

(At Home.) SUNDAY, Sep. 24, 1874.

Elder Gold:—

WHEN a few more years have passed I shall go where I shall return no more; and, as many have taken occasion through the LANDMARKS to set forth a declaration of those things which they hope the Lord God has taught them; and as my mind is always in trouble pondering over past occurrences and future events—I feel a desire to set before you and your readers a few things that I have seen and felt, and to gather up the beginnings of God with me, if indeed he began at all, of which things I am often in doubts about; but they cause me so many cogitations that I thought I would throw them together and leave them to the judgment of the godly, to say by what spirit I have been taught. I will not dare to consume space to tell how I felt in youth, only to say from my earliest recollection I had strange views and feelings about God, death and another world: and often made promises to do better, and have often sought some secreted place to try to pray, when but a child, and would feel better when I did so; but, when I read in the Bible of the curses denounced against the sins that I am guilty of, they have so terrified and affrighted me that I have spent many sleepless nights, having that fear which hath torment. This was my life until in my twenty-eighth year. By a very strange providence, which to be brief I shall hear be silent about—stantly had different feelings and views from I had ever had prior to that day. The following are some of them:

I felt that I was a lost sinner and knew not how to express it; but will say I felt uneasy, restless, grieved—a kind of horror for sin I had before known nothing of. With these diverse feelings that then attended me—there was life given me which caused me to see all of my sinful acts back to the day of childhood: yea! I may say, that I saw them individually. I then grieved over and wished I had not done them, because then I knew they were against a holy and just God. There was a sorrow attended these feelings that I love to have: I remember that I wanted to and did hunt some secret place to confess and ask pardon for my sins. Though from a child I had been filled with fear, that caused me to make promises to do better, especially when I would have frightful dreams, and when there would be thunder and lightning, which brought death and the Day of Judgment to my mind. Now I felt different. Then I promised to do better. Now I tried to do good and thereby obtain forgiveness. I was then in my twenty-eighth year and had been a Bible reader from my youth and cared not who saw me reading, but preferred to be alone to meditate: though it condemned me I loved to read it and hear its precious contents expounded. Now under the same feeling and beyond expression, only they were all new and different from any I had ever had before, I loved the people of God: also, I loved to be where they were assembled: I received them as the excel-

lent of the earth, a people truly blessed. Often I have been to their meetings and often felt so guilty and condemned I thought they could see it. I would often secrete myself and try to read and pray, and would often wish for a place under the ground so that no one could see me; nay! I did not want a bird to see me. I remember that I felt bad but still wanted to feel worse. It seemed strange that I loved to grieve, though I felt guilt and condemnation. I loved to have these feelings and desired to see the worst of my case, to see, feel and acknowledge it all before God. At times I would think my burden was very great but would confess that it was all my fault. Thus I went on, hoping that God would bless me.—I hoped on for a long time, looking at my sinful acts, hoping that when I had grieved and repented I might hear the Lord say, Thy sins are forgiven thee! I noticed, that when I did the best I could I would be breaking promises. I saw that I was a sinner by nature and practice, and that all my sins had sprung from that corrupt fountain. Then I saw the justice of God in condemning me, yet I loved him. Under these feelings of his justice and my condemnation, I felt unworthy to even look toward heaven, thinking that I had no friend there. When I would wake up in the night God, death and judgment were first in my thought. When I heard of a death it added to my grief and fear. I thought I was lost forever. I am now seeing and feeling the forebodings of what I shall hereafter suffer. Sometimes whole streams of filthy lucre would break in upon me when I would be trying to pray. I would inwardly say, What shall I do? my prayers are all mixed with sin, I am nothing but filth and sin, my prayers will do me no good. I could truly and feelingly witness with the sayings of the Holy Spirit: the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Truly I felt to be the chief of sinners. I plainly saw the justice of God in damning me, so that I have said, justice! justice!! justice!!! for hours. I read in the Bible that the wicked will gnaw their tongues and blaspheme: but thought if I went to hell I would continue to love Jesus.

In this condition I have walked and sat alone with the Bible in my hands, and have often lain prostrate with my face to the ground—sometimes asking for mercy, and sometimes asking the Lord to convict and give me a godly sorrow for sin.

One night I dreamed I was going to heaven, traveling along the straightest, narrowest road that I ever saw, that was cut through a solid rock: I finally arrived at heaven and saw the Savior and heard the heavenly host singing the sweetest songs I ever heard. Again, I dreamed I was sent for to go to Washington City, and was appointed by the authorities of the nation as ensign, and my flag was tied in the blood of Christ. This dream and especially the sweet singing made strange works in my mind, but my burden was not relieved.

Sometime after this I went to hear Elder Wm. Ross preach: I told my

feelings. He said he was satisfied.—Then I became tranquil and better satisfied.

Since then I have had many doubts and fears. Again, I have been so carried away with the goodness and his mercy to me that I have said, Bless the Lord, oh! my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Yes, I have felt the power of his love while reading his precious word, when at preaching, when on my bed, while walking and riding along the road in deep meditation.—Again, I have felt humble and thankful, so that I went off to myself and said, Glory, glory to his name forever!

I now feel a comfort in talking with the dear saints of the Lord.

Farewell, —*—

FRAGMENTS, NO. 29.

"A still small voice."—1st Kings 19: 12.

Elder P. D. Gold—Highly Esteemed Brother and Companion in the Ministry:—

TIME speeds away, and the ever-revolving wheels of nature have rolled several months into eternity since I sent you a fragment for the LANDMARKS. I still feel a deep interest in its success, and it has of late appeared to me to be almost doubly rich from the sound and able editorials, and the heart-melting productions of the brethren and sisters. Realizing my own stupidity and weakness, and seeing that you continue to have matter for the work, I have hesitated about intruding upon your readers.

When the idolatrous and blood-thirsty Jezebel swore by her gods to take the life of the tried and persecuted Elijah, he took his servant and fled for his life, from mount Carmel in northern Palestine, to Beer-sheba, in the south part of the holy land, and leaving his servant there, he went a day's journey into the wilderness, and there, weary, thirsty, hungry and forlorn, he sat down under a juniper-tree, and there requested that he might die. "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." Believing that he was the only true prophet of God left alive in Israel, the rest all slain, the altars of God thrown down, and the altars of Baal reared up over all the land, his nation, from the king to the peasant, gone after strange gods, and his life threatened by an ambitious and wicked queen, is it any wonder, dear reader, that this old servant of God should desire to depart out of a world of sin, sorrow and distress? But the Lord had further use for him in the world before he should be translated into the climes of bliss in a chariot of fire, and hence he did not grant the prophet's request; but, there in the desert, as at the brook Cherith, and at Sarepta, the Lord provided for his present wants by a miracle. "The Lord will provide," and his children should take courage, and trust in him in their greatest straits, and in their darkest hours, and he says to them, "I never will leave thee nor forsake thee." As he lay and slept under the lonely tree an angel is dispatched from heaven and supplies his wants of hunger and thirst, and upon that

food he went forty days and nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

I must not enlarge here on that food and the forty days, and speak of their significance, and so I pass on to the text.

He is now at the mount of God, where Moses was nearly six-hundred years before, in Arabia, at the back of the wilderness, on the rugged, lonely and awe-inspiring mount, an exile from his own country, and cut off from human society, so he takes up his abode in a cave. The God in whom he trusts still has his eye on his faithful prophet, and speaks to him, saying, "What doest thou here Elijah?" "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." He was told to go and stand on the mount before God, and while there the Lord passed by, and a "great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks," but the Lord was not in the wind. Though he sent his mighty wind, with all its frightful and sore, yet in it, or through it, he did not speak to the awe-stricken prophet any words of peace or comfort. "And after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake." He spake not to the heart of the trembling and frightened man any words to allay his fears.

Earthquakes are the most awful and terrifying occurrences that mortals have ever witnessed. During the heavy convulsions of the globe, while it rolls like a toy, and the ocean boils and heaves like a caldron, and mountains are overturned by their roots, (Job 28: 9.) dumb brutes, fowls and mortals are filled with unutterable dismay and terror. Experiencing one of those awful convulsions of nature, an English writer exclaims, "At that moment what were all the things of earth to me? Riches, honor, empire, wisdom all were useless sounds, and empty as the bubbles of the deep?"

And after the earthquake subsided, a fire—not a mere bonfire, or a taper, but, I presume, a great and consuming conflagration—sweeping through the mountain with its terrible roar, worth the name of a fire. "But the Lord was not in the fire." No peace or comfort spoken yet to the affrighted prophet. Those awful displays of omnipotence were well calculated to fill his soul with terror, and give him some idea of the majesty, power and glory of him who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and prepared him the more fully to receive and appreciate words of comfort.

"And after the fire a still small voice." And when Elijah heard it he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went and stood in the entrance of the cave, and there came a voice to him again with the joyful intelligence that the Lord had reserved unto himself seven-thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal, &c., filling his heart, doubtless, with much joy and encouragement.

The foregoing events in Elijah's