

BROWNLOW NORTH:

THE STORY

OF

HIS LIFE AND WORK.

BY THE REV.

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MOFFAT.

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VI.

BROWNLOW NORTH'S POST BAG.

LETTERS FROM ANXIOUS INQUIRERS AND YOUNG CONVERTS.

“If others sadly bring to me
A lesson hard and new,
I often find that helping them
Has made me learn it too.
Or had I learnt it long before,
My toil is overpaid,
If so one tearful eye may see
The lesson plainer made.”

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

THIS chapter may probably prove to some readers one of the most profitable, and we hope it will also prove not the least interesting in the volume. The variety of spiritual experience that is here recorded in the writers' own words is as great as the diversity of position in life, occupation, and circumstances of the correspondents, and may perhaps strike a chord of sympathy in the bosom of some reader, who may in one or other of these heart effusions find a picture that is not very far from being a portrait of himself

We think they may prove helpful to persons under spiritual anxiety, or at the outset of their Christian course, by showing them that their state of mind in its general features, whatever its special details may be, is not peculiar to themselves, but that others have suffered as they do, and have been succoured. It is right to call the reader's attention to the fact that, in the greater part of the letters here selected for transcription, the letter was written after the lapse of several years since the professed experience of a saving change. This affords a pretty good guarantee, not only of the writer's sincerity, but of the reality of the change that had taken place. In some of the cases here recorded, as well as in many others which might have been narrated, we can ourselves vouch for the fact that the conversion, however sudden, has been attested by a long course of consistent Christian life and in several instances, of successful public work in the Lord's vineyard. We have thought it prudent to withhold all clue to the writers' identity in every case except where permission has been granted us to publish names, or where we know that the race is now finished, and that the life and death have borne testimony to true and tried discipleship; for of some of them we have every reason to believe that the subject of this memorial sketch has been able to say in the presence of their common Lord, "Behold me and the children whom Thou hast given me!"

The letters which came to Mr. North in such numbers, and which are very interesting to read, even after the lapse of nearly twenty years in some cases, are from persons in all ranks and positions of life. Here are letters from peers and peeresses, Indian rajahs and German princesses, professional men, busy merchants, acute lawyers, soldiers and sailors, squatters in the lonely Australian bush, from young ladies, from boys, from governesses, students, footmen, letter-carriers, domestic servants, farm servants, etc., etc., all bearing on the one great question. A few are from Christians encouraging him in his work, but the great mass come from those who had been awakened, or converted, or delivered from spiritual distress through his preaching. Some are from persons who had never known what sin is according to the world's estimation, but had been deeply convinced of it by the Divine Spirit; a few from those who had been guilty of the blackest sins, all preserved with equal care, and docketed methodically by this indefatigable evangelist. Of hundreds of such letters we can only give here a very short selection.

The first letter is from a sailor; and if we could have peeped in on the writer, we should have found him penning his epistle to his spiritual father in one of Her Majesty's ships of war lying in the beautiful estuary of the Firth of Forth, above the point where the northern and southern shores curve inwards as if to embrace each other, but suddenly retire, leaving between them that fair stretch of deep, calm, and almost landlocked water known by the historical name of St. Margaret's Hope. The writer is not a lad, but a married man and the father of a family, and had returned half a dozen years before from foreign service.

A SAILOR'S LETTER.

"H.M.S. —, *April 5th*, 1860.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I take the pleasure of writing to thank you for the great blessing you have been the means of bringing on a most hardened and wicked sinner. You may remember coming to preach one Sunday on board of this ship. Your prayer was heard that day. The Lord sent your words home to the heart of one of the greatest sinners who was listening to you, and who thought he had been so vilely used that there was no truth in religion or in the Bible; one who reviled God's truth, and argued against it, and many times said man had no pre-eminence above a beast, and brought the Bible to prove it, and in fact had almost become an infidel. But you stopped me: I heard you say you had been guilty of almost every crime, you thought, but murder; so thinks I, 'That's a plain-speaking man, I'll just pay attention to him,' not thinking to do much good by it; but when you asked if we ever thought upon God, it went like a shot through me. I had forgotten Him altogether.

“Family distress in fifty-four, when I came home in the Frigate —, had driven God out of my thoughts, and the devil took the advantage, and goaded me on to drink, and ran me into all sorts of evil. Your coming on board that day just saved my soul from his snare; but I have had to struggle hard, as you told us. I prayed to the Lord Jesus to assist me, and He has done so, and has beaten him; and I am happy to inform you the good Spirit is master within, and shall never more be drowned by an evil one. And now, instead of reviling God’s truth, I adore it, and read it earnestly, and pray while reading for the Lord to open my eyes to see the hid treasures therein contained; and I think He grants my prayer; and instead of not being able to think of Him a minute without some worldly thought coming in, I think of Him long and often. I found all you said true. I was eating husks all my life till now. I never was so happy before. I often think of you, sir, and pray the Lord to prosper all your efforts, and may His blessing ever attend you for the blessing you have brought on me. My heart is full.

“From yours ever thankful,

“A—B—, H.M.S. —,

“P.S. There is a prayer-meeting on board this ship every night. It was held in a cabin, but they are obliged to go into the stoke-room, the cabin was not large enough. Mr. Palmer (the Lieutenant) attends with the men.”

The same address which was blessed to this sailor had been carried home to the heart of one of the officers in the ship, who soon afterwards became, as he has ever since continued, an active worker for that Lord whom he then chose as his portion. About a dozen years after that memorable day he thus writes to his spiritual father:—

A NAVAL OFFICER’S LETTER.

“January 15th, 1871.

“DEAR MR. NORTH,—Do you remember, now nearly twelve years ago, your preaching on board H.M.S. — from the Prodigal Son? It was that little sentence, ‘when he was yet a great way off,’ that the Holy Spirit blessed to my soul. How wonderful it all was, and still is! One hour amongst the tombs, mad; the next, sitting at the feet of Jesus, in one’s right mind. What a comforting text that is, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.’ What should we be without the Lord’s protecting care? How soon would Satan be in possession of us again! I am so sorry to be off early tomorrow to London, but I trust we may meet again; at any rate, we shall meet before very long with our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. The conflict will be over then for good and all. God grant that an abundant blessing may have accompanied your words tonight.

“Believe me, ever yours in Christ,
“GEORGE PALMER.”

We shall now give an extract from a letter this officer wrote to Mr. North six months after his conversion, which shows how active he was from the first in seeking to stand up for Jesus and win souls to Him.

“*Nov. 7th, 1860.*

“I am happy and thankful to be able to tell you of fresh instances of God’s mercy to sailors, as during the last month the chaplain and myself have had a school in the evening, composed entirely of our own men, quite independent of the fishermen, who also meet every night for prayer. Fifty-two men have been attending for the purpose of learning to read and write, and the last half-hour we devote to the service of God. I had between seventy and eighty fishermen in the engine room last night, and last Sunday I could not go up to the ‘E’; but to make up for my disappointment God enabled me to speak His word to fifteen of our own men between two guns on the main deck: and truly I was never more proud and delighted in my whole life; it was such a direct answer to prayer, as I had so longed to get our own blue jackets together by themselves. It is a glorious privilege to be permitted to be an instrument in His hands for good, and to endeavour in our poor way to show our gratitude for all He has done for us. Our chaplain is away on leave, so I am quite by myself now at the school and meeting.”

Such officers are an honour to their Queen on earth, as well as to the King of kings above, of whose service they are not ashamed. May our country long be blessed, as she has been of late, with many devoted servants of Christ in both army and navy, and may their noble example, amid so many difficulties and much opposition, stir up all God’s children in other professions, many of whom are absolutely doing nothing to advance His kingdom by personal effort, not to stand all the day idle, seeing the Lord “hath need of them,” and souls are perishing near them, who might be saved by the active and prayerful exercise of such gifts influence, and opportunities as God in His providence has given them.

Let none suppose that all the correspondence came from persons able to analyse and express their feelings, and trace their spiritual history. There is many a short, ill-spelt, ill-written note, expressing in a few lines the anxiety of the writer’s soul, yet as carefully preserved and docketed by this skilful soul-gatherer. Here is one such, apparently from a female farm servant.

A SERVANT’S LETTER.

“*Jan. 3rd, 1859.*

“MR. NORTH,—My heart has failed me a thousand times before I could come to you. Perhaps I am only deceiving myself, but I have had many an anxious thought about my soul, and have longed to converse with one who really feels a God as you do. I know Christ died: I know He lives: but I cannot see the cross and His sufferings there for me. I do not know what it is to be washed in Christ’s blood and feel forgiven. Oh pray for me, and do what you can to bring a sinner to peace in believing. Forgive my presumption.

“Yours humbly, E. F.”

It was in reading, studying, and replying to such letters as these, which came to him morning by morning in great numbers, that Mr. North spent the forenoon at least of each day, after the large portion he reserved for private devotion and diligent perusal and study of the word of life; which occupations together always confined him to his own room till one o’clock. It was through the post office, as well as through the inquiry-room, that the book of the human heart was laid open to him, which, with the book of revelation, formed the volumes he studied, and studied all the day. These two books, the Bible and the human heart, were his theological library, and perhaps some of us in the ministry would find greater help and success in our work, if we studied these two volumes far more intently than we do. To answer such letters, each with some distinctive feature in the case, he had to look much up to God for wisdom, and much into His word for direction, that he might minister the suitable instruction, warning, counsel, and encouragement to every soul. The work is one of the most exhausting that a man can engage in, and it is a matter of thankfulness that, with a frame somewhat weakened, he was enabled for so many years to bear the great fatigues providentially laid upon him in private teaching and dealing with cases of spiritual distress, as well as in public preaching.

The writer of the next letter was a student in the grey granite capital of Northern Scotland, a city that has always been celebrated for the acuteness and intellectual power of its divines, though not always for their evangelical fervour, and which has been from time to time the scene of remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit. This correspondent became a devoted minister of Jesus Christ in the Free Church of Scotland, and is now in connexion with the English Presbyterian Church.

A STUDENT’S LETTER.

“ABERDEEN, *March* 2nd, 1863.

“MY DEAR SIR, I regret much that I have been deprived of a personal interview with you, though I have been privileged to hear you every time you have preached in Aberdeen. I therefore take the liberty of sending you this

note to tell you that I have never repented the choice I made some seven years ago, when, in Albion Street Chapel, you pointed me to a personal Saviour. Very often, to my shame and confusion, have I proved unfaithful and treacherous; but so great has been His love to me, that He has not cast me off, but has again and again gone after His lost sheep in the wilderness, folding me in His bosom, and speaking words of cheer and comfort. I have been frequently in the depths, often in the hot furnace, and of late in the wilderness; but wherever I am, there He is; and in the very wilderness He has given me songs, vineyards, choice dainties. Oh His love, His forbearance, His tender mercies! Would I could praise Him more, and were moulded into His glorious image! In a few months I expect, D.V., to be licenced, but I shrink back from the work when I think of its awful nature and responsibility. Oh I try sometimes and remind Jesus of me, that I may be an able minister of the New Testament, one dead to self and to the opinion of the world. The Lord has had much to do with me, a proud, stubborn, wayward child; but He sees my heart, and knows that it is my earnest desire and prayer that I may sit at His feet and learn of Him!

“Yours very truly,

“J. H. C.”

The next letter is from a German lady sojourning in London, and has no signature or address by which the writer could be traced; but it shows us how uniform, under a vast variety of outward conditions, are the ways of Divine grace, and proves that the Lord will gather in His own chosen ones by some instrumentality or other, in ways that are as beautifully wise as mysterious.

A GERMAN LADY'S LETTER.

“LONDON, *April 7th*, 1860.

“MY DEAR SIR,—Suffer me to express to you from my deepest soul my thanks for all which, next to God, I owe you. I am a poor German sinner, who left her country three years ago; I do not know why, my heart yearned for England; and oh, how wondrous are the ways of the Lord! it was here that I should recognise the truth, and gradually be penetrated of it. I never shall forget the 18th of March, when, under your pulpit, I listened to your precious message; my stony heart was melted, and all hesitation vanished, and, like Rebecca, my decision was taken. How happy and rejoicing I went home that night, thanking the Lord for what He had done for me, and praying Him not to leave me for a minute! Joyfully I looked forward to Good Friday, when I should hear you again, and most fervently I thank you for expounding, as through the inspiration of the Spirit, this psalm so mightily and beautifully. Earnestly I read and prayed the words of David in the evening.

But how busy the devil is just when we feel the most sincere! He would not let me pray, 'Lead me and guide me,' but showed me how hard and unpleasant the ways of the Lord often would be. Your warning, 'The Lord expects you not only to be a joyful Christian, but a *hell-shaking* Christian,' came not out of my mind, and I trembled at the responsibility of my new office. Oh, how can I be faithful to the end, which perhaps may be very far? But the Lord heard my cries, and comforted me; for it is written, 'As thy day so shall thy strength be;' and Jesus said, 'I will be with you always.' Oh that I could remember all that you say, dear Mr. North! because I need it all for the dear people of my country: nay, that you rather would go yourself, and tell them the gospel, as they have never heard it before. Surely the Lord has not sent me here without purpose: oh that I might be enabled to do His work, always trusting in Him as my strength! I am only an infant in Christ, and feel weak as such, but will you pray for me that I grow in grace and in the power of His might?

"From one of your devoted sisters in Christ Jesus."

Strange to say, the sermon which awoke such a strain of thanksgiving in the bosom of this poor stranger lady, and brought her sweet note of gratitude, awoke bitter opposition in another breast, and brought an angry and rude letter, also anonymous, from one holding that redemption was universal, and casting back into the preacher's face the gospel, as proclaimed by him that day, as being no "good news" for any sinner: Mr. North could afford patiently to bear such taunts when the Lord so graciously accompanied his words with signs following. "Perhaps," this writer says, "(indeed, I should say *certainly*,) if you had been sent, you would have had a pleasanter message than the one you gave us out of your own head on Friday night." But it had proved very pleasant to at least one wounded heart.

The next letter is from a young lady in Edinburgh, who, although not awakened, or brought to seek and find the Saviour by Mr. North (as was her only sister), was led by him to entire separation from the world, and consecration to Christ, and into clear views of the Gospel, which filled her with light and peace. It is very often so in the Lord's great harvest field, that one soweth and another reapeth, and that both have reason to rejoice together. To be the sole instrument of awakening, enlightening, leading to the Saviour, and establishing on Him of many souls, would appear to be too great an honour to be safely conferred by the Lord of the harvest and of the reapers upon any single worker. Accordingly we find that His usual way is to divide the toil, and to divide the success and the honour among His servants. The writer of this letter was well known to the author, and after many years of a consistent and useful life she fell asleep in Jesus in February, 1872.

A YOUNG LADY'S LETTER.

“EDINBURGH, *September 28th*, 1859.

“DEAR MR. NORTH,—As you know so little of my past history, perhaps you will allow me to say a few words about it, to show how wonderful God's dealings towards me have been; for I may truly say, I was brought by a way I knew not. I believe the Holy Spirit has striven with me since my childhood, though I often, often resisted Him. Thoughts of what would become of me in eternity would often cross my mind with startling power, and my only comfort lay in dismissing the subject altogether. I had quite a passion for novel-reading, which of course was poison to my soul, and which I believe deadened the powers of my mind to a great extent, by inducing a sort of dreamy lethargy, if I may so call it, and inaction of mind, the evil effects of which I feel to this day. Self was my idol, and much greater homage would I have paid it, had not restraining grace prevented. Until I became Christ's, my life was one long course of disappointments (how different *now!*) Gradually I was convinced of the sin of novel-reading and waltzing, and felt compelled, by a power I could not resist, to give up these snares of Satan. Still I was without Jesus. It proves how dark and blind the natural heart is. The preaching of Mr. Caird [now Principal Caird] used to affect me powerfully. It was in January, 1853, after a very awakening sermon by him in Greenside Church, that on Monday morning I was led to ask myself what I was to do. A voice within urged me to read [John Angell] James's 'Anxious Inquirer,'¹ Satan tried hard to prevent my doing so, but the Holy Spirit prevailed. I found in this little book a simple explanation of the way of salvation. I saw that faith was necessary to justify the sinner; and knowing that I had no faith, I prayed to God to give me faith in Jesus, and received an answer within that week. I can remember the moment when light came into my soul, and I knew I was accepted in the Beloved. My heart now turned from the world, and longed for Christian friends; but I knew none to whom I could open my mind. I was very ignorant then. I knew little or nothing of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, or the necessity to watch and pray against the temptations of Satan, whose personality I did not realize. I gradually lost the tenderness of conscience I had at first, and though I did not go to large parties, I gradually became worldly-minded again.

“This state of things went on till God in His long-suffering love sent me to hear you preach. It was more from curiosity than any other feeling that I went. I was told by one lady that she would on no account go to hear you again, as she shook all over, and would have given anything to get out of church, only she found that impossible, owing to the crowd. I asked my sis-

¹ This was a book which Mr. North constantly recommended inquirers to read.

ter to accompany me, but she declined, so I went to hear you alone one forenoon. You preached from Titus ii. 1-14. You said a good deal about lukewarm Christians, and their ungrateful return for all the love of Jesus, and all He suffered on earth for them. I felt that sermon come home to my soul with a power I had never experienced before. I felt I was a lukewarm Christian, and resolved and wished that I could give myself entirely to Jesus; but still there was a mist within. I got my sister and father after that to go to hear you at the Greyfriars. Your preaching was to me different from anything I had ever heard before. You made religion a thing of happiness and beauty, and I felt irresistibly drawn again and again to hear you. Your last sermon in Edinburgh at that time, in Free St. Luke's, was blessed as the means of my dear sister's awakening. How we ever went to see you is a wonder to us now, but our heavenly Father did it all. I know I have been a new creature since that interview. Light dawned into my soul when you were talking of the promises being ours independently of feelings, and I saw a beauty in Jesus I had never seen before. My heart was so full of gratitude for Jane's conversion, that I gave myself all away to Jesus for the rest of my life; and though I know now, better than ever I did before, how wicked and deceitful my heart is, yet it is my earnest desire to live to His glory, and to do His will in all things. Our ambition now is to gain *jewelled* crowns. Do pray for us, that we may win many souls to Jesus, and never be ashamed to confess Him before men.

“Praying that God may bless you and your labours most abundantly, believe me,

“Yours most gratefully in Jesus, C. O.”

Six months later, another long and interesting letter from the same correspondent came to Mr. North, giving an account of the progress of the work of grace in herself and her sister, and goes on to say:—

“My sister and I and two other friends hold a little prayer-meeting once a week, to plead for our unconverted friends. We paid two visits to Newhaven, with dear Miss W—. It was delightful to see the eagerness and pleasure with which the converts talked of being brought out of darkness into light. One young fish-woman told us that when anxious and told to ‘believe,’ she said to those about her, ‘I believe everything,’ but she could get no peace till, as she said, ‘I saw I must *trust* in what I believe.’ I mention this, as at that time we thought it a very simple definition of faith. I have not forgotten what you said about striving against that fear which is so apt to come over one when trying to pray before others; and though it was sometimes very hard, yet the Lord has enabled me to overcome it in great measure. I believe there is as much pride as timidity in regard to this. I know with myself it is so, the fear of not being able to make a good prayer; so when I found this out, I saw it was sinful to yield to this wicked pride.

“Ever yours most gratefully, C. O.”

Two letters from Mr. North to this lady, in reply, will be found at the commencement of chapter vii.

In the latter part of the year 1862, Mr. North paid a visit to Haddo House, the seat of the Earl of Aberdeen, and a sermon which he then preached, along with private personal conversation, was made a means of blessing to two of the sons of that highly esteemed nobleman, both of whom were carried by sudden death into the presence of the Saviour whom they had learned so ardently to love and manfully to serve.

The bereaved mother thus wrote to Mr. North:—

“HADDO HOUSE, *Jan. 3rd*, 1872.

“DEAR MR. NORTH, This season of the year brings back very vividly to my mind the remembrance of that Never-to-be-forgotten time when you were here. Do you recollect reading the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and the short prayer afterwards? My darling George asked that they might not be as the thorns, but like young fir-trees, bearing fruit to God. Often afterwards, when I saw those two boys growing such fine-looking men, and being what they were, I remembered that day, and I thought of that verse in the Psalms, ‘The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, and grow like the cedar in Lebanon.’ Now the following verse is appropriate, ‘Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.’ He has taken them out of this world, but they are transplanted, I firmly trust, into the courts of our God. I hope you are well in health, and much encouraged in your work.

“Believe me, yours very truly and gratefully,

“M. ABERDEEN.”

A sketch of the short life of the younger of these two brothers, the Hon. James Gordon, in memory of whom the Dowager-Countess of Aberdeen founded the Gordon Memorial Mission, in connection with the Free Church Missions in South Africa, was written by Dr. Alexander Duff. The following extracts from letters which he wrote, in the year after his conversion although not addressed to Mr. North, but to a young friend, contain clear evidence of the abundant fruit of his message as received into this prepared soil, and show us how very rapidly the work of grace had matured in the heart of one who was then only nineteen years of age.

A CAMBRIDGE STUDENT’S LETTER.

“DEAR —, As for yourself, do not be afraid. You say you are not sure that you are safe. If you are *saved*, then you are *safe*. ‘Fear not, for I have

redeemed thee. Fear not, for I am with thee. Fear not, for I will help thee.’ But you must give your whole heart to Jesus; keep nothing back. Remember, He gave up all for us, and we must give up all for Him, if we would be His; and how little that is in comparison with what He gave up for us! For His were no common sufferings. The very fact of being clogged and held down by a body like ours must have been torment to the King of Glory, who had been Lord of all from eternity. He, too, had bitter struggles with the devil, and therefore He is able to succour us when we are tempted, and to sympathise with us. I am sure you must have a hard fight: but if you confess Christ openly, and come boldly out to take up your position under His banner in answer to His call, ‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’ then He will give you strength. I am sure, when we look back on the time of our warfare on earth, we shall wonder why we were so fainthearted and so cold, when we had such a glorious reward before us. We shall wonder how it was that we were not willing rather to go through fire and sword, through flood and flame, to prove our love to Him who loved us with such exceeding love.

“The old year will soon be gone. It is a solemn thing to look back on a whole year, and to think how much of it we have wasted, and worse than wasted. Truly the Lord is long-suffering and gracious, or He would long ago have cut us off for ever. There are many thoughts which come into my mind at such a time. Last New Year’s Eve I went to bed with scarce a thought about my soul,

‘I knew not my danger, I felt not my load,
Jehovah-Tsidkenu was nothing to me.’

But the very next day, by the grace of God, I was brought to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.² Yes, New Year’s Day, the birthday of the year, is the birthday of my soul, and ten million years from this time I shall be singing the praises of Him who on that day called me into His marvellous light. ‘Hallelujah, hallelujah! salvation to our God!’ And there, too, will be the harpers harping with their harps, and the angels, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, their voices as the sound of many waters, all singing the praises of the King. And the ransomed of the Lord shall be there, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands, and crowns on their heads singing, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;’ and you and I shall be among that number; for Jesus has said that if we come to Him, He will receive us; and when He has received us, no man shall pluck us out of His hand: we are safe for time and for eternity; we are His, and He is ours. Let us then be mindful of the great reward. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us looking right to Jesus, and through Him to glory, honour, and immortality.

² For an account of Mr. North’s visit, which was so blessed to this family, see “Visit to Haddo House” in chap. xi.

“Try to confess Christ openly before men, and to speak often of His name, and the Lord will hearken and hear, and will write it in a book of remembrance, and you shall be His in that day when He makes up His jewels’ (Mal. iii. 17).

“Yours affectionately, J. H. GORDON.”

The next letter is from a lady residing in the North of England, who has ever since been actively engaged in the work of the Lord, in which she has been largely owned, having been the means through her classes, and otherwise, of bringing not a few to the knowledge and love of the Saviour.

AN ENGLISH LADY’S LETTER.

“March 3rd, 1862.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I desire to express my warm gratitude, first to God, and then to you, who were the means to me of enlightening and quickening in the way of grace. I attended every one of your public weekday addresses during my visit to Edinburgh, and was led by them to regard religion as a more real, personal thing than before. I have known these things as long as I can remember, with the head perfectly, but my heart had become so accustomed to them, that I took them all as a matter of course, and thought for years that I was a Christian. On hearing you, however, I doubted it, and was very unhappy for some weeks, going about to establish my own righteousness, trying to make myself better before I came to Christ, and miserable because I could not *‘feel’* good, nor sorry, nor anything that I ought to feel; and this remained up to the middle of your last address, Thursday, Feb. 27th, on Romans x. 1-4. Then I saw, by God’s Spirit, that I must not consult my feelings any longer, but give up all my own righteousness, the good as well as the bad; and I was the more ready to do this, having proved that my righteousness was as filthy rags; and that I must take Christ’s righteousness as my own, a free gift imputed to me. And I have been joyful in Him ever since. Now I know what faith means, and why it is ‘precious faith.’ I could not before understand those words, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,’ for I did not know what to believe about Him. But now all things are new: the Bible has depths I never saw before; Jesus Christ is to me ‘wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.’ I cannot praise Him enough for revealing Himself to me; and I am most grateful to you, dear sir, as having been the means of showing me this new life. I thank you especially for having shown it so clearly in the Bible; for now, if any doubts arise, I can turn at once to those precious passages, Romans iii. 20-24, and x. 1-4, which brought me, through the grace of God, life and salvation. . . .

“I remain, with deep gratitude, yours sincerely,
“M. F. J.”³

In the next chapter the reader will find Mr. North’s replies to some of these letters, and to others of a similar character, from persons asking to be shown the way of life, or to be guided in that way.

³ An interesting record of some of the results of this lady’s subsequent labours for the Lord will be found in a little volume, “Warfare and Victory,” published by Seely & Co,