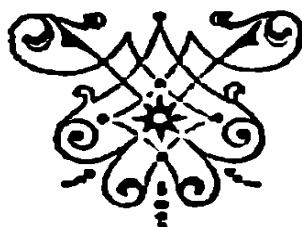


NO ROAD THIS WAY.

ISAIAH i. 18.



MELBOURNE: 193, SWANSTON STREET.

LONDON: W. H. BROOM AND ROUSE,
15 & 16, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Price Two Shillings per 100.

First Series, 1 to 10.

NO ROAD THIS WAY.

GETTING into a railway carriage on one of our country lines, I observed what is termed a “religious paper” lying on the seat opposite. A young man seated near, noticing my glance at it, said, “Ah ! we have had a carriage-full of ‘Salvationists’ from Melbourne, and they left that paper behind them, saying that it might do some one some good.”

“And perhaps it may,” I replied.

“Oh, yes !” he said, “I rather believe in them ; but they are too extravagant. Those fellows have been singing and praying all the way from

Melbourne. Why can't they pray to themselves, or wait till they get home? I am just as good a man as any of them, but I know where to draw the line in every thing."

I said nothing to this for a few minutes; but then asked, "Did I rightly understand you to say that you can draw the line in every thing? You mean, of course, that in conduct, while enjoying the pleasures of this life, you are careful not to go so far as to imperil your chance of heaven in the next."

"Just so," he said.

"Now listen a moment," I replied. "God speaks of two ways, paths, or roads, through this world. One, a narrow path that leadeth unto life eternal; the other, a broad way that

leadeth to destruction. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Where or how can you draw a line between these two? Must you not be on one or the other? Is there any middle way? Does Christ, does the Bible, speak of any intermediate path?" And, oh, my reader, I would ask you to ponder this rigid fact, that God speaks (mark, God speaks) of ONLY TWO WAYS, the broad and the narrow. On which are you? Of ONLY TWO CLASSES of persons, saved and lost. To which do you belong? Of ONLY TWO FINAL STATES, eternal blessing and eternal woe. To which of the two states are you hastening? Be honest with yourself, and answer the question as before God! Very likely you will say of yourself, "I can't boast of being very good, nor

am I very bad, and so I hope to get to heaven at the end." But, dear reader, ponder! Look again at the scripture, Matt. vii. 13, 14, only two ways; John iii. 16-18, only two classes. To one or the other you must belong.

"Oh," said my fellow-traveller, "of course you must be on one road or the other; you can't go two roads at once! Of course I can't draw a line there, and I did not mean in that way; but," he added, "I don't think the path is so narrow."

I replied, "Did you not say just now that you were as good as those who have just left the carriage?"

"Yes," he said, "I am. I can pray silently in my heart, and God will hear me as well as them."

"Yes," I answered, "but I fear that, like many more, you think that your goodness commends you to God. Now, are you fit for His presence?"

(Read Job ix. 20, 30, 31; xv. 15, 16; Hab. i. 13.) It is His goodness, and not ours, that leads us to Him. "You say the way is not so narrow. If you mean by that, that it is wide enough to admit every son and daughter of Adam, blessed be God; it is true, for His mercy is as limitless as the heavens above, as free as the air we breathe. None need be shut out from the glorious down-shining of God's love. But, dear friend, while it is blessedly true that the invitation is to all, yet it is also true that there is *but one way back to God, and that way is by the cross.* God has shut

man up to that way, for none other was possible."

"Oh," he said, "I am not much at a scriptural argument, and there are so many opinions about these things!"

"Let us take, then," I responded, "the Word of God, which is so plain that a 'wayfaring man, though a fool,' need not err therein. I give you one scripture to think over (you will find it in John iii. 16), and I ask you, as you admit yourself unfit for God's presence, not to shut your heart to this wondrous, measureless love of God, but, as conscious of your need, to joyfully and heartily welcome it. Remember, there is *no other way* (Gal. iii. 21), '*none other Name* under heaven given among men whereby

we must be saved.' Acts iv. 12. It is Jesus only. Believing, then, this story of God's love, you will gladly seize every opportunity to tell it to others."

We parted, perhaps never to meet again on earth, but with the prayer in my heart that God would open the young man's heart to receive this wonderful love; and I have here related the incident because it is only a sample of the many forms of ignorance and unbelief under which men seek to hide away from God, and shut out His love.

I have not thought it necessary to dilate on the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, though, indeed, it is most blessed to dwell on as meeting man's need, and glorifying God; but

I have sought to show there can be no middle path, no middling good, *no drawing the line*; you must get *right into the path of life through the gate of God's love*.

Again, I say, let not the wicked one delude you. Be not deceived. Examine this matter at once for yourself. Decide now as to which road you will go, to which class you will belong—saved eternally; or for ever lost.

Remember, that if two straight roads ever so slightly diverge, they will never come together. No, never. Your path may not take you far from the narrow way; but, at least, *it is not that narrow way*, nor will it ever become such. You must turn right back, and enter in at the strait

gate, through the cross of Christ. Submit to the judgment of God, given against you in Romans iii., where it is recorded that all fall short of His glory; and accept the salvation He gives so freely to you, but at such infinite cost to Himself.

Remember, I beseech you, that your sins *need not* shut you out from God, for He has met, by the cross, the need of sinners. But your *will* may shut you out. You *may refuse* His love! But beware! "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." "For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." Prov. xxix. 1; i. 32.

THE INFIDEL AND THE WORD OF GOD.

ONE Sunday evening a young man was walking along the streets on his way to some scene of pleasure, when he was accosted by a person, who stopped him, and thrust a small piece of paper into his hand. The young man took it, and read, by the light of the nearest lamp, the words, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Isaiah i. 18.

A sneer passed over his handsome face as he read, and, throwing the paper from him, he hastened on.

“‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow’ does not apply to me, at any rate; for I am an infidel, and I do not believe anything of the kind,” thought he. “‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ Hang the thing; I can’t get rid of it! ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ Sins? Conscience? Yes, but I acknowledge neither a future nor a God, and therefore am not responsible. What do I care to have my sins made white—to use the figure—seeing that I owe no duties beyond those necessary to natural human existence? ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ — I am an infidel” (stamping his foot). “I

don't believe in the Bible, the God of the Bible, the future, nor anything beyond the still, dark grave. So here's for a short life and a merry one! 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Confound it! 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Confound it! I wish I could get it out of my head. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' It is very forcible; very poetical. Certainly that Bible is a wonderful book. Given for the sake of argument, that it is true, and that a God exists, I can easily understand religious people, who believe in a future either of joy or suffering, clinging to such sentences with a tenacity proportioned to their belief.

‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.’ Admirable writing; terse, forcible language. I wonder who wrote it? God, I suppose. God? Why there is no God. I forgot myself. If I could only remember my principles, and how logical and well founded the arguments are which support them, I should be all right. ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white a snow.’ Confound the thing! Will nothing put a stop to this? There is a church; I may as well turn in.”

He entered, and was shown quietly into a pew by the door. A solemn silence reigned. The preacher had just read the text from the pulpit, paused a moment before repeating it,

then in a gentle voice he pronounced the words, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

* . * . *

The vestry of that church was always open for a short time after service for the reception of those whom the message of the Lord had touched. That evening among the penitents there was one who prayed with tears, “Jesus, though my sins be dyed deeper than the deepest scarlet, do Thou make me whiter than the purest snow.”