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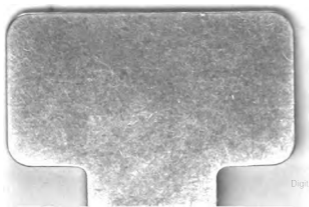
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The Prison Sayings

OF

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD,

A.D. 1637.



WITH AN INTRODUCTORY SKETCH OF HIS
CHARACTER.

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Introduction.

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IN the army of King David, there were many men of might, but the chief among them all was the Tachmonite, who sat in the highest seat. Adino, the Eznite, gained the title of Israel's bravest warrior, by the strength of his right hand. In the field of battle, ere the day had gone down, eight hundred were slain by his spear; and by this deed of prowess, and not by court favour, he earned the name of chief among the captains. 2 Sam. xxxiii, 8.

And so, among the hosts who follow the Captain of our Salvation, there are those who, having fought the good fight and kept the faith, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, earn high places under Him whom they have served in this world's battle-field. The seat of the Tachmonite, the conqueror of eight hundred, may perchance be occupied by Saul of Tarsus, who laboured more abundantly than all the Apostles. Those who attain not to his high degree, may yet earn a place like that of one of the thirty chief captains, or of the three mighty men. They who bring ten talents to their Master, who bring forth fruit an hundred fold, will have the nobler seats. Every man shall be rewarded according as his work shall be.

The name of Rutherford ranks not among the least or the lowest of Israel's captains. He bore the standard near

to his Captain in troublous times ; and, when imprisoned by the enemy, he did not cease to fight, but still kept on the armour of God, combating the armies of the aliens. There, he gained his greatest victories ; there he vanquished his own spirit : and greater is he that ruleth himself than he that taketh a city. His sword was not a Damascus blade, it was not made of earthly steel, but of far truer metal than the choicest weapons of which the world can boast. Every soldier of Christ has a sword like his, may all use it as he did, and more valiantly !

At Anwoth, in the shire of Gallo-way, Rutherford laboured zealously in the vineyard of his Lord. He mentions that in the year 1634, by a strange providence, some of his papers, concerning the corruptions of the times had come to the king's hands, and then he anticipated suffering in his Master's

cause ; but, through the intervention of providential circumstances, he kept his charge at Anwoth for two years longer.

In the year 1636, he wrote to Lady Kenmure as follows :

“ That honour that I have prayed for these sixteen years, with submission to my Lord’s will, my kind Lord has now bestowed upon me—even to suffer for the Lord Jesus, and for the freedom of that kingdom that His Father hath given Him.

“ I am sentenced with deprivation and confinement within the town of Aberdeen, and am charged in the king’s name to enter against the twentieth of August next (A.D. 1636), and there to remain during the king’s pleasure. I purpose to obey the king who hath power of my body.”

At this period he was sometimes oppressed with the feeling that he had

done little good in his ministry, and that he had "spoken too little for the crown, honour and kingdom of the well-beloved Son of God;" yet, he says, "His kindness was never greater to me than now." And he writes, — "Welcome, welcome, sweet and glorious cross of Christ! Welcome, Jesus, with Thy light cross! Thou hast now gained all my love from me. Keep what Thou hast got. Only woe is me for my bereft flock!"

In August 1636, he obeyed the king's command, and proceeded to Aberdeen, from whence he wrote to his friends, that Christ had met him there, and that "his adversaries had sent him to Aberdeen to be feasted with his love." He found often much joy and unspeakable comfort in the presence of his Lord, and said that sometimes he would be too joyful, if the remembrance of sin did not come

in to sour his joys. He further said, that if Christ had never done more for him since he was born, He had engaged his heart and gained his blessing in that house of his pilgrimage—the prison. He would not exchange his cross with any. He was persuaded that it was Christ's truth he suffered for, and he knew that His comforts were no dreams.

“O how sweet is the love of Christ!” said Rutherford at this time, “and how wise is that love! Let faith wait and trust awhile. God's heirs live upon hope.” He could have sung in his prison-palace, the song of the German prisoner of recent times—

When I'm by earthly friends forsaken,
And human comforters depart,
I'll cling the closer to my Saviour,
And clasp Him firmer to my heart!
In all my sorrows, all my fears,
'Mid disappointment's bitter tears,

With language not to be expressed,
I cast me, Saviour, on Thy breast !

Sweet were the uses of adversity to Rutherford. The prison was no prison to him when, mounting up with eagle's wings, his spirit refused to be confined within those narrow walls, and soared on high to gaze upon that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which was before him. He climbed the lofty hill to view from its summit the glorious land which lay before the unimprisoned eye of faith ; he ascended to that hill top, and surveyed that happy land, the everlasting rest of God. He saw the bright glory of it, the riches of that incorruptible inheritance ; into which he pressed onward with his loins girt and his lamp burning. His eye became familiar with those heavenly scenes, and when he turned and looked upon all this world's

pride and glory, and estimated their value in comparison with the things eternal, then he said,

“ I verily count more of the sufferings of my Lord than of this world’s lusted and over-gilded glory.”

He esteemed the reproach of Christ of greater value than all earthly treasures; for he had other and richer treasures laid up in heaven, and there his heart rested.

But he was just like ourselves. The selections from his prison letters shew how and what he felt. Often his mind was dejected, when he regarded the circumstances in which he was, and looked away from his strong Rock. And he was grieved, too, at being severed from those among whom he had laboured. Yet, when he writes, saying, “ If my Lord would be pleased, I would desire some were dealt with for my return to Anwoth,” he adds,

“But if that never be, I thank God, Anwoth is not heaven; preaching is not Christ. I hope to wait on.” But at another time he says again, “That day that my month was closed, the bloom fell off my branches, and my joy did cast the flower. I dare not say that the Lord hath put out my candle, but I have tasted bitterness since that day my Master laid bonds upon me to speak no more.” Thus sorrow and gladness were mingled in his cup; he knew his own heart’s bitterness, and at the same time he had the joy with which a stranger intermeddleth not.

He had his faults and his errors, but his views of Him to whom the Scriptures testify were glorious. He shone as a light in the world. Even now his lamp burns brightly; and, by means of its light, many are still cheered who walk in dark and beclouded paths, in suffering and sorrow.

Rutherford has gone to his rest. He has fulfilled his day on earth. He has fought the good fight and has kept the faith, and now he awaits the day of the resurrection of the just.

Reader, where wilt thou stand on that day?

Prison Sayings.

.....

I WOULD honest and lawful means were essayed for bringing me home to my charge ; but however it be I wait for the Lord. Lord, give me submission to wait on !

My heart is sad that my days flee away, and I do no service to my Lord in His house, now when His harvest and the souls of poor perishing people require it ; but His ways are not like my ways, neither can I find Him out. O that He would shine upon my dark-

ness, and bring forth my morning light from under the thick cloud that is spread over me !

O that Christ would come home to me, and bring summer with him ! that I might preach His beauty and glory as once I did, before my clay-tent be removed to darkness ; that my branches might be watered with the dew of God, and my joy in His work might grow green again, and bud and send out a flower ! But I am a short-sighted creature, and my candle casteth not light afar off. He knoweth all that is done to me ; how that when I had but one joy and no more, He came in one hour and dried up my flower at the root.

What can I say ? Surely my guiltiness hath been remembered before Him, and He was seeking to take down my sails, and to let my vessel lie on the coast like an old broken ship that is no more for the sea. But I praise

Him for this stroke, I welcome this furnace ; God's wisdom made choice of it for me, and it must be best because it was His choice. O that I may wait for him till the morning break out ! I know that he will make his light to shine forth again. May I set down my desires where my Lord bids me.

Go on in your journey to heaven, and be content with such fare by the way as Christ and his followers have had before you. The Lord hath not changed the way to us for our ease, but will have us following our blessed Guide. Alas, how doth sin clog us in our journey and retard us !

What fools are we to have a by-good or any other love, or to match our souls to any one but Christ ! It were best for us to seek our own home, and to sell our hopes of this little clay idol of

the earth, where we are neither well summered nor well wintered.

We cannot entertain two loves. Blessed were we if we could suffer ourselves to be mastered and subdued by Christ's love, so as Christ were all things to us, and all other things nothing.

Death is the last thief, that shall come without noise of feet and take our souls away; and we shall take our leave of time and face eternity; and our Lord shall lay together the two sides of this earthly tabernacle, and fold it, and lay it by, and put the one half of us in the dark grave, and the other half of us in heaven or hell.

It cost Christ and all His followers much toil ere they reached the top of the mountain; but still our soft nature would have heaven coming to our bedside, when we are sleeping. O how

loath are we to forego our weights and burdens that hinder us to run our race with patience !

It is no easy task to displease and offend nature that we may please God.

It is hard to win one foot, or half-an-inch out of our own will, our own wit, our own ease, and worldly lusts ; and so to deny ourselves, and to say, It is not I, but Christ ; not I, but grace.

Alas, that Idol, *myself*, is the Master idol we all bow to ! Every man blameth the devil for his sins ; but the great devil, the house-devil of every man, that lieth and eateth in every man's bosom, is that idol that killeth all, *himself*. Blessed are they who can deny themselves, and put Christ in the room of themselves. O sweet word "I live no more, but Christ liveth in me !"

I know you will be looking back to your old self, the self-idol that you set up in the pride of youth above Christ. Strive to make Christ yourself.

If this world and the lusts thereof are your delight I know not what Christ can make of you ; ye cannot be metal to be a vessel of glory and mercy.

I am sure many ells and inches of the short thread of your life are by-hand since I saw you ; and that thread hath an end, and you have no hands to cast a knot, or add one day or a finger breadth to the end of it. When the outer walls of the clay house shall fall down, and ye find your time has ebbed and run out, what thoughts will you then have of idol-pleasures that possibly now are sweet ?

How many a mere professor's candle

is blown out and never lighted again ! I see ordinary profession and to be ranked among the children of God and to have a name among men, is now thought enough to carry professors to heaven ; but certainly a name is but a name and will never endure a blast of God's storm. I counsel you not to give your soul rest, nor your eyes sleep, till you have got something that will stand the fire and last out the storm. I know if I had one foot in heaven, and He were to say to me,—“Do for thyself, I will hold thee up no longer,”—I should go no farther but presently fall down as dead nature.

We run our souls out of breath, and tire them in galloping and coursing after our own night dreams (for such are the roving of our misjudging hearts) to get some creature good thing in this life. And on this side of death we

would fain stay, and spin out a heaven to ourselves on this side the water: but sorrow, want, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill spun web.

Hold-fast Christ, contend for Him: it must be your resolution to set your face, against satan's northern tempests and storms, for salvation. Nature would have heaven come to us sleeping in our beds. We would all buy Christ, if we might fix the price ourselves; but He is worth more lives than you or I have to give Him.

Let my part of this poor world be forfeited for evermore, provided I may anchor my tottering soul upon Christ! but, O Lord, can we give Thee any thing for Christ? or rather may not a poor sinner have Him for nothing?

When we shall come Home, and en-

ter into the possession of our Brother's fair Kingdom, and when our heads shall feel the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pains and sufferings, *then* shall we see life and sorrow to be less than one step or stride from a prison to glory !

O that we were out of ourselves and dead to this world, and this world dead and crucified to us ! Then would Christ win to Himself a lodging in our heart : then should he be our night song, and our morning song.

Oh thrice blinded souls, whose hearts are charmed and bewitched with dreams, shadows, night vanities, and night fancies, of a miserable life of sin. Poor fools ! who are beguiled with painted things and this world's fair weather, and smooth promises, and rot-

ten hopes. May not the devil laugh to see us give away our souls for the corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin ?

How far are we bereft of wit to chase and hunt, and run, till our souls be out of breath, after a condemned happiness of our own making !

I bless His high and glorious name, that the terrors of great men have not affrighted me from open avouching of the Son of God.

His Cross is the sweetest burden that ever I bare. It is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour.

I have not much cause to fall in love with the world ; but rather to wish that He who sitteth upon the floods would bring my broken ship to land,

and keep my conscience safe in these dangerous times. Keep your conscience clear, and stand for the truth of Christ.

The greater part of Mankind think heaven is at the next door, and that Christianity is an easy task ; but they will find they have been deceived. I beseech you, make sure work of salvation.

Go on through the waters without wearying ; your Guide knoweth the way. Follow him and cast your care and temptations upon Him, and let not worms, the sons of men, affright you : they shall die, and the moth shall consume them. There is no less at stake in this game betwixt us and the world than our conscience and salvation ; we have need to take heed.

I entreat you to consider that your soul is more worth to you than the whole world, which, in the days of the blowing of the last trumpet, shall lie in ashes. Remember that Judgment and Eternity are before you. Your afternoon will wear short, and your sun fall low and go down.

O how comfortable a thing will it be to you when Time shall be no more, and your soul departs out of its house of clay to vast and endless eternity, to have your soul prepared for its Bridegroom! No loss is comparable to the loss of the soul. There is no hope of compensating that loss.

Christ is a Well of life.

O you poor, dry, and dead souls! why will ye not come hither and fill your empty vessels, your thirsty souls, from this fair, and deep, and sweet Well of life? O to think that Christ

should be so large in sweetness and worth, and that we should lose our love so miserably as not to bestow it upon Him ! Alas these five thousand years and more, Adam's foolish heirs have been wasting and lavishing out their love and their affections upon dead creatures and broken idols, and have not brought their love and their heart to Jesus.

Strive to force your way through the thorns of this life to reach Christ. Lose not sight of Him in this cloudy and dark day.

Learn not from the world to serve Christ, but ask Himself the way ; the world is a false copy, and a deceitful guide to follow.

Salvation is supposed to be at the door, and Christianity an easy task ; but I find it hard and the way strait and narrow. Hurt not your conscience

with any known sin. Set your heart upon heaven, and trouble not your spirit with this clay idol of the world.

O that Christ had His own of us ! We have all idol love, and are inclined to love other things beside our Lord ; and therefore our Lord hunteth for our love more ways than one or two.

I know that I have need of a buffet-
ing tempter, that grace may be put to
exercise and I kept low. What am I,
to carry the marks of such a great
King ? Let no man think he shall lose
at Christ's hands in suffering for Him :
herein find I liberty, joy, access, life,
comfort, love, faith, submission, patience
and resolution.

I doubt not but my Lord is prepa-
ring me for heavier trials. I am most
ready, at the good pleasure of my Lord

and in the strength of His grace, for anything He shall be pleased to call me to. If my Lord will take honour of such a one as me, how glad and joyful shall my soul be !

I am chastened, but I die not ; I have loss, but I want nothing : this water cannot drown me, this fire cannot burn me, because of the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush.

The worst things of Christ—His reproaches, His cross—are better than Egypt's treasures.

I love careful, and withal *doing* complaints of want of practice ; because I observe many who think it holiness enough to complain, and set themselves at nothing, as if to say “ I am sick,” would cure them ; they think complaints a good charm for guiltiness. I hope you are wrestling and struggling. I urge upon you a nearer communion

with Christ, and a growing communion. There are depths of love in Christ beyond what we have seen; therefore dig deep, and labour, and take pains for Him;—He will be won with labour.

I assure you the greatest part but play with Christianity; they put it aside easily. I thought it had been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek God had been at the next door; but O the windings and turnings that He hath led me through! and I see yet much way to the ford.

Who will raise the song with me, and set on high His great love! As for friends, I shall not think the world to be the world, if that well go not dry—I pray God I may not look to the world for my joys.

Seeing my sins and the sins of my youth deserved strokes, how am I

obliged to my Lord, who amongst many crosses has given me a chosen cross; namely, to suffer for the name of the Lord Jesus. Since I must have chains, He would put golden chains on me; watered over with many consolations. Seeing I must have sorrow He hath chosen for me joyful sorrow. My crosses come through mercy, and the hand of love, from the kind heart of a Brother, Christ my Lord; and therefore they are sweet.

If my inmost heart were seen, I should lose and forfeit the love and respect of all those that love God: pity would come in the place of these. I would that they would set me lower, and Christ higher. His love has made me a prisoner, and bound me hand and foot. Christ's love is more than my praises, and above the thoughts of all the mighty hosts that stand before the

throne of God. It is my joy to hold my peace, and wait to see what more Christ will do to me. I have nothing to give Christ but poverty.

I can now by some little experience say more of Christ to you than formerly. I must persist in this, that if you seek, there is a hidden treasure, and a golden mine in Christ you never yet saw. Then "come and see."

Light, and the saving use of light are far different. O what need have I to have the ashes blown away from my dying out fire! I may be a book-man, and be but a fool in Christ's way; learning will not beguile Christ. The Bible beguiled the Pharisees, and so may I be misled.

I know you are not looking after the things of time: you have no great cause

to think that your stock and principal are under the roof of these visible heavens and I hope you would think yourself a deceived soul if it were so. It speaks something when our Lord bloweth the bloom off our vain hopes in this life, and loppeth the branches of our worldly joys well-nigh the root, on purpose that they should not thrive. A forfeiture of the saint's part of worldly happiness is not such a real evil as our blinded eyes conceive.

I am growing impatient now for some deliverance, more than before; but I know I am in error. It is possible I am not come to that measure of trial that the Lord is seeking in His work. If my friends could do anything effectually for my deliverance, I should exceedingly rejoice; but I know not but the Lord hath a way whereof He will be the only reaper of praises. I

know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace and hard trials together—and one of these cannot well be without the other.

O that time would post faster, and hasten our communion with that “Fair-est among the sons of men”! But a few years will do our turn, and the soldiers’ hour-glass will soon run out. I am sure the saints, at their best, are but strangers to the weight and worth of the incomparable excellency of Christ. He is so new, so fresh in excellency; day by day renewed to those that search more and more in Him; and yet He is ever one and the same. O! we know not the half of what we love when we love Christ.

I rejoice exceedingly that the Father of lights hath made you see that there is a point in Christianity which you

strive to reach ; and that is, to quit the right eye and the right hand, and to keep the Son of God. Fear not, Christ will not cast water upon your smoking flax ; and who else dare do it, if he say nay ?

Binding up of wounds is his office : many a whole soul is in heaven, which was sicker than ye are. His children must often have the frosty side of the hill—our pride must have wintry weather to rot it.

I verily count more of the sufferings of my Lord than of this world's lusted and over-gilded glory. My Lord hath fully recompensed my sadness with His joys ; my losses with His own presence. I find it a sweet and rich thing to exchange my sorrows with Christ's joys ; my afflictions with that sweet peace I have with Himself.

Put Christ's love to the trial, and put upon it burdens, and then it will appear love indeed. We employ not His love, and therefore we know it not.

Let us be faithful, and care for our own part—which is to do and suffer for Him; and lay Christ's part on himself and leave it there.

Duties are ours; events are the Lord's. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to question God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt thou do this and that?" we lose ground; we have nothing to do there. It is our part to let the Almighty exercise his own office.

I hope, when a change cometh, to cast anchor at midnight upon the Rock, whither I must run, when I must believe in the dark.

I am sure it is sin not to eat, when

he saith—"Eat, O well beloved ! and drink abundantly ;" it is good to be ever taking from Him.

I am heavy and sad, considering what is betwixt the Lord and my soul, which none seeth but He. I find men have mistaken me ; it would be no art, as I now see, to spin small and make hypocrisy seem a goodly web, and to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly to hell without observation—so easy is it to deceive men.

I have doubted whether I ever knew anything of Christianity, save the letters of that name : men see but as men, and they call ten twenty, and twenty a hundred ; but O ! to be approved of God in the heart, and in sincerity, is not an ordinary mercy.

My neglects while I had a pulpit,

and other things whereof I am ashamed to speak, meet me now, so as God maketh an honest cross my daily sorrow. I see now, a sufferer for Christ will be made to know himself as well as another poor sinner—my blessing on the cross of Christ that hath made me see this.

Mistaken grace, and somewhat like conversion which is not conversion, is the saddest thing in the world: make sure of salvation, and lay the foundations sure, for many are beguiled.

Put a low price upon this world; put a high price upon Christ. Temptations will come, *but if they be not made welcome by you*, you have the best of it. Be jealous over yourself and your own heart.

Let not Christ have a faint and

feeble soldier of you. Acquaint yourself with prayer. Make Christ your Captain and your Armour. Make conscience of sinning when no eye seeth you.

I know you are mindful of your sweet country, and not taking the place of your banishment for your home : sand-blind were our hope, if it could not look over the water to our best heritage.

If you win Christ, though not in the sweet and pleasant way you would have Him, it is enough ; for the Well-beloved cometh not *our* way, He must choose His way Himself. He cutteth off your love to the creature that you might learn that God only is the right owner of your love, sorrow, loss, sadness, death, or the worst things that are.

Christ knoweth well how to use things, and will make us to be obliged to affliction, and to thank God, who made us acquainted with such a rough companion to force us to Christ. You must learn to make evils your great good, and to spin out comforts, peace, joy, communion with Christ, out of your troubles, for they are Christ's messengers sent to win you to Himself.

Thanks to God for crosses. When we count our losses in seeking God, we find godliness is great gain. Give not away your crosses for nothing.

There is not such a glassy, slippery piece of way between you and heaven as *youth*. I have experience here in what I say, and seal what I assert: the old ashes of the sins of my youth are now fires of sorrow to me. Yet I must tell you, the whole saints now triumphant in heaven and standing be-

fore the throne, are nothing but *Christ's insolvent debtors*—What are they but redeemed sinners?

Christ is faithful, and He hath said “*him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*” Take hold of that; it cannot be presumption to take that as your own.

Presumption is ever whole at heart, and groaneth only for the fashion. Faith hath sense of sickness, and looking to Christ in the promises is glad to see therein a known face.

He who can tell his tale and send such a letter to heaven as he hath sent to Aberdeen, is very likely to obtain Christ's hearing. Be not ashamed because of your guiltiness — necessity must not blush to beg.

Doubtings are your sins, but they are

*Christs medicines, which as a Physician
He maketh use of for the curing of
your pride.*

In the passing of your Charters, when they passed the Mediator's great Seal and were concluded, faith's advice was not sought. Faith hath not a voice beyond Christ's merits: blood, blood, your Surety's blood, maketh that sure work.

The part of faith now, having already closed with Christ for justification, is to take out a copy of your pardon, and so ye have peace with God upon the account of Christ. Since Faith apprehendeth pardon, but never payeth a penny for it, no marvel that salvation doth not ebb or flow.

I am not the man I go for among my friends. I am very often so that I know not whether I sink or swim in

the water. I find myself at times lighter than froth.

I think it manhood to play the coward, and take shelter by the side of Christ: thus I am not only saved from my enemies, but I obtain the victory.

Let us be glad and rejoice in the salvation of our Lord, for Faith had never yet cause to have tearful eyes, or a sullened brow, or to droop or die.

When it comes to the practice of constant walking with God, our journey is broken ten times a day I have been somewhat nearer the Bridegroom; but when I draw nigh, and see my vileness, for shame I would, be out of His presence again. O what am I to stand beside the High and Holy Lord who inhabiteth eternity!

It is good there is a heaven, and it is not a night dream or a fancy: it is a wonder that men do not deny there is a heaven, as they deny that there is a way to it but of men's making.

This world which the Lord will not have to be yours, is but the dross, the refuse of God's creation; the moveables not the heritage: it is your Father's blessing, and Christ's birth-right, that our Lord is keeping for you.

Ere ye were born, crosses in number weight and measure were appointed for you, and your Lord will lead you through them: make sure of Christ, and the blessing of the earth will follow.

Make fast work. See that Christ lay the ground stone of your profession; for wind and rain will not

wash away this building; his works have no shorter date than to stand for evermore.

Christ takes as poor men may give. He breaketh not a bruised reed, nor quencheth the smoking flax, but if the wind blow he sheltereth the spark till it rise to a flame.

To think that matters go back betwixt Christ and us, because of deficiency in our obedience, is a piece of old Adam's pride, who would either be at legal payment or nothing. We would still have God in our debt, and buy his kindness with our merits. Pride maketh loose work of the covenant of grace, and will not let Christ be sole bargain maker.

Wait on, he that believeth maketh not haste.

Let God do with you what he will. He will end all with consolation and

will bring glory out of your suffering ;
and could you wish a better thing ?

Let not the censures of men, who see but the outsides of things, and scarce well that, abate your courage and rejoicing in the Lord : howbeit your faith seeth but the dark side of Providence, yet it hath a better side, and God will let you see it.

Learn to believe that Christ is better than His strokes, himself and His promises better than his frowns.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God ; hence I infer that losses, crosses, disappointments, ill tongues, loss of friends, relations, houses or country, are God's workmen, set to work out good to you out of every thing that befalleth you. Let not the Lord's dealing seem harsh, rough, or unfatherly, because it is un-

pleasant. When the Lord's will blows across your desire, it is best in humility to strike sail to Him, and to be willing to be led any way our Lord pleaseth. You know not what the Lord is working out of this but you shall hereafter.

It is a point of denial of yourself to be as if you had not a will, but had made it a free disposition of it to God; and to make use of His will for your own is both true holiness and your ease and peace.

The Lord is equal in his ways, but my guiltiness often overmastereth my believing. I would rather a cloud went over my comforts than that my faith should be hurt. I desire to give no faith, no credit to my sorrow when it suggests hard thoughts of Christ; yet these thoughts awake with me in the morning. I am a dry tree! I can neither plant nor water!

I rue from my heart that I yielded so far to the law, as to apprehend wrath in my Lord Jesus; for truly I am a debtor to His love, but I wish he would give me grace to learn to do without his comforts, and to give thanks and believe when the sun is not in the firmament. I have no resting place for my faith but bare Omnipotency, and God's holy arm and good will.

I am glad that you go on to follow Christ in this dark and cloudy time: it were good to sell all other things for him; for, when all these days are over, we shall find it our advantage that we have taken part with Christ.

Oh, how sweet a thing were it for us to learn to make our burdens light, by framing our hearts to the burden, and making our Lord's will a law! and we have good cause to wait patiently,

for ere long our Master will be with us and bring every thing to light.

Happy are they that are found watching. Our sand glass is not so long as to weary us in doing so. Time will eat away and root out our woes and sorrow ; our heaven is in the bud and growing up to a harvest.

Think not much of a storm upon the sea, when Christ is in the ship.

I find one thing I saw not well before, when the saints are under trials, and well humbled, little sins raise great cries in the conscience ; and in prosperity, conscience is a Pope which gives dispensations and great latitude to our heart. Oh, how little we care for pardon at Christ's hands when we make dispensations ! but when a cross without begets a heavier cross within, we

play no longer with our idols. It is good still to be severe against ourselves; for we but transform God's mercy into an idol for turning of the grace of God into wantonness.

Happy are they that know God, wrath, justice and sin, as they are in themselves.

That Christ and a sinner should be one, and have heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation! What more could love do? There are none but perfect garden flowers in heaven, and the perfection of all is Christ. He graceth heaven and all His Father's house with His presence. He is a Rose that beautifieth all the upper garden of God. Let us then go on to meet with Him, and to be filled with the sweetness of His love. Why sit we still? Why sleep we in the prison?

My greatest desires are these two—
First. That Christ would take me in hand, cure me, and undertake for a sick man. I know I should not die under His hand.

Second. Could I once fully apprehend, believe, and see the love of the Son of God, it were the fulfilling of desires of the only happiness I wish for; but the truth is, I hinder my communion with Him, by want of both faith and repentance, and because I will make an idol of Christ's consolations. O how little of Him do I see! May the Lord, of the fulness of His riches, satisfy a famished man!

The summer sun of the saints shineth not on them in this life. How should we have complained if our Lord had reversed the order of his providence, and had ordered matters thus—that the saints should have enjoyed

glory and ease *first*; and *then* Methuselah's days of sorrow and daily misery? We should think a short heaven no heaven.

If there had not been such a thing as the grace of Jesus, I should have long since given up the hope of heaven and the expectation to see God.

Grace, grace, free grace, the merits of Christ for nothing, hath been and must be the Rock that we drowning souls must swim to.

New washing, renewed application of redemption purchased by that precious blood that sealeth the free covenant, is a thing of daily and hourly use to a poor sinner.

It is grace's wonder, that Christ will
abode in such a polluted
as our soul, in which the old

man is ever breaking out in rebellion against the heavenly guest. May I not say, Lord Jesus, what dost Thou here?

Sanctification, and mortification of our desires, are the hardest part of Christianity. It is in a manner natural to us to leap for joy when we think of the new Jerusalem; but to obey, and work out our own salvation, and to perfect holiness, is the troublesome and stormy north-side of our way.

To rely on Christ, and not to be weary of sin is presumption, not faith. True faith is ever accompanied by a broken and contrite spirit; and it is impossible that faith can be where there is not in some measure an humble and contrite sense of sin.

You remember, "your summer days would have clouds, and your rose a

prickly thorn beside it." In heaven alone is Christ enjoyed without alloy; here we must share His cross, yet I know no tree beareth sweeter fruit than Christ's cross.

Yet a little while, and Christ will triumph: and when He hath accomplished His work, and hath refined His silver, He will bring new vessels out of the furnace to adorn His house. Free yourself of clogging temptations, by overcoming some, and contemning others, and watching over all.

If you seek the way to heaven—the way is in Him, or He is it; what you want is treasured up in Jesus, and He saith all His are your's, even His kingdom He is content to divide with you; yea His throne and glory. John xvii. 24. Rev. iii. 21.

Therefore take pains to reach that

besieged mansion of Christ. Devils, men, and armies of temptations are lying about it to keep out all that are out, and it is to be won with violence. Stand not for a price nor for all that you have to win that castle; the right to it is purchased for you.

It is not a smooth and easy way, neither will your weather be fair and pleasant; but those who by faith see the invisible God, and the fair City, make no account of losses and crosses. In you must be, cost you what it will.

If we knew the glory of our Elder Brother in heaven, we should long to be there to see Him. We children think the Earth a fair garden, but compared with the garden of the Lord it is but wild, cold, barren ground. All things are fading that are here;

it is our happiness to make sure of Christ.

I exhort you not to lose breath, nor to faint in your journey: the way is not so long to your home as it was: you are fast coming within reach of your glorious crown. Your Lord Jesus was sore travailed ere He got up the mount. It was he who said "Father, save me." "I am poured out like water—all my bones are out of joint—my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of me." "My strength is dried up like a potsherd."

Make His sweet comforts your own, and be not strange with Christ.

Take no heavier concern for your children than your Lord alloweth, Give them room beside your heart, but not where Christ should be, for then they are your idols, not your chil-

dren. If your Lord take any of them home to His house before the storm come on, take it well. Let our Lord pluck His own fruit at any season He pleaseth. They are not lost to you, they are laid up and treasured in heaven where our Lord's best jewels lie.

Be of good heart: Heaven is yours. and that is a word few can say.

As for Christ's cross, I never received evil of it but what was my own making. When I mis-used Christ's physic, no marvel that it hurt me.

It is sixteen hundred years since Christ bore His cross, and still it keepeth its mark of Him. I am glad that Christ hath such a relation to this cross, and that it is called the cross of our Lord Jesus, Gal. vi, 14; *His* reproach, Heb. xiii, 13. as if Christ would claim it as His own. Your excuse for your advice to me is needless: alas, many

sit beside light as sick folks beside meat,
and cannot make use of it !

Your fault is just mine, that I cannot believe my Lord's bare and simple word. I must have a sign and a seal, a witness and caution to His word, or else I count myself loose, though I have the word and faith of a king.

Oh ! I am made of unbelief, and cannot swim but where my feet may touch the ground ! Alas, my temptations represent Christ to me as a deceiver ! Temptations ever represent Christ unlike himself, and we in our folly listen to the temptation. I myself often mistake the cross of Christ.

I cannot but testify under my own hand that the more I know of Christ, the more cause I find to love him ; and when I have said all I can, another may declare I have said nothing of

Him. I never knew Christ ebb or flow, wax or wane; when he seemeth to change it is but we who turn our faces from him. Surely he hath borne with strange ways in me.

Crosses are proclaimed as common accidents to all the saints, and in them standeth a part of our communion with Christ. You do well to fear your own backsliding.

I can say more of Christ now by experience. If this whole world were in the balance it could not weigh against Christ's love: men and angels cannot fathom it.

Make sure work of your salvation. Build not upon sand. Lay the foundation upon the rock in Zion. Strive to be dead to this world, and to your own will and inclinations; let Christ have a commanding power, and a King's throne in you. Walk with

Christ though the world should withstand you ; Christ will win the field. Blessed are they who watch, and keep themselves in God's love.

Learn to discern the Bridegroom's voice and to give yourself to prayer and reading.

Heaven is no dream.

Frequent your meetings for prayer, and communion with God : they would be sweet meetings to me. Would that all the kingdom were as I am, except my bonds ! They know not the love the Lord Jesus sheweth to a prisoner : He hath sealed my sufferings with comforts. Christ beareth me good company ; lifting the cross off my shoulders, so that I think it to be but a feather, because underneath me are the everlasting arms.

I verily think Christ hath led me

now up to a point in Christianity that I never reached before. I think all before was but childhood and child's play. I look back to what I was before, and laugh to see the sand houses I have built when I was a child. Now I wonder that any man living can laugh upon the world, or give it a hearty welcome. Nothing breaketh my heart but that I cannot speak of the Bridegroom's glory to the daughters of Jerusalem. Now and then my silence burneth up my spirit, but Christ hath said, "Thy reward is laid up in heaven."

I was before at variance with Christ because I believed His outward look rather than His faithful promise, Yet He hath in patience waited for me till I have come to myself, and hath not taken advantage of my weak apprehensions of His goodness.

Grace *tried* is more than grace; it

is glory in its infancy. Who knoweth the truth of grace, without a trial? Oh, how little Christ getteth of us but that which He winneth, so to speak, with much toil and pains! And how soon would faith freeze without a cross!

When Christ blesseth His own crosses with a tongue, they breath out His love, wisdom, kindness and care of us. Why should I start though my Lord's plough make deep furrows on my soul? I know He is no idle husbandman. He purposeth a crop, and would that this white, withered ground were made fertile, to bear a crop for Him by whom it is so painfully dressed; and that this fallow ground were broken up. How sweet and comfortable have the thoughts of Him been to me in my bonds! I have found in them a sufficient recompense of reward.

It is no wonder that ye be in heaviness for a season, and that God's will; in crossing your desires and design to dwell among a people whose God is the Lord, should move you. I deny not but ye have cause to inquire what His providence speaketh to you in this; but God's directing and commanding will can by no good logic be concluded from events of providence. Paul found many lions in his way in those places whither the Lord sent him for the spreading of His gospel: a promise was made of the holy land, and yet many nations were in the way.

I know you have most to do with submission of spirit; but I persuade myself you have learned in every condition wherein you are cast, therein to be content, and to say, Good is the will of the Lord, let it be done. I believe the Lord purposeth to bring mercy out of your sufferings and silence, which I

know from mine own experience is grievous to you. Suffering is the better half of our ministry, howbeit the hardest; through many afflictions we must enter the kingdom of God, not only by them, but *through* them must we go.

Oh, how sweet and dear are those thoughts that are still upon the things which are above! and how happy are they who are longing to have little sand in their glass, and to have Time's thread cut, and that can cry to Christ "Lord Jesus, come and fetch Thy weary pilgrim!"

I wish our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. O but heaven casteth a sweet perfume afar off to those who have spiritual senses! God hath many fair flowers, but the fairest are in heaven, and the Flower of all flowers is Christ. Fy,

fy upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houses, fair lands, fair pleasures, fair honours, and fair persons, and have so little love to Christ ! If men would have something to do with their hearts and thoughts, that are always rolling up and down after sinful vanities, they may find great and sweet employment of their thoughts upon Christ.

I can write no better thing to you than to assure you, that if you will weigh Christ against every other delight, He will be found worthy of all your love.

I heartily desire that you will remember your country, and consider which way your soul setteth its face ; for all come not home at night who suppose they have set their faces heavenward. It is a woful thing to die and miss heaven. Thousands shall be

deceived and ashamed of their hope; because they cast their anchor in sinking sands, they must lose it. Till now I knew not the difficulties that there is in reaching home; nor did I understand so well what that meaneth—"The righteous shall be scarcely saved."

Let Christ have your whole love.

I have some experience in what I thus write to you. My witness is in heaven, I would not exchange my chains and bonds for Christ for ten worlds' glory.

I judge this clay-idol, that Adam's sons are selling their souls for, not worth a drink of cold water. May-flowers and morning vapour, and summer mist pass not so fast away as these withering pleasures that we follow after. When you and I shall be in the cold ground, our pleasures that we now naturally love shall be less than nothing.

We built castles in the air, and night dreams are our daily idols that we dote on; salvation, salvation is our only one necessary thing. Call home your thoughts to this work, to enquire for your well-beloved.

I never took it to be so hard to be dead to my own will, and to this world. When your old idols come weeping about you, you will have much ado: it is best to give them up in time, so as you could at a call quit your part of this world, as a thing little worth.

Verily, I have seen the best part of this world. I purpose now to lay it aside.

I thank God the cloud has passed away. I am ashamed now of my unjust doubts of Christ, my Lord: verily He is God, and I am dust and ashes.

When He hid His face from me, I thought it was in wrath; but I have seen the other side of His cross now.

It was good for me to come to Aberdeen to learn a new mystery of Christ, *That Christ's promise is to be believed against all appearances.* Verily I have been but a child until now. I would I could begin to be a Christian in real earnest. Come all crosses,—welcome, welcome, so I may get my heart fixed on Him.

This is the fruit of my sufferings, that I desire Christ's name may be spread abroad in this kingdom.

Verily, we know not what an evil it is to indulge ourselves, and make an idol of our will! I pray God I may never find my will again. O if Christ would subject my will to His, and liberate me from that lawless lord!

O but pride of youth, vanity, idolising of the world and charming pleasures, take long time to root them out : far as ye are advanced, ye will find that ye are far behind, and have most of your work before you.

My desire is that your communion with Christ may grow. Let this be your desire, and let your thoughts dwell much upon that blessedness that abideth you in the other world. The fair side of the world will be turned to you quickly, when you shall see the crown. O but I would think myself blessed for my part, might I reach the house before the shower comes on ! Death, as fast as time fleeth, chaseth you out of this life. This clay-idol, I mean the vain world, is not worth the seeking.

Happy is your soul, if Christ command all within.

It is the Lord's kindness that He will clear us from our dross in the fire. Who knoweth how needful winnowing is for him, and how much of his dross he must lose ere he can enter the kingdom of God ?

So narrow is the entry to heaven, that our knots and bunches of pride, and self-love, and idol-love, and world-love, must be hammered off us, that we may press in, stooping low and creeping through that narrow, thorny entry.

I find it the most sweet and heavenly life to pitch my tent upon Christ's foundation stone, which is sure and faithful ground.

I thank God because He has taught me in my wilderness not to divide Christ, nor intermix Him with creature vanities, nor to spin His sweet love in one thread with the world and the

things thereof. And yet I am but training on to love Him, and my soul hungers to feed more abundantly upon Him : but our meat doth us the more good that Christ keepeth the keys, and that the wind and the air of His sweet breathing, and of the influence of His Spirit, is locked up in the hands of the good pleasure of Him who bloweth where he listeth.

I see there is a sort of impatient patience required in the want of Christ, as to His manifestations to the soul. They thrive, who wait on His love, and catch the turning of the precious gale ; and they thrive who through waiting make haste and strive and seek diligently for their lost and hidden Lord Jesus. He hath a way of His own beyond the thoughts of men, that no foot hath skill to follow Him ; but we are still bad scholars, and will go in at

heaven's gates with only half our lesson learned, and will be children as long as we are under Time's hands.

On this side of the New Jerusalem we shall still have need of forgiving and healing. Lord, do anything that may perfect Thy Father's image in us.

Christ and His cross are not separable in this life ; howbeit they part at heaven's door, for there is no room for crosses in heaven. Not one tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, or thought of trouble, can find lodging there. They are but the marks of our Lord Jesus down in this stormy country on this side death.

His sweet presence eateth out the bitterness of sorrow.

You have made a sweet change in leaving the black kingdom of this

world and sin, and coming over to our Bridegroom's new kingdom, to know and to be taken with the love of the Son of God. I beseech you, make now sure work, and see that the new building of your soul be of Christ's own laying, for then the wind and storm shall neither loose it, nor shake it asunder.

Many now take Christ by guess; therefore, I say, be sure you take Christ Himself. His sweet working in the soul will not lie; it will soon tell whether it be Christ indeed you have met.

Your lines are well fallen: it could not have been better. In heaven, or out of heaven, there is nothing better, nothing so sweet and excellent, as that which you have found; therefore, hold fast to Christ. But take His cross with Himself cheerfully.

I think it a sweet thing that Christ divides my suffering with me, and taketh the largest share to Himself. What a portion is Christ! O that the saints would dig deeper into the treasures of His wisdom and excellency!

O for my house above not made with hands!

I find my Lord going and coming seven times a-day; His visits are short, but they are both frequent and sweet.

Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken dead, rise again, and revive upon me; yea, I see that while I live temptations will not die: yet I will not believe that Christ would have done so much for me, and taken such pains to have me to Himself as He has done, if He meant not to take possession of me. I dare not say that I am a dry tree, or that I have no room at all in the vineyard.

I see that now which I never saw before. 1. I see the necessity of faith is never known aright in a fair day,—but now I miss nothing so much as faith. Faint and hungry, I run to the fair and sweet promises; but when I come I am like one stupified with cold under water that would fain come to land, but cannot lay hold of anything that is cast to him: I can let Christ take hold of me, but I cannot lay hold on him, for afflictions cramp my faith. O what would I give to have my claim made good!

2. I see mortification, and to be crucified to the world, is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be. How heavenly a thing is it to be deaf and dead to this world's sweet music! As I am at present I would scorn to buy this world's kindness with a bow of my knee.

I scarce now either hear or see what

it is that this world offereth me: I know it is little it can take from me, and as little it can give me. I recommend mortification to you above anything; for, alas! we but tire our own spirits for the vapour of a dying life.

One sight of what my Lord hath let me see within this short time is worth a world of worlds.

I thought courage in the time of trouble, for Christ's sake, would be a thing easily had. I thought the very remembrance of the excellency of the cause would be enough; but I was a fool in so thinking. I see joy groweth up in heaven, and is above our short reach. Christ will be the steward and dispenser of it Himself, and none else but He; therefore, now I count much of the least spiritual joy; yet truly I have no cause to say that the consolations of Christ are dried up.

Be humble and thankful for grace, and look not so much to its weight, as whether it be true. Christ will not quench your smoking flax; He never yet extinguished the feeblest flame that was kindled at the Sun of Righteousness.


I recommend to you prayer and watching over the sins of your youth. Satan hath a friend at court in the heart of youth; and there pride, luxury, lust, revenge, forgetfulness of God are his hired agents. Keep Him (Christ)—cherish His grace, and let Him direct you in all things.

I am fully agreed with my Lord. I reign as a king over my crosses; I will not yield to a temptation, nor give place to the devil. Praise God with me, and let us exalt his name together.

As for my case I bless His glorious

name, my losses are my gain, my prison a palace, and my sadness joyfulness. Let no man shrink from Christ's cross, for He beareth both the sufferer and it. I see that Christ can triumph in a weaker man than I; yet who can be more weak? But His grace is sufficient for me.

At my first coming (to prison), my apprehensions wrought so upon my cross, that I became doubtful of the love of Christ, as being by Him thrust out of the vineyard, and I was under great misgivings of mind; but our apprehensions are not well founded, they speak falsely of God and Christ's love. But since my spirit was settled, and the clay fallen to the bottom of the well, I see better what Christ was doing: and now my Lord is returned with salvation under His wings; and I see not how to be thankful enough, or sufficiently praise that royal King.



Ordinarily melted gold casteth first its dross ; and satan and our own corruptions form (*i. e.* devise) the first words the cross speaketh, and say, “ God is angry, He loveth you not.”

I have benefited in riding alone a long journey, by giving that time to prayer, 2. By abstinence, and giving days to God. 3. By praying for others; for by making an errand to God for them, I have gotten something for myself. 4. I have been really made sure in many particulars that God heareth prayer ; and, therefore, I used to pray for everything, of how little importance soever.

I have been much challenged by conscience.

1. For not referring all to God as the last end ; that I do not eat, drink, sleep, journey, speak, and think for God.

2. That I have not benefited by good company; and that I left not some word of conviction, even upon natural and wicked men; as by reprov-
ing swearing in them, or that I have been a silent witness to their loose carriage, and aimed not in all companies to do good.

3. That the woes and calamities of my fellow-creatures, and particularly of the brethren, have not sufficiently moved me.

4. That at the reading of the lives of David, Paul, and such characters, I was not more humbled, and laboured not to imitate them.

5. That unrepented sins of youth were not looked to and lamented for.

6. That sudden stirrings of pride, anger, revenge, love of honours, &c., were not resisted and mourned for.

7. That my charity was cold.

8. That having had experience of

God's hearing me in this and the other particular, yet in a new trouble I had always, at first, at least, my faith to seek, as if I were to begin A B C again.

9. That I have not more boldly contradicted the enemies speaking against the truth, either in public, or social, or ordinary conferences.

10. That in great troubles I have admitted false thoughts of Christ's love, and misinterpreted His chastenings; whereas the event hath said all was in mercy.

11. Nothing more moveth me, and weigheth my soul than that I could never from my heart in my prosperity so wrestle in prayer with God, nor be so dead to the world, nor so hunger for communion with Christ, as when the weight of a heavy cross was upon me.

12. That the cross extorted vows of new obedience which ease hath blown away as chaff before the wind.

13. That practice was so short and narrow, and light so long and broad.

14. That death hath not been often meditated upon.

15. That I have not been careful of gaining others to Christ.

16. That my grace and gifts bring forth little or no thankfulness.

Growth in grace should be sought for above all things, and falling from our first love mourned for.

Thoughts of Atheism should be watched over; such as, if there be a God in heaven; which will trouble and assault the best at some times.

To beware of wandering of heart in private prayer.

That words be observed, wandering and idle thoughts be avoided, sudden anger and desire of revenge, even of such as persecute the truth be guarded

against; for we often mix our zeal with our own wild fire. Conscience made of praying for the enemies who are blinded.

That we deal with all men in sincerity.

Some hours of the day less or more (should) be given to God, for the reading the Word, and prayer.

Remember how swiftly time fleeth away; your forenoon is already spent, your afternoon will come, and then your evening, and at last night, when you cannot see to work: let your heart be set upon finishing your journey, and making up your accounts with your Lord.

I recommend Christ and His love to you above all things. Be not great with the world, make it not your lover, for it will deceive you.

Our ministry, whether by preaching or suffering, will cast a savour through the world, both of life and death. I persuade you, my dear brother, there is nothing out of heaven next to Christ dearer to me than my ministry, and the worth of it in my estimation is increased, and paineth me exceedingly; yet I am content for the honour of my Lord to surrender it back again to the Lord of the vineyard. Let Him do with it and me both what seemeth Him good.

Believe me, this kind of cross is still the longer the more welcome to me.

Christ's love will not wrong me, but there is a tricking and false heart within me, that still leads me to doubt Him. It is sometimes hard to me to make sure of Christ's love; because my faith is sick, and my hope withereth, and my eyes wax dim, and unkind and comfort-eclipsing clouds go over the fair and

bright Sun of Righteousness; and then when I and temptations meet we lose all through unbelief. Sweet, sweet would be my life for evermore, if I could keep faith in exercise; but I see my fire cannot always cast light.

Go on in the strength of His rich grace whom ye serve. Let us make our part good, that it may be able to abide the fire when hay and stubble shall be burnt to ashes. Nothing, nothing,—I say, nothing but sound sanctification can abide the Lord's fan.



