

The King's Highway.

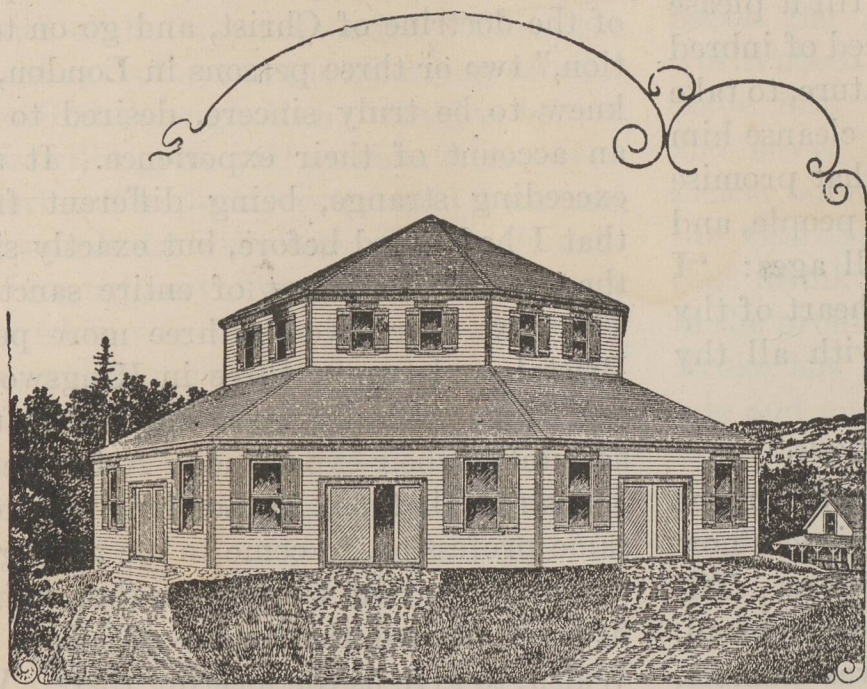
An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

A Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

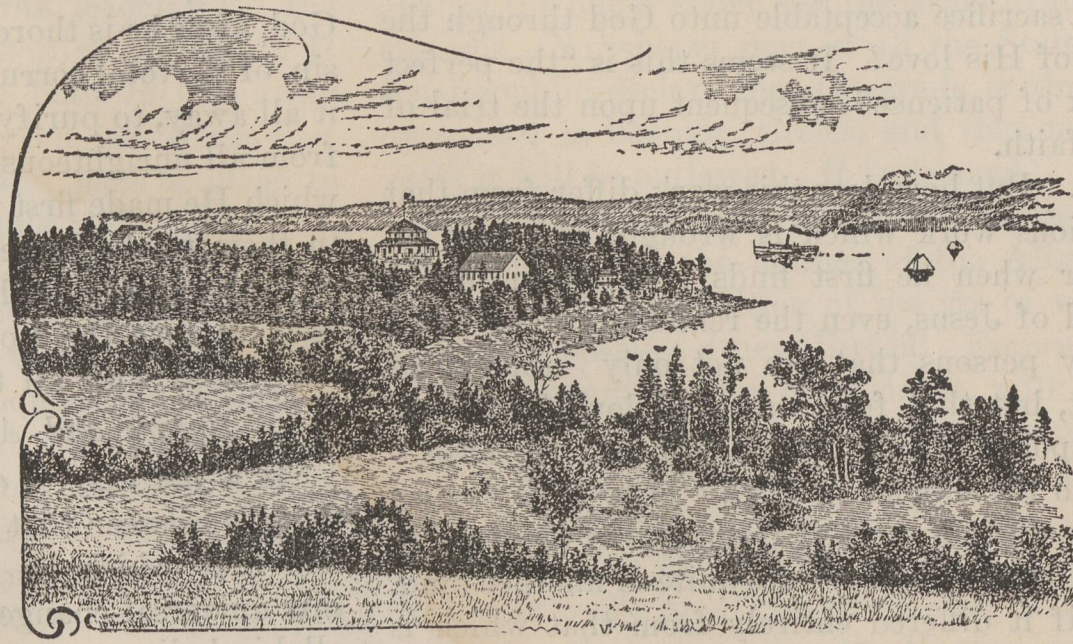
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BEULAH TABERNACLE



A BIRDSEYE VIEW OF BEULAH CAMP GROUND

ON PATIENCE.

By John Wesley.

"Let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."
—James I, 1-4.

1. "My brethren," says the apostle in the preceding verse, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." At first view, this may appear a strange direction, seeing most temptations are, "for the present, not joyous, but grievous." Nevertheless, ye know by your own experience that "the trial of your faith worketh patience," and if "patience have its proper work, ye shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

2. It is not to any particular person or church that the apostle gives this instruction; but to all who are partakers of like precious faith, and are seeking after that common salvation. For, as long as any of us are upon earth, we are in the region of temptation. He who came into the world, to save His people from their sins, did not come to save them from temptation. He, Himself, "knew no sin," yet while He was in this vale of tears, "He suffered, being tempted;" and herein, also, "left us an example, that we should tread in His steps." We are liable to a thousand temptations from the corruptible body variously affecting the soul. The soul itself, encompassed as it is with infirmities, exposes us to ten thousand more. And how many are the temptations which we meet with even from the good men (such at least they are in part, in their general character) with whom we are called to converse from day to day? Yet what are these to the temptations we may expect to meet with from an evil world? Seeing, we all, in effect, "dwell with Mesech, and have our habitation in the tents of Kedar." Add to this that the most dangerous of our enemies are not those that assault us openly.

No:

"Angels our march oppose
Who still in strength excel.
Our secret, sworn, eternal foes,
Countless, invisible!"

For is not our "adversary the devil as a roaring lion," with all his infernal legions, still going "about seeking whom he may devour?" This is the case with all the children of men; yea and with all the children of God, as long as they sojourn in this strange land. Therefore, if we do not wilfully and carelessly rush into them, yet we shall surely "fall into divers temptations," temptations innumerable as the stars of heaven, and those varied and complicated a thousand ways. But instead of counting this a loss, as unbelievers would do, "count it all joy, knowing that the trial of your faith," even when it is "tried as by fire," worketh patience." But "let patience have its perfect work, and ye shall be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

3. But what is patience? We do not now speak of a heathen virtue, neither of a natural indolence; but of a gracious temper wrought in the heart of a believer by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is a disposition to suffer whatever pleases God in the manner, and for the time that pleases Him. We thereby hold the middle way, neither "oligorountes," despising our sufferings, making little of them, passing over them lightly, as if they were owing to chance or second causes; nor, on the other hand, affected too much, unnerved, dissolved, sinking under them. We may observe, the proper object of patience is suffering, either in body or mind. Patience does not imply the not feeling this, it is not apathy or insensibility. It is at the utmost distance from stoical stupidity; yea, at an equal distance from fretfulness or dejection. The patient believer is preserved from falling into either of these extremes by considering who is the Author of all his suffering. Even God his Father. What is the motive of His giving us to suffer? Not so properly His justice as His love. And what is the end of it? Our "profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness."

Very nearly related to patience is meekness, if it be not rather a species of it. For may it not be defined, patience of injuries, particularly affronts, reproach, or unjust censure? This teaches not to return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrawise blessing. Our

blessed Lord himself seems to place peculiar value upon this temper. This he peculiarly calls us to "learn of Him, if we would find rest for our souls."

5. But what may we understand by the work of patience? "Let patience have its perfect work." It seems to mean, let it have its full fruit or effect. And what is the fruit which the spirit of God is accustomed to produce hereby in the heart of a believer? One immediate fruit of patience is peace, a sweet tranquility of mind, a serenity of spirit which can never be found unless where patience reigns. And this peace often rises into joy. Even in the midst of various temptations, those that are enabled "in patience to possess their souls," can witness, not only quietness of spirit, but triumph and exultations. This both

"Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven."

6. How lively is the account which the Apostle Peter gives, not only of the peace and joy, but of the hope and love which God works in those patient sufferers "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation!" Indeed, he appears herein to have an eye to this very passage of St. James: "Though ye are grieved for a season, with manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith (the same expression which was used by St. James) may be found to praise, and honor, and glory, at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom, having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." See here the peace, the joy, and the love, which, through the mighty power of God, are the fruit or "work of patience!"

7. And as peace, hope, joy and love are the fruits of patience, both springing from and confirmed by it, so is also rational, genuine courage, which indeed cannot subsist without patience. The brutal courage, or rather fierceness, of a lion may probably spring from impatience; but true fortitude, the courage of a man, springs from just the contrary temper. Christian zeal is likewise confirmed and increased by patience, and so is activity in every