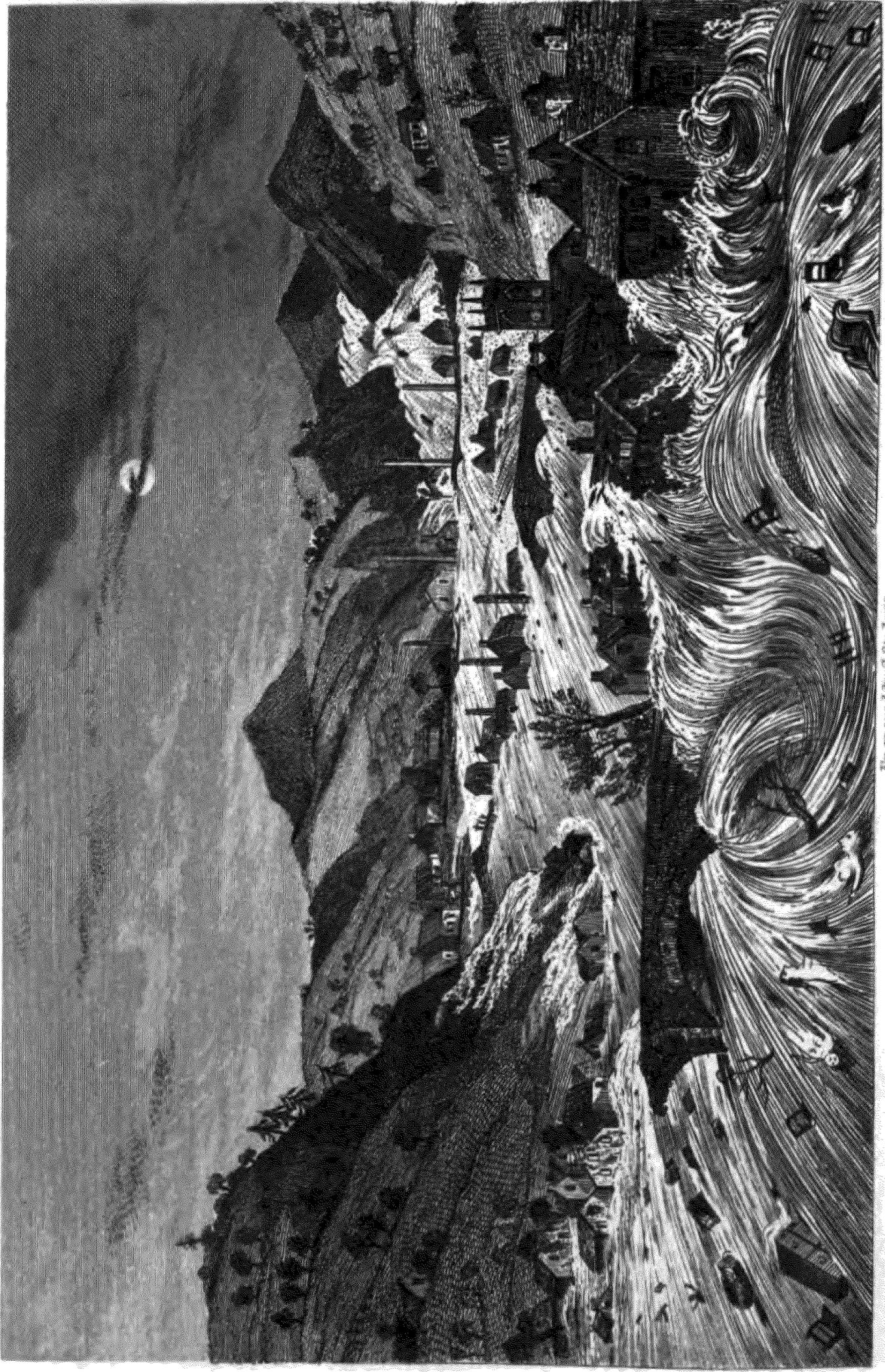


SORROW
ON THE
LAND



Engraved by G. Stoddart.

BURSTING OF THE BILBERY RESERVOIR AT HOLMFIRTH.

SORROW ON THE LAND:

CONTAINING AN

ACCOUNT OF THE INUNDATION

OCCASIONED BY THE

BURSTING OF THE BILBERRY RESERVOIR,

ON FEBRUARY 5TH, 1852,

WHEREBY

EIGHTY LIVES AND A LARGE AMOUNT OF
PROPERTY WERE DESTROYED.

BY A WESLEYAN MINISTER.

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P R E F A C E.

THE author of the following narrative of a most serious local calamity is not singular in the opinion that it deserves a record more durable than its startling details secured for it in the periodical press of the day. To the young especially of the present age, and even of future times, its facts can scarcely ever be destitute of painful interest; and these, in correct and consecutive order, have been carefully supplied. The moral lessons which the whole so clearly suggests, it is hoped may be of permanent benefit to the youth of the Wesleyan congregations, for whom this narrative is especially designed. That God may bless to them this record of a most solemn and mysterious visitation, is the sincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

April, 1852.

**“ A vision of the deluge. Lo! behold,
The waters dark through every valley roll'd.
Wide, fruitful fields are buried 'neath the wave,
The peasant's hearth encroaching billows lave.
Towards each mountain-height, each hilly waste,
Young, old, rich, poor, in wild disorder haste;
Rank, beauty, wisdom, wealth have lost their place,
Whilst death glares horribly in every face !”**

SORROW ON THE LAND.

THE VALLEY OF THE HOLME.

MEN who have become eminent, and places which have become noted in the pages of history, have frequently owed their distinction to accident. This is of such frequent occurrence, that it has passed into a proverb, "It is the occasion that makes the man." It is, perhaps, still more true, that some signal catastrophe only is likely to give prominence, for a time, to such a place as the village of Holmfirth; a place the very name of which had seldom been heard at any great distance from its own obscure neighbourhood, and which, before the recent flood, had scarcely attracted any degree of public attention. Henceforth, however, it will be held in remembrance, in association with some of the deepest earthly sorrows, and of the finest sympathies of which man is capable, even under the inspiration of Christian charity and love.

"Holmfirth is seven miles from Huddersfield, in Yorkshire. It is a village containing a population of 2,347 inhabitants, situated on

the old road to Buxton, in the townships of Wooldale, Cartworth, and Upper Thong; partly at the foot of three great hills, and partly climbing up their craggy sides. The Holme and Ribbleden waters unite in this village; and this circumstance, together with its proximity to those stupendous mountains sometimes called the English Alps, renders it extremely liable to inundations. The houses are scattered in the deep valley, and on the acclivities of the hills, without much regard to arrangement. The church is a handsome modern edifice, with a tower, containing six bells. The steeple, which is of ordinary height, sinks into insignificance beneath the neighbouring houses on the cliff, where the beholder looks down upon its highest pinnacle. The traveller, at his first view of this extraordinary village, is struck with astonishment at the singularity of its appearance. The principal part of the inhabitants are employed in the manufacture of woollen cloth."

"Holmfirth has been often subject to floods; floods which have caused much destruction of property; but never to compare with the recent calamity. In the autumn of 1799, several houses and mills at Holmfirth and Huddersfield were swept away by the floods; but no loss of life is recorded. In 1821 we

find the following recorded :—‘ On September 21st, after a heavy rain, the great reservoir above Blacksike-Mill burst its embankment, and rolled down the valley a prodigious volume of water, which forced down the buildings in its course. The flood commenced at seven in the evening, and the water had subsided at ten, but the inhabitants did not dare to retire to rest. The next day presented a truly affecting scene of desolation ; mud, stones, timber, broken furniture, work-tools, and prostrate trees were spread over the fields to a considerable extent. Happily, no lives were lost, although the wreck of property was very great.’ Again, in 1822, we find : ‘ May 20th, after a severe thunder-storm, a cloud burst on the hills above Holmfirth and Meltham, and, from the junctions of those valleys, sent down the vale a breast of water from seven to nine feet high ; but happily no lives were lost.’”

“The entire Holme valley is a striking instance of British enterprise. On sites apparently the least adapted for their object, mills, manufactories, shops, and dwelling-houses have been erected ; the owner of each actuated only by considerations of his own means and requirement ; and yet all these isolated efforts combining to congregate and employ in the narrow valley of the Holme a large and indus-

trious, and hitherto a thriving, population. With a striking disregard for the dangers of great floods, but a singular fear of little overflows, the Holme-lands upon the wider expanses of the valley are rarely the sites of either mills or dwelling-houses. But where the valley contracts to a gorge, and the stream deepens as it narrows, there the little space by the side of the stream is blocked-up with a mill, and a row of cottages with their 'wall-race' in the very bed of the stream, perched on the precipitous bank on the other side which did not allow room for another mill. It was at these gorges, thus obstructed by buildings, that the loss of life and property occurred. And hence it is, that although the embankment of the reservoir burst to its very base with one tremendous roar, pouring out its millions of gallons of water so fast as to empty the whole in little more than a quarter of an hour, the flood down at Holmfirth is described by some as coming in three successive surges."

Holmfirth, being the principal village on the Holme Brook, is the one from which the late awful catastrophe takes its name, and which, as it was situated in a part of the valley more contracted than some other parts through which the surging billows passed, experienced, perhaps, their utmost rage, although it is three

and a half miles below the Bilberry reservoir. The valley, and the surrounding hills, were occupied by a population of about 17,000 inhabitants, about half of whom have been deprived of employment by the inundation. The attraction in this, as in many other of the ravines and glens of Yorkshire, is the Brook, which affords a very partial supply of water to work the machinery employed in the trade of the valley, and an outlet for its refuse. The stream is inconsiderable ; and though it is passed by four bridges, of one arch each, at those points where the desolation was the greatest, it may frequently be crossed by a foot-passenger stepping from stone to stone over its rugged bed. The ordinary supply of water is utterly inadequate to the necessities of the manufacturers who ply their busy machinery by the motive power of the water accumulated in their mill-dams. Hence the necessity of reservoirs. These are formed for the purpose of treasuring up the waters which frequently fall so abundantly in these mountainous districts, that, when needed, they may be let off into the different mill-dams, to turn the wheels which give a kind of magic velocity to the myriads of spindles, shuttles, cards, &c., which these manufacturers employed at the time of this destructive flood ; but which, by its

terrific sweep, like many who tended their operations up to the previous sunset, are now motionless and silent for ever.

THE HOLME RESERVOIRS.

THESE reservoirs have been constructed under the authority of an Act of Parliament, which was passed in the year 1837. The Act provided for the construction of eight reservoirs, one of which was on the Digley Brook, at Bilberry-Mill. It was situated at the head of a narrow gorge, or glen, leading from the Holme valley, at Holme-Bridge, to a high bluff of land called Good-Bent, and was supplied by two streams flowing through the cloughs, running to the north-east and south-east of Good-Bent, and draining the moors of Holme-Moss on the one side, and the hills running up to Saddleworth on the other. The extent of surface to be drained by the reservoir was 14,000 acres; which, reckoning at two inches of rain in twenty-four hours, would give 101,640,000 cubic feet of water. The confluence of the streams takes place between two large hills, called Hoobrook-Hill and Lum-Bank, and which run parallel with each other for a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards, when they open out, and form an extensive

oval basin, of not less than three hundred yards in diameter. The reservoir was formed by blocking up the valley below this basin, so as to enclose some twelve or fifteen acres of surface. This was done by an embankment, so formed that it was presumed it would constitute a barrier which would be secure against any accumulation of waters the heaviest rains could supply. The embankment was about one hundred and fifty feet wide at the top, and eighty-seven feet high, and was formed of earth, stones, &c., such as the district supplied, with a wall of what is called *puddle* through its centre, sixteen feet thick at the bottom, and eight feet thick at the top. This puddle was composed of clay, gravel, &c.; and the object of introducing it was to render the embankment water-tight, and so prevent the leakage of the water. Had the design been properly carried out, no doubt it would have been safe. The precautions against an overflow which would wash away the embankment on the outside of the puddle-wall in the centre, were an outlet running through the bottom, and a waste-pit, like an immense chimney, built up in the embankment, to receive the water when it should arrive at the height of about sixty feet. These were worked by shuttles, which could be drawn up or let down at pleasure, to regulate

the ordinary supply to the mills, or to carry off the surplus water in a season of heavy rain. The shuttles were under the care of a man called "the drawer," with a salary of £5 a year. In blasting the rock for the purpose of getting a firm foundation for the puddle-wall, the workmen struck into a spring, about the thickness of a man's arm. Instead of this being carried off, so as not to interfere with the work, an attempt was made to carry it up in the embankment, and force it into the inside. This injured the puddle by keeping it too soft; and it appears to have been the first great error in the construction of the embankment. Mr. Leather, the engineer, declared on oath before the Coroner's jury, that he never heard of this spring; and the workmen declared, that they waited five or six weeks for him to come and look at it, and that this delay cost the contractor £200 or £300. From the first, the embankment was leaky; the leaks increased in number and power; and the embankment sunk so as to be below the water-pipe. The Commissioners, by law-suits, and expenses incurred by the construction of this and two other smaller reservoirs, got so grievously into debt, that at one time the drawer could not get his paltry salary of £5: and, to add to the existing evils, the Commissioners split up

into parties ; so that when one party ordered a hole to be made in the waste-pit to receive the water in the event of a flood, the other interfered by threats to prevent the workmen from proceeding. The leaks had become so serious, as the drawer testifies, that they would sometimes supply the mills without his attending to the shuttles : one of these shuttles was under repair, and the workman suspended the work until he could learn who was to pay him ; and the other was so blocked up with stones, ling, &c., that very little water could escape. In this state was the reservoir when the extraordinary falls of rain occurred in the commencement of February, 1852. "There had been much rain for two or three weeks," says one of the witnesses. "There was a good deal of rain on the Saturday night and Sunday morning before the accident. Monday and Tuesday were fine days ; Wednesday was very wet, and continued so until about ten o'clock at night. It was very windy on Wednesday during the day and night. The water was some little higher on the Wednesday than I had seen it before. I never saw the water rise so rapidly as it did on this evening." Mr. J. F. Bateman, C.E., who has the superintendence of the reservoirs belonging to the Manchester Corporation water-works, (which

are situate but a short distance on the other side of the chain of hills,) estimates the fall of water on the summit of the hills, during the first nine days in February, at little less than *ten inches*; and states that the fall of rain, at the foot of the hills, was an inch and a tenth on the day preceding the bursting of the Bilberry reservoir, and was two inches and four-tenths from 11 A.M. on the Wednesday to 11 A.M. on the Thursday. So greatly did these rains swell the streams feeding the Manchester reservoirs, that, instead of an ordinary run of from fifteen to thirty cubic feet per second, Mr. Bateman found the stream on Wednesday (the day before the Holmfirth accident) pouring into his reservoirs an average of no less than 1,730 cubic feet per second. And after that time the stream rose at one period to from 3,600 to 4,000 cubic feet per second. We have now arrived at the proximate cause of the fatal accumulation of the waters of the Bilberry reservoir; and we see how ill prepared the outlets were to dispose of the surplus quantity; and how weak the embankment had become, from the errors of its original construction, and the casualties and wear and tear of about a dozen years from its completion. "It is calculated, that when the embankment gave way, the quantity of water in the reservoir would not

be less than eighty-six millions two hundred and forty thousand gallons, or the enormous and fearful amount of *three hundred thousand tuns.*”

THE BURSTING OF THE RESERVOIR.

THE insecurity of the reservoir was no secret: from the very first it was known to be defective, and by many its bursting was regarded as only a question of time; and every unusual season of rain excited apprehension. But although the engineer had refused to certify the embankment as secure, and the contractor had in consequence entered an action for the recovery of the amount of his contract; and everybody was sure that some day or other the barrier would burst and involve the beautiful valley of the Holme in indescribable desolation; yet it is astonishing what recklessness and indifference prevailed amongst those whom the sweeping ruin menaced. Some who lived all but under the embankment were hardly convinced of the nearness of the catastrophe, when it was close at hand, and narrowly escaped the death which befell those who lived a mile or two down the valley. Some of those below had heard that the rupture of the embankment was possible; and two men from Holm-

firth, who had business up the valley, had even been to see the reservoir; but on their return they gave no alarm, and retired to rest in their accustomed security. Their very familiarity with the report of danger had rendered them less susceptible than they would have been of fear and caution. Those, however, who had the reservoir in charge, and a few others also, were more alive to their peril, and that of their friends and neighbours, as shown by the following painfully interesting account of Charles Batty, the drawer in charge of the reservoir, given in evidence at the Coroner's inquest. The inquest was taken before George Dyer, Esq., of Halifax, the Coroner for that division of the West Riding which includes Holmfirth. He opened his court in the Town-Hall at Holmfirth, on the 6th of February, and continued it by successive adjournments, (sometimes at intervals of a week,) for the purpose of affording time for minute inquiry, until Friday the 27th.

“ Charles Batty said,—‘ I am a cloth-miller, of Bilberry-Mill. That is the next mill to the reservoir. I have lived there six years since last October. I have been the drawer of the Bilberry reservoir for six years. The gentlemen from whom I received my appointment were Mr. George Hirst and Mr. John Roebuck.

Mr. J. Roebuck gave me the key. My salary was £5 per year. My duty was to supply the water for the mills below. I was appointed to draw water for Bilberry-Mill. I was to draw water to *fit* our mill, whether we had work or not, and for the supply of other mills as well. I had directions from Mr. Hirst to keep the water at a height of thirty-five or thirty-seven feet in the reservoir, and not to exceed forty feet if I could help it. He assigned as the reason, that it was not safe above that height. We had no marks specifying the height. I ascertained when it was thirty-seven feet, from a place in the waste-pit called a *square*, which was generally considered forty feet high. Some people estimate that at forty-four feet. I have generally drawn the shuttle at that height, but sometimes the water rose higher. I never saw the water come over the embankment before the 4th of February instant. I received my orders and directions from Mr. George Hirst and Mr. John Roebuck during Mr. Hirst's life; but since Mr. Hirst's death I received them from Mr. Roebuck, and from no other person. I had no instructions to look to the repair of the reservoir, and my duty was simply to draw the water. We had a good deal of rain on the Saturday preceding the 4th, and some days previously. On the Saturday

afternoon preceding the accident the water was thirty-six feet high. It was under the square referred to. The shuttle was partly drawn on that day. The proper quantity of water did not flow through the shuttle; and I drew it up to the height on Saturday, and it remained drawn up to Sunday morning. On Sunday morning the water had risen to forty-four feet. It was four *courses* above the square; and we reckoned the *courses* at one foot each course. On Sunday morning Mr. John Roebuck was at our house, and I told him that there was not the quantity of water coming out of the shuttle that there used to do. We then went to the reservoir, and we found that the full quantity of water was not coming through. We had two shuttles, but one was not in working order. That shuttle, however, was up. We tried to move it, but could not; and Mr. Roebuck measured it, and ascertained that it was up. The screw part had been taken off. We then tried the front shuttle. It was in working order. We let it down and pulled it up to try it, after which we left it up. The next time I visited the reservoir was on Monday, about noon. The water then was better than a foot below the *square*. The water coming in then was not so strong as on Sunday. I did not go up again till Wednesday

night, about five. The water was just at the ladder at the bottom of the valve-pit, and would be five or six feet above the square; and we estimated the height at forty-six feet. The shuttle was still at the top. I did not take particular notice of the escape of water; but I think it was the same as on Sunday, and was less than formerly. The first time that I had noticed that the escape was less than formerly was on the Saturday. I think there was more than half the usual quantity coming through the shuttle at that time. There was on the embankment, besides myself, Charles Batty, of Bottoms-Mill, and Joseph Broadhead Whitely, of Green-Owlers. It was raining very heavily at that time, and the water was coming very strong. Mr. Roebuck came up afterwards, and I saw him at my house, and told him the stream was coming in very strong, and that the escape from the shuttle was only about half what it ought to be. Mr. Roebuck said he thought the reservoir would burst if it continued raining, and he ordered me to remove my family. This was betwixt five and six o'clock, and I did remove them. I saw Mr. Roebuck again on the reservoir-bank about nine o'clock. I can't exactly speak to the height of the water, as it was getting dark, but it had risen three or four feet. The water was a good bit off run-

ning over then. I should say from the valve-pit it would be fifty feet high at the time: it would be at least ten feet above the *square*. I did not remain long upon the embankment then, but returned again soon after nine o'clock, and found the water about three feet perpendicular from the surface of the embankment. I was there several times again that night, but I don't know exactly what were the hours. I left Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Whitely, and several other persons there. I was there about half-past eleven. Joseph Whitely was there, but I did not see Mr. Roebuck. The water was then running over, but not in a great quantity. I believe it had been running over some time. To the best of my knowledge, the embankment burst about half-past twelve o'clock. I was in my own house at that time, but my family had been removed. It was with great difficulty that I escaped. Before it burst, I saw Joshua Charlesworth, engineer of Bilberry-Mill, and he said he would go up and see how it was going on. He was the first who alarmed me. I heard some one whistle, but I did not know what it meant. It would be a quarter of an hour after he went up that he came down and alarmed me. There was not a great noise, but a tremendous rush of water. The regular stream was rather stronger for a few minutes,

and then it came *all abreast* in one mass. I gave no warning to any one but Mrs. Hirst.' ”

The following is from the evidence of Jonathan Woodcock, Batty's predecessor, who left his situation because he could not get his salary of £5 per annum:—“I was at the reservoir on the Sunday morning before the accident. They were working the shuttles. Mr. John Roebuck was coming away when I was going, and he said, ‘There is great danger.’ We were about forty yards from the reservoir then. The water was forty-seven feet high. It was three feet above the *square*, and I reckon the *square* as forty-four feet high. I noticed the water through the shuttle. It did not sweep through as it ought to do ; and, in my opinion, there was only about half the quantity which ought to have come. I looked down the waste-pit, and observed that the water was boiling up instead of sweeping' through. I was at the reservoir again on Wednesday night, at nine o'clock. I went there because Joseph Whitely told me that the water was within eight feet of the top. When I got there it was within two courses (exclusive of the coping) of the top of the waste-pit. It was about two yards from the top of the embankment by the slope, or about two feet perpendicular. There were many people on the embankment at that time. Mr. John

Roebuck was there, but at that time he said nothing. The first time I stayed a very little, and returned about eleven, when I found that the water was nearly running over. Mr. John Roebuck was there then, and he said, 'You will see such a sight before one, or at the latest two, o'clock as you never saw in your life before.' I understood he referred to the bursting of the reservoir. He said there would not be a mill left in the valley. I remained on the embankment till it burst. The water began to overflow the embankment about half-past eleven. There was nothing done at the waste-pit or other places to prevent the bursting. I was close to the embankment when it burst. It did not burst all at once. There was a hollow in the puddle on the north side. The water commenced to overflow on the north side, into the hollow first, and then over it, when it washed away part of the embankment. There was no water to be seen in the hollow at eleven. The first time I noticed it flow into that hollow would be about twenty minutes past eleven. It lodged there for half an hour, after which it overflowed the outer portion of the embankment. The hollow would be six feet in depth. It was on the outside of that hollow where I noticed the embankment first give way. It began to give way

about the middle of the embankment. The water ran along the top, and the upper surface of the embankment continued to give way. After that the water boiled up about the middle of the outside slope of the embankment, and swept away a great quantity at once. The water washed nearly to the bottom, close, as we imagined, to the puddle-bank. We were then aware of the consequences which would follow, and withdrew from the embankment. The embankment gave way, and Bilberry-Mill was swept down in less than five minutes afterwards. After the outer portion of the embankment was washed away, the puddle-bank was standing, but we had not much time to notice it."

We have preferred giving this full account of the awful event from those in charge, on their oath before the Coroner's jury, as showing their unaccountable indifference, as to the loss of life and property, up to the very hour at which it occurred. There is proof that on the previous Sunday the reservoir was considered in a very dangerous state; that, at six o'clock in the evening of Wednesday the 4th, the danger was so great that Mr. Roebuck ordered Charles Batty to remove his family, and he did remove them. This was at least six hours before the rupture took place. At eleven, Mr. Roebuck said, "You will see such a sight

before one, or at the latest two, o'clock as you never saw in your life before: there will not be a mill left in the valley." But, strange infatuation! although that valley contained mills, houses, and cottages, to the water's edge, and hundreds of human beings, most of them in all the insensibility of their "first sleep" at midnight, not a single messenger is despatched lower than Digley-Mill, only about-one sixth of the distance from the reservoir to Holmfirth. Nay, even those who were nearest the point of anxiety and danger were as narrowly saved as some of those at a distance.

"A few hundred yards down the valley, and on the same side as Bilberry-Mill, stood Digley Upper-Mill, lately occupied by Mr. John Furniss, woollen manufacturer, whose affairs were in the hands of the Leeds Bankruptcy Court. The building was a block of stonework, consisting of a factory, a large house, farm-buildings, and outhouses. The end of the mill was washed away, a quantity of machinery, and a large amount of property, in the shape of pieces, warps, &c., destroyed, and the gable-end of the house, which is comparatively new, and the whole of the farm-buildings, swept away, with horse, cows, goat, poultry, &c. In the house were Mrs. Furniss and her two children; and in bed, in one of the chambers, were two

messengers from the Bankruptcy Court. They were alarmed at the rapid rise of the waters about half-past twelve o'clock, and left the house: one of the messengers, named William Crompton, had barely time to put on his clothes, and get on the rising ground, before the final bursting of the reservoir took place. He had to wade up to the middle in water before he could reach *terra firma*, and gain the mountain-side. Mrs. Furniss says, she saw the bursting of the bank, and she describes it as the rising of an immense sheet of foam, or mist, accompanied by a sound like reverberating thunder. The miller employed at this factory had been confined to bed for seven weeks; and he with his family remained in the house at one end of the mill until the following day, when he was taken away in a cart, he not having sustained any personal injury."

Even at Digley-Mill the escape of the family was very remarkable. The following is the statement of Mr. Henry Beardsall, the son-in-law of Mrs. Hirst, the proprietor of the premises, in conjunction with Mr. Beardsall, inserted in the "Leeds Mercury:"—"Mr. Beardsall had become somewhat alarmed at the rapid rise of the water in the reservoir, and began to fear that the embankment would not be able to resist the immense pressure. He

accordingly determined to make an examination of it the last thing before retiring to rest on Wednesday night; and for this purpose he walked up the valley to the top of the embankment, taking his stand on the side opposite the funnel. The weather had cleared up, and the moon, being at the full, shone bright, so that an inspection could easily be made. As he stood on the top of this embankment, at an elevation of more than sixty feet, he saw the water roll over its topmost height; and while he gazed, the embankment gave way in a mass, and was burst away at a distance of not more than two or three feet from the place where he stood. In this fearful position his thoughts reverted to his family and the family of his mother-in-law, all the members of which he had left only a short time previous in their houses at Digley. It occurred to him that he might outrun the flood; and he started off at full speed down the valley, intending to give the alarm to his family and friends, keeping in his route to the left of the bed of the water-course. On mounting a wall which he had to cross, the torrent of water spread out into the valley, and levelled the wall the moment he placed himself upon it, for the length of fifty feet, the swell of the water extending towards him. Finding himself in this imminent peril, he made for the

high ground, and only reached the hill-side in time to see the mill, houses, and other premises at Digley, carried away by the resistless torrent, and, for aught he knew, the whole of his relatives and domestics with them. This must have been a moment of intense agony, as he thought upon the fate of his family and friends; but, to his amazement and delight, very soon his friends and domestics surrounded him on the hill-side. What a moment of ecstasy and joy must that have been to find himself again in the presence of those who only the instant before, he felt assured, had been swept away with the resistless flood! 'How had they escaped?' was a question which he might well ask, and which was promptly answered. During the absence of Mr. Beardsall, Mr. Edward Barber, a nephew of Mrs. Hirst, who resided at Holme-Banks, about half a mile from Digley, whose family had become alarmed for the safety of their friends, had been sent by his father to get them out of the valley. He arrived during the absence of Mr. Beardsall at the reservoir, and insisted upon every one leaving the houses; and through this most providential interference, the lives of these two families, and also of the families of the cottagers, were saved, with some of the furniture of the lower rooms of the houses. Mr. Barber wished

to remove the books belonging to the establishment ; but Mrs. Hirst, who left the house with great reluctance, refused to tell him where they were, intimating that they were ' safe enough. ' ”

We have thus lingered in the vicinity of the reservoir at that midnight hour, and at the terrible crisis of its disruption, for the purpose of collecting all the evidence we could gather of the occurrences of that fatal moment. All that description and engraving can do, has been done to depict the horrors of the letting loose, almost in an instant, of three hundred thousand tons of water from such an elevation ; but how futile is the attempt to describe or to portray such a catastrophe ! The simple narratives here recorded are, perhaps, more eloquently descriptive of its horrors, than all the art of pen or pencil.

But we must also remember that this flood was no sooner let loose, than it became armed with the most destructive missiles, to assist it in its work of desolation. Uprooted trees, the beams of demolished mills and houses, and, above all, the tremendous steam-boilers,—one of which is said to have weighed fifteen tons,—became the sport of this surging torrent, and, like so many battering-rams, assisted it in its onward work of ruin. We must now endeavour to follow it in its course, and make

a tour of the once-beautiful and romantic, but now desolate, valley of the Holme. In this we are assisted by the following graphic narrative from the "Halifax Guardian" of February 7th.

After describing the destruction of Bilberry and Middle-Digley Mills the writer continues, — "A little below this singular scene of devastation, the valley becomes contracted into a narrow gorge; but, in spite of the natural disadvantages of the situation, the enterprising genius of a British manufacturer had been evinced in the erection of some very extensive premises known as Digley-Mill. On the left of the river some extensive dye-works were erected; and a little lower down, on the same side, a large weaving-shed. Between the two there was a wright's shop, a mistel, barn, cart-shed, &c., and two cottage-houses. On the opposite side of the river stood five cottages and a large wooden mill. The whole of this extensive property, with the exception of the mill-chimney, was swept away. Such a complete and utter wreck we never before witnessed. One can conceive of a single building being gutted; but to be told that only the day previous the property we have briefly described was situated upon either bank of the river, appeared a marvel. Of the cottages scarcely a vestige remains; but imbedded in the river are un-

mistakable tokens of extensive works having recently been planted there. Part of the steam-engine remains ; but the huge boiler was floated down the stream as though it were only the weight of a tin tea-kettle. No pen can describe this terrible wreck of property. Some of the dye-pans remained ; but all the machinery and valuable store of goods were gone,—all swept away. We have heard the loss at this place variously estimated, and should think that £20,000 was under rather than over the mark. During the whole of Thursday, Digley-Mill was visited by thousands of spectators, and certainly such a terrible scene has seldom been witnessed by man. Fortunately Mr. George Hirst and his family were saved, having been made aware of the extreme probability of the reservoir bursting during the night. We had an opportunity of hearing the evidence of two of the tenants occupying the cottages on the right-hand side of the river, and shall give it pretty much in their own words.

“ Peter Webster said, that, having heard that the reservoir was in an unsafe state, he went to look at it about half-past ten o'clock on Wednesday. He saw a large hole which had been washed in the inner embankment, about three yards from the top : the wind was blowing hard at the time ; and, fearing that the embank-

ment would break, he gave a warning to that effect to the inhabitants at Digley-Mill, and owing to his foresight not a single life was lost at this place. From what he saw at the reservoir he could not rest until he had visited it again, and went up accordingly after midnight. While thus proceeding on his journey, he met a man, who in breathless haste exclaimed, 'Peter, it's coming: run back!' Webster immediately returned, and soon after the whole valley was inundated. He describes the rolling of the tumbling waves down the valley as being awfully grand. His house was swept away, but his wife and children escaped with their clothes on their backs, being the only things they saved, excepting half a loaf of bread and an old crust of cheese. They formed a pitiable group when we saw them in the upper room of a small warehouse, built higher up the hill-side on the left hand, and which fortunately escaped the wreck.

"James Armitage, the miller, said, that, having been warned by Webster, he took the precaution to remove his family, but every vestige of his property had been swept away. He said he stood on an elevated position upon some steps, and saw the first approach of the waters. According to his own vivid but homely description, the mill, weaving-shed, dye-house, went 'crash, crash, crash,' and in ten minutes

or less the whole of the extensive premises were gone. He relates a most wonderful escape of a young man, who had been confined to his bed by an attack of rheumatism. Fearing that a flood would come, Armitage, along with three other men, wrapped the sickly man in blankets, and carried him out of the house to a neighbour's house high up the hill-side. They had just got him out of the house when the torrent swept past. One minute later, and the whole five would have perished.

“It is providential that this awful calamity occurred during the night : had it occurred a few hours later, the whole of the hands employed at these works would have been on the premises, and the probable loss of life under such circumstances makes the blood run chill to contemplate. This remark also will apply to the other mills partially or wholly destroyed by the rapid descent of this terrible flood. •

“BANK-END MILL.

“The next scene of destruction down the stream was at Bank-End Mill, occupied by Messrs. Roebuck, and used as a woollen mill. The east end of the mill was forced in, and a great portion of the machinery washed away. To add to the accumulative force of the destructive current, the mill-dam gave way.

Fortunately no loss of life occurred in this locality.

“HOLME-BRIDGE.

“ At this part the valley, which has run from west to east, assumes a north-easterly direction, and is a considerable width; and the water, therefore, was spread over a much greater surface, but left sad evidences of the amazing velocity with which it swept along. Holme church is situated on one side of the valley, the steeple facing up the stream. The churchyard-walls were tumbled down, and nearly all the tombstones overturned, the church-doors were stove in, and such was the force of the water that the whole of the pews on the floor of the church were lifted up bodily. Cushions, prayer-books, &c., were washed away in great numbers, and the interior of the church presents a lamentable aspect. A goat, which was last seen feeding in the graveyard, was found dead in the middle aisle of the church, having been washed there by the flood. The battlements, and one of the arches of the bridge, are washed away, rendering the valley impassable. The gates of the toll-bar house were also lifted from their position, and swept along by the fury of the torrent, but the bar-house escaped. The wreck of property left by the flood when it subsided is immense: mud, broken machinery,

woollen pieces, large beams of machinery, and broken furniture were spread over the fields to a great extent. The houses of the inhabitants bordering upon the stream were inundated, their property either spoiled or destroyed, and such was the quantity of mud and filth which had accumulated in and about their dwellings, that a most awful stench was occasioned, and the next evil to be feared is the outbreak of some dreadful pestilence. The inhabitants appeared to be in a state of bewilderment bordering upon distraction, and tears were in almost every eye.

“ HINCHLIFFE-MILL.

“ We now approach a spot where the most appalling scenes were witnessed, and where the uncontrollable fury of this terrible visitation manifested itself in its most fearful form. Hinchliffe-Mill is occupied by Messrs. Butterworth and Co., and, like the rest of the mills in this locality, is used as a woollen mill. A large dam extends on the easterly side of the mill, and on the other side of the river six cottages were erected, immediately opposite the mill; the rivulet dividing the respective buildings. On the easterly side of these six cottages was a large mistel, and above that another long row of cottages upon the immediate banks of the river. This row of houses is called Water-

street, and it was in this locality where the most terrible loss of life was occasioned. From the information we were able to collect, it appears that a general rumour prevailed that the reservoir (which is about two miles and a half up the valley) was in an unsafe state, but no specific information was conveyed to the unfortunate inhabitants that immediate danger was apprehended. It was like the story in the fable. The cry of 'Wolf! wolf!' had been raised so repeatedly, and no 'wolf' had ever come, that the inhabitants generally laughed at the idea of the reservoir bursting, and retired to rest in fancied safety. Fatal security !

“In order to appreciate the dreadful scene to which we are now about to introduce our readers, it must be borne in mind that the six cottages to which we have alluded as being erected on the bank of the river opposite to that on which stands the mill, faced sideways to the stream, the dam-head being immediately opposite. These cottages were occupied respectively by Eliza Marsden, Joseph Dodd, Jonathan Crossland, John Charlesworth, James Metterick, and Joshua Earnshaw, with their families. In all, forty-four individuals retired to rest in that clump of houses on Wednesday night; and soon after they had gone to sleep—or, at all events, retired to bed—thirty-six of them met

a watery grave. The following is the sad record :—

Eliza and Nancy Marsden, and two sons ; all lost.....	4
Joseph Dodd, wife, and two daughters ; all lost.....	4
Jonathan Crossland, and seven children ; all lost.....	8
John Charlesworth, wife, and eight children ; seven lost	7
James Metterick, wife, and twelve children ; nine lost.....	9
Joshua Earnshaw, son, grandson, and gran- daughter ; all lost	4
	—
	36

“ Thus out of this terrible catalogue, four families have been clean swept away ! The whole of the houses were carried away by the flood ; and when we visited the site upon which they had stood, an old rusty can was the only article we saw. Houses, furniture, beds, bedding, and inmates,—all were swept away. A person who saw the houses go, described the scene thus :—‘ I was looking out of the window, and saw the water coming rolling down the valley. In a minute after I saw the six houses wobble a bit like on the top of the water, and then they all went away.’ With regard to the three first families on the list nothing can be

said, excepting that one or two bodies have been recovered : the rest were carried along by the mighty torrent. Three of Charlesworth's children, by some means, made a miraculous escape. They ran to the door of a neighbour named Ellis, and were fortunately taken in by him just in the nick of time to make their escape out of the top of the house. Other two children of the same family had escaped as far as the top of the fold leading into the turnpike-road, but returned to rescue two hens which they kept, and by so doing were caught and drowned.

“ In the family of the Mettericks two remarkable circumstances occurred. The eldest son, (William,) who does not live there, had been for a warp ; and, the evening being so very wet and stormy, he decided to stay there all night at his father's, rather than encounter the storm in going home to his family. He was drowned. Another son, twenty-four years of age, was washed out of his bedroom, but fortunately got astride a small beam, on which he managed to balance himself, and was carried with tremendous impetuosity down the foaming waves. Fortunately the end of the beam pointed itself in the direction of the dam adjoining Mr. Harpen's mill ; and, borne up by the beam, he swam into this harbour of refuge, and was res-

cued from his Heaven-sent life-boat in a state of extreme exhaustion.

“Immediately in the rear of the site upon which these cottages formerly stood is another row, the lowermost of which is occupied by Robert Ellis. It was to this man’s door that three of Charlesworth’s children ran when the flood first approached. He heard their knock, and immediately opened the door, let them in, and the moment after he had closed the door it was burst open, and the house inundated. Some stockings had been hung up to dry on the bread-creel; and when we saw them on Thursday they were marked with mud half way up the leg, showing the height of the water in the house. Ellis had a most miraculous escape: he ran up-stairs with his children and those of Charlesworth, and fourteen of them made their escape out of the top of the house. The great rise of water in this immediate locality, and sudden destruction of an entire row of houses, probably arose, first, from the narrow confined water-course opposite the houses; and, secondly, from the bursting of the mill-dam immediately in their front. A double force would thus be brought to bear against this pile of buildings. It is seldom that we have read before of such a direful destruction of life and property as this we have just narrated.

“ The next building higher up the stream is a mistel, where a valuable cow was drowned ; and above this building stands another row of cottages, in continuation of Water-street. A great loss of life was occasioned in this row of houses. But several wonderful escapes are narrated. The cottage occupied by Joseph Brook, wife, and child, was perfectly inundated. The wife and child were lost, but Brook was saved. Brook gives a most affecting account of the loss he has sustained, and of his own narrow escape. He says that he and his wife slept in ‘ the house,’ and his little daughter up-stairs. The child awoke about half-past one o’clock, and came down-stairs, exclaiming, ‘ Father ! father ! I am frightened by the wind.’ The father leaped out of bed, hearing a strange unearthly sort of noise. He ran to the window, and the next moment exclaimed, ‘ It’s not the wind, it’s water ; and the water is on the door-stones : run up-stairs.’ He says he did not know but that they were all running up-stairs, but when he got into the chamber he found himself alone. In a moment he heard the water rush through the door of his house, his daughter gave a shriek, he heard a few sighs, and all was still. He then got into the lobby, went to a window, and cried out for assistance. Some men brought a ladder, and he escaped

with no other article of clothing save his shirt. When the water subsided, his wife and daughter were found in the bed, and it appeared as though the poor child had run to her mother for safety.

“The next-door neighbour, George Crossland, had a more marvellous escape. His family escaped, when he was caught by the water down-stairs, which rose to the height of seven feet in a few minutes. Fortunately, the room was still higher, and, as he had learned to swim, he managed to keep his head above water for some time, but soon became thoroughly exhausted, and was nearly suffocated, and swam round the house in the vain hope of catching hold of something. At last he caught hold of a ‘sampler’ hung up in a frame to the wall; and, the nail very fortunately having been hammered into the wall a little faster than usual, he managed to keep afloat until the flood passed away, and thus was rescued.

“In another adjoining house occupied by James Booth, his wife, and a lodger named William Heeley, the whole family were lost.

“In a house in the same street occupied by Jonas Wimpenny, a whole family of eight persons had a most marvellous escape. The oldest son, hearing the rushing of the water, wanted at once to open the door, but, owing to the presence of mind of some member of the family

he was prevented, and the door kept to until the whole family had escaped. The next moment the door was burst open by the flood. In all forty-one persons have met an untimely death at Hinchliffe-Mill.

“HARPEN AND VICTORIA MILLS.

“Progressing lower down the stream, we come to Harpen-Mill, occupied by Messrs. Barber and Co. ; and Victoria-Mill, occupied by Messrs. Harper and Co. At the latter place three dwelling-houses were entirely washed away, but fortunately the inmates escaped. Both mills have suffered great damage.

“SANDFORD-MILL.

“This mill was occupied by Messrs. Sandford and Co.; and on the left-hand side a small mansion had been erected, and was occupied by Jonathan Sandford, jun., Esq.,—his family consisting of two daughters (the one about ten and the other five years of age) and his house-keeper. The house was completely swept away, and nothing left standing except a portion of one of the walls. It is said that Mr. Sandford had been informed the evening before, that a report had spread about the unsafe state of the reservoir, and that it would be hardly safe for him to sleep at home ; and it is rumoured that he did not believe there was

sufficient danger to justify the removal of his family : he therefore retired to rest with them ; but not one now remains to tell the events of that terrible night ! Such a tragic event has created an unusual amount of sympathy in the neighbourhood, which was not a little heightened by the almost frantic offers of reward to any amount, by his distracted father, (who resides in the neighbourhood,) for the recovery of any of the bodies. According to our latest reports only one of the bodies had been recovered ; and, with numberless others, the rest may have been washed out even to the sea, the rivers being so greatly swollen by the late heavy rains. Not a particle of the property has been found, that we are aware of, except a deed of some property belonging to Mr. Sandford, which was found embedded in Mr. Floyd's garden. Two houses in the immediate vicinity of Mr. Sandford's residence were also swept away, but the inmates were saved.

“UPPER AND LOWER MILL.

“The mill called Upper-Mill, occupied by Mr. John Farrar, was washed into, the engine greatly damaged, the whole of the dyehouse nearly swept away, and a great amount of ‘mungo’ or ‘devil's dust’ carried down by the flood. In addition to the injury done to the

machinery, Mr. Farrar has sustained a still more serious loss. On Wednesday he had payments made to him amounting to nearly £700, which he had deposited in his counting-house. The whole of this amount was swept away.

“At Lower-Mill, occupied by Mr. J. H. Farrar, nearly all the windows were broken, the machinery greatly damaged; and, what is remarkable, the boiler was lifted clear off its seat and carried away, rolling on the surface of the water like an immense porpoise. How far down the valley this boiler was carried we have not ascertained; but several boilers have been left high and dry in the fields by the retiring waves. The mill-dam was also burst.

“It appears that some person had run down the valley when the embankment first gave way to give an alarm; for in the neighbourhood of Lower-Mill or Upper-Bridge several young men who were returning from Holmfirth met a young man who was running and crying, ‘Flood! flood!’ but was unable to utter one single syllable more. Mr. Tedbar Earnshaw and Mr. George Littlewood, in company with some others, met this young man at Holmfirth, and by a sort of instinct at once concluded that the reservoir had burst; but the young man who thus brought the alarm sank thoroughly exhausted to the ground. Upon the strength

of the supposition they had come to, they commenced kicking at all the doors, and in less than five minutes the flood was upon them. Earnshaw says that he saw a bed with two little children in it coming out of one of the houses, and roll down the stream: the shrieking children were lost. Mr. Littlewood says that he handed about twenty women and children out of houses, and knocked up several of the inhabitants, who in the utmost consternation and bewilderment beheld their dwellings surrounded by water.

“HOLMFIRTH.

“The first news of the fearful doom which had befallen so many of the inhabitants in the Holme-valley, and of the terrible approach of the flood, reached Holmfirth about half-past one o'clock; and we believe the two parties just alluded to, along with one or two of their companions, were the first to rouse the inhabitants: at all events they acted in a praiseworthy manner in their heroic exertions to save life and property. Among others whom they aroused was Mr. Lomax, surgeon, who upon running to his bedroom-window was horror-struck at seeing the water surging in the road beneath. Looking across the valley, he saw the toll-bar house carried away at one fell swoop. Think-

ing it time to escape, he and his wife and family managed to squeeze themselves through one of the windows on the back part of the house, and ascended one of the neighbouring heights for security.

“ Perhaps the most affecting spectacle which the dawn of the morning revealed in this valley of desolation was the number of dead bodies, and especially of females, which were laid in the mud and upon the banks of the river. They were all carefully removed by the special constables and others engaged for the occasion, and taken to the nearest public-houses.

“ Considerable damage was done at Upper-Bridge, where the valley is very much confined. The door of a dwelling-house occupied by a poor man named Joseph Hellowell was burst open by the destructive current. He was in bed at the time with his wife : his five children were also asleep in bed. Hellowell made his escape by climbing into an upper room, from whence he was taken into another dwelling by the inmates, and saved. His wife and children were all drowned. In the next house two children, named Alfred and Sarah Woodcock, were drawn into the current, and perished. A house adjoining the bridge, occupied by Enon Bailey, was swept away, with his

wife and children. The toll-bar house in Hollow-gate, kept by Samuel Greenwood, was entirely swept away, and the inmates, three in number, drowned. Two houses a little lower down the river, occupied by Mr. Ashall and his family, were completely carried away, not a vestige remaining: the family, five in number, were all lost. In an adjoining house two females named Kaye were drowned.

“Great damage was done to the church, and especially to the Wesleyan chapel. Several graves were burst open in the grave-yard attached to the Wesleyan chapel, and coffins were floated away from what had been considered to be their last resting-place.

“At Cuttle-Bottom, a most miraculous escape is stated to have taken place in a dwelling-house adjoining Mr. Wimpenny’s house, in which a servant of Mr. Floyd’s, solicitor, and a little boy, were sleeping. When the water rushed into the house, the man seized hold of the boy, and made for the staircase; but just as he reached the door, it was closed by the force of the water, and the boy was separated from him. Of course it was expected that the boy was drowned. It turned out, however, that the little fellow, when borne up by the force of the water, had caught hold, as with a death-gripe, of one of the

joists, and held fast for a long hour, until the water subsided, when he made his escape.

“At Bridge-Mill the force of the current washed down the embankment of the dam, doing considerable damage to the mill and machinery. A building at Bridge-Fold, occupied by Mr. Exley and his family, was completely destroyed, and the inmates pulled out of the house before it went to complete ruin. Their escape is miraculous. The harrowing recital of scenes which will never be effaced from the memory of those who witnessed them, might be continued to an indefinite extent, but we are obliged to limit our description.

“Several of the Magistrates had a narrow escape of their lives. The residences of Messrs. Charlesworth and Moorhouse were greatly damaged, the boiling and foaming waters literally surrounding their houses for some time. They were all ultimately rescued.

“At Thongs-Bridge Mill the water entered, and did immense injury to the machinery and the property deposited therein. The scene of devastation in this neighbourhood beggars description. The torrent forced its way through the lower part of the mill of Messrs. Wimpenny and Woodhead, situated on the opposite side of the river, and destroyed the dry-house and other buildings. An affect-

ing incident occurred at this place. The cottage of the engine-man, attached to the premises, was filled with water; and, finding his position to be one of great danger, he rushed to the window, for the purpose of effecting his escape, when it at once flashed across his mind that he had left his child behind. Fortunately, he observed the little fellow floundering about, and, grasping him by the arm, saved his life.

“HUDDERSFIELD.

“Below the immediate neighbourhood of Holmfirth, the whole line of the river is one scene of wreck for many miles: as the course of the river is pursued, scarcely a field, garden, or building on its confines but has suffered more or less. The strong walls on the road-side, and surrounding many of the gentlemen’s houses on the Honley-road, are razed to the ground, and the houses at the lower part filled with mud and sand.

“At Lockwood, the gardens of Mr. Thewlis are again a scene of complete wreck. The force of the waters appears to have cut up everything in the grounds. The loss to this poor man is somewhere between one and two hundred pounds. The most singular circumstance is, that this is the second disaster he has sustained at this garden: on that very day two

years since, his entire grounds were destroyed by a storm of wind and hail ; he was but just recovering his loss, by the aid of a liberal public, when this second calamity has again blighted all his hopes and prospects.

“ At King’s-Mill, such was the force of the torrent, that a new bridge was torn up, which had lately been erected at considerable expense by Mr. James North, for his own convenience, in running, by a tram-road, his grain, &c., from the canal across his field and to the mill, without the slow process of having the whole to cart from the canal-warehouse. This bridge was swept away like match or cork wood, and a large portion of it was found, during the forenoon, down below Mirfield. The stout and strong piers, of solid masonry, supporting the recently-erected bridge leading from the new road and Commercial-street to King’s-Mill, erected, at considerable expense, by the Trustees, were demolished, and the bridge now hangs like a half-broken reed, and is dangerous to pass over. Several other bridges, &c., below, have suffered materially ; and men were engaged nearly the whole day, up to their breasts in water, at various points of the stream, picking out those portions of wreck they could get hold of.

“ At Mirfield, the bank was one hetero-

geneous mass of broken furniture, wearing-apparel, parts of buildings, and every other movable or floating article. At an early part of the day, a very handsome piano-forte was got out, and the next article was a press-bedstead complete. The bodies of two horses were seen to go over the dam-stones near the station; and they were followed by the carcasses of pigs and cows. Early in the morning, the body of a young woman was taken out near to Low-Mills. She was in a state of nudity, was apparently about twenty-two years of age, and had a ring on the marriage-finger. We are informed that somewhere about £20 of property was recovered from the river in the course of the day."

ON the second day after this calamity we visited Holmfirth, to see and sympathise with our afflicted friends; and of course made the Wesleyan chapel-property the object of special inspection. It also afforded one of the best points of observation in the village, from which to look in different directions at the desolation which this awful flood had opened to the gaze of the lovers of the marvellous,—of whom thousands were visiting the place,—and to the sympathies of those whose visits have led to the most beneficent results.

The Wesleyan chapel stands in the midst of what was once a neat and commodious burying-ground, bordering on the brook to the south, and on the road to the north. Within this space, bounded by walls, is contained the chapel, school-room, vestries or class-rooms, and two Ministers' houses. The fence-walls, except on the side of the road, have been principally washed away; the boundary-wall on the brook, though it had withstood the ordinary floods of the Holme-valley, was swept from its foundations; the boundary-line was obliterated; a part of the graveyard was carried into the flood; and the river was flowing where once the dead reposed. Many graves and tombs have been destroyed; and amongst the rest, that of the Rev. Aaron Floyd. Grave-stones, head-stones, and the coverings of many beautiful altar-tombs, have been overturned, and some of them washed into the river. One of these, seven feet in length, nearly four in breadth, and perhaps six inches thick, had been tossed, like as much cork-wood, from the tomb which once it covered. There were the wrecks of the coffins of the dead, with their ends and sides exposed to the gaze of every eye, in some instances as tenantless as if their former occupants had been called to judgment. In some cases the bones had been found, and

laid side by side, to suggest lessons of mortality and humility to man, and to admonish him of the uncertainty of finding a resting-place beneath the sun, even in the grave. In or near this burying-ground was seen the wreck of a cradle, in which unconscious infancy had sweetly reposed; a pillow, from which most probably some one on the fatal night had just awoken to find a watery grave; a mahogany looking-glass, at which some maiden, unconscious of impending danger, might, for the last time before she retired to rest, have admired her charms, and arranged her tresses; the sofa-pillow, on which perhaps many an anxious and aching head in vain had sought repose; the bedstead, on which the weary limbs of the son of toil might have been stretched to renew their strength and elasticity for the labours of a day which he was not to live to see; and the bottle, from which the drunkard might have poured his midnight glass, before he lay down to rise no more. Here, too, lay the conquests of the resistless waters from the vegetable world: a large tree, torn up by the roots, of two feet diameter at the base, had been brought, no one knows whence, and deposited in the back-yard of the Ministers' houses.

The flood had risen twelve or fifteen feet high at the lower end of the chapel; and,

having burst in the lower sash of the windows, had filled the chapel, up to the top panel of the pew-doors, with water, and deposited about a foot deep of offensive mire on the floor. The end of the class-rooms was washed down, and the partitions and floors sent adrift, so as to make the whole very insecure. The school-rooms were in a similar state of disorder, and invaded by dirt and drift. The under-story of the Ministers' houses was filled with water six feet deep; and, if like many of the poor they had slept on the ground-floor, like them they would have been drowned in their beds. The water was about at its height before they were aroused. Mrs. Firth, the wife of the Rev. B. Firth, hearing the roar of the waters, awoke her husband. The people outside were calling to them, and the Rev. T. Garbutt, to jump out of their windows. But it was discovered that the landing to their front-doors was not yet under water, and thus their egress was clear. They and their families escaped in their night-clothes, and sought shelter and security on the side of the hill; and, through the good providence of God, they have not sustained the least injury.

O, what a scene of devastation is the valley! Three bridges, within sight, have had their parapet-walls swept down. One side of a

street is entirely swept away, so that nothing appears less likely than that, on the Wednesday night preceding, inhabited houses had stood there, most of whose tenants were now numbered with the dead. The opposite side of the street also is a mere heap of rubbish, mingled with all kinds of wreck brought down by the flood. Amongst the wreck, are cast metal dye-pans, of several tons' weight each, and two steam-engine boilers, one stopped in its progress by the bridge, and the other grounded in a vacant space, some three miles, it is said, from the place where formerly it was wont to do the work of fifteen horses, in driving the machinery of one of the mills. It is ten tons' weight; and in its rapid course down the valley, it had been an awful instrument of destruction. A poor man, who had lost two of his children, and very narrowly escaped with his wife and four others, on a subsequent visit gave us a fearful account of the destruction occasioned by these ponderous floating bodies striking the buildings, and scattering them in their course in the angry flood. Had this bulky boiler proceeded a little further, (and no reason can be assigned why it did not,) it would probably have destroyed the Wesleyan chapel, or the Ministers' houses, whichever it had struck. The Ministers, their

families, and their friends, looked at its dangerous contiguity to their "holy and beautiful house," with gratitude to God, that it had been arrested in its destructive career. The injury done to the chapel-property is great, and cannot be less than £300. In this is not included the breaking of the tombs. It must be left, we presume, to those whose affection was gratified in their first erection, and whose feelings cannot be described on seeing these monuments of respect to the dead, to a large extent, a heap of ruins, to repair this damage.

But the dead ! O, what a sight is the remains of those who have been recovered from the flood ! At the Crown Hotel we saw six bodies. At the George Inn, we saw eight bodies ; six of them of one family, of the name of Hellowell, of Scarfold, Holmfirth. On one table lay, side by side, five fine and lovely children, each a little taller than the other, as in the order of their birth ; and at their feet lay their mother in tearless insensibility to their fate and her own. The father of this interesting group of children escaped. They slept, it seems, in what in Yorkshire is called "the house ;" that is, the lower story of the building. He had only just time to run up the stairs, and was saved by being dragged through a hole in the floor of the house above. His wife and family were

drowned in their beds. The two other corpses were those of Jonathan Crossland, and Joshua his son. The appearance of the place was desolate in the extreme. The back-walls of some of the houses were washed away, and their interior exposed to view, and the ruins were dangerous to be approached: the lower rooms of those that stood were filled with drift and mud, and the poor people were trying to remove it, and restore them to a habitable state. The town was almost deluged with mud; and men with carts were employed in its removal. Special constables, with cards in their hats, designating their office, and with begging-boxes in their hands, asking alms for what but two days before was a prosperous village, were standing at the corners of the desolated streets. It was a fearful sight. With the exception of hundreds of curious visiters, the living seemed scarcely alive; and, instead of the neatness and activity of business, the shops which were left standing were not only closed, but they exhibited nothing but broken windows, and a mixture of goods, wreck, and mud. Many of the survivors had retired into secret to mourn their losses, and, we may hope, to seek consolation in God.

At this time the bodies were being found; a few in the rooms in which they had been drowned, but a greater number amongst the

mud, and drift, and rubbish. One had been discovered in a hedge, another in a thorn-bush, and a third high up in the forks of a tree.

The following is the account of the

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE FLOOD.

“As was anticipated, the influx of visitors on Sunday was enormous. Although the weather was extremely wet, and the rain descended incessantly, thousands of persons were found visiting the desolate valley during the day. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company alone brought in more than nine thousand passengers. From Bradford the estimated number was four thousand, in addition to many coaches, omnibuses, cabs, horsemen, &c., from that place, as well as from Wakefield, Halifax, Manchester, Sheffield, and other places. The Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Company also contributed very materially to the great influx of people into Holmfirth. In fact, such was the great number of persons in the valley, that there was a complete dearth of provisions, most of the inns being cleared out early in the day.

“INTERMENT OF THE BODIES.

“It was a day of gloom and mourning, from the extraordinary number of funerals which

took place. The urgency for burying the dead had become a pressing necessity, from the rapid decomposition which usually goes forward in cases where death has resulted from drowning. Morning, noon, and evening, hearses, biers, and mourners were seen moving about in all directions. The scene had a more strange effect from the unfavourable circumstances under which the funerals took place. The inclemency of the weather, which had been the first cause of such ruin, misery, and death, now interposed to prevent that decent and decorous attention to external forms in which the bereaved, more especially in rural districts, are anxious to manifest their respect for the memory of the dead. All Saturday night and during the whole of Sunday the rain fell heavily, sometimes in torrents, not only adding discomfort to grief among the mourners, but absolutely again raising the fears of the people almost to terror lest another of the reservoirs should burst and overwhelm the town a second time.

“ Although no service could be performed at Holmfirth church, owing to so large a portion of wreck being deposited therein, the ringers were able to ascend the tower, and ring muffled peals nearly the whole of the day. These mournful peals, added to the fitful gusts of wind, and the darkened atmosphere, gave a

melancholy interest to the funeral ceremonies which were performed.

“ There was, perhaps, only one thing the rain could not damp and restrain, and that was the excited curiosity of the immense crowds of people. The streets and roads were crowded like a fair. The turnpike-roads were also filled with a constant stream of vehicles, full of people. It was extraordinary to see the strangers, despite the falling torrents, wending their way up the valley, after inspecting the scene of devastation at Holmfirth, to the ruins of the reservoir. Well-dressed people, as well as operatives, men, women, and children of all ages, were amongst them, wet to the skin, shivering with cold, yet unable to find room in the few public-houses to shelter or warm themselves. The wind blew in sharp and fitful gusts, and now and then, as the crowds moved along the hill-sides, one of these gusts would catch up an umbrella like a kite, and hurl it down again deep into the valley or into the river.”

THE events of each day were sufficient, would our space permit, to supply matter for interesting narration, but a bare reference must suffice. On an application made to the Home Office, Captain Moody, R.E., was sent down to examine the reservoir, and to watch the

proceedings of the Coroner's inquest. A party of Sappers and Miners, under the command of Lieut. St. John, was also sent, to make a careful survey of the whole valley, and of the damage sustained; a local Committee composed of the magistrates, clergy, and gentry, sat daily to assist, by their authority and advice, in making inquiry or giving directions; public meetings were held in the large towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire especially; clothing was sent in large quantities from all parts, to be given to those who needed it; and the suddenness of the disaster and the inclemency of the weather made this very needful. A Ladies' Committee sat daily to inquire into the cases; and, as if to show the mutability and uncertainty of earthly things, it is stated that application was made to this Committee for clothing for a family which, the night before the catastrophe, were worth £10,000.

The Coroner's jury concluded their sittings on Friday, the 27th of February. The particular case selected for them to find their verdict upon, was that of Eliza Marsden; and the following is a report of their verdict, which the Coroner read to a crowded court, who listened to it with breathless silence:—"We find that Eliza Marsden came to her death by drowning, caused by the bursting of the

Bilberry reservoir. We also find that the Bilberry reservoir was defective in its original construction, and that the Commissioners, engineers, and overlookers were greatly culpable in not seeing to the proper regulation of the works. And we also find that the Commissioners, in permitting the Bilberry reservoir to remain for several years in a dangerous state, with a full knowledge thereof, and not lowering the waste-pit, have been guilty of gross and culpable negligence. And we regret that, the reservoir being under the management of a Corporation prevents us bringing in a verdict of manslaughter, as we are convinced that the gross and culpable negligence of the Commissioners would have subjected them to such a verdict had they been in the position of a private individual or a firm. We also hope that the Legislature will take into its most serious consideration the propriety of making provision for the lives and properties of Her Majesty's subjects exposed to danger from reservoirs placed by Corporations in situations similar to those under the charge of the Holme Reservoir Commissioners."

During the inquest, the bodies of the sufferers had been found as far as this ever will be the case, we presume; and an estimate of the amount of property destroyed had

been returned. The loss of property is estimated at A QUARTER OF A MILLION STERLING; and the following is a report of the losses :—

BUILDINGS DESTROYED.		BUILDINGS INJURED.	
Mills	4	Dyehouses and stock	5
Dyehouses	10	Mills partially de-	
Stoves	9	stroyed	17
Cottages	27	Stoves	3
Tradesmen's houses .	7	Cottages	129
Shops	7	Tradesmen's houses .	7
Bridges	6	Shops: large, 23;	
County-bridge	1	small, 21	44
Warehouses	10	Public-houses	11
Barns and stables . .	8	Bridges	5
		County-bridge	1
		Land acres	200
		Warehouses	4
		Barns, &c	14
		Places of worship . .	3
	89	Iron foundries	2

RETURN OF THE NUMBER OF LIVES LOST,
AS AT PRESENT ASCERTAINED.

Adults	38
Children	39
	—
Total	77
Of these there are	
Married—12 fathers and 14 mothers	26
Unmarried	12
Children	39
	—
Total	77

Note. Inasmuch as bodies have been found which cannot be identified, it is believed that more lives have been lost.

Rewards are still being offered (March 23d) for some of the missing bodies; but we fear it will be in vain. They are probably either imbedded in the mud, or carried into the sea. From the first, Mr. Sandford, sen., had anxiously offered rewards for the recovery of the bodies of his son and his grandchildren. Emily, a child of three and a half years old, was found on the Saturday after the flood, by the parties engaged in clearing away the wreck near the brook, at the dam-head, Holmfirth. Mr. Sandford's body, however, was not found until the 20th, fifteen days after it was lost. In the meantime, its recovery had become a subject of exciting pecuniary interest. It was found that, not long before his death, Mr. Sandford had insured his life for £1,000, which could not be recovered unless his remains were found; and it was also believed that his property would be thrown into Chancery. In the interval, therefore, which elapsed, the original reward of £5 was raised to £10, and then to £100. On the 20th it was discovered, quite accidentally, by a boy who went to fetch water, and who, by an arbitration to which the case has been submitted, receives £50 of this amount, the other £50 being divided between those who assisted him in recovering the body. It was too fast embedded in the mud of the tail-goit

of the mill to be easily recovered ; and, as the evidence on the inquest may show the manner in which the flood had deposited the bodies in its course, we give the testimony of this boy on the inquest :—

“ William Broadhead, of Thong’s-Bridge, the lad who discovered the body, said: ‘ On Friday, the 20th of February, I went to the river Holme for some water. I put my pail down, and then went on the bridge. I saw part of a body laid in the water. His feet would reach into the tail-goit of Mr. Robinson’s mill. I went home and fetched a muck-drag. There had been no one near the body whilst I was away. On returning, I went down Mr. Robinson’s yard, and called Hiram Earnshaw’s sons. They followed me to the place. I went into the water so as to put the drag over the body. I could not pull him out. Hiram Earnshaw’s son was coming, and I sent for John Crosland, the constable. I remained with the body till he came. It was not removed. Crosland, Hiram Earnshaw, Jonathan Brooke, and two other masons removed the body into Hiram Earnshaw’s house ; and it was afterwards removed to the *Royal Oak*, and afterwards to the *Crown*. When it was found, some men said it was Jonathan Sandford.’

“ A verdict similar to those in the other cases was then returned.”

The jury was the same which had been engaged in the official investigation of the state of the reservoir, and which concluded its various and protracted sittings on Friday, the 27th of February.

Except in the cases of the children, the appearances were not the ordinary appearances of natural death. The children seemed to have suffered little, and to have made but little resistance to the overpowering flood. But the adults appeared to have struggled and suffered much. The faces were flushed ; they exhibited bruises on various parts ; and in some cases the expression seemed to be that of surprise and consternation. This was remarked to be the case especially with Mr. Sandford. Though living actually under the mill-dam, and in the very course of the current, and warned of the danger impending over him and his family, he had retired to rest in his usual security, and the next time he was seen, it was above a fortnight after the catastrophe by which he had been surprised and destroyed. Well might his very remains exhibit the surprise of the moment in which he was awoke to a sense of his danger and called to meet death in such an awful form. Though by insuring his life he had provided for a common event, he had hoped to live for years in the enjoyment of domestic bliss ; and it

is remarked that he had just expended £200 in additional household furniture.

He and his family attended the Wesleyan chapel in Holmfirth, and there his two wives had been interred. His family-tomb, being somewhat further from the brook, and protected by the chapel, had escaped the violence of the flood by which so many others were destroyed ; and it was ready to receive his two lovely children and himself, as successively they were rescued from the retiring flood. The following account of his funeral is from the "Halifax Guardian" of March 6th : the service was conducted by the Rev. B. Firth :—

"The funeral of Mr. Jonathan Sandford (for the recovery of whose body, it will be remembered, the reward of £100 was given) took place last Saturday, in the Wesleyan burial-ground, at Holmfirth. This unfortunate victim to the 'raging waters' was followed to the grave by a large retinue of sorrowing relatives and friends ; and after the solemn ceremony of interment, the officiating Minister took occasion to address those present, in a very affectionate manner, touching upon the awful catastrophe by which so many homes had been made desolate, and endeavouring to impress the subject practically upon the hearts of his hearers."

PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPES.

IN the preceding narratives some cases have been given which come under this designation ; but to have separated them from their connection would have broken the course of the narrative. Those here brought forward are such as it had been reserved for the calmer moments of intercourse and reflection to bring to light, and for the recital of those who owe their existence to the gracious interposition of that God who, though he employs a friend, or a beam, or any other agent or instrument, to accomplish His purpose of mercy, is not, therefore, to be ungratefully forgotten. This is, perhaps, most likely to be the case, when, in the midst of imminent peril, self-possession is maintained, and the means which lead to security are used at the apparent promptings of a prudent ingenuity. Of this kind of ingenuity some cases are related which ought to lead all, and especially the persons themselves, to adore that God whose " Spirit alone giveth us understanding."

The instances which we intend here to detail will, by individualising the sufferers, throw us more into their society in the trying hour. We shall commence at Hinchliffe-Mill, where the flood first became fatal, and where those who escaped, in some cases, had not only to flee from death by the flood, but to abandon

to its merciless violence their sinking, dying friends. One of those who escaped as by miracle was James Metterick, a young man of twenty-four years of age. His statement is as follows :—

“There were ten of us in the house,—my father, step-mother, and eight children. Somebody came and roused us just at one o’clock. I put on my trousers; my step-mother and I stood on the stairs. We looked out of the windows, and saw a large quantity of water and sticks coming down. From their appearance we knew the reservoir had burst. I and my step-mother came down-stairs, and my father handed us the children, who were asleep in the house-part,” (the lower room,) “for us to lift into the chamber. The water burst in at the window and through the door, filled the lower room, and half filled the chamber. I ran with the rest into the garret, except my father and one child, who we expected were drowned in the house. About half a minute after we had got into the garret, the whole house gave way, and we were all swept down the stream, and I saw no more of any of them. No part of the house touched me that I know of. When I got into Harpin’s” (Bottom’s) “dam, I caught hold of a piece of wood, and sprang up. I got a good sob of breath, and then went under water and lost my

hold of the plank : on coming up again, I got hold of another, and again rolled over : at last I got hold of a large piece of timber, and kept my hold. I got hold of a small piece of wood, and paddled it towards the side. A gust of wind then came, and blew me towards the land on the Anstonley side. I leaped off the timber, and fell up to my neck in water ; but I managed to scramble out of the water, and after falling several times, I got to a house, and stripped off my trousers and shirt, (all I had on,) and went to bed. I was nearly exhausted."

At Victoria-Mill twenty persons were very narrowly saved from three houses, which were washed down just as the fleeing families had escaped to the one which was on the ground nearest the road. The names of the heads of these families were John Howard, Eli Sanderson, and John Pogson. A young man named Haywood speaks as follows :—

"I lived with my grandfather, John Howard, in the house nearest the river. The next was occupied by Eli Sanderson and family ; and the house furthest from us by Joseph Pogson. Over our house was a warehouse, which was partitioned off from Pogson's by a thin wall. We heard no alarm, and found the water about us. Pogson, I believe, got his family up into the garret by a ladder, after which he pulled

the ladder up after him, and broke into the warehouse through a door which had been closed up. He then broke a hole through the floor, and putting the ladder down, enabled Sanderson to get into the warehouse also. Both the families were then over our heads, but we could not get to them. When the water had subsided, I got a lad on my back, and tried to escape to the road, but I could not, and I turned back, and put the lad on the mill-step; after which nine of us who were in the house escaped, when we placed a ladder against the end of the wall, and enabled the other families to escape. Immediately after, the roof fell in. The greater part of the building came down."

Mr. Richard Woodcock's account is this:—
"When I was aroused by the cry of those who gave the alarm, there were nine of us in the house,—myself, my wife, and seven children. On hearing the alarm, I ran up a few steps leading to the road, to see what was the matter; but, on hearing the roar of the water, I ran back again to see for my family. I met my wife at the door, with two of the children: I took one under each arm, and carried them up into the road, and told my wife to follow me. When I took these children, I was up to my knees in water. My wife, instead of following me, ran up-stairs to see after the children.

These were five in number, and they all slept in the garret; three in one bed, two in another. The bed containing the three was washed away, the other stood. Two out of the three sleeping in the bed washed away, or that fell with the part of the floor into the flood, awoke and got up,—a girl five years old, and a boy of seventeen. This boy went down-stairs, but returned to put on his trousers. The girl was coming down the ladder by which they went from the chamber into the garret, to her mother, who by this time was standing in the chamber, up to the neck in water. The ladder, with the child upon it, was washed away; but the mother caught her as she fell, and held her up above the flood. In the garret was one child still asleep, the boy who had returned to dress, and two other children. While the boy was putting on his trousers, by the side of the bed, that part of the floor gave way, and the bed with his sister dropped into the flood, carrying him along with it. The other part of the floor stood, and the children were safe. My wife had got into a corner of the chamber, where she was sheltered from the sweep of the flood by the chimney; and here she stood holding up the child until the water subsided. The two children (one fifteen and the other eight years of age) clung together in the corner of the room

that stood, and with the mother, and child she held above the flood, were rescued in the following way. A person broke a passage through the gable-end of the house next the road, which was twenty feet above the basement-story of the house, into the garret, and the two children who clung together were taken out of the opening made in the wall. One of the children said, 'My mother is below in the chamber.' I got through this hole, and saw my wife with the child in the chamber. A person near handed me a short ladder, and I put it down to my wife; but it would not reach the part of the floor where she stood. I held it as firmly as I could. The child first attempted to climb up this swinging ladder, but in climbing fell. Her mother again caught her, and the next time she got safe up: then the mother followed, and both were safe, and were taken through the hole like the others." This poor man is a Wesleyan, and the only member of the Wesleyan church whose house was that night entered by death.

"Another house, occupied by Mr. Enor Bailey, his wife, and two children, projected towards the stream, and was carried away by the flood. His wife and children were all drowned; but he laid hold of a beam which was being carried down the stream, and which,

by a sudden sweep, brought him again to the left bank of the river, and he was able to scramble out and escape into the turnpike-road.

“ Another cottage was occupied by a labouring man, named John Kaye, with whom lived his son-in-law and daughter, with their child. The three latter were drowned, while a remarkable deliverance awaited the old man. He was driven by the force of the current into Victoria-square, on the opposite side, and a little lower down the street. He was espied floating on the water by the landlord of the Rose and Crown Inn, who at once stretched out a pole to the drowning man, and rescued him from almost certain death.

“ The premises occupied by Mr. T. Ellis, plumber and glazier, are elevated from the road, and ascended by a flight of steps. Nevertheless such was the sudden and great rise of the flood that the inmates who were sleeping in the upper story were placed in great jeopardy. Mr. Ellis made his escape by forcing open a small portion of the ceiling of the workshop with a crow-bar, and by this means got into one of the houses on the hill-side. Richard Tolson, (a workman with Ellis, and who lived upon the premises,) his wife, four children, and James Roberts, a lodger, seeing the water

already up to the lower ledge of their bedroom, and having witnessed the destruction of the three houses opposite, went up the narrow and contracted bedroom-chimney, and providentially got into another house higher up the hill-side. The inmates of the adjoining house, occupied by Mr. R. Parsons, escaped out of the back-door : the house was gutted.

“ Mr. James Lee, tailor, perished. Lee and his grandson Job were down-stairs at the time, making some clothes for a funeral. The flood burst open the door ; and the old man, unable to help himself, was drowned. Job managed to swim about the house ; and fortunately his cries were heard by a man named Benjamin Brearley, and his wife, who lodged in the house, and were asleep up-stairs : they immediately ran to his assistance, but found themselves unable to open the chamber-door : with their feet, however, they managed to force one of the panels, and through a small aperture, of a few inches square, pulled Job by the head and shoulders.”

One of the most affecting instances is that of Mr. Sidney Hartley, whether we refer to those who were lost, or to those who were saved. The family consisted of Mr. Hartley, his wife, eight children, and an apprentice. Mrs. Hartley had heard the report of the insecurity of the reservoir, and she sat up until ten o'clock.

“Then, however, she went to bed. The alarm reached the family almost immediately, and the daughter (one of the three children saved) states, that the water burst upon them before they could get out of the chamber; and when the mother found that they could not escape, she held up her infant child (a boy three months old) above the water outside the window, hoping to save it, but, finding the front of the house giving way, she turned and bade her family farewell, and was swept away with the babe in the foaming torrent. So also perished the father and four other children. But the little creature who gives this narrative, with two brothers, and an apprentice-boy, being suddenly floated up to a part of the roof which yet remained, caught hold of one of the rafters, and clung to it. The apprentice, John Dearnley, got out upon the roof, and assisted the three children to do the same. Here they remained at least twenty minutes. He afterwards carried them one by one into a portion of the Holmfirth-Mills which had escaped destruction; where, in their night-clothes, they stood up to their knees in mud, exposed to the inclemency of the weather. Ultimately, however, they discovered a way into a room nearly full of wool; and burying themselves amongst it obtained the warmth they so much needed, and

remained there till morning. The three orphans are now residing with their relatives."

Mr. Joseph Barrowclough makes the following statement:—

"My residence is at the bottom of South-lane, Holmfirth, and my threshold about sixteen feet above the bed of the river. At a quarter before one I was awoke by my wife: she asked what that rush was. I said it was the wind; but I was not quite awake. I put my clothes on, and gave the alarm that the water was up to my door-stone: that was at one o'clock. I then went out, turned my attention to the churchyard, and saw a man just drowning: the water was about four feet deep: Matthew Fearn was his name. I dragged him out, and took him to my house, and left him there, and then went to see after my daughter living at Nathan Littlewood's, Ribbledon-road; and on my way back, I tumbled over the body of the wife of the above Matthew Fearn, dead on the road. The thought struck me, 'I must not stay with the dead, but try to save the living:' so I left her just where she was. My attention was next attracted by six persons on the top of a house-ridge, one side of which stands in the river. I got upon a wall, and shouted to them, 'Stay where you are; for the water, I believe, is about

to lower.' I then attempted to make my way to them, but saw that I could not with safety. I waited five minutes, and I believe the water lowered four or five feet. I then got on a piece of timber; and from one piece of timber to another, I got to George Haigh's shop, close to James Whiteley's house. I lost my footing, and fell up to my neck in water. I got out; and William Martin then shouted out of his chamber-window, 'Come and save us!' and I said, 'I will shortly.' He said, 'You can now, if you will.' He first flung out a mattress out of the bed, and then flung five children, and I caught them and handed them to his brother, who had then come to my assistance; and he took them to my house, where they were put to bed. Martin and his wife came down by a ladder, which was handed over to me. Another long ladder was brought, and was put up to James Whiteley's window. I then went up the ladder, through the window into the back-room next the river; and while I was there one part of the house-side fell into the river. I then went up one flight of stairs on the back-side, next the river, into the attic, and then up through the roof, and shouted, 'Where are you?' They said, 'We are all here.' 'Come then,' I said: 'I'll try to save you.' I then brought them down, put them ~~all~~ out of the

chamber-window,—James Whiteley, his wife, two sons, and two daughters: parties took them away to my house and the neighbours', and they were put to bed. I then came down myself into the street, which was still swimming with water; and, turning my head up to the place from which I had fetched Whiteley's family, I saw four more persons. I went up the ladder again in the same way; and brought down Charles Marples, his wife and servant, and a little girl, who had made their escape through the ceiling and slates to the roof of a house near to Victoria-Bridge."

The only case of resuscitation, of which we have heard in the narratives of this catastrophe, was that of a little girl, who was found in or near the grave-yard of the Wesleyan chapel. The principal agent in this case was C. T. Floyd, Esq., solicitor. When this child was found, he thought he discovered signs of life, and called the attention of Mr. Beeley, the surgeon, to the circumstance; who, however, was of a contrary opinion. Mr. Floyd felt with his hand whether the heart had ceased to beat: he found it just fluttered; and called the attention of Mr. B. to the circumstance, who was now convinced. They administered brandy, and used friction, and soon the little creature began to vomit. In the afternoon she was

even playing in the street, with all the cheerfulness of childhood.

In seasons of surprise and danger, persons are divested of all disguise, and, in some cases, of what may appear to be a regard to the ordinary dictates of prudence. In other cases, the ruling passions and affections prompt to the use of such means as the most deliberate judgment approves, and as the warmest affection applauds. Cases which come under these descriptions occurred in this catastrophe.

THE WIDOW.

THE ruling passion in the solitary state of widowhood is often that of lingering attachment to the home of wedded joys, and to everything associated with blighted bliss. This was remarkably exhibited in the conduct of Mrs. Hirst, of Digley-Mill. The following is her own account of her conduct under apprehension of the flood :—

“I went into the house and opened my Bible, and thought I would read a little about the troubles of Job. After this I went to bed. By and by I was again alarmed by my neighbours, who urged me to fly for my life. The members of my family said they would go in

different directions to my relations and friends, and they did so. I put, as I thought, many things out of harm's way, by taking them from the lower rooms into the chambers. The heavy pieces of furniture, such as the pianos, tables, and chairs, were left below. I got into the cellar, and there I thought of staying for safety. By and by, two of my neighbours came and urged me to run, but I refused, and clung to the cellar-stone; but they forced me away. I then seized my youngest child, who was in bed, wrapped it in a table-cloth, and we fled for our lives, the men carrying us along; and as soon as I got over the wooden bridge, I looked and saw the water coming in great force, mountains high, and dashing in the windows of the house. I just saw the white window-blinds floating on the water, and then remembered no more. Another minute and I had been lost. The reservoir burst before I left the house. All I had was swept away."

The following is but too true:—

"Mrs. Hirst, a widow, the mother of a large family,—who but an hour before was possessed of a respectable home, an excellent furnished house, a well-stocked farm, a large and most valuable mill, with well-appointed machinery,—was suddenly bereft of *all*. Not a vestige of property, estimated at from £10,000 to

£15,000, now remains; and even the very clothes her family now wear they have had to sue for and obtain from private benevolence.”

THE WIFE AND THE MOTHER.

AT Holmfirth there was a row of very neat houses and shops, recently built. They stood at right angles with the course of the stream, and with their fronts facing up the valley so as to breast the boiling flood. The lowest of these shops, and the one nearest the brook, was occupied by a Mr. Joshua Woodcock, a tailor and draper, whose shop was filled with water, and whose loss will probably amount to nearly £500. “He and his wife and family (two children, three young men, and a servant-maid,) were awoke by the roaring of the waters, and, seeing the flood rush past with such impetuosity, were very naturally alarmed for their safety. Mrs. Woodcock at last exclaimed, ‘I know a way of escape: follow me.’ She immediately threw open the window of the room above the shop-windows, and, nothing daunted, stepped upon the narrow wooden cornice of the shop-fronts, which is only some fourteen or sixteen inches in width. Upon this narrow ledge she ran in her night-dress to the top of the row, which consists of eight shops. Her family had

not heard or understood her, and of course did not know where she had gone, and did not follow her. Finding no one followed, she returned, exclaiming, 'If I am to perish, I will perish with my children, and we will all go together.' As she was thus returning, she fell through one of the windows of an adjoining house, and, we believe, fainted. The water did not reach the story above the shops, and her husband and children were safe; but Mr. Woodcock had an idea that his wife was lost, and in an agony he felt as if he could not survive the loss of his devoted wife. It was, however, soon made known to him that she was safe in a neighbour's house; and when this was announced, he exclaimed, 'Then, if she is safe, I have lost nothing!' Mr. Woodcock is an excellent Local Preacher; and he says that when, surrounded by his family, he presented their morning sacrifice of praise, he was strongly reminded of Mr. S. Wesley's feelings after the fire at Epworth rectory."

On the opposite side of the brook, at the same time, all the feelings of the mother were excited to the uttermost in the case of the wife of Mr. Sidney Hartley, until they were quenched by sudden death. Her husband and four of their children were gone. Three of them, as by miracle, had been placed on the roof of an

adjoining house. The water had risen in the room so that she was all but overwhelmed: the youngest, an infant of three months old, she held in her hand out at the window, with but little hope of its being seized or saved. As long as she could, however, she held its little head above water, and only when the side of the house fell into the flood did she yield to the stern necessity of resigning it to the torrent; and then, with a mother's heart and eye, she cast a last look on the three children on the roof, and bade them an affectionate and last farewell:

“And when she sinks beneath the billows wild,
Still, still she stretches out towards heaven—her
child!”

But perhaps the following case is still more affecting:—

“Mr. Dyson, with a family of several children, was awoke by the water coming into the house, and he succeeded in saving the whole of them: he afterwards ran across the street, and saved another family by carrying the females and children on his back; and then he found a woman standing on a portion of her house, who refused to leave the spot, because her child had just before been swept away before her eyes: he, however, compelled her, and saved her.”

At Thong's-Bridge, a mile below Holmfirth,

a mother held up her child while she herself was standing almost up to the neck in water, and by this saved it from the jaws of death.

At Mytholm-Bridge, an instance of rare heroism occurred in the case of Mrs. Shaw, the sister of the Rev. James England, a Wesleyan Missionary in Newfoundland. The only means of escaping destruction was to ascend the chimney, take off a part of the roof, and thus make an opening for the deliverance of the family. Her husband was too stout to go up the chimney; but, prompted by the feelings of the wife and the mother, she effected the difficult task, and when she had ascended the chimney, she took off a part of the roof, and through this opening took the children from her husband, and thus they all escaped.

CHILDREN.

WE have given an account of two children of the name of Charlesworth, who with another of the same family "had escaped as far as the top of the fold, but, returning to rescue two hens which they kept, were caught and drowned."

At Holmfirth a lovely girl was supposed to be lost, the house in which her parents lived having been partially destroyed. She was the child of an architect, whose name we have not

heard. In the search that ensued, she was found under a board-partition, which had thrown her down, and fallen upon her. Her remark was to the following effect :—“ When I heard the flood, and the house shook, I could not kneel down to pray, but I said my prayers in bed.” The family has removed; but we are sorry to hear that this lovely child is so ill that her recovery is scarcely expected. The contrast here is striking.

THE HOARD OF MONEY.

AN eccentric individual, a bachelor, who was employed as a fireman at one of the mills about a mile below Holmfirth, for the last two or three years, from mere penuriousness, had been sleeping on a sheet of wool, and had long been hoarding from his scanty income whatever he could spare. These savings amounted to upwards of £11. On the morning of the flood, he says, “ I was awake from my bed by a noise resembling distant thunder, and almost immediately, as if by magic, I found myself floating about the room. As soon as I could collect myself, I thought of my little stock of money, which I had folded up in a pocket-handkerchief, and deposited safely in a wall in an adjoining stable, opposite the mill. It was mostly in

half-crown pieces. Money! money! being the topmost thought, I instantly scrambled to the window, and from the light of the moon, which shone brightly through the window, I perceived that the building was entirely swept away. I exclaimed, 'I am ruined! I am ruined!' and hastened out of the room." In concluding his narrative he adds, "I dreamt the night previous that I was surrounded by water, and, observing a large number of half-crowns floating down the stream, I at once thought I would seize them; and in my attempt to secure them I awoke, and found to my astonishment it was but a dream."

PUBLIC SYMPATHY.

WE greatly deplore what we fear is one of the feelings of the age,—to set class against class; as if by nature or interest, or both, they were prompted to mutual repulsion. The rich are represented as being the enemies of the poor; the different interests of the nation as being the rivals of each other; and even Ministers and their flocks as having not only distinct but opposite interests and feelings,—the one class proud and selfish, the other oppressed, and suffering from priestly tyranny. We sincerely hope that one effect of this catastrophe, in a

district which probably is not innocent in these respects, will be, to counteract these alienating influences, and to convince those who may have felt and diffused them, that to a very large extent they were unfounded. The parties and classes who were thus isolated, envied, and maligned, were the first to feel and act in the terrible emergency which this inundation created, and they have set a noble example, and excited an emulation in the heart and conduct of others, which it is hoped will mitigate the severity of the stroke. From the Queen to the Sunday-scholar, the nation has been roused, and more especially in the vicinity of the loss. Her Majesty sent a donation of £100, and Prince Albert and the Duchess of Kent, £50 each. In Huddersfield and the vicinity, the donations have been princely. Messrs. John Brooke and Sons have given £500; four other firms £200 each; and about twenty others, sums varying from this amount to £100. Mr. Brooke's workmen subscribed upwards of £100. In Halifax, Bradford, and Leeds, noble sums have been given. At the Leeds' meeting, thirteen gentlemen came forward with £100 each. In Halifax a canvass was made from house to house; and after the gentlemen had thus made their application, a few excellent ladies carried boxes to the kitchen-doors of

every house, to receive the contributions of the servants. The following is a statement published in the "Huddersfield Chronicle:" perhaps the most creditable amount of all is that from Holmfirth:—

"THE HOLMFIRTH RELIEF-FUND.—Though not in a position to announce officially the amount of subscriptions received in aid of the above fund, we believe, from returns before us, that we may safely estimate it in round numbers at £50,000. So noble a response to the appeal made to public charity, forms a gratifying feature in connection with this melancholy event. The subscriptions received include the following sums:—

	£.		£.
Holmfirth	4,300	Ashton	350
Huddersfield....	14,000	Wakefield.....	350
London.....	6,800	Preston.....	300
Leeds.....	6,700	Stockport.....	300
Halifax	4,500	Oldham.....	300
Bradford	3,440	Rochdale.....	300
Manchester	2,500	Skipton.....	140
York	2,100	Exeter	126
Sheffield	600	Devonport.....	121
Birmingham ...	500	Bristol	18
Barnsley	500		
Hull	450	Total.....	£49,095
Liverpool.....	400		

The following painful intelligence from a local newspaper shows that the fears excited

for the subsequent health of the district have been painfully realised :—

“Typhus now reigns paramount here : not only in the central part of the town, but in the various adjacent hamlets ; the filthy locality of Burn-Lee being especially under its influence. In this place, during the last week, death revelled triumphantly amongst its victims ; and at the present moment (March 26th) the number of cases, in some houses, is two, three, four, and even five. The fearful result of the flood is indeed beginning to manifest itself in all its coming terror. Considering the baneful effects of inhabiting inundated, and therefore inevitably-damp, houses alone, considerable disease must prevail. But when to this is added the death-dealing effluvium which under the sun’s rays, rises, almost palpably, from the conglomeration of decomposed animal matter, and other various feculent abominations at present composing the contents of the river’s-bed, who shall wonder if, ere Midsummer-day, the neighbourhood be decimated by pestilence ?”

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

THE catastrophe narrated in the preceding pages is one which must excite reflection in every reader, and especially in every beholder. But men will come to very different conclusions, as their habits of thought, their secular interests, their creeds, or their principles, sway their judgment and their hearts. The infidel worshipper of human agencies and second causes will see but little in it except the carelessness and selfishness of contractors and Commissioners, and on these he will principally expend his reflections and his wrath. A few common-place expressions of sympathy with the sufferers will perhaps escape his lips ; but he will profess too much reverence for a merciful God to associate His providence in any way with the event. Thousands of such persons we fear have visited the valley since the fatal event occurred, especially on the Lord's days. " It has been computed that on Sunday, the 14th of February, the second Sunday after the flood, nearly 50,000 persons visited Holmfirth." But little moral benefit is to be expected from such heedless

desecration of the Lord's day. One of the most solemn and instructive scenes of admonition concerning the frailty of man, and the uncertainty of human happiness and earthly wealth and prosperity, was thus turned into a theatre for the gratification of a morbid curiosity. We would not pronounce all to be infidels who thus desecrated the Sabbath-day; but we fear the heedless thousands who still continue thus to turn this affecting and admonitory event into an occasion of adding sin to sin, include a large infusion of the infidels of the vicinity.

Selfishness, in its grossest form, has also prowled over this devoted valley with a vulture's eye and appetite; and excursion-trains on Sundays, "not to start during service-time," have been put on the different lines, to convey their frivolous thousands to this "valley of the shadow of death." This has been continued. A railway-bill announced the "commencement of the cheap-trip season;" and informed the public that, "all these excursions would be conducted on the same liberal principles which characterized them last year." The first trips of the season were to take place on Good-Friday, April 9th, and on Easter-Monday, April 12th, to Holmfirth; and "in order to prevent disappointment at Holmfirth, the contractors had made ample arrangements to supply refresh-

ments on both days in a covered tent, at very moderate terms," of which a list of prices was to be printed. These arrangements extended from Leeds to Liverpool, and included the smallest intermediate stations; and thus, at railway-speed and at the lowest fares, were the frivolous idlers of these localities to be conveyed, with holiday hilarity, to tread and perhaps to dance in the very footprints of death, while the ravages of the flood, in its most hideous forms, were still staring survivors in the face.

The following is from the local press of the district, of March 27th:—

“THE HOLMFIRTH FLOOD.—Two only of the eighty-two victims to the deluge of the 5th ultimo now remain to be discovered. For the recovery of one of these (James Metterick, of Hinchliffe-Mill) a reward is still pending. As yet, however, the body has not turned up. Skulls and other portions of deceased individuals continue to be found in the watercourse; but these are, doubtless, parts of what were washed out of the grave-yards of Holmbridge church and the Holmfirth Wesleyan chapel.”

It is lamentable, that all the moral purposes for which such a catastrophe may be supposed to be permitted by the wise providence of God are so likely to be defeated. What have such parties to expect, but that, “because they

regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them, and not build them up?" (Psalm xxviii. 5.) The practical sympathy of this class of visiters with the suffering and bereaved has been but little. By this time they have amounted to hundreds of thousands; but though £60,000 has been contributed, the only amount we have seen reported from them is £300! The liberality from other quarters, however, has been almost unprecedented; and the following advertisement from the "Relief Committee" may be regarded as somewhat unique in the annals of benevolence:—

"**HOLMFIRTH CALAMITY.**—The Committee respectfully request that all subscriptions which have been promised for the above object may be remitted, without delay, to the Huddersfield Banking Company, Huddersfield; and they beg to state, with feelings of sincere thankfulness, their belief that, when all such subscriptions have been received, the amount will be sufficient to meet all reasonable claims by the sufferers upon the benevolence of the public. And the Committee beg also to announce that, when the total amount of subscriptions has been ascertained, they will, with the assistance of representatives from other towns, forming the Central Committee, be in a position to appro-

priate the funds placed at their disposal by public liberality.

“ JOHN BROOKE,
“ Chairman of the Mutual Committees,
“ Huddersfield and Holmfirth.

“ *Huddersfield, 30th March, 1852.*”

This liberality has in a great degree been the result of personal inspection of the scene of the catastrophe, but by a very different class of persons, and from very different principles and feelings, from those on which selfishness relies for success in cheap-trip speculations.

In a neighbouring town, a large bill stared us in the face, headed, “ For the Benefit of the Holmfirth Sufferers ; ” and, on reading the contents, we found that it was to inform the public, that the proceeds of a “ ball ” would be given to these “ sufferers.” The band was to consist of upwards of twenty performers ; the doors were to open at 7, and dancing was to begin at 8 o'clock ; and refreshments were to be provided at the hotel. We wish that Committees, consisting as they generally do of the benevolent of different denominations, led on by Ministers of religion, would refuse to receive contributions of this description. There is a revolting incongruity in a large company being called together for dancing and frivolous amusement on such an occasion, and to be

flattered, perhaps, by the belief that they are serving the cause of suffering humanity.

Another train of very painful reflections arises from the culpable indifference and selfish apathy of the parties concerned in the construction and care of the reservoir from first to last ; and more especially when, from the rising floods, the result of this insecurity could scarcely be a matter of doubt. A responsible party, whose immediate duty it was to watch and conserve the dam, had refused very trifling expenses for the repairs of the shuttle. Near to the time of the overflow of this dam, £12. 10s., expended in making a hole in the waste-pit, would have prevented the disruption : this was even commenced, but was resisted and abandoned. And yet some of these very persons had large property at stake ; and one on the spot is actually a loser of between £2,000 and £3,000. On the night of the flood he said, that "before two o'clock, at the latest, there would not be a mill in the valley ;" but "did nothing to prevent the water from running over," and scarcely warned any person of danger "until it was too late to be of any use." It would be out of place here to pursue the course of reflection suggested by these facts ; but while such reckless indifference concerning life and property on the part of those who had

power to act, and were bound to take action, for the prevention of the impending calamity, is very greatly to be deplored, it cannot too strongly be condemned, and all right-minded persons will fully agree in the sentiment expressed in the verdict of the Coroner's inquest, that "if they had been individuals" (acting in a private capacity) "instead of a corporate body, it would have justified and called for a verdict of manslaughter."

Our concluding reflections must be of a spiritual and moral character, for the religious improvement of this awful event. And here we would remark, that we shall not irreverently attempt to meet every argument of those who arraign the equity of the Divine government, nor presume on our competency to "justify the ways of God" to the reason of the believer. In all such cases, much must be left to faith; but the believer in Divine revelation, and he only, can properly reason on the mysteries of God's providence and grace. After such an exhibition of selfishness and heedlessness, as is supplied in the history of this reservoir, the most obvious reflection is, that its prevention would have required, on the part of God, a miraculous suspension of the most obvious laws of nature. One of the best of man's friends, but one of the most powerful of his foes,—water, to an enormous

weight, might be considered as hanging from the first, and especially towards the approach of the catastrophe, in the most threatening state of suspension over the lovely and devoted valley below. No one pleads ignorance of the danger: the Commissioners themselves are many of them the first to confess it; but they do nothing to prevent it; nor does the voice of apprehension from the people exposed to peril even whisper a demand that they should. Even to the very hour of the catastrophe, they converse of the danger as imminent; but retire to rest in careless security, and many of them are drowned in their beds. Now the God of nature, the great Governor of the universe, has not promised to interfere by miracle to avert such calamities. By allowing nature to take its course, all may be taught not to trifle with the laws of the material world, and then expect Him to save them by miracle from the effects of their own imprudence.

The following paragraph, extracted from a local newspaper, furnishes painful illustration of the moral character of some of the sufferers, such as little consists with any trust in special protection by Divine Providence:—

“An unpleasant incident occurred, during the week, to the Committee at Holmfirth, which is deserving of notice. Amongst the number of

those drowned by the flood was a person calling himself Ashall, who managed a leather-dealer's establishment, at Holmfirth, for Mr. Crawshaw, of Huddersfield. This man, with his presumed wife, and two children, perished; the house they inhabited being swept entirely away. Now, however, his true wife has presented herself at Holmfirth, and pleads for relief from the contribution-fund, as well as the transfer of her late husband's watch, which was picked up after the deluge. The statement of the woman, which is duly confirmed, is, that the name of her deceased husband was not Ashall, but Spencer; that he left her at Bacup, with two children, seven years ago, eloping with the now-sacrificed young woman, to whom she was cousin; that she knew not what had become of the guilty pair, until the newspaper reports suggested her suspicion; and that subsequent inquiries had unfolded the whole romantic, though melancholy, truth."

There is, however, a danger of those who read the records of a calamity like the present, turning their attention to the event in the way of uncharitable reflection on the characters of those on whom its greatest severity has fallen, to the diversion of their mind and heart from their own sins, and from a day which, if they repent not, will be as awful to them, though

they die in their beds, as was the solemn hour of this visitation to those who thus perished and were the least prepared. This was the folly of those mentioned by St. Luke, chap. xiii. 1—5. In the preceding chapter, the Lord Jesus exhorts to immediate repentance on pain of perdition. St. Luke says that “there were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices;” evidently supposing that those must have been “sinners above all men,” or God would surely have protected them while they were engaged in His worship. Our Lord answered these self-righteous cavillers according to what He knew was in their hearts; and He referred to an additional case more obviously than this the result of Divine penal visitation, because no human hand was seen,—the case of eighteen persons on whom the tower of Siloam had (no doubt recently) fallen and slain them. Our Lord desires those whom He addresses to consider that these calamities had not been permitted of God for the punishment of some extraordinary depravity in those who suffered, but for the special admonition of those who survived; and that to make them the subject of idle conversation, to divert the mind from repentance, and find all the reasons why these events were permitted, in those who suffered,

was to resist the purposes of God. This is evidently the moral designed to be inculcated, and it speaks with a trumpet-voice to us : it forbids us to sit in uncharitable judgment on the departed : it commands us to spend our reflections on ourselves, and to repent of our sins as now we see they ought to have repented. Eighty or eighteen souls thus swept off is an appalling event ; but penitence or impenitence is still the great distinction, and men may perish in detail as well as in crowds. Let us leave their judgment to God, and attend to our own salvation, and be thus prepared for death, whenever or however it may come to call us to our final award and our eternal state.

By the sceptic, who either believes our world to be innocent, or, if sinful, only under the dominion of "a God all mercy," no satisfactory reason can be assigned for any of the afflictions of life, and especially for such a catastrophe as the one under review. The imaginary deity whom he worships would either be indifferent to the affairs of men, or, if active, accountable to any of his creatures who might dare to arraign him at their bar ; but the sceptic is as much bound to give the philosophy of such facts as daily wring anguish from our hearts, or occasionally strike us with horror and dismay, as the believer in revelation. The latter only can do this, however ; and he

finds the great reason for the whole in the facts, that this is a fallen world under a discipline of mingled judgment and mercy, and that spiritual and eternal good is mercifully designed, and frequently effected, by such means as those which lead infidels most loudly to blaspheme. These spiritual and eternal results are so much beyond all the sufferings of the body, and all the interests of time, that the latter are in comparison unworthy of a thought. But yet, as earthly good is that to which we are most ardently attached, and that by which we are often so guiltily ensnared, nothing is so likely to awaken us, as seeing death drag the worldling from his enjoyments, or his possessions made the prey of the fire or the flood. In the one case, the Saviour says, "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh;" and in the other we seem to hear Him again saying, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee : and so is everyone that layeth up treasure on earth and is not rich towards God." Suffering without sin, or affliction and catastrophe without moral and disciplinary ends, and a future state of rewards and punishments, are indeed incomprehensible mysteries ; but, as a system of government, leaving the details to be studied in the light of eternity, that which works out eternally glorious results, by transitory

sufferings and secular losses, is what ought to “commend itself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” We live in a world of men absorbed in earthly frivolities and interests, and insensible to the approaches of death: the only exceptions are the effect of religion. What so likely to arouse such a world to a sense of its present perils and its eternal dangers, as the voice of the flood, or the glare of the flame, by which both life and property are in a moment destroyed? “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;” “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” This is the obvious moral of the whole; and therefore it is that we condemn whatever is calculated to remove or weaken the spiritual impression intended to be produced by the God of providence and grace in this visitation; and especially every attempt to divert the mind from the contemplation of an event so well calculated to produce the best effects, for this world and another, on the mind and heart of all.

We conclude with an extract from an eloquent article on this calamity in the “Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine” for April, 1852, and to which we cordially refer our readers:—“Let those who are trusting implicitly in the goods of this life learn to cease from their idolatry, by the stern lesson of many who retired to rest

affluent and prosperous, but who rose, according to this world's language, ruined. Let them think of the elaborate and costly apparatus for producing wealth effectually destroying in an hour more than it would produce in a generation, and count it a symbol. Let those who shudder at the cold thought of the stealthy, insidious entrance of the midnight flood, suppressing the very cry for mercy which it created, learn to live in such daily preparation for death as none but those who are *in Christ* can attain to; remembering that they may themselves be under the frowning brow of as imminent a calamity as fell upon the sleepers of that valley.

“And let all, in addition to these lessons, learn to bless the goodness of God, who left not His essential compassion without a witness during that night of sorrow,—who saved multitudes more than He permitted to die,—who gave long, ample, and repeated warning to all,—and who doubtless heard many voices in their prayer for spiritual grace, who cried in vain for temporal deliverance. Bread was cast upon those waters. May it be found after many days!

“By this time, the first excitement is over. The desolated valley is fast undergoing renovation. The British energy, which cannot be thoroughly broken, will soon restore the pros-

perity of the Holme valley—if God give His blessing. May He prosper the effort! The broken hearts we leave with the only Healer. May He succour the parents beginning to find the lack of their little ones, and the little ones who, though they know it not, have lost their best friends! Especially may the Lord sanctify this visitation to the good of those sufferers—not many—in whom the readers of this Magazine have a more special interest!”

POSTSCRIPT.

DURING the time that this work has been in the press, facts have been ascertained which are of an extraordinary character. First, that the wide-spread desolation of the valley of the Holme has not inflicted loss of property to above one-third of the amount of the original estimate. This, it is true, cannot be either fully ascertained, or satisfactorily repaired; but, perhaps, instead of the amount first stated, £100,000 will be near the sum. Secondly, the liberality of the nation has supplied for the relief of the sufferers upwards of £67,000! Thirdly, in the appro-

priation of this sum, the repair of the reservoir, and the claims of the mortgagees, have been excluded from all consideration, and attention directed solely to those of private individuals, and the repair of places of worship. Fourthly, the private claims have been so carefully sifted, reduced, or rejected, that the whole have been settled for about one-half of the amount claimed. The number of schedules sent in was 400; amounting to £67,224. 10s. 9½*d.*, exclusive of the reservoir, the estimated loss on which was £8,508. The latter claim was rejected: towards the amounts on the schedules, about £32,000 have been paid; and for the repairs of places of worship, £543 were allowed,—which it is hoped will repair the damage sustained by them, except the tombstones. The probability is, that one-half of the amount subscribed will be returned to the subscribers; so that, whether the sufferers be satisfied or not, the subscribers cannot complain. It is a high gratification to them to discover, that effectual though not full relief has been afforded to so many sufferers; and that their sufferings, in a pecuniary point of view, have been found to be less severe than competent judges at the time computed them to be. The mistake was unintentional, and indeed unavoidable. No one, looking at the miles of country laid waste, could have supposed the

case to be within the reach of the most enthusiastic benevolence. The Committee of distribution have had a most arduous and delicate task to perform, and richly do they deserve the gratitude of all. They have exercised a wise discretion, where enough remained to render help entirely needless, or but partially required; and to the poorer class of sufferers they have been more liberal.

It was no part of our intention to produce a mere financial sympathy; and this statement ought not to detract from the proper effect of such a narrative as this. On the loss of life we might even enlarge; for since the date of this narrative, several persons have died, undoubtedly victims of the flood. Amongst them is Joseph Charlesworth, Esq., whose house was surrounded, and was in awful jeopardy; and who received such a shock at the time, and subsequently underwent so much fatigue in sympathy with the sufferers, and in rendering incessant attention, as the senior Magistrate of the district, to their relief, that he has sunk, universally regretted.

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