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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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Poetry.

What's the News.

The author of the following hymn, was a young man, now dead, who was insane on almost every subject except that of religion, on which he continued to the last thoroughly sane and intelligent. At the daily union prayer meeting at Jayne's Hall, Philadelphia, this hymn is frequently sung.

Where'er you meet, you always say—
"What's the news? What's the news?
Pray what's the order of the day?
What's the news? What's the news?"
O I have got good news to tell,
My Saviour hath done all things well,
And triumphed over death and hell—
That's the news! That's the news!

The Lamb was slain on Calvary—
That's the news! That's the news!
To set a world of sinners free—
That's the news! That's the news!
'Twas there his precious blood was shed;
'Twas there he bowed his sacred head;
But now he's risen from the dead—
That's the news! That's the news!

To Heav'n above, the Conquerer's gone—
That's the news! That's the news!
He's pass'd triumphant to his throne—
That's the news! That's the news!
And on the throne he will remain,
Until as Judge he comes again,
Attended by a dazzling train—
That's the news! That's the news!

His work's reviving all around—
That's the news! That's the news!
And many have redemption found—
That's the news! That's the news!
And since their souls have caught the flame,
They shout Hosanna to his name;
And all around they spread his fame—
That's the news! That's the news!

The Lord has pardoned all my sin—
That's the news! That's the news!
I feel the witness now within—
That's the news! That's the news!
And since he took my sins away,
And taught me how to watch and pray,
I'm happy now from day to day—
That's the news! That's the news!

And Christ the Lord can now save you—
That's the news! That's the news!
Your sinful heart he can renew—
That's the news! That's the news!
This moment, if for sins you grieve,
This moment, if you do believe,
A full acquittal you'll receive—
That's the news! That's the news!

And then, if any one should say,
"What's the news? What's the news?"
O tell them you've begun to pray—
That's the news! That's the news!
That you have joined the conquering band
And now with joy at God's command,
You're marching to the better land—
That's the news! That's the news!

Baptist History.

For the Christian Messenger.

A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

LETTER XLII.

The Troublesome Period.

From A. D. 1567 to A. D. 1688.

Continued.

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

I now present you with a series of extracts from Hannah Hewling's account of her brothers, continued by Mr. Kiffin, their grandfather.

"At Salisbury, the 30th of August I had the first opportunity of conversing with them. I found them in a very excellent composure of mind, declaring their experience of the grace and goodness of God to them in all their sufferings, in supporting and strengthening and providing for them, turning the hearts of all in whose hands they had been both at Exeter and on ship-board, to shew pity and to favour them; although since they came to Newgate they were hardly used, and now in their journey loaded with heavy irons and more inhumanly dealt with. They with great cheerfulness professed that they were better and in a more happy condition than ever in their lives, from the sense they had of the pardoning love of God in Jesus Christ to

their souls, wholly referring themselves to their wise and gracious God to choose for them life or death, expressing themselves, thus:—'Any thing what pleaseth God; what he sees best, so be it. We know he is able to deliver; but if not, blessed be his name, death is not terrible now, but desirable.'"

"The next opportunity I had was at Dorchester, whether they were both carried, and remained together four days. By reason of their strait confinement our conversation was much interrupted; but this appeared, that they had the same presence and support from God."

"The sixth of September, Mr. Benjamin Hewling was ordered to Taunton, to be tried there. Taking my leave of him he said, 'Oh! blessed be God for afflictions. I would not have been without them for all this world.'"

"I remained still at Dorchester, to wait the issue of Mr. William Hewling, to whom, after trial, I had free access, and whose discourse was much filled with admirings of the grace of God which had been manifested towards him in calling him out of his natural state. He said, God by his Holy Spirit did suddenly seize upon his heart when he thought not of it, in his retired abode in Holland, as it were secretly whispering in his heart, 'Seek ye my face,' enabling him to answer his gracious call and to reflect upon his own soul, shewing him the evil of sin and the necessity of Christ, from that time carrying him on to a sensible adherence to Christ for justification and eternal life. Hence he found a spring of joy and sweetness beyond the comforts of the whole earth."

"When I came to him the next morning, when he had received news that he must die the next day, and in order to it was to be carried to Lyme that day, I found him in a more excellent, raised, and spiritual frame than before. He was satisfied, he said, that God had chosen best for him. 'He knows what the temptations of life might have been. I might have lived and forgotten God; but now I am going where I shall sin no more. Oh it is a blessed thing to be freed from sin and to be with Christ! Oh! how great were the sufferings of Christ for me, beyond all I can undergo! How great is the glory to which I am going! It will soon swallow up all our sufferings here!'"

"As they passed through the town of Dorchester to Lyme, multitudes of people beheld them with great lamentations, admiring his deportment at his parting with his sister. Passing on the road, his discourse was exceedingly spiritual, taking occasion from every thing to speak of the glory they were going to. Looking at the country as he passed, he said, 'This is a glorious creation; but what then is the paradise of God to which we are going! It is but a few hours, and we shall be there, and be for ever with the Lord.'"

"At Lyme, just before they went to die, reading John xiv. 8, he said to one of his fellow-sufferers, 'Here is a sweet promise for us—I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you. Christ will be with us to the last! One taking leave of him he said, 'Farewell till we meet in heaven. Presently we shall be with Christ. Oh, I would not change condition with any one in this world. I would not stay behind for ten thousand worlds.'"

"Afterwards he prayed for three quarters of an hour with the greatest fervency, exceedingly blessing God for Jesus Christ, adoring the riches of his grace in him, in all the glorious fruits of it towards him, praying for the peace of the church of God, and of these nations in particular; all with such eminent assistance of the spirit of God as convinced, astonished, and melted into pity the hearts of all present, even the most malicious adversaries, forcing tears and expressions from them; some saying, they knew not what would become of them after death, but it was evident he was going to great happiness."

"When just departing out of the world, with a joyful countenance, he said, 'Oh, now my joy and comfort is that I have a Christ to go to,' and so sweetly resigned his spirit to Christ."

"An officer who had shewn so malicious a spirit as to call the prisoners 'devils,' when he was guarding them down, was now so convinced that he afterwards told a person of quality that he was never so affected as by his cheerful carriage and fervent prayer, such as he believed was never heard, especially from one so young; and said, 'I believe, had the lord chief justice been here, he would not have let him die.'"

"The sheriff having given his body to be buried, although it was brought from the place of execution without any notice given, yet very many of the town, to the number of two hundred, came to accompany him; and several young women of the best of the town laid him in his grave in Lyme Church-yard, Sept. 13, 1685."

"When I came to Taunton to Mr. Benjamin Hewling, he had received the news of his brother's being gone to die with so much comfort and joy, and afterwards of the continued goodness of God in increasing it to the end. He expressed himself to this effect:—'We have no cause to fear death, if the presence of God be with us; there is no evil in it, the sting being taken away. It is nothing but our ignorance of the glory the saints pass into by death which makes it appear dark to ourselves or our relations; if in Christ, what is this world that we should desire an abode in it? It is all vain and unsatisfying, full of sin and misery.' He also intimated his own cheerful expectations soon to follow, discovering then and all along great seriousness and sense of spiritual and eternal things, complaining of nothing in his present circumstances but want of a place of retirement to converse more uninterruptedly with God and his own soul; saying that his lonely time in Newgate was the sweetest in his whole life."

"When there was a general report that no more should die, he said, 'I do not know what God hath done contrary to our expectations; if he doth prolong my life, I am sure it is all his own, and by his grace I will wholly devote it to him.' But on the 29th of September, between ten and eleven at night, we found the deceitfulness of this report, they being then told that they must die the next morning, which was very unexpected as to the suddenness of it. But herein God glorified his power, grace and faithfulness, in giving suitable support and comfort by his blessed presence, which appeared upon my coming to him at that time and finding him greatly composed. He said, 'Though men design to surprise, God doth and will perform his word, to be a very present help in trouble.'"

"The next morning, when I saw him again, his cheerfulness and comfort were much increased, waiting for the sheriff with the greatest sweetness and serenity of mind. * * * With a smiling countenance, he discoursed of the glory of heaven. * * * His hope and comfort still increasing, with the assurance of an interest in that glorious inheritance to the possession of which he was now going, he said, 'death was more desirable than life, and he would rather die than live any longer here: * * * Then, reading the scriptures and musing with himself, he intimated the great comfort which God conveyed to his soul in it; saying, 'Oh, what an invaluable treasure is this blessed word of God.' In all conditions here is a store of strong consolation. One desiring his bible, he said, 'No; this shall be my companion to the last moment of my life.'"

"Thus praying together, reading, meditating, and conversing of heavenly things, they waited for the sheriff, who, when he came, void of all pity and civility, hurried them away, scarcely suffering them to take leave of their friends. Notwithstanding this, and the doleful mourning of all about them, the joyfulness of his countenance was increased. Thus he left the prison, and thus he appeared in the sledge, where they sat about half an hour before the officers could force the horses to draw; at which they were greatly enraged, there being no visible obstruction from weight or way. At last the mayor and sheriff haled them forwards themselves, Balaam-like, driving the horses."

"When they came to the place of execu-

tion, which was surrounded with spectators, many that waited their coming said, that when they saw him and them come with such cheerfulness and joy, and evidence of the presence of God with them, it made death appear with another aspect.—They first embraced each other with the greatest affection; then two of the elder persons praying audibly, they joined with great seriousness. Then he [Benjamin] required leave of the sheriff to pray particularly; but he would not grant it, and only asked him whether he would pray for the King. He answered, 'I pray for all men.' He then requested that they might sing a hymn. The sheriff told him it must be with the rope about their necks; which they cheerfully accepted, and sung with such heavenly joy and sweetness that many who were present said, it both broke and rejoiced their hearts. Thus in the experience of the delightfulness of praising God on earth, he willingly closed his eyes on a vain world, to pass to that eternal enjoyment."

"All present of all sorts were exceedingly affected and amazed. Some officers who had before insultingly said, 'Surely these persons have no thoughts of death, but will find themselves surprised by it,' now acknowledged that they saw he and they had something extraordinary within, which carried them through with so much joy. Others said that they were so convinced of their happiness that they would be glad to change conditions with them. The soldiers in general, and all others, lamented exceedingly, saying, 'It was so sad a thing to see them so cut off, that they scarcely knew how to bear it.' Some of the most malicious in the place, from whom nothing but railing was expected, said, as they were carried to their grave in Taunton church, 'These persons have left sufficient evidence that they are now glorified spirits in heaven.' A great officer also in the king's army has often been heard to say, 'If you would learn to die, go to the young men of Taunton.'—(Memoir of Kiffin, p. 66-78)."

The execution of Mrs. Gaunt was another horrible affair. It is one of the blackest in the catalogue of crimes with which James II. stands charged in history.

Elizabeth Gaunt was a Baptist lady, resident in London. Her life was a series of charitable acts. She was constantly engaged in visiting the jails, and administering succour, according to her means, to the distressed and unfortunate. On the discovery of the Rye House plot, one Burton, who was deeply implicated in it, and for whose apprehension a reward of £100 was offered, found shelter in her house. She assisted him to escape to Holland, where he lived some months. He returned to England with the Duke of Monmouth, and was at the battle of Sedgemoor. After wandering about some time he obtained concealment in the house of John Fernley, a barber, in Whitechapel, London. Fernley was a poor man, but though he knew of the reward that had been offered for Burton's apprehension he would not betray him. Much as he wanted money, his honour was not to be sold. That noble feeling cost him his life. The wretch Burton learned that the king was peculiarly exasperated against those who harboured traitors. He informed against both his protectors. They were brought to trial and convicted. Fernley was hanged; Mrs. Gaunt was burned alive, that being then the punishment of females for this offence. The only witnesses against her were the villain Burton and her own maid-servant; but the girl was ignorant of Burton's character and position, and could only testify to the concealment, so that the law's demand, requiring two witnesses, was not satisfied. But the judge who presided at the trial overruled the exception taken on this account, and a verdict of "guilty" was brought in, in opposition to right. The good woman suffered the terrible punishment in such a manner as to excite strong sympathy in her favour. Bishop Burnet says, "She died with a constancy, even to cheerfulness, that struck all who saw it. She said, charity was a part of her religion as well as faith; this at worst was