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**FREEMASONS' HALL**  
**ADDRESSES.**

BY THE REV.

**JOSEPH DENHAM SMITH.**

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**NO. 3.**  
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**S. W. PARTRIDGE, 9 PATERNOSTER-ROW.**

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## THIRD ADDRESS.

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THE Third Address of the Series was delivered on Saturday, at Two o'clock, in Freemasons' Hall. The spacious building was crowded to excess: many sought admittance in vain.

The Hymn, No. 16 in the "Times of Refreshing" Hymn-book, was sung, commencing:—

" Oh! come to Jesus now,  
Jesus is here."

Mr. SMITH read part of the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, beginning at the 21st verse. He then proceeded to address the congregation as follows:—

You have here God's indictment, not only against Israel, but against men in general. God formed man for His praise. Creation and redemption were undertaken for His praise, but here is what God says of the sinner:—

" This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise. But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." (Ver. 21, 22.)

I have no doubt many of you are conscious that this portion of the indictment is true. You have been living without prayer, without communion, without fellowship, and without God. There might

be written over your very door, and along the walls of the room in which you have lived, the solemn syllables "*No God.*" You have been living "without God, and without hope;" and if you had died ten years ago, or twenty years ago, or thirty years ago, you would have been ten, twenty, or thirty years in hell. God's word is, that you have not called upon Him: no prayer, no communion, no fellowship with God. But more remarkable still—God says:—

"Thou hast been weary of me." (Ver. 22.)

Many of you are conscious that you do not like the thought of God. You would go anywhere rather than into His presence. You tremble at a sense of His presence. You cannot help consenting to this. You know you have been weary of the idea of God; not weary at times only, not as a mere interregnum, or episode in life, but all through your unconverted, unsaved lives.

"Thou hast not brought me," says God, "the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices." (Ver. 23.)

In other words, God complains that you have not brought *Christ* to Him. The offerings of the Old Testament typify the Lord Jesus; and whatever else all your life long you have brought Him—sins, self, or your own religiousness—you have not brought the Lord Jesus as "a sweet savour" offering unto God. Many of you, in some moment of guilt or dread, have brought yourselves, you have brought words of prayerlessness, but you have not brought *Christ*. You have brought your fears, your guilt, or your

hopes, but God says, you have not brought *Christ*. Now, unless the sinner bring Christ, as the ground of his acceptance, there is no access to God—no communion, no fellowship with Him. People talk of God out of Christ. There is for us no such God. There is God *in* Christ, who is the only God *we* have revealed to us. There is none other for us. If we have not *such* a God, we have *no God*. If no God, no prayer, no fellowship, no communion.

“Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices.” (Ver. 24.)

As I have before mentioned, the fat was the very prime of the offering, and indicated, doubtless, the strength and energies of the heart—the perfectness of the Lord Jesus. Some of you, Christians, have brought *partly* Christ and *partly* yourselves—your own exercises, your own religiousness; but God would have you come, and, as it were, not even see yourselves before Him—that you may see Christ, what he is before God, and see yourselves made “the righteousness of God in him”—that you may bring the very perfectness of Jesus, which God delights to see, and through which He accepts the believing sinner. Have you come to Him thus—with Jesus only? To have such an approach to God, gives rest and peace to the soul that knows it.

“But thou hast made me to serve with thy sins.” (Ver. 24.)

God, as it were, has been serving the ungodly—has been the servant of the sinner. In the morning—your life-long morning, when you awake from your

sleep, it is God that wakes you. When you go down to your family circle, it is God that gives you to do so. When you partake of the morning meal, it is God that has provided it for you—it is He that has spread for you your table. And when you go to your daily labour, it is God still going with you, and serving you, giving you strength to go. And when in hard toil, God fitted your back to the burden. When of an evening you come home to your circle, it is God who gives you all the amenities, and pleasures, and joys of that circle. And when you have laid down to rest, it was God—blessed attendant that He has been to you!—that closed your eyes, and kept watch over your slumbers. And yet, with all that, thou hast made Him to serve with—what? How? With thy love or gratitude? Ah! no. Thou hast made Him to serve *with thy sins*. God hath done all this for thee, and a million times more, and thou hast made Him to serve with thy sins. You have given Him back forgetfulness! drunkenness! licentiousness! unbelief, in some one or more of ten thousand forms of enmity! You have given Him *sin! sin!* Ah! this is God's indictment. "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins." You have not treated Him as you would a common servant. If you have a servant, you give him suitable wages; but you have made God serve, as it were, with your sins. What a dreadful picture is this! but how true, of every sinner, every unsaved, unconverted sinner, within this Freemasons' Hall this afternoon! Ah! I wonder you do not tremble under the thought, that you are always in the sight of God, who, as a great Server, takes note of such requitals, and that if you

die now, it would have been better for you to have died in your infancy, or never to have been born. May God grant that you may be led to think of it now! May God bring thee, poor sinner, into thine own presence, that thou mayest know *thyself!*

There is no hope of doing anything with thee, until thou knowest something of thyself. See an illustration of this in the woman of Samaria. When Jesus saw her at the well, he began to talk with her about the water, but every word seemed to go from her mind, and produce no effect. But our Saviour proceeded—His object was to bring her into her own presence. At length he said, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." She, with a flippancy and ease, which had marked all her prior conversation, supposing that He knew nothing about her, said, "I have no husband." Jesus, with an eye that *could* penetrate, looked at her, and said, "Thou hast had five husbands;" the mask fell—the curtain was drawn—the woman at once saw that Jesus knew her. She now knew herself; and brought into her own presence, it was comparatively easy to make her feel the presence of *Christ*. When she found that Jesus knew her past life, it was then she looked to him, sought refuge in him, and found a Saviour in him. Ah! dear hearers, may God bring you into your own presence now. May He give you to know what you are, and where you are, in His presence this morning, and may He bring you to know Jesus as your Saviour!

But to proceed, the last clause of this indictment is seemingly worse than all. Here it is:—

"Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins; *thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.*" (Ver. 24.)

I do not know in all the Bible of its being said of anything else that it wearies God. God holds the stars in their orbits, and directs them from one stage to another in their courses, yet He is not wearied. He has watched over every angel He ever made, and every worm He ever created, and every blade of grass He ever caused to grow; yet has His mighty power never wearied. But oh! sinner, *thou* hast wearied Him. "*Thy sins* have wearied me," says God. You know them—so black—so secret to all but God—so dreadful—some of them—such a list—such a load! Oh! do you not think that God would love to see you this day so wearied with them yourself, as to cast them where they can be taken all away? Oh! that thy heart may bend under the load this morning. God grant it! the Lord grant it!

So far the indictment. Now, let us hear God summing up the verdict, and pronouncing the sentence. For when the law condemns, it inflicts a doom corresponding to the sentence. The verdict and punishment must agree. And now listen to it. One can hardly believe one's senses. Why, there is not the stroke of a pen between the awful indictment and this sentence. "I, even I, am he that hath vengeance, that damneth"—is that it? Ah! no, no. "I am he that condemneth thee, that destroyeth thee!" Oh, no; but,

"I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions."—(Ver. 25.)

Oh, marvel of marvels—mystery of divine grace

—mystery of God's love and grace in redemption! Not that there was no condemnation; not that there was no curse for all this; righteousness cannot be overlooked. Mercy and pardon never come with justice crushed beneath their feet. Oh, no! all we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. But the Lord (in the day of His fierce anger against sin) laid our iniquities upon Jesus. My dear hearers, if I were dying to-night, I have nothing but that. I see all that God says against me, and because I see what God, in putting away sin, has done for me, I know I have a rock—"that rock is Christ." Salvation—salvation through the blood of the Lamb—yes, salvation, that came to me in the day of God's fierce anger against sin, when Christ took the cursed load upon him, and bore it away. Now I triumph as I sing:

"The Lamb, the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb;  
The Lamb upon Calvary;  
The Lamb that was slain, that liveth again,  
To intercede for me."

Oh, do you now understand it? God could not have said, "I have blotted out," unless on the ground of righteousness. The curse due to sin must be lawfully borne. People pray, "Lord, if thou hadst been strict to mark one sin in a thousand, who could stand?" why He has been strict, to mark not only the one sin in a thousand, but the other nine hundred and ninety-nine. He marked them all on Christ. *He* (Christ) bore their curse, and because of that *we* live. I hear much in these days about a *personal* Christ, and that is what the Germans are full of just now. The Lord forbid we should *not*

have a personal Christ! For what would be the good of a paper Christ, or a wafer Christ, such as some would give you? What would be the use of a Christ that was *not* personal? And oh! what a person He is! very God and very man; very man as he hung in pains on the accursed tree; very God when he broke the bars of the tomb, and "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Very God and very man: but a mere person is of no use to a sinner without the work. But what do men mean by a *personal* Christ? The "person" and the "work" of Christ should never be separated. The person is of no use to me excepting in the light of the work. Paul says, "whom I believe." The "person" of the Lord Jesus Christ was utterly worthless to Paul, excepting as connected with the "work" of the Lord Jesus. And what of his work? Why, that as the God-man he bore the indignation and the curse against sin; that he in the boundlessness of his love and grace put his own back under the awful burden, the curse that was due to sin, and that he fulfilled all righteousness. And now God is not only a gracious God, but He is a just God—just to remit sins to faith; John says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" mark that word—"*cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" I am, then, treated as righteous, even as His Son, because His Son died, and died for the ungodly. Why, there is not the blackest sinner in London—the greatest backslider in London—the vilest prodigal in London, who might not have instantaneous peace if he saw that—who might not, *on believing*, have salvation on

the spot—the salvation which Mary Magdalene of old had—which the prodigal had—which the dying thief had.

Mark now the wonderful completeness of this. "I, even I, am he that *blotteth out* thy transgressions." "Ah," says some weak believer, "perhaps a few of my sins are blotted out." "No," says God, "I have blotted *thy sins out*." "That may be so," he then says, "but I still feel as if they were *here*: I feel as if I were bearing my load." Ah! then, you have not seen the Gospel. Why, if you owed a merchant five thousand pounds, and feared that your children would not have bread; and if, some morning, not alone on the ground of clemency, but of justice as well, the merchant brought you that long heavy account, with "*settled*" inscribed on it—the debt being cancelled and gone in the dread book of account, it would be gone *in your own mind*. The very sight of "*paid*" would be salvation from that day. You would see the word "*settled*" at the foot of the bill, and you would know that that meant *paid*. If some one said to you, "The word '*settled*' refers only to the first two or three items—it does not mean that the whole bill is "*settled*," you would not believe him. God has blotted out all thy transgressions—blotted out, because *borne*—just as the account was settled because *paid*. God has taken the sponge of His grace, dipped it in the precious blood that flowed from Calvary, passed it over the catalogue of guilt, and left nothing on the cross but the blessed words, "I have blotted out, as a cloud, thy transgressions."

We said, just now, that God was wearied with

nothing but with sin. We may add, He now *forgets* nothing but sin; not even the blade of grass that turns its spiral form heavenward—not even a drop in the brinal ocean which has its own use and commission in storm or calm. There is not a bird that cleaves the air, or a fish the sea, but God has marked out its path. God forgets nothing but the transgressions of him who believes, for He says “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and I WILL REMEMBER THEM NO MORE.” Blotted out at the cross, they are blotted from His book—blotted out from His memory, and now, on believing, blotted here from my heart, from my conscience. There is “*no more conscience of sins.*” May the Holy Ghost quicken you! May He give you to understand and believe the Gospel! May the Lord bless to us the reading of His Word!

Several letters were then read requesting the prayers of the congregation, on which

Mr. SMITH remarked.—There are many looking to God for salvation, and what do they do?—They go, perhaps, to some secret place—some inner room. Do I object to a secret room for prayer? The Lord forbid! One of the most hallowed and delightful things conceivable is to be alone with God. But what do some in their secret place? They look up to Heaven, and keep looking up, oftentimes vaguely indeed, and they expect that God at some time or other will send them conversion or salvation. They do not know how it will come to them but they keep crying to heaven—looking up to heaven. I never knew a man saved by merely vaguely

looking up to heaven. Do not misunderstand me. You will know what I mean before I have done. What saith the Apostle? The word is *here*; it is *nigh* thee; it is in thy hand; nay, as if ready for food, it is *in thy mouth*, and in thy heart—the word, beloved, that this day we preach, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

It is *here*, in this Book, that the Lord speaks to you. Oh, He does speak *from heaven*—the *risen* Christ! But THE WORD—the truth in the Word, is where His utterance is given. You say, you can confess with your mouth that you long to tell of His grace and love to your own soul; and that you can and do believe that God raised him from the dead; that *he* is now a risen Christ before God in perfectness for the believing sinner. This truly is well, but it is not all. Do you not believe this:—that so knowing and confessing Christ, God says, “THOU SHALT BE SAVED”?

Believing this, then, you *are* saved. And believing it now, you are saved *now*. Believe then, what God says, and present rest will be yours. May God the Spirit give you to know and understand that your salvation comes of *believing the truth as it is in Jesus!*

Other communications were read, some complaining of a want of more sorrow and distress of mind.

MR. SMITH continued.—I don't know a passage in the Bible that warrants a man in waiting to have more conviction before coming to Jesus. Before

you have the deeper convictions you want, you may be in your grave, or in hell. The question is, Do you want salvation? Salvation is provided and proclaimed, and may be had on believing. The Lord Jesus, who knew what sin was, suffered, agonized, wept enough; he bore our sins enough. And having ceased from bearing them, he has entered into rest. So, believer, *enter thou into thy rest.*

Prayer was then offered by several persons in the assembly, and Hymn 29 was sung from the "Times of Refreshing" Hymn-book :—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Come unto me and rest."

[THE ADDRESS.]

MR. SMITH.—Before we separate, I would like to lodge one blessed sentiment in your minds.—

"Perfect love casteth out fear." 1 John iv. 18.

You know far better than any one else, whether, individually, you are possessed of *perfect* love which casteth out fear; whether the love which you have be a *perfect* love—perfect in its nature, and perfect in its influence—casting out fear. Now, is it not well worth our while to remain here a little this afternoon to consider this question—whether or not, with all the profession of religion you have made, perhaps for years, you personally, experimentally, know that perfect love which casteth out fear?

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It may simplify the matter if I put it in two lights. If we consider, first of all, the nature of the love itself, and then its influence; for it is said of this love, whatever it is, that it "casteth out fear."

FIRST, THEN, THE NATURE OF THE LOVE ITSELF.

Of love *in the abstract*, it is true that it casteth out fear. We never fear a person whom we love. The love spoken of here is *perfect* love. And it cannot be *your* love, for *that* is not "perfect." In speaking of "fear"—and the life of many is just a life of *fears*—I have touched a chord which vibrates deep down into your own consciences, which are miserable, wretched, full of all fear. May God grant, that before you leave this Hall, you may know that perfect love which casteth out fear! May the Spirit of God quicken you to know the truth, and the truth will set you free!

Well, dear friends, I come at once to the conclusion, that it is not so much of *your* love that John speaks, but of that perfect love which is to be found only in God—that love which has been manifested in Christ, and which, by the Spirit, is known and realized *in us*. *My* love to God can never be perfect. No matter though it may grow, and grow, and grow, it will never come up to that perfectness which is spoken of here. Blessed be God! we cannot live in comfort, without some consciousness of our own love to God. But, oh! if our salvation depended upon our love to Him, where should we be? Perhaps in a moment like this, calm and happy, it may all seem well; but to-morrow you may be conscious of having little or no love in your heart. Then, where are you? Where will you be when your own love lies low

down, where the eye of the mind cannot see it? It may be, moreover, that when you are dying you may feel your love to be a poor thing. Ah! no; it is not *your* love, but *God's* love revealed to you, and shed abroad in your heart, and producing love to Him in return. Says Paul, "That we may know the love of Christ;" in other words, he longed to know that love of God who gave the Lord Jesus; and the love of Christ who gave *himself*—who came and died that he might place us in righteousness, in acceptableness, in perfectness before God.

Let me explain this for a moment. John, in the same letter, says, "If we walk in the light as He is in the light." You will get some idea of God's love for us, if you will just think—"God is light"—is perfectness. Nothing can come before God, but what is like Himself—perfect. But what is man? Is man perfect? Nay, he is all imperfect, all enmity against God. But the Son of His love came from the bosom of the Father, to the sorrows of Gethsemane and Calvary, to the sufferings of the cross, to the gloom of the grave. And, in his perfectness, he did for man precisely what man in his imperfectness could not do; and having lived as man—having obeyed as man, though, withal the Son of God—and having worked out a Divine righteousness as the Son of God as well as Son of man—having fulfilled every claim which God had upon man, and having done everything that was necessary for atonement, and for man's standing before God in righteousness—he went back in all the light, and joy, and perfectness of his completed work. He went back to his Father in all the brightness and

blessedness of his accepted work. God seated him upon His own throne, where he now is. Now, as he (Christ) is in the light, *we are in the light*. This is a great truth to know, and one that gives rest and peace in the Divine presence. Christ is there in perfectness—for whom? For angels? No, for the believing sinner. I would ask you, could love be more perfect than that which brings the sinner from all his degradation and wretchedness, and puts him, so to speak, into all the perfectness and joy—acceptableness and righteousness of the Lord Jesus himself? Believing this, I thus get a foretaste of the meaning of the Psalmist, when he says, “I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.” As Christ is in the light, so, seeing him, and believing in him, we are as he is—in the light; and being before God as Christ is, we walk accordingly. We put on Christ. We walk in the light of what he is. We walk in practical holiness, according to that word, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

I cannot dwell further upon this part of the subject, but, I trust, you see what I mean. God sets aside the sinner, brings in the Son of His love, works out a perfect righteousness, and that righteousness, which is the righteousness of God, is imputed to the believer. It was a glorious statement of Martin Luther, to which he gave expression in one of his mighty orations upon the sinner's justification, not by his works, but by Christ. Noble, lion-hearted Reformer! How one loves to hear him! Said Luther to the listening and wondering Christendom just awaking from the sleep of superstition—“As Christ

is before God, so am I." Of course our Reformer excepted his essential glory, which is incommunicable, and which none can share. A similar utterance was made by our great Irish Evangelist of the sixth century. Saint Patrick was evidently struggling for the great truth we are considering. Said he—"The sinner nothing; Christ everything. Christ before me. Christ behind me. Christ on the right hand. Christ on the left hand. Christ below me as a rock. Christ above me." And, as if he struggled to get utterly rid of self, "Christ in me, Christ through me." Could love be more perfect that puts the first Adam, the natural man, aside, and makes the believer before God all that Jesus is—as I have said, his deity excepted? It is thus that God does not view the sinner, who is dead—crucified in Christ, *as he is in himself*, but he sees him *in Christ*, in whom is redemption, righteousness, light, life, and holiness—"the Lord our Righteousness." Oh, may God give you to understand this!

If this be true, I often say to myself, "Where am I?" Why, I am where God puts me. As a sinner, under the first Adam—as a thing at enmity with God, He put me aside. Having first judged, condemned, and sentenced me on the cross in the person of my Substitute, He brings the living Saviour out of the tomb, instead of my dead, crucified self. When I see Christ, I say, "He is my life;" and when Christ, who is my life, shall appear, I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is. Could love that puts me in a position like that, be more perfect? Compared with this, how small a thing is our own

love? All our love is as when the schoolboy on the shore tries to tempt the rising tide into little lake-like holes which he makes in the sand; but the love of God is like the tide of the ocean, which submerges them all. Oh! that we may know this perfect love of God, that puts a perishing, hell-deserving sinner in Christ, in righteousness, in holiness, in perfectness; so that such an one as Paul could say "*I live*; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

I could speak with you much longer on this subject, did time permit. I want you, dear people of London, to forget as it were, that there is such a thing as self—that there is such a person between the crown of your head and the soles of your feet as yourself. God has put you, the sinner, aside, and brought in Christ. You that were "dead in trespasses and sins hath he quickened, and raised you up together with Christ," *a new creation*, "and hath made you to sit together with him in heavenly places."

So far then as to the nature of the love itself. Let us now,

II. CONSIDER ITS INFLUENCE. The moment we know and receive this love, "*it casts out fear*."

And first, it casts out *all slavish fear of God*. Before I knew God, I was afraid of Him—I thought God hated me. I thought the Lord Jesus Christ, by his death, had made God propitious towards me. But when I saw that it was because God Himself is love, that the Son of His love came and died; and that Christ was not the cause, but rather the expression, of His love, such perfect love it was that cast

out fear, that is, all slavish fear of God. The salvation of the Gospel is the salvation of *God*.

Ah, dear people, many of you have never seen God through a right medium. Believe me, you have not. If it were broad daylight now, and there was a crystal dome over this building, and if every part of that dome were stained glass, I need not tell you that, having a stained medium, the light would be stained. Every ray as it descended into this hall would be coloured. Thousands of sinners look to God through some false medium. They see Him in the light of their wretched gloomy consciences, or through the medium of dark and mysterious providences, or through the medium of a life-long defective instruction. Often guilty fears, and the lies of the devil and their own evil hearts, are the turbid windows through which the suspicious and saddened soul looks out upon God. How can such see Him in His own character, which is—LOVE? Why, what God is now, God has been through eternity. "God is love." It was God loved the sinner, and gave the Son of His love for him. It is God that wants the sinner. It was God that sent His Son down to bear the condemnation of the sinner. When I know the perfect love of God, it casts out all slavish, inordinate fear of God. The devils fear. I know there is a holy reverential fear; but the fear the text deprecates, is an inordinate slavish fear, such as the devils have. They believe, *and tremble*; they must tremble, because they know of no salvation for them. We believe in *God* as our salvation, and *are saved*. God has associated the believing and the saving. "He that believeth," says God, is saved.

A great theologian, in view of dying, once said, "Let me throw myself into that divine syllogism: God says, all who believe are saved: I believe; therefore I am saved." Blessed truth! is it not? I wonder can you put yourselves into it now? The soul that sees it, and knows it, knows that "God is love;" and that He is such, not at the expense of Divine righteousness, but THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS; not trampling on justice, BUT THROUGH JUSTICE; for God is a just God, as well as a great and gracious Saviour. Such is the teaching of the Spirit of God—a teaching which casts out all *slavish* fear of God Himself. May God, beloved, give you to *know* this perfect love which casteth out fear!

But secondly, this perfect love casts out *fear of sin*—I mean, the condemnation of sin. How dreadful a power is sin! It had closed the door upon hope, shutting man up to inevitable judgment. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Death is its penalty. It is death, therefore, and everlasting death, which the mind awakened to sin dreads. Dark and doleful are the soul's forebodings.

Now, God, in dealing with sin, deals with the sum of all evils. By going down to its gloomy domain of death, Christ obtained his victory over sin. He atoned for sin—expiated its offence—bore it away. Where then is sin? And why dread its power? By the Gospel I find that God, in the day of His anger against sin, laid sin upon Christ, who for us became a Sin-bearer. I see him bearing the load, and taking it to the cross. And I see him going down to the grave. I know he was a Sin-bearer *upon the cross*, and that he was not a Sin-

bearer *when he rose from the grave*. There is no more sacrifice for sin, and no more sin-bearing on the *heavenly side of his grave*. Where, then, is sin? gone—gone for ever—buried in the tomb of Jesus. Its condemnatory power is lost. This was God's design in giving Christ. This was Christ's will when he gave himself. "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." None now. None in death. None in eternity—none. This is indeed "perfect love," that thus for ever removes it from us.

Thirdly. To know the perfect love of God is *to have all fear*, that is, *inordinate fear of death removed*. I would not hurt the weakest conscience. There is that, I know, in nature which shrinks from death. We all have it—some more, some less. I would make a distinction between the fear which nature has, and the fear of the soul. When we know the perfect love of God, it takes away all slavish fear of death. It no more sees death as man's great enemy. What is it that makes a man afraid to die? It is sin. What makes a man afraid of judgment? It is sin. What is the sting of death? It is sin. But sin reigned—unto what? It reigned unto death, It reigned all through the generations until it inserted its sting—as to its suffering, its penalty—upon One who knew no sin. Oh, mystery of grace! It effectuated—shall I say it—the death of the Son of Man—the Son of God. Sin reigned unto *his* death—but no further. He took the monster's sting and bore it away to his grave; which grave, where he left it, became a stepping-stone to life, so that we can now say, as we look at death and the grave—

“ O grave, where is thy victory?  
O death, where is thy sting?”

Now, if this be true, why, dear Christian, why in bandage all your life through fear of death? Ah! you have not seen the robbed and powerless thing with its sting gone. It is for you, and such as you, that the poet of the sanctuary has so plaintively sung:—

“ Poor trembling mortals start and shrink,  
To cross this narrow sea;  
And linger shivering on the brink,  
And fear to launch away.”

Cross *what* narrow sea? When the ark came to the river, the waters rose upon a heap, so that the children of Israel went over *dry-shod*: and that was an image of what I am now speaking about. Christ, on the cross, went down into the very place of death, and took away the sting, and broke the power of death in his own place, so that now we can say “ O death, where is thy sting?” In other words, the Jordan is emptied; its bed is dry—*dry*. Some of our dear young converts in Kingstown and Dublin delight in this truth; they each one sing:—

“ Soon to Jordan's *emptied* river  
Like a pilgrim I shall come;  
Then I hope to shout Salvation!  
And go singing ' Glory' home!”

Fourthly. This perfect love will cast out *all fear of life's trials and cares*. The future is provided for. All the steps of a good man, as they come singly—each day—one by one—are ordered by the Lord. We know that “ all things work together for good to

them that love God; to them who are the called according to His purpose." Afflictions, vicissitudes, sorrows, suffering, are God's methods of bringing His *hurt* child to His arms. We do not always see it, but we shall see it. "As for God, His way is perfect."

"The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower."

Fair flower! that groweth from affliction's stem! it contains a hundred medicines for the soul; it has an odour for the darkest desert; a summer beauty for winter times—a beauty which, when it drops, will fall not, as other flowers, upon the earth, but into Heaven. Who that knows this, need fear? rather let him say:—

"Father I know that all my life  
Is portioned out by Thee;  
And the changes that will surely come,  
I need not fear to see."

*Finally*, this perfect love casts out *fear of man*. I may give you a beautiful illustration of this. There was a lady who had been in better circumstances, but was now reduced very low. She had no servant, or the means of keeping one. One night—in the dead of night—she heard, down in one of her lower rooms, the foot-fall of a burglar. She adopted, under the circumstances, a pardonable expedient to alarm the thief. She said, "I will call John"—thinking the burglar would take the alarm of "John." Now, it so happened, one of the burglars (for there were several) was a John, and no sooner was John called, than up came the burglar,

responding to his name, with his dark lantern, and a pistol in his hand. Seeing he was recognised, and that his doom was sealed, he put the muzzle of the pistol to the lady's head, as if, in the impulse and excitement of the moment, to take away her life. She said, speaking as calmly and clearly as I do now, "Will you grant me one request? It matters little," said she, "about my life, for I am wanting to go home. For me to die is Christ: but it does matter about your life. If you take away my life, you will be a murderer, and as a murderer you must meet God. The request I have to make is that you will let me offer one prayer to God, that He would have mercy upon your soul." She instantly fell upon her knees, and put up this prayer:—"O my God, have mercy upon this man. God, have mercy upon this man; the Lord have mercy." When she opened her eyes, the man was gone. The matter came up at the assizes, and when the story was being told, such was its interest, the judge forgot his position—his character as judge merging for a moment into that of an inquirer, amongst other things he asked, "Can you tell me how it was that in a time of such peril to your own life, you had the calmness and self-possession which the facts of the case show that you enjoyed?" As the judge asked the question, silence throughout the court awaited her reply. "My Lord," she said, "I have long known the perfect love of God. I have long since been enabled to say '*I know whom I have believed,*' and in that hour of extremity, I knew and realized that perfect love which casteth out fear."

Oh, my brethren and sisters, death is a great rob-

ber. He may come to you in dead of night. *He* will not flee at your prayer. Ah, no, no; when that great enemy shall come and knock at your door, it will be worth a million worlds to be able to say, "O death, I have long since known the perfect love of God; the love that thought of me from eternity—the love that manifested its grace for me—the love that gave up Christ to die in my stead—the love that came down to earth, in suffering and death, to bring me to rest and joy, and life divine in His presence in heaven; I have long since known *that* love; and now, when all other love is vain, **THAT LOVE** casteth out fear. O death, where is thy sting? Why should I dread going home, by thee, to a being who loves me?"

Speaking of death, or rather departure, I have just come from the bed-side, at his residence in Blackheath, of a servant of Christ, whose name is known and loved by many who hear me. Dear Mr. Sherman is now in the closing evening of life. He is lying at his last "nearness." I knew much of him in the old time, when I was a stripling, and he, the loved and honoured successor, at Surrey Chapel, of the venerated Rowland Hill. In days gone by, I derived much good from him. And now, this morning, how did I love to speak with him of Christ! We spoke of what the believing sinner is *in* Christ, and, as it were, *as* Christ before God. It was a solemn moment. With his wonted emphasis he repeated, as for himself, Toplady's hymn,

"A debtor to mercy alone."