FRUITS OF JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING. LETTER THE SECOND

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Fruits of Joy and Peace in Believing. Letter the Second by Anonymous

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FRUITS

OF

JOY AND PEACE.

I feel truly thankful, my dear Friend, that my last letter afforded you comfort. It is indeed the very highest privilege to be employed in our Lord's service, and surely we are so employed when we endeavour to comfort those of his dear children who are cast down through temptation, or sorrow. I anticipate the observation you will make on reading this; "Oh! that I were indeed but one of his dear children! then, I should not feel temptation, or suffer sorrow." Yes, dearest, "the joy of the Lord is" indeed "our strength," it blunts the edge of temptation, and extracts the thorn from every sorrow;

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and therefore it is, that I am so anxious that you should taste that joy, and feel that strength. You acknowledge that my last letter has made you feel more than before, the great encouragement we have to approach God in the name of his beloved Son. You agree with me that it is impossible to meditate on the gracious, condescending messages sent us by the Most High, on the patience, mercy, and love displayed in his conduct to our fallen race,-on those brighter manifestations of gentleness and goodness, when as "God manifest in the flesh," he visibly appeared amongst his sinful creatures,-lived with them,-conversed with them,-and dispensed blessings all around him,-you agree with me that it is impossible prayerfully to meditate on all these things, without feeling encouraged to come to the Saviour for life and salvation. And you express a hope, that you "may be accepted at the last." But dearest, is it honor-

ing the stupendous redemption work of the Lord from Heaven, which he himself pronounced with his dying lips to be perfect, and "finished;"-is it exalting the mighty and complete salvation of God our Saviour, ushered in with the rapturous praises of angels who proclaimed "peace" on earth, "good will" to men, and that they brought from heaven "good tidings of great joy;"-is it scriptural to suppose, that after all the wonderful things which the Lord Jesus Christ hath done, and suffered on our behalf, his people are called to pass their life in doubt, and fear, only cheered with the hope of being "accepted at the last?" Can this wavering, uncertain, trembling hope, be the "strong consolution" of which the Apostle speaks, which he describes as "sure, and stedfast?" -as the "confidence which bath great recompence of reward?"-as the state of "rest," into which the believer enters even before his warfare is accomplished? "For

we which have believed do enter into rest."

Surely, none could more perfectly know the mind of the Lord than the Apostles, instructed as they were from his own lips, and favored with so large an influence of His Divine Spirit; yet when addressing their converts, they never inculcate the doctrine of uncertainty, but on the contrary, exhort them to obtain a clear, and blessed assurance of their state of acceptance. "These things write we unto you," says St. John, "that your joy may be full." Now it is the blessed hope of acceptance which can alone fill the soul with joy.

Again, he adds,—"We know that we have passed from death unto life." "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." And