

THE UPPER ROOM,
AND OTHER SERMONS DELIVERED
ON IMPORTANT PUBLIC OCCASIONS

BEING A FEW TRUTHS FOR THE TIMES.

BY THE RIGHT REV.
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"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself
to the battle?"—1 Cor. xiv. 8.

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THE GOOD WAY.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”—JER. VI. 16.

THE book of the prophet Jeremiah receives from most Christians far less attention than it deserves. It is a noteworthy fact that hardly any portion of Holy Scripture is the subject of so few exhaustive commentaries and expositions.

I fail to see the reason of this comparative neglect. The book was written, under God’s inspiration, by a Jewish priest, at a peculiar crisis, in the last days of the kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah was God’s messenger to a wicked king,—a worldly aristocracy,—a corrupt people,—a rotten Church,—and a dead formal priesthood. He warned his countrymen faithfully, but, like Cassandra of old, he was not believed. He lived to see the complete ruin of Church and State, the city burnt, the temple of Solomon destroyed, and the people carried into captivity. And, finally, it is a Christian tradition, that, after being dragged into Egypt by the Jewish refugees, who fled there, he died the death of a martyr.

I repeat that the writings of such a prophet as this deserve more attention than they have hitherto received in this generation. I knew a man of God who made a great mark in his day, who said to me, thirty-five years ago, that Jeremiah was pre-eminently a book for the latter days of England. To that opinion I entirely subscribe. Holding that opinion, I ask my readers to hear a few words about the text which I have chosen. I commend it to you as a text for the times.

I. First of all, you have in this text *excellent general advice*. Jeremiah says to you, “Stand, and see, and ask.”

I take these words to be a call to thought and consideration. They are as though the prophet said, “Stop and think. Stand still, pause, and reflect. Look within, behind, and before. Do nothing rashly. What are you doing? Where are you going? What will be the end and consequence of your present line of action? Stop and think.”

Now to set men thinking is one great object which every teacher of religion should always keep before him. Serious thought, in short, is one of the first steps toward heaven. “I thought on my ways,” says the Psalmist, “and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies.” (Ps. cxix. 59.) The prodigal son in the parable “came to himself” before he came to his father. He began to consider quietly the folly and uselessness of his conduct, and then, and not till then, he returned home, saying, “Father, I have sinned” (Luke xv. 18). Want of thought is, in truth, the simple cause why many make shipwreck forever. There are but few, I suspect, who deliberately and calmly choose evil, refuse good, turn their back on God, and

resolve to serve sin as sin. The most part are what they are because they began their present course without thought. They would not take the trouble to look forward and consider the consequence of their conduct. By thoughtless actions they created habits which have become second nature to them. They have got into a groove now, and nothing but a special miracle of grace will stop them. That is a solemn charge which Isaiah brings against Israel: "My people doth not consider." (Isa. i. 3.) "I never gave it a thought," is the sad excuse which I have heard many a man or woman in the lower classes make for sin. The words of Hosea are strictly true of thousands: "They consider not in their hearts" (Hos. vii. 2).

There are none, we must all be aware, who bring themselves into so much trouble by *want of thinking* as the young. From natural high spirits and ignorance of the world, they are always tempted to look only at the present and forget the future. Too often they marry in haste and repent at leisure, and lay up misery for life by wedding an uncongenial partner. Too often they choose in haste a wrong profession or business, and find, after two or three years, that they have made an irretrievable mistake, and, if I may borrow a railway phrase, have got on the wrong line of rails. Esau thought only of present gratification, and sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Dinah must needs go "to see the daughters of the land," thinking no harm, and ends by losing her own character, and bringing trouble on her father's house. (Gen. xxxiv. 1-31.) Lot thought only of the present advantage of settling in the well-watered valley around Sodom, and forgot the consequence of being mingled with a people who were "sinners before God exceedingly." (Gen. xiii. 13.) All these found to their cost the folly of not considering, looking forward, and thinking. They sowed to the flesh, and they reaped a harvest of sorrow and disappointment, because they did not "stand and see."

These, no doubt, are ancient things. Every middle-aged person can shake his head over the foolishness of young people, and tell us mournfully that you "cannot put old heads on young shoulders." But the young are not the only persons who need the exhortation of the text in this day. It is pre-eminently advice for the times. Hurry is the characteristic of the age in which we live. Railways, and electric telegraphs, and general competition, appear to oblige modern Englishmen to live in a constant breathless whirl. On every side you see the many "driving furiously," like Jehu, after business or politics. They seem unable to find time for calm, quiet, serious reflection about their souls and a world to come. They have no abstract objection to the doctrines of Christianity, or to the use of means of grace, the Bible, or private prayer. But, alas, they cannot make leisure for them! They live in a perpetual hurry, and in a hurry they too often die. If ever there was an age in England when Jeremiah's advice was needed, it is now. If the prophet could rise from the dead, I believe he would cry aloud to the men of the nineteenth century, "Stop, and think,—look forward,—stand, and see."

Let me, as Christ's minister, impress on all into whose hands these pages may fall, the absolute necessity of resisting the current of the age,—the absolute necessity of making time for your souls. The restless, high-pressure hurry in which men live endangers the very foundations of personal religion. Daily private prayer and daily Bible-reading are too often jostled into a corner, and hastily slurred over. Body and mind are wearied out, when Sunday arrives, by the intense struggle of week-day life. Church services are listlessly attended, and sometimes neglected altogether. The temptation to idle away God's day, or to spend it in visiting or dining out, becomes almost irresistible. Little by little the soul gets into a languid and relaxed condition, and the fine edge of conscience becomes blunt and dull. And why? Simply because in the incessant hurry of business and politics men never find time to *think*. They are not wilfully and of purpose irreligious; but they give themselves no leisure to stand still and take stock of the state of their souls. Even at the end of last century William Wilberforce made this sorrowful remark about Mr. Pitt, "He was so absorbed in politics, that he had never given himself time for reflection on religion." (*Life of Wilberforce*, p. 41. Edition, 1872.)

I ask every reader of this paper to consider his ways. Beware of the infection of the times. Remember the old Spanish proverb, "Hurry comes from the devil." Resolve by the grace of God, if you love life, that you will have regular seasons for examining yourself, and looking over the accounts of your soul. "Stand, and see" where you are going, and how matters stand between you and God. Beware of perpetual hurried prayers, hurried Bible-reading, hurried church-going, hurried communions. Commune at least once a week with thine own heart, and be still. Cotton, and coal, and iron, and corn, and ships, and stocks, and land, and gold, and Liberalism, and Conservatism, are not the only things for which we were sent into the world. Death, and judgment, and eternity are not fancies, but stern realities. Make time to think about them. Stand still, and look them in the face. You will be obliged one day to make time to die, whether you are prepared or not. The last enemy, when he knocks at your door, will brook no delay, and will not wait for a "convenient season." He must be admitted, and you will have to go. Happy is he who, when the roar of business and politics is dying away on his ear, and the unseen world is looming large, can say, "I know whom I have believed: I have often stood and communed with Him by faith; and now I go to see as I have been seen."

II. From the general advice which Jeremiah gives in our text, I shall now pass on to the *particular direction* which the Lord commands him to address to the men of his generation. If they were really willing to listen to his counsel to "stand, and see," and consider their ways, then he bids them "ask for the old paths."

Now what did Jeremiah mean when he spoke of the "old paths"? I find no

difficulty in answering that question. I feel no doubt that the phrase meant the old paths of faith in which the fathers of Israel had walked for 1300 years,—the paths of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,—the paths of Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel,—the paths of David, and Solomon, and Hezekiah, and Jehoshaphat,—the paths in which the rule of life was the Decalogue, and the rule of worship was that elaborate, typical, sacrificial system of which the essence was faith in the coming Redeemer. That this was the standard around which the men of Jeremiah's day were summoned to rally I shall never hesitate to maintain. Fallen and low as the spiritual condition of Israel often was, between the first of the Judges and the last of the Kings, I fail to see any proof that the Ten Commandments and the law of sacrifice were ever dethroned and repealed. On the contrary, I believe they were honoured and revered by every Jew who was "an Israelite indeed." In the darkest days of the Kings, I believe there were always a few who mourned secretly over the corrupt state of the nation, and, like Simeon and Anna, kept the faith and longed for better times. In a general return to the "old paths," and nothing short of the "old paths," Jeremiah declared, was the only prospect of hope for the future of his countrymen.

But is the principle laid down by Jeremiah a principle which applied to his times alone? Nothing of the kind! I am firmly persuaded that one chief medicine for the spiritual diseases of the nineteenth century is a bold and unhesitating inquiry for "old paths," old doctrines, and the faith of the days that are past. Error, no doubt, is often very ancient, yet truth is always old. Men's hearts are just what they were 6000 years ago, and need the same remedy. God in that long period has used several dispensations, and each succeeding age has enjoyed more light. But the foundation truths have always been the same, and the way by which sinners have reached heaven has always been one and the same. I say boldly that the age wants nothing new. What it wants is plain, distinct, unflinching teaching about "the old paths." Give me no modern road of man's invention. Show me where patriarchs, and prophets, and Apostles, and Fathers, and Reformers set down their feet, obtained a good report, and made a mark on the world. "The old path is the good way."

We want throughout Christendom a return to the *old paths of the early Christians*. The first followers of the Apostles, no doubt, were, like their teachers, "unlearned and ignorant men." They had no printed books. They had short creeds, and very simple forms of worship. I doubt much if they could have stood an examination in the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Creed of Athanasius, or even in the Church Catechism. But what they knew they knew thoroughly, believed intensely, and propagated unhesitatingly, with a burning enthusiasm. They grasped with both hands, and not with finger and thumb, the Personality, the Deity, the offices, the mediation, the atoning work, the free and full grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the inseparable necessity of repentance, faith, and a Christ-like life of holiness, self-denial, and charity. On these truths they lived,

and for them they were ready to die. Armed with these truths, without gold to bribe or the sword to compel assent, they turned the world upside down, confounded the Greek and Roman philosophers, and altered in two or three centuries the whole face of Society. Can we mend these “old paths”? Can we improve them after eighteen centuries? Does human nature require any different medicine? I believe the bones of the oldest human skeleton that ever was unearthed are just like the bones of men in these days, and I believe the moral nature and hearts of men, after the lapse of ages, are just the same. We had better ask for the “old paths.”

We want throughout the Church of England a return *to the old paths of our Protestant Reformers*. I grant they were rough workmen, and made some mistakes. They worked under immense difficulties, and deserve tender judgment and fair consideration. But they revived out of the dust grand foundation truths which had been long buried and forgotten. They brought into just prominence such cardinal verities as the sufficiency and supremacy of Scripture, the right and duty of private judgment, and free justification by faith without the deeds of the law, and without any ordained man or any ceremony interposing between the soul and the Saviour. By embalming those truths in our Articles and Liturgy, by incessantly pressing them on the attention of our forefathers, they changed the whole character of this nation, and raised a standard of true doctrine and practice, which, after three centuries, is a power in the land, and has an insensible influence on English character to this very day. Can we mend these “old paths”? Shall we improve them either by going back behind the Reformation and increasing the ceremonials of religion on the one hand, or by adopting lower views of inspiration and the atonement on the other? I doubt it entirely. I believe the men of 300 years ago understood the real wants of human nature better than many do in 1882.

Of course I am well aware that the “old paths” for which I have been pleading are not popular in some quarters at this day. In fact, the views I have just propounded are in direct antagonism to much of the so-called wisdom of these times. “Effete systems,” “old-world creeds,” “fossil theology,” “exploded theories,” “worn-out doctrines,” “old-fashioned divinity,” and the like phrases,—who does not know the heavy fire of such language which is continually poured on the “old paths” of faith in some organs of public opinion, and from some pulpits and platforms? Novelty is the idol of the day. Free handling, enlightened views, rational interpretation, science (so called) before the Bible, these are the guiding principles of many in this age. Tell them that any religious idea is old, and they seem to think it is probably false! Tell them that it is new, and it is probably true!

But I have yet to learn that all new views of religion are necessarily better than the old. It is not so in the work of men’s *hands*. I doubt if this nineteenth century can produce an architect who could design better buildings than the

Parthenon or Coliseum, or a mason who could rear fabrics which will last so long. It certainly is not so in the work of men's *minds*. Thucydides is not superseded by Macaulay, nor Homer by Milton. Why, then, are we to suppose that old theology is necessarily inferior to new?

For, after all, when modern scoffers at "old paths" and worn-out creeds have said their say, there remain some stern facts which can never be explained away, and some questions which can only receive one answer. I ask boldly, What extensive good has ever been done in the world, except by the theology of the "old paths"? and I confidently challenge a reply, because I know that none can be given. I affirm, unhesitatingly, that there never has been any spread of the gospel, any conversion of nations or countries, any successful evangelistic work, excepting by the old-fashioned distinct doctrines of the early Christians and the Reformers. I invite any opponent of dogmatic theology to name a single instance of a country, or town, or people, which has ever been Christianized by merely telling men that "Christ was a great moral Teacher,—that they must love one another, that they must be true, and just, and unselfish, and generous, and brotherly, and high-souled," and the like. No! no! no! Not one single victory can such teaching show us: not one trophy can such teaching exhibit. It has wrought no deliverance on the earth. The victories of Christianity, wherever they have been won, have been won by distinct doctrinal theology; by telling men of Christ's vicarious death and sacrifice; by showing them Christ's substitution on the cross, and His precious blood; by teaching them justification by faith, and bidding them believe on a crucified Saviour; by preaching ruin by sin, redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Spirit; by lifting up the brazen serpent; by telling men to look and live,—to believe, repent, and be converted. These are the "old paths." This, this is the only teaching which for eighteen centuries God has honoured with success, and is honouring at the present day both at home and abroad: Let the teachers of a broad and undogmatic theology,—or the preachers of the gospel of earnestness, and sincerity, and cold morality,—or the advocates of a ceremonial, sensuous, histrionic, sacramentarian Christianity,—let them, I say, show us at this day any English village, or parish, or city, or district, which has been evangelized, without the distinct doctrinal teaching of the "old paths." They cannot do it, and they never will. There is no getting over facts. The good that is done in the earth may be comparatively small. Evil may abound, and ignorant impatience may murmur and cry out that Christianity has failed. But, we may depend on it, if we want to do good and shake the world, we must fight with the old apostolic weapons, and stick to the "old paths."

Does any reader doubt the truth of what I am saying, and think I am going too far? I ask him to listen for a moment to the two following arguments, and overthrow them if he can.

For one thing, I bid him turn to the lives *of all the most eminent saints* who

have adorned the Church of Christ since its great Head left the world, and summon them as witnesses. I will not weary my readers with long lists of names, for happily they are legion. Let us examine the holiest Fathers, and Schoolmen, and Reformers, and Puritans, and Anglicans, and Dissenters, and Churchmen of every school, and Christians generally of every name, and nation, and people, and tongue. Let us search their diaries, analyse their biographies, and study their letters. Let us just see what manner of men they have been in every age, who, by the consent of all their contemporaries, have been really holy, and saintly, and good. Where will you find one of them who did not cling to the “old paths” of simple faith in the atonement and sacrificial work of Christ? who did not hold certain great distinct doctrinal views, and live in the belief of them? I am satisfied you will not find one! In their clearness of perception and degree of spiritual light, in the proportion they have assigned to particular articles of faith, they may have differed widely. In their mode of expressing their theological opinions they may not have agreed. But they have always had one common stamp and mark. They have not been content with vague ideas of “earnestness, and goodness, and sincerity, and charity.” They have had certain systematic, sharply-cut, and positive views of truth. They have known whom they believed, and what they believed, and why they believed. And so it always will be. You will never have Christian fruits without Christian roots, whatever novel-writers may say; you will never have eminent holiness without the “old paths” of dogmatic theology.

For another thing, I bid him turn to the death-beds of all *who die with solid comfort and good hope*, and appeal to them. There are few of us who are not called on occasionally, as we travel through life, to see people passing through the valley of the shadow of death, and drawing near to their latter end, and to those “things unseen which are eternal.” We all of us know what a vast difference there is in the manner in which such people leave the world, and the amount of comfort and hope which they seem to feel. Can any of us say that he ever saw a person die in peace who did not know distinctly what he was resting on for acceptance with God, and could only say, in reply to inquiries, that he was “earnest and sincere”? I can only give my own experience: I never saw one. Oh, no! The story of Christ’s moral teaching, and self-sacrifice, and example, and the need of being earnest, and sincere, and like Him, will never smooth down a dying pillow. Christ the Teacher, Christ the great Pattern, Christ the Prophet, will not suffice. We want something more than this! We want the old, old story of Christ dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification. We want Christ the Mediator, Christ the Substitute, Christ the Intercessor, Christ the Redeemer, in order to meet with confidence the King of Terrors, and to say, “Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?” Not a few, I believe, who have gloried all their lives in rejecting dogmatic religion, have discovered at last that their “broad theology” is a miserable comforter, and the gospel of

mere “earnestness” is no good news at all. Not a few, I firmly believe, could be named, who at the eleventh hour have cast aside their favourite, new-fashioned views, have fled for refuge to the “old paths” and the precious blood, and left the world with no other hope than the old-fashioned Evangelical doctrine of faith in a crucified Jesus. Nothing in their life’s religion has given them such peace as the simple truth grasped at the eleventh hour,—

“Just as I am: without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee—
O Lamb of God, I come.”

Surely, when this is the case, we have no need to be ashamed of the “old paths,” and of walking therein.

I ask every reader of this paper to respect the logic of facts. Give the direction of Jeremiah the attention it deserves. If you once begin to think seriously about your soul, never be ashamed of asking for “the old paths,” and walking in them. Yes! do not merely look at them and talk of them, but actually walk in them. Let no scorn of the world, let no ridicule of smart writers, let no sneer of liberal critics, shake your confidence in those paths. Only try them, and you will find they are the good way, “a way of pleasantness and peace.”

III. From Jeremiah’s general advice and special directions let me now turn to *the precious promise* with which our text concludes. “Walk in the old paths,” saith the Lord, “and ye shall find rest to your souls.”

I cannot doubt that our Lord Jesus Christ had these words of the prophet in His mind, when He proclaimed that glorious invitation which is so wisely quoted in our Communion Service: “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.) One thing, at any rate, is quite certain. Whether under the Old Testament or the New, nothing could be held out to man more suitable to his spiritual wants than “rest.” Walk in the “old paths,” is the promise, and you shall have “rest.”

Let it never, never be forgotten that rest of conscience is the secret want of a vast portion of mankind. Sin and the sense of guilt are the root of all the heart-weariness in the world. Men are not at ease, because they are not at peace with God. Men often feel their sinfulness, though they know not what the feeling really means. They only know there is something wrong within, but they do not understand the cause. “Who will show us any good?” is the universal cry. But there is universal ignorance of the disease from which the cry springs. The “labouring and heavy-laden” are everywhere: they are a multitude that man can scarcely number; they are to be found in every climate, and in every country under the sun.

To what class do the labouring and heavy-laden belong? They belong to

every class: there is no exception. They are to be found among masters as well as among servants,—among rich as well as among poor,—among kings as well as among subjects,—among learned as well as among ignorant people. In every class you will find trouble, care, sorrow, anxiety, murmuring, discontent, and unrest. What does it mean? What does it all come to? Men are “labouring and heavy-laden,” and want rest.

Now, rest for the labouring and heavy-laden is one of the chief promises which the Word of God offers to man, both in the Old Testament and the New. “Come to me,” says the world, “and I will give you riches and pleasure.”—“Come with me,” says the devil, “and I will give you greatness, power, and wisdom.”—“Come unto Me,” says the Lord Jesus Christ, “and I will give you rest.” “Walk in the old paths,” says the prophet Jeremiah, “and you shall find rest for your souls.”

But what is the nature of that rest which the Lord Jesus promises to give? It is no mere repose of body. A man may have that, and yet be miserable. You may place him in a palace, and surround him with every possible comfort; you may give him money in abundance, and everything that money can buy; you may free him from all care about tomorrow’s bodily wants, and take away the need of labouring for a single hour: all this you may do to a man, and yet not give him true rest. Thousands know this only too well by bitter experience. Their hearts are starving in the midst of worldly plenty. Their inward man is sick and weary, while their outward man is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day! Yes, a man may have houses, and lands, and money, and horses, and carriages, and soft beds, and good fare, and attentive servants, and yet not have true “rest.”

The rest that Christ gives in the “old paths” is an inward thing. It is rest of heart, rest of conscience, rest of mind, rest of affection, rest of will. It is rest from a comfortable sense of sins being all forgiven, and guilt all put away. It is rest from a solid hope of good things to come, laid up beyond the reach of disease, and death, and the grave. It is rest from the well-grounded feeling, that the great business of life is settled, its great end provided for, that in time all is well done, and in eternity heaven will be our home.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him in the “old paths,” by showing them His own finished work on the cross, by clothing them in His own perfect righteousness, and washing them in His own precious blood. When a man begins to see that the Son of God actually died for his sins, his soul begins to taste something of inward quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him in the “old paths,” by revealing Himself as their ever-living High Priest in heaven, and God reconciled to them through Him. When a man begins to see that the Son of God actually lives at the right hand of the Father to intercede for him, he will begin to feel something of inward quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him in the “old paths,” by implanting His Spirit in their hearts, witnessing with their spirits that they are God’s children, and that old things are passed away, and all things are become new. When a man begins to feel an inward drawing towards God as a Father, and a sense of being an adopted and forgiven child, his soul begins to feel something of quiet and peace.

Rest such as this the Lord Jesus gives to those who come to Him in the “old paths,” by dwelling in their hearts as King, by putting all things within in order, and giving to each faculty its place and work. When a man begins to find order in his heart in place of rebellion and confusion, his soul begins to understand something of quiet and peace. There is no true inward happiness until the true King is on the throne.

Rest such as this is the privilege of all believers in Christ. Some know more of it, and some less; some feel it only at distant intervals, and some feel it almost always. Few enjoy the sense of it without many a battle with unbelief, and many a conflict with fear: but all who truly come to Christ know something of this rest. Ask them, with all their complaints and doubts, whether they would give up Christ and go back to the world. You will get only one answer. Weak as their sense of rest may be, they have got hold of *something* which does them good, and that *something* they cannot let go.

Rest such as this is within reach of all who are willing to seek it and receive it. The poor man is not so poor but he may have it; the ignorant man is not so ignorant but he may know it; the sick man is not so weak and helpless but he may get hold of it. Faith, simple faith, is the one thing needful in order to possess Christ’s rest. Faith in Christ is the grand secret of happiness. Neither poverty, nor ignorance, nor tribulation, nor distress can prevent men and women feeling rest of soul, if they will only come to Christ and believe.

Rest such as this is the possession which makes men *independent*. Banks may break, and money make itself wings and flee away. War, pestilence, and famine may break in on a land, and the foundations of the earth be out of course. Health and vigour may depart, and the body be crushed down by loathsome disease. Death may cut down wife, and children, and friends, until he who once enjoyed them stands entirely alone. But the man who has come to Christ by faith will still possess something which can never be taken from him. Like Paul and Silas, he will sing in prison; like Job, bereaved of children and property, he will bless the name of the Lord. He is the truly independent man who possesses that which nothing can take away.

Rest such as this is the possession which makes men truly *rich*. It lasts; it wears; it endures; it lightens the solitary home; it smooths down the dying pillow; it goes with men when they are placed in their coffins; it abides with them when they are laid in their graves. When friends can no longer help us, and money is no longer of use,—when doctors can no longer relieve our pain, and

nurses can no longer minister to our wants, when sense begins to fail, and eye and ear can no longer do their duty,—then, even then, the “rest” which Christ gives in the “old paths” will be shed abroad in the heart of the believer. The words “rich” and “poor” will change their meaning entirely one day. He is the only rich man who has come to Christ by faith, and from Christ has received rest.

This is the rest which Jeremiah was commissioned to proclaim. This is the rest which Christ offers to give to all who are labouring and heavy-laden. This is the rest for which He invites them to come to Him. This is the rest which I want all who read this paper to enjoy, and to which I bring an invitation this day. May God grant that the invitation may not be brought in vain!

(a) And now, before we part, let me ask if there is any reader who is inwardly desiring rest of soul, and yet knows not where to turn for it? Remember this day, that *there is only one place where rest can be found*. Governments cannot give it; education will not impart it; worldly amusements cannot supply it; money will not purchase it. It can only be found in the hand of Jesus Christ; and to His hand you must turn if you would find peace within.

There is no royal road to rest of soul. Let that never be forgotten. There is only one way to the Father,—Jesus Christ; one door into heaven,—Jesus Christ; and one path to heart-peace and rest,—Jesus Christ. By that way all labouring and heavy-laden ones must go, whatever be their rank or condition. Kings in their palaces, and paupers in the workhouse, are all on a level in this matter. All alike must walk in the “old paths,” and come to Christ, if they feel soul-weary and athirst. All must drink of the same fountain, if they would have their thirst relieved.

You may not believe what I am now saying. Time will show who is right and who is wrong. Go on, if you will, imagining that true happiness is to be found in the good things of this world. Seek it, if you will, in revelling and banqueting, in dancing and merry-making, in races and theatres, in field sports and cards. Seek it, if you will, in reading and scientific pursuits, in music and painting, in politics and business. Seek it in a round of religious formalities,—in a perfunctory obedience to the requirements of a ceremonial Christianity. Seek it; but you will never overtake it, unless you change your plan. Real heart-rest is never to be found except in the “old paths,” in heart-union with Jesus Christ.

The Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I., lies buried in Newport Church, in the Isle of Wight. A marble monument, erected by our gracious Queen Victoria, records in a touching way the manner of her death. She languished in Carisbrook Castle during the unhappy Commonwealth wars, a prisoner, alone, and separate from all the companions of her youth, until death set her free. She was found dead one day with her head leaning on her Bible, and the Bible open at the words, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-

laden, and I will give you rest.” The monument in Newport Church records this fact. It consists of a female figure reclining her head on a marble book, with the text already quoted engraven on the book. Think what a sermon in stone that monument preaches! Think what a standing memorial it affords of the utter inability of rank and high birth to confer certain happiness! Think what a testimony it bears to the lesson before you this day,—the mighty lesson that there is no true “rest” for anyone excepting in Christ! Happy will it be for your soul if that lesson is never forgotten!

(b) But who is there among the readers of this paper that has walked in the “old paths,” and *found the rest which Christ gives*? Who is there that has tasted true peace by coming to Him, and casting his soul on Him? Let me entreat you never to leave the “old paths,” and never to be tempted to think there is a better way. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. Turn not aside to right or left. Go on to the end of your days as you have begun, looking to Jesus and living on Him. Go on drawing daily full supplies of rest, peace, mercy, and grace from the great fountain of rest and peace. Remember, that if you live to the age of Methuselah, you will never be anything but a poor empty sinner, owing all you have and hope for to Christ alone.

Never be ashamed of living the life of faith in Christ. The “old paths” will bear thinking of to all eternity. The way of the world is a way which will not bear calm reflection now, and of which the end is shame and remorse. Men may ridicule and mock you, and even silence you in argument; but they can never take from you the feelings which faith in Christ gives. They can never prevent you feeling, “I was weary till I found Christ, but now I have rest of conscience. I was blind, but now I see. I was dead, but I am alive again. I was lost, but I am found.”

Last, but not least, look forward with confidence to a better rest in a world to come. Yet a little time, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. He will gather together all who have believed in Him, and take His people to a home where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at perfect rest. He shall give them a glorious body, in which they shall serve Him without distraction, and praise Him without weariness. He shall wipe away tears from all faces, and make all things new (Isa. xxv. 8).

There is a good time coming for all who have come to Christ in the “old paths,” and committed their souls into His keeping. They will remember all the way by which they have been led, and see the wisdom of every step in the way. They will wonder that they ever doubted the kindness and love of their Shepherd. Above all, they will wonder that they could live so long without Him, and that when they heard of Him they could hesitate about coming to Him.

There is a pass in Scotland called Glencroe, which supplies a beautiful illustration of what heaven will be to the man who comes to Christ. The road through Glencroe carries the traveller up a long and steep ascent, with many a

little winding and many a little turn in its course. But when the top of the pass is reached, a stone is seen by the wayside, with these simple words engraven on it, "Rest, and be thankful." Those words describe the feelings with which everyone who comes to Christ will at length enter heaven. The summit of the narrow way will be won: we shall cease from our weary journeying, and sit down in the kingdom of God. We shall look back over all the way of life with thankfulness, and see the perfect wisdom of every little winding and turn in the steep ascent by which we were led. We shall forget the toils of the upward journey in the glorious rest. Here in this world our sense of rest in Christ at best is feeble and partial; but "when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." Thanks be unto God, a day is coming when the end of the "old path" will be reached, and believers shall rest perfectly, and be thankful!