

SOME  
STRAIGHTSMOUTH  
STORIES

W. G. TURNER

# SOME STRAIGHTSMOUTH STORIES

*STRIKING INCIDENTS OF GOSPEL WORK*

BY

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## SOME STRAIGHTSMOUTH STORIES

IN response to repeated requests these stories of the Lord's good and gracious dealings are now issued.

One instinctively recoils from mentioning oneself; but having been privileged to stay at Straightsmouth from the very first day and so to witness the rise, decline and revival of the work there, an occasional personal reference can scarcely be avoided.

A true story of God's patience, grace and willingness to use the most insignificant instruments under unlikely conditions can hardly fail to encourage the reader, and this is the reason for writing.

The writer gratefully confesses that,

“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,” and firmly believes that God’s “hitherto” is always the promise of the “henceforth.”

For obvious reasons, names of living persons are not given in the stories though the originals will readily be recognized by those who know them.

# PART I

## STRAIGHTSMOUTH—THE PLACE AND HISTORY

STRAIGHTSMOUTH, at any rate, possesses a distinctive name. One member on the staff of the leading local paper, however, assured the writer he had never heard of it, and had no idea where it was situated. Thanks be to God it is a place well known in heaven, for to many the Iron Room has often become “none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven,” as their souls have met their Saviour there.

Originally the Iron Room stood in a piece of waste land known locally as “the

field," and one of the earliest remembrances of it is as a playground for about the roughest class of lads to be found in south-east London. The meetings were constantly enlivened by volleys of stones being thrown on to the corrugated iron roof; the sound inside as they rattled down can be better imagined than described. To this general annoyance a particular one was added during the summer months, owing to the lads chalking wickets on the sides of the building. The constant *thud* of the cricket balls against the fence, accompanied by the shouts and yells of the players as they quarrelled and disputed, did not contribute to a reverent quietness in the building.

Fences had to be erected and re-erected, as most of the growing lads were of the type that finds pure pleasure in wanton annoyance and destruction.

The Iron Room, Straightsmouth, Greenwich, was opened in 1902 for the following purposes:

1. For the Breaking of Bread, according to the word of the Lord Jesus for a continual remembrance of Himself in His death until His return. Acts xx, 7. 1 Cor. xi, 23-28.

2. As a place where prayer is wont to be made for all men according to 1 Tim. ii, 1-3.

3. As a preaching station where the Gospel of the grace of God should be continually proclaimed; and the past humiliation of the Son of God, His present exaltation and patience, and His coming glories constantly affirmed.

4. As a Sunday School for the benefit of the children of the district according to the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, "It is not the will of your Father that one of

these little ones should perish." "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

5. As a place where God's holy word may be constantly ministered for the edification, exhortation and encouragement of God's people.

In short, it was opened, and through God's mercy continues open, for the fostering of Christian fellowship in separation from evil, and the furtherance of Christ's interests in the needy district.

When, in 1904, a census of attendances at so-called places of worship in London was being taken, the Iron Room, Straightmouth, appeared as follows:

	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>	<i>Children.</i>	
Morning	12	12	7	31
Evening	12	13	40	65

Of the men at the evening counting, one was a godly old man then living opposite

the building, whose infirmities prevented him from going farther afield, but he continued coming until he went home to be "with Christ." The additional woman was one who, living near by, has continued to attend with very rare absences from the day of opening. These were for many years the only two adults who came in to the Iron Room from the immediate district, our other neighbours—while tolerant—being neither interested in us nor our doings. Owing to causes unnecessary to specify, by the year 1916 the numbers were so reduced as to be almost too few to carry on at all.

Few came in the morning, even fewer in the evening, and a small Sunday School of about fifty children was the only apparent sign of activity. One Sunday evening, only two persons came beside the preacher, but one elderly man assured the writer that

he would be coming as long as the door was opened. This valiant resolution, however, waned, and a few weeks later the pitiful decision was made by the two or three left that we must close down.

So it was suggested to the writer that: "If you want to keep the Sunday School on, you had better take the place on yourself and pay the expenses; then we will continue to come in the morning and give you whatever is collected." The expenses then averaged only fifteen shillings per week, all over, but collections rarely rose above six or seven shillings. Thank God, the doors were kept open, and some work continued amongst the children.

A crisis had, however, arrived, both in the affairs of the Iron Room and in the inner life of the writer, too.

The utter hopelessness of the situation on account of his own helplessness and

lack of fellow-workers literally drove him to wait upon the Lord for clear, plain, evident guidance in the matter. Obtaining leave of absence from business one Tuesday, the whole morning was spent in seeking to get in real touch with God about the matter in hand. But one quickly found that self-examination, self-judgment, confession of much failure, were the first matters to be settled; and then liberty in prayer for light as to the will of the Lord for His work at Straightsmouth was granted.

It was a searching and humbling experience (one, alas! that has had to be often repeated), as sins of omission and commission quietly came into vivid consciousness in the light of God's holy presence. Pride, envy, jealousy, evil-speaking, sloth, and all the rest of the evil brood had to be identified, confessed, and

put away. Many confessions had to be made not only to God but to others; and *then* the help of the Lord began to come in a marked way.

The Lord so laid the burden of the neighbourhood upon one's heart, that there was no further doubt remaining as to continuing in the work there; and a glimpse of the possibility of the building being yet filled with genuine worshippers, remembering the Lord there at His table, was given as a cheer and encouragement. That marked a distinct turning-point in the work at Straightsmouth, and is given here in detail so that any worker in similar difficulties may find the sure way out if he will take it.

The neighbourhood had by this time very considerably improved, owing to a good deal of building which, in a short time, covered the whole of "the field"

in which the Iron Room stood. Incidentally this enlarged the scope of work. But our new neighbours, with some rare exceptions, were totally indifferent to us and never thought of entering the doors.

The time had, however, come; and, in September, 1916, the Lord sent two very willing, whole-hearted workers in the persons of two sisters who felt led to come from a neighbouring gathering and offer to help in any way.

Instead of carrying on open-air meetings as before alone, one now had the assistance of these two sisters in singing the hymns and forming a congregation. How they prayed and worked! It seems as though the tide was really turned by their hearty fellowship in the gospel. After singing hymns on "the green" then right in front of the Iron Room, they would go from house to house and gather some in to the

preaching. Every Lord's Day evening, and every Thursday, these two devoted helpers somehow managed to form a nucleus of a congregation which, thank God, never went back again.

The first Sunday night of September, 1916, some eighteen persons were brought in, the next the number had risen to thirty-five, and when, on the third Sunday evening, it reached fifty-three we ceased to count, because never since has it gone back. At the close of the meeting we would *all* again sally forth for the preaching in the street outside, until compelled, by sheer inability, to desist.

Times of real blessing were granted us and conversions began to be frequent. There was, of course, a growing opposition but this was a sign that the kingdom of darkness was being disturbed. Help began to be offered both by personal

service, and of other kinds necessary to the carrying on of active gospel effort in such a district. We had "gospel teas" occasionally and saw some fruit from these. Coffee and cakes, too, were frequently provided by a brother from a neighbouring gathering as an inducement to some of the very roughest lads in the district to come to a straight evangelistic talk. The good brother used to take charge of the lads, while the writer spoke to them. Sometimes odd things happened, and they took charge of us both. On one well-remembered evening, after quietly leaving the hall in a body, they waited outside to bombard us with stones as we came out, and thoughtfully included handfuls of mud, to soften the force presumably. I did not exactly enjoy it myself, but felt much more concerned about the good brother, one quite unused to such unmerciful treatment.

Still, he bravely stuck it, and was then, and has consistently remained to this day, a real friend to the work at Straightsmouth.

When called to visit a young man in the Miller Hospital, some years after, the dying man with a smile recalled those stormy nights at the Iron Room in which he had once taken such willing part.

From Blackheath, too, at that time came one, now with the Lord, whose shrewd, practical advice and personal help was a great gain to us in many ways. To his son, too, an energetic, gifted young brother, we owed (under God) an impetus given to special work amongst lads and young men. His generous, patient, self-sacrificing labour while he was with us, is deeply engraven upon the hearts of all who were privileged to be fellow-workers with him during that period. For energy,

enthusiasm and unfailing devotedness, some may perhaps equal, but none surpassed him, in the history of the work at Straightsmouth.

Mr. F. E. Race, of Lewisham, too, encouraged me greatly at one trying period. It was in many ways the flood-tide of fellowship. Extracts from two letters of 1921/2 will more perfectly convey this to the reader to-day. We omit irrelevant matter.

“ November, 1921.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ In response to the enquiries of some who have expressed interest in the work of the Lord at Straightsmouth, Greenwich, and wished for further information, the following statement is sent out. When the Iron Room was erected the need of the district was rightly felt to be very great,

and succeeding years have only served to throw this into greater relief, so many houses having since been built around it.

“ There are estimated to be at least 8,000 persons in this immediate neighbourhood, who attend no so-called place of worship of any kind.

“ From the time of opening the Iron Room the Sunday School and children’s work has flourished. With other departments, however, there have been many fluctuations, and in the autumn of 1916 the Gospel Meeting dwindled down to three persons, the Prayer Meeting often to two only, while the Reading Meeting and Ministry of the Word had been entirely given up. Things were at so low an ebb that it was seriously proposed to close the Iron Room altogether.

“ This, which would have been nothing short of a tragedy, so sharply exercised

the hearts of those who were most closely connected with the Sunday School that they humbled themselves before the Lord and sought His reviving grace. The few who felt this were then led to make a renewed effort, and since that time the Lord's blessing has manifestly rested upon not only the School, but the work at Straightsmouth in all its branches.

“ At the present time the Sunday School fills the room *twice* each Sunday afternoon—the numbers being now 300, while the accommodation is only sufficient for about 150. The place is again filled for the gospel preaching in the evening, on one occasion as many as 170 being crowded in. The Prayer Meeting now averages an attendance of 40, nearly 100 are present at the week evening meeting for Ministry of the Word. A large Bible Class of young men and lads meets twice weekly, a

Women's Meeting is well attended, and a Children's Meeting fills the room practically each Wednesday evening, after which a class is held for instruction of christian workers.

“The assembly, too, has grown, over twenty being added during the last two years alone—in almost every case from the district by the Lord owning the ordinary preaching—and there are also a dozen others desirous of fellowship.

“Two years ago a meeting for fellowship was commenced on the first Saturday of each month, and goodly companies from the London meetings have assembled month by month, and heard with profit addresses from our brethren Messrs. W. J. Hocking, George Cox, Theo. Davis, Charles Hall, Dr. Wreford and others.”

(The rest of this letter, being an appeal

for financial help towards a larger building, is omitted.)

\* \* \* \* \*

“ The response to our circular letter of a year ago to those who had expressed interest in the work of the Lord at Straightsmouth was threefold.

“ Some gave generous help as they were led; others, beside sending to our need, expressed thanks for the cheer and hope that the Lord’s working in our midst had awakened in themselves; others, the far fewer in number, gave us the benefit of their brotherly criticism. But the Lord graciously owned the liberality of His people and poured us out a year of blessing.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ There are still 8,000 persons in the immediate neighbourhood, who attend no

so-called place of worship of any kind.  
*Are these to be reached ?*

“ At the present time the Iron Room and the new Hut erected last year are *filled twice* each Sunday afternoon. In the evening the Iron Room is again so uncomfortably crowded, frequently 180 being crowded into the space intended for 150. The Prayer Meeting is very largely attended—usually an average of 60 being present, and at the week evening meeting for Ministry of the Word we number roughly 100. The Young Men’s Bible Class meets three times per week in the Hut, a large Women’s Meeting is held weekly, the Children’s Meeting is also well attended. The regular house-to-house visitation and distribution of thousands of “ Messengers ” each month, together with two open-air meetings weekly throughout the year, is a distinct feature of the work

here, and to our knowledge one that is very greatly blessed. For this, as for all, we give our God and Father the glory, and count upon His continued help in this, to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The “Hut,” or temporary room, put up for the young men’s classes and Infants’ School, was erected in December last, at a cost of nearly £200, towards which the sum of £98 was contributed by readers of our letter, and acknowledged by the writer.

So far this may be called the story of the place.

## PART II

### STORIES OF CONVERSIONS

ONE Lord's Day evening after the preaching, when we returned to the Iron Room from the open-air meeting which follows all the year round, two women from the district, both mothers of families, approached one of our sisters with the enquiry: "Please, miss, can you tell us how to find God?" The young sister was so taken aback by the unexpected question that she simply stammered out that very likely Mr. Turner could, and so brought them into the Iron Room. After some conversation and prayer, during which it seemed quite impossible for them

to grasp the simple way of God's great salvation, they left and returned home.

But during the night one of them could not sleep, and over and over again the things one had said passed in review until suddenly the light broke in upon her mind, and she saw for herself the love of God in Christ dying for our sins, and believed it.

"I couldn't sleep for thinking about what you said. Then it all came clear to me that Christ had died for my sins, and that I had just to trust Him, which I gladly did."

Next evening all was plain to them both; one had helped the other, and both were now rejoicing in God their Saviour; and in spite of the many ups and downs of circumstances, are still doing so.

\* \* \* \* \*

One evening, a brother, well known and

honoured in the meetings, and myself were engaged in interviewing several persons who desired fellowship at the Lord's Table. One of the number was a young woman whose replies to our brother's interrogations both encouraged and amused the writer.

The good brother made a remark to the effect: "Well, since you say you are the Lord's, perhaps you will give us some account of how it happened."

Very earnestly the sister replied: "Yes, Mr. Davis, it was like this. I always came on Sunday evenings to the meeting, although I didn't like Mr. Turner's preaching a bit, I must admit. But one evening he gave out for the closing hymn one that I was rather fond of:

' Out of my bondage, sorrow, and loss,  
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come.'

And then just as we were going to sing it, bother if he didn't up and say, 'Don't sing a word of it if it isn't true of you; if you don't really mean it. For a lie doesn't become truth by singing it.'

"I didn't like him saying it a bit, for I had been very troubled for weeks and especially during the service that night. I stood up with the rest, and just then I looked to Jesus and did mean it. So I sang with all my heart, 'Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come.'"

This was encouraging to hear, especially as some had severely criticized the use of such hymns committing the singer to a definite act.

That she did not like the preaching was a matter of taste; that the Lord was good enough to own it was a matter of grace.

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One of our "old boys," preaching recently in the Iron Room, gave the writer a real thrill as he referred to his own conversion. In the course of a good gospel address, he for a moment paused as though at a loss for words. Then, leaning over the pulpit, and pointing downwards, he exclaimed in thrilling tones: "It *is* real, it is real, friends! Ten years ago I found the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour in this very place."

A real testimony to the saving and keeping grace of the Lord Jesus. How well the scenes of the night to which he referred came back, flooding the mind with gracious memories. It was quite late on a Sunday evening, nearly ten o'clock, when the ever-loved colleague of those days brought a gang of rough lads into the Iron Room to be talked to, and pleaded with; and prayed over. Subdued and sullen they appeared,

and no response came for a long time as we sat in a rough circle. Then one was led to hazard the remark that they each knew what they ought to do, but were all afraid of one another. Suddenly one of them exclaimed: "I'm not afraid of any of them. I mean it. I'm going to take Christ as my Saviour."

The air seemed suddenly electric, and the writer was quickly led to say: "Then kneel down there and tell Him so."

There was a momentary pause, and then the lad did so. Another and another followed, and that night a rough gang of lads ceased to exist, and a band of men, whose hearts the Lord had touched, was formed in their place.

"What shall I do with these, sir?" asked one of them as he held up his pack of cards with which he used to gamble; "I shan't want them now."

We took them and several more and tore them up to the glory of God.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some weeks later, a fine, strapping, upstanding girl, with a most defiant manner, came one night after the meeting and, striding the full length of the hall, accosted the writer with: "I want you to do the same to me as you've done to my brother."

Recognizing her, I enquired, "What do you mean? What do you want me to do? I am willing to do anything I can to help you."

"I want you to save me, *now*," she replied.

"I can't possibly do that for you," I answered, "I really cannot."

Her bewildered look was only equalled

by the surprised and almost despairing remark: "Then what on earth am I to do?"

She was deeply conscious of her need, and the example of her brother had intensified this sense of want, and she had come to be saved.

"But what I cannot possibly do, there is One Who is able and willing to do, the Lord Jesus Christ Who died to save sinners like us. Will you trust Him?—He wants you more than you want Him."

She saw the point of my remark and, I believe, trusted Him there and then. At any rate, in spite of subsequent ups and downs, she is still following on to know the Lord.

## A ROUGH DIAMOND

There was in the district a gang of young fellows who absolutely, on their own confession, did not care a scrap for anybody. Their chief delight was to do all they could to annoy the neighbours, and when funds allowed to go to the cinema to see the pictures and kick up a row. One of themselves says : " Being a bit of a daredevil myself, I was one of the chief offenders. We used to get together and gamble the money away for which we had worked hard during the week. There are many other things we did in those days too numerous to mention, but I want to come straight to the point. The fact is we were dead in sin and away from God, and gradually drawing nearer and nearer to eternity, and hadn't given a thought to

it. Satan, I now see, had blinded us in our sin, and so he kept us busy piling sin upon sin, and we didn't care. But during one of the air raids on London I can well remember an incident that happened to me. One night, during a raid, I sent up a prayer to God—I prayed and said that if He would save me through the raid I would turn over a new leaf. When the next day came, I was quite well, safe and sound, but I forgot all about God then. I also forgot all about what I had promised to do, and went on in my old way of sin. But one day some people came out in the street, and spoke about a Saviour, and said that He was willing to save all who would believe on Him, and just cast themselves on Him for salvation from their sins. But although I took no notice of it then, yet when the next week they came out again and offered us lads hymn-

books, some of us took them. After the service, Mr. D—, one of the speakers, came up and asked if I would like to hear more about that Saviour. All the other chaps went except me, and I was determined not to go. I noticed they came out of the Iron Room different from what they went in. They said they had got their sins washed away and their past blotted out for good, and had a bright looking forward for eternity.

“ After a week or so I noticed something which they had, and which I knew *I had not*—real happiness. While I felt sad and miserable, *they* had the light of Jesus shining through them. My sins were unforgiven, and that made me miserable. So one night the other chaps determined to get me into the Iron Room, and they caught hold of me and carried me shoulder-

high right into the meeting. The speaker was just telling of Someone who had been taken by cruel hands and nailed on the cross between two thieves, and I looked and saw Him dying for me, and I believed it, and thanked Jesus Christ for His great love that led Him to die for me. From then onward I was to live for Him. The very next day came a temptation while at work on my round. I had been in the habit of making profits of my own, and it suddenly came to me that I would either have to give up this wrongdoing or give up Jesus Christ. I could not give Him up, so decided to give up the money-making dodge, and from then till now I have had that real happiness which can only be got by coming to Jesus and taking Him as your own personal Saviour.

“ ‘ Come to the Light, ’tis shining for thee,  
Sweetly that Light has dawned upon me;  
Once I was blind, but now I can see,  
The Light of the world is Jesus.’ ”

Then you, too, will know the joy of sins forgiven.”

But the reader may ask, “ Has it lasted, or was it only emotion ? ” Certainly there was some emotion. Great changes in lives such as these of which we write do not take place without *deep emotion* caused by a real sense of sin and a true-hearted acceptance of the sinners’ Saviour.

Thank God, we can, however, record that in the cases of most of these one-time rough lads their changed lives and characters are so real that the neighbours remark upon it. The very things which once these lads hated and despised they now find real pleasure in, and in spite of some

temporary ups and downs their lives confirm the fact of their true conversion to God. And it is their joy to witness by life and lip amongst the people who know them best that the Lord Jesus Christ does save from *the power of sin* as well as *from its penalty*.

“ He breaks the *power* of cancelled sin,  
 He sets the prisoner *free*;  
 His blood can make the foulest clean,  
 His blood avails for me.”

Any fair-minded person, listening at the open-air group and watching the happy, earnest faces of some of those who three years ago cared for none of these things, would be satisfied as to the change, especially as at the close of the meetings they so heartily sing:

“ I have such a wonderful Saviour  
 That everybody should know.”

“The blood of Jesus Christ (God’s Son) cleanseth from all sin,” 1 Jno. i, 7. It was this text that led Captain Hedley Vicars to say, “Then by God’s help I will live as a blood-washed man from to-day.” Like the Greenwich lad whose true story you have read, the heart of the educated army officer felt his desperate need of a Saviour—*do you?*—and accepted Him as his own Saviour—HAVE YOU?

\* \* \* \* \*

On the outskirts of the little crowd listening to our young men preaching in the open air one Sunday—a bitter, cold night—there was standing a big, rough-looking fellow who seemed particularly interested as one of our younger and smaller fellows was speaking.

Anticipating what he told us a few weeks

later, his thoughts as he watched the rather diminutive preacher ran somewhat like this: "Poor little kid; poor little nipper, to stand there and make such a fool of himself. But he must have some pluck to do it. I wouldn't have the courage myself. Wonder why he does it."

The actual happenings were, that he stayed on until the crowd dispersed, when one of our young brothers quietly got into conversation with him and brought him along to the Iron Room. Nothing further except an invitation to come the next night, which he did. The next night was the Assembly Prayer Meeting and he made very little of it all. But again, keeping by him, they invited him to come to the Hut the next night, which he very willingly did. He was a lonely fellow, and was not used to so much kindly interest being taken in

him by comparative strangers. At the Hut on Tuesday evenings our lads spend an hour or so reading, writing or playing simple games amongst themselves, ending up with a time of Bible study. It is a kind of home under definite Christian auspices. Our new friend was struck by the absence of quarrelling and swearing and by the way the lads took their defeat if they lost at the games. But when the hour's Bible reading following came, he could not make much more of that than he had of the Prayer Meeting in the Iron Room the previous night. Still, he stayed through it. When a couple of the brothers, who are responsible for the Tuesday evenings, were clearing up preparatory to leave, they began to speak of the Lord and one made a reference to Him giving Himself a ransom for all. The new fellow, who was lingering about, overheard this

remark, and broke in with : “ Does that mean Jesus Christ died for *me* as well as you chaps ? I never knew that.”

“ Well, that’s the idea,” was the response.

“ Then could I be saved as well as you ? ” came the sharp rejoinder.

“ That’s up to you ; if you trust Him with all your heart, you will be ” ; and further conversation on the way of salvation followed.

Thanks be to God, for some months now this new convert has been holding on his way. What rejoices the writer is to see the desire for soul-winning so manifest in those who have themselves been won for Christ in the Iron Room, Straightsmouth.

This time a girl is the subject of the story. She was brought to the place by one who is indefatigable in recruiting for the Lord, and yet holds back from His table from a sense of unworthiness. She is so afraid of letting the Lord's name down in the eyes of the world, and so to our sorrow is not yet numbered amongst those who obey His word as to the Breaking of Bread. How much one would like to see similar sensitiveness and a more careful outward testimony on the part of many who apparently have little idea of the real solemnity of the position often so lightly taken. But that is another thing. This young sister brings her workmates from the factory whenever she can induce them to come. She brought a young woman to the Prayer Meeting one evening. The visitor could make neither head nor tail of the proceedings. What a lot of

young men wanted to come to such a meeting for, she could not understand. Why they got up one by one and prayed, and who told them what to say when they did pray, she could not imagine. But her curiosity was aroused, and her friend soon explained things to her, and was used of the Lord to her conversion. To-day she, also, is numbered amongst the praying band. It fills one's heart with hopefulness and gratitude to our gracious Lord who deigns to use the humblest instrumentalities for His purposes of blessing.

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#### CAUGHT IN THE ACT

He was a lad about fourteen years old, who worked in a fish shop. A careless, godless boy he was, who never thought

about either God or his own soul, but even at his age, drank, gambled and thieved when there was a chance of escaping detection. One day, while he was left in the shop alone, he was tempted to steal some of his governor's money from the till. He put his hand in the till and took out a shilling; but at the very moment he had the coin in his hand, the son stepped into the shop and caught him. The open till, the shilling, and the telltale look on his face was enough. The son of the governor of the shop said to him, "I could tell my father and get you the sack, and tell your mother, too, and disgrace you."

The boy, thoroughly frightened, pleaded with him not to say anything, but to let him off and give him another chance, which the young man did. But now that he was forgiven he did not care a bit; he soon got over the fright of having been caught and

still went on in the same old wicked, careless fashion, until one Sunday—it was Sunday, October 15th, 1922, he went with a band of young fellows into a house to drink and gamble. While they were thus engaged wasting the hours of the Lord's Day in this godless occupation, the sound of singing in the street outside arrested their attention. An open-air service was being started right outside the house where they were. This amused and annoyed these young fellows and disturbed them, so one of them said to the lad of our story: "I bet you two bob you don't go out and join in the singing, or kick up a row with those chaps there."

"I bet you two bob I do," replied the lad, and getting up from the table he and two of his mates went out to upset the meeting. *But it was they who' were themselves upset.* As happened in the case of

stealing the shilling from his employer's till, when he was caught in the act and forgiven; so once more this lad was to be caught in the act and to be forgiven again by One against Whom he was sinning. When these three turbulent youths reached the open-air ring in the middle of the street opposite the house, the hymn being sung made him feel rather queer. It was:

“ Where will you spend Eternity ?  
This question comes to you and me!  
Tell me, what shall your answer be—  
Where will you spend Eternity ?  
Eternity! Eternity!  
Where will you spend Eternity ?

Many are choosing Christ to-day,  
Turning from all their sins away;  
Heaven shall their blessed portion be  
Where will you spend Eternity ?

Leaving the straight and narrow way,  
Going the downward road to-day,

What shall the final ending be?—  
Where will you spend Eternity?

Turn and believe this very hour,  
Trust in the Saviour's grace and power;  
Then shall your joyous answer be,  
Saved through a long Eternity!  
Eternity! Eternity!  
Saved through a long Eternity!

The singing of this hymn with the constant repetition of the word *Eternity* made the little gang serious, and instead of making a row they quietly stood and listened to the speaker. While they were standing on the edge of the ring, a young man came over to them and asked if they knew anything about Eternity or what it all meant.

“No, we don't,” they replied, and he then explained to them the way of salvation open for any lost sinner, however bad, who turns to the Lord Jesus Christ and trusts

entirely in Him. As they were listening, the lad of our story saw it all. He said it all became quite plain to him, and to use his own words, "*then God stepped in and saved me.*" A careless, godless, drinking, gambling youth, out with the very purpose of upsetting the open-air service of God's people, and yet, by believing the truth of God's love for sinners—proved by giving His Son to be our Saviour—this very youth finds himself *caught in the act and forgiven.*

This is the experience of the writer and of millions more, for God delights in mercy as His word states (Micah vii, 18). "Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity? . . . because He delighteth in mercy."

## THIS MAN

At the close of a gospel service, a lady who had come into the Iron Room out of curiosity, came to the preacher and said: "Will you pray for me?"

The preacher replied, "With pleasure—but what is the matter?" "Oh!" she said, bursting into tears, "I have not heard anything like what you said to-night before. I am a Roman Catholic, and all my life I have gone to a man to confess my sins, not knowing of this."

The address had been based upon the words "*This Man*," which constantly occur in the Gospels in a very striking connection. "*This Man* receiveth sinners and eateth with them," Luke xv, 2. "I find no fault in *this Man*," Luke xxiii, 4. "They cried out all at once, saying, 'Away with *this Man*,'" Luke xxiii, 18.

“*This Man* hath done nothing amiss,” Luke xxiii, 41. “Truly *this Man* was the Son of God,” Mark xv, 39. “Be it known unto you, therefore . . . that through *this Man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things,” Acts xiii, 38. “*This Man*, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,” Heb. x, 12, 14. It was this latter word which seemed to reach her very soul as she listened. “This Man, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins sat down.”

She had been trusting to the constant offering of the Mass—the Sacrifice of the Mass—as she had learned to call it, and it had never given her peace with God. Neither had her repeated confessions to the

priest satisfied the longing desire for real forgiveness of sins.

But now, through *this Man, and His one sacrifice for sins*, light and release from the burden came.

The old-time question put to Rebekah, in the distant days of the patriarchs, was put to this seeking soul in "Christian" England in the twentieth century: "Wilt thou go with *this Man*?" She said, "What will the priest say?"

The preacher pointed her to the real Priest—God's great High Priest, Christ Jesus—the only Mediator between God and man, Who gave Himself a ransom for all. "Wilt thou go with *this Man*?" Will you accept Him as your only but all-sufficient Saviour, and go with Him?

In the case of the lady in question, she decided wholly for Him: "I will go."

## A GREAT CHANGE

One sultry August evening, we had just finished our last Sunday night open-air service on the Green (as it was then) at Straightsmouth, and the writer had gone over to the Iron Room preparing to go home, when in came a gang of rough lads and youths escorted by one who was, at that time, wonderfully successful in recruiting young fellows for Christ's service. His keen, frank, genial heartiness appealed to them, and on this particular evening, filled with an unquenchable zeal, he had tackled this gang, and had so talked to them that they all professed a desire to be different from what they had been.

They admitted that they spent their Sundays chiefly in gambling away their week's wages and any money they could get; the police they regarded as their

natural enemies; at home most of them found their room preferred to their company; their language was neither polite nor refined, as a general thing; and the fact of being spoken to pleasantly by a gentlemanly fellow not much older than themselves, somehow, after the first strangeness, won their hearts. He, on that never-to-be-forgotten evening, so aroused their interest that they were willing to come into the hall and hear more about the subject.

They certainly were the class of lad that has no use for what they call religion. One of them afterwards told me he had no idea what churches and chapels were for, or what people did in them. He related how, on one occasion, his curiosity led him to hang round the door of the parish church for some time, watching the people go in and wondering how much was

charged for admission. Seeing no prices up anywhere, he did not like to go in for fear the charge was too much. This in Christian England, in the twentieth century, and in the heart of the Empire! Was the late Bishop of Zanzibar so very far out when he called it "Pagan" London?

It was quite late, and being myself very tired after a long and full day, I distinctly remember for a moment feeling sorry that my colleague's youthful energy had led him to bring such a batch of young fellows in at that time of night. However, he explained that having spoken to them pretty straight, they were willing to hear some more, and would I just take on, and he would pray for blessing.

Although all these years have passed the scene is vividly distinct, as they filed in and all sat round in chairs in a kind of semi-

circle. A more serious, glum, uncomfortable-looking lot of fellows I suppose it would be hard to find. But they were all deeply stirred by a sense of not being what they should be, and somehow, uneasily, wanted to be better.

I spoke to them of their sins and of the Saviour Who died for them, and they grew quieter and more interested, until the definite question was put: "Who is going to take the Lord Jesus Christ now as his own Saviour?"

No answer; a long pause; the question repeated followed by dead silence. We prayed and waited; and then I suggested that perhaps it was fear of their pals, or fear of what people at home or at work might say that was keeping them back from making the most important decision that a man is ever called upon to make, namely, *Christ for me.*

At last, after one and another had intimated that they would if the others did, being all members of one gang, I reminded them that, as Bunyan says: "*Every tub must stand on its own bottom*"; and that the word of God says: "*Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*"

We pressed the absolute need of individual personal decision for Christ; of individual personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour; and of individual personal confession of Christ then and there.

At last one, and, thank God, one who has stood firm and faithful ever since, said: "Well, *I will*, whatever the other chaps do."

In a few minutes, lad after lad knelt and made his confession of Christ as Saviour. It was a wonderful time, and God honoured the zeal and faith of my colleague that night, for the genuineness of their

conversion was confirmed by their changed lives. Packs of playing cards were at once torn up or given up without any pressure on our part. Gambling died a natural death. Cigarettes were soon dropped. Very soon some of that gang, which had been such terrors in the neighbourhood, were to be seen witnessing for Christ their Saviour in the streets where they lived. Only a few months ago the writer's heart leaped for joy when, standing in the open-air ring, one of this very band testified: "You know me, friends, you all know where I live; it's just ten years ago since I took the Lord as my Saviour over the road there. It's been a hard fight sometimes, very hard, but I am still here to-night to invite you to come to Him, too." Looking around the street, as I stood listening, I saw many who knew that young fellow ten years ago. But unless you *did* know

him, you would never have dreamed that he was the same man. For when a man truly accepts Christ as his Saviour, and loyally submits to Him as his Lord, the change is so great that it can only be described as being "all things new." A "new" birth into God's family by faith in Christ Jesus; a "new creation" in Christ Jesus; His workmanship "created in Christ Jesus" unto good works. There is, of course, a mighty change wrought in the one who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ; but there is also an equally mighty change wrought outwardly. But to return to our gang of lads: on the next evening they turned up again full of joy and equally full of questions as to what next. By the following Sunday night some other members of that gang had come forward and confessed Christ as their Saviour.

One of the first things they learned was

that the same One Who is *able to save*, is also *able to keep*. This is the secret of continuance—Christ able to keep me, and constantly looked to, for to do so.

## PART III

### STORIES OF VISITING

SOME stories, taken at random as to dates, may interest and awaken prayerful sympathy in the heart of the Christian reader, and encourage him in this branch of the Lord's work.

One Sunday evening, at about eleven o'clock, a sharp knock and hasty ring called me to the street door.

"Mr. Turner live here?" queried the nocturnal visitor.

"Yes," I replied.

"Can I see him at once?"

"Well," I replied, "what can I do for you?"

“ You—him ? ”

“ Yes, what is it ? ”

“ Well, sir, a woman’s gone mad down Deptford. She is one of your people. Her husband says will you come at once ? They can’t do nothing with her ? ”

My family having all gone to bed, I went upstairs and told my wife not to worry if I happened to be late, and then set out with my guide. It was a poor, low street, and the tiny house was crowded with neighbours and curious folk, giving voluble advice to the distracted husband. I quietly told him to turn them all out of the room where his wife was lying. She was hysterically sobbing and shrieking. He did so, and seemed greatly relieved when, after my taking her hand, and talking quietly to her for a time, she gradually became calmer. Then reading and talking to her about the Lord (for she

was a real believer) and praying with her, she by and by fell asleep; and shaking hands with the husband, I prepared to depart. When leaving the house, to my surprise a young woman, calling me by my name, asked if she might walk along with me as part of her way home lay along the same road. As we walked she told me how exercised she was by things she had heard at the Iron Room, and after some conversation she assured me that she had been brought to the Saviour that night. The years since of consistent Christian walk go to confirm her statement.

\* \* \* \* \*

An urgent request to visit a dying man in our local hospital was sent by his wife.

On reaching the hospital ward, the nurse said: "Just in time, sir, he is very low."

I passed inside the screen drawn around his bed and there found him lying with closed eyes and apparently almost gone. The laboured breathing and other signs showed the end to be very near. The natural instinct of every believing child of God led me to lift my heart to God in a swift prayer for help and guidance. It seemed a hopeless case, for the man was very old, and apparently unconscious. Then into my mind came the thought of saying the twenty-third Psalm. I bent over and whispered it slowly and distinctly in his ear; but no sign of having even heard it appeared; until, on beginning the fourth verse, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil," although his eyes still remained closed, his lips seemed to be trying to form the words with me, and so continued until the end of the

psalm. Then with a flicker of his eyelids he hoarsely whispered: "My mother taught me that." He rallied a little, and later on I gathered that he truly trusted Christ as his Saviour and had once been in fellowship, but had backslidden, and now very badly wished to return. This, I am thankful to believe, he really did.

All visiting is not of this character, nor ends so satisfactorily. Having said and done all one can, there is, oftentimes, the haunting sense that it is of no avail. Some who appeared true penitents on what they feared was their deathbed, on recovering flung all their profession to the winds.

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When visiting a man whom the doctor had given up, his wife, who was watching at the other side of the bed, suddenly

exclaimed: " Mr. Turner, sir, I ain't used to this sort of thing. He's dying fast, ain't he? Well, will you be so kind as to arrange about the coffin and bury him proper, sir? "

The poor man on the bed could hear quite well, but couldn't speak; imagine his feelings as his heartless spouse so briskly made his funeral arrangements. He did not die that night, but lived for several months longer. The smell of that awful room; the drink-laden air; the bluebottle flies, and worse, the gasping, choking patient, and the heartless, maudlin wife, recalls the awful feeling of nausea on that stifling summer night with window fast closed, and a big fire burning in the grate. While reading, praying and watching, one perspired almost as in a Turkish bath. In earlier days the man had been associated with a well-known

brother in aggressive Christian work, but drink and bad companions had dragged him down into the very gutter. He professed repentance and faith in Christ before he passed away, and one hoped it was genuine—at any rate it appeared so.

\* \* \* \* \*

One amusing story may be permitted, perhaps, of a tiny child in an isolation hospital, down with scarlet fever. She was the first child and her distracted mother begged the writer to visit her.

“They won’t allow us in to see her,” she pleaded, “and she is too young to be able to write to us or to read letters from us. Will you just go and see her and tell us how she is getting on?”

The mother, who was in such obvious distress, had herself been one of our

Sunday School children, and naturally one went. It was a journey of twelve miles, but with a nicely-dressed doll from one of our sisters and a box of chocolates begged from another, the writer went to see little Joan.

She was very pleased, and, when leaving, one promised to come again and left to the accompaniment of waving hands from all the little patients in the ward. The sequel was the pathetically amusing part; for a Bank Holiday intervening, the parents spent the day in going to the hospital and walking round the walls, speculating as to which part of it their little girl was in. Arriving at last once more at the entrance they enquired the latest news of the child, and were told she was making progress. The mother broke down completely at leaving, and just then the medical superintendent came through

the gates. He sympathetically enquired as to the cause of her grief, and after a moment turned to the porter instructing him to telephone the sister that little Joan had a visitor and might be brought out on the balcony for a few moments.

He then told the mother to go up the drive and wait at the bottom of the steps leading to the balcony, saying she might just wave to her little girl. Mother arrived first, and after a few moments the door opened and a nurse brought the little one to the balcony. She had told her that a visitor had come to see her. As the child's eyes fell upon the figure of her mother standing, her little face clouded for a second and she exclaimed, "Oh! Mummy, you?—I thought it was Mr. Turner."

The mother subsequently told me that her feelings could better be understood

than described, although, of course, delighted to see the child again looking so well. It may have been a case of cupboard love, but I rather think that, having been possibly the only visitor in the children's ward, it had made a rather deeper impression on her mind especially as she was expecting me again. Still—poor mother!

\* \* \* \* \*

The visiting is much the more exhausting part of mission work. Not only the depressing sights and scenes, but the ever-recurring question on the lips of anxious parents and friends: "Why does the Almighty allow it?" makes this part of the work rather exacting.

Even under the happiest auspices in visiting, to have read the 23rd Psalm or

the 14th chapter of John by request some four or five times by sick beds in one afternoon, and to have engaged in prayer the same number of times in almost the same words, tends to become a danger to one's own spiritual sensitiveness. Yet such is frequently the case, and cannot well be avoided.

Or, taking as a typical morning's visits from one's own notebook, the following is the order that the calls were made (1) A sick girl, a young believer, whose father had but recently died, herself suffering from some undefined malady which prostrates her periodically. (2) A young woman with influenza rather badly. (3) A member of our Women's Meeting just about after her confinement, proud and happy, and wanting prayer offered for herself and the latest arrival. (4) A woman whose eldest boy was lying ill, she having

just lost her youngest daughter after eighteen months' painful illness. (5) An elderly lady recovering from bronchitis, who insists upon the visitor tasting her homemade cough mixture, *which he did*. (6) A wild, harum-scarum young girl, just getting out of hand, having no mother—yet who listens to the visitor's word with respect. (7) A lonely old man with a grudge against some of his nearest relatives, which he insists upon explaining again; a very difficult matter to get God's word in here. (8) An old lady who is stricken down to the dust by an unthinkable domestic tragedy—but listens as one tries to say some word of help. (9) A dear old sister waiting to be taken Home, yet who loves a visit, and a brief word from the Holy Scriptures. (10) A young sister who has absented herself from the meetings for some weeks, and who was restored

by means of a personal call that morning.

These would be all the visits that day, as meetings and other claims intervened.

Another afternoon: visits to six folks in the local hospital, then to an isolation hospital helped to fill the allotted time.

Time would fail to tell of the hopeless cases of suffering and poverty one knows of within a few streets of the better-class neighbourhoods. So much preventible illness and poverty mixed with so much overcrowding. There are thousands of people in the district who never seem to have the slightest chance of better conditions, and yet from them, here and there, some of our brightest converts have come.

Unemployment, age and infirmity, sickness and bereavement, make the visiting a strenuous business. To move, as one has done, from the bedside of a chronic invalid, to the next house where the man is lying dead; then off to sign pension papers in another for one who could neither read nor write and yet was all alone in advanced years; then to call on a sick man and be told, "He is not bad enough for you to see him yet; perhaps he may get better; but if he gets worse, I'll send for you in time"; and then to visit one in his last hour, who had lived a notoriously bad life, and to be prevented from saying one word about Christ by his own wife and mother because they don't want him disturbed—all this burdens the spirit with a sense of one's own utter helplessness, and of the tremendous need.

A paralysed woman, unable to use her

hands in any way, appeals to the visitor as to why the Lord has allowed it to happen to her: and one feels how different this branch of work is from mere preaching and teaching.

“ Who is sufficient for these things ? ” is the cry of the district visitor whenever he or she visits the district properly.

But wonderful openings for testimony to the grace of God and to the love and compassion of the blessed Saviour are afforded, and much encouragement invariably follows from this side of the Lord's work.

Many a story of earlier days spent under happier auspices has been volunteered when once the master key of sympathy has unlocked the hidden reserve of some lonely or misunderstood heart. It is indeed difficult to see how work for Christ in a poor, South London district can be

effectively carried on without systematic visiting and sympathetic interest being shown. This we have tried at Straights-mouth, and never found it fail.

## PART IV

### STORIES OF INCIDENTAL HAPPENINGS

THE opening of the "Hut," or the "'Ut," as it quickly became called, marked a real advance, as the lads and young men now possessed a room of their own where they could always feel at home. To understand what this means, one must know something of the unthinkable overcrowding prevalent in our district. It is, in many cases, simply impossible to get a moment's quiet in some of the homes. As for private reading and prayer, the prevailing conditions make it entirely out of the question for many of our folks.

Imagine yourself the only professing

Christian in the home, and being made the general butt of the family because you have confessed Christ. Imagine yourself, *just for once*, losing control of your temper and answering back, thereby eliciting a volley of uncomplimentary remarks upon your religion, and being reminded that they don't seem to do *you* much good at the Iron Room. Only those who live amongst it know how galling things can become—and so, in God's goodness, by the liberality of His people, we built and opened the Hut.

The Bible Classes still flourish after years that have elapsed, and one great joy and encouragement to the present writer is to be able to attend them twice a week, Sunday afternoons and Tuesday evenings.

But a fresh crop of lads has arisen at Straightsmouth and these are as keen in carrying on both at the Hut and in the

open-air work round the district as ever their predecessors were. Recently one of our older men remarked to the writer: "It does your heart good to see the fresh lot of young ones coming on, doesn't it?" *It does!* One has often been stimulated by remembering a remark of the beloved colleague of other days who, when looking at a group of youngsters who had been brought in by him, said: "Don't despise them, governor, if the Lord tarries, in five years' time they will be men."

They are, and many of them stalwart Christian men, too, who are not easily turned aside from the work.

\* \* \* \* \*

A sister, whose name is a household word in the district, when visiting the homes with *Messengers*, was constantly

met by polite refusals to come to the gospel meetings, on the ground that they, the women, had no possible opportunity of getting out in time on Sundays. With father staying in bed until past mid-day to recuperate after a week's work and a very strenuous Saturday's sport; and with dinner about three o'clock when the public-houses were closed; and with the children worrying to get theirs earlier so as not to miss their Sunday School marks; and with company always coming to tea about six o'clock—"Well, miss! How can I possibly get to the service?" This was often the burden of the reply, followed by the soothing assurance: "I'd willingly come, miss, if it was at a time when I could; but you see how it is with us, *you* understand, don't you?"

But our sister was a cheerful and indefatigable worker, and one day she came

to me and made a very hopeful suggestion.

“ If I could persuade, say, a dozen women to come to a gospel meeting on any particular day of the week regularly, would you come and take it ? ”

I willingly assented, hardly expecting, however, to be called upon to do so, yet hoping something might come of it. To my surprise and joy, she returned some time later, saying she had secured promises from a dozen if the meeting could be held on Tuesday afternoons. I asked her to get them to agree as to the time, and said, God willing, I would make a point of being there to speak. So a women's work began (more than the expected number turning up on the first Tuesday) which, through the goodness of God, has been much blessed of God and has become quite an institution.

The interest created by this helped wonderfully in the district; as people, who had no kind of use for what they termed religion, found themselves attracted by the old, old story, and now find they can manage to get out to some other meetings. To oneself it has become a weekly event; and is one of the meetings during the week one never misses, if possible. It is a great encouragement to the other workers also to know that some of our old scholars who have grown up and married, now come themselves and bring their children. The Women's Meeting has also helped us to get to know other folks better, and awakened a spirit of sympathetic friendship in the neighbourhood, and it was a severe blow when our sister had to leave us to take up work elsewhere. Her visits, alas, now few and far between, always afford occasions for calling forth a regular

demonstration of loving appreciation and respect from the women who learned to love her then.

\* \* \* \* \*

During the terrible air raids, of which we had a full share (one bomb actually dropping through the house next to the Iron Room), the writer used to make it his business to go round in the night after the "all clear" sounded to see that all our folks were unhurt. One extraordinarily encouraging thing learned on one of these occasions was that some of the neighbours, who were scared to death, as well they might be, used to send their children over to our Christian sisters' houses in the street, saying they would be safer there, because "the Almighty would be sure to look after His own."

When crowds from the street used to rush to the crypt of the Parish Church near by, these two dear Christian women would remain indoors with their children and some of the neighbours' children, and trust in God to protect them. Their faith was honoured, and the neighbours all knew it.

When the Armistice was signed nearly all the street wanted to come into the Iron Room to thank God. It was a most impressive sight, and gave splendid opportunity for speaking of the Lord to them, and the injunction to do so is implied in Holy Scripture by the benediction: "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass."

Some of our workers used laughingly to enquire which was which in the work—which the ox and which the ass, to which

the rejoinder would be that patient plodding and enthusiastic energy make a suitable pair when yoked in His happy service.

One amusing happening, somewhat alarming in its way, and expensive to the owners, was how Armistice Day was celebrated down our way. A huge, close-boarded fence, surrounding the waste land opposite, was requisitioned by no one knows who, and made into a glorious bonfire in the street. This incidentally opened up the waste land again, so that for several years we were able to hold open-air meetings upon it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our midnight meetings, too, have been a feature of the work at the Iron Room, for then an almost entirely fresh congregation assembles, composed of people

who will never attend any kind of so-called place of worship at any other time.

After an hour of prayer and preparation out go the band of young workers into the streets, lanes and courts and give invitations by the hundred verbally and printed, and as a result many are brought in. We have known of cases of real blessing in conversions and restorations of souls through this means.

\* \* \* \* \*

One Sunday afternoon a gang of *girls* literally stormed the place and insisted on joining the Bible Class, which, by the way, did not then actually exist. No one being prepared to tackle this interesting band of young hooligan ladies, it fell to the writer to undertake the class. They were wild, and rude, and coarse, but frank and lovable,

so the afternoon passed uneventfully until at the close, when the teacher enquired if they really intended to join the class. On their assenting, and giving their names for the register, he tried to establish friendly relations by enquiring their occupations, and where they lived.

“Me,” shouted one good-temperedly, “me, mister, why I’m a basher.”

Upon timidly enquiring what occupation that might be, she turned to the class, and prefacing her remarks with a stronger word than is customary in Bible Classes, exclaimed: “He don’t know what a basher is,” and this in a tone of pitying contempt. It transpired that the young lady was employed in a tin factory.

The next one, a much meeker type of girl, simply bleated out: “Me, why I’m a smeller, you know.”

Again noticing my air of bewilderment,

one of the others hastened to explain that this girl was employed by a brewery firm to smell returned empty bottles to detect whether they had been used for paraffin or or any obnoxious liquid.

Several weeks later some of them professed conversion, and we gathered that some living across the river had joined local mission halls there. Two of the number, however, came into fellowship and are still to be found in the Iron Room. But no stranger would recognize them, for grace changes people wonderfully.

\* \* \* \* \*

Curiously enough the back seats in the Iron Room are not in the Iron Room at all. They are in the Antipodes, in India and other far-off parts of the Empire.

Waiting for a tramcar at Blackwall

Lane, East Greenwich, recently, I was accosted by a very smart young man.

“ Good morning, sir, do you know me ? ”

I had to fall back upon the feeble apology: “ Well, I ought to, I suppose, but really I can't quite place you.”

“ I know you all right, Mr. Turner, a chum of mine showed me your photo out in India and told me all about the Iron Room; he used to belong there.” So one of our back seats is in India.

A little later came news of some who used to be in our School and Bible Class doing well in Canada, and of others corresponding regularly with people who still attend the Iron Room. So another row of our back seats is in Canada.

Then a letter from a man living happily in New Zealand, married and having a large healthy family. I imagine a third

row of our back seats is in the Antipodes, for he writes: "We never forget the good old days at the Iron Room, Straights-mouth. We often talk of what you used to say about our sins and our Saviour there on Sunday nights. We are both properly converted now, and you over there are always in our thoughts."



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