



THE SHEPHERD.

The Shepherd

WHEN a shepherd has at last overtaken his poor, silly, wandering sheep, he does not straightway fall to scolding or beating it for having cost him so much toil and trouble. No; but he observes that it is very weary, that it has torn itself among thorns, and cut itself among jagged rocks, and therefore he first tenderly sees to its wounds, and then bears it back to the fold in his own arms. Poor trembling sinner, the gospel has at length laid hold upon you; you cannot longer run into the paths of sin, grace has stopped your mad career, and made you tremble at the guilt of sin. You are afraid of Jesus, for you know how sorely you have grieved him; you fear that he will chide you severely, and perhaps spurn you from his presence. Oh think not so of the Good Shepherd! He is already gazing on your bleeding wounds, and preparing to bind them up; he will soon take compassion on your weakness, and bear you in his arms. Trust to him, poor sinner, just as the poor sheep trusts the shepherd. A man is more precious than a sheep, and Jesus is more tender than the most careful shepherd. To coming sinners he is gentle indeed. When the prodigal returned all ragged, and filthy, his loving father did not put him in quarantine till he had been cleansed and purified, but there and then he fell upon his neck and kissed him, without so much as giving him one upbraiding word. He came straight from the swine-trough to his parent's arms. That welcomed prodigal is the type of such sinners such as you are. You too shall have all kisses, and no frowns; all love, and no wrath; all kindness, and no severity. Oh! if you knew the Saviour, you would not delay. Now, *now* poor heavy-laden sinner, trust the Lord Jesus, and live. He has never treated one returning prodigal with harshness, and he cannot change, and will therefore deal as generously with you as He has done with others. Whether *thou* wilt trust him or no—I will—I do. Poor sinner, may the Holy Spirit lead thee to look to Jesus and live.