul under his gracious care. But if every man ought thus to commend himself to the care of God, how much more ought the pregnant to do so? They have much to pray for every morning. 1. To keep them throughout the day in good and holy thoughts, so that they may think of God, always have him in their hearts, and converse with him. 2. They must commend their life and their limbs to God, that God may guard their steps, preserving them from dangerous falls or other misfortunes. 3. They must also commit the fruit of their

THE WOMAN WITH CHILD bodies to the holy providence of God, that it may grow strong and well formed, and may be filled with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. 4. They must guard, particularly, throughout the day, against anger, quarrels, and strife, must not take things amiss, or be unduly exacting, nor be too easily incensed, lest their obstinacy and passion bring misfortune, disease, or even death, upon their hidden pledge. If they thus surrender themselves to the goodness and mercy of God, they have the consolation that God will set his angel over them, who will guard them in all their ways. MORNING PRAYER.

Lord God, the Father, what thou hast created; Lord God, the Son, what thou hast redeemed; Lord God, the Holy Ghost, what thou hast hallowed, I commend into thy hands. To thy holy name let honor, glory, praise and thanks be given in the morning hour, and in all eternity. Amen. O thou gracious, good, and merciful God! who art thyself the light before whom there is no change of the light and the darkness, I thank thee from the bottom of my soul, that thou hast guarded me this night so mercifully, and hast suffered me again to behold the gladsome light of morning. Oh, thou light of my soul! Shed OFFERS UP HER MORNING PRAYER.

a brighter radiance into my heart this morning, that it may strengthen my love of thee, and my hope and trust in thee. Sanctify my soul, that

I may converse with thee this day; may think of thee, rejoice in thee, and enjoy the consolation of thy bounty. Grant that I may not wilfully sin against thee this day, but may serve thee in holiness, and walk before thee in the righteousness of the children of God. Set thy most holy presence before my eyes, that I may be the more encouraged to persevere in sanctification, and not to offend thee. I commend to thee my life and limbs—my every step and tread. Thou, O

God of all goodness and mercy, hast placed me in a peculiar condition, in which I need thy particular care and assistance. Therefore I humbly beg and pray, O thou protector of thy children!

guard my going out and my coming in; let thy angel lead me by the hand, that I may not slip or fall, be wounded, or do harm to my limbs, and thereby also to the fruit of my body. Defend me, uphold me, preserve me. Drive away all that is hurtful to me, and may thy good spirit guide me on even paths. Let me live to see the close of this day under thy protection, when I will joyfully thank thee for all the benefits thy

mercy has vouchsafed unto my body and my soul. Now the Lord bless me, and preserve me;

the Lord let his face shine upon me, and be

THE WOMAN WITH CHILD gracious unto me; the Lord lift up his countenance over me, and give me peace. The grace of the Father protect me, the love of Jesus cover me, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with me now and at all times. O bless me in my sleep and waking. O bless my every step and tread! Bless me in every undertaking. Pour every blessing on my head. Give me the experience of thy grace, and ne'er avert thy loving face. Amen. 1. See the gladsome morn advances

As the night retreats away,

And upon my inner senses

Jesus brings returning day.

With him I this night have slept,

With him I have vigil kept,

With him I have borne all sadness,

With him I will share all gladness.

2 Guard my steps, where'er I travel,

Jesus! send thy angels fleet—

Every danger to unravel,

E'er it grapples with my feet.

What I bear beneath my heart

Thy great goodness did impart;

Let it thrive, what thou hast given,

As I would myself have thriven.

OFFERS UP HER EVENING PRAYER

3. Keep me safe, serene, and quiet,

Let no frights disturb my peace,

And no bitter passions riot

Plunge me into fell disease.

Let thy lovely Jesus form

Comforter in every storm

Come, before my eyes to hover,

From my sight all ills to cover.

4. From my thoughts he shall not wander,

Jesus still belongs to me.

On his grace I still shall ponder,

He is mine, where'er I be.

From the morning to the night

Never will I leave his sight.

When again the evening closes,

My glad soul on him reposes.

The Woman with Child offers up her Evening Prayer.

EXHORTATION.

Oh, how great is God's bounty, whenever he permits a human being to reach the close of a day in safety; when he may say on retiring to his rest, I lie and sleep in peace! Oh what a glorious rest it is to go to bed at peace with God, at peace with conscience, in peace and comfort of body! Then may a man say in praise of the 44*

THE WOMAN WITH CHILD triune God: The Lord hath done great things with me, wherefore I rejoice. If he falls asleep with a grateful heart, and with the praise of God on his lips, his nightly rest will not lack God's blessing. In the same manner women with child, when they have safely completed the day, ought to raise their hearts, their eyes, and their lips to God, to thank God for their preservation, for his goodness and protection, and to recommend themselves to his continued care. 1. They must cry to God to preserve them from fright and accident, because sudden frights often expose pregnant woman to great danger. 2. They must beseech him to guard them from sickness and pain.

3. They must pray to him to keep the wings of his mercy constantly extended over them and the fruit of their bodies. EVENING PRAYER.

Gracious, loving, and merciful God! I appear in thy most holy presence with a happy heart. Lord, how precious is thy goodness, that men rest trustfully under the shadow of thy wings: aye, under the shadow of thy wings have I gone in and out to-day; under them have I been preserved; no misfortune has approached me, but I have reached the evening in safety. OFFERS UP HER EVENING PRAYER.

Praised be the love of our heavenly father, who has carried me in his arms as his child. Praised be Jesus Christ, my Saviour, who has led me by the hand, so that no accident could overthrow me. Praised be God, the Holy Ghost, who has not departed from me. O thou Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, remain with me this night. Spread out thy goodness, Lord! Lord! over them that know thee, and thy righteousness over the pious. Guard my body and soul from all misfortune; let me converse constantly with thee in sleep, so that I may still be with thee when I awake. Behold, I know no help but in thee, thou God of Israel. Let

thy angels watch beside, and around my bed, so that nothing may be hurtful to me, and to what thou hast been pleased to bestow upon me. Drive out of my heart, all sorrows, evil thoughts, and false imaginations; drive from my bed, and from my house everything that can do me harm, or bring me suffering. Thus I lie down in the arms of my God—I sleep in the arms of my Jesus; his left hand is beneath my head, and his right hand covers me. O thou, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier! be and remain with me. Thou, triune God, art my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? Thou art the strength of my life, whom should I dread? I dread naught, because God is with THE WOMAN WITH CHILD me; I fear naught because I have Jesus near.

When it is dark around me, Jesus is the light of my soul; if fear approaches, the Holy Ghost is my comfort and assistance. Let this night pass happily under thy protection, that I may see the lovely face of the sun, saved, happy, protected and preserved! My mouth shall praise thee with joy, and thank thee for all the good thou hast done me. As often as my pulses beat this night, my spirit shall embrace thee; as often as my heart is moved, it shall be my desire to cry everywhere, with a loud voice, O Jesus,

Jesus! thou art mine, and I am thine forever.

Thus then will I fall asleep in thine arms, O

Jesus! thy providence shall be my covering, thy mercy my couch, thy breast my pillow, and my dreams the happiness flowing from the word of light, which thy spirit pours into my heart.

Amen.

HYMN

1. Though the sun remains no longer

On my path his rays to shed,

Jesus' light glows all the stronger,

Which he casts upon my bed

Say am I not well bethought,

When around my midnight cot

Jesus' hands my slumbers lighten?

Now no harm my soul can frighten.

OFFERS UP HER EVENING PRAYER.

2. All myself will I surrender

Jesus to thy guardian thought,

Bless the coming life so tender,

Thy almighty hand has wrought.

All that is so dark to me
Thy prevailing eye can see.
Thou thyself the gift hast granted
Do thou keep what thou hast planted.

3. Evening finds me very weary
And I long for sweet repose;
Jesus' voice is soft and cheery,
And his arms around me close.
Bless them all that share my home,
And the stranger soon to come;
Never, never let it perish,
In thy own fond bosom cherish.

4. Keep it safe from all disaster
Till the day return again,
And from day to day, dear Master,
Let it thrive, and know no pain.
While it rests beneath my heart
Never let thy love depart;
And if thou my love believest,
Let me see the gift thou givest!

DAILY REFLECTIONS

72. Daily Reflections of a Woman with Child

EXHORTATION.

When God bestows the blessings of the holy state of matrimony upon a married woman, she must sincerely rejoice; but other reflections also suggest themselves.

1. This holy state is accompanied with much pain and hardship.

2. God is a gracious God, who will relieve them; a mighty God, who will heal them.

3. In a dark hour, a sleepless night, an untoward mishap, they must remember that, by their baptismal covenant God is their father, who will not forsake his children; for as a father has pity on his children, so the Lord hath pity on them that fear him. They must call to mind the power of God, which will give them strength to complete and bring to light the good work he has commenced in them. When it appears very hard, so that they think they will not be able to bear it, they must remember that with God nothing is impossible, and when he speaks a word, the proud waves and pangs of suffering and of hardship must go down. 4. If their pains should be of long continuance, their trust must not fail nor their hopes wither, but they must reflect that God has already appointed the hour when he will help them.

OF A WOMAN WITH CHILD.

5. But if ye say, Many lose their lives in pregnancy and labor, I answer, God has appointed unto every one the hour of his death. If the pregnant know of instances of married women who have died in pregnancy or in labor, they also see many instances of others who were happily delivered, and became happy mothers; indeed, the number of those whom the Lord has preferred, rescued and aided, is far greater than that of those who have died in the struggle. Now, if among fifty or a hundred hardly one has died, and ninety-nine have been happily delivered, it is against the faith and love of God always to anticipate the worst. Therefore say, the God who hath helped so many thousands will help me also, and assist me; rely upon this from the bottom of your souls, repel all dubious thoughts, and cast your eyes upon the strong hand of God. 6. Women with child must also control themselves, lest they bring death upon themselves by anger and obstinacy; for as every thing may injure them in this condition, they must guard themselves the more carefully. It is by no means to be praised, but rather to be chid, in many pregnant women, that they are too prone to anger, evil-minded and ready to take offence; whatever people do around them, displeases them; they fret about everything; not a dish, not a speech, not a chair is to their liking; they DAILY REFLECTIONS must moderate themselves and overcome this failing by prayer. And I would have all Christian women to consider, if the fruits of their bodies ripen in such bitter blood, whether they are not in fault if they bear wicked, passionate and obstinate children, which have as obstreperous a disposition as their mothers had during their pregnancy. 7. As Christian women are fond of going to the Lord's Supper when in this condition, they have the more reason to surrender themselves and their fruits to the Lord Jesus, and to persevere in sanctification by his strength in the faith. Holy, good, and merciful God, I come to Thee to lay my prayer, my supplication, my intercession, and my thanksgiving at thy feet. Thou hast, Great God! bestowed thy blessing upon my married state, for which I thank thee from the bottom of my heart, and pray thee to give me a joyous glimpse of thy face. But, because thou, O righteous God, hast imposed many sufferings on this condition, I assume it willingly under thy assistance. If, therefore, bitter

hours should come, painful days, sleepless nights, Lord my God, depart not from me, I know that in thy omnipotence, thou canst assuage all my woes; in the midst of pangs and sufferings thou art still OF A WOMAN WITH CHILD.

my father, my help, my succor, my only refuge, and my gracious God. If the hardships and spells become great and numerous, and even insupportable, yet I will not despair, but will consider that thou, O faithful God! wilt not suffer me to be tempted beyond my power of resistance, but wilt have a care that the temptation shall end so that I may endure it. When

I sigh, "O how long, how endless is the heart's suffering and longing after thee," then bethink thee of thine hour of help, and let it soon appear according to thy gracious will. Set thy omnipotence before my eyes, O God! that I may not be frightened, if others in the same condition are afflicted with severe sickness, or even die in giving birth. Let it remain constantly inscribed on my mind, how many hundred pregnant ones are happily delivered throughout the year, and how very few are withdrawn from the world by thee in child-bed. Help in the hour of labor, and gladden my heart with a hale and well-formed child. But if thou hast resolved to give me the release from this world's suffering on this occasion, then, Lord! thy will be done. But in the meantime, O God! give me thy good spirit, to keep me constantly in good thoughts; give me a quiet and gentle mind, that I may not bring death upon myself and my fruit by anger or spite. Let my fruit be endowed with good

THE CONDITION OF THE PREGNANT powers of body and mind, let it grow under the shadow of thy grace, until at last thou shalt bring it to the light of day, and thus convert all my pangs into delight, and my tears into joy. Now, Lord my God! I have poured out my heart before thee, O give ear unto me in thy goodness, save me according to thy promise, have mercy on me according to thy faith, help me according to thy love, and rejoice me according to thy grace. Amen. The Pregnant Woman reflects that her Condition is well pleasing in the Sight of the Lord.

EXHORTATION.

As God has himself instituted the holy state of wedlock, and intends thereby to propagate the human race, for which reason he said to our first parents in Paradise, "Be fruitful, and multiply;" so a godly married woman must rejoice in the Lord, when she perceives herself thus favored. 1. She must reflect that children are a gift of God, which he grants to some, but withholds from others, so that men may not ascribe anything to their own powers.

IS WELL PLEASING UNTO GOD.

2. Whenever a married woman becomes conscious of such a blessing, she must consider that God has graciously remembered her, as is said of Sarah, and of Rachel;" and the Lord visited Sarah, and the Lord remembered Rachel."

3. Thereupon she shall thank God, and regard her present condition as coming from God, who has given her his blessing.

4. If pains and ailments make their appearance, she must reflect that God has designed her for this condition, but that he will not therefore desert her; on the contrary, she must set her trust the more firmly in him, when she will find that in his hands all things are well. 5. For this purpose she must persevere in prayer, guard against anger and malice, stand fast in faith, in the love of Jesus, and in vital godliness, and

rest assured that she is in a favored state, well pleasing unto God, in which she may count upon his gracious aid and protection. O thou loving God and Father! how can I sufficiently acknowledge, praise, and extol thy fatherly goodness, that thou hast called and placed me in my present condition. If it be at times irksome, I know that I stand in thy grace, and that my condition is well pleasing in thine THE FAVORED CONDITION eyes, and ordained by thee. Thou knowest,

Lord! that I have not coveted a man in wantonness, and have kept my soul undefiled of all evil desires, and have not sought dissolute and wanton company; but have consented to take a husband in thy faith, in chastity, and in thy honor.

As thou hast graciously remembered me, and hast enriched me with a fruit of my body, I receive it as a gift of thy hand. Let me taste thy mercy and loving kindness, while in this condition. Be my gracious God, and hearken unto my prayers and my sighs. Be my guide and escort; defend me, lead me, and preserve me. Be my refuge, before whom I may pour out my heart; who will gladden me when I am sad, and refresh me when I am weary. Be my helper, and assure me that thou art with me in the time of need, and wilt rescue me. Be my aid, if pains and ailments should make their appearance. Be my preserver, who will safely deliver me when the time has come, and make my heart rejoice. O my heavenly Father! while

I am in this condition, be thou my strength;

carry, sustain, strengthen, and refresh me. O

Jesus, while I am in this condition, be thou my mediator and advocate with God, and bring my feeble prayer before him. O God, the Holy

Ghost! while I am in this condition be thou my comforter. Comfort me; assure me that I stand

OF THE PREGNANT.

in grace; that I am a child of God, and that my delivery will be happy, and that all will be well. Aye, thou triune God! be with me in this hour, and I shall be happy, safe, well-guarded, and preserved. Lord Jesus, direct my walk, that, henceforth, while I live, I may walk according to thy will; watch over my body and my soul; enter me in the books of thy custody, so that I may not fall. O give me thy wounds to contemplate by the hour, and I can forget the world. Amen. 1. With what a wonder-working grace

Has me my God regarded,

And when I prayed in sore distress,

All I besought, awarded;

So that my overflowing soul

His matchless goodness doth extol.

Give praise unto the Highest.

2. He called me forth from nothingness,

He saved me from perdition,

He sent the Holy Ghost to bless
And cheer me in contrition.
He gave me what my heart most craved,
Another spirit to be saved!
Give praise unto the Highest.
3. And e'en if anguish, pain and fear
Should wait upon this favor,
He too will send his angel here,
Nor let my spirit waiver.

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THE PREGNANT WOMAN THANKS GOD

When every other help is gone,
He never fails to help alone;
Give praise unto the Highest.
4. With more than patriarchal care
Did he conduct me hither;
Kept me from every toil and snare,
And left me not to wither.
Good cheer is at his open board,
Good cheer beneath his watch and ward.
Give praise unto the Highest.
5. And what transcendant bliss upon
My being will he shower,
When I with him shall take my wonne,
In his eternal bower!
For when I die, I shall not die,
I'll go to God, I'll soar on high.

Give praise unto the Highest.

The Pregnant Woman thanks God for her fruitfulness.

EXHORTATION.

1. When a godly married woman perceives that she is fruitful, it is her duty to thank God, and to remember that God is now making her a partaker of the blessing bestowed upon the state of holy wedlock.

FOR HER FRUITFULNESS.

2. She must then walk discreetly, keep herself in the bounds of moderation, soberness, gentleness and Christian modesty, lest by her own fault she again destroy her fruitfulness, which may be the consequence of immoderate or improper work, froward lifting and carrying, malicious wrath, or other transgressions. 3. Perceiving her fruitfulness to increase, she must daily recommend herself and the fruit of her body to God, and cry to him to form, preserve, strengthen, and watch over it, and in time to bring it happily to light.

4. She must not murmur at the hardships attending her situation, and must not be irascible, wrathful, or revengeful against her husband or other persons, these being all signs of impatience at the thought of her fruitfulness, which is ingratitude which God will not fail to see, and for which he will make such a person atone. Lord, Almighty God! who art a God of life, who givest us all our breath and life, who hast blessed the holy state of wedlock with fruitfulness of body, I thank thee that thou hast remembered me also, and hast made me a partaker of this blessing in my marriage. Thou, mighty Lord! hast granted me a greater boon than THE PREGNANT WOMAN THANKS GOD others, who sigh for this gift, and do not receive it; therefore I beg thee to let me well understand the good that thou hast done me. I surrender myself unto thee wholly. Preserve me from fear and fright, from falls and dangers, from mishaps, and from all that might rob me of thy gift. Lord, how great is thy wisdom, in forming men so wondrously! How great is thy omnipotence, in bringing them to behold the light of day! How great is thy goodness in thus preserving and multiplying the human race! I thank thee, my God! that thou hast designed me for a work-shop of this thy glorious work, and hast made me fruitful by thy divine blessing. Let me be, in the fulness of time, a happy mother, and joyfully behold what is concealed. Lord! let thy goodness and truth escort me everywhere; guard my foot from stumbling, my limbs from being broken, and my body from injury. Preserve what thou hast given me, and let it enjoy thy guardian care. But, in the meantime, I will look to thy help; I lift up mine eyes to the hills whence my help cometh; my help cometh from the Lord, who has made the heavens and the earth. I will praise the Lord at all times; his praise shall be constantly in my mouth. At morn, at noon, and at night, I will thank the Lord for all the good which he hath done me. Praise the Lord, O my soul, who has visibly FOR HER FRUITFULNESS.

blessed thy state — who has rained down showers of love upon thee from heaven; think of what the Almighty has done thee, who has looked on thee with favor. Amen.

1. A thousand thanks to thee, almighty Lord! for having

So graciously vouchsafed my heart's intensest craving;

O now preserve from harm the gift, the precious load,

Which thy munificence upon me has bestowed!

2. A thousand thanks, O Lord! for thy protecting power,
That often me defends, when dangers round me lower.
If they recur again, O be thou still with me,
'Tis thou that gives me strength, 'tis thou that makes me free.

3. A thousand thanks that thou hast never me for saken,
Nor wilt, while yet my faith is stable and unshaken,
And while I flee from sin. Lo! I my vows outpour,
To serve thee here below, and there for evermore

THE PREGNANT WOMAN

4. Thou wilt be still my God! Thou wilt me guide and strengthen,
That I may never fear when coming dangers lengthen
Their shadows, till they steal, and gather c'er my head!
Be with mein that hour! Depart not from my bed!

5. Be with me in that hour! Lend me thy firm endurance!
In direst agony give of thy love assurance;
And when the danger's past, with what transporting glee
Will my glad lips proclaim a thousand thanks to thee!

The pregnant Woman recommends herself and the fruit of her Body to God.

EXHORTATION.

When a godly married woman becomes aware of her first fulness, various duties devolve upon her, in addition to the ordinary ones of her rank and station.

1. She must diligently recommend herself to God every day, that he may lead, strengthen, and protect her.
2. She must faithfully lay the fruit of her body before God in her prayers.

RECOMMENDS HERSELF TO GOD.

3. For this is what distinguishes Christian matrons from unbelieving ones, godly married women from reckless wantons. Unbelieving women and wantons curse their pregnancy, disregard their future offspring, do not thank God for it, do it hurt when they can, and perhaps entertain no good intentions with regard to it. But godly married women think and feel otherwise; they never pray without presenting their child to the Lord, beseeching him to shape it well, to give it sound and straight limbs, to preserve its life, and to grant it a happy birth. 4. They love their coming offspring even before they see it, are solicitous for its

preservation, prepare everything necessary to swathe and clothe it after it is born.

5. Not content with caring for its bodily comforts, they also pray God to permit the fruit of their bodies, after the birth of the body, to attain to regeneration by the rite of holy baptism.

O holy father and creator of all men, Lo! I come before thy most holy face, and humbly bespeak thy grace. In thy goodness, O great God! thou hast bestowed upon me a fruit of my body; but what am I, that I should be favored to give it to the world? Therefore, O Lord! Lord! All my longing is before thee and THE PREGNANT WOMAN my sighs are not unknown to thee. Lord! Lord! what thy grace has given may thy mercy preserve. To thy fatherly care and custody I resign myself wholly. Lord! watch over me day and night lest harm befall me. Escort me, when I go out, preserve me when I am abroad, and bring me back to my home safe and unharmed. Let my soul be quiet and content. Let my soul ever converse with thee, be glad in thee, rejoice in thee. Let my heart be a dwelling place of Jesus and a temple of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus may live in me and walk in me, direct me and sanctify me. Ward off all vexation, anger and fright. Let the look of thine eyes guard my breath, my life, and my every tread. May the Lord preserve my going out and my coming in henceforth to all eternity. In the name of the triune God I go out and in. In the name of the triune God I retire to rest and arise in the morning. In the name of the triune God I undertake my daily labor. O thou triune God! guard, preserve, and defend me by thy power, carry me in thy hands, protect me on my paths, lest evil befall me, and I will thank thee and praise thee as long as I live. I also recommend to thee, O triune God! the pledge which I carry under my heart. Lord I pray for it, I present it to thee, Oh! hear my supplication for the sake of thy Goodness, and of Jesus. O give my child thy RECOMMENDS HERSELF TO GOD.

Holy Spirit. Let it be filled even in its concealment, like John the Baptist, with heavenly power. Give it a well-tempered soul and a pious heart, that it may fear and love thee as long as it lives. But give it also sound and straight limbs, a hale body, and good gifts of body and mind. And when thou hast favored it in secret with these glorious gifts of body and mind, then, after its bodily birth, let it be speedily regenerated by holy baptism. Thou hast said, O Jesus! Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Thou hast taken the children upon thine arms, and blessed them. Take my child also, in time, upon thy holy arms, and bless it also, give it the pledge of being thy child, the Holy Ghost; sanctify and renovate it for the life eternal; make it a child of heaven and of eternal life, that I with it and it with thee may hereafter become partakers of eternal bliss. My hope rests firmly upon the Lord, my God! He is the best of friends, who stands by me in every danger; he alone shall have the service of my heart. Amen. 1. From God I'll not depart, to him I will surrender

All that a sinful heart so poor as I can tender;

He is my castle strong, my shield, my burguenot,

My strong and faithful God, my God forsake me not.

2. From God I'll not depart, though pangs and sorrows offer,

My heart shall gently bear what 'tis its lot to suffer.

Let sorrow still be mine, however great it be,

For when it comes I cling more closely still to thee.

3 From God I'll not depart, for why should I not tarry?

Does he not always lend his hand my steps to carry?

The hand that makes me free, the hand that doth me keep,

Gives me to eat and drink, and watches o'er my sleep.

4. From God I'll not depart, though pangs and pains should harrow

My bowels, or the tooth of sickness gnaw my marrow.

The hour of comfort comes, the struggle is forgot,

And thus I surely see that God forsakes me not.

5. From God I'll not depart, e'en when my days are numbered,

For then my end shall be as light as if I slumbered.

I live and die for him while here I live and die,

And when I mount above, he'll be forever nigh.

THE COVENANT PROMISE

73. The Pregnant Woman remembers the Divine Covenant Promise

EXHORTATION.

As sad and painful as is at times the condition of pregnant women, so glorious and glad are the promises God has made them, in assuring them of his assistance in times of need, and declaring that he will not leave them, nor forget them, but will help them, save them, carry them upon his hands, and do all that is contained in so many sayings of pith and power. 1. Every godly pregnant married woman should make herself acquainted with these sayings, and derive comfort from them. 2. If the desired help, the promised rescue, and the expected assistance, should not come at the moment she asks for it, she must not despair, or suppose that there is an end of the promise, and that it will not be fulfilled. 3. On the contrary, she must set her firm reliance upon the promises of God, who will faithfully keep what he has vouchsafed, when his hour of help arrives. 4. In the meantime, she must persevere in prayer, trust and hope, until the coming of the glad hour when the now afflicted one will say with joy, in praise of the Highest, "Hitherto THE PREGNANT WOMAN REMEMBERS the Lord hath helped me; the Lord hath done me great good, whereof I am glad."

My God! my heart reminds thee of thy words, Ye shall seek my face; therefore, Lord, I seek thy face. Thou knowest, my God, that without thee I am nothing, and can do nothing; who can help me but thou alone? Therefore I come to thee, and cling to thy word of promise. Thou sayest that thou wilt not forsake thy people; O forsake not me! Thou sayest that thou wilt be with them in the hour of need; my hour of need approaches. Thou sayest thou wilt help them; O help me. O be with me! Thou sayest that thou wilt give them strength; O give me strength. Thou sayest thou wilt rescue them; O rescue me. Lord, in my condition, I know not whither to fly, except to thee alone. I have much care and trouble, and disquietude in my heart, but thy consolations rejoice my soul, thy word of promise raises me up. Knowing thus that thou art the patron of thy faithful, the help of the deserted, the refuge of the afflicted, I am of good cheer, and cling to thee. I will cling to thee, and to thy word, when my sorrows and the agonies of my heart increase; then I will cry, Lord, I will not let thee go, except thou help me. If thou dost delay help, it will at last appear to the comfort THE COVENANT PROMISE.

of the wretched; thou wilt help them gloriously.

Thou, Lord, imposest a burden, but thou also helpst to bear it; therefore, if thou wilt help me to bear my burden, it will not be too heavy for me. God is my reliance and my strength— a help in the troubles which have befallen me;

therefore I am not afraid; and why should I be afraid? The Lord is with me. The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom should I be afraid? The Lord is the vigor of my life, whom should I dread? With God I will cheerfully go about my coming labor; with God's assistance,

I will labor and will conquer. O thou gracious

God! strengthen my faith, rivet my reliance upon thy promises. Let me, secure against all mishap, reach my time in safety. Meantime I will pray and sing, will trust in thee, until, joyfully, delivered, I shall thank and

praise thee for thy benefits in thy temple, and, while I live, in my heart. Amen. Yea, I will believe, for here I have God's word; of this no fiend can rob me. I will forever and forever repose on this firm foundation, and grasp the anchor of hope with the strong hand of faith. Amen.

1. I shall not be forsaken

Though I may suffer now.

God in his care has taken

My health, and made his vow

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That those who love and fear him,

And in him put their trust,

Shall rest securely near him,

His mercy ne'er shall rust.

2. Although at times me seemeth

There is no end to pain,

Still bright his promise gleameth,

And makes me glad again.

He knows the fitting period

For coming to my aid,

And when, what me has wearied

Forever must be staid.

3. He nevermore can leave me,

For am I not his child?

How could he hate or grieve me

That am so reconciled

To him and to his keeping?

Could he look down and see

His child distressed and weeping,

And fail to set it free?

4. I never was forsaken

While I on earth remain,

Though often I have taken

My fill of throes and pain.

Why now should my preserver

Withhold his helping hand?

What could abate his fervor?

His word runs not to sand.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

5. In God is my dependance,

For he is true and just;

My heart, with all its tendons,

Shall clasp the faultless trust.

The hour comes ever nearer

When what me now annoys,

Will set my spirit clearer

And fill my heart with joys.

The Pregnant Woman remembers the Omnipotence of God.

EXHORTATION.

When we reflect upon the conception, preservation, growth, and birth of a child, we are at a loss how sufficiently to praise the omnipotence of God; without God's omnipotence, no child can be born; and when one is born, it is always a miracle in the eyes of the faithful. 1. Knowing this, a godly married woman must rely on the omnipotence of God; the more children she sees born, the more miracles of the omnipotence of God does she behold. 2. As the almighty hand of God has helped others, she may rest assured that God will help her also. THE PREGNANT WOMAN REMEMBERS

3. If despondency would intrude itself, she must remember the words of the angel, who says, "With God nothing is impossible."—Luke, i. 37. As nothing is impossible with God, a pregnant woman may also rejoice in the omnipotence of God. 4. If circumstances should arise which do not occur to others, she must not lose her reliance upon the omnipotence of God; for it is because God is almighty that he can heal the most dangerous wounds, relieve the heaviest burdens, and ward off every casualty. 5. Though human beings are present at the birth of a child, yet the almighty hand of God is there also, though unseen; it regulates all things, and brings everything to a happy end by its divine power. My God! how my heart

rejoices when I think of thy omnipotence—of thy almighty hands which lift and carry all things, and save us from all affliction. If I regard my present condition, I see that all depends on thy omnipotence alone; it must carry me in its arms, or I shall fall. Thy omnipotence must alleviate my ailments—aye, in the coming throes it must accomplish all things alone. If I regard the fruit of my body, it is again thy omnipotence which must
THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD.

preserve it, strengthen it, guard it, and bring it to see the light of day. Therefore, it is my greatest consolation, now and throughout my life, that thou art an almighty God; if I am weak, thou art strong; if I am wretched, thou art omnipotent; if I am powerless, thou canst do all things. This consolation no one shall take from me. We have a God who aids, and a Lord who rescues from death. Therefore, Almighty

God! I commit myself wholly unto thee; watch over me, preserve me during my pregnancy;

may thy omnipotence assist me to reach my time in peace. May thy omnipotence strengthen me, when the hour of birth draws nigh; may thy omnipotence stand by me when it has come.

May thy omnipotence attend me at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of my labor, until I shall be a happy mother. Therefore, happen what will, I will not fear, for I have an almighty God; I will not despair when troubles swell, for I have an almighty God; I will be of good cheer when called upon to labor, for I have an almighty God; in my throes I will cry, O thou Almighty God, help me! Lo, I depend upon thee, I hope in thee; thy child awaits the hour of thy coming. Hasten, then merciful father! to me, with thy omnipotence; let me hear joy and happiness—let the frame rejoice which thou hast shattered. May thy omnipotence sustain the fruit of my body; may thy omnipotence give me strength, yea, may thy omnipotence make me rejoice by a happy delivery, and I will praise this thy omnipotence, while I live, and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. I called upon the Lord in my woes, O Lord, hear the voice of my cry! Then my helper saved me from death, and gave me peace; therefore I thank thee, O God! O thank the Lord with me!

Give honor unto our God! Amen.

1. We have a God on high, who fails not to defend us

When trouble and despair most pitilessly shend us.

However much we bear, however great our woe,

Our God is ever near, him shall we not forego.

2 We have a God on high: in sorrow and disaster,

He holds the balance still, of life and death the master.

And were they sore beyond the tension of belief,

God's power is yet more vast, and surely gives relief.

3. We have a God on high! In sorrow and in anguish

He helps. Hard though it be, my faith shall never languish.

THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

My Lord, I will be thine! To thee 'tis easy all,
To bid my torments cease, and make my anguish small.

4. We have a God on high! He hears the poor implorer,
That piteous to him calls, and comes as his restorer
God loves the poor in heart; he hears, he sees, he gives,
When his own time is ripe, the happiness that lives.

5 We have a God on high! Should any one be froward,
And say, No help is here, there is no mercy toward:—

I will the presence and the help of God proclaim;
Yes, God is surely here, give honor to his name

The Pregnant Woman takes comfort at the thought of the Assistance of God.

EXHORTATION.

When persons in need of help see great dangers, manifold sufferings, heavy burdens, and hard labor before them, it is encouraging to have some one to stand by them in the times of danger, to help them through their sufferings, and to lend

THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

a hand in furtherance of their labors. Such also is the comfort of the pregnant.

1. If they learn that dangers may attend the time of birth, they say, "The Lord is with me, I am not afraid."
2. If they experience manifold sufferings they say to God, "Thou art my help and my salvation, my God! do not depart." 3. If their burden becomes heavier from day to day, they remember that the Lord, who imposes the burden, will also help to bear it. 4. If they dread their approaching labor, they know that the Lord will bless it, and will help them through with it. Should not this encourage them, the more so as God in Holy Writ calls himself a helper? But if God helps, they are well and rightly helped. Men often would fain help, but cannot; but God both can and will help; therefore, how dark and dangerous soever the time may seem, it should still be graven on their hearts, "The Lord is my helper." Wherefore dost thou grieve, O my Soul, and art so ill at ease within me? Look to God, for I shall yet have to thank him, that he is the help of my sight, and my God. Yea, my God! this is my comfort in my present condition, that thou THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

art the help of my sight. If my face is pale with fear, thou canst dispel all fear with thy glorious assistance. If my face is wet with tears thou canst wipe them away, when thou appearest with thy gracious assistance. Therefore I will rely upon thee, and to all things that might cause me fear, dread, or fright, I will oppose the comforting thought that God is my helper, and will be and remain my helper. But thou, Almighty God! hasten to my side with thy merciful succour, when I need succour. Lord I wait for thy salvation, and invoke thy help, I rely upon thy help; if thou wilt not help me, I am lost. If my sufferings increase, O Lord! do not withdraw thy merciful assistance. When the hour of birth arrives, do thou arrive also with thy sustaining

favor. Thou art my only refuge, my God, and my help, I know no other. If thou wilt not help me, who can save me? Help me, O God of my Salvation! when I pray, hear me, help me when troubles set in, help me when dangers threaten, help me when my hour arrives, then will I sigh, in joyous confidence, with my Jesus: Father, help me out of this hour of trouble If then I have thee with me, I shall conquer, my sadness shall be converted into joy. O how gloriously hast thou helped others! Help me too; thou art still the same strong, merciful, almighty God that thou hast ever been, Lord! I perse THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD.

vere in prayer like the Canaanitish woman, and say, Lord help me! yea, I will not let thee go except thou help me. Come, O Father of grace and mercy! and help thy child, for which, without thee, there is no help. Come, O Jesus, thou Saviour of mankind! and help me, stay with me, until I am happily delivered. Come and help me, O Holy Ghost! and set thy seal upon my consoling hope that my help will soon arrive. Triune God! to thee I resign my self; triune God, to thee I cry; on thee I rely Help me when thou wilt, but in delaying help assist me with thy mercy; help me in my need rescue me from my troubles, and I will thank thee with joyous lips. Meanwhile, be of good cheer my heart! despair not, God will have mercy upon thee; Counsel and help will he bestow upon thee, he is the protection of the wretched; not even can we sit in a garden or roses; whoso relies upon God is well-served; God will forever guard him. Yea, I will constantly place my reliance upon thee, thou wilt rejoice me with thy help, when help is needed. Meantime I will quietly await the coming help, and praise the name of the Lord. Amen. 1. Is not my God with me? Then fare ye well and leave me,

Ye terrors of the night! Ye can no more deceive me.

God answers to my cry; his help and gracious aid

Seek me in my distress, and I am not afraid.

2. Is not my God with me? If some uncouth annoyer

Crosses my path unwares, he cannot turn destroyer,

For as he comes, comes God; mishap is not alone,

For every evil one, an angel leaves God's throne.

3. Is not my God with me? If I must taste the savor

Of sorrow and of care, I shall not lack his favor;

To rescue me from all, and by what I have borne,

To teach me that without his love I'm quite forlorn.

4. Is not my God with me? and if an inundation

Of wrath should o'er me pass, I have the consolation;

Were evil ne'er so great, it none the less must yield,

For God is with me still, and o'er me spreads his shield.

5. Is not my God with me? And if the welkin darkens,

The word must be fulfilled to which my spirit hearkens;

DEVOTION AT THE APPROACH

His goodness and his truth are every morning new;

Be faithful then to him who is to you so true.

74. Devotions when in Labor

Devotion at the approach of the hour of Delivery.

EXHORTATION.

When Paul promises Christian women that by bearing children they shall be saved, he does not mean to say that by bearing children they would merit salvation; for only Jesus Christ has purchased salvation by his sufferings and death;

but he meant to console them by saying that although, in consequence of the fall, they must bear children in great pain, nevertheless they have a gracious and reconciled God, and even if they should die in labor, they may inherit eternal life.

1. But they must remain in the faith, they must not throw away their confidence when the hour of birth approaches, they must not grumble against God, but remain in faith, hope, and assurance, though it should go hard with them, and call to mind the beautiful promise of divine omnipotence.

OF THE HOUR OF DELIVERY.

2. They must remain in the love of God, must love God with all their hearts, and then say, I love thee from my heart, O Lord! I beseech thee not to be far from me with thy help and grace. They must remain in the love of their neighbors, and must previously reconcile themselves to God and their neighbors, as some godly married women are fain to receive the holy communion, in order to sanctify and sacrifice themselves to God. They must also remain in the love of their offspring, and must not carelessly do it harm, or perhaps even deprive it of life by some perverseness, but must submissively follow the good advice and counsel of the people around them. But when unloving mothers show themselves untrue to their children at the time of birth, and will not do what God imposes upon them, and what it is their duty to do, (a sin from which empresses, queens, and princesses are not free,) they are the murderesses of their children, who will accuse them before the throne of God of having deprived them of life from idleness, and killed them before their birth. 3. Finally they must continue in sanctification and chastity, lead a holy, chaste, and Christian life, pray faithfully for their child, guard against sin, and, in this state of sanctification, await the hour of delivery. 47*

DEVOTION AT THE APPROACH

Lord, almighty God! faithful and loving father! the hour of my delivery is constantly approaching, therefore do thou also approach with thy help and grace; I come before thee with prayer, in abiding trust, in full confidence, with a living faith in thy gracious assistance; O do thou come to me with thy most holy presence, goodness and mercy. Come to me, and remain with me, at, during, and after the birth; when I have thee with me, I have the most puissant rescuer the most powerful helper, and the most faithful friend. When the time comes give me good cheer, that I may be undismayed, and may discard all fear, that I may calmly stand, sit, or lie down, and reflect that as thou art with me, all will be well. Give strength unto my limbs that I may not fail, but may perform my labors with thy strength, and happily end them. Through thy power all things will be easy; if the Lord is near me and with me, I am whole. Grant also, dear Lord, unto those around me wisdom and prudence to arrange all things fitly, to do nothing too much and nothing too

little, bless what they undertake, and look graciously upon what they attempt, that they may thank thee therefor with me, and I with them. Give me grace to follow good advice and avoid all perverseness, lest I do myself harm or make my OF THE HOUR OF DELIVERY.

child a cripple or cause its death, thereby loading a heavy responsibility upon myself. Hear, O gracious God! my prayer, and the prayers of all present; help me soon, and help me happily, if it is thy holy will. Let me see my child happy and living, and be a joyous mother. See, Lord! here I am, do with me as thou wilt. Forsake me not, and do not withdraw thy hand from me, God, my Salvation, remain with me in the worst of trouble, and then fortify my patience, that I may not grow faint, my hope, that I may not let it fail. Now I can do all things through him who makes me powerful, even Christ. May the heavenly father bless, preserve, and keep me. May Jesus Christ be with me, strengthen and refresh me, and may the Holy Ghost be my spokesman with God with unutterable sighs, and bear witness of my spirit that I am a true child of God. May the love of the father cover, and the grace of the son refresh me. Faithfully will I pray to God and take him to my assistance in all my troubles, which are well known to him; for patience I will beseech him in all things; he will well watch over me and be my help in all things. Amen. 1. Aid me in this hour of anguish,

Father of all mercies, aid!

Thus, while here in pain I languish,

With my heart of death afraid,

Thus I turn to thee and cry,

Father, do not let me die!

Many an hour my form has quivered,

Let me quickly be delivered!

2. Surely all is at thy bidding,

What thou wilt is quickly done;

If thou but command the ridding

Of my pangs, they all are gone.

Come, O Lord, and loose the chain,

Speak dispersion to my pain,

If thou do not give me nurture,

I shall perish in my torture.

3. Lord, the word that thou hast spoken

Says, thou wilt not me forsake;

All my hope is in that token,

Let my spirit never break.

Mighty Lord! I cry to thee:

King of succors, succor me!

In thee all my trust is grounded,

Let me never be confounded.

4. Yet 'tis not for me to measure

Time and place to thy return;

I will wait thy gracious pleasure

Patient, though my bowels burn.

CONSOLATION AT THE HOUR OF BIRTH.

Give me strength and give me force

For the hard and bitter course,

Go not from me I beseech thee,

Let my cries of anguish reach thee.

5. Lord, on thee alone depending,

I will bear without a groan,

Thy omnipotence unending

Is my confidence alone.

Father, lo! I look to thee

Father, Father, pity me.

Come, O come, let pity speed thee,

Come, thy child so sorely needs thee.

Consolation at the approach of the Hour of Birth.

EXHORTATION.

Godly married women are often seized with fear and trembling when their time comes; but why should they be afraid? Have they not a God with them, the God who has imposed these pains, and who surely will help them to bear and to overcome? 1. Remember at this time, that God is a good and gracious God.

2. He is faithful, and will suffer no one to be tempted beyond his powers of resistance, but will

CRY TO GOD BEFORE DELIVERY.

put such an end to the temptation, that it may be borne.

3. He is merciful, and will have mercy on them as a father on his children.

4. He is strong, and can do what men cannot do, for his power is great in those that are weak. Remember that your pangs will be of short duration, and will not last; not for days and years, like the sufferings of David, or the disease of the sick man, but will be over in an hour; and even should they last a little longer, And should it last unto the night,

And through the night till morning,

I know the Lord will make it right,

He needs no help nor warning.

Let such be your comfort.

Cry to God before Delivery.

Lord, Almighty God! as I perceive that my hour will soon have come, I hasten to thee, and beseech thee, do not depart from me. O remain with me, give me strength to bring forth, and graciously deliver me, assuage the throes of labor, which thou hast imposed upon the female sex. O strong and almighty God, help me now
CRY TO GOD BEFORE DELIVERY.

erfully; my help is with thee; for thee, Lord, my heart longeth; my God, I hope in thee, let me never be confounded; hasten to bestead me,

Lord, my help! O Jesus, thou who didst take human form and shape for the sake of thy holy birth and incarnation, have mercy upon me, help me through this hour, and save me, O most precious Holy Ghost! dwell in my heart, and cry Abba, dear Father! Bear witness of my spirit that in the midst of my throes I am still a child of God. O thou Holy Trinity! help me, and be merciful unto me. Amen.

ANOTHER.

O thou loving God! who lovest from thy heart the children of men, and hast especially promised to assist us in suffering and sickness, thou knowest the condition in which I am; thou seest also for what it is I am preparing, and what is before me; O therefore all my hope rests upon thee. O thou mighty God, who dost bestead the lonely deer in the wild forest, without human aid, O let the fruit of my body be commended unto thee, and bless the hands that offer to assist at the birth; do thou, thyself, give me the best of help, and graciously deliver me. Thou hast said,

Fear not, I am with thee; do not fail; I am thy God, I will give thee strength, and will help thee; I will keep thee with the right hand

CRY TO GOD BEFORE DELIVERY.

of my righteousness. Upon this gracious promise I rely, and joyfully set about the work which God has appointed for me in my station and condition. I will be of good cheer, and await thy comfort. In the meantime I will patiently bear, according to thy ordinance and thy will, what thou hast imposed upon me.

But let not thy face be terrible unto me. Lord, Lord! my trust in adversity, be thou still as ever the gracious God of my hidden pledge; keep, O Lord, thine handiwork. Be pleased, at the proper time, graciously to untie the bonds of nature, and when men would despair, do thou display thy power, and thy wondrous goodness. Be strong with thy power in my weakness, fortify me in body and in soul. Soothe and assuage my pains, and let my offspring see the light of day unharmed and healthy; lay it alive into my arms and hands, and I will sing thy praises with outstretched arms and folded hands, and return to thee as a sacrifice, and a child of holy baptism, what thou hast given me. But if it should be written in thy sovereign wisdom, that I must depart this life in my labor, then thy will be done; thou art my God, my Lord, my Father. I thy creature, thy handmaiden, thy child, deal with me according to thy pleasure; I am prepared for life and for death, and even if thou shouldst design to kill me, I CRY TO GOD DURING BIRTH.

shall still hope in thee. Bestow upon me a patient and willing heart, constant faith, and abiding confidence. I lie in throes and struggles; help me, O Lord Jesus; I cling to thy grace alone; thou canst give me strength. When terror comes, guard me, that I may not be overwhelmed; thou canst dispel all danger, I know thou will not fail. Amen. Cry to God during Birth.

Lord, Lord! great in counsel and mighty in deed; lo, here I am, and sigh for thy help alone. Here no man can aid me but thou alone. Therefore I humbly beseech thee, mighty Helper in the hour of need! to manifest thy almighty power. Thou knowest my sufferings, because thou hast thyself imposed them; whether I sit up or lie down, whether I walk or stand, thou knowest it, and thou, Lord, art near me. Thou seest my tears also, and my sighs are not unheard of thee. I now call to mind thy boundless omnipotence; thou canst do unutterably more than we know or understand; no adversity is so great, but that thou canst dispel it. See, thy mighty hands have fashioned my child; they have clothed it with flesh and skin, life and CRY TO GOD DURING BIRTH.

many benefits thou hast heretofore vouchsafed unto it, and thy look has preserved its breath. Therefore do thou bring it also to see the light of day, according to thy mercy. Lord! Lord! thou who has helped so many thousands over the face of the earth, thou in thy goodness wilt help me also; I rely upon thy mercy and truth; let them watch over all my steps. If danger should seem to threaten, speak the consolation to my soul; I am with thee in adversity, I will rescue thee, I will not desert nor overlook thee. Let me do what I have to do with faithfulness, so that my conscience may be clear; and do thou give strength unto my weakness. Sad heart, be of better cheer, and do not so utterly despond; all will end for the best; thy pains and thy wailing will soon be turned to joy. Amen. ANOTHER.

O gracious and merciful God! thou hast said, Call upon me in adversity and I will rescue thee, and thou shalt praise my name; in accordance with this gracious word I come to thee at this time, my father! I cry to thee in mine adversity; O hear my voice, and do not conceal thyself from my voice. Remember that I am thy child; O do not make me suffer pain beyond my capacity! Lord, when I am in pain, soothe it, Jesus, thou son of David! have mercy upon JRY TO GOD DURING BIRTH.

me; by thy holy birth and incarnation help me, dear Lord God! bestead me, help me, and make me glad. Holy Ghost, thou comforter in hours of trial, speak this comfort to my soul, that I shall soon be a joyous mother. Carry my faltering supplications to the throne of God, and when I can no longer pray for pain, O Jesus! do thou pray for me! O most precious Holy Ghost! do thou speak for me before God with unutterable sighs. O triune God, stretch forth thy hand to me and to my child, as we stretch forth our hearts and hands to thee. Let us not perish nor be harmed. Manifest thy might in us, and we will praise and bless thy power; not only in this mortal time shall thy praise be sounded, I will spread it hereafter also, and extol

thy name eternally. Do not let the fruit of my body, which is thy creation, be destroyed, but preserve it graciously by thy power; grant that I may overlook nothing necessary for its well being, and may cast eyes upon it through thy goodness. Lord God Father, who art in heaven, have mercy upon me. Lord God Son, the Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me. Lord God Holy Ghost have mercy upon me Amen. CRY TO GOD DURING LABOR.

ANOTHER.

Merciful and mighty God! the hour has come which thou hast appointed for my delivery, therefore I turn to thee and cry, Father help me through this hour. In thy name I begin my labor, in thy name will I complete it; Lord, my Creator, assist and fortify me; Jesus, thou son of God! who wert born of woman, stay with me, and refresh me. O embrace me with thine arms, and keep me, most precious Holy Ghost! Give me patience and cheerfulness for my labor; have mercy upon me, and make me glad. O thou holy trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! hasten to my relief. Arise, Lord, and help me, or I perish. Christ, thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. Christ, thou Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me. Christ, thou Lamb of God! who takest away the sins of the world, leave thy peace with me. Amen. PASSAGES AND PRAYERS DURING LABOR.

75. Passages and Prayers to be spoken during Labor

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them."—Psalm exlv. 18, 19. I turn my thoughts from all around me,

And bend my eyes on Jesus' face;

I know that nothing will confound me,

So long as he vouchsafes his grace

On him my every hope is set,

I seek him and I hold him yet.

Like Jacob, I with him will wrestle,

I seek his help, for he is strong;

At last I'll in his bosom nestle,

And feel that I to him belong.

I'll cry, Lord! I release thee not,

Except thou bless me on the spot.

O my Jesus! be nigh unto me now, and remain with me until thou hast helped me; O fulfil my desire; I desire nothing but thy help, which thou hast promised in thy word.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."—Psalm xlii. 5. 48*

Why art thou sad, my suffering soul?

Be still and do not falter.

God is my strength and fortress whole;

His goodness cannot alter.

Suffer in silence yet a while

Suffering shall yield to gladness.

O my Jesus! I hope in thy salvation—I hope in thy comfort! O let it quickly appear; thou alone art my hope. Hear me, make me glad, and deliver me, and I will thank thee forever. "The Lord has called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I

have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer."—Isaiah, xi iv. 4, vi. 7. 8. O Jesus, help me soon! on thee my hope is grounded,

For thee I yearn that have been so severely wounded.

All help doth come from thee; from thee above 'tis sent,

O therefore quickly come to ease my languishment.

O my God, have mercy upon me; do not forsake me; thou art my God. O merciful God! my eyes look upon the sky, and long for thy comfort. Do not withdraw thy countenance from me; thy hand strengthens me, thy right hand keeps me. O Lord! how long, how long does the heart crave and yearn after thee. TO BE SPOKE DURING LABOR.

"Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save."

—Isaiah, lix. 1.

No contraction bounds the action

Of the Lord's resistless brand;

Storms and dangers are no strangers

To the magic of his hand.

I know my God! that with thee nothing is impossible, therefore I rely upon thee; Lord, stretch out thy hand to me, as to Peter, when he sank; thy hand can save out of all things, in all things, and from all things. O Lord, look upon me, I yearn for thy grace. "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."—Psalm xci. 14, 15, 16. Lord Jesus Christ the need is sore

That fiercely doth assail me;

O dearest Lord, delay no more,

But hasten to regale me.

No one but thee can me bestead,

No earthly creature gives me aid,

Without thee I must perish.

O Jesus! as no one can help me but thou, hasten hither with thy assistance. Lo, I am in great trouble; O rescue me according to thy promise. I covet thee; come and help me. My heart calls to thy mind thy word, ye shall seek my face; therefore, Lord, I seek thy face. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee"—Isaiah, liv. 10. Where fails my strength, do thou sustain,

O Lord, my earthly weakness;

Grant that despair may never stain

My robe of holy meekness.

Preserve me, O most mighty Lord,

In full allegiance to thy word,

Preserve me from defection.

O Jesus, do not withdraw thy grace and thy Holy Ghost! O do not depart; fortify me for my labor, and in my labor. Remember the covenant thou hast made with me in holy baptism; by virtue of that covenant thou art my father, and I thy child; O my father, think of thy child! Help thy child, have mercy on thy child. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psalm ciii. 13.

My father and my God thou art,

My child is ever at thy heart,

Thy heart of more than love;

I am a hapless thing of dust

On earth I have no hope nor trust.

O my gracious God and Father, I know not where to find or seek assistance or consolation but in thee alone. Therefore I cry to thee, O help me, my father! Have mercy upon me, my father! O let my father's heart be melted, that I may soon rejoice, O thou with whom nothing is impossible, grant my prayer for thy mercy's sake. "This I surely know, that whoso serves God, he shall be comforted after adversity, and relieved from tribulation, and shall find grace after chastisement. For after the storm thou makest the sun to shine again, and after weeping and wailing thou dost overwhelm us with joy. To thy name be power and praise for evermore, thou God of Israel."—Tobit iii. 22, 23, Mishap was never of such long duration,

But that at last it found its termination;

Thy hand extend, and make amends,

Upon this earth my heart no more desires.

O God, after my throes and pangs, let me speedily see thy assistance, thou art the help in need, the mighty Hero who alone can help, save me and let me find grace before thee, do not pass by thy handmaiden, thou lover of life, preserve my life and the life of my child; let us both live before thee, that we may praise thy name. "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion. Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape; incline thine ear unto me, and save me. Be thou my strong habitation; whereunto I may continually resort; thou hast given thy commandment to save me for thou art my rock and my fortress."—Psalm lxxi. 1, 2, 3. Lord Jesus unto thee I cry,

Incline thy ear and hear it!

Let thy almighty hand be nigh

To my distracted spirit.

The anguish and the woe I bear

Are greater than I may declare,

My heart is overloaded.

O Lord, thou well knowest my misery and wretchedness; Lord, Lord, the greater the need the more will I cry to thee for help, as my Jesus did, who prayed the more fervently, the more he wrestled with death.

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say more than they that watch for the morning."

—Psalm cxxx. 6.

And should the morning turn to night,

And night again to morning,

My trusting soul shall take no flight,

All faint misgivings scorning.

My God! this is and shall be my firm resolve.

I will not doubt thy goodness, should evil tarry ever so long; even if the Lord would conceal his face from me, he will soon arise, and be merciful unto me.

"Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as I dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward; O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me what shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it."—Isaiah xxxviii 14, 15.

From the deepest depth I call,

No one hears me of them all;

None but Jesus! thou my friend!

Thou wilt hear, and rescue send.

(The Lord Jesus answers:)

In the highest heights I hear

Of thy sorrows harsh and drear;

Then thy lips with fear be dumb

My relief shall quickly come.

O Jesus! all my hope rests in thee, as in my strong and mighty helper. O do as thou hast said! With thee I have begun my labor, O let thy blessing rest upon it. Help me and my child, let us joyfully behold each

other, and live before thee. Lord! have mercy upon us! "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn thee unto me and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins."—Psalm xxv. 15, 18. Pour again the welcome guerdon

Of thy gladness on my heart:

Help to rid me of this burden,

Soothe the pain in which I smart.

If thou do not quickly help me,

My despair will overwhelm me.

Must I sigh and sigh thus vainly?

Will my prayer not be heard,

Art thou not the power that mainly

Saves the wretched with a word?

O command these throes to leave me,

Send thy angel to relieve me.

Lord Jesus, in faith I look to thee; O come to me, see how I suffer, fortify my faith, strengthen my assurance, that I may not swerve from thee. O stand thyself at my side. Lord, hear my prayer, do not forsake me. O, when will the time come for me to be gladdened by thy comfort? "Surely I come quickly. Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

Rev. xxii. 20.

Lord, if thou do not help me now,

I am destroyed forever;

Thou art alone who can'st bestead,

And me from anguish sever.

O come, Lord Jesus, come to me.

Thou seest what my sufferings be,

Thou never can'st forsake me.

O my Jesus! Such is the wish of my heart, and its desire, that thou mayest quickly come. O come and deliver me, come and make me glad, come and save me, let me see what I long to look upon. "Now Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. Hear my prayers O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears."—Psalm xxxix. 7, 12.

I know thou never yet hast me forsaken,
Nor left my heart alone, in terror shaken,
When e'er so distaught, God is my thought,
Although my soul with pain and dread is taken.

Lord Jesus, hasten to me, help me, my God, my Helper, and I shall be well helped. I know not whither else to turn in this distress and trouble, therefore I beseech thee come, O come, and give me help. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might be increaseth strength. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isaiah xxxix 29, 31. Lord Jesus Christ, God's only son,

In thee my trust is vested;
Thou art the truly beauteous one;
Whoe'er on thee has rested,
His faith, shall find in all distress,
A refuge that can ne'er grow less,
Therein is my reliance.

O Lord my God! Give me also new strength, bestow upon me the courage, power, and strength of thy holy Ghost, I am too weak to complete this work, but in the strength of my God I can do any and everything. Lord, strengthen me this time; my God help me to a joyful victory. The name of the Lord be praised.

"Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul."—Psalm xciv. 17, 19.

From the Lord my help is sent:
Therefore at the height of sorrow,
I will ever rest content;
Though no hope comes with the morrow,
And no mortal's aid is nigh,
I will lift my eyes on high.

Lord, almighty God! from whom all help cometh which is done on earth, hast thou not said, call upon me in adversity? at thy behest I call, and say, Lord help me, Lord! have mercy, take away the tribulation and distress of my soul, give me what I hope for, give me what I pray for, Lord! it is in thy hands. "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."—Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

Who hopes in God, and trusts in him,

Shall never be confounded;
Let come what will, misfortune grim,
If on this rock is founded
His confidence, a sure defence
Has he for all disaster.
Whate'er betide, his fortunes ride
Where tempests cannot master

O Lord! help me in thy great goodness and mercy, I wait for thy help, I hope for a glad delivery which is with thee; Look upon me, a poor afflicted woman, and make me happy again; let thine hour arrive, that I may thank thee with joyous lips. "The prayer of the wretched pierces the clouds, and will not stint, until it enter in, and will not cease until the Highest looks upon it."—Jesus Sirach xxxl. 21.

O God, give ear unto my supplications,
And let despair not set upon my patience;
Thou knowest my pain,
O hear me complain,
And put a period to my lamentations.
Pour thy contentment o'er my spirit rather,
And let my heart its wandering forces gather
To suffer in strength,
Until at length
Thou comest to relieve me, loving Father!

Lord, almighty God! thou who dost not despise the groans of the wretched, and condemnest not the desires of the hearts of the afflicted, accept our prayer, which we offer up to thee in our distress, and be graciously pleased to hear us. "Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication. Attend unto me, and hear me; I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and sorrow hath overwhelmed me."—Psalm lv 1, 2, 5. Hope on, thou spirit stricken,

Hope on, and never quail,
Though terrors round thee thicken
They never can prevail.
The darkness of thy present

Shall surely pass away;

Thine hours be smooth and pleasant.

And gladness grace the day.

O Lord, Lord, thou canst help me, for thou art an almighty God, thou wilt help me for thou art my loving God and father, O therefore hear me, let thy countenance shine upon me, and I shall be whole. "He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."—2 Cor. 6, 2. When all the help of this world fails,

And evil still grows greater,

The rescue comes, on summer gales

E'en from the great Creator,

Who doth his eyes in pity bend,

On all who have no other friend.

To God give praise and honor.

O Lord, has thine hour not yet come? Lord, how long wilt thou quite forget me? Yet I know that my God will not forget me, his love is too great, his heart is too warm, O save me for the sake of thy loving kindness. O how long, how long must the heart be pained and yearn after thee? "Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word. I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord; and thy law is my delight. Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee, and judgments help me."—Psalm cxix. 170, 174, 175. Though it should seem he will not come,

Yet nevermore be frightened;

For he would never have it known

When by him cares are lightened.

Unto his word more faith impart

Than to the mutterings of thy heart

And nothing let disturb thee.

Lord, my God! Through all my wretchedness and pangs I will look upon thee alone; I will not look near me nor around me, for then I only see feeble men, but over me, heavenward, to thee almighty God! O let thy grace assist me, and thy arm sustain me, help me, God of my salvation, and I shall be safe. "I will turn their mourning into joy, and will convert them and make them rejoice from their sorrow."—Jer. 31, 1

Awhile he will have tarried,

His comfort kept at bay;

'Twill seem as though he carried

No thought of thy dismay.

And that shouldst thou remain

With fear and torture harried,

He would not turn again.

But if thou dost betoken

That thou art firm in faith

49*

Thy fetters shall be broken,

And thou released from death;

He will unbind thy chain;

His word shall soon be spoken,

And thou rejoice again.

O my God! relieve me of my burden, do not longer withhold thy help, turn my mourning into joy, and give me to rejoice over a safe delivery from my sorrow; in God is my salvation, and my pride; my trust is in God. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."—Psalm cxxi. 1, 2.

God never has forsaken

Of those a single one,

Who, with their trust unshaken

Him set their faith upon.

Though strange the times may seem,

Yet never doubt their fitness;

With rapture thou shalt witness

Thy bliss, as in a dream.

Lord, triune God! I have set all my hope on thee, for thee I yearn. Lord God Father, have mercy upon me and my child. Lord Jesus, strengthen me, and stand by me. O holy Ghost, refresh me with thy comfort, that I may be speedily rejoiced, delivered, refreshed, and rescued; triune God, have mercy upon me. "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie, though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."—Habakkuk ii. 3. From God I will not wander,

He guides me on my way;

Follows me here and yonder,
And holds me when I stray;
He stretches forth his hand;
At morning and at even
His guardian care is given
To me, where'er I stand.

O yes, my God! I will not leave thee, except thou bless and help me. On the delay of thy help let the glorious hour of thy coming arise. Meantime I will persevere in sighs and prayer, and will say, Lord Jesus help me to strive, Lord Jesus help me to conquer, my delivery, my life, and my comfort are in thy hands. "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? Consider and hear me."—Psalm xiii 1, 2, 3. O when will thy pitying favor

Look upon my ceaseless pain?

When wilt thou return again?

Must I suffer thus forever?

O my God, how long, how long

Must I suffer and be strong?

O my gracious and merciful God? As thy

49* help is delayed I am seized with fear, yet I will not despair. Thou art my father, and I thy child. O conceal thy face from me no longer, speak but one word and I shall be well; for what thou speakest, is done, and what thou commandest, is performed; Lord in mercy hear me. "O Lord, the hope of Israel! Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise. Be not a terror unto me; thou art my hope in the day of evil."—Jeremiah xvii. 13, 14, 17. Where do I hear a cheering voice?

Thou, thou, Lord Jesus, art my choice;

With thee my heart does never miss

Comfort and counsel, peace and bliss;

Of all who still on Christ depend,

None e'er was left without a friend.

Yes, Lord Jesus! All my hope is now in thee, and thy omnipotence. Help me soon, my Saviour! if it be thy holy will; help me, that I may rejoice in thy assistance. O how will I praise thy name, and extol it, when thou shalt have gloriously saved me. My trust is in the name of the Lord, who has made the heavens and the earth. "I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because

he hath dealt bountifully with me."—Psalm xiii. 5, 6.

If I am weak thy truthfulness

Shall be my firm reliance,

That to the storms that round me pass,

I may bid sure defiance.

While faith and hope are still my share

While I persist in tears and prayer,

My heart is yet unconquered.

O thou faithful Saviour and lover of mankind!

My heart reminds thee of thy word, Ye shall seek my face; therefore I seek thy face, O Lord!

I know that thou canst help, and wilt gladly help; therefore I hope in thee, I hope from moment to moment.

O God! let this be the time; Lord help me according to thy mercy.

Meantime my hope is firm in thee.

"My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord; remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance and is humbled in me. This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope."—Lament iii. 18, 21. Even should the Lord be minded

For my death, my heart would cry,

With a faith not to be blinded,

And he could me nought deny.

Though his look be ever stern,

Yet his goodness will return;

He who soul and body gave me,

He will keep me, he will save me.

Yes, my God is mindful of me; therefore I say:

The Lord is mindful of me and blesseth me; he letteth his face shine. Though my power is not great, though I have no power to bring forth, yet in God I have strength and power. I shall yet rejoice in his help.

"Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side."—Psalm lxxi. 20, 21. Be not too vehement with me,

Lest I might wholly perish,

Thou knowest my strength, and through my pains

Wilt none the less me cherish.

I am not made of steel nor stone,

But by a breath can be o'erthrown,

And never rise thereafter.

O God, if thou wilt have me suffer great pain and fright, be not too vehement with me, thou knowest the extent of my power, my strength is not hidden from thee. O therefore refresh me; lift me up when I sink; ease me, when I faint; strengthen me when I grow weary. Lord God of my life! Save my life, and the life of my child, and thy name shall be praised for evermore. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth."—Isaiah xii. 2, 5. As in thy counsel it is writ

That I my life must jeopard

Yet of thy grace give me full store,

Be still my gentle shepherd;

That faith to patience me may bring,

And patience to the heavenly spring

Of thy most precious favor.

Yes, my God, this is my comfort, that my sufferings shall come to a good and happy end, because thou art my strength, my comfort and deliverer; if I have God with me, I have a certain deliverance; therefore I will hope in silence; by silence and hope I shall grow strong. I can do all things through him who maketh me powerful, even Christ. "Be not far from me, for trouble is near: for there is none to help. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death."—Psalm xxii. 11, 16. "Jesus, and hast thou forever enwrapped me in sorrow, That I must languish through night to the dawn of the morrow?

How can it be,

Sweetest, that thou couldst decree

On me such wailing and sorrow?"

"Child, is thy hope thus extinguished, thy spirit abated That for a little my help and assistance have waited?

Knowest thou not

It is my heart's dearest thought

That thou shalt never lack comfort?"

Yes, dearest Jesus, thy love and truth is the foundation of my hope and trust, thou hast loved me from eternity, and often helped and delivered me, therefore I hope that thou wilt refresh me this time also; though my trouble is great, and help seems afar off, and with feebleness my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth, yet in all things my heart is directed toward thee, thou wilt release me from all suffering. This I believe and know, Lord help my unbelief, and fortify my trust. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."—Lament. iii. 21, 22, 23. Think not, easily mistaken,

That the Lord has thee forsaken;

Know, howe'er thy lot be cast,

God will help thee at the last.

Help may be awhile belated

Without being all abated;

If not every wish succeed,

Yet he comes in time of need.

Gracious God, thy help is new, thou dost strengthen and preserve me in a moment. How could I accomplish all things? Thy supervision preserves my breath, thou dost sustain my head and my hands. Therefore I am not forsaken; God will never depart from me, neither will I depart from God; the hour of my deliverance will shortly come, because I have him with me, from whom my help cometh.

"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him."

Psalm ii. 1, 3.

In thy hope be strong and cheerful

Though the Lord awhile delay;

He shall soon devise a method,

To fulfil what thou dost pray.

Therefore undisturbed endurance,

This alone can stand thy stead,

Thou must rest in God's disposal,

If thou wouldst not be dismayed.

Only cry, I see him here!

His heart yearns to have thee near.

Let thy hope be firmly grounded,

Faith can never be confounded.

Lord, I know that thou dost always hear my prayers, therefore I will trust in thee at this heavy hour; if hard storms break out, I will remain firm in thee. If thou dost lead me on strange paths, lead me to heaven. I know thou art near me, although thy help is not revealed;

I say in faith, hasten to assist me, Lord my God.

"The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."—Lament. iii. 25, 26.

I know that in thy own good time

Thou wilt take pity on me,

And in the hour of my distress,

Throw help and grace upon me.

O fortify my trembling hand,

And give my feet the strength to stand

That now so feebly totter.

Yes, my God, my soul waits for thee, my confidence fails not; loving Jesus, refresh me with thy kindness in my pangs, steady my sinking feet, strengthen my feeble hands, I hope in thy goodness, I wait for thy salvation, and am comforted by thy grace. O God of mercies, thou who dost give me comfort in distress, let me experience thy mercy. "I have called upon thee; for thou wilt hear me, O God! incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. Show thy marvellous loving kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of thine eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings."—Psalm xvii. 6, 7, 8. Draw me, with thine arms of mercy,

With thy strong desire to bless;

Dearest Lord, thy loving kindness

Will subdue my bashfulness;

If thou wilt not draw me toward thee

I, alas, must fly before thee.

Draw me with thy cords of mercy,

Draw me onward by thy truth,

Do not longer stay nor tarry

Holy Lord of Sabaoth.

I shall hope in all my anguish,

Though to death I lie and languish.

O Lord, preserve me and my child from ill, cover us both with the shadow of thy wings, hear my sighs, and help me; when trouble increases, let a strong hand appear, I shall trust in thee although it should seem as if thou wouldst kill me. Thy hand is not shortened; I do not regard my weakness, but thee the gracious, strong and merciful God. "God maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."—Job v. 18, 19.

Soon shall my woes be ended,

What boots this faint despair?

After I shall have suffered

On earth, all will be fair.

Then I shall sing, rejoicing,

In God is all my trust,

Therefore I yet shall triumph,

Although I bite the dust.

O God, the help so often extended to me gives me courage to think that at this time also thou wilt be my God, my deliver, and ally. Thou art still as strong as thou hast ever been; thou hast aided so many. O manifest thy goodness in me also; then, after the assistance rendered, my mouth shall be full of praise, and I will say, "This the Lord has done, the name of the Lord be praised."

"The Lord thy God is a merciful God; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy father, which he sware unto them."—Deut. iii. 31,

See, my Jesus, my Redeemer,

How with pain I am distraught!

Thou, thou art my sole protector,

Other refuge have I nought

But with thee I fear no throes,

Cross, nor death, nor troops of woes;

Than my Saviour none know better

To release from every fetter.

O my father, think of the covenant thou hast made with me in holy baptism, remember that thou art my father, and I thy child, remember, O Jesus, that thou hast watched and purified me with thy holy blood; to thee I flee and invoke thy help; O deliver me, refresh me, make me glad! "The Lord will not cast off for ever: but, though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."—Lament. iii. 31, 32, 33. There is on earth no truer word

Than that of Jesus Christ, our Lord,

I know thou nevermore wilt break

The covenant that thou didst make;

Thou art my faithful shepherd still,

Who wilt protect me from all ill.

My shepherd will not forsake his sheep, nor my father his child; thou hast caused my grief,

O God, make me rejoice again; if thou hast blessed me, let me see thy blessing. Lay my child into my arms, living and healthy; I will lay it into thy arms again in holy baptism, and restore to thee what thou hast given; if by the bodily birth it is mine, it shall be thine by regeneration.

"Blessed be the Lord who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."

—Psalm lxxviii. 19, 20.

If God sends me an affliction,

Why should I not rely

On his benediction?

He who sends, knows how to shift it?

Has he not well bethought

How to check and lift it?

Lord, thou hast laid this burden upon me, C remove it again, thou aid and refuge of all the faithful. How easy is it for thee to deliver me, to loosen the bond, to open the door; with thee nothing is impossible; let me abide in this trust in thee constantly, to the hour of my release.

*50

DEVOTIONS

"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psalm 1. 15.

O God, what comfort dost thou give

To all who are forsaken;
The door is never closed on those
Whose trust remains unshaken.
Blind reason thinks all hope is lorn,
And knows not that the cross has torn
From death all true believers.

My God, I wait for thy salvation; without thee I am lost, therefore I cry to thee in my trouble. Save me, hear me, have mercy upon me. O comfort me with thine aid, let thy joyful Spirit keep me thine. "I cried to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication. Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me. Lord, be thou my helper."—Psalm xxx. 8, 10.

He knows the real golden seasons;
He knows when it is well for us;
So he but finds us true sincerely,
Not false or seemingly virtuous,
He comes before we are aware,
And makes us glad with heavenly fare.

Yes, Lord Jesus, let the hour of thy help come quickly, I wait for thee with impatience. Meanwhile I will sigh and pray, and thou wilt hear me, and aid me according to thy promise. IN CHILDBED

" Do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake;
because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me. Help me, O Lord my
God. O save me according to thy mercy."—Psalm cix. 21, 26.

In all my agonies
The Lord my comfort is.
He is my sure salvation
From every tribulation.
However great the peril,
His hand can make it sterile.

This is my comfort in all my sufferings; God is with me, the mighty protector of his children, to him I commend myself, he will do all things well.

NOTE.—If death should seem to be approaching, recourse must be had to the texts, prayers, and verses, to be found in the

Daily Hand Book, beginning at page 55.

76. Devotions for Women in Childhood

The Woman in Childhood thanks God for her safe

Delivery.

EXHORTATION.

" A woman, as soon as she is delivered of the child, remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."—John xvi.

21. This is the blessing bestowed by God upon

THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED THANKS GOD pious mothers. After their delivery, they forget all sorrow, and think only of praising God.

1. They praise him for the omnipotence which has preserved them, the aid he has extended, confessing that without the wonderful help of God all their efforts would have been idle. 2. They praise the goodness of God, in having shortened and alleviated their sufferings.

3. They thank God for having permitted them joyfully to look upon their child;—or, if it is dead, for having taken it away to the joys of heaven, and, in his mercy, exchanged its earthly life for the life of heavenly transports. 4. They must not deprive themselves of the rest which God has given them from forwardness or avarice, or unnecessary exercise and fatigue, but must accept and enjoy it. Many women in childbed, desire to obtain renown by walking in and out in the days assigned to them by God for rest, and thereby incur some dangerous illness, some permanent injury, or deplorable accident. They have to thank themselves and their own forwardness, in having thought to be wiser than God, and despising the rest which he has ordained for them. For the same reason, husbands must not disturb this rest of their wives, but give them a full measure of all that God has enjoined upon women in their purification Leviticus xxii. never FOR HER SAFE DELIVERY.

aging them to labor, or prematurely to quit their childbed.

5. They must daily cry to God to protect them and their children from all evil, and commend them and themselves to God in assiduous prayer.

6. They must beseech the Lord to give them health and renewed strength, and in due time, a glad and happy churching.

Strong and almighty God! I appear with joy before thy most holy face, and praise thee for the great benefits with which thou hast honored me. I praise thee for having alleviated the pains of my labor, joyfully delivered me, and held thy hand over me in the hour of birth. Lord how great is thy omnipotence, how glorious thy power; thou didst hold me when I was ready to sink, thou didst refresh me when I was weak and impotent, thou didst strengthen me when all my powers were gone. Thou hast gloriously fulfilled all things, thou hast given me my child, preserved my life, averted all misfortune, and made me glad according to thy wish. Praise the Lord O my Soul, and what is in me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits. The THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED THANKS GOD

Lord hath done great things in me, whereof I am glad. Praised be the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplication; the Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart hopes in him, and my heart is glad, and I will thank him with my song. Thank the Lord for he is lovely, and his mercy endureth for ever; ye that have been saved by the Lord, declare that his mercy endureth for ever; ye whom he has redeemed from tribulation, who cried to the Lord in their trouble shall praise the Lord for his goodness and his miracles, which he doth unto the children of men, and bring thanks and tell of his works with joy. Yes, my God, this day I recount thy work with joy and say, How shall I recompense the Lord for all his benefits? O my God, magnify thy mercy in me. Guard, strengthen, and sustain me on this childbed. Protect me and my child from all accident, from sickness and untoward casualties, Restore my lost powers quickly, and let me gain strength from day to day. O God of all grace and mercy! spread out the wings of thy grace over my house, keep it from fire and water, and let me pass the time of my confinement happy in prayer and in the fear of thee. Preserve my child for thy praise and glory; let me hold my churching in good health and with renewed strength, and make my offering of thanks and praise before thy face and in FOR HER SAFE DELIVERY.

thy holy temple. Give thanks to God with hearts and lips and mouths, who does great things in us and everywhere, who from the mother's womb, and the cradle of infancy has bestowed upon us innumerable benefits, and does so still. Amen. 1. Praised be the mighty God above,

Who heard my supplication,

Who graciously assuaged, and turned

My heavy tribulation.

Who pitied when I cried and raved,

And granted what my spirit craved.

His mercy lasts forever.

2. He was my comfort and my aid

At every time, but double

When he so tempered and removed

My last distress and trouble.

O look upon his works of grace,

And sink before his holy face.

His mercy lasts forever.

3. Though I was sorely terrified

I never was forsaken;

It seemed the time was very long

That I was rent and shaken.

Yet now all grief is turned to joy,

To happiness what did annoy;

His mercy lasts forever.

THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED

4. Yes, of his puissant arm of strength

I now have apprehension.

When all the help of man was gone,

God ended the contention.

He came with all his conquering aid

And on a bed of roses laid—

His mercy lasts forever.

5. Therefore, I never will forget,

Great God, thy power and glory,

And of thy goodness unto all

Proclaim the wondrous story.

I rest beneath thy folded wings

Securely as a bird that sings;

Thy mercies lasts forever.

The Woman in Childhood offers up her Morning Prayer.

EXHORTATION.

Prayer is the daily task of every pious christian; how much more, then should a woman in childbed begin and end the day with prayer? Especially when she and her child, during that time, are liable to so many casualties. But when she has resigned herself and her child into the hand of God, she can look with entire confidence to God for his divine aid and protection. OFFERS UP HER MORNING PRAYER.

1. At every morning, therefore, a woman in childbed should thank the Lord for the night's rest she has been permitted to enjoy.
2. She should commend herself and her child to the guardian care and providence of God.
3. She must spend the day in good thoughts, and enjoy her portion of rest with thanksgiving.

4. If sufferings show themselves after birth, she must bear them with patience, assured that the God who has so mercifully delivered her from the pangs of labor, will also avert every other trouble. Merciful God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! In this morning hour I raise my heart to thee, and thank thee for the gracious protection this night extended to me. Thy angel held watch over my bed, so that no evil came nigh me; thou hast protected me and my child, and permitted me once more to behold the face of the sun this morning. Lord, Lord, how great is thy goodness which is new every morning! Thy grace encompassed me this night, thy watch and ward were over me, thy mercy covered me, and I was kept unharmed. Therefore arise, O my spirit, and my soul, and praise the Lord for all his benefits. Lord, Lord, thou wert ever my aid, and THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED this night also, thou didst hold thy hand over me, I have experienced thy grace, thy power, thy omnipotence, thy love, and thy goodness. Lord, Lord, I will never forget thy benefits. I will extol the Lord at all time, his praise shall ever be in my mouth. My soul shall glory in the Lord; the wretched shall hear it, and rejoice. Praise the Lord with me, and let us together extol his name. When I sought the Lord, he answered me, and delivered me from all fear. When I cried in my wretchedness, the Lord heard me, and helped me out of all my troubles. Therefore my mouth shall be filled with his praise, and my heart thank him; yea, with folded hands I will praise his mercy. But O Lord, Lord, let me be commended to thy fatherly guidance this day also. I commend to thee my body and my soul. O keep my soul and mind from evil thoughts, dread and trouble. But let thy holy spirit dwell in my heart, sanctify it, fill it with heavenly comfort and joy, and enable me to pass the day in thy fear, in inward spiritual bliss, in the love of Jesus, and in childlike contentment. Restore also to my body the powers it has lost, increase them every day, and restore me soon to perfect health. Avert all pains, casualties, disease, and misfortune, and alleviate the sufferings which thy wisdom may still impose upon me. Preserve my child according to OFFERS UP HER MORNING PRAYER.

thy grace, and let it grow and prosper to thy praise. Triune God, I resign myself wholly into thy keeping. Lord God, father in heaven, have mercy upon me, be gracious unto me and unto my child, forgive my sins, bless and keep me from all evil! Lord God Son, the Saviour of the World, have mercy upon me, be my mediator and advocate, my Jesus and beatifier, and let thy grace refresh me this morning like a refreshing dew; stand by me, strengthen me and keep me. Lord God Holy Ghost, have mercy upon me, pray in me, and bear testimony unto my spirit, that I am truly a child of God. The Lord bless me and keep me; the Lord make his face shine upon me, and be gracious unto me; the Lord lift up his countenance over me, and give me peace. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep my heart, soul, and mind, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen. 1. Night's shades no longer bound me,

Again I see around me

The light, the day, the morning,

And Jesus, all adorning.

2. Jesus kept watch, and harkened,

When the sun's face was darkened;

He has not yet departed,

His presence, still imparted.

THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED

3. Soft in thine arms I slumbered,

My every hair is numbered

By thy enduring kindness,

In spite of all my blindness.

4. The day has fairly broken.

Lord, let it be a token

That thou, who hast defended,

Thy care hast not yet ended.

5. Jesus, my hope and gladness,

My spell against all sadness,

In all things be above me,

Protect, and guide, and love me.

The Woman in Childhood offers up her Evening Prayer.

EXHORTATION.

When the two disciples had spent the day with Jesus, they were loath to part with him at night, but said, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." Luke 24, 29. In the same manner a woman in childbed must begin and end the day with prayer, and implore the gracious presence of her God for the approaching night. 1. She must thank God for having preserved her from pains and casualties, and her child from uneasiness throughout the day.

OFFERS UP HER EVENING PRAYER.

2. If God in his wisdom should impose some further suffering, she must praise God for assisting her to bear it, and that he has permitted her to live till night. 3. She must commend herself and child to the protection of the triune God for the night.

4. After her prayer, without giving way to anxiety, trepidation, fear or fright, which would interfere with her rest, she must go to sleep in the arms of her God, and think of God with joyful resignation when she wakes. Lord, Almighty God, how shall I sufficiently thank thee for the love and truth extended to me this day? I have spent this day in safety under thy protection, I have lived to behold the return of evening, thou hast aided me to bear and overcome the troubles of my condition, thou hast screened and guarded me, thou hast been the gracious father, protector and aid, of myself and friend. Lord, when I called upon thee, thou didst make me whole. Thou hast turned my lamentation into a dance, thou hast taken off my sackcloth and robed me with delight, that my praise may sing thy name, and never cease. Lord, my God, I will thank thee in eternity. But if, in thy mercy thou hast covered me 51*

THE WOMAN IN CHILDBED throughout the day with the wings of thy grace,

O spread thy loving kindness over me this night also, keep me, my house, and mine from misfortune, danger and harm. Forgive me, in mercy, all I have done this day to offend thee in thought, word, or deed. I will now lay myself in thy arms, O God of all grace and mercy, and will say, I lie and sleep in peace, for thou, O

Lord, wilt help me to live in safety. Command thy angels to come and watch over thine own;

give us the sentinels to make us secure against

Satan; thus shall we sleep in thy name because the angels shall be with us. O wake thyself at my bedside, and drive away whatever can disturb my rest. Lord God Father, let thy Father's heart be open to me this night. Lord Jesus, thou light of my soul, shine around me this night with the lustre of thy heavenly grace. O most precious Holy Ghost, awake in my soul holy desires and wishes; sing and pray in my heart, and seal the consolation that I am a child of God. O thou triune God, let me fall asleep in thy love, and rest gently in thy grace, so that, when I awake I may be with thee still. Let me gladly behold the morrow, when I will thank and praise thee for all thy benefits extended to my body and my soul. May the love of the father shield me, the grace of Jesus cover me, and the assistance of the Holy Ghost strengthen

OFFERS UP HER EVENING PRAYER.

and comfort me. The day is gone, O Jesus remain with me; light of my soul, dispel the darkness of sin; rise with me, splendor of righteousness, enlighten me, Lord, for it is time. Thou dost not sleep when feeble limbs slumber; O let my soul grow in good gifts even in sleep. Sun of Life refresh my mind, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. Amen. 1. Jesus, eternal light! The day is past and over,

A mantle dark the sun's replendency does cover;

Jesus, thou light of life, never depart from me,

With thee throughout the night united let me be.

2. While yet I live, I live to thee, for thou hast given

Life, happiness, and peace, all for which I have striven;

For thee, O friend of souls, for thee I live alone;

My heart still lingers round the footsteps of thy throne.

3. Lord Jesus, while I sleep give me thy kind protection,

Cover me with the wings of thy benign affection;

Jesus, abide with me, the night comes on apace,

Look to my body and soul, and guard their resting place.

4. Gladly for thee I die, for then I shall inherit

The happiness thy death and sufferings did merit;

For thee I die each day, in casting off my sin,

Dying I live for thee, by having thee within.

THE WOMAN IN CHILDHOOD PRAYS BEFORE

5. Day and night I am thine, I wake and sleep before thee,

At night, Lord, from my side depart not, I implore thee;

In comfort and distress, in poverty and wealth,

Lord, I am always thine, in sickness and in health.

The Woman in Childhood prays before and after the Baptism of her Child.

EXHORTATION.

Christian parents, to whom God has given children, lose not a moment which can be saved to have their children received into the communion of Christ in holy baptism. The baptismal covenant is of the last importance for time and eternity. 1. A pious mother will therefore present her child assiduously to God before it is baptized, praying him to permit it to be baptized, and in mercy to adopt it as his child. 2. After the baptism she must thank the Lord for the great favor thus awarded, and commend the child to the continued protection of God.

AND AFTER THE BAPTISM OF HER CHILD.

PRAYER,

77. BEFORE THE CHILD ATTAINS TO HOLY BAPTISM

Gracious and loving God, thou who art the true father of all having the name of children in heaven and on earth. In true humility of heart I appear before thee, and present my new born child. O merciful God! receive the gift which comes from thee as thy child in holy baptism, let it be thy child, screen and preserve it. Jesus, thou hast said, suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. Behold I bring thee my child this day, give it thy Holy Ghost and let him regenerate it with the water and with spirit, let him sanctify and govern it, and fill its heart with faith and heavenly light. Let it grow to thy honor, and give me grace to rear it in thy fear and admonition. O my God, I give thee this child to be thine; heavenly father, I lay it into the arms of thy mercy; O keep and preserve it. I resign it to thee, O Jesus! Wash it with thy holy blood, conceal it in thy wounds against all the power of Satan. I commend it to thee, most precious Holy Ghost. I give it into thy keeping. Sanctify it wholly, that its spirit, body, and soul may be kept blameless to the day of Jesus Christ. THE MOTHER PREPARES FOR HER CHURCHING.

WHEN THE CHILD HAS RECEIVED THE RITE OF HOLY BAPTISM.

O God, let this day be the day of my child's covenant, bliss, and regeneration, and grant that it be always mindful thereof, and that I may often recall the day to its recollection. Let it never break this covenant, nor fall from the state of regeneration, but abide in constancy and sanctification even unto the end, when thou wilt receive it into eternal joys as thy child and heir. Ye people who have been baptized and know your God, by the name of Jesus Christ, remember well how much good was bestowed on you in holy baptism. The Mother prepares for her Churching.

EXHORTATION.

When God has safely preserved a mother for six weeks, restored her powers, protected her and her child from harm, and enabled her to take her churching, should not her mouth be full of joy, and praise God thankfully and with fervor? THE MOTHER PREPARES FOR HER CHURCHING. 97

1. She must consider how weak and feeble she lay in her bed, and also how God revived her strength, and made her able to go abroad in health and safety. 2. She must be mindful of the severe illnesses of other women in childbed, which have sometimes even proved fatal. If God enabled her to escape all this, the word of thanks must not be neglected. 3. If her child is at the same time in the enjoyment of good health she has a double reason to appreciate this great instance of the divine favor. 4. Her churching must be attended with a devout frame of mind, a grateful heart, and eloquent lips.

5. She must then offer up her prayers and thanks, praise God, commend herself and her child to God, receive the benediction, and be for ever mindful of the goodness of God thus made manifest in her. How shall I recompense the Lord for all his benefits? Yea, the Lord hath done great things in me, thereof I am glad. Gracious and powerful God! I am about to hold my churching, to thank thee in thy temple for the merciful aid THE MOTHER PREPARES FOR HER CHURCHING.

and strong assistance thou hast extended unto me. Lord God, thou hast happily delivered me, preserved my life, enabled me joyfully to look upon thy child. Thou hast preserved me for these six weeks, defended me from harm, given me back my sunken powers, and enabled me to approach thy temple in health and

strength. Thank the Lord for he is of great goodness, and his mercy endureth for ever. In my trouble I called upon the Lord, and the Lord heard me and comforted me. The Lord is my power, my song, and my salvation. Lord, I thank thee for having preserved my life in labor; I thank thee for having given me back my strength; I thank thee that by thy aid I may now hold my churcing, and thank thee in thy temple for all thy benefits! O Lord, accept the faint offering of praise from my lips. Give thy blessing to this my churcing, increase my strength from day to day, let my child grow to thy honor. This day I bring thee a pair of turtle doves, my grateful heart, and my adoring tongue. Do not despise the offering! I bring thee the perfect sacrifice of redemption, the blood and death of Jesus in the true faith. Therewith do thou cleanse and purify me. I again offer thee my child, as I have already done in holy baptism. Be to it a father, guardian, patron, preserver and gracious God. Continue to spread the wings of thy grace THE MOTHER PREPARES FOR HER CHURCHING.

ver me and my child; let us walk before thee, and praise thy name. Grant that I may ever be mindful of this favor, so that in faith, piety, and the fear of God, I may persevere, and bring up my child therein. Give thy holy Ghost unto me and my children; let him enlighten, sanctify guide, and direct us on an even path, until I and my child shall enter into thy glory in the new

Jerusalem, where thou thyself art the light and the sun. While I live here I will praise the

Lord for ever; great good has he done unto me, more than I can tell. He has helped me everywhere, particularly at this time has he alone averted evil. Amen.

1. God has heard my prayer, and given

Gladness to my bounding heart

What I wished with anxious longing,

His great mercy did impart.

Now my mind is penetrated

With thy goodness, and elated;

He afflicts, but at the last

With delight 'tis all o'er-cast.

2. God has heard my prayer, converted

All my weeping into bliss.

On this day of joy and gladness

Further sorrow comes amiss.

100 THE MOTHER PREPARES FOR HER CHURCHING.

All my tears are turned to laughter,

All the world is changed, as after

Nights of tempest and of storm,
Come the sunbeams, fresh and warm.
3. God has heard my prayer, in labor,
When I screamed in agony,
He turned toward me and addressed me
"I am here; rely on me,
I am here, I will deliver;
Thou disaster shall not shiver."
And when thus thy voice was heard,
I was near thee, undeterred.
4. God has heard my prayer. Come with me.
Let us all his praise proclaim;
All we need he richly giveth,
Come and bless his holy name.
He regards with gentle favor,
All who make for him endeavor,
And in trouble bids us cheer,
Saying "I am ever near"
5. God has heard my prayer; believe me
Whosoever thou mayest be,
He is sure to those that trust him,
As I now have learned to see.
He can screen and he can cover,
He can o'er our weakness hover;
He can stretch his mighty hand,
And deliver all the land.
THE GODLY MOTHER THANKS GOD.

78. The Godly Mother Thanks God when her Child is Weaned

EXHORTATION.

A godly mother has reason to pray for her child every day, and must renew her prayer when it is to be weaned. For great was the goodness of God in permitting the mothers' milk to nourish the child, thereby causing it to grow, to gain strength, and to become so far developed that it can thenceforth be sustained without this nutriment. 1. Therefore a godly mother must thank God for having, by means of the milk, brought the child to such perfection, that it may now sustain life by means of other food.

2. If she has suckled her child herself she must thank God for having given her wholesome milk, and set his blessing upon it, so that her child has prospered.

3. She must beseech God in like manner to bless the food which the child is henceforth to receive; to let it grow up to his honor, and, as it increases in years to fill its heart with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. 4. And as children learn to walk about this time, the godly mother must pray to God to hold her child in leading strings, protect it by his holy

THE GODLY MOTHER THANKS GOD angels, keep it from hurtful falls, keep its limbs straight and sound, and suffer it to pass from stage to stage of life, under his fatherly care and guardianship.

Merciful and gracious God! how is my heart rejoiced that I have lived to see the time when my child may be weaned from the mother's breast. Loving God! In thy memory thou didst give me this child, through so many accidents thou hast preserved it, thou hast spared its tender life, and now permitted it to reach an age when it requires stronger food for its support. Praised be thy mercy, for having hitherto given thy blessing to the mother's breast, whereby it has gathered strength and flourished under thy care. Thanks for thy blessing, thanks for thy protection, thanks for thy truth and goodness. Lord, every day thou dost perform the greatest miracle when in the mother's breast thou dost convert food and drink into milk, and dost endow it with a nourishing power, so that the child is thereby refreshed and strengthened. O God! as thou hast thus permitted my child to profit by the mother's breast, bless unto it likewise the food and drink to which I would now make it accustomed; grant that it may receive it wi

WHEN HER CHILD IS WEANED.

lingly, let it thrive upon it, and daily, weekly, and yearly, increase in strength. Remain with it also when it essays to walk, escort it by thy holy angel, hold it when in danger of falling, screen it from danger. O let this my child be commended unto thee in soul and body, strengthen its inward man, sanctify it by thy Holy Ghost, let it readily receive education in obedience and the fear of

God, let it not show signs of perverseness, but be ready to obey as a good and docile child; give it thy holy spirit and a pious heart, so that I may have joy of it here, and enter into glory with it hereafter. Thy goodness, Lord, is very great, which protect and keep me, I will praise it here on earth as long as I shall have breath.

Amen.

1. The Lord Almighty God, who on me has expended

The fulness of his grace, and never stopped nor ended,
I praise upon this day, when I and eke my child
Have gained in health and strength, because he on us smiled.

2. If others by distress and trouble much were harassed,
The shower of benefits alone has us embarrassed;
Up to this very day the milk of my poor breast
Has made my child to thrive, so by his goodness blest.

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3. In me and in my child he has wrought many a wonder,
This I must eagerly confess and inly ponder.
Our life and welfare both he has so well bethought,
And will not cease until all of his work be wrought.
4. In every time and place the Lord hath done and tendered;
Much kindness unto us, and greatest service rendered;
He helps, protects, and loves, and of our steps takes heed,
Not many a father would so loving be at need.

5. Thereof this day, O God, my heart is overflowing
With happiness and joy, and thanks beyond my showing;
Vouchsafe thy mercy still, and let us not forget
That we are ever thine! On thee our hope is set.

Admonition and Comfort for the Barren.

1. When God suffers married people to be childless, so that they can say with Abraham, "Lord, what wilt thou give me? I am without children," Gen. xv., 2. They must remember that barrenness may depend on natural causes in both parties, for as God does not give the same consti

FOR THE BARREN.
tution to all men, so he does not give them all the same degree of fruitfulness. If God has not infused this good gift into their system, they must be none the less contented with God, knowing that he is nevertheless their gracious God, that he loves them, and is favorably inclined towards them. How many trees, which adorn the garden though they bear no fruit, are still favorites there! So also barren married couples are the well beloved children of God, none the less that in fruitfulness they are surpassed by

others. 2. They must remember that children are a gift of the Lord; he who does not receive this gift has no right to murmur against God, or to be envious of the gifts of others; God is master in his own house, and distributes his favors according to his pleasure. God has made a reservation of three keys; the keys of the grave, for God alone can awake the dead; the keys of the rains, for no idol can send rain, and no man can cause it, and the keys of the womb, which no one can open if the Lord closes it, and no one close, if the Lord opens it. As it is by the will of God that children are withheld, such married couples are especially called upon to manifest their patience, resignation, and hopefulness. 3. Barrenness is no index of the wrath of God;

ADMONITION AND COMFORT for they may see by the other blessings showered upon them, that God is not angry with them.

4. The childless must reflect that even this deprivation is a favor of God, who understands their mental and bodily constitution better than themselves. For although women may be fond of children yet God may rightly judge them too weak to bear and rear children; perhaps a child would interfere with her prayers and devotions and those of her husband, perhaps it would cause them great grief, if God in his wisdom, were to call it away again. Therefore, as God measures the strength and weakness of men better than they themselves, he therein shows them an especial favor, which it is sheer ignorance in them to regard as other than a manifestation of grace. 5. Married couples must be particularly on their guard against attempting to extort children from God with murmurs or impatient clamors.

6. Godly married women must not be misled by the expression of St. Paul in 1 Tim. ii., 15, where he says, "The woman shall be saved in child-bearing, if she continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety." For Paul does not say that women shall be saved by bearing children; we are justified and saved by the merit of Jesus Christ, for the sake of his precious blood, Rom. iii., 28, Rom. v., 1, and not by giving birth to children. If it were otherwise, FOR THE BARREN.

a virgin could not be saved, which is contrary to God's holy word. He says this for the consolation of married women. Though, because woman suffered herself to be tempted in Paradise, she is subject to great pangs when in labor, yet God is ready to assist and deliver them out of their throes. Though, in these pangs, they experience the wrath of God, yet they shall be saved, if they are steadfast in the faith of the Lord Jesus, in the love of God and man, in the sanctification of their lives, and the sanctity of their christian walk. 7. Married couples must bide their time, and persist in prayer. Some trees bear fruit the first year after they are planted, some do not for many years. Therefore pious couples must not be too ready to despair. "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward." Hebrews x. 35. As God does not give temporal benefits to all men at the same time, but favors one sooner, and another at a later period; so it is with these gifts also. 8. Married couples must also be very careful not to throw blame upon each other; the husband must not ascribe the barrenness to the wife, nor the wife to the husband. It is God who withholds the fruit of their body, Gen. xxx., 2; they must love each other none the less, and be resigned unto the will of God, for neither of them can ADMONITION AND COMFORT accomplish anything without prayer, and the blessing and good will of God. They must particularly avoid suspicion, envy, or ill will, when they find their kindred already to discuss the division of the inheritance, but must persevere in sincere love, dismiss all informers, and if necessary, dispose of what they shall leave behind them, according to justice and charity. 9. If God does not bless a married couple with offspring, they should all the more increase in the love of Jesus; and as those who have children are often hindered by them in the worship of God and in self improvement, they must consider themselves favoured in being able to worship God with less interruption. 10. Parents without bodily offspring should be doubly mindful of the poor, doing

good to pious children, clothing them and sending them to school, and assisting in their education; such children will praise their benefactors in the judgment day as fathers and mothers, and extol them before God, saying, "These have fed my nakedness, and given me to eat and to drink," Matthew, xxv. 11. Finally, married people must examine their own hearts to see whether they really look upon children as a gift of God. If they consider them a gift of nature which they themselves can further or advance they err, and perhaps God, FOR THE BARREN.

by withholding what they crave, intends to show them that children are his gift, for which he must be asked in prayer. If christians object that fornicators certainly do not pray for offspring and yet produce it, I answer that with them God gives nature the rein for the exposure of their shame, because they beget children not for the honor of God, but to cool their evil passions and lust. Godly married couples must do as Isaac did, of whom it is said "Isaac prayed to God for his wife, for she was barren." Isaac therefore understood that children are given by the grace of God, as also appears from what immediately followed. "And the Lord took pity on him, and Rebecca his wife, conceived," Gen. xxv., 21. These reflections pious married couples must impress upon their minds, and abstain from all murmurs and impatience.

Lord, Lord, what wilt thou give me? I am without children. O my God, I see how richly thou dost bestow thy blessing upon other married couples, and dost withhold it from me. Lord, Lord, let me patiently submit to this as being thy holy will. I know that in thy omnipotence thou canst easily give me children if thou wilt. I know that thou, my gracious God, ADMONITION AND COMFORT lovest me, and hast never yet refused thy grace, therefore I will patiently resign myself to thy will, for thou best knowest wherefore thou hast not yet vouchsafed this blessing. But if thou dost not gladden my heart with the birth of children, let me enjoy the greater happiness in thee, let me love thee. Let me abide in faith in thee, O triune God, in the love of my neighbor, in sanctification of life, and let me walk in charity and decency before all. Let thy Holy

Spirit convince my heart more and more that such is thy gracious will with me, and that I must be resigned to it from the bottom of my heart. Preserve my heart from envy, suspicion, impatience, disaffection to my partner in life, make me heartily love and regard him (her) in the place of my child, and affect him (her) more than ten sons and daughters. If it is thy will that I should wait awhile, and then become a fruitful mother, if thou dost intend to be mindful of me as of Hannah, convince my heart of this thy gracious will and pleasure. But if thou wilt not give me an heir, O Lord, let it be my heir to walk in thy ways, Jesus shall be my consolation and my part. Lord, Lord, all things are possible with thee; Sarah and Elizabeth hast thou permitted to conceive after the course of nature was past, and it is easy for thee to remove my barrenness. Lord have pity on me, and I

FOR THE BARREN.

will thank thee for thy gift all my life, and rear it to thy praise and honor. In holy baptism I

I will give it back to thee. Let me not be envious when thou fillest the houses of others with children, but let me show the greater mercy and charity to poor orphans; let me clothe, feed and provide for them. Now Lord, be thy goodness over us, in which we hope; gladden me, comfort me, help me, give me children, if it so please thee, but not in wrath, not to my shame.

If it is well for me, grant my prayer in thy mercy; but if it is not thy pleasure, I seek not to extort children from thee, I will have nothing, not even children, against thy holy will. Lord,

I have poured out my heart before thee; make it happy, and well pleasing unto thee. Let me hold my soul in patience, until thou shalt afford thy help. I am happy in my hopes, for though

God's help comes not at my call, yet has he already made his appointment, he knows the time and the goal full well, I wait upon him, and hope cannot deceive me. Amen.

1. Lord, O Lord, what wilt thou give me,

I am childless to this day.

My years, months, days, hours, and minutes

In postponement wear away.

ADMONITION AND COMFORT

All around I look on others

Hopeful fathers, happy mothers,

But myself am left alone,

None to weep when I am gone.

2. Nothing gives me greater pleasure,

Than a little child to see,

To provoke its mirthful prattle,

Or to nurse it on my knee;

Not the greatest earthly treasure

Could afford me greater pleasure;

But this joy I may not share,

For no children do I bear.

3. Why, dear Lord, art thou more lavish

Unto others than to me?

Others have so many children

With an empty granary!

Other blessings thou extendest

Unto me, and richly sendest;

But the gift which most I crave,

Still, dear Lord, I cannot have.

4 O my God I will not murmur!

Do according to thy will;

I will bear whate'er thy wisdom

Shall require me to fulfil.

Need I prompt thy keen discerning?

Well thou knowest my eager yearning:

But whatever it be on,

Let thy will, dear Lord, be done.

FOR THE BARREN.

5. Let thy will, in every season,

Lord, be present to my sight;

Let thy will be ample answer

To what my heart would indite.

Yes, whatever thou requirest,

Let it be as thou desirest;

Let me be subdued and meek,

Only hear thy wisdom speak.

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