

Letters: Mrs. William Bonar his sister-in-law (2)

Andrew Bonar:

GIRVAN, 16th Aug. 1862.

MY DEAR JESSIE,

... It is so still to-day, the sea like glass, and somehow everything seems to fall in suitably with our present feelings. We have bidden dear Christian our last farewell. It is so strange to try to realise that we shall no longer see her among us, or get one of her letters telling whatever she thought would interest us. I feel as if a large reservoir of sympathy were now gone, there were so many little things in which very few are interested at all, that she was sure to care for and to make it her delight to manage. York Place can never be the same again, for the home feeling that was about it lay very much in the heart of sympathy that was there. Many thanks to you, Jessie, for all your unwearied attention and invaluable services. What a remarkable providence that you and William should have been able thus to be present, and take such part in all those last scenes! Dear Christian now knows that 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit' was 'in the sight of God of great price.' To-morrow she will be spending a happier Sabbath than we can enjoy here. She will be able to tell us when we next meet her, what undiscovered riches are in Jesus, how glorious He is, how lovely, what a fountain of life! . . . Christian was ten years with me in Collace, and I am certain she never once all that time spoke to me one unkind word or did one selfish act. I wish that in this my life were like hers. So to live in such a world needs great grace. But the day approaches when we 'shall see Him,' and be made 'like Him.' . . . Â—Your affectionate brother,
ANDREW A. BONAR.

GLASGOW, 28th Oct. 1864.

MY DEAR JESSIE,

Â—You will excuse me writing at any length, and yet I wish to send a few lines to thank you and William. No doubt you have prayed for me and mine, as well as thought on us and sympathised. For some days I was like one half-dreaming, now all is sadly real. Who can tell the strange want in my home, and the cloud that at times casts its dark shadow over me when something brings up my loss and forces me to remember that the sixteen years of our happy, happy home life are over ! I know 'it is the Lord,' and I know that 'I shall yet praise Him.' I preached on Sabbath on Psalm 97:11, trying to show the Lord's way of bringing light and gladness out of darkness and sorrow, first in the atoning work of the Head of the Church; second, in the sanctifying work He carries on in His members. It is such times as these that make a minister feel that he must handle solid truth, preaching to himself all the while. . . . My meditation at my prayer-meeting was on Deut. 1: 6-8, and then 19-26. God is saying to me 'You have dwelt at this mountain long enough,' and then He is also saying, 'Arise, journey onwards to the Promised Kingdom.' Driven out of a rest here that was ready to ensnare the soul and make it self-indulgent, He cries, 'Be done with this for ever, and go on to a better.' And I was struck with noticing that He makes so little account of the wilderness that lies between. He puts the rest out of which He shakes us, side by side with the rest of the Kingdom. Who can tell how soon that Kingdom may be reached!

Give William my kindest love.

Â—Your affectionate brother,

ANDREW A. BONAR.