

Grasping the Promises;

OR,

THE POWER OF FAITH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A TRUE STORY OF LUCKNOW."



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W. H. BROOM, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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ON entering the hospital, on a September morning in 1857, I saw a young lad lying on one of the charpoys, evidently in much suffering. His countenance was intelligent and pleasing, and his extreme youth and wasted appearance naturally drew my attention to him. On going up to him, I asked him about his illness; on which he replied that he belonged to the artillery, and on the march up from Calcutta had, as usual, been sent one day to water a horse. The animal had become restive, and had thrown him. In consequence the poor boy had his leg broken, and received other internal injuries.

"What is your name?" I asked. "Willy."

"Do you know anything of the Lord Jesus?"

"Of whom?"—"Of Jesus, the Son of God."

"I never had my schooling much cared for; so I don't know anything about Him."

"Can you read?"—"Oh yes, ma'am."

"Have you ever been in England?"—"Yes for a little while, but we have been mostly abroad. My father is lying here, on this bed next me. Mother died when I was a baby; so I've always been a boy of the regiment."

Turning to the father, after ascertaining his name to be Reynolds, I said, "And do you, my friend, know the Lord Jesus?"—"Well, ma'am, as far as that goes, I have been taught all about Him. My parents as brought me up made me learn the Bible; but as soon as I got my own master I left all that soft stuff off, and took to drinking and swearing."

"Indeed," I said, "but you are willing now to take to your Bible again?"—"No, ma'am; I never found any fun in psalm-singing and church-going; and I've no mind ever to try my hand at it again."

"Oh but, Reynolds, you must die one day; would you not wish to be different before then?"—"No, I'm quite content; I dare say I shall die as easy as any of you."

"But what of the life beyond. Do you remember it is written, 'Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven?'"—"Of course not; I know I must take the consequences on my shoulders."

"But, Reynolds, you cannot have thought

on what it will be not to go to heaven; it will be to go to hell."—"I can't help it, ma'am; and on this I've made up my mind," (striking with his hand on the bed with great energy) "no power on earth shall induce me to leave off my own ways. I never found them Methodist ways happy or good; so there's no use you're tiring your breath in speaking to me. I tell you," (again vehemently striking with his hand) "no power on earth shall induce me to be a Bible man."

"Yes, Reynolds, no power on earth has power to change the heart; but there is One above, who made you, who has all power."—"But I don't want to be different. Didn't I tell you as how the old ways best suited me? No, no; I love my bottle too well ever to part its company. It's unbearable lying here, without a drop of anything. But I don't want any more of this here talking, please, ma'am; I won't change my mind for any talking. I just hate all cant together."

"Well then, Reynolds, I will speak to your boy." So turning to him, I asked if I should sit down on his charpoy, and tell him about Jesus. "If you please, ma'am. But it must be very easy, for I'm a poor ignorant boy; so you will please begin from the beginning."

"How do you mean, Willy?"—"Why

“speak, hard and plain, all that a man needs know for his safety. Speak as if I were to die in a hour.”

“I will try; but first let us pray that Jesus may be with us, and teach me how to speak, and teach your heart to come to Him.”

When I had prayed, I told him as simply as I could, the story of the Creation, and of man's fall; and of the birth, and life, and death of the Son of God “to save our ruined race.” He listened with great interest, and then asked me to tell him just how he could be made one of the “little flock,” who should be saved.

“I'll tell you a Bible story, Willy, to explain it,” and I opened my Bible at Mark x, 46.

“Oh ma'am, please, it's easier to understand *you* tell it; the book words are so much harder.”—“I do not think, Willy, you will find this word hard. God has written it so simply, that little children may learn and love it. Many children have been led to Jesus.” So I read him the story of Bartimeus through.

“Now, ma'am, will you please tell me what that blind man has to do with me? for I can't get my leg made well all of a sudden now.”

“Willy, do you know you are just like that blind man?”—“I don't see how that

can see. I've got two eyes, and can see as plain as possible."

"Yes; God has been so kind as to give you and me our bodily sight; but your heart is blind; every day is bringing you nearer to the world of spirits, and yet you have been living in sin—going on straight the road to hell."

"Yes, ma'am, but then I don't see as how I'am so much to blame. I've scarcely ever heard a word of these things; and father and the men are mostly drunk and cursing."

"Well, now at least you have been told of Jesus. Will you come to Him?"—"I don't see as how I can; He's not in the world now."

"Yet, Willy, He is near us, in this very room. Just as you cannot see your soul, so you cannot see God, because He is a Spirit."

"Then how can I go to Him like the blind man?"—"Why lift your spirit to Him, think of Him, believe His word, believe He is present listening to you, and pray to Him; tell Him all your thoughts and wants; tell Him how you have forgotten Him up to this time."

"I don't know how to pray; I don't know what I want, except not to go to the place of torment."—"Well, begin with the blind man's prayer: 'Jesus have mercy on me.'"

"Yes, ma'am, but I don't see now how I'll

know He hears me. He won't answer me aloud."—"No, Willy, but He has had this story, and all His Bible written for us. They are God's own message to us; and you must simply believe, and, like Bartimeus, rise, and come to Him—and *expect* He *will* change your heart."

"I should think, ma'am, if it's true He died for us, He must want to save us."—"Yes, He has sent me here this morning to tell you of Him; and you must take the message I bring you from Him, just as if you heard Him speak aloud. Here is a little Bible for you; and when I am gone, look into it carefully, and see if I have not been telling you true. Now, Willy, before I tell you about the rest of the story, we will pray again, because, as you see here, in Matthew vii, 7, Jesus, who cannot speak a lie, promises, 'Ask, and it shall be given you;' and again in 1 John v, 14, 'This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.'"

After earnest prayer, that Jesus Himself would be present, and guide this poor child to give up his heart, I said, "Willy, when Bartimeus cried out, Jesus stood still to listen; and I am sure Jesus is beside us now, looking into your heart, and listening to know your wants. He is saying to you, 'What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?'

All in this hospital are sinners ; we all need pardon and new hearts. But, besides, we have each our own particular wants. Our ages, characters, needs, pains, are all different. Jesus wants us each to tell Him our own longings of heart, our own especial wants, our every thought. He is able to supply all your need, and He wants you to speak to Him freely as to a friend. You may tell Him all your thoughts and wishes without fear."

"But, please, ma'am, what does 'He calleth thee,' mean?"—"It means that Jesus has written us this Bible to tell us His will, to tell us how we can be saved, and He wants every one who reads it to come to Him. He wants you to come to-day, Willy."

"I don't see," roughly exclaimed the father, whom I had thought asleep, "what casting away his garment has to do with us."

"Can you, Willy?" I said. The boy thought a moment. With his Bible open, he seemed drinking in every word. Presently he joyously clapped his hands, and said, "I have it, I have it. Was not the Bible written in this country?"—"No, not in India."

"But was it not written in a hot country like this, not in a land like England?"—"Yes, it was written in a warmer land than England."

"I know then why the man cast aside his

garment. I have seen the black men, when they wanted to go fast, take off their sheet; and I can guess what it means for us," said he in a more solemn tone; "it means, does it not, that, if I want to be made one of Jesus' flock, I must put away my bad words and my crossness; and father, if he comes, must put away his cursing and drunkenness. It means, we can't come to Jesus, and keep our own ways too, both at once."

"Yes, Willy; and now when Bartimeus had come, what did Jesus say to him?"—"Thy faith hath made thee whole."

"Yes, he had prayed for an earthly blessing, and it was granted him; and so you and I may take each little want to God. You may tell Him about your pain, and ask Him to make it less. If good for us, everything we ask for shall be given. But sometimes God, who sees all from the beginning to the end of time, sees that granting our prayers would bring a curse rather than a blessing; and so in love He refuses. But if we seek blessings for our souls, He will certainly grant them."

"Thank you, ma'am; now I see how pretty the story is both ways."

"But Willy, I do not want you only to think it pretty; I want you to come, as the blind man, to the Lord Jesus."—"Well, ma'am, there's no saying but I may."

"But *now*, Willy, at once; I want to have you ask for mercy before I leave you."—"I can't yet; I'll try to bye and bye."

"But if you should die first?"—"Oh, I don't think I shall die; the fever's gone down pretty considerable, the doctor says."

"But, Willy, I'm afraid to leave you, until you have come to Jesus. I should be so miserable if you died without hope. And if you live, why it's not likely you will think more of death and eternity as you get well, unless you come now straight to Him."

"But I can't now; I can't pray to nothing. If I had a little image I could pray to it. But it seems like speaking to the air as you do it; only you seem to see some one as you pray."

"Yes, Willy, by faith I see Jesus. I know He is listening to us, and willing to receive us as His own for ever. May I pray with you, believing the promise, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out?'"—"

"Yes, please."—"And, Willy, pray with me;" and so we pleaded together that light might shine into his heart, and that he might receive his sight.

"Do you think you have really come to Jesus, Willy?"—"I've tried to wish what you prayed: but I still seem to think it strange to pray into the air. I don't feel as if God were near. But your praying does me

more good than talking; it seems as you pray, that I can feel something is moving my feelings."

"Well, Willy, I must go now; God willing, I will come again to-morrow."—"Oh stay, please, a little while longer. I don't think there's one good man in the room; and directly you go they'll begin to curse and swear. The only chance of my getting to see Jesus, is by your praying and reading His words to me."

"Oh, no, Willy, the Lord is always near you; and if you will but try to look up to Him, and believe that He died for sinners, He will give you to know the joy and peace of His love."

"Please pray just once more, and I will wish very hard to find Him." His voice joined mine in once more pleading the promises.

When I came up to his bed next morning, he clapped his hands, and gladly exclaimed, "I've found Him! I've found Him!"

"Found whom, dear boy?"—"Found Jesus; I know now what you meant about my heart being blind. I couldn't sleep all night, my poor leg ached so dreadfully; but as I was crying—for I hardly could bear the pain—it came to my mind, all the story of the Cross on the hill; and I thought how bad it must be to be hung up by nails—it would

drive me mad, I think. And I thought, if Jesus bore it all gladly to save us, I ought to be glad of my pain, as it makes me care for nothing but religion. And then it seemed as if I understood how my sins had helped to nail Him there; and I did ask so hard to be made sorry for my cruel wicked doings, that I got in a burning fever. But it has done me good. I feel quite happy like now. I've had a dream that Jesus put His bleeding hands on my head, and whispered that thing you told me yesterday, 'My blood has availed for thee.' "

For about a week I was privileged to visit Willy daily, and we had much happy conversation together on the Saviour. He exceedingly enjoyed committing to memory passages of Scripture and hymns. His strength gradually declined, as his father's recovered. Reynolds seemed increasingly hardened against the truth, and most unwillingly listened to his child's pleadings that he would come to Jesus. Yet his heart was softened at the near prospect of parting with the boy, as he said, "for ever;" and he tended his child with affectionate solicitude. Still he positively refused to accede to the earnest request that he would read to him, even although Willy's hands had grown too feeble to hold the book.

On Saturday forenoon, Willy said to me,

"I've been praying hard for something; you'll think it such a strange prayer."

"Shall I? What was it?"—"That God would make my father very ill again; for you see ma'am, he's almost well. The doctor has just been round, and told him he may leave on Monday. And you know his heart is desperately hard, and if he goes up to the front, there's little chance of his ever coming back; and it's not likely he'll get any one there to tell him of Jesus."

"O Willy, you must not feel so. All means of working are in God's hands. When your father was a child, his heart was no harder than yours and mine; and the same Holy Spirit that converted us, is able to do all things for him?"

"Please, ma'am, will you give me your hand? Now I want you to promise me one thing; will you?"—"I must hear what you want first."

"You remember, ma'am, the day I came in here, how you kept on telling me about the promise to those that pray?"—"Yes, Willy; and God did answer my longing prayer, and gave you your sight."

"Yes, and ever since I felt you had got what you wanted, I've thought I do the same; and I have been praying night and day for my father. I feel God will hear the prayers of those who love Him; and now

that I'am going where there's no prayer. I want you to promise you'll never pass a night nor morning, without asking God to convert my father; and I'm sure I'll meet him some day in heaven. He'll soon have no one but you to pray for him. Will you promise me you'll pray hard as you did for me."

"Yes, Willy, I will; but I feel God is more willing to save than we to pray."—"Never mind, ma'am, He says we are to pray; and you must just lay hold of the promises. Now remember you have promised to a dying boy."

The next morning, Willy said, "Do you know I'm dying?"—"Yes, I knew you must die, when I first saw you; but you are much worse than when I saw you yesterday."

"Yes, the doctor says I can't live out the day. Will you put your ear close down to me? I want to whisper something to you. Do you know my father bribed one of the men last night to get him some drink; and he was so bad and wild all night. The doctor has found it out, and is very angry. Oh, you don't know how it pains me to see my father go on so the last night his child is spending on earth;" and the poor boy wept passionately. I soothed him with some of the precious promises of God's word, and cheered him by uniting with him in prayer for his father.

"Do you know what I have been thinking of all the morning?"

"Of how soon you will see Jesus?"—"Yes, I've been thinking that I began this Sunday a poor sick boy in the hospital, surrounded by wicked men, and sinful talk; and I think I shall be at home before night. I think I've begun a Sunday that will never end. I don't think I shall ever have another week day."

At his request I read him Ephesians ii and iii, 2 Cor. v, and the story of Bartimeus, and then proposed prayer.

"You will come again to see me?"—"I do not think, Willy, I should find you here if I came."

"But I want you to hold my hand as I pass through the dark valley."—"O Willy, it will not be dark, I think; for Jesus will hold your hand, and pass with you right over to the other side."

"Oh but I want to hear your voice telling me His words; it would be so dreadful only to hear bad language as I pass through."—

"But, Willy, there is a dying man in another room who wants a friend."

"Please don't say no; I do so want you to come and see me again."—"But I cannot come till just before evening church; and before then I think you will have left earth."

"Well, if you don't find my poor body

here, you will be very happy.”—“I shall think of you as one dear child of God safe at home, Willy; but I shall miss you.”

“Will you cry?”—“I don’t know, dear boy; I dare say I shall; but it will be sweet to look forward to meeting again.”

“If you cry for me, you will be the only one to do so. It’s nice to think one will miss me. Father won’t care; his feelings are all hardened. I’ve no pain now; my leg seems quite asleep. I told the doctor so, and said how glad I was to have it better, but he shook his head, and said it was a bad sign for life. But you know,” he added, with flushed cheek and beaming eye, “he was wrong; it is a good sign, for I shall soon be away, really living in Jesus. Here I’ve only been wanting to be like Jesus, there I *shall* be like him.” Before I went, he made me promise that I would come again in the evening.

In the evening I found him lying with his eyes closed, sinking rapidly, but calmly. Stooping over him, I whispered, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” “Dear Willy, is Jesus with you?”—“Oh yes.”

“Have you any fear?”—“No, none; I have been wondering why they call it a dark

valley. I have found the light growing brighter every day since I first believed; and now it's so bright I must shut my eyes." I repeated Isaiah lx, and 2 Cor. v, to him.

"Now please say my favourite hymn which you taught me last Sunday." I repeated to him some beautiful lines on Psalm cvii, 30, beginning—

"Yes, billow after billow—see they come
Faster and rougher as yon little boat
Nears evermore the haven."

The dying boy took up the mariner's answers in broken accents, yet with a depth of feeling that showed he realized their meaning.

"I felt so weary last night with the pain," he said; "but I thought He would not let the waves be too rough, and you see they seem to have brought me on all the faster for being rough."

"Shall I pray with you once more, Willy?"—"Oh yes, please. I have been beseeching the Lord a great deal to change my poor father's heart; and I know I shall see him some day in heaven. I don't now so much mind leaving him unconverted, for I know I have been heard." After praying, he said, "That is my last prayer; now it shall be only praise for ever and ever." His breath began to fail him, and we had to prop him up with pillows. As I repeated passages of Scripture he occasionally joined. Presently

he turned round, and calling me by name, most touchingly assured me of his gratitude for my having told him of the Saviour, and having striven to lead him to His feet.

"There's a sweet text I'll give you to think of sometimes, ma'am. Jesus says, (and he repeated the substance of John xvi, 33,) 'In this world ye shall have sorrow, but be of good cheer, in me ye have peace.' I've found it all peace since I believed, for He just wiped out all my sin. Now please tell me about——"

"About what, Willy?"—"About——I forget—my memory seems strayed like—about many——"

"About our Father's house with many mansions?"—"Oh, yes." After repeating part of John xiv, he said, "You don't know how I love that word, 'And yet there is room.' I am sure Jesus has prepared a seat in heaven for my father, and I don't believe it will be left empty." I then repeated with him 1 John iii, 1, 2. "Oh it's such a dear word that, and quite, quite true. I see Him now. He's calling me, I must go. Just think how soon I'll be 'like him.' I am so glad to go. Just hold—my—hand. I can't—catch—my—breath."

"Are you alone, Willy?"—"No, no, thou art with me, Jesus, our Immanuel—it's all washed—clean."

"What is washed?" "My soul. Oh won't it be glorious—to—join the multitude who are safe."

"Yes, dear boy; thus heaven is gathering, one by one, all the members of its family."

"Yes, yes—soon I'll be with—those—in glory—and you left here. But we'll still be of one heart, and

"Oh! who can tell the rapture when the circle is complete,

And all the children, sundered now, around our Father meet;

One fold, one Shepherd, one employ, one everlasting home:

Lo! I come quickly—even so—Amen! Lord Jesus, come!"

The poor boy commenced these lines; but, his breath failing, I finished them, he joining me as he was able. Then for some minutes spasms came on; the death rattle told his hour was come; and solemn indeed it was to feel the tightening grasp of the hand already cold and heavy, and breathe into his ear the last sounds of earth he would ever hear. Suddenly he opened his eyes, and fixing them on me, said, "Good-bye—remem—ber—your—pro—mise. We shall—be—for—ever—with—Jesus; safe—in our happy home. Oh, it's all great joy." Then he seemed exhausted; the coolie and I, for the last time, tried to put the spoonful of wine between the teeth, but he could no longer take it. I breathed a word of earnest

entreaty that the way might all be smooth. The church bells began to chime for evening service. "Yes, yes," he said, "I'm all ready; as they stop—I'll be—mounting—up to glory." I rose to go. "Good-bye, dear Willy; we'll soon meet to part no more." With still closed eyes, the lips seemed to move. I stooped to catch the words—"like Him." He never spoke again.

I saw, on coming into the ward next morning, that a stranger lay on the boy's charpoy. Reynolds was just ready to start.

"I was just waiting to see you, ma'am; for I didn't see as how I could go till I had thanked you for cheering up my child."

"Ah, Reynolds, where is the boy?"—"Indeed, no one could mistake where he is; if ever any one went to heaven he did. He died about a quarter of an hour after you left. He never moved again."

"Well, Reynolds, and will you join him where he is?"—"No, ma'am, no, I'm no hypocrite; I love my own ways too well yet. Won't I have a swing of them when I get away." Yet with unwonted patience, he allowed me to tell him once more of that redeeming love, which waits to be gracious. "Please, ma'am," said he, "may I have the Bible as you gave Willy?"—"Surely, Reynolds; and you will read it?"

"Nay then, I didn't say that, for I won't.

But I'll tell you what, I won't let it be ill-treated; it shan't be torn up for lighting the pipes. I'll keep it for Willy's sake."

"Do, my friend, and may your Willy's Saviour be soon all in all to you."

For some weeks I heard no more of Reynolds. At length one afternoon a soldier came up to me in the hospital, and saluting me, asked if I had been there in September. "Yes."—"Then you must be the lady I want," mentioning my name. Answering in the affirmative, he begged pardon for his boldness, but said he had been entrusted with the last message of a man named Reynolds.

"The last message! why is he dead?"—"Yes, ma'am."

With a faithless shudder, fearing the answer, I asked, "What kind of death did he die?"—"The most blessed I ever saw."

"Thank God! Will you tell me all you know about him?" "With pleasure, ma'am, if it's not encroaching on your time too much." He then gave me the following particulars, which I have put together in a connected form, with a strict regard to accuracy.

After leaving here, Reynolds followed his own ways. On arriving at Cawnpore he had immediately to join General Havelock's advancing column to Lucknow. At the end

of the first day's march, just as the men were settling round their fires to cook their supper, a young soldier called out, "Come, comrades, I've got some news to read to you, will you come and sit down here?"

"What kind of news?" said Reynolds.—
"Come, and you shall hear."

"Well," thought Reynolds, "we don't often get a sight of a paper; it's sure to be better than nothing." And so he and a few others sat round the little fire of Walter and William, two young soldiers between whom there existed a deep and brotherly friendship.

Taking from his breast a slip of paper, Walter read some texts from 2 Corinthians, chap. v. and the hymn beginning "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." As he was reading, Reynolds said to his next neighbour, "I say, I didn't come for a sermon; pretty old news this!"

"Hush," said the other angrily, "hold your tongue, can't you? No more did I expect it; but it can't do us no harm."

Again Reynolds said, "Well, I don't want any more; it seems as if wherever I go, I'm to hear of such things. I'm tired to death of such croaking. It's not the way to put one in spirits for such dying work as we've got before us."

"Well, go away, can't you and don't stop us who want it from hearing." But some new

strangely powerful thoughts bound Reynolds to the spot, where he sulkily sat with folded arms, whilst the two lads simply explained the way of salvation by Jesus, and prayed. All night long Reynolds dreamed of judgment; and as he rose in the morning from a disturbed sleep, he resolved to himself, "Well, I'll go and hear that paper again to-night. I'll go after dark, else they'll say I'm growing chicken-hearted; but somehow those two boys speaking and praying I can't forget; it minds me of my own Willy, and his prayers for his father. But they'll never be answered. I only want to listen." That evening when the field was covered with the sleeping forms of England's noble-hearted soldiers, Reynolds walked round to the two young comrades' resting-place. Their fire was almost out. Touching Walter on the shoulder, he said, "I want you just to read me the words you read last night. But you can't see, can you?"

"Oh, that's no matter, comrade," said both, jumping up; we know it off by heart. Sit down and welcome." After repeating it, "Now will you pray with us?" said they. "No, I'll never pray."

"Then we will pray for you;" and together by turns they besought God to turn his heart to Himself. When they rose from their knees William saw a tear on Reynolds' cheek.

Taking him by the hand, he tried by every argument he could think of to win him to Jesus. At last Walter said, "We must sleep now, or we shan't be fit for to-morrow's work; and it mustn't be said Christian soldiers do not fight as well as others." So they all three lay down together. But William could not sleep. But a short time had elapsed since he had been first awakened from his sleep of sin; and so he could feel for one still under its power. He rose, "I can't sleep, Reynolds. What, oh what if you should be killed to-morrow? Have you never been taught about Jesus?" Gradually he drew from the recumbent soldier the history above related. The mention of the prayers of little Willy drew tears from the eyes of this devoted young soldier.

"Reynolds, those prayers *must* be heard. You must come with me to Jesus. Do get up and kneel, and we'll pray you may be made disposed to love Him. Why shouldn't the love of Christ constrain us all alike?" "I don't want to be a Methodist; if I'm content, I don't see why you should worry the very life of me."

For a while they talked thus together, William sitting beside Reynolds. Presently he said, "I mustn't let your precious time go away so; I must pray. If you won't kneel with me, why I'll pray alone." And so he

did. Rising, he asked Reynolds if now he wouldn't come with him. "No, I didn't listen to my own child's words, so it isn't likely I'll heed you."

"Then I must pray alone."

"What not again? You'll be worn out all to no purpose."—"You're wrong as to the last thing; it will be grand to see you converted."

"But that you never will."—"Yes, but I shall."

"You speak too boldly; I tell you you'll be disappointed."

"No, but I can't be. This is the confidence I have in Him, that because I ask according to His will for a poor sinner's soul, I shall be heard, and the thing I want given. Jesus said, 'Ask, and ye shall receive.' I tell you, Reynolds, I won't leave off praying to-night till your heart is turned."

"Well then you'll pray till morning, and find me all the same."—"No, I'm sure I need not pray so long; but if I do, I know you'll be brought round some day. You will have a soft heart soon." And again William knelt down, and poured out with intense longing, his prayer for Reynolds. Before morninglight appeared, William felt the hand of the old soldier on his shoulder, who in a choking voice said, "Stop, stop, don't pray any more for me. Tell me what words to

pray. Oh, I want to pray, but I can't. You must teach me; give me words." And humbly did he repeat after the lad simple petitions for mercy. When marching time came, he pleaded to be allowed another such night. "Yes, if we are all spared to see it."

At night, after the usual reading, Reynolds implored William to pray again with him. Walter said William was not fit for night work, nor he either, for the journey had nearly exhausted them.

"Oh, but I am a miserable sinner; I cannot sleep; I cannot pray as I need; oh, do pray, do; if I die, what will come of me?" "Well," said Walter, "we'll take it by turns to pray with you." And thus they spent what proved to be their last night together. At first the agony of Reynolds' mind mocked all attempts to comfort him; and William felt it was right to plead that this sorrow might deepen and not pass away. He feared to heal the wound too soon, and therefore strove to set vividly before Reynolds' mind all the travail of soul Jesus endured for sinners, contrasting His love with man's ungrateful unconcern for His own salvation. But as the cross was held up to his view, faith was given Reynolds to look up and believe all his sins had been nailed there.

This night of prayer was a blessed season to each of these men; and when, just before

marching, they united in one last pouring forth of their souls before their Master, they felt strengthened for whatever cross the day might bring. They parted in sure hope that they should meet in glory. "Not again on earth," was Walter's impression; something whispered in his heart that he was almost home. But William could not believe a trial so fearful could be near, as parting with his only earthly friend.

That day, two of the three fell in the fierce conflicts they were engaged in. Reynolds was borne to a hospital tent, where he lingered in much suffering about forty-eight hours. As he looked back on the past, he could hardly believe that he was going to his Willy's Saviour. Bitterly did he regret having left the little Bible at Cawnpore, with his other things. He was enabled patiently to bear his pain, and told those about him, that it gave him real joy to suffer: for patience and thankfulness were all the proofs he could leave to his comrades, that his conversion was sincere. On the second day, to his glad surprise, William walked in; but oh, so unlike his former self, ghastly white, his eyes swelled and red with weeping.

"Why, William, what's come over you," said Reynolds, frightened at the intensity of sorrow he beheld. "I only heard this morning you were dying," said William.

"Where's Walter?" Kneeling by the charpoy, William whispered, "Gone home to Jesus. The love of Christ has taken him safe there." Then bursting into a violent flood of tears, he said he was heartbroken, he should soon follow.

"Nay, then," said Reynolds, "it ill becomes me to speak a word to you; but yet it seems to me as if you did wrong to grieve so hard. Walter's safe home. You wouldn't choose pain rather than glory for him? You will come soon. But there are many souls to be sought out. Won't you be glad to work again? Just think how, when I get to glory, I'll tell Jesus all the pains you took for me; and won't it add to your joy to see me there? Now go and speak and pray the same with others."

"I'll stay beside you till you go," said William.

"Yes, do, and tell me the hymn again. I know the texts. And William pray for me, and thank the Lord for turning such a stony heart." Presently he said, "William, if you get back to — again, will you give the lady a message for me?"—"Oh no, I can't indeed. My brother gave me one for her; and if I get back, I'll try to give it right. But my memory seems all going. Indeed I couldn't remember any other message than his."

"I happened at the time," said the soldier who told me these particulars, "to be on guard over the wounded, and offered to bring down any message, if my life was spared. So he asked me to tell you all this about him, because he knew you would keep on praying, as you had promised his boy. And he thought it would cheer you to hear of such a change in him; and he hoped you would hold on praying hard all your life, 'because,' he said, 'if a heart so set up strong in wickedness as mine has been brought down low, she need never feel so anxious about others. None could be harder—few so hard. She need only pray, and of course as the Lord's mind is of the same wish, she must always get her answer.' He died that night in calm assurance that all his sins had been 'wiped out' of the book before God. And so, ma'am, I've given his message, and I hope it has not kept you too long."

The reader may believe that I earnestly assured him that I was not wearied by his tale; and gratefully thanking him for all the trouble he had taken, proposed we should read a little of God's word together. We thus enjoyed a few minutes' converse on those truths and that Saviour so dear to each. May we have grace soon to join those gone before to glory! Perhaps while I write, the pious

narrator of Reynolds' conversion and death is already there.

Dear believing readers, is there not here a lesson and a precious encouragement for you? You are daily approaching a treasury of grace, whose contents are boundless, because the Lord of that treasury is Himself a God of infinite mercy. Oh, why is it that you draw so little out of its priceless stores? Why is it that the "little flock" is so lifeless, so little full of the Spirit, so little constrained by redeeming love? Why is it that it numbers so few amongst the multitudes of earth? Is it not in part that we fail to lay hold of the promises with the strong hand of faith? We ask little, and therefore get comparatively little.

Jesus our Master is even now pleading for us. Shall not *we* then, in whose hearts He has planted His love, be workers together with Him in interceding for those still without? For even hereunto were we called to be a "royal priesthood."

Dear friends, our Redeemer, according to His promise, will "come quickly." If our hearts beat high with rejoicing expectation of soon seeing His face, if that hope of His appearing is all our comfort, the chief subject of our thoughts, does not one awful remembrance damp even the joy of our prospects? Does not thought sometimes rest

on those to whom it will be the day of final doom? To those who realize the blessed safety of being hid in the cleft of the Rock of Ages, such doom seems too heart-rending to dwell on. And indeed it is vain to weep over those that are lost, who have died without hope. Yet let them sometimes be remembered, to quicken our cold zeal, our flagging efforts, our selfish resting in our own deliverance from the bondage of Satan. There are many that should engage our thoughts, and awaken our compassion; many wanderers in life's highway; many that are weak, needing a helping hand; many sorrowing, weary pilgrims, to whom we might bring comfort. Shall we not follow the footsteps of our Master, and sacrifice self for these? Let us be earnest for others, making their cases as our own. Let us bind them to our hearts, and rest not till, as Willy said, they are "constrained" by the love of Christ; for He has said, "According to your faith, be it unto you."•

• Matt. ix, 29.

