

The Great Sacrifice

OR, WHAT THE DEATH
OF CHRIST HAS WROUGHT

Twenty well-known Writers tell of the
Triumphs of Calvary.



Editors:

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FOREWORD

THIS book ought to be attractive to every reader, for it is a Gospel Book, and Gospel means Good News,* and what is more attractive than that? Naturally the value of good news depends on who sends it. We should not expect "good news" from a little child or a pauper to be worth much, but if it came from the King it would be sure to be something great, something worthy of the sender.

The GOSPEL is GOD'S GOOD NEWS.

It must then be something worthy of Him, Wonderful, Eternal, Infinite, Divine. It is all this, surpassing all that eye hath seen, that ear hath heard, and that heart can conceive.

And what is this glorious Gospel of God? The apostle tells us clearly in the fifteenth chapter of the first of Corinthians, verses 4—1.

"CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS, according to the Scriptures;

and HE WAS BURIED;

and HE ROSE AGAIN the third day, according to the Scriptures."

This is the only true Gospel, and the apostle pronounces a solemn *anathema* against anyone preaching another, be it himself, an angel from heaven, or any other preacher, Legalist,, Modernist or Ritualist (Gal. i. 8, 9).

But in order to appreciate good news, certain simple conditions must be fulfilled.

(a) *It must be understood.* In the Babel of Christendom the still small voice of the Gospel is scarcely audible, and nothing is so much misunderstood. Men think it is something they have to do, an improvement in themselves, a promise to lead a new life, to give up this or that, to join a church or observe certain religious duties. Let such compare their thoughts with the Apostle Paul's definition given above, and they will see that the Gospel is not some-

*God-spel. Anglo Saxon for good news.

Foreword

thing they are asked to do, but something Another has done for them, which they are to accept.

(b) *It must meet a felt need.* Were a sure remedy found for consumption, it would be good news to thousands of consumptive homes, but to others it would be a matter more of interest than of good news, according to the words of the Saviour, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." A reprieve from the King would be the best of news to a condemned criminal, but for a respectable citizen to receive a reprieve would be an insult. The Gospel comes to us as guilty and "condemned already," and offers pardon and salvation to all through the crucified and risen Saviour.

(c) *It must be available.* To tell sick people of a dead doctor, or of a remedy far beyond their means or reach would detract entirely from the good news. The Gospel of God brings salvation within the reach of all, on the simplest possible conditions: "It is the power of God unto salvation *to every one that believeth,*" and apart from it there is no hope for eternity.

The object of this book is once more to proclaim the glad tidings of Christ, "that all men through Him might believe."

There is general unanimity in the twenty papers, of which the book is composed, but each contributor is responsible alone for his own paper.

W. HOSTE.

R. McELHERAN.

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WHERE?

THERE!

BY ARTHUR S. BOOTH-CLIBBORN.

THE whole history of human language, in the spiritual sphere, may be reduced to two words. It can also be condensed into, and embodied in two writers signs or printers' marks.

The words are (from the side of the fallen, sinning, suffering humanity)—“WHERE?”: from the side of heaven)—“THERE!” To the agonising question of earth, “Where can salvation be found?” heaven returns the answer: “There, at Calvary!” The note of interrogation is thus answered by the note of exclamation.

The fall took place at one spot: a tree; the rising again was prepared and provided for at one spot: a tree. The first was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the second, the tree of Calvary, the tree of the knowledge of good alone (1 Cor. xv. 22; Phil. iv. 8).

At the first, man “died” to innocence, at the second, he “dies” to sin. United with Christ by faith, he becomes united to Him in His death. Death is the only exit from sin.. There is no Exodus without a death. Our Lord spake with Moses and Elias on the mount concerning the exodus which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. The word *decease* should be thus translated in this place (Luke ix. 31).

Close to Calvary's tree is a burial spot. There from

the ground, as from the dust, man may even now rise again in Christ; a new CREATION (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15).

Some deny the literal character of the story of the fall. To them the Garden of Eden, the tree, the forbidden fruit and the tempter, speaking through the serpent, are but a Babylonian legend, or at best an allegory. The answer is found at Calvary.

The "place of a skull" was a literal hill, the tree a real tree. Christ hung upon it (condemned by mankind under Satanic influence) as a dried, dead fruit—and for our sins. The one tree answers to the other. The tree of the Redemption to the tree of the Fall. Both are literal.

Thus has God blessedly simplified everything. Man alone complicates. The complete, the absolute, is never complicated. The train which remains completely on the rails can move with safety though with the greatest swiftness. True Christianity is always simple. To consent to die is simple; to seek to save one's self is infinitely complicated. All comes to this in the end: "He that saveth his life shall lose" (Matt. xvi. 25).

Take a survey of the affairs of the fallen man, in no matter what sphere, and you will see that the thousand and one complications in which he involves his life come all from one source: he is busy saving himself *from* God; saving his life *for* himself. But in that process he cannot succeed, for he can find no rest or peace. He is out of joint with the universe, being out of joint with God. Should a fish be happy out of water? Can it? Should a member—a shoulder-bone, a hip-bone—be "happy" (namely painless) at ease, at peace if dislocated? Can it? Nay, verily! It complains loudly. We never "hear from" the member which is in place. The properly articulated joint works noiselessly, painlessly, and leaves us blessedly unconscious of its existence, while we move the member about freely. It claims no attention, we do not even think of it.

There are many complications in the world just now. They are very painful. Material, moral, and spiritual problems are being made more complicated by man every day.

With God is simplicity. Let us return to Him. There is no remedy anywhere else; and certainly no peace. As for us who are believers let us make sure that our "return" has been as complete as that which we require of the unregenerate worldling when he seeks the salvation of God.

The world is uttering more and more loudly and agonisingly its pitiful "Where?" Let us not add to the pain of its perplexity by giving contradictory, or many and varied answers. Above all, let us offer none which at all resembles its own, so-called "solutions." Let us be simple and plain. We have (if we indeed belong to the New Creation) only one answer. There is only one spot to where we can point men, only one Person upon whom we would fix their gaze.

To this world's cry, "Who shall deliver us?" Let us answer with one Name, not many names. To its mighty wail, "Where?" let us respond by pointing to one spot, not to many spots. Let our reply be as brief and as definite as is the cry. To the "WHERE?" let us answer "THERE!" For

We have no other argument,
We know no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died,
Yes, died for you and me.

May I pass on a few humble prose-verse meditations. Their inception was a word spoken to the soul with impressive power when the present writer was standing apart on a platform waiting for a London tube train. Such occasions are memorable in the life of each of God's people. HE has spoken. He has stilled in the heart by one word some rising tempest of anguish or apprehension.

In the midst of the *many* words of man let us watch and wait for a "one word" from God. It will suffice, it leads to the great "THERE" and to the supreme "HIM." It will prove itself to have been of Him by being a *liberating* word.

PART I.

The Question: How can we get back to the Tree of Life?

Adown the ages, through all time, where fallen man has sinned and strayed; from every race and every clime, where souls in agony have prayed, ONE WORD has voiced the mighty cry which rose from each and all to heaven: "WHERE may I in repentance fly; my sins, WHERE can they be forgiven?"

How can a man his steps retrace, and find the point he started at when fleeing from the Father's face; and know for sure that "This is that?" How can he say: "Yes here I strayed from Wisdom's hallowed, peaceful way, my great Creator disobeyed; to darkness turned the light of day?"

How can he recognise the spot where once there stood the tree of Life, where Satan by a hellish plot destroyed the husband through the wife, slew brother by his brother's hand, cursed in its cradle all our race, led man to slight his God's command—God's image in himself efface?

I see a dead tree standing lone, all blood-besmeared and lightning-scarred; of all in sight the only one so greatly and so strangely marred. Is this the spot, this naked stake, where man of everything is shorn, at which God "all things new" can make; and man can be of God re-born?

My sins me rest and peace deny! Where is salvation, tell me where? Answer in one word or I die!" From heaven comes the answer—"There!"

No tree of life exists for thee in humanism's wide

domain, where thou thyself from sin canst free, and by thyself salvation gain. Behold this riven tree of death: 'tis made the door to life and peace. If there thou yieldest all in faith, thou there, from sin shall find release.

There at the "Cross" where Christ has died—where all the lines of sin converge, and enter deep the pierced side, that life and peace may thence emerge—THERE is destroyed the power of hell; sin's archives too from everywhere; Yes, heaven has now glad news to tell; O sinner, look, it points thee THERE!

("HE hath concluded them all under sin that He might have mercy upon all."—Rom. xi. 32).

PART II.

The Answer.

The first creation there behold: dead, set aside because of sin. A new must now replace the old, a new CREATION now begin. For this our Lord His throne forsook, was clothed in true humanity, our debts and death upon Him took, was made *one* with that lifeless tree.

The storm of judgment on Him rushed, the skies grew dark, the air grew dense; beneath a world His soul was crushed; earth's pulses halted in suspense . . . "Tis finished!" then rang forth the cry. 'Twas done away—that race which fell—THE MAN now lifted up on high, has conquered there sin, death and hell.

His lifeless frame within a tomb is then "laid up" before the Lord; cut off from all, a thing of doom, more than all others it is marred. Thus Aaron's rod, bereft of life, of root, of branch, of sap, of bark, cut off—as by stern judgment's knife—was once laid up before the ark.

No hand of man can now intrude, no force of nature operate, in that dark silent solitude to quicken or to re-create. The dead is there alone with God, as when from nought He all things made; in that dry

peeled, imprisoned rod, what power of earth could be displayed?

And thus the end of man has come, and God can now anew begin. The tongue of self-defence is dumb; our Advocate our cause can win. The banner of our race is furled, the measure of its sin is given where— isolated from the world, and insulated unto heaven— that sterile staff in silence lies, and Death all powers but God's defies.

But He has spoken, and His Word, fount of re-creating faith; commands that life shall be restored, immortal life where all is death. Lo! in one night is lived a year—of New-Creation-Law a type—on that dead staff green buds appear, then blossoms red, then almonds ripe.

It is enough! No longer I shall know the old creation's pow'r; myself I shall henceforth deny, and Christ be all from hour to hour. In Him a New Creation blooms, upon our dead and severed stem; our life with peace and joy perfumes. Who can, what is *of Him*, condemn?

PART III.

The Application.

The Cross-Roads at Calvary.

Along the lines of nature move, the zealous efforts of the flesh, and all who trust it soon shall prove they crucify the Lord afresh. The strength and pride of nature they call from the grave the Lord to "serve"; the soul once more becomes the prey of fevered pulse and throbbing nerve.

Across the life of nature lies* the only pathway

*A friend to whom I read these prose verses opened a hymn book and showed me in a hymn by an old writer the same thought as that expressed in this line. I had no recollection of having seen it. This is an illustration of how the Holy Spirit utters the same Truth in the spirits of God's people in all ages. It is old, but ever new. If lying dormant in memory it will be quickened, brought unto living exercise in some hour of need.

back to God; but nature this—heaven's law—denies, and proudly seeks some other road! Yet none is found, search as it may; the paths which flatter self and sin all intersect the "narrow way," which leads to life and peace within.

At Calvary is now the place, where God alone with man can meet; for there Law made a way for Grace: the piercèd side, and hands and feet. Our Shepherd-Lord for us was slain where cross the Broad and Narrow Ways. There from the tomb He rose again; sees now His seed, prolongs His days.

Yes! *there* alone is mercy found; God *there* alone can pardon give; and make to us His grace abound, the "more abundant" life to live. He *there* His one appointment made with man to meet Him face to face, and see his sins on Jesus laid. *Thither* must he his steps retrace.

But wilful man still vainly tries to His Creator to dictate; the Cross as trysting-place decries, and thus ignores his fallen state. A thousand meeting places he, appoints to God in haughty pride; a contrite sinner scorns to be, and passes Calvary with a stride!

I WORSHIP Thee, Thou Son of God, low-bending at Thy piercèd feet, for I, at last, have understood where I, with Thee my God can meet! Henceforth the place of peace I know, in this wild world of warring sin; and as I there repentant go, lo! Thou dost make me pure within.

And now henceforth my path shall be across the world's most favoured ways, a faithful love to offer Thee, whose Cross Thy love for me displays. The world which hated Thee, must hate those who athwart its dictates go; but now its threatenings come too late for Thee, my Saviour-Lord, I know!

ARTHUR S. BOOTH-CLIBBORN.

MY EXPERIENCE.

BY F. N. CHARRINGTON

Of the Tower Hamlets Mission, London, E.

HISTORY can produce shining examples of self-sacrifice, as also the Great War. Many have died for their King and country. Many have sacrificed themselves to rescue the flag or lead a forlorn hope.

But all acts of self-sacrifice pale before the Supreme Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Men will die for their friends, but He died for His enemies. "He gave Himself a ransom for all."

I would like to give one or two incidents of my life, and I do so to the glory of God, to shew what I owe to the sacrifice of Christ.

I was born to a great inheritance valued at considerably over a million, so that I should have had at least a thousand pounds coming to me every week. But it was a corrupt and defiled inheritance. It was built upon the tears and blood of the people, on sin and misery, ruined homes, blasted lives, and starving children. John Wesley said of the Liquor dealers, "Blood, blood is upon the walls of their houses. They murder His Majesty's subjects wholesale."

It was not only a defiled inheritance, but would have soon passed away. If I could have taken it with me, it would only have melted in the fires of hell. But, thank God, when I was twenty years old I became a Christian. Travelling in the South of France with my father and mother, I met the Rev. Wm. Rainsford (son of the well-known Marcus Rainsford). We travelled home together, and I invited him to my father's

house at Wimbledon Common. He then said, "I am afraid I have been very unfaithful to you, I have never talked to you about your soul." I said, "Well, we have had a very pleasant time together on the Continent, and I don't think you need introduce a controversial subject like religion." He seemed very sad at my reply and said, "Well, will you promise when I have left to read the third chapter of John?" I said certainly I would, and the next night I read the chapter according to promise, until I came to the last verse, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." That was the turning point of my life. I felt my need of a Saviour, although hitherto I had never understood how I could be saved. Through this verse I was brought to trust in Christ, and received assurance of my salvation. A young friend of mine named Canning (afterwards Lord Garvagh) having also like young Rainsford said that he had eternal life, therefore in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word was established, and I was established in the faith of Christ.

That day I was born again to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

After that I was engaged in some little way in trying to work in the East End of London, chiefly among boys and girls. I was beginning to be very uncomfortable in my conscience as to my connection with the drink traffic. One day, passing the "Rising Sun" at the corner of a little street in the East End, I saw a poor woman with her little children, dragging at her skirts, go to the public-house. She looked in and called to her husband inside: "Oh Tom, Tom, do give us some money, the children are crying for bread." The man looked at her, and his only reply was to rush out and knock her and the children down into the gutter. Of course you will ask, "What did you do?"

Well, I was just a coward, for sin makes cowards of us all. I looked up at the public-house, and I saw emblazoned in gold the name of my firm, "CHARRINGTON." I said to myself, "How can I say anything to that man, seeing that I am responsible for their misery." But when he knocked down his wife, he knocked me out of the Liquor Traffic.

I thought to myself at that moment, this is one case in one public-house. There are hundreds of other cases of misery in the same house. This is only one house, and we have got hundreds of public-houses, and what amount of misery, and what amount of wretchedness, I thought must I be responsible for? I said, "I cannot bear it: I will give it up," and I carried out my intention. Since then I have never regretted the step I took.

I have done what I could in the East End of London during the last fifty years to counter-act the power of the drink and to preach the Gospel through public meetings in our "Great Assembly Hall," Mile End Road, and many trophies have been won for God.

No sacrifice we can make can take away our sins, only the sacrifice of Christ can do that for those who believe in Him. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." That He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps, and His sacrifice should lead us to self-sacrifice.

F. N. CHARRINGTON.

SUBSTITUTION.

BY SIDNEY COLLETT.

I VERY gladly respond to the invitation to write a short paper containing a Gospel message and appeal, for I can truly say with the apostle that "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart" (Rom. ix. 2, 3) for those who are not merely content, but actually prefer, to live without the knowledge and love of Christ in their hearts.

Alas! how blind they are, both to the true nature and final doom of the world to which they cling, and also to the blessedness of Divine forgiveness, which they might enjoy. Of course, it is easy enough to say, as many do, "I never allow anyone to talk to me about religion"; but that attitude is as foolish as that of the ostrich, in burying its head in the sand when its pursuers are upon him, and thereby deceiving himself as to his real danger.

It is, however, quite natural that the unconverted man should avoid facing the question of his position in the sight of God.

For the Scriptures declare that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23); and that there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (Eccles. vii. 20). So that the first sight a sinner has of himself is very

humiliating, and sometimes genders a spirit bordering on despair. For the question then naturally arises, How can such an one ever be made fit for the kingdom of heaven?

But, although the process is painful, it will, on a little reflection be seen, that it is the wisest, and indeed the only sure road to pardon and peace. For, as our Lord said :—“They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick” (Luke v. 31).

So that, while the sight of open, notorious sinners appeals more to the imagination, nevertheless the man who, being spiritually blind to his sinful condition, and being at the same time satisfied with his own (supposed) self-righteousness, that man’s condition is pitiable indeed! For the same Divine Lord declared : “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke v. 22).

I would, therefore, at once beg of my reader to seek earnestly for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and to yield gladly to all His gracious motions in the heart. For it is written, “If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine in unto them” (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). Now, from this passage of Holy Writ it is quite clear there are two unseen powers—the Spirit of God, and the spirit of the Evil One—each seeking for our submission and allegiance; and it is an eternal truth that—“To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey” (Rom. vi. 16). The one, if yielded to, will blind us with a deadly blindness: the other, like a kind, yet faithful physician, will shew us our true condition, in order that we may, the more readily, seek and find the Saviour. Indeed, as a rule, it is only those who are thus con-

victed of sin by the Holy Spirit, who have any real desire after God, and cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

Have you, my reader, ever been brought to that state of heart and mind? Do you know what it is to cry from the heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? If so, what a wonderful revelation of Divine love awaits you! For the same Spirit who shewed you yourself in all your sinfulness, helplessness and need, is the very One who waits to reveal Christ to you, as the One who alone can meet your need, by saving you from your sins. And when we begin to contemplate God's plan of salvation through Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures, we are indeed lost in wonder, love and praise!

For, strange and wonderful as it may appear, the sinner, though guilty and stained with sin, is not asked to cleanse himself, nor to atone for his wrong doing, nor in any way to attempt to make himself righteous. But he is assured that if he will accept the terms which God offers, God can and will put away his sin, cleanse him from every stain, and impart to him a righteousness that he never could acquire by any process of his own. And such will be the effect, that it will transform his life in this world, and make him perfectly fit for the better world to come.

Now this Divine remedy for sin was planned far away back before the foundation of the world, by the infinite wisdom and love of God, Who foreknew man's fall, and devised a scheme of redemption, based on the laws of eternal justice, whereby fallen man could be raised up again, his sins forgiven, and his guilty soul saved. This is the great central theme of the Bible; it is presented to us very plainly in such a passage as John iii. 16, where we read that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,

that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Let us try and understand something of what this most wonderful statement really means.

Clearly it does not mean that Christ was given merely as Friend, or Guide, or Comforter; but rather as a Substitute for the sinner, in order that He might meet the claims of God's Holy Law which stood against the sinner, by taking his place and dying in his stead.

Oh! 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love,
The love of God to me;
It brought my Saviour from above,
To die on Calvary.

But let us proceed slowly and carefully with this stupendous subject, for on the *rejection or acceptance* of it depends the eternal future of every one of us.

One thing it clearly teaches is that without a Divine Saviour and a personal faith in that Saviour, the sinner must “perish.” We are probably all familiar with the words of Romans vi. 23—“The wages of sin is death”; but, how few really believe their solemn import! For inasmuch as “all have sinned,” all are equally under condemnation (Rom. iii. 19). Oh! reader, if you are still unsaved, how terrible is your lot! “The wrath of God abideth on you” (John iii. 36), and apart from the provision made by Divine love in the Gospel, there is for you no remedy and no escape.

Moreover, we need to remember that God is holy and the Laws of Divine righteousness are inexorable. God cannot tolerate sin, neither can His Laws be broken with impugny. We read in Exodus xxxiv. 7: “He will by no means clear the guilty.” It is altogether contrary to God's nature to pass over sin and

leave it unpunished. In other words, God never forgives a sinner like some mothers forgive their children — by simply passing over their fault. He brings it right out into the light of day, as He did with Achan's sin (Joshua vii.); and deals with it on the grounds of absolute justice. That is to say, no sin ever escapes God's all-searching eye, and consequently no sin can possibly escape its due penalty. The debt has been incurred, and it must be paid to the very last mite.

But the Bible reveals to us the glorious truth, that God, Who is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. iii. 9) has made such a provision for the sinner in the Person of His Son. Christ "magnified the law and made it honourable" (Isa. xlii. 21) and then paid, with His own life's blood, the sinner's debt by drinking to the very dregs the bitter cup of the wrath of Almighty God. Thus it was that He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, when

Christ, the Mighty Maker died,
For man, the creature's sin.

Oh! may the Spirit of God help us to take in, if we have never done so before, this stupendous truth.

Where He hung, we ought to have been; the agony that He endured, we ought to have borne. When God hid His face from Him, it was in order that He might not hide His face from us. He died that we might live. In a word, "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

There was a school in Scotland where girls and boys were all taught together, and for some weeks there had been a great deal of trouble in the school—an insurrection on a small scale. The master, after several unsuccessful attempts to restore order,

finally got all the children together, singled out seven of the big girls as the ringleaders, and stood them upon a form in sight of all the other children. Then he addressed the school somewhat in this manner—"Now children, you all know about the trouble and disturbances we have had in the school; you know also how patiently I have tried to help you to a better state of things. But matters have gone so far, that I am determined to put a stop to it. I have, therefore, singled out these seven bad girls, who I know are the cause of all the trouble, and now I am going to punish them. But I want you to say what punishment you think they deserve." For a time there was a dead silence. But when the master pressed his question, a wee voice was heard at the lower end of the school, saying, "Let 'em off!" It was the voice of a little blind boy—a Christian—"Blind Jimmy" they called him. "No, no," said the master, "I am not going to 'let 'em off' any more. I have let them off too many times already. Now I am going to punish them, and I want you to say what punishment I ought to give them." But when no other reply was forthcoming, the master said, "Look here, I'll let 'em off. I will let them off on one condition, and that is, that some one child comes up here," and he held the cane in his hand as he spoke, "and receives a beating instead of these seven bad girls." Now the words were scarcely out of his lips when a scuffle was heard at the bottom of the school, and the children as they looked round, saw little blind Jimmy getting up out of his place, and feeling his way by the ends of the forms until he came and stood before the master. "Jimmy, my boy," said the master, "you did not understand what I said. I said if anyone would come up here and be beaten instead of these seven bad girls, I would forgive them and let them off." So Jimmy turned his blank eyes up to the master and said, "Then sir, please beat me." I am glad I was not there to see what took place then. For the master, determined to deal out justice on

account of those girls' sins, raised his cane, and many were the strokes that fell upon blind Jimmy's back. At length Jimmy turned his face, this time wet with tears, up to the master's, saying, "Please sir, have I had enough?" "Yes," said the master, "I think you have had enough; you can go to your place." So Jimmy returned and sat down in his seat, and sobbed. Then the master addressed the seven bad girls thus:—"Now girls I forgive you; your naughtiness has been dealt with in the person of blind Jimmy, the strokes that ought to have fallen on your backs, fell upon his; he has suffered in your stead, and, as far as I am concerned, your wrong doings are for ever put away. I shall do my best to forget the past, and am going to treat you as if you had never done anything wrong. You can sit down, you are forgiven."

Of course they did not sit down. They leapt from the form, and gathered round blind Jimmy, threw their arms round his neck and kissed and thanked him again and again, while he said in his Scotch way: "Oh! girls, I didna mind the pain, if it would only bring you to Jesus!" And there were fifteen children in that school brought to Christ that day through that exhibition of substitution!

Touching and beautiful as this true narrative is, it is but a poor illustration of what our Divine Substitute accomplished for us. Gethsemane's agony, the shame, the suffering, and the darkness of the Cross, ah! this no human mind can fathom.

What He endured no tongue can tell,
To save our souls from death and hell.

Oh! Christ what burdens bowed Thy head!
Our load was laid on Thee;
Thou stoodest in the sinner's stead,
Didst bear all ill for me—
A victim led, Thy blood was shed,
Now there's no load for me!

Yes, the claims of the Law have been so perfectly met at the Cross, that no charge can ever be brought against the sinner who is sheltered under the atoning blood of Christ, for

Justice will not twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again at mine.

And because of this, God comes to us in the Gospel, offering us a free pardon (Isa. iv. 7), and all the sinner has to do, is to accept that offer by a simple faith: the sinner is at once saved (John iii. 36), and passes from death unto life, and can never come into condemnation (John v. 24).

What a wonderful offer! The sinner has nothing to do, because Christ has done everything. He has nothing to pay, because Christ has paid everything. There is nothing to compare to it. Oh reader! Will you not accept this offer without delay, and simply trust the Lord Jesus Christ? For it is written, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). God waits for your response—waits that He may be gracious unto you (Isa. xxx. 18).

But I most solemnly warn my reader that this wonderful Gospel message throws upon every sinner who has heard it the solemn responsibility of accepting or rejecting it. It is for lack of this definite transaction between the soul and Christ that multitudes are for ever lost.

Many are content with Church membership, or the fact that they have been baptized, or confirmed, or are in the habit of attending the Lord's Table. But none of these will avail the sinner in the last day. The dreadful word at that day to all who are resting in any such things, will be—"Depart from Me, I never knew you" (Matt. vii. 23).

Yet there are men and women who maybe are diligent in business, careful in their homes, courteous and considerate in all their dealings with their fellow-men; yet are nevertheless careless and indifferent regarding the matter of their soul's salvation.

Oh! how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation (Heb. ii. 3). For it is well to remember that there is no other way of salvation. God has no other Saviour. He has no new Gospel to offer us. No new Heaven to tell us of. So that

If you still His call refuse,
And all His wondrous love abuse,
One day from you He'll sadly turn,
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn,
Too late, too late, will be the cry,
You let your day of grace pass by.

May God in mercy lead you to Himself without delay, for His eternal glory, and for your eternal good.

AMEN.

SIDNEY COLLETT.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

BY ERIC COUCHMAN of the Argentine.

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. vi. 14).

THERE is but one hope for fallen and sinful man, one hope for present joy and true happiness, one hope of everlasting bliss. It is the Cross of Christ. The adversary of our souls well knows this, and so has made the Cross the focal point of his deadliest attacks. He knows full well that to deny the historical fact of the Cross would be futile, but he occupies himself in disseminating false and erroneous doctrines touching the Cross. For this reason we find a vast number of people looking to the Cross of our adorable Lord as a symbol of heroism and brotherly love instead of being what in reality it was—the place where the God-Man became the Vicarious Sacrifice for our sins. “He was wounded for *our* transgressions, He was bruised for *our* iniquities : the chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him; and with His stripes *we are healed*” (Isaiah liii. 5). “Having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself” (Col. i. 20).

The Cross of Christ! The Incarnation was the necessary preparation — God was manifested in the flesh in order that the great love of the Father in giving the Son of His love, and the great love of the

Son in giving Himself as an offering for sin might be revealed and the great sacrifice accomplished. Who can fathom the depth of such marvellous love? It is no wonder that the Apostle Paul gloried in the Cross. He had a clear grasp of its inner meaning. He might of course have gloried in his lineage; in his zeal; in his upright moral conduct; in his piety; in his wonderfully successful life. But what Paul did glory in, was the Cross. And rightly so, for the Cross is that which brings fallen man back to God. Man was created in the image of God, and endowed with freedom of will. Where freedom of will exists, there also exists the power to disobey, which man did, finding himself alienated from God by sin and wicked works. This also is the cause of sorrow and suffering, for sin always brings sorrow in its wake. Separation from God is another result of sin. Thus we have God and man separated, not by the will of God, but by the wilful disobedience of man. God's Word, which is sure and steadfast, and must be fulfilled, had gone forth:—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die," but blessed be God, He has in His mercy devised the means by which He may keep His Word, and yet bring man back to Himself, without impeachment of His holiness.

The Cross of Christ has effected this. There, oh wonder of wonders! the spotless Son of the thrice-holy God was made sin for us. There He, the Just, suffered for us, the unjust, to bring us to God; there the spear-thrust pierced His side, and the sins of the ages, yours and mine included, overwhelmed His soul; there human hatred at its worst burst over Him, and there hell hurled its sharpest javelin at Him; there He was "smitten of God, and afflicted." Listen to the piercing cry, ringing through the ages! Let it penetrate your innermost soul to-day: "*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*"

As I gaze upon the Cross I find that through the Man of Sorrows who suffered there I am brought back to God. I am free because He was bound; my brow

is painless because His was lacerated; I am forgiven because He paid the penalty; I gain heaven because He suffered hell for me.

Thus constrained by such love, and with joy and gratitude let us draw near to the Cross, and cry:—
“Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.” “God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

Through the work of the Cross we are redeemed from the curse of the law. We read that “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse” (Gal. iii. 10), but Christ through the work of the Cross came “to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. iv. 5).

Thank God that the Cross stands between us and His wrath, that through Christ “crucified for our offences, raised again for our justification,” we have free and eternal salvation, but let us not forget that the Cross should also stand between us and this great world-system of sin and pleasure— . . . “by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

The Cross is our shame, for it shows up our lost estate. It is also our glory, for it brings us back to God. Let us, therefore, with holy reverence draw near in spirit to the foot of the Cross and pledge our love and allegiance to the One who “loved us and gave Himself for us.”

E. COUCHMAN.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

BY THE LATE DAN. CRAWFORD.

"The Scripture . . . preached . . . the Gospel, saying, etc."
Galatians iii. 8.

Saying what? Saying in seven sterling words the whole subject: (1) In (2) Thee (3) shall (4) all (5) nations (6) be (7) blessed. Without labouring to sophisticate the subject, see how frankly and finely the Bible simplifies our search for us. Let us, therefore, seize upon this formula with alacrity, because on this theme how often it is a warm heart speaks, but a foolish tongue wags. Even gracious souls become piously petulant on this "What-is-the-Gospel?" theme and the preacher is pilloried. Not to mince matters, we are all in this ugly thing: how often have we carped out the cheap criticism: "*That* was not the Gospel." Or again: "Yes, very clever, but it was *not* the Gospel."

Here, then, in this mouth-stopping formula God in mercy gives us His own searching summary of a much perverted theme. For when God is seen to sum up, then depend upon it, every superfluous jot is as surely excluded as its antithesis is included. And like the perfect God He is, how supernaturally natural of Him to sum it all up in *seven* words! Surely here is a

call to pedantic purists and atticising professors to give these seven sacred truths their careful and prayerful study. The dying Christ from the Cross breathed out His valedictory in *seven* last words, and why not seven? Was He not the light of the world? And did not *the Light split up into seven several colours* on the prism of pain?

But here we must pause primarily to note how doubly and delightfully valuable such a fixed formula is. For on this "What-is-the-Gospel?" theme the soul of man can be soundly and profoundly saved and yet remain a curious jumble of inexpressible emotions. Hence the value of this cast-iron creed: "The Scripture...preached the Gospel saying"—these seven solemn certainties. Mark you (and as you mark it may it mark you) "the Scripture preached the Gospel" *in toto*, not half but the whole; not 50 per cent thereof,, but God's cent per cent of salvation.

Let us then revel, not so much in the verse itself, as in the fact that there is such a verse to revel in. Then anon we advance in to the bed-rock certainty of such a phrase: I mean the delicious take-it-or-leave-it audacity of the utterance, and now the opened ear is eagerly expectant to receive *what* it was "the Scripture preached the Gospel saying..." For this formula is as doubly delightful as it is delightfully double: it assures me (1) that whatever is going to follow this warning word, *that and that only* is "the (whole) Gospel"; then (2) In this "preached the Gospel" it puts in my mouth all the facts and forces of God's message of mercy in one exact, evangelical epigram. For God's Gospel is so great that it can be preached in seven small words!

How often we forget that to preach the everlasting Gospel is not the same thing as preaching everlastingly. So, conversely, you can be finished saying in five minutes what will take a whole eternity to finish. The tenor of the smart talker nowadays is that he snaps out an epigram before he has had time to accum-

ulate even a fraction of the facts. But here in mercy intervenes the God who holds all data in His hands, and so holding them He includes *all* His Gospel in these three deathless facts :—

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------|
| I. In Thee | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | Christ |
| II. Shall all nations | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | Whosoever |
| III. Be blessed | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | Everlasting life |

Now, note here how at last that good old Gospel guess about John iii. 16 is justified: I mean, it is notorious that all down the centuries the Christian, like a homing pigeon, has made unerringly for this God-so-loved watchword and declared that here in one vital verse you find the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning the full Gospel! All's well that ends well, for now it is the mere guess graduates with honours as a fixed formula: there is no longer any conjecture that John iii. 16 is the full Gospel, for watch the following affinity:—

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---|
| I. In Thee | | God so loved...that He gave
His only begotten Son... |
| II. Shall all nations | | that whosoever believeth
in Him |
| III. Be blessed | ..... | should...have everlasting life. |

The Gospel formula, then, has three phases: was this I wonder the birthplace of the old three-divisioned sermon? For why not three? Is not the Gospel a Three-in-One God seeking out three-in-one man with such a three-in-one message of mercy: (1) in Thee (2) all nations (3) be blessed. I risk repetition by urging that God says this is "the Gospel," i.e.: all the Gospel and only the Gospel: first, The Blesser ("in Thee"), second, The Blessed ("all nations"), third, The Blessing ("shall be blessed")—all and only blessing, for is not the Gospel God's *good news*, therefore blessing blots out all else?

This, I say, is all the Gospel God has; therefore,

“all” is its dominating and dwarfing word: Christ, Heaven’s “all,” was given for earth’s “all,” and He it is who bestows “all” the life God has. The African defines “everlasting life” as a “*living as long as God lives,*” so to have this life everlasting is to know that we live on and in God everlastingly. The Jews, whose favourite name for God was “The Eternal,” caught Christ’s point better than we do, for every time Christ spoke of “eternal life” they read into the meaning “life of God” equates “life eternal.” So it is only half of the story to sing, “He’ll not be in glory and leave me behind”; why not say solemnly that God will not have a glory at all unless we are part of it! For as He is so are we, and His life is the measure and manner of ours. Thus it is “all nations” get all that God can give: the Gospel is an all-for-all message of deathless hope, man gone to the extreme of sin and God gone to the extreme of atonement. What more can man need? What more can God want?

The uncomprising matter-of-factness of this simple statement forces us in all good faith and honesty to seize on the sheer simplicity of the Gospel. Many a humble soul may be poorly equipped with the letter “h,” yet granted he grips these three things (and they grip him) then sure enough he has all God can give him for a Gospel. Born high, born low, born rich, born poor, this “all nations” welcomes him among the “blessed.”

Ah, but look at that accusing phrase—“*all nations*”—it is Christ at the Front, Christ on the battlefield, Christ at the Peace Conference, a broken-hearted Christ naming “*all nations*” (oh, yes, I am a Foreign Missionary) as the recipients of His blessing. How reminiscent all this of the Prayer Book rendering: not “His Kingdom shall have no end,” but “His Kingdom *shall have no boundary.*”

He is the Lord of Heaven, yes, the Heaven that is an unbroken vault; no divisive boundaries are scratched across *that* fair firmament. If the sacred sky were

marred by being cut-up into fighting frontiers like this poor planet, *terra*, then those cut-up skies would soon enough cut off our supplies! I repeat, there is undying pathos in that poor word "nation," for it means my *natal* home; I was born there, my nation where God gave commandment concerning my yet unborn bones. True, this old phrase concerning Joseph's burial seems the least likely phrase to be fittingly applied to one's birth, but in God's Book all my members were written while as yet they were not. Also: in that same Book God is so concerned concerning one's nation that He shall count when He writeth up the peoples, this man was born *there*, yes, there in the precise place where his God did ordain.

"In Thee shall all *nations* be blessed." Ah! there is a sobbing of a million souls in this poor estranged "nations." For now we face the fearful fact of not land but language, a mad Babel of unknown tongues, each nation bewildering its neighbour with an unknown jargon. And an unknown speech makes an unknown speaker, for as beasts cannot speak, it is little wonder these nations speaking strange lingoes break out like beasts on each other. Yet look how unlike Christ's ways are to man's: the victor forces *his* bit of Babel on the defeated, and makes him learn *his* language, whereas in Christ's Kingdom "it was given Him that...all..languages should serve Him." Here, then, we face the fact that when a nation slangs another *per se* it thereby slangs the good God who determined its national destiny.

This was the meaning of that ugly-lovely phrase I heard in America in the dear old pre-war days: "spitting in God's face"! Such an astounding four-word phrase, far from vulgarizing the only country that could conceive it, proves once again that America better than being a mere "melting pot" is superlatively *the smelting pot of the nations* where the dross disappears. For look you: it was God who determined this nationality business, and every time we sneer out

the personality, "You Negro you!" "you blank Chinaman," what is this but only spitting in the face of that God who made them all white, yellow and black, from Greenland to Patagonia, from Norway to the Cape, from Siberia to the South Seas. And, remember the African puts it very pungently when he says that "if you spit up to the sky you are only spitting in your own face, for the saliva only falls short of the sky to *fall right back in your own face*"!

"Shall be blessed..." Does this look too much like a blank cheque? "Blessed..." with what? Is not the absence of any qualifying word too arbitrary? It almost seems as though God would ask us to take Him on trust. Aye, and such surely is the sum of this matter: for to be in Him is the maximum of blessing God can bestow. All the fates and the fortunes of God are thine for thou art in Him. This "shall" should be shouted, for there is the certainty of salvation in it!

Nor is this "blessed..." a blank, let alone a bloodless blank. For of all the pestilent trash preached in God's Name without His authority, a "bloodless" sermon is the maximum of mockery: the blood is the life even in its exegesis. And the point is that "*bless*" is *only another spelling for "blood,"* so every time we shout "Bless the Lord!" there is a memory of the blood that brought the blessing. We speak piously of "the many manifold blessings of this life," but no matter how many or how manifold those blessings, they are all dipped in the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. This is the profound reason why "the Scripture preached the Gospel" *thousands of years before* ever Paul was born. The pre-slain Lamb postulates this pre-promulgation of the Gospel! For if "bless" is "blood" then what is "blessing" but only another form of "bleeding"? Therefore, seeing God had to bless the world right down from the day the world began, and even before that, this explains the mysterious meaning of the Double Death and how

the same Lamb could be slain on Calvary and yet also slain before the foundation of the world.

For if "bleeding" means "blessing" then there must be as much of the former to pay for as much of the latter, if all down the way from Adam daily "bleedings" i.e., "blessings" should shower down on the race. For He is the God of the cosmic process, the glorious God of Antithesis, who declares in Nature that there can be no birth without a pang, no high hill but beside some deep valley, no black without a white, and no *pro* without a *con*. He it is, God the Giver and For-giver, who puts the Crown on the Cross and the Cross on the Crown.

We have seen the where, the who and the what of it all: "where?" (in Thee), "who?" (all nations), "what?" (shall be blessed), but now we finish off finely with the glorious "why?" of God's salvation—"The Scripture foreseeing that *God would justify the heathen by faith.*" See how logical all this theological talk can be, for that bless-blood hint from the etymology of the word leads us straight to the goal of the Gospel—justified by His blood. There is a why for every wherefore in life, and this very verse has only to be quoted in full to sweep the full arc of this great Gospel message—"The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith preached before the Gospel, saying, in Thee shall all nations be blessed."

Watch the three precious points involved in all this : (1) Note that sacred singular of the word "Scripture" : where Christ is in review it is "the Scripture," the one revelation with no differentiation between Genesis or Ephesians, between Leviticus and Romans; all are centralised on the Christ coming, hath come or shall come—*one Christ confirmed by one Scripture.* Then (2) comes next and necessarily the astounding metaphor that this unit, "the Scripture," by virtue of the unbroken character of its contents is a living, sentient personality—"the Book with the million eyes." For

how can you have foresight without insight? And looking down the dark centuries ahead *it* (what a poor pronoun!) foresees endless eventualities unknown even to the then B.C. writers thereof. It is Paul looking back who sees this foreseeing of the Scripture, not Moses who wrote the record! Lastly (3) the Scripture so foreseeing that God in the coming days of grace would justify the heathen by faith, preached the Gospel long before a Peter or a Paul lived to praise and publish His name.

Surely this is your authority to seize boldly on the dear old types and symbols of the Mosaic economy and get honey out of them all, God's sweet for Satan's bitter. Does not the Epistle to the Hebrews revel in Tabernacle typology? Does it not call such, "shadows of things to come." Nay, nearer and dearer still, how often in the rush of modern life a mere snatch of a line from the old Psalms or Prophets has so succoured the soul that you could echo Paul eloquently, "Yes, beloved brother Paul, the Scripture *did* foresee my plight to-day, and three thousand years before ever my soul, this remote day in A.D."

So let us close where we began: God *alone* did not foresee, for His Scripture likewise did this foreseeing that fixed for us a Gospel formula, a guide that cannot be gainsaid. All our carping criticisms are foreseen only to be counteracted in the very brevity of this Divine Gospel summary.

If you say it is too short because "there is no mention of sin therein," then the abrupt answer is that this very word "justify" stands for the sin that is blotted out in the glorious phrase, "being justified by His blood."

If you say, "this is not the Gospel because Christ's dying and rising are not mentioned," then the rebuke you receive is that to be "In Thee" means in Christ for life and death and all things, and to be in Christ is to stand before God accepted in the Beloved. Is sin strangling your soul? Then to enter into Christ is to

make your exit from that iron hand of bondage. By faith we enter, and by faith we stand firm in and for Him. By faith we are blessed, for by faith God commands the blessing unto all nations. The jumble of jargons in the world only isolate man from man, but God knows the lingo of all and never misunderstood a man yet!

Here is love in endless torrents,
Pity like the boundless sea;
Jesus, Prince of Life, is dying,
Dying to purchase life for me.

D. C.

LIFE OR DEATH? CHOOSE LIFE.

FATE OF THE UNBELIEVER.

BY J. C. M. DAWSON, B.A., BELFAST.

THE Holy Scriptures have been given by Divine inspiration (2 Tim. iii. 16). We can, therefore, accept their teachings with the most perfect confidence. Recognising this, let us consider a few of them that concern us in a very special way.

MAN'S NEED AND DANGER.

Man has been "shapen in iniquity" and conceived in sin (Psa. li. 5); he is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. ii. 3); he has "sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). He is "guilty before God," and he cannot justify himself in His sight by the works of the law (Rom. iii. 19, 20). He is hurrying on to meet the holy and just God, and, if he meet Him in his guilt, he must receive the righteous punishment due to it, and perish for ever in hell (Matt. xxv. 41, 46), "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23), and that death is described as "the Lake of Fire" (Rev. xx. 14), "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 48). In a word, he has sinned against God, Who is averse to and must punish sin, he does deserve and is in

imminent peril of eternal judgment, and he cannot escape from it by his own efforts.

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

Christ is the uncreated Word, the second Person in the Godhead (John i. 1). He is the Source, Author and Object of the entire creation (Col. i. 16). Nevertheless, the Son of God, though the Possessor of almighty power and infinite wisdom, could not by the exercise of those infinite attributes put away sin and save man in righteousness from the endless punishment that awaited him for his sins. The eternal Word became flesh (John i. 14), that is, He voluntarily took sinless but real humanity into His perfect Deity by being born of the Virgin Mary (Heb. ii. 14). His earthly life was absolutely faultless and blameless. It was the exception to every other human life. As Man He lived to do the will of God. He had no sin (1 John iii. 5); He knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21); He "did no sin" (1 Pet. ii. 22). However, His sinless, human life did not render any satisfaction to God for sin, and no sinner can be justified in the sight of God by the perfectly righteous and holy acts of the Lord Jesus. They did not provide salvation. He, Who was God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16), Who was holy, harmless and undefiled (Heb. vii. 26), allowed wicked men to nail Him to the Cross. There He became "The Lamb of God," Who bore "away the sin of the world" (John i. 29): there He "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix.26) and "obtained eternal redemption" by His blood (Heb. ix. 12). He arose from among the dead on the third day, because all the demands of God with regard to sin had been perfectly satisfied by His death, and He, Who tasted "death for every man," is now "crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9). He rests from the work of putting away sin, having completely accomplished

it by His one sacrifice at Calvary. The infinite value of that work cannot be enhanced—it requires no additions by God or man.

SALVATION FOR ALL.

Though all men deserve the wrath of God for their sins, and all are absolutely helpless to do anything towards their own salvation, yet not a single sinner need perish as far as God is concerned, “for God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John iii. 16,17). “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. i. 15). “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto a knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. ii. 3,4). A real salvation from all the punishment due to sin has been provided by the death of Christ, and Christ has sent His servants to “preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark xvi. 15, 16).

SALVATION THROUGH FAITH.

Any person who exercises faith in the Lord Jesus Christ obtains this salvation, because “a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. iii. 28); and “to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5); and “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. x. 9). When

the trembling jailor at Philippi asked, "What must I do to be saved?" he received the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 30, 31). Salvation has been procured by the sacrifice of Christ, but is obtained by putting faith in Him.

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

The word spoken by the Lord to the woman in Simon the Pharisee's house, "Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 48, 50) were her assurance. She knew that she was saved on the authority of the Son of God. The written words of God addressed to believers in Christ should assure every such person of his own salvation. For instance, "By grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. ii. 8); "God, Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace" (2 Tim. i. 8, 9); "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus iii. 5); "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. i. 13, 14). Timothy, Titus, the Ephesian and Colossian believers were in circumstances similar to those in which we are placed. They had not heard the Lord Jesus when He was preaching on earth. The Gospel had been proclaimed to them by the Lord's servants; they believed its facts and trusted the Saviour presented to them in it, and they were forgiven and saved. Any sinner, therefore, who turns from his own works, recognising their uselessness, and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, obtains exactly the same spiritual blessings that they obtained, that is, he is forgiven and saved from all future judgment,

and his authority for believing this is the Gospel embodied in the infallible Scriptures of truth.

TIME OF SALVATION.

Life is very uncertain, "it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14), and after death the judgment (Heb. ix. 27). Therefore, if a man desires to obtain salvation, he must seek it during the present life, and, since its duration is so uncertain, he should seek it at once. Can the salvation that has been provided by the death of Christ be obtained immediately? Yes, for "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2), and "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 36), and "he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Consequently the moment the sinner believes in Christ, he obtains everlasting life, and is exempt from all judgment, and, therefore, he can be saved now. The Lord Jesus said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," i.e., "I will receive and save, and under no circumstances cast out afterwards." Again, He said from the throne, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life (i.e., salvation) freely" (Rev. xxii.17).

FATE OF THE UNBELIEVER.

Many who listen to the Gospel assent more or less readily to its statements, but do not come as lost and helpless sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. They remain consequently unforgiven and exposed to a richly deserved hell. If they continue in this course, which in God's estimation is nothing less than rejecting Christ and flouting His own love and grace,

they shall die in their sins (John viii. 24), and eventually come out of their graves (John v. 28, 29), and stand before the Great White Throne (Rev. xx. 11-15) to be judged by their works. The outcome of that judgment will be endless suffering in the Lake of Fire. They shall be consigned there, not because they are guilty sinners, for all their sins could have been forgiven through faith in Christ, but because they have neglected God's great salvation (John iii. 36), and in that hell they shall be punished for all their sins, including their crowning sin, the rejection of Christ. God is love—this has been demonstrated at the Cross (1 John iv. 9); "God is also a consuming fire" (Heb. xii. 29), this shall be manifested throughout eternity in the lake of fire.

J. C. M. DAWSON.

SALVATION AND PERDITION.

BY MONSIEUR S. DELATTRE of France.

IT is impossible to speak of salvation without speaking of perdition, unless one has to do with consciences, already roused and enlightened, like Lydia, Nathanael and Cornelius.

We must hear the painful reproaches of conscience and be terrified by the conviction of our defilement and ruin, if we are to feel our need of a Saviour.

Never perhaps has conviction of sin been less known or more superficial than at the present day. Nevertheless, men never spoke more of justice. Every conscience has a longing for it, condemns evil, at least in others, and clamours to see it punished.

But the very man who is crying out for the punishment of others, is worthy of punishment himself. Indeed, who is he who inveighs with most emphasis against iniquity, who proclaims all down the ages, alike in savage as in civilized lands, in the cottage and the palace, in the most worldly newspaper as well as in the evangelical pulpit, that the guilty ought to suffer? Guilty man, who condemns in others what he does himself. Deep down in every conscience there is a notion of absolute justice. You see a man succeed in his undertakings by trampling underfoot law, both human and divine, and you cannot help wishing that his evil deeds may receive adequate punishment.

This feeling is so deeply rooted in our being that

to destroy it, we must first be destroyed ourselves. A human being completely deaf to the voice of justice perhaps does not exist.

When a man no longer condemns his own sins, he retains an even greater capacity for severely judging the sins of others. Who then has implanted in our souls this inextinguishable need of justice? Is it not God?

The moment we allow ourselves to think, a voice within affirms that justice violated demands punishment, and that the existence of punishment proclaims the existence of justice.

We are all convinced by experience of two things; first, that God is just, seeing he has engraved in indelible characters in our hearts the idea of justice, and then that we are unjust, seeing the voice of God within us condemns us.

Hence arises a double query. What will a Just God do? and, What will become of the sinful creature? To persons of a serious turn these questions are exceedingly painful. They see themselves lost now and for ever, for, as we have seen, the idea of justice entails that of punishment. They understand they are at war with God, and the thought that they are going to meet Him, that they must appear before His judgment throne, appalls them. Amongst all nations, whatever their degree of civilization, an awakened conscience feels these legitimate alarms.

But certain shallow souls will object to all this. Such fears to them are cowardly and morbid; they knowing nothing of such an experience and believe only in the goodness of God.

Then let me ask you, you who speak thus, of what God are you talking? Is it of the God of Nature? As far as I can see this God is inexorable. It is impossible to break his laws with impunity. Think of the diseases in the world, the sorrow, the mourning. Do all the sufferings of humanity prove to us the goodness of God?

Would you, then, dare to hide from the stings of your conscience and the judgments of the God of Nature, in the God of the Bible, as He has revealed Himself in the pages of the Old and New Testaments? Passing by the Old Testament if you will, let us ask Jesus Christ, the meek and lowly Saviour, the merciful and compassionate One, Who soothed every suffering one, welcomed with love every sorrowing one. What message has He for us? He declares that the unprofitable servant will be cast out into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, that ungodly sinners will depart into eternal punishment. He addresses such as "Accursed." His Word declares, moreover, that "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii. 10), and He warns that man who hears His word and yet obeys it not, that he is on the road to eternal ruin.

What is the inevitable conclusion of such teachings that we are so ready to leave in the shade? Is it that God is unjust and cruel toward us, His poor, feeble creatures? Ought we not rather to recognise that God is holy and righteous, and that He cannot hold for innocent those who break His holy law day by day, and that we are therefore guilty and lost? It is useless to cherish illusions, to shut our eyes, to deceive ourselves. To go forward to meet God with all our guilty past and our corrupt heart is to encounter a fearful doom. A holy God cannot welcome into His bright and holy dwelling-place dark and defiled beings. "Oh Lord," writes the Psalmist, "the wicked cannot dwell with Thee." In vain is the question asked by many a sinner—"How can I persuade myself that I am not lost and that God will be lenient to my faults?" Such thoughts and desires are useless folly. Both conscience and reason, if allowed to have their say, deny their truth, and charge home on us our condemnation and our doom. There remains a question. What must I do to be saved? To this cry of a convicted soul God

has already answered. He became Man to save man. He died that we might live. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Jesus Christ in order to redeem us from the curse of the law was made a curse for us. "He suffered once for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). A sight of the Cross of Jesus Christ tells us of our guilt, of God's horror of sin, of the punishment we deserve. That Cross leads us to repentance and faith, as we see in it the revelation of a just and holy God, full to overflowing with a love which constrained Him to an infinite sacrifice in order to reconcile us to Himself and safeguard His own righteousness, while saving His lost creatures.

S. DELATTRE.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

BY THE LATE A. C. DIXON, D.D., OF U.S.A.

“WHEN the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. iv. 4-7).

This Scripture gives, first of all, the fact of the incarnation. “God sent forth His Son.” Jesus speaks of the Son of Man as “He that came down from heaven.” He was pre-existent to His birth. “They shall call His name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us” (Matt. i. 23). “A child shall be born, a son shall be given, and he shall be called the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” The birth of Jesus, was, therefore, the incarnation of Deity.

Let us consider :

- (1) The Preparation for the Incarnation ;
- (2) The Process of the Incarnation ;
- (3) The Purpose of the Incarnation.

1. THE PREPARATION.

“When the fulness of time was come.”

(1) There was a political preparation. Rome did not care about religious opinions. She simply wanted her revenue, and there was, therefore, religious liberty in a large measure all over the world. War had ceased. The temple of Janus was closed.

(2) There was a linguistic preparation. The Greek language, in process of formation for centuries, had reached the very perfection of language, that the Gospel might be written and preached over the world through this perfect medium.

(3) There was a religious preparation. The Jews were scattered to the four winds and had carried with them the Old Testament Scriptures and the traditions of their fathers.

(4) There was also a demonstrative preparation. The world had grown bad. You have only to look at the ruins at Pompeii to see a picture that Paul drew of the heathen world. The world of painting, the world of literature, the world of music, the world of culture had become putrified, and it had been demonstrated that culture, artistic refinement, military power, and civil government did not make people morally better.

II. THE PROCESS.

“Made of a woman (not of man), made under the law.”

There was in Jesus Christ the union of the human and the Divine—just as Divine as if He were not human, and just as human as if He were not Divine.

We have the accounts of the deification of men in pagan mythology. But I do not remember any account of a god becoming a man, to help man. Whoever heard of Jupiter or Mars or Minerva coming down and attempting to bear the burdens of men? The Gods were willing enough to receive the gifts of men, but Christianity is unique in the fact that our God became a man with human infirmity; emptied Himself of the glory of heaven, in order that He might take upon Himself the sins and weaknesses of our humanity. Thus it is that God made Himself thinkable as well as lovable to us. The highest form of our thought is perfect man, and I confess that I am not

quite capable of thinking pure spirit. When I try, it assumes at least a ghostly, phantom form. So that God Who is spirit, in order to make Himself thinkable to us, puts Himself into the shape of our highest thought, perfect, sinless man. If you try to think something higher than the human form, you make it a monster. When we think of God, we are apt to think of Him in human form. In the Epiphanies of the Old Testament God revealed Himself to Joshua and others in human form. He puts Himself within the compass of our highest conception, in order that He may make Himself real to us in His love and sympathy and power.

III. THE PURPOSE.

The purpose is threefold.

(1) The primary purpose is redemption. "To redeem them that were under the law." Jesus Christ came to this world to die. In the prophecies, the gospels and the epistles, the supreme purpose of Jesus Christ in coming into the world is to make atonement for sin. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" strikes the keynote of His mission. Redemption means a buying back and the question is pertinent. From whom or what was man bought back? Origen taught that man had sold himself to Satan, and the death of Christ bought him back from Satan. But the difficulty with that is that man had no right to sell himself to Satan, and Satan had no right to purchase. If such a sale was made, it was a fraudulent transaction.

The purpose of the Incarnation was "to redeem them that were under the law," and in the phrase "Under the law," there is at least an intimation of the answer to our question. By his sin, man has come under the law of condemnation. The righteous law of God has found him guilty and holds him for punishment. The death of Christ satisfies the demands

of the law, and thus buys him back to liberty. Without this satisfying of justice God cannot be merciful; for mercy excludes justice, and justice excludes mercy. The moment a judge begins to be merciful he ceases to be just, and the moment he begins to be just he ceases to be merciful. The Incarnation through the death of Christ makes it possible for God to be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." If God should be merciful without the satisfaction of justice, He would cease to be a God of justice, and would thus forfeit His throne of righteousness. In a word, He would cease to be God.

In many a prison of Europe is the record opposite the name of a poor debtor or criminal; "Debt paid by John Howard"; "Fine paid by John Howard." And when the law was satisfied because justice had been vindicated through the kindness of another, the court of justice could be merciful and release the prisoner. For the court to do so without the satisfaction of justice would be to discredit the law, and forfeit all claim as a court of justice. It would be the destruction of the court. And for God to be merciful without the satisfaction of justice would be the destruction of God.

(2) The second part of His purpose was "that we might receive the adoption of sons"; not that we might recognise that we are sons already, but "that we might *receive* the adoption of sons." And the word adoption means more than taking up a waif child of the street and by a process of law treating it as if it were your son, to receive your inheritance. It means really producing the condition and experience of son, Jesus came to redeem us from sin, that we might become really sons of God, with the very nature of God; "born from above," "partakers of the divine nature" by regeneration.

(3) The third part of the purpose is that we should recognize and express the fact that we are

Sons of God. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father." You become sons through faith in Jesus Christ, and then enter into the spirit of the son that becomes familiar with the father. "Abba," is the child's prattling word for "father." When we have accepted Jesus Christ, we have become akin to the Father; having become real children of God, we then have the spirit of sonship by which we can come into His presence and make known our wants in a familiar way.

(4) The fourth part of the purpose is that we should be "heirs of God through Christ." "Thou art no longer a servant but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Righteousness, as defined in the letter to the Romans, is primarily right relation. We must get right with God before we can do right before God. Until we get right with God, all our doing right is "filthy rags" in His sight. "I beseech you in Christ's stead," pleaded Paul, "Be ye reconciled to God." In other words, Get right, and then do right. And you cannot get right by doing right. Through the death of Christ on the Cross, making atonement for sin, we get a perfect standing before God. That is justification, and it puts us in God's sight, back in Eden before sin entered.. God looks upon us and treats us as if we had never sinned.

Heirship is a matter of relation. If your name is in the will, you get what is left to you regardless of your age, colour, or condition in life. A cartoon in a daily paper, a few days after Mr. Carnegie's death, pictured a ragged tramp standing on the street corner and weeping as if his heart were broken. A policeman asked, "What is the matter?" "Mr Carnegie is dead" blubbered the tramp. "Well, what of that?" continued the policeman, "Was he a relative of yours?" "No, no," said the tramp, "That is what I am crying about. If I were a relative of his, I would now be a rich man."

The cartoonist, in this grotesque way, announced the great fact that heirship depends upon relation. And yet Mr. Carnegie might have disinherited his own son by leaving him a merely nominal amount. But if his will had said, "All my children shall inherit my fortune"; the heirship would then have depended upon the sonship, and, as sonship is an unchangeable relation not one of them could have been disinherited. Once a son means forever a son. You cannot *unson* a man. And God makes my heirship depend upon His unchangeable relation of sonship. "If a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

This brings us to the proposition which a life-time of searching for the truth has confirmed :

JESUS CHRIST WAS NOT A PRODUCT OF THE AGE IN WHICH HE LIVED, BUT OF ANOTHER WORLD, WHO CAME TO THIS WORLD FOR A PURPOSE. Three things prove this : (1) His claims; (2) His character; (3) His works. First, what He *said* about Himself; second, what He *was* in Himself; and third, what he *did*, being Himself. Jesus Christ certainly claimed four things :

(1) That He was the Son of man; not *a* son of man, but *the* Son of man. Frederick W. Robertson says : "There is something exceedingly emphatic in that expression, Son of man. Our Master is not called the Son of Mary, but, as if the blood of the whole race were in His veins, He calls Himself the Son of Man. There is a universality in the character of Christ which you find in no other man. Translate the words of Christ into what country's language you will, He might have been the offspring of that country. Date them by what century of the world you will, they belong that century as much as to any other. There is nothing of nationality about Christ. There is nothing of that personal peculiarity, which we call idiosyncrasy. There is nothing peculiar to any particular age

of the world. He was not the Asiatic. He was not the European. He was not the Jew. He was not the type of that century, stamped with its peculiarities. He was not the mechanic. He was not the aristocrat. But He was the man. He was the child of every age and nation. His was a life world-wide. His was a heart pulsating with the blood of the human race. He reckoned for His ancestry the collective myriads of mankind. Emphatically, He was the "Son of Man."

Now was there anything in the environment of Christ to make out of Him such a world-wide Son of Man? Just the contrary. He was raised in a mountain village, and village life tends to make men narrow. Travel may correct this tendency, but Jesus did not travel out of Palestine. Born of the tribe of Judah and having a legal right to the throne of David, we should naturally expect Him to share the narrow, bitter feeling of His Jewish kindred, and, like them, chafe under the loss of national glory. On the other hand, He shares none of their narrow feelings. He teaches them a lesson in brotherly love by condemning their priest and Levite for passing by on the other side, while He praises the hated Samaritan who stops and helps the wounded man. All through His life there was a conflict between His universal sympathy and the narrow bigotry of His people. When Demosthenes thanked the gods that he was a man and not a beast, a man and not a woman, a Greek and not a Barbarian, he expressed the sentiments of all mankind till Jesus came with the thought of universal humanity. Jesus was not Jew enough for the Jew, nor Roman enough for the Roman, nor Greek enough for the Greek. They all rejected Him because He belonged to all alike, and refused to belong to either exclusively. The forces at work in the world at that time did not produce such a man.

(2) *Jesus taught that He was the Son of God.* The High Priest said to Him on His trial, "I adjure thee

by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said unto Him, "Thou hast said" (Matt. xxvi. 64). The High Priest understood His answer as affirmative for he at once rent his clothes, exclaiming, "He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?" When Pilate wanted to let Him go, the Jews cried out, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 7). One of the charges flung into His face on the Cross was that He said, "I am the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 43). Thus the enemies of Jesus testify that He claimed to be the Son of God. And His friends who were closest to Him and best knew His mind admit the claim. "I saw and bare record," says John, "that this is the Son of God" (John i. 34). Paul "Preached Christ in the synagogues that He is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20). When the centurion, beholding the wonders of the crucifixion said "Truly this was a Son of God," he simply echoed the claim of Christ's friends, and the charge of His enemies.

(3) *Jesus taught that He was God* in such a way as to compel others to admit the claim. It is evident that His friends and enemies understood Him as claiming that in being the Son of God He was God. Listen to these words: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). Again, "He that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me" (John xii. 45). Many men, before and after Christ, have tried to demonstrate the existence of God. Jesus made no such attempt. His mission was to manifest God in His own person. His claim confirms the message of the angel, "They shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us," and Paul showed that he had caught His true meaning when he wrote "God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). Jesus taught the impossibility of knowing God the Father except through Himself. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he

to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). He claims identity of Divine nature with the Father in the words, "I and My Father are one" (John x. 30). He calmly claims attributes which none but God can possess. He declares that He is eternal. To the cavilling Pharisees He said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 58). As a man He prays, but in one of His prayers we see a flash of His deity: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John xvii. 5). And, with this eternity of nature, He declares that He has equal honour with the Father. "The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men shall honour the Son even as they honour the Father." "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father that sent Him" (John v. 22, 23). He claims to be omnipresent as to place and time. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). He claimed that He had power to forgive sins (Matt. ix. 5, 6). And His enemies were right in their question, "Who can forgive sins save God only?" He claimed to be able to work miracles, even to the raising of the dead. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (John v. 21). To an unprejudiced mind there can be no shadow of doubt as to the fact that Jesus taught that He was God, and gave to those near Him such proof of it that they were compelled to admit the fact. John crowns Him Creator of the Universe. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John i. 3). He calmly wrote, "We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John v. 20). After Jesus stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee, "they

that were in the ship came and worshipped Him saying, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xiv. 33). His receiving their worship proves that He claimed to be God; their giving worship proves that they gladly admitted His claim. Paul's Christ "who is over all God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5) is the true Christ.

(4) *Jesus claimed that He was Himself the antidote for all evil.* Men have presented their plans and philosophies for the remedying of earth's ills, but Jesus stands alone in presenting not a system, but His own personality as capable of supplying the needs of the soul. To the hungry soul He says, "I am the bread of life." To men who stand perplexed about the way from earth to heaven He says, "I am the Way." To Pilate's question: "What is truth?" which is but an echo to the question of all ages, He replies, "I am the truth." To the seeker after the secrets of life He boldly says, "I am the life." To those who are groping in the dark He says, "I am the light of the world; He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." To a world crushed beneath the burdens of guilt, superstition and ignorance He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Instead of systems of philosophy or plans of relief, He presents Himself. This idea is not of earth. It was not man's way of doing before or since Jesus came. He stands alone as the One who offers Himself as the remedy for all evil. There was nothing in the thought of His age to suggest this; nothing in His environment to foster it. The idea bears the superscription of another world.

HIS CHARACTER. There are but three positions

we can hold with reference to Christ. Some said, "He is a good man, others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people" (John vii. 12). Jesus Christ was either deceived, a madman, a bad man, or God. None but God, or a madman, or a deceiver, could have made the claims that He did. The whole trend of His life indicates the soundest mind, filled with the healthy enthusiasm which a great mission inspires, and He thinks too clearly to be deceived. The charge that He was a madman, no one is foolish enough to defend. Then we are driven to one of two other positions. He was either God or the worst of men. We have just seen that He claimed the attributes of deity. A good man cannot claim to be what he knows he is not. A good man cannot be a hypocrite. Now, does any one in this day contend that Jesus was a deceiver? I have yet to hear of such an one. A candid Jewish Rabbi admitted in a sermon some time ago that Jesus was a good man, whose object was to do good, and died a martyr to His mission. Such an admission puts a man who rejects the deity of Christ in an embarrassing position, for he must now prove that a good man can be a hypocrite; that a good man can at the same time be the worst of men. There is no middle ground. Jesus pressed this fact home upon the young man who came to Him saying, "Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" when He replied, "Why callest thou Me good, there is none good, but one, that is God" (Mark x. 17, 18). "To say that I am good is equal to saying that I am God."

The question of Jesus, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" challenges not only His hearers, but all the ages; and their verdict has echoed the words of Pilate, "I find no fault in this man." Friends and foes who lived close to Him and inspected His words and actions confirm the claim that He is good. Peter says, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Pet. ii. 22). "Ye know," says John, "that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him was

no sin" (1 John iii. 5). All admit that He was good;
AND IF GOOD, HE IS GOD.

HIS WORK. His work was to establish a kingdom not of this world (John xviii. 36). Such a thought was not of this world. The Jews were looking for a temporal king, to deliver them from Roman rule. If Christ had taken hold of their idea and used it for His own advancement, He would have acted like a man, and His success could have been explained as the success of Napoleon and Washington can be explained. On the contrary, He opposed the leaders of public opinion, and began the establishment of a spiritual kingdom which lives to-day after the ancient kingdoms of Greece, Rome and Egypt have ceased to exist, except in memory. A young man, a poor mechanic, from a mountain village, with no rich, powerful allies, does this in three years! And He does it by the deliberate sacrifice of Himself. Men have died martyrs to their mission. But man has never yet planned martyrdom as a part of his mission. Jesus told His disciples that He would go to Jerusalem and be crucified, and on the third day rise again (Matt. xvi. 21). He provides before His death for a memorial of that death. Men do not build monuments to their defeats. But Jesus would have His followers remember not the test of discipleship. He tells His followers that the Mount of Transfiguration, but Calvary; not His glory, but His shame. Indeed, He makes His shame they must expect to be hated, persecuted, killed. Men do not try to establish kingdoms in this way. All these things go to prove that Jesus was not native to this world. He was more than man, and, as I see Him standing out distinct from and above all others, I cannot resist the impulse to fall at His feet and say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

A. C. DIXON.

THE GOSPEL AND ITS BLESSINGS.

BY FRED ELLIOTT.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith." (Rom. i. 16-17).

About the year A.D. 60 in the city of Corinth an old man sat busily engaged writing. He was writing a message to the children of God in Rome. His pen moved swiftly and surely, for he was being impelled and propelled by the Holy Spirit, for the Scriptures declare that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. i. 21). The writer, Paul, was no ignoramus, no proud, vain, empty boaster. He was one of the most cultured and learned men, as well as one of the most sane and sober of his day. He penned the words for two special reasons, first, because bidden by God, and secondly, because they were the deep conviction of his own spirit. He had found the truth of them, and because of that, with confidence he spake. He was writing to men and women in the midst of a very wicked city, where the name and the people of the Lord were hated and despised, where sin was rampant. Yet he raised the banner of the Lord, and

declared the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Blessed Paul! This word is as powerful to-day as the day it was penned.

What was this Gospel that he gloried in?

(1) It was not the gospel of social reform (although social reform follows in the train of God's Gospel).

A great deal of modern preaching to-day is on the above lines. We are told what we need is better wages, better houses, better laws, better sanitation, etc. When these obtain we shall have better people—a people who will seek after God. Is this true? Thank God for anything and everything which will make men and women's lives brighter and better, but will the above "gospel" do it? We fear not. We must remember this fact, our first parents never fell in a slum, they fell in a garden. The very best that the gospel of social reform can do is to put a new coat on a man's back, but the Gospel of God puts a new man in the coat. Which of the two is best I leave the reader to judge. Get the man right at the centre and the circumference will right itself automatically. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. vi. 33).

(2) It was not the gospel of education (although education has done a lot).

We are told to-day that what we want is more education on the question of the sins of drink, gambling, drug taking, etc. Would to God there was more education on these things. There would undoubtedly be less sin committed. Does this "gospel" really meet the need of the human heart? We fear not. During the recent European War we had the most civilized and educated nations on earth in conflict, and we have no hesitation in saying that they stooped to dastardly acts lower than any barbarian nation would. The fact is, nationally we are educated to the point of barbarism.

The same obtains in the individual life. The degraded, sensual man, is not found wholly among the ignorant and uneducated classes, on the contrary, they are also found amongst those who have been educated to the highest point.

These are man's gospels. Man's gospel says "do," but God's Gospel says "done."

Hallelujah, 'tis done, I believe on the Son,
I'm saved by the blood of the Crucified One.

When our Lord Jesus died on Calvary's Cross He uttered the victorious words, "It is Finished"; He bowed His head and gave up the ghost, and the veil of the Temple was rent in twain.

While these gospels sound all right, they do not meet the deep need of the human heart. The Psalmist cries, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts. All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me" (Psa. xlii. 7). The great deep of man's need calls, and God answers the cry out of the great deep of His infinite supply. How does He do it? Through the Sacrifice of Calvary — "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me." Jesus Christ bore our iniquities in His own body on the tree, and from Calvary there flows the healing stream. God's Gospel is the Gospel of Calvary. Paul defines it in 1 Corinthians xv. 3, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

I. Christ died. Blessed fact. His death was a wondrous death, the most wonderful and far reaching the world has ever known.

(1) He died, *not a suicide's death*. It was true He had power to lay His life down and power to take it again (John x. 18). But He took not His own life. It was taken from Him (Isa. liii. 8).

(2) It was *not an accidental death*. It did not just happen that He was there at the time. In Rom. v. we read, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly" Not a minute too soon nor a minute too late, but when

the eternal clock struck the hour He died. His death was prophesied, prearranged and provided by God (Gen. xxii. 8). It was no after-thought.

(3) It was *not a criminal's death*. There were two malefactors crucified with Him, but the testimony of all was found in the words of Pilate, "I find no fault in this just person" (John xix. 4).

(4) It was *not a violent death*. It was an excruciatingly painful death, but not violent. You remember towards the close of the day they came to break the legs of the first thief, and passing by the Lord, they break the legs of the second, but they break not His legs. Why? The Scriptures had said, "A bone of Him shall not be broken" (John xix. 36) and because the Scriptures could not be broken, not a bone in the body of our Lord was broken.

(5) It was not simply *a death as an example*. It surely tells us that because He died as He did, we can die peacefully resting on His grace.

That bitter cup, love drank it up,
Now blessings draught for me.

"For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in His steps" (1 Pet. ii. 21).

(6) He died *not as a political hero*. They were looking for one to deliver them from the Roman yoke. They were willing to accept Him as an Emancipator, as a King, but as a Saviour they rejected Him. Even His own "thought it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke xxiv. 21). They did not know the real import of Christ's coming. He died *for our sins*, blessed be His Name. The death of the Lord Jesus was a substitutionary death, and on the ground of that death God can be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6). "By His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah liii. 5).

It is not believing in any theory of the atonement which saves, but a believing in the Christ who made atonement for sin, accepting the Lord Jesus as our Saviour, having Him as our Lord, we are "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6) and on that eternal Day will be owned of Him.

He died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*, and the Holy Scriptures declare unmistakably that His death was a vicarious and a substitutionary one.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good;
That we at last might go to Heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.

This is the first note in the Gospel—He died. It is remarkable that Paul passes over in this word His wondrous life. While we thank God for the sinless, blameless, spotless life, we find nothing vicarious there. It was His death that brought "life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (ii. Tim. i. 10). "The life of all flesh is in the blood, and it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22).

II. The second note was—"He was buried." Surely this is proof that He was truly dead. No "swoon" theory can stand the weight of Holy Scripture. The soldiers declared He was dead, so Pilate gave Joseph His body, and they buried Him of the virgin womb in the virgin tomb.

III. But the triumphant note of all is—"He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." This is truly the good news of the Gospel. It is the foundation of the Gospel message. "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. xv. 17). No resurrection, no salvation.

You remember Joseph of Arimathæa begged the body of Jesus and wrapping Him in linen with spices as the manner of the Jews was for burying they laid

Him in the tomb. They rolled the heavy stone in front of the tomb and sealed it. None durst break that seal. Soldiers paraded up and down outside the sepulchre, watching lest any should steal the body. More than that, all the host of hell would surely be gathered round that grave in the garden that day. If Satan could only keep the body in the grave that it might see corruption, then Calvary was a fiasco. Oh, the importance of these three days. Blessed be God, on the third day He burst the bars and rose triumphantly a victor over sin, death and hell. "He was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Believing in a risen Christ we are justified. Our faith is no vain thing, and our preaching has the stamp of eternity on it (1 Cor. xv. 14).

What think ye of Christ? He rose again,
 With victory following in His train;
 He burst the bars, the power was given,
 Oh, Hallelujah! Christ has risen.

A beautiful story is told of a wee laddie who though very poor loved to visit the Art Galleries in Glasgow. One day a Christian gentleman visited the same Galleries, and as he went into one of the rooms he noticed this wee boy gazing at a picture of the Crucifixion. Getting up close to him he wanted to know how much he knew about salvation, and began to question him as to who it was that hung on the Cross in the picture. The little boy turned, and in a subdued voice said, "Why sir, dae ye no' ken?" The gentleman said, "Who is it sonny?" He replied, "Why sir, that's Jesus." He then began and told him all the story, clear in every detail, as to the atonement. He had learned it in a slum Mission Hall. The gentleman was so taken with the little fellow, finding him such a bright Christian, that he gave him ten shillings to himself, with a "God bless you." He left the boy, and going into another of the rooms was soon "lost" gazing at a beautiful picture. He

suddenly heard little feet pattering behind, and before he could turn round there was a tug at his coat, and looking round he saw the wee boy. Looking up into his face he said, "There's one thing I forgot tae tell ye." The gentleman said, "What's that, my boy?" He said, "It's this sir. Jesus rose again from the dead." Blessed word—He rose again. Ruskin said all good stories should have good endings, and if there is no resurrection the message of Calvary is incomplete. Blessed ending to the good story. He lives for evermore. "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. i. 18).

This is the Gospel of God—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ—and also the power of God unto salvation. Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ, we receive God's power, for Christ is the power of God (1 Cor. i. 24). Not only does He give power to overcome sin, but He gives power to enjoy salvation. A man may know absolutely nothing of spiritual things, yet an hour after his conversion he may be enjoying the deep things of God. Such is the power of His grace.

But in this Gospel there is not only power given, but righteousness imputed and imparted. It is not only "the power of God unto salvation," but "therein is revealed the righteousness of God." Not only "power," but righteousness. "There is none righteous no not one" (Rom. iii. 10), but Christ is our righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30). Bunyan in his "Pilgrim's Progress" tells us of the blessing received at the Cross. His burden was gone, he received a scroll in his hand and a robe of Christ's own weaving, the righteousness of Christ imputed. These blessings are ours in Christ, and that prophecy fulfilled, "Thy people shall be all righteous" (Isa. lx. 21).

Some time ago I conducted a Mission in Lincolnshire. One day, invited out to the Squire's to tea, I was going through his grounds and stopped to look

at some lambs playing in the fields. As I stood I noticed two wee lambs seemingly crippled coming up the hill. Turning to my hostess, I said, "Poor little things." Instead of sympathizing with me in this, she simply smiled. I thought she must be very heartless. Asking her why she smiled, she told me the following story. A ewe had given birth to two lambs, and the lambs died. Another ewe had given birth to two lambs and the ewe died. Here was a sheep without her lambs and lambs without a mother. What could the shepherd do? One of two things; he must either get the old ewe to take to the lambs or else bring them up on the "bottle." Putting the two strange lambs to the ewe, she simply butted them away with her head as they were not her own. The farmer being a wise man, took the two dead lambs and skinned them. Taking the skins of the dead lambs he covered them over the backs of the living lambs and gave them to the ewe. She bent her head, and smelled them for a moment. It was her own "flesh and blood" and immediately they were her own. She reared them till they were quite strong.

What a blessed message for us. God could not accept us as we were, "without hope and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12). We had transgressed the law of God. The Scripture had declared, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4), "The wages of sin is death" (Rom vi. 23), "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John iii. 4 R.V.), and *must* be punished. "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 13).

God looks upon us in Christ, blessed be His Name. We are covered by the slain Lamb of Calvary, and are "accepted in the Beloved." God can see no flaw or blemish in us, for He sees none in Him, and "as He is so are we in the world" (1 John iv. 17). Some day He will present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

No spot or wrinkle then. We will be all fair (Songs. iv. 7). "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. vii. 17).

When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart;
Then, dear Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then how much I owe.

FRED ELLIOTT.

THE EXODUS ACCOMPLISHED AT JERUSALEM.

BY GEORGE GOODMAN.

WHEN Moses and Elijah stood in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus it is said that they talked together of the decease He should accomplish at Jerusalem—His “exodus” or way out of life by death.

It would have been a grand thing to have been able to listen to that conversation. No doubt, however, we have it largely reproduced for us by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament Scriptures, and it is to these we propose to turn.

It has been said that there have been and are many theories of the Atonement. This may be true, but they are quite unnecessary. *No theory is needed*, the facts are very clearly revealed and satisfy all the needs of the human heart. They are sufficient to bring peace with God; the assurance of eternal life and courage for all the demands of daily life: all else is but curiosity, which the Scripture never offers to satisfy.

The true work of faith is to receive truth in the love of it. To delight in revealed facts and not to deaden them by undue speculation often to one's own confusion.

Accepting revealed statements as facts, let us then consider this “decease accomplished at Jerusalem.” In the words of the poet, let us “survey the wondrous Cross.”

The fourfold historical account of the event is given by the four evangelists. The large space they devote to the Lord's death shews the value they attached to this crisis in His history. The great crowning event of His life was to them His death. He came to live truly, but more emphatically He came to die. The graphic and impressive story is told almost without comment, quite without dogmatic teaching. It is the most pathetic and profound piece of writing the world has among all its treasures of literature. It is essentially "God-breathed."

But our attention is to be given to the facts that are revealed concerning it, so let us carry the scene in our memory as the background of all that is said concerning it.

I. THE NATURE OF HIS DEATH.

The first and great fact revealed to us is stated in the words — "*Christ died for our sins.*" At once curiosity is roused and a hundred queries spring to birth, but let us hush these and allow the fact to fix itself upon our minds. It was "for our sins" He died.

Death for sins was no new idea to the Jewish mind. All their sacrifices taught it. "For his sin which he hath sinned" (Lev. iv. 28) the Israelite brought a kid of the goats or a lamb, laid his hand on its head and slew and offered it.

The Lord Jesus had been pointed out by John the Baptist as "The Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world," and Christ Himself recognised that His death was to be "for His sheep," and declared that He had come to give His life "*a Ransom for many.*" It was necessary if He was to fulfil the purpose for which He came (to seek and to save that which was lost), that the corn of wheat should fall into the ground, and die if it was to bear fruit, the Son of Man must be lifted up if men were to have eternal life through Him.

Again, He applied the prophecies of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah liii. and lxi to Himself. Reading from chapter lxi. in the Synagogue at Nazereth He said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," and quoting Isaiah liii. 12 "He was numbered with the transgressors, He adds, "This that is written must yet be accomplished in Me . . . for the things concerning Me have an end (a fulfilment)"

Another interesting fact is that the Lord chose from all the Old Testament types one outstanding one to illustrate His death, that of *The Brazen Serpent* in Numb. xxi. 4-9, "As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

Much more He said concerning His death. It was "Blood of the New Covenant" that He shed. It was for the remission of sins. It was when "lifted up" that He would "draw all men to Him."

The Apostles took up the same strain, and follow their Lord in applying to His death the manifold types from the imagery of the Old Testament. He is "Our Passover" sacrificed for us. He enters like the High Priest of old into the Inner Sanctuary of the Tabernacle—The Holy of Holies, but His is not an earthly Sanctuary, but "The True Tabernacle which God pitched and not man." He becomes to His people The Mercy-Seat, or Throne of Grace, where *we* may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

His body is the veil that was rent, so that His death opened the way into the Holiest.

They follow their Lord in describing His dying as "*a Ransom for all to be testified in due time.*" They ascribe a sacrificial character to His death. It is "One sacrifice for sins." It has been "offered once for all." It made an end of all sacrifices. "There is no more offering for sin" because "by one offering He *hath* perfected for ever them that are sanctified"

Moreover, they describe His work on the Cross as a Reconciliation made by God in Him. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." God's

love to men is therein commended to us in that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

More mysterious things are said, in the presence of which we can only bare our heads, remove the shoes from our feet and worship. He who knew no sin was "*made to be sin for us.*" We make no comment on this stupendous fact!

He was "*made a curse for us.*" The broken law was vindicated and the handwriting against us taken away. He "nailed it to the Cross," and openly triumphed" in doing so. *Sin was condemned in His holy sinless flesh.* All this and much more is revealed as to the nature of His death.

II. THE PURPOSE OF HIS DEATH.

As we turn from the facts revealed concerning the nature of the death of the Son of God to those that speak of the purpose of it we find great riches of grace revealed.

We are not left to speculate on the question—"Why did Jesus die?"; "What object had He in view?" The facts as stated are very plain, indeed, unmistakable. Our Lord's own explanation may be looked at first. He says, "*It behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations.*"

When He took the memorial cup He referred to it as "The blood of the Covenant shed for many *for the remission of sins.*" He said "The Son of Man must be lifted up that *whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*"

Remission—Salvation—Life—came through His dying.

The Apostles speak so much on this subject that a list of some of the statements made is all that space permits. Let each be "received with meekness" and "mixed with faith."

His death then is stated as effecting this:—

1. It “put away sin” (Heb. ix. 26)
2. It “redeemed us from all iniquity and from the curse of the law” (Titus ii. 14; Gal. iii. 13)
3. It “redeemed” us to God (Rev. v. 9)
4. It “reconciled” us to God (2 Cor. v. 18)
5. It “brought” us to God (1 Pet. iii. 18)
6. It “justified” us (Rom. v. 9)
7. It “sanctified” us (Heb. x. 10)
8. It “perfected” us for ever (Heb. x. 14)
9. It “purged” and “took away our sins” (1 John iii. 5)
10. It destroyed him that had the power of death (Heb. ii. 14)
11. Christ became thereby the propitiation for our sins (1 John ii. 2)
12. It purchased us for God so that we are no longer our own, but bought with a price (1 Cor. vi. 20).

All this He, the Just One, did for us the unjust.

In addition to this finished work, the result of His death in present enjoyment and practice is stated in the following glowing terms:—

1. Since He made peace by the blood of His Cross, we being justified enjoy *peace with God*. He is our peace (Rom. v. 1; Eph. ii. 14).
2. His dying had in view that the *Righteousness* of the Law might be fulfilled in us (Rom. viii. 3).
3. He died, moreover, that we being *dead to sin might live unto righteousness* (1 Pet. ii. 24). We reason that if He died then, with Him, we died, that henceforth we might not live unto ourselves but to “Him who died for us and rose again.” As one has said, “Did Christ die, and shall sin live?” God forbid.
4. It is, moreover, written “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth from all sin*” (1 John i. 7), causing those who know it to “cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit” (2 Cor. vii. 1).

5. It was that we might "*bring forth fruit unto God*" (Rom. vii. 4).

Thus all these are represented as following upon an apprehension of His death—Peace—Righteousness Death to Sin—Cleansing and Fruit unto God.

III. THE APPLICATION TO MEN.

Our last enquiry shall be—What is stated as to the application of the virtue of the death of Christ to the individual? It is clear that all have not availed themselves of it. Indeed, some are described as "yet in their sin," and are warned by the Lord Himself—"If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins."

The work of Calvary has its world-wide application. "*He died for all,*" we are told. "God so loved the world," Jesus tells us, "that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish." Moreover, as we have seen, He described His death as a Ransom, to which Paul adds "for all."

We cannot think of the Blessed God as not desiring the blessing of salvation to all His creatures. This is expressly stated, "Who will have all men to be saved" for "He desireth not the death of the sinner."

But that man is a responsible being is also made clear, and until he obeys the command given to all men to repent and the entreaty to be reconciled to God, he remains outside the saving efficacy of the precious blood.

Much has been argued as to whether Christ died for all or only for an election, but the matter is largely a strife over words. For example by way of illustration. A wealthy and benevolent man erects in his native town some public baths and dedicates them to the community at large. Many, however, have no love for cleanliness, and never avail themselves of the provision thus made. Indeed, they openly laugh at the idea, and declare that they have no interest in the baths whatever. Now it certainly cannot be denied that the

provision made is "*for all*," yet others might be heard to reason thus—How can it be for all if only one tenth of the people are benefitted? "Surely," they argue, "It is not for all, it is *for those only who come*." It becomes thus merely a matter of the point of view.

So as to the death of Christ. Calvin reasoned, "It is sufficient for all; it is efficient in the case of the believer."

Now this availing or appropriation by faith of the benefit of the Cross is thus described:—

1. Having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience (Heb. x. 22).
2. Believing to the saving of the soul (Heb. x. 39).
3. Washing away thy sins (Acts xxii. 6).
4. Receiving Christ with a view to becoming children of God (John i. 12).
5. Coming to Christ to find rest (Matt. xi. 28).
6. Confessing Christ as Lord in faith, for salvation (Rom. x. 9).
7. Coming to take the water of life freely (Rev. xxii. 17).

These seven shall serve as a sufficient sample of the Scriptural presentation of that great transaction of the human soul with the Living God by which he is made a partaker of Christ and enters into all His death means and has secured.

So, avoiding theories, we have set the revealed facts before you. They need no adorning, no support from the wisdom of man, but received in simplicity and sincerely will speak peace to the heart.

G. GOODMAN.

MERCY BY SACRIFICE.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL OWEN HAY, C.B.

THE position taken up by Christians is a mean and selfish one in the view of many now-a-days. "They are only interested in securing their own salvation," it is said, and rejoice in believing themselves "saved." "We prefer an unselfish philanthropy, which interests itself solely in the good of mankind, and does not trouble itself meanly about its own salvation."

This view, however, entirely misrepresents the true Christian, and totally ignores man's position as it is given to us in the Bible.

Man is a rebel, and in arms against his rightful King. When the Divine Spirit is listened to and obeyed, His first work must necessarily be to convict this rebel of his sin in disobeying and resisting such a King. The rebellion too, has involved the condemnation and death of the glorious Son of God—the most awful sin of which man was capable.

Good purposes, practices, or grand philanthropic schemes are out of the question in God's view for this rebel. Only one thing is possible, and that is an absolute surrender, and the laying down of his arms, followed by a humble acceptance of the pardon of the great King. A pardon too, which, in the mystery of Divine love, was purchased by the death of the King's Son: although in this tragedy each rebel had a hand.

The true Christian, then, is a surrendered and pardoned rebel, enslaved in love and gratitude to Him who died for him. To him no service is too humble, no sacrifice too great, to requite such love as has

pardoned the "chief of sinners," whom he knows himself to be.

He is really the best of unselfish philanthropists, "for the love of Christ overmasters" him, Who died for all, and in Whom each one also died "in order that the living may no longer live to themselves; but to Him Who died for them, and rose again."

And now to try to tell the story of that great love, so that we may, standing there it may be, in that obscure corner of the Temple court, with the heart-broken tax-gatherer of our Lord's story, and watching the life-blood flow over the great altar, breathe his prayer, "God be propitiated toward me the sinner," and find ourselves like him absolved from guilt.

Perhaps the best plan of reminding ourselves of the story of the Great Sacrifice is to look into the great picture gallery of the Old Testament, where every picture brings in a portrait of our Saviour, God. Among them pause for a few moments opposite this one, where (in Numbers xxi. 4 to 9) the propitiating Sufferer is shown at His lowest depth of humiliation, as the serpent slain for the poisoned crowds.

So dark is the picture that we might well have had doubt of the likeness, had not He Himself whose portrait is here, given us (in John iii. 14) the explanatory view of it—that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," by the Father's purpose and act, for "it pleased the LORD to bruise Him: He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin . . ." (Isa. liii. 10) for "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (v. 6). Equally, however, with the consent of the willing victim—for "I lay down My life. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (John x. 17, 18).

Israel, in proud rebellion, was face to face with so grave a disaster that they were humbled and on their knees.

In extraordinary pity and mercy God's plan of

salvation for them (a personal and individual one) was instantly ready and revealed.

So simple in design as to present no difficulty of arrangement—so easy to take full advantage of—just a look—so absolutely sufficient that “it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked unto the serpent of brass, he lived,” so like the “who-soever believeth in Him” of John iii. 15.

Now comes the meaning of the plan itself—*The plague*—overwhelming and destructive—the living fiery serpents. *The remedy*—the brazen serpent uplifted—for personal application.

Not one of the dead serpents suspended on the standard: but an object typical of the **WHOLE PLAGUE**, of all the serpents, which had bitten or might bite and poison. No longer formidable, it could not bite, condemned and dead. The very plague in all its deadliness slain, done for, and made an end of for ever.

St. Paul in 2 Cor. v. 21 concludes the explanation, saying “He (that is God) made (Him that is Christ) to be **SIN** for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made (or become) the righteousness of God in Him.”

The saving message for a world of sin-poisoned men and women, for each one of *us*, dying of the plague of our sins, in consequence of our own proud rebellion, is still in the three splendid monosyllables “**LOOK AND LIVE.**”

The newly forged piece of brass, hanging in the blazing Eastern sunlight, was easy to see and unmistakable, and the Christ of Calvary’s Cross is just as accessible.

But, as then, there is one thing each one must do now, turning from all else, no matter what, to look only at the **ONE** who saves.

There is no time to lose, for dying rebels, in doing this one thing.

OWEN HAY.

A GREAT PROBLEM SOLVED.

BY JAMES HODSON.

GOD is Love; that is, He not only loves, but is Love in His nature. As such He is pleased to find joy in the fellowship of His creatures. But it is also true that God is Light; that is, antagonistic, in the essence of His being, to sin in every form. Sin has come in and made intercourse between man and God impossible. "He is of purer eyes to behold evil and cannot look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13). God is absolutely righteous in the principles of His Government. He cannot sacrifice His holiness to display His mercy. He must be consistent with Himself. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works." The fall of Adam was a disaster so far-reaching in its effect, as to ruin his whole race and bring upon them God's sentence on sin—death. "Death passed unto all men for that all sinned" (Rom. v. 12, R.V.).

How then can an infinitely holy God have renewed fellowship with sinful man? This is the profoundly difficult problem to be solved.

God is Love, but His justice must be vindicated. Death is the penalty of sin. A substitute must be found or the sinner must die. Angels could do nothing here; for one thing, they are not of flesh and blood and could not die for man. The difficulty was met in the Counsels of the Triune God. "In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under law" (Gal. iv. 4). "He became a partaker of flesh and blood" in order to die (Heb. ii. 14). He

took not on Him angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. He was not subject to death, but the supreme purpose of His Incarnation was that He might die. He was born of a virgin by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Why was this necessary? The devil had corrupted the whole world, and no member of that sinful race could ever have become a sacrifice for sin. But Christ was born of a virgin. He was the second man from heaven. His was a true humanity, but it was a spotless humanity and intrinsically holy. The lamb in Exodus xii., the red heifer in Numbers xix., were both types of Christ. The lamb was to be without blemish, the heifer without spot. The Lord Jesus was perfect in both particulars, without blemish, no innate defect; without spot, no contracted defect. He was undefiled and undefilable. He could lay His hand on the foul leper and contract neither disease nor defilement (Luke v. 13). Thus He was the anti-type of both the lamb and the heifer. God prepared Him a body that was holy. This could not be said of any other man. He knew no sin; He did no sin; He was "holy, blameless, undefiled and separate from sinners." As man He was tested in every possible way, but every testing only proved Him to be what He was, the Holy One of God.

In the Old Testament God links Himself specially with three men. "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." In the New Testament He links Himself with one Man. He is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." There are preachers abroad to-day who deny the virgin birth and the true deity of the Son and asperse His spotless humanity. Let us hold fast the truth, and thus have fellowship with God concerning His Beloved Son.

The question may suggest itself here—Why did He come into the world to die? In order to put away sin, for this could not be accomplished without the shedding of blood. He saw our dire need, was moved

with compassion, and although He knew all it would cost Him of sorrow, reproach, and suffering, He went to Calvary and shed His precious blood that He might become the Minister of righteousness and peace to our souls. The devil tried to turn Him from the path of obedience, but "He set His face as a flint to go to Jerusalem," and even in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the dark shadows of the final hour were closing in upon His spotless soul, we hear Him cry in entire devotion to the Father, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

What a sight for heaven! The prospect of death and of contact with sin was both strange and abhorrent to Him, the Prince of Life, the Holy One of God; but nothing could turn Him from God's ways (John viii. 29), and He takes the cup which His Father had given Him to drink. Then follows His arrest, sham trial, unrighteous condemnation and mockings, scourgings and crucifixion.

Pilate knew He was a just man. He had the warning of His wife and his own experience of men and things to tell him that. "He knew that for envy the chief priests had delivered Him unto him," and yet to salve his conscience and please the Jews, he acted as though the Lord Jesus had been proved guilty, and offered the people to choose between Him and a condemned murderer. They ought to have remembered the warning of Numbers xxxv. 31, "Take no ransom for the life of a murderer . . . he shall surely be put to death," but instead of that "ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life" (Acts iii. 14, 15). It was the third hour, our nine o'clock, when they crucified Him, and He hung on the cross six hours (see Mark xv. 25-33).

During the first three hours He endured the worst that man could do, the agony of the Cross, the railings of the priests, the mockings of the people. The language of His soul then was, "I looked for comforters

and found none...lover and friend Thou hast put far from Me, and Mine acquaintance into darkness." But all that could never put away sin. That was only the preface to His affliction, for we read "When the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." It was then that the Lord caused to meet on Him, like' a black flock of unclean ravens, our sins. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6). "His soul was made an offering for sin, and He had to cry that exceeding bitter cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Thus a righteous basis was laid for God to save. The judgment of God fell on Him. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." Thou hast put Him to grief." All the waves and billows of God's holy wrath against sin overwhelmed Him. Truly, His heart was in the work He came to do, and this was the crowning act of obedience, and He could say, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life" (John x. 17), and the Spirit testified through Paul, "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name" (Phil. ii. 9). He is now in the glory, in the enjoyment of the perfect sunshine of the Father's presence. The great difficulty has been overcome. The sinner can come to God by Jesus Christ. "God can be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Reader, trust Him now. If you do, you will become at once a child of God. Your sins will be all put away. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. How simple! His obedience of act led Him into death. All He asks of you is the obedience of faith, and that will lead you into eternal life now, and eternal glory bye-and-bye.

God is infinitely pleased with His beloved Son. He will see to it that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father (Phil. ii. 10, 11). He pledges His word

that everyone who believes on Him shall inherit eternal blessing ; but it is equally true that every Christ-rejecter shall have his eternal portion in the Lake of Fire under the ever-abiding wrath of God.

The world rejected and crucified my Saviour, and its heart is unchanged. How can I love that world that slew Him and cast Him out? May God do for you, my reader, what He did for me many years ago, draw your affections for the things of the world and fix them on His Son. I have never been to a hippodrome, theatre, picture palace, football field, racecourse or billiard-room from that day to this. Why? Because I find satisfaction in the blessed Lord, and these other things are not of the Father, and will only feed the flames in the day of Judgment.

If you have hitherto rejected Him will you not change your mind and tread another path? God hates sin, and if He forsook His beloved Son at the Cross because sin was laid upon Him, He will surely cast into the Lake of Fire those who reject Christ. Oh! be wise, time is short, you cannot afford to enjoy the pleasures of sin now for a season and then lie down in torment for eternity.

The death of Christ meets all our need. We are called ungodly, but Christ died for the ungodly. We are called unjust, but Christ suffered for the unjust to bring us to God. We are called sinners, but while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. How clear it is that His blood justifies us and saves us from the wrath to come, if we will but acknowledge our guilt and trust in Him as our Saviour.

Without Him you are in your sins, going down to a lost eternity. I pray that you may be led now to put your trust in the Divine person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not religiosity and churchianity, but Christ you need. He will lead you from your awful danger into peace and blessing and eternal life. I was recently at the bed-side of a dying woman, and I said, "You were christened by a clergy-

man and confirmed by a bishop, were you not?" She said "Yes." "Do you think," I asked, "that will help in any way to bring you to God?" She shook her head and said, "No, that didn't go deep enough, now I have Christ, He did the work." I was delighted to hear that. I prayed with her, and she died a few days later trusting Christ. Thank God for His salvation. God thought, Christ wrought, the Spirit brought, the Bible taught it. Believe and you will have it.

JAMES HODSON.

THE UNIQUE SACRIFICE.

By W. HOSTE, B.A.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13).

THE world admires self-sacrifice in others, though generally content not to follow the example. A V.C. is a great hero. Men love the reward, but not the risks. Cross-wearing is more popular than cross-bearing. Many intended to gain the cross in the Great War, but failed at the critical moment. Probably, too, many earned it, whose deed passed unnoticed.

Perhaps no text was so often quoted in connection with the late War as the above, and yet in most cases it was misapplied, as referring to all who for their country fell at the front. It is true that such faced death at the call of duty, but with a hope of coming through alive. Between risking your life and laying it down there is a marked difference, and the verse says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man *lay down* his life for his friends." At the great Memorial Service for those who had fallen in the War, held in Hyde Park in May 1919, this verse was printed in a modified form on the memorial cards—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life *for his country*." No encouragements are held out to those who change the Word of God, and the above change is quite beside the mark.

No doubt during the War there were instances not a few of heroism and self-sacrifice, which would fall within the scope of this verse. One special case comes to mind. A young officer, on the point of throwing a hand grenade, let it slip and it fell into the bottom of the trench, where he and his comrades were stand-

ing. It was an affair of seconds. There was no time to pick it up. If it exploded it meant death to them all. He threw himself deliberately upon it and was blown to pieces, but his comrades were saved. It was a noble act of unselfish devotion. "He laid down his life for his friends."

But someone may object that he owed his life to his friends, for his own accidental carelessness. If so, the illustration so far fails. There was a case in the French Revolution of a father who laid down his life for his son. He was visiting a crowded prison where his son was awaiting execution. Worn out by privation and fatigue, the condemned man had fallen asleep. His name was called, the father answered, so the story runs, and died in his stead.

His act illustrates well the greatest human love. Other instances will occur. Most of us have read of the sacrifice of Eric, the Russian serf, who jumped from his master's carriage to face certain death in order to give the family time to escape from a pack of wolves. Had he merely fallen from the carriage, while endeavouring to save his master, though the result might have been the same, it would not have been "*giving his life* for his friends."

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

But all these fall far short of the supreme sacrifice—"Jesus Christ laid down His life for His enemies." Had the young officer died to save Germans, or the father and the serf to rescue their deadliest enemies, that might in some ways have compared with the Divine Sacrifice. "God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." Christ died for His enemies and prayed for His murderers. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Human love never

reached such a height. That made the sacrifice unique and proved His love greater than any mere human.

Many a man has risked his life, with the thought that he must die sooner or later. Better die a glorious death, than die the common inevitable death. But our Lord need never have died. Death had no claim on Him. Men die because of sin. He had no sin, and was exempt from dying. His death too was no glorious death, but the most shameful of deaths. There is a vast difference between facing death for King and country, and dying a lingering death, surrounded by the scorn and scoffs of fellow-countrymen.

There was no glamour at the Cross, no glory to be won, no friends to applaud, no hand to alleviate His sufferings. His companions in death were not heroic comrades, but convicted felons. "He was numbered with the transgressors." He could have saved Himself. He might have descended from the Cross. It was not the nails that kept Him there, but obedience to God, and love to man.

THE REASON OF THE SACRIFICE.

Why then did He die? "The Scriptures must be fulfilled." He must glorify God by a perfect "obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross." The types must be realized. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The blood of the covenant victim must flow, for Jesus had become the surety of a better covenant. Had He gone to heaven without shedding His blood, none else could have entered, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission."

No earthly reward awaited Him, no decoration, no titles from man. The only marks of victory He bore, were the five wounds of Calvary. The only wreath, a crown of thorns; for plaudits He had scornings, for cheers, sneers, for glory, shame. He

did not die like a Nelson amid the hero-worship of a nation, but as "the Man of Sorrows," "a reproach of men and despised of the people" (Isa. liii. 3; Psa. xxii. 6).

His was a unique death. He was forsaken of God at the last. No other servant of God ever had such an experience. David, contemplating the "valley of the shadow of death," feared no evil, for he knew Jehovah would be with him.

But in the valley of death itself Jesus cried "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Not only the sun was darkened, but God hid His face. For Christ was there as the sin-bearer. "His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree." He suffered once for those sins. On that Cross He died as the sin-offering, "without the camp." There He cried, "Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death."

Those utterly fail to grasp the need-be of His death who speak of it merely as the great example of self-sacrifice. He was that, but infinitely more. We admire a man who enters a burning house, or plunges into a boiling sea to save a fellow-creature, but what should we say of a man who risked his life, knowing that there was no one to save? We should call him a mad-man or a suicide.

There were millions to save, and Christ died to save them. Now not one need perish. All may have eternal life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SACRIFICE.

The importance of the death of Christ is shewn by the large space it occupies in the Gospels. The death of Stephen is the only death of a disciple of which we have any detail. It occupies four verses. The death of our Lord fills four long chapters; for that death affects every member of the race.

What occupied the thought of Moses and Elias when they found themselves with their Lord in the glory

of the Holy Mount. Did they speak of the heavenly glory they had left, or of the Kingdom glory yet to come? No, "they spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." That was to them all that mattered. They could talk of nothing else. Were that death not died, heaven would shut her gates on their return. They, in common with all other men, must be for ever excluded. But Christ did die, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Men rarely speak of their own death. It was a frequent subject of reference to our Lord. He spake thrice of being "lifted up," signifying what death He should die (John iii. 15; viii. 28; xii. 32); of giving His life, as the Son of Man a ransom for many (Matt. xx. 28); the Good Shepherd for the sheep, and of laying down His life in obedience to His Father's command, that He might take it again (John x. 11-18). He was born in order to die; not that He was mortal and thus subject to death, but He set death before Him as an end to be accomplished.

THE PREDICTION OF THE SACRIFICE.

The Sacrifice of Calvary was foretold from Eden downwards. The bruising by the serpent of the promised seed foretold it. The coats of skin made by Jehovah for Adam and Eve spake of it. Abel's acceptable offering prefigured it. The sacrifice of Isaac pointed on to the day of Christ. The Paschal lamb, the sprinkled blood, foreshadowed "Christ, our Passover sacrificed for us." The sacrifices for sins and trespasses, the burnt and peace offerings, were finger-posts to Calvary. The brazen serpent symbolized, as we have seen, the Son of Man lifted up on the Cross.

The prophets too spake of "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." Isaiah in his gospel-prophecy dwelt much on the atoning death of Christ that was to follow 700 years later. "He was wounded

for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed" (Ch. liii. 5). Ours were the sins, His the suffering; His the stripes, ours the healing. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Ch. liii. 6).

All our sins were laid on Jesus,
 Jesus bore them on the tree;
 God who knew them laid them on Him,
 And believing we are free.

DENHAM SMITH.

To Daniel the cutting off of the Messiah was revealed by Gabriel (Ch. ix. 26). Micah foresaw the smiting of the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek (Ch. v. 1). Zechariah describes the coming again to His people of Jehovah Himself, whom they had pierced, and inscribes the solemn word of the Lord, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered" (Ch. xii. 10; xiii. 7).

THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRIFICE.

This is a side of truth which the natural heart specially dislikes and denies. God's thoughts concerning sin are quite unknown and His claims ignored. To the carnal mind it is unthinkable that God's righteousness should demand satisfaction. To men of the world God is altogether such an one as themselves. But God's Word is very clear. "He will by no means clear the guilty." A way must be found whereby God can be just in justifying the ungodly or He will never do it. Were a single sin passed over at the expense of His righteousness, that is without a full satisfaction having been paid, the throne of God must totter to its base. Satan could successfully oppose

the entrance of a single sinner into heaven unless a sufficient atonement had been made, and no man can make that atonement for his own or for his brother's sin. God cannot deny Himself; He must be true to His holy character and respect His own law to the uttermost farthing.

This is the Glory of God. All the demands of His justice had to be fully met, before His love could go forth in unlimited flow to the guilty. The law demands the death penalty. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James ii. 10). But God has met His own claims at Calvary. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John iii. 16). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13).

The Sadducees of the present day, the Broad church school, the Higher Critic, the New Theologian (they are all brothers in the same family) hate with a bitter hatred the doctrines so clearly taught in God's Word of man's depravity and God's holy claims. They talk of their broad-mindedness, of their devotion to truth, but it is "truth" in the abstract. The "Truth" itself they stab in the back. But they can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth. Could they slay it, God would raise it from the dead.

The death of Christ glorifies God for ever before the universe. On that ground a full, free offer of immediate forgiveness and Eternal Salvation can be made to every creature, and made good at once to every one who believes in Jesus. One moment a child of wrath, under condemnation, on the way to eternal destruction; the next a child of God, pardoned, justified, and an heir of eternal glory. God's salvation is according to the claims of His holiness—"There is none holy as the Lord...neither any rock like our God." This is the comfort of those who trust Him.

God is Light and God is Love.

The Pharisees on the other hand, the Sacerdotalist party, the Ritualist and Romanist, bury the Sacrifice of Christ under forms and ordinances and by the conditions they attach, make salvation inaccessible to the helpless sinner. Of them it may be said with truth, "Ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth"; for after a long life of religious observances, sacraments and penances, what is the brightest hope they can offer to the earnest religionist? With rare exceptions, the flames of *Purgatory.

The only Purgatory that God's Word knows is the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, which cleanseth from all sin those who trust in Christ now in this life.

At the Cross of Jesus, "Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Isa. lxxxvii. 10).

Mercy cried for pardon for the sinner; truth demanded satisfaction for the sin. They met in the Person of Christ. By His death He atones for sin and saves the sinner. Else righteousness and peace had been in eternal conflict, now they can fall into one long embrace. As has been well said, "Love has its fill, law its due. On the Cross we see sin fully punished, and yet fully pardoned. We see justice with her gleaming sword and mercy with her silver sceptre reigning in sublimest splendour." As soon hope to strengthen a house by trailing honey-suckle up the porch, as substitute a moral and beautiful life for Christ the one foundation. Cain no doubt knew how to grow honey-suckle; Able laid a true foundation.

THE REALITY OF THE SACRIFICE.

This is shewn by divers considerations. In the Psalms we learn the inner experience of the Lord on the Cross. The sixty-ninth, for instance, tells how

*Purgatory—An imaginary place, where souls are said to be purged from sin in flames of fire, which, even if it existed, would be useless for the believer, and powerless for the unbeliever.

the waters, symbol of judgment, came into His soul, how He sank into deep mire where there was no standing and came into deep waters, where the floods overflowed Him. All this speaks of a real and terrible experience. Then in Psalm xl. He speaks of a horrible pit and a miry clay. He not only came where the sinner was, but went much lower still, into the very depths of hell, if we may so say, where no sinner has ever yet sunk. In Psalm xxii., we hear the exceeding bitter cry already referred to—the orphan cry of Calvary—“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me.”

The agony in the Garden bore witness to the terrible reality of the Cross, which loomed there in all its blackest horror.

Gethsemane was not the place of sin-bearing, but there what sin-bearing would entail was realized.

“If it be possible,” He cried, “Let this cup pass from Me,” but His will was never more subject to His Father’s than then; He accepted the cup, for how else could the Scriptures be fulfilled. On the Cross He drank it to the last drop; He tasted death for every man; He endured the judgment of God on account of sin. It was no seeming sacrifice, no semblance of suffering, but a dread reality.

THE MEANING OF THE SACRIFICE.

What then is the true import of this death? It was a Sacrificial death. In Leviticus xvii. Jehovah said to Israel, “I have given you the blood (i.e., of beasts) upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls,” but we know too from Hebrews x. that it was “not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (v. 4). Is it not clear, then, that these sacrifices were only types of a greater Sacrifice? The sacrifices of the Old Testament had no value, except as “shadows of the true,” enabling God to “pass over” the sins of the faithful, until the Substitutional Sac-

rifice of Christ should be offered up.

The Cross of Christ, was then, substitutionary.

There "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities." As our substitute He bore the penalty of our transgressions and iniquities. Who else could have done such a stupendous work but the God-Man?, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree"? In what sense could He have borne them except as a substitute. As Abraham offered the ram *instead of* Isaac his son, so "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." In the Old Testament economy, as the oft-repeated sacrifices taught the people of God that apart from blood-shedding there could be no atonement, so we learn in the New, that Christ is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but also for the whole world (1 John ii. 2).

This coincides with the first public testimony to the Lord Jesus by John the Baptist. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). Christ came not as an example merely, but as a Saviour; not as a preacher, but as a propitiation; not as the Man of God, but as the "Lamb of God."

To this we may add the witness of the Lord Himself. "The Son of Man came . . . to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark x. 45). This is My body which is given for you" (Luke xxii. 19). "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28). What have we to do but accept the blessings of redemption and yield ourselves to the Redeemer?

The epistles too leave us in no uncertainty as to the same truth. Peter, who once sought to turn our Lord from the path of suffering, learnt to glory in His sufferings. His first epistle has been called "The Epistle of Suffering." He speaks of the blood of Christ as the price of our redemption. "Redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without

blemish (Ch. i. 19); of the stripes of Christ as the means of our healing, "By whose stripes ye were healed" (Ch. ii. 24); of the sufferings of Christ as our way to God, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (Ch. iii. 18). The witness of the apostle John is no less clear. "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10). "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (v. 14). It would be impossible here for want of space to quote a tithe of the testimonies of the apostle Paul. His letters testify throughout to the sacrificial character of the death of Christ. "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). "He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). The epistle to the Hebrews is full of the same truth, "Christ once suffered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). "Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself . . . Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Ch. ix. 24-28). "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin for ever sat down on the right hand of God, . . . for by one offering He hath perfected them that are sanctified" (Ch. x. 12-14).

How clearly all these terms exclude the repeated offering of the Papist or Ritualist. Had the work of Christ been on the same plane as a sacrifice of the old economy "He must have offered Himself often" (Ch. ix. 25). The Sacramentarian affirms that the Sacrifice was made once on Calvary but is offered again and again on their pretended "altars." The Word of God makes no distinction between "making" and "offering." Both took place on the Cross "once for all." In dying He exclaimed not "It has failed," but "It is finished"; He bowed His head not as vanquished but as Victor. The completion of the offering

is also proved by the attitude of the Lord in heaven. He is not standing as an earthly priest, but is *seated* on the Father's throne.

Standing is the position of one who has not yet completed his work, but is still engaged in it. Sitting is the pose of rest after finished toil.

THE VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE.

The value in God's sight of the death of Christ, and His acceptance thereof, to which nothing can be added nor aught taken away, is set forth by the following considerations :—

(a) By the interest of the Spirit of God in the coming of Christ to accomplish that Sacrifice. As soon as man fell, God spake of Him as the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15); then to Abraham, as his seed "In whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18); to Judah, as "Shiloh.. to whom the gathering of the people would be" (Gen. xlix. 10); to David as the King whose kingdom should be established for ever" (2 Sam. vii. 16).

These blessings were afterwards shewn to be contingent on sacrifices as symbols of the death of Christ, apart from which no blessing, not even of a temporal or material kind, could come to a guilty world. The great centre of interest throughout the Old Testament, the national hope of Israel, was the coming Messiah, who should combine in His person, the seemingly incompatible roles of humiliation and exaltation, "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 11).

(b) This interest was also shewn by the signs at His birth, the mysterious star in the material heavens so eloquently telling of the King to the Wise Men of the East, and the vision of the angelic host from the actual heaven itself.

(c) Nor was that the only testimony He received

from thence. Thrice a witness was borne to Him by the Father. At the baptism "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." On the Holy Mount, "This is my beloved Son . . . hear Him." And on the eve of Calvary, "I have both glorified My name and will glorify it again."

What clearer proof could be alleged of the intense interest of God in the mission of His beloved Son or of the value of the work He accomplished. It is not without deep significance that the Holy Spirit by Peter calls the blood shed at Calvary "The precious blood of Christ."

(d) The testimony of the great fore-runner John the Baptist—as great as the greatest man ever born before him, was another witness to the all-importance of Christ's mission. Not only so, but this testimony was confirmed to Him by the miraculous works granted Him to do. "The works which the Father hath given Me to do, that I do, bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me." And by those done by His apostles, "God also bearing witness, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will" (Heb. ii. 4).

THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE SACRIFICE.

The acceptance of the work of Christ is proved by the resurrection. "Raised again on account of our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). "God raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pet. i. 21). Had He remained in the grave our faith would be in vain, we should yet be in our sins; we could never have known whether His work was sufficient or not. But where is the crucified One now? Seated on the highest pinnacle of glory—the Father's throne.

What further proof could we demand that His sacrifice has met every claim of that throne and has

for ever cleared out of the way every obstacle for the believer.

The descent of the Holy Spirit gives additional assurance of the value of the work of Christ. So great the value of that work that even the murderers of Christ could hear from Spirit-filled lips the astounding offer of forgiveness through the very Prince of Life whom they had crucified and slain. Millions since have been led to repentance and faith in the Crucified; multitudes in every age and clime have received the gift of eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The testimony of the written word to the Incarnate Word is uniform and unflinching. The whole Bible may be summed up in three words: Christ—Jesus—Lord. One theme predominates throughout, the Person and work of the Son of God. The Old Testament altars of atonement point forward to the Cross, the New Testament "tables of communion" back to it. It will be the theme of heaven throughout the Eternal Ages, the delight of angels, the song of the redeemed. This brings us to the last point

THE AVAILABILITY OF THE SACRIFICE.

How is the sinner to avail himself of so great a salvation? How can he make it his very own? Not by works, religious observances, prayers, or sacraments, but by simple faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8,9). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). There is no ground for boasting. The beggar who puts forth his hand and takes the gift can claim no credit. Believing is not

in itself a virtuous act, a meritorious effort by which the sinner earns the favour of God. No, all boasting is excluded by the very freeness and simplicity of salvation, which at the same time exclude all excuse from those who refuse or neglect it. "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?" The answer is a solemn one. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that *obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9). Their fate will be in the hands of Him they crucified, for "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31). How few murderers would escape if their victims could come to life. Those who refuse Him as Saviour will have to stand before Him as Judge. Those who have preferred the religion of the flesh, with its sins and pleasures, and have rejected the Sacrifice, will have to bear their own sins, in that awful place, "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

W. HOSTE.

JESUS THE SON OF GOD OFFERED ON CALVARY.

BY R. McELHERAN.

THE Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are so transcendently great, that we may well hesitate and tremble to write thereon, lest we "darken counsel by words without knowledge." The apostle John, writing of Him under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, . . . and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (John i. 1, 2, 14). He is spoken of in the epistle to the Hebrews thus, "Who, being the brightness of His (the Father's) glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). From these statements it is clear that a history of His life as commencing at Bethlehem, would give an inadequate view of His intrinsic and essential greatness. The words of inspiration—the Holy Scriptures—direct our thoughts back into the eternal past, before the heavens and the earth were created; and unfold the dignity and glory of His person as co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. In His intercessory prayer of John

xvii. He asks, "O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (verse 5). And to the Jews who were seeking to take His life He says, "Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 56, 58). This is He of whom we read, "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 4, 5).

It has been said that the reason many have such inadequate and unscriptural views of the efficacy of His atoning work, is because they have inadequate and unscriptural views of the glorious Person upon whom the whole responsibility of that work rests. If we realized His essential greatness, we would better comprehend Calvary. We would see that God became incarnate, that the blood which was shed on the Cross was **THE BLOOD OF GOD'S SON**, and that therefore its efficacy is beyond all question. Yes, blessed be His peerless Name, He glorified God on the earth, He magnified the law and made it honourable, His whole course from Bethlehem to Calvary was devoted to doing the will of His Father. He said, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." And again, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that **THROUGH DEATH** He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Let the reader ever bear in mind that, had the Lord Jesus Christ come to earth, lived a life of perfect

obedience to God, and then returned to heaven without having died, there would have been no shedding of blood and no atonement, and consequently no salvation for any of the sons of men. His holy incarnation, His miraculous birth, His spotless life, these in themselves could never put sin away. It was only by His death that redemption could be accomplished. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). "It is the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). "Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). The blood speaks of death—sacrificial death—and points to the GREAT SACRIFICE OF CALVARY. Christ crucified, Christ buried, Christ raised again from amongst the dead, these form the grand foundations of that gospel which the apostle Paul preached, and of which He says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. i. 16). "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved; . . . how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 1-4).

Even in the days of the apostles there were those who propagated erroneous doctrines, thereby perverting the Gospel of Christ. Of such the apostle says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8). To-day we have, of course, much more of such teachings, and in view of them and of the terrible anti-Christian drift to ritualism, rationalism, infidelity, socialism, and spiritism, which is now taking place in the great religious denominations of Christendom, it is incumbent on all true believers to "contend earnestly

for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

As in days past, so now, those who hold fast the truth of the Gospel will be termed narrow-minded. But C.H.M. has truly said, “We hear a great deal nowadays about narrowmindedness on the one hand, and large-heartedness on the other; but it is as a Roman orator over two thousand years ago exclaimed in the senate house at Rome, ‘Conscript Fathers, long since indeed, we have lost the true name of things.’ For what do men now call bigotry and narrow-mindedness? A faithful clinging to, and carrying out of the Word of God. And what do they designate large-heartedness? A readiness to sacrifice the truth on the altar of politeness and civility. As against this we hold that a really narrow mind is one which refuses to open itself to admit the truth, and that, on the contrary, a large and liberal heart is one expanded by the truth and grace of God.”

It is said of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, that “she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.” And the Bereans were “more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.”

The Scriptures testify of Christ. “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.” In answer to the question, “How can we know the way,” the Lord answered, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by ME.” Apart from Him there is no salvation, as it is written, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” And again, “To HIM gave all the prophets witness, that through His Name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive

remission of sins." And yet again, "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

The great barrier to people getting saved is that they are not willing to be saved in God's WAY and TIME. God's way is CHRIST, and God's time is NOW. Sinner, come to Him at once. He lovingly says, "Him that cometh unto ME, I will in no wise cast out."

DIVINE BLESSEDNESS.

BY C. H. MACINTOSH.

“OH! the blessedness; transgression forgiven; sin covered.” This truly is blessedness, and without this, blessedness must be unknown. To have the full assurance that my sins are all forgiven, is the only foundation of true happiness. To be happy without this, is to be happy on the brink of a yawning gulf into which I may, at any moment, be dashed for ever. It is utterly impossible that anyone can enjoy solid happiness until he is possessed of the divine assurance that all his guilt has been cancelled by the blood of the Cross. Uncertainty as to this, must be the fruitful source of mental anguish to any soul who has ever been led to feel the burden of sin. To be in doubt as to whether my guilt was all borne by Jesus or is yet on my conscience, is to be miserable.

Now, before proceeding to unfold the subject of forgiveness, I should like to ask my reader a very plain, pointed, personal question, namely: “Dost thou believe that thou canst have the clear and settled assurance that thy sins are forgiven?” I ask this question at the outset, because there are many now-a-days who profess to preach the Gospel of Christ, and yet deny that any one can be sure that his sins are forgiven. They maintain that it is presumption for any one to believe in the forgiveness of his sins; and, on the other hand, they look upon it as a proof of humility to be always in doubt as to this most momentous point. In other words, it is presumption to believe what God says, and humility to doubt it. This seems strange in the face of such passages as the following:—“Thus it is written, and thus it behoved

Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and REMISSION OF SINS should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 46, 47). "In whom WE HAVE redemption through His blood THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14).

Here we have remission or forgiveness of sins (the word is the same in the three passages) preached in the Name of Jesus, and possessed by those who believed that preaching. A proclamation was sent to the Ephesians and Colossians, as belonging to the "all nations," telling them of forgiveness of sins in the Name of Jesus. They believed this proclamation, and entered on the possession of the forgiveness of sins. Was this presumption on their part? Or would it have been piety and humility to doubt the forgiveness of sins? True, they had been great sinners, "dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath, aliens and foreigners, enemies by wicked works." Some of them had, doubtless, bowed the knee to Diana. They had lived in gross idolatry and all manner of wickedness. But then, "forgiveness of sins" had been preached to them in the Name of Jesus. Was this preaching true, or was it not? Was it for them, or was it not? Was it all a dream—a shadow—a myth? Did it mean nothing? Was there nothing sure, nothing certain, nothing solid about it?

These are plain questions, demanding a plain answer from those who assert that no one can know for certain that his sins are forgiven. If indeed no one can know it now, then how could any one have known it in apostolic times? If it could be known in the first century, then why not now in the present century? David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. iv.

6-8). Hezekiah could say "Thou HAST CAST ALL MY SINS behind Thy back" (Isa. xxxviii. 17). The Lord Jesus said to one in his day, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. xi. 2).

Thus at all times, forgiveness of sins was known with all the certainty which the Word of God could give. Any one of the cases adduced above is sufficient to overthrow the teaching of those who assert that NO ONE can know that his sins are forgiven. If I find from Scripture that any one ever knew this marvellously precious blessing that is quite enough for me. Now, when I open my Bible, I find persons who had been guilty of all manner of sins, brought to the knowledge of forgiveness; and I therefore argue that it is possible for the very vilest sinner to know now, with divine certainty, that his sins are forgiven. Was it presumption in Abraham, in David, in Hezekiah, in the palsied man, and in numbers besides, to believe in the forgiveness of sins? Would it have been a sign of humility and true piety in them to doubt? It will, perhaps, be argued that these were all special and extraordinary cases. Well, it matters not, so far as our present question is concerned, whether they were ordinary or extraordinary. One thing is plain, they completely disprove the assertion that NO ONE can know that his sins are forgiven. The Word of God teaches me that numbers, subject to like passions, like infirmities, like failures, and like sins as the writer and reader, were brought to know and rejoice in the full forgiveness of sins. And thence those who maintain that no one can be sure on this momentous question have no Scriptural foundation for their opinion.

But is it true that the cases recorded in the Holy Scriptures are so special and extraordinary as not to afford any precedent for us? By no means. If any case could be so regarded it is surely that of Abraham, and yet of him we read that "it was not written for his sake alone, that righteousness was imputed to him;

BUT FOR US ALSO, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 23-25). "Abraham believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. xv. 6). And the Holy Ghost declares that righteousness shall be imputed to us also if we believe. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). "To Him give ALL THE PROPHETS witness, that through His Name WHO-SOEVER BELIEVETH in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

Now, the question is, what did the Apostles Peter and Paul mean, when they so unreservedly preached the forgiveness of sins to those who listened to them? Did they really mean to convey to their hearers the idea that no one could be sure that he possessed this forgiveness of sins? When in the synagogue of Antioch, Paul said to his audience, "We declare unto you GLAD TIDINGS," did he entertain the notion that no one could be sure that his sins were forgiven? How could the Gospel ever be called "glad tidings" if its only effect were to leave the soul in doubt and anxiety? If indeed it be true that no one can enjoy the assurance of pardon, then the whole style of apostolic preaching should be reversed. We might then expect to find Paul saying to his hearers, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that no one can ever know, in this life, whether his sins are forgiven or not." Is there aught like this in the entire range of apostolic preaching and teaching? Do not the apostles everywhere set forth, in the fullest and clearest manner, remission of sins as the necessary result of believing in a crucified and risen Saviour? Is there the most remote hint of that which is so much insisted

upon by some modern teachers, namely, that it is a dangerous presumption to believe in the full forgiveness of all our sins, and that it argues a pious and humble frame of soul to live in perpetual doubt? Is there no possibility of ever enjoying, in this world, the comfortable certainty of our eternal security in Christ? Can we not rely upon God's Word, or commit our souls to the sacrifice of Christ? Can it be possible that the only effect of God's glad tidings is to leave the soul in hopeless perplexity? Christ has put away sin; but I cannot know it! God has spoken; but I cannot be sure! The Holy Ghost has come down; but I cannot rely upon His testimony! It is piety and humility to doubt God's Word, to dishonour the atonement of Christ, and to refuse the faith of the heart to the record of the Holy Ghost! Alas! alas! if this is the Gospel, then adieu to peace and joy in believing. If this is Christianity, then in vain has "the dayspring from on high visited us to give the knowledge of salvation through the remission of our sins" (Luke i.). If no one can have this knowledge of salvation then to what end has it been given?

And let my reader bear in mind that the question before us is not whether a person may not deceive himself and others. This would be at once ceded. Thousands, alas! have deceived themselves, and thousands more have deceived others. But is that any reason why I cannot possess the absolute certainty that what God has said is true, and that the work of Christ has availed to put away all my sins? Men have deceived themselves, and therefore I am afraid to trust Christ! Men have deceived others, and therefore I am afraid that God's Word will deceive me! This is really what it all amounts to when put into plain language. And is it not well to have things thus put? Is it not needful at times to strip certain propositions of the dress in which legality and fleshly pietism would clothe them, so that we may see what they are? Does it not behove us, when men stand

forth as the professed and authorised exponents of a sound and enlightened Christianity to test what they say by the unerring standard of Holy Scripture? Assuredly it does; and if they tell us we can never be sure of salvation, and that it is presumption to think of such a thing; and, further, that the very utmost we can attain to in this life is a faint hope that, through the mercy of God, we may get to heaven when we die; we must utterly reject such teaching, as being in direct opposition to the Word of God. False theology tells me I can never be sure, God's Word tells me I can. Which am I to believe? The former fills me with gloomy doubts and fears; the latter imparts divine certainty. That casts me upon my own efforts; this upon a finished work. To which shall I attend? Is there a shadow of foundation throughout the entire volume of God for the notion that no one can be sure of his eternal salvation? I most fearlessly assert there is not. So far from this, the Word of God, in every section of it, sets before us in the clearest way, the privilege of the believer to enjoy the most unclouded certainty as to his pardon and acceptance in Christ.

And let me ask, is it not due to God's faithful Word and Christ's finished work, that the soul confiding therein should enjoy the fullest assurance? True, it is by faith that any one can so confide, and this faith is wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost. But all this, in nowise, affects our present question. What I desire is, that my reader should rise from the study of this paper with a full and firm conviction that it is possible for him to possess the present assurance that he is as safe as Christ can make him. If any sinner ever enjoyed this assurance, then why may not my reader now enjoy it? Is Christ's work finished? Is God's Word true? Yes, verily. Then, if I simply trust therein, I am pardoned, justified and accepted. All my sins were laid on Jesus when He was nailed to the accursed tree. Jehovah made them

all meet on Him. He bore them and put them away; and now He is up in heaven without them. This is enough for me. If the One who stood charged with ALL my guilt is now at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, then, clearly, there is nothing against me. All that divine justice had against me was laid on the Sin-bearer, and He endured the wrath of a sin-hating God that I might be freely and for ever pardoned and accepted in a risen and glorified Saviour.

These are glad tidings. Does my reader believe them? Say, beloved, dost thou heartily believe in a dead and risen Christ? Hast thou come to Him as a lost sinner, and put thy heart's full confidence in Him?

Having thus sought to establish the fact that it is possible for one to know, upon divine authority, that his sins are forgiven, we shall now, in dependence upon the teaching of the Spirit of God, proceed to consider the ground on which God forgives sins.

THE GROUND OF DIVINE FORGIVENESS.

It is of the very last importance that the anxious reader should understand this cardinal point. It is quite impossible that a divinely convicted conscience can enjoy true repose until the ground of forgiveness is clearly seen. There may be certain vague thoughts respecting the mercy and goodness of God, His readiness to receive sinners and pardon their sins, His unwillingness to enter the place of judgment, and His promptness to enter the place of mercy. All this there may be, but until the convicted soul is led to see how God can be just and yet the Justifier—how He can be a just God and yet a Saviour-God—how He has been glorified with respect to sin—how all the divine attributes have been harmonized, it must be a stranger to the peace of God which truly passeth all understanding. A conscience on which the light

of divine truth has poured itself in convicting power, feels and owns that sin can never enter into the presence of God, that sin, wherever it is found, can only be met by the just judgment of a sin-hating God. Hence, until the divine method of dealing with sin is understood and believed, there must be intense anxiety. Sin is a reality, God's holiness is a reality, conscience is a reality, judgment to come is a reality. All these things must be looked at and duly considered. Justice must be satisfied, conscience purged, Satan silenced. How is all this to be done? Only by the Cross of Jesus.

Here, then, we have the true ground of divine forgiveness. The precious atonement of Christ forms the base of that platform on which a just God and a justified sinner meet in sweet communion. In that atonement I see sin condemned, justice satisfied, the law magnified, the sinner saved, the adversary confounded. Creation never exhibited aught like this. There the creature enjoyed the manifestation of power, wisdom and goodness; but the fairest fields of the old creation presented nothing like "grace reigning through righteousness"—nothing like a glorious combination of "righteousness and peace, mercy and truth." It was reserved for Calvary to display all this. There that grand and all-important question, "How can God be just and the Justifier?" received a glorious reply. The death of Christ furnishes the answer. A just God dealt with sin at the Cross, in order that a justifying God might deal with the sinner on the new and everlasting ground of resurrection. God could not tolerate or pass over a single jot or tittle of sin; but He could put it away. He has condemned sin. He has poured out His righteous wrath upon sin, in order that He might pour the everlasting beams of His favour upon the believing sinner.

On Jesus' Cross this record's graved,
Let sin be judged and sinners saved.

Precious record! May every anxious sinner read it with the eye of faith. It is a record which must impart settled peace to the heart. God has been satisfied as to sin. This is enough for me. Here my guilty, troubled conscience finds sweet repose. I have seen my sins rising like a dark mountain before me, threatening me with eternal wrath; but the blood of Jesus has blotted them all out from God's view. They are gone, and gone for ever, sunk as lead into the mighty waters of divine forgetfulness, and I am free, as free as the One who was nailed to the Cross for my sins, but Who is now on the throne without them.

Such, then, is the ground of divine forgiveness. What a solid ground! Who or what can touch it? Justice has owned it. The troubled conscience MAY rest in it. Satan MUST acknowledge it. God has revealed Himself as a Justifier, and faith walks in the light and power of that revelation. Nothing can be simpler, nothing clearer, nothing more satisfactory. If God reveals Himself as a Justifier, then I am justified through faith in the revelation. When the moral glories of the Cross shine upon the sinner, he sees and knows, believes and owns, that the One who has judged his sins in death, has justified him in resurrection.

Anxious reader, see, I beseech thee, that thou apprehendest the true ground of the forgiveness of sins. Let me reason with thee. What is to hinder thee from this very moment, resting on the foundation of accomplished atonement? Say, does thy conscience need something more to satisfy it than that which has satisfied the inflexible justice of God? Is not the ground on which God reveals Himself as a righteous Justifier sufficiently strong for thee to stand upon as a justified sinner? What sayest thou, friend? Art thou satisfied? Is Christ sufficient for thee? Art thou still searching for something in thyself, thy ways, thy works, thy thoughts, thy feelings? If so, give up the search as utterly vain. Thou wilt never find anything.

And even though thou couldst find something, it would only be an encumbrance, a loss, a hindrance. Christ is sufficient for God, let Him be sufficient for thee likewise. Then, but not until then, wilt thou be truly happy.

REPENTANCE—WHAT IT IS NOT, AND WHAT IT IS.

BY ALEXR. MARSHALL.

IT is important to have correct thoughts regarding "repentance," seeing that the Lord Jesus declares, "Except ye *repent* ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 3). If no one can be saved unless he repents, the subject must be of the greatest moment. In Mark i. 15, we find Christ urging His hearers to "*repent* and believe the Gospel"; and after his resurrection He charges the apostles that "repentance and remission of sins be preached in His name among all nations" (Luke xxiv. 47). In Acts iii. 19, Peter, in accusing the Jews of murdering their Messiah, exhorted them to "*repent* and be converted," while the apostle Paul on Mar's hill distinctly declares that "God now commandeth all men everywhere to *repent*." (Acts xvii. 30). What then, is repentance? It is to be feared that many seeking souls have been perplexed and bewildered by the conflicting views that exist as to what "repentance" really is.

WHAT REPENTANCE IS NOT.

(1) *It is not sorrow for sin.* This assertion may startle the reader, but I feel perfectly satisfied that the Scriptural thought of "repentance" is not "sorrow for sin," as many say and think. In asserting that "repentance" as used in Scripture has not this meaning, I do not say that a repentant sinner will not be grieved and humbled on account of his sin. *No one has ever yet repented toward God without being sorry*

for his sin. True "godly sorrow" always follows, but does not precede repentance. Before a sinner repents he is, doubtless, sorry because of sin's consequences, but he is not sorry because of the *dishonour done to God*. An unsaved man cannot have "godly sorrow," or sorrow according to the will of God, for "they that are in the flesh"—man in his natural state—"cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8).

"Godly sorrow" must be the sorrow for sin which the Christian feels, whilst the "sorrow of the world" which "worketh death" is the sorrow of the unsaved. In 2 Cor. vii. 9 we read, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye *sorrowed to repentance*." If repentance meant sorrow the verse would read thus, "Ye sorrowed to sorrow." It is evident that the sorrow spoken of *led* to repentance, and no one needs to be told that the leader, and the thing led to, are necessarily different. Slothfulness leads to poverty, but poverty surely is different from slothfulness.

(2) *Repentance is not hatred of sin and determination to forsake it.* The anxious inquirer must be confused when he is told to "forsake sin" and "give up" this, that and the other thing *in order to obtain God's pardoning mercy*. Those who teach this doctrine seem to ignore or forget that a man must *first* be rescued from the *penalty* of sin ere he can renounce it; that he must first be *justified* ere he can be sanctified; that he must *first accept* Christ before he will "give up" that which his nature loves and delights in. Of what use is it to urge the unsaved to hate or forsake sin, when every hour of every day in their lives they are living in rebellion against the eternal God? Go where they may, do what they please, they are trampling His commandments under their feet (1 John v. 9-11).

WHAT REPENTANCE IS.

The Greek word "metanoia," which in the New Testament is translated by the English word "repentance," means *afterthought*, from *meta* (after)

and *noeo* (think) and as *afterthought* often results in a *change of mind*, it came to have that as meaning.

Matthew Henry in his commentary on Matthew iii. 2 says, "*Metanoete*—bethink yourselves; admit a second thought to correct the errors of the first; consider your ways; change your minds; you *have thought amiss; think again and think aright.*" In Hebrews xii. 16-17 we read, "Esau, for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright. Ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he *found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*" Esau sought to obtain a *change of mind*, not in himself, but in his father Isaac. Jacob had obtained his father's blessing by guile. Esau earnestly besought his father to repent, to *change his mind*, and recall the blessing and give it to him, but Isaac was immovable and said, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." It is evident, therefore, that the repentance Esau sought with tears was a change in his father's mind. In 2 Cor. vii. 9 the apostle wrote, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance." The believers at Corinth had been made sorry by Paul's first letter reproving them for their inconsistencies of conduct. The letter had the desired effect, and they began at once to remedy the evils. They felt deeply humbled by their failures, and grieved over their conduct. And the apostle says, "I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance"—that ye sorrowed to such a *change of mind* as has produced such results. "For behold this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves" (v. 11). Their sorrow first manifested itself in a *change of mind*, which is "repentance," and then in a *change of conduct*, which is the *legitimate fruit* of repentance. In accordance with this view of the meaning of the word, we would refer to the Lord's parable as found in Matthew xxi.

28. The disobedient son answered and said, "I will not," but afterwards he "repented," that is, he "changed his mind," and as a result, "he went" and did his father's will.

NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE.

In the days of the apostles the world was divided into two classes, Jew and Gentile. Both classes were ignorant of God's way of salvation, and both required to *change their minds* before they could receive the Gospel of Christ. They were "alienated from the life of God through ignorance" (Eph. iv. 18). The Jews believed that they would be saved because they were the children of Abraham after the flesh. They boasted of their election of God, and rejected His pardoning mercy. They imagined that the Messiah was to come to earth with all the pomp and splendour of an earthly monarch, and when He came "without form or comeliness" "He was despised and rejected" by them. They required to *change their minds*, and accept Christ as their Messiah and Lord. The Gentiles, on the other hand, had many errors which had to be abandoned ere the truth of the Gospel of God's matchless grace would be received. They strongly opposed the doctrine of salvation through faith in a crucified Saviour. To the Jews it was a 'stumbling block' and to the Greeks "foolishness." Considering these facts, we see the force of the injunction to *repent and believe the Gospel*. The command seems to amount to this—"Change your minds, you are all wrong regarding yourselves and God's scheme of redemption. You are quite mistaken in your thoughts of God and your relationship and responsibility toward Him. Change your mind. Believe the glorious Gospel which is a revelation of His mind and heart, and enter into life and liberty."

Thus the "goodness of God leads to repentance" (Romans ii. 4). When the sinner, convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, looks away from himself, his "feelings," and "realizings" to Christ and sees Him

by faith dying for him and understands in some measure what His death has accomplished, he repents, *changes his mind*. This revelation of God's amazing love produces "repentance towards God," and this accompanied by *faith in the Lord Jesus Christ* (Acts xx. 21) is salvation.

Repentance has to do with *the errors abandoned*; faith with the *truths received*. When repentance alone is used as in Acts iii. 19—"Repent ye therefore and be converted," *faith is implied*; the belief of the truth being that to which the change is made. When faith only is used, *repentance is implied*, as in John iii. 36—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" the reception of truth presupposing a change of mind concerning the error. Unsaved reader, unless you repent *you must perish* in your sins. Hitherto you may have thought that it was a matter of unconcern to God whether you spend eternity with Him in the glory, or with lost spirits in the abode of despair. If so, *repent, change your mind* regarding this delusion. However vile and guilty, however wretched and debased, you may be, *God loves you*. If you doubt it harken to the wonderful words of life spoken by the Saviour, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). What matchless love! God so loved *you* that He gave His well-beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to bleed and suffer and die that *you* might be eternally saved! That amazing love of God embraces every sinner out of hell, and *therefore embraces you!* Though hating your *sin* with relentless hatred, He loves your soul with a marvellous intensity of affection. Perhaps you reply, "*God is not willing to save me in my sins.*" Yes, He is willing to save you as *you are and where you are that you may be delivered from your sins*. Every moment you continue in unbelief you are guilty of the horrid sin of calling your best and dearest Friend a liar! "*He that be-*

lieveth not God hath made Him a liar, because He believeth not the record (or testimony) that God gave of His Son, and this is the RECORD (testimony) that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 9-11). "*But I am not sorry enough on account of my sins.*" That may be so, yet God calls on you at this moment to repent, to *change your mind*, believe on Him who died to save you from eternal perdition. "If you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all," says an old hymn. You are commanded to come to Christ *with no other qualification than that you are a sinner needing a Saviour. Your need is your claim.* Come as you are by simple faith, and accept of eternal life as a free gift and a present possession (Rom. vi. 23). *I have no love in my heart to Christ.*" It is blessed to know that whether you love Him or not, *He loves you.* Perhaps you have been "trying" to love the Saviour, and have miserably failed. Cease all such foolish efforts. Ponder, consider *His love to you*, and you will be able to say truthfully, "We love Him *because He first loved us*" (1 Tim. iv. 10). *Surely I have something to do in order to be saved!*" Harken to the words of the Lord Jesus, "This is the work of God *that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent*" (John vi. 29). The "work" you have to do is at once to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). You have nothing *meritorious* to do. Christ paid the ransom for your deliverance with His precious blood (1 Tim. ii. 6). Divine justice is perfectly satisfied, not with what *you have done for Christ, but what Christ did for you.* "All that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

"I do believe on Christ, but cannot say I am saved." If you really believe on Him who loved you and gave Himself for you, God's Word says that you are saved, and are the present possessor of eternal life (John iii. 14-15; v. 24).

I don't feel that I am saved. Neither do I. I *know*

that I am saved, not because I *feel* it, but *because God says so, and He always speaks the truth.* My feelings don't affect my security, whether I feel joyous or sad, I know that I am safe for eternity because God says so.

'Tis not doing, 'tis not praying;
'Tis not weeping saves the soul:
God is now His grace displaying,
Jesus died to make thee whole.
Look to Him, and life works follow;
Look to Him without delay:
Sinner look, and ere to-morrow
Thou wilt weep, and praise, and pray.

A.M.

REGENERATION A NECESSITY.

By D. L. MOODY.

THERE is no portion in the Word of God, perhaps, with which we are more familiar than this passage. I suppose if I were to ask those in any audience if they believed that Jesus Christ taught the doctrine of the New Birth, nine-tenths of them would say: "Yes, I believe He did."

Now if the words of our text are true they embody one of the most solemn questions that can come before us. We can afford to be deceived about many things rather than about this one thing. Christ makes it very plain. He says, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God"—much less inherit it. This doctrine of the New Birth is therefore the foundation of all our hopes for the world to come. It is really the A.B.C. of the Christian faith. My experience has been this—that if a man is unsound on this doctrine he will be unsound on almost every other fundamental doctrine in the Bible. A true understanding of this subject will help a man to solve a thousand difficulties that he may meet with in the Word of God. Things that before seemed very dark and mysterious will become very plain.

The doctrine of the New Birth upsets all false religion—all false views about the Bible and about God. A friend in America told me that in one of his after-meetings a man came to him with a long

list of questions written out for him to answer. He said, "If you can answer these questions satisfactorily I have made up my mind to be a Christian." "Do you not think," said my friend, "that you had better come to Christ first? Then you can look into these questions." The man thought that perhaps he had better do so. After he had received Christ, he looked again at his list of questions, but then it seemed to him as if they had all been answered. Nicodemus came with his troubled mind and Christ said to him, "Ye must be born again." He was treated altogether differently from what he expected; but I venture to say that was the most blessed night in all his life. To be "born again" is the greatest blessing that will ever come to us in this world.

Notice how the Scripture puts it. "Except a man be born again," "born from above," "born of the Spirit." From amongst a number of other passages where we find this word "except," I would just name three. "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 3, 5). "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 20). They all really mean the same thing.

I am so thankful that our Lord spoke of the New Birth to this Ruler of the Jews, rather than to the woman at the well of Samaria, or to Matthew the publican, or to Zaccheus. If He had reserved His teaching on this great matter for these three, or such as these, people would have said, "Oh yes, these publicans and harlots need to be converted, but I am an upright man; I do not need to be converted." I suppose Nicodemus was one of the best specimens of the people of Jerusalem: there was nothing on record against him.

I think it scarcely necessary for me to prove that we need to be born again before we are meet for heaven. I venture to say that there is no candid man but would say he is not fit for the kingdom of God un-

til he is born of another Spirit. The Bible teaches us that man by nature is lost and guilty, and our experience confirms this. We know also that the best and holiest man, if he turn away from God, will very soon fall into sin.

Now, let me say what regeneration is not. It is not going to church. Very often I see people, and ask them if they are Christians. "Yes, of course I am, at least I think I am. I go to church every Sunday." Ah, but that is not regeneration. Others say, "I am trying to do what is right, am not I a Christian?" "Is not that a New Birth?" No. What has that to do with being born again? There is yet another class—those who have "turned over a new leaf," and think they are regenerated. No; forming a new resolution is not being born again.

Nor will being baptized do you any good. Yet you hear people say, "Why I have been baptized; and I was born again when I was baptized." They believe that because they were baptized into the church they were baptized into the Kingdom of God. I tell you that is utterly impossible. You may be baptized into the visible church, and yet not be baptized into the Son of God. Baptism is all right in its place. God forbid that I should say anything against it. But if you put that in the place of regeneration—in the place of the New Birth—it is a terrible mistake. You cannot be baptized into the Kingdom of God. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." If anyone reading this rests his hopes on anything else—on any other foundation—I pray that God may sweep it away.

Another class says, "I go to the Lord's Supper; I partake uniformly of the Sacrament." Blessed Ordinance! The Word of God declares as oft as we do it we do shew His death. Yet, that is not being "born again"; that is not passing from death into life. Jesus says plainly, and so plainly that there need not be any mistake about it, "Except a man be

born of . . . the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." What has a Sacrament to do with that? What has going to church to do with being born again?

Another man comes up and says, "I say my prayers regularly." Still I say that is not being born of the Spirit. It is a very solemn question then that comes up before us; and oh that every one would ask himself earnestly and faithfully: "Have I been born again? Have I been born of the Spirit? Have I passed from death unto life?"

There is a class of men who say that special religious meetings are very good for a certain class of people. They would be very good if you could get the drunkard there, or get the gambler there, or get other vicious people there—that would do a great deal of good. But "We do not need to be converted." To whom did Christ utter these words of my text? To Nicodemus. Who was Nicodemus? Was he a drunkard, a gambler, or a thief? No! No doubt he was one of the very best men in Jerusalem. He was an honourable Councillor; he belonged to the Sanhedrim; he held a very high position; he was an orthodox man; he was one of the very soundest men. And yet what did Christ say to him? "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

But I can imagine someone saying, "But what am I to do? I cannot create life. I certainly cannot save myself." You certainly cannot, and we do not preach that you can. We tell you that it is utterly impossible to make a man better without Christ; but that is what men are trying to do. They are trying to patch up this "old Adam" nature. There must be a new creation. Regeneration is a new creation; and if it is a new creation it must be the work of God. In the first chapter of Genesis man does not appear. There is no one there but God. Man is not there to help or take part. When God created the earth He

was alone. When Christ redeemed the world He was alone.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John iii. 6). The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, and the leopard cannot change his spots. You might as well try to make yourselves pure and holy without the help of God. It would be just as easy for you to do that as for the black man to wash himself white. A man might just as well try to leap over the moon as to serve God in the flesh. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Now God tells us in this chapter how we are to get into His Kingdom. We are not to work our way in—not but what salvation is worth working for. We admit all that. If there were rivers and mountains in the way, it would be well worth while to swim those rivers and climb those mountains. There is no doubt salvation is worth all that effort, but we do not obtain it by our works. It is “to him that worketh not, but believeth” (Rom. iv. 5). We work because we are saved; we do not work to be saved. We work from the Cross; but not towards it. It is written, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. ii. 12). Why, you must have your salvation before you can work it out. Suppose I say to my little boy, “I want you to spend that hundred dollars carefully.” “Well,” he says, “Let me have the hundred dollars; and I will be careful how I spend it.” I remember when I first left home and went to Boston; I had spent all my money and I went to the Post Office three times a day. I knew there was only one mail a day from home; but I thought by some possibility there might be a letter for me. At last I received a letter from my little sister; and oh, how glad I was to get it. She had heard there were a great many pickpockets in Boston, and a large part of that letter was to urge me to be very careful not to let anybody pick my pocket. Now I required to have

something in my pocket before I could have it picked. So you must have salvation before you can work it out.

When Christ cried out on Calvary, "It is finished!" He meant what He said. All that men have to do now is just to accept of the work of Jesus Christ. There is no hope for a man or woman so long as they are trying to work out salvation for themselves. I can imagine there are some people who will say as Nicodemus possibly did, "This is a very mysterious thing." I see the frown on that Pharisee's brow as he says, "How can these things be?" It sounds very strange to his ear. "Born again." "Born of the Spirit." How can these things be?" A great many people say, "You must reason it out; but if you don't reason it out, do not ask us to believe it." I can imagine a great many people saying that. When you ask me to reason it out, I tell you frankly I cannot do it. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whether it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8). I do not understand everything about the wind. You ask me to reason it out. I cannot. It may blow due North here, and a hundred miles away due South. I may go up a few hundred feet, and find it blowing in an entirely opposite direction from what it is down here. You ask me to explain these currents of wind; but suppose that, because that I cannot explain them, and do not understand them, I were to take my stand and assert, "Oh, there is no such thing as wind." I can imagine some little girl saying, "I know more about it than that man does; often have I heard the wind and felt it blowing against my face." And she might say, "Did not the wind blow my umbrella out of my hands the other day? and did I not see it blow a man's hat off in the street? Have I not seen it blow the trees in the forest and the growing corn in the country?"

My friends, you might as well tell me that there is no such thing as wind, as tell me there is no such thing as a man being born of the Spirit. I have felt the Spirit of God working in my heart, just as really and as truly as I have felt the wind blowing in my face. I cannot reason it out. There are a great many things I cannot reason out, but which I believe. I never could reason out the creation. I can see the world, but I cannot tell how God made it out of nothing, But almost every man will admit that there was a creative power.

There are a great many things that I cannot explain and cannot reason out, and yet that I believe. I heard a commercial traveller say that he had heard that the ministry and religion of Jesus Christ were matters of revelation and not of investigation. "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me," says Paul (Gal. i. 15, 16). There was a party of young men together going up the country, and on their journey they made up their minds not to believe anything they could not reason out. An old man heard them, and presently he said, "I heard you say you would not believe anything you could not reason out." "Yes," they said, "that is so." "Well," he said, "coming down on the train to-day I noticed some geese, some sheep, some swine, and some cattle, all eating grass. Can you tell me by what process that same grass was turned into hair, feathers, bristles and wool? Do you believe it is a fact?" "Oh yes," they said, "we cannot help believing that though we fail to understand it." "Well" said the old man, "I cannot help believing in Jesus Christ." And I cannot help believing in the regeneration of man, when I see men who have been reclaimed, when I see men who have been reformed. Have not some of the very worst men in the city been regenerated—been picked up out of the pit, and had their feet set upon the Rock, and a new song put in their mouths? Their tongues were cursing and blaspheming; and now are occupied in praising God.

Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. They are not reformed only, but regenerated—new men in Christ Jesus. Heaven is filled with a company of those who have been twice born.

In the 14th and 15th verses of this chapter we read, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." "Whosoever." Mark that! Let me tell you who are unsaved what God has done for you. He has done everything that He could do toward your salvation. You need not wait for God to do anything more. In one place He asks the question, what more could He have done? (Isa. v. 4). He sent His prophets and they killed them; and then He sent His beloved Son and they murdered Him. And now He has sent the Holy Spirit to convince us of sin, and to show how we are to be saved. In this chapter we are told how men are to be saved, namely, by Him Who was lifted up on the Cross. Just as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." You may see many countries; but there is one country, the land of Beulah, which John Bunyan saw in vision, you shall never behold, unless you are born again—regenerated by Christ. You can look ahead and see many beautiful trees; but the tree of life you shall never behold unless your eyes are made clear by faith in the Saviour. You may see the beautiful rivers of the earth, you may ride upon their bosoms, but bear in mind that your eyes will never rest upon the river which bursts out from the Throne of God and flows through the upper Kingdom, unless you are born again. You may see the kings and lords of the earth; but the King of kings and Lord of lords you will never see unless you are born again. When you are in

London you may go to the Tower and see the crown of England, which is worth thousands of pounds, and is guarded there by soldiers, but bear in mind that your eye will never rest upon the crown of life except you are born again.

You may hear the songs of Zion which are sung here; but one song—that of Moses and the Lamb—the uncircumcised ear will never hear: its melody will only gladden the ear of those who have been born again. You may look upon the beautiful mansions of the earth; but bear in mind that the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare you shall never see unless you are born again. It is God who says it. You may see ten thousand beautiful things in this world; but the city that Abraham caught a glimpse of—and from that time became a pilgrim and sojourner—you shall never see unless you are born again (Heb. xi. 8, 13-16). Many of you may be invited to marriage feasts here; but you will never attend the marriage supper of the Lamb except you are born again. It is God who says it, dear friends. You may be looking on the face of your sainted mother tonight, and feel that she is praying for you; but the time will come when you shall never see her more unless you are born again.

I may be addressing a young man or a young lady who has recently stood by the bedside of a dying mother, and she may have said, "Be sure and meet me in heaven," and you made the promise. Ah! you shall never see her more except you are born again. I believe Jesus of Nazareth sooner than those infidels who say you do not need to be born again.

Parents, if you hope to see your children who have gone before, you must be born of the Spirit. I may be addressing a father or a mother who has recently borne a loved one to the grave, and how dark your home seems! Never more will you see your child, unless you are born again. If you wish to be reunited to your loved one, you must be born again.

I may be addressing a father or a mother who has a loved one up yonder. If you could hear that loved one's voice, it would say, "Come this way." Have not some of you a sainted friend up yonder? Young man or young lady, have you not a mother in the world of light? If you could hear her speak, would not she say, "Come this way, my son,"—"Come this way, my daughter?" If you would ever see her more you must be born again.

There is a Saviour there for all. Nearly nineteen hundred years ago He crossed over, and from the heavenly shores He is calling you to heaven. Let us turn our backs upon the world. Let us give a deaf ear to the world. Let us look to Jesus on the Cross and be **SAVED**. Then we shall one day see the King in His beauty, and we shall go no more out.

ONE GOLDEN CURL.

BY HENRY PICKERING.

THE SUPREME SACRIFICE, a term much in use during the Great European War, ever led the mind to the true meaning of the Sacrifice of the Supreme, when "One died for all" (2 Cor. v. 15).

Either beneath the Shadow of the Sacrifice, the sorrow of loved lads mowed down in battle, or the gently falling on sleep of loved ones in our family circle, we feel the "vanity of all under the sun" (Eccl. i. 2; iv. 7)., and the intense reality of that which pertains to the Home Eternal, beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb. Let me cite a case of confirmation.

He was one of the class who have made Britain great—"an honest working man." His home was in a humble street in the city of Glasgow, yet withal he was a "gentleman" in the truest sense of the word—made *gentle* by the "grace of God," with a heart overflowing with love to "all *men*."

It seemed one of the joys of his life to get me alone and recount the poverty struggles of his boyhood; the wanderings in the broad paths of folly; the marvellous transformation of mind, heart, and life, "when it pleased God to reveal His Son" in him; the joys and trials of early service for the Master; the mature Christian experience in seeking to rescue the perishing or caring for the lambs of the flock; the faithfulness of a Covenant-keeping God "een down to hoar hairs."

As he sought time and again to magnify the grace of

God in His moving "in a mysterious way" during the years of his chequered career, the fleeting things of life appeared so trivial, the world such "a wilderness wild," and the Presence of the Eternal so real that, like Jacob of old, we could have exclaimed, "This is none other than the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven" (Gen. xxviii. 17). Once, specially, during a period in which he was passing through a "burning fiery furnace" of affliction, although two men only had entered the room, it seemed as if a third were present, and the form of the third was "like unto the Son of God" (Dan. iii. 25).

His heart aglow with his favourite theme— Grace and Glory—he joyfully exclaimed with the apostle: "For our light affliction, which is but for a *moment*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are *seen*, but at the things which are *not seen*: for the things which are seen are *temporal*; but the things which are not seen are *eternal*" (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18). Stopping suddenly in the midst of his glowing words, he exclaimed: "Man, I'll show you something which illustrates this passage, though I seldom show it to anyone." So, saying, he approached a little folding desk, set it on the table at my side, opened it as one might open a treasure chest, which, to him, indeed it was. Folding back the upper part of the writing slope, he dived into the secret recesses of the seldom-used portion of the desk. My inquisitiveness was aroused. Was I to behold a family heirloom of unknown value, a nugget or gem sent by a friend in a distant land, a presentation from fellow-workers after years of service, a relic of the days of folly and sin, or—what? Producing from the very bottom of this treasure hoard a small package wrapped in brown paper, he began to open it up. One wrapping after another only increased my anxiety, as it certainly increased his earnestness. At last, after much unfolding, on the cleanest of white tissue, now

fast being moistened by falling tears, lay — one golden curl, TOMMY'S CURL—all that he had left of the boy who had been a father's pride, a mother's joy, ere the Good Shepherd had folded the lamb in His bosom. Holding the curl in his shaking hand, tears fast flowing down both our cheeks, his soul stirred to its depths as he contrasted the "temporal" with the "eternal," he declared, "Man, were it not for the RESURRECTION, life would not be worth living!"

When the doctor had given up hope, when mother had received the last sad look from these bonnie blue eyes, when father had kissed the pallid cheek cold in death, with trembling hand he had cut the golden curl that used to adorn the fair brow of his darling boy. Now once more that silent memorial was unearthed, reminding us that by virtue of "REDEMPTION through the blood" of Christ (Eph. i. 7) the believing parent and innocent child were safe; by the virtue of the RESSURECTION of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. i. 3), the prospect of a RE-UNION beyond this parting vale was assured. Hence "Tommy's Curl," which reminded us of the *temporal* in the land of sorrow and farewells also spoke of the *eternal* where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 4).

It may be that this page is wet with the silent tear from a mother whose memory has been stirred, a father whose heart has been touched, or a son or daughter in whom "chords that were broken now vibrate once more." There are more treasured curls than one, and there are more treasures than curls. The baby shoe, the simple toy, the little dress, the piece of jewellery, the loved Bible, or other belongings are brought out of the secret drawer as the fateful birthday comes round. Then the pleasures, revellings, follies, and sins of this life appear in their true

“temporal” character; the life “beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb” appears as it is — real and “eternal.”

If **SAVED**, how ringing clear the Scriptures of of Truth concerning **RESURRECTION**. “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead” (Acts xxvi. 8). “There shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts xxiv. 15). “God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power” (1 Cor. vi. 14; xv. 52). Then, as to **RE-UNION**, “The *dead* in Christ shall rise first: then we, which are *alive* and remain, shall be caught up **TOGETHER WITH THEM** in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. iv. 14-17).

If **UNSAVED**, what heart-longings for certainty concerning “death, judgment, and eternity.” If you take your true place as “guilty before God” (Rom. iii. 19), and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as the God-appointed and only Saviour of the lost (John i. 12), you will have His word concerning **DEATH**—“I am the Resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die” (John xi. 25, 26). Then as to **JUDGMENT**—“He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life” (John v. 24): and **ETERNITY**, instead of “a certain fearful looking for of judgment, like all genuine believers, you will be “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus ii. 13)..

In view of the quickly passing away of things “temporal,” and the certainty of having to do with the “eternal,” it behoves each and all to “consider their latter end” (Deut. xxxii. 29). *Rest not* on the longings of the heart after better things, in the doing of good works, in religious ordinances, in any human efforts

or devices! *Rest alone* in the “perfect work of the only Perfect Workman”—the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “I have finished THE WORK which thou gavest Me to do” (John xvii. 4).

Rest in His Redeeming Blood,
Rest in perfect peace with God.

Then, with all who are truly “born again,” you will rejoice that “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then shall ye also appear with Him in Glory.”

THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

(Isaiah liii.)

THE subject of this chapter was thus questioned by the eunuch, when he asked, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts viii. 34-35).

His blessed Person dominates it and His sufferings fill it. It is the very substance and marrow of the Gospel. It is the answer to the cry of the forsaken *One* in Psa. xxii., "Why hast *Thou* forsaken Me?" He comes before us as "*The Man*" (Zech. vi. 12); "*The King*" (Isa. lii. 14; Zech. ix. 9); "*The Branch*" (see Isa. iv. 2; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6); "*The Servant*" (Zech. iii. 8). In this chapter Jehovah's Servant appears. He ascends Calvary, He makes atonement, He secures His satisfying seed, the gift of His Father and the travail of His soul, and He is exalted gloriously. His soul sufferings are the sufferings of a covenant victim, for "He shall see *His* seed," and that seed not only the gift of His Father but the travail of His soul.

It is the covenant of redemption between two persons—God and His Mediator. They are the parties to its ratification. His seed His Father's gift to Him, are the objects and recipients of it. We have the Son's soul made an offering for sin, and the Father assuring Him a seed, to which seed He applies eternally the full value of His atoning death. In addition to the seed, there is the exaltation by the Father of the suffering Saviour in manhood to the sovereignty of all. "It is in the soul of Jesus Christ that we must

seek the veritable passion of the God man, and what human soul could have ever been able to suffer as He suffered" (Alex. Vinet). The language of Isaiah liii. is dyed through and through with sacrificial references. He comes before us as a—

Saviour scorned—"He was despised" (v. 3).

Saviour sorrowful—"A Man of sorrows" (v. 3).

Saviour suffering—"Stricken, smitten of God" (v. 4).

Saviour silent — "He opened not His mouth" (v. 7).

Saviour slain—"A Lamb to the slaughter" (v.7).

Saviour satisfied—"Shall be satisfied" (v. 11).

Saviour sovereign — "Therefore I will divide Him," etc. (v. 12).

So we have His birth, death and glorious resurrection as Sovereign Lord.

In verse 2, "For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant"—or sucker. We have here the grow up of origin, manhood, the Babe of Bethlehem, taking us as it does to His lowly birth in our humanity, whereas in Isa. xi. 1, "And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch (margin, a shoot) shall grow out of his roots," we have the come forth of manifestation in all His glory as Jehovah's King.

THE SINLESS SUFFERER.

In answering the "How can these things be" of Nicodemus (John iii. 9), our Lord not only takes him to His lifting up on the Cross, but also emphasises the *necessity* of Calvary in His words, "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." There was a moral fitness and necessity in Calvary. It became Him for whom are the all things, and through whom are the all things in bringing many sons into glory to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Heb. ii. 10). It was in keeping with God's character. It became Him—it was what you might expect God

to do. None of His sons would desire a perfecting like that. Yet, if it was the path He trod, we must not seek to or desire to shun it.

The path of the saint void of suffering is not an enviable one. David's sweetest psalms were written when in suffering. God gets more out of us, and so also do men, as we pass through the fires. The myrrh smells the sweetest when most bruised. This principle is seen in the lives of individuals (*e.g.*, Psa. cxix. 67), assemblies (Rev. ii. 10). It is also seen in nations too, as evidenced in their songs, for

The mark of rank in Nature
Is capacity for pain,
And the anguish of the singer
Makes the sweetness of the strain.

There must, however, be this great distinction between our Lord's sufferings and ours. All human sufferings are in some way or other associated with sin; to us sin and suffering are correlative terms, but not so with Him. "*He was the sinless sufferer.*" Peter ii. 22 says He did no sin. 1 John iii. 5 says "and in Him is no sin." Heb. vii. says He was holy, harmless, and undefiled. Pilate's wife said, "Have thou nothing to do with this *just* man." Pilate calls Him just, and says, "I find no fault in this man" (Luke xxiii. 14). The thief on the cross, as he rebuked the other thief, said, "We receive the due rewards of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke xxiv. 41). The centurion seeing what was done, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke xxiv. 47), again, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. xxvii. 54). This pathway, in which the Captain of our salvation was perfected, is a pattern road for the sons to tread, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. We can never suffer as He suffered, or die as He died; our sufferings can never be those of a sinless man, but the principles which governed His sufferings can in measure govern ours. Knowing that He who leads God's sons to

glory will never ask them to tread a path which He Himself hath not trodden. "Our Shepherd is the Lamb," one who knows the Lamb's life, needs, and road. "And when He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them" (John x. 4).

THE WILLING SUFFERER.

The sufferings of Christ were not only sinless, but also essentially voluntary. Hear Him say in John x. 17-18—"Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." This is an aspect which surely differentiates between His sufferings and ours. Few, if any, of the sons He is leading to glory suffer willingly, voluntarily, or vicariously, but this was uniquely and absolutely true of Him.

Behold a spotless Victim dies
My Surety on the tree—
The Lamb of God, the Sacrifice,
He gave Himself for me.

This brings us to the very heart of things, to the true passion of the Son of God. The covenant victim pouring out His life for His own sheep. Not an hireling, but the beautiful Shepherd in the constraint of everlasting love dying for the sheep. In a past dispensation the sheep died for the shepherds, but here we behold the amazing sight—the beautiful Shepherd willingly and voluntarily dying for His sheep. It is to this willing and voluntary "laying down" to which He refers, when He says, "Therefore doth My Father love Me; because I lay down My life for the sheep." It has been called "the supreme act of self-sacrificing obedience and love," drawing out, as it does, the admiration and love of the Father. It was a passion in obedience to the will of His Father. "This commandment I have received from My Father." His passion differs from all martyrdoms in this, that "it was a life *given* for man, not *taken* by man." This

surrender of the Son to the will of His Father in the "willingly dying for the sheep," was an eternal act, historically fulfilled on Calvary. Listen to the word, "Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. x. 14).

In His "form of God" He was immune from all sufferings, but His sufferings He voluntarily assumed, when He brought of His own will and choice His Divine Nature into union with the human and became man. "John x. 18 is the only instance in which Christ is said to do any thing of Himself" (Westcott), and in what immediately follows we learn it was in obedience to His Father's will.

This vicarious death we have prefigured, right down through a past dispensation in type and shadow, and when He came, "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second" (Heb. x. 9). The sight and amazement of Eternity is "that sight" (Luke xxiii. 48). Not simply Deity suffering for humanity, but Deity for ever entering into manhood, dying "Man" for His creature's sin. Surely this in some measure explains John iii. 14, "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

AN OMNISCIENT SUFFERER.

"Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him went forth and said unto them," etc. (John xviii. 4). Some would have us believe that our Lord gradually woke up to the fact that He came to die for sinners, that He did not know from the beginning of the days of His flesh. His knowledge of all things that should come upon Him was from the very earliest beginnings of His life as man. He had "long fore-knowledge of the deadly tree." In John i. 29 John bears testimony to Him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. In John iii. He clearly and definitely speaks of Himself as "the Son of Man" who must be lifted up even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. Our Lord in John

always speaks of His death as a lifting up. In John iii. 14 we have the necessity of Calvary. Even so MUST the Son of Man be lifted up. In John viii. 28 we have the revelation of Calvary. "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man then shall ye know that I am." In John xii. 32 we have the dynamic of Calvary. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me. This He said signifying what death He should die." Here we have the Cross presented as God's great magnet, men drawn to Himself by His Cross.

In John vi. 27 He speaks of that meat which the Son of Man shall give which endureth unto everlasting life. In *v.* 35 He says "I am the bread of life." In *v.* 51 He declares that the bread which I will give is My flesh for the life of the world, and then in *v.* 54 He differentiates between His flesh and blood "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man," etc. Thus clearly foretelling that His death should be a death of violence separating His blood from His flesh.

John right through the Gospel which bears his name specially emphasises the omniscience of Jesus, His superhuman knowledge, His Kenosis was His own Kenosis. As God He knew the whole plan, and in the Eternal Counsels devised the plan with full knowledge of all it involved. Was He not the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world? Did He not through the Eternal Spirit offer Himself without spot to God? (Heb. ix. 14). There was not a moment in His manhood when He was not omniscient. The Kosmic activities of the everlasting Word never ceased even when He lay wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger.

No less Almighty at His birth
 Than on His throne supreme
 His shoulders held up heaven and earth,
 While Mary held up Him.

Right throughout His earthly path He was essentially

a Man of Sorrows, and knowing that every hour brought Him nearer that Cross where He must be lifted up and where He must taste death for every man. He surely knew the end from the beginning, and to Him Calvary was the end. Calvary where He should be forsaken in His sufferings by His God and where He must die an abandoned man. Where His cry should be heard. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Psa. xxii. 1). Calvary where He should be "Cut off, but not for Himself." Where His soul's travail should be seen, for the passion of the Cross is seen in the soul-sufferings of the Son of Man. "Dying crushed beneath the load of the wrath and curse of God." Where it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, where He made His soul an offering for sins, where He poured out His soul unto death, where He was numbered with the transgressors, where He bore the sins of the many, where He made intercession for the transgressors.

Would Jesus have the sinner die?

What means His death on yonder tree?

O hear His agonizing cry

Sinner, He prays for you and me.

Forgive them Father, O forgive.

They know not that by Me they live.

To faith that death means everything. It covers the whole of our redeemed life. "He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil age" (Gal. i. 4). Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify to Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14). Again in 1 Peter i. 18, 19, we see Christ and His Cross redeeming from a vain manner of life by tradition from your fathers. There is no point in the entire life of the believer that is not to be governed and controlled by Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Wouldst thou know My glory, beloved,

Know Me, the great I AM?

First must thine eyes behold Me,

The slain and the stricken Lamb.

THE GREAT SACRIFICE

My visage so marred more than any,
My form than the sons of men;
Yet to the heart I have won Me,
I am the fairest then.

Thou knowest the sun by its shining,
Thou knowest the rose by its breath,
Thou knowest the fire by its glowing,
Thou knowest My love by death.

Wouldst thou know in My great creation
Where the rays of My glory meet,
Where to My awful righteousness,
The kiss of My peace is sweet,

Where shine forth the wisdom and wonder
Of God's everlasting plan?
Behold on the cross of dishonour,
A cursed and a dying Man.

IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD?

(2 Kings iv. 18-37).

A Question for the Home and the Sunday School.

BY J. B. WATSON.

THE chapter is full of movement. The characters in it are seen taking journeys, expending energy, putting forth labour, wrestling in prayer. Their words are such as people use in an hour of sharp distress, their actions those of men and women having in view a single purpose overshadowing all else by its urgency. The object of all this solicitude is a child. The child is central to this record. Its calamity is the cause of all this activity; its blessing the object of all this mental and physical labour.

In the New Testament we have a chapter where the Lord Jesus gives the child this central place. "He took a little child and set him in the midst of them"; not that that circle of future church-builders should influence the curly-headed Hebrew lad, but rather that he should be an unspoken sermon to them in their folly. That sermon preached, the Lord took the little fellow as His text, and set before that inner circle of His own great truths concerning the child. He taught them that their attitude toward "these little ones" was an index of their attitude toward Himself—"Whoso shall receive one such little child in My Name receiveth Me" (Matt. xviii. 5).

He taught them that to become a snare to the soul of the child was a fearful thing for any man. "Whoso shall stumble one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone

were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (v 6).

He taught them that the soul of the child was infinitely precious in God's sight, that the children have ambassadors at heaven's court, ready to lay upon the footsteps of the throne any wrong that may be done to them—"Take heed that ye despise not (think down upon) one of these little ones: for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven" (v 10).

He taught them that His long and toilsome journey to the Cross had the salvation of the children in view—"For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost" (v. 11).

And finally, having spoken of the joy of heaven in the finding of the lost, He taught them that the great loving purpose of the Father is the blessing and salvation of every one of these same little ones—"Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish (v. 14).

To view the child as the Lord thus sets him in our midst can but lead us to this conclusion: *It is a solemn charge, to be in any wise entrusted of God with the care of the soul of the child!*

(1) *The care of the child a holy trust and stewardship.*

The Shunammite's boy was, as the record makes plain, a trust and reward given from God. She was a great woman, we are told. This may mean that she was wealthy, but assuredly we may apply it to her in a wider sense; she was great in the qualities of soul she manifested that day. She had made room in her house for that man of God who more clearly than any other Old Testament character types for us the Holy Spirit. She made him an abode, and as a reward was entrusted with the care of a precious soul.

So, to those who make room in their life, abodes for Him who

Comes sweet influence to impart
 A gracious willing guest,
 Where He can find one humble heart
 Wherein to rest.

there shall come increased entrustments, wider spheres,
 new stewardships, added joys.

THE DIVINE IDEAL—
 PARENTAL INFLUENCE.

Of course, we have also depicted here the truth that the Divine purpose is that the first and chief responsibility for the child rests with the parents, the first sphere of influence is the home. The parent can never escape this, nor farm it out to the Sunday School Teacher. The teaching of Scripture is plain as plain can be on this point.

Gen. xviii. 19.—Of Abraham, God says approvingly “I know that he will command his children and his household after him, they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.”

Exod. xii. 26—“And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you ‘What mean ye by this service?’ ye shall say: It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover.”

Deut. iv. 9.—“Keep thy soul diligently lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: *but teach them to thy sons and to thy sons’ sons.*”

Psa. lxxviii. 5-6.—He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and teach them to their children; that they might set their hope in God.”

Eph. vi. 4.—“Provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

The parent’s first and highest duty toward the child-

ren is this,—more than to set them in the way of getting on in the world—more than to see that they have good education and fair opportunities—that they should have the sweet influences of a godly home and the teaching of the great truths of the Gospel.

Christian parents, which are you more concerned about—that your son should enter the university or into the Kingdom of God? that he should pass examination after examination or that he should pass from death unto life by faith in Christ? that he should get on in the world or that he should grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ Jesus?

Beware lest you fail of your high trust and stumble one of “these little ones!”

But it is just here that the saddest feature of the matter presents itself to us. Take a hundred children at random from out our streets and lanes, and enquire as to the character of their home influences. It will be found that the vast majority have parents who are incapable of discharging their responsibility because they themselves know not God nor own His Christ. Ninety per cent. (is this overstating the fact?) of the children would be found to be spiritual orphans with no one to lay in their opening minds the sure foundations of Divine truth. The pity of it! as we look at these, in an unkind world, surrounded by all manner of baneful influences, we say in our haste “What chance have they?” but the answer comes back from the lips of the Lord, “It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

Now the Sunday School Teacher is called to foster these spiritual orphans for God: to make up, as much as in him is, for all that the child has lost because of his parents' incapacity to lead him in the way of the truth. When the parent is like the Shunammite's husband, so busy about his harvesting, or his thousand and one temporal interests as to have neither time nor heart to trouble about the child's urgent need and can

only hand him on to the care of someone else ("carry him to his mother")—we should be at hand to spend love and care upon him as she did on that sad day when she saw him die before her eyes.

She watched him die. She realised that he was lost to her. The weight of the disaster fell on her soul heavily, but she was not crushed thereby. She understood but did not despair. Her heart received a shock, but made a splendid recovery. She did not send for the undertaker. She did not believe that he was lost beyond remedy: she believed in the promise of the man of God, or rather in the promise of God through His servant Elisha. So she took the lifeless form of her boy up to that little room, laid it on the bed there, closed the door and went out. It was at once an act of understanding and an act of faith. He was beyond *her* power, she understood that: he was not beyond God's—she believed that.

As we face our charges week by week, do we understand how deep is the need that besets their souls? Have we clear understanding that spiritual death has overtaken them, and that only Divine power is competent to meet their case? And, knowing it, can we leave them in the presence of God? can we carry them into the chambers of our heart and with prayers constant as it's pulsings seek that they shall be blessed, quickened, saved?

Her faith conquered not only here, but again in face of her husband's coldness it gained a yet more notable victory. She makes ready to journey to the Man of God. Her husband, ignorant of the true condition of affairs, remonstrates that it is neither new moon or Sabbath; why this earnest haste? And her reply, knowing that the boy lies lifeless yonder—is this, "IT SHALL BE WELL."

Is faith in us thus able to face the world's cold inability to understand our earnest urgency in the matter of the child's spiritual need; to conquer its frown upon anything beyond a due and decorous

modicum of religious observance, kept to its stated times and seasons. In face of these chilling and enervating influences can we, with the vision of the child's needs before us, and of the loving purpose of the Father with us, say "IT SHALL BE WELL?"

Nor was this all. Presently, after an arduous journey, taken without regard to personal convenience or safety, she is met by Gehazi who asks her the threefold question "Is it well with thee, is it well with thy husband, is it well with the child?" Without hesitation, though the vision of the dead face of her boy rose before her as she spoke, she replied "IT IS WELL!" This is indeed fine! it is the utterance of one who has taken shelter in the promise of a faithful God, who calleth those things that are not as though they were. It is Faith indeed, giving substance to things hoped for.

We need this—to see, not the child that is, but the child that shall be when grace has had its way in his soul. And only Faith can give us this blessed power of vision.

Yet further goes the faith of this great woman. Her words to Elisha are splendid. "Did I desire a son? Did I not say do not deceive me?" What does this mean? It is surely this she means: Is the promise of God yea or nay? Does He give and then withdraw his gift? *Once* the boy has been given me; he is dead; but I will not let thee go until he is given me a second time. This faith is Abrahamic. It is in kind that which he had who received his Isaac back as from the dead on Mariah. It is the faith which gives glory to God, and staggers not at the promise through unbelief.

We must rest satisfied with nothing short of this—the giving of the child re-born. The entrustment to us of the child at first is a great honour; but it entitles us to hold God to His promise to give us the child a second time—alive from the dead.

THE TEST.

Now comes a yet further test to this great woman. To prove her Gehazi is directed to go on ahead bearing Elisha's staff with him. He is to lay it upon the face of the child. So she watches Gehazi hurry off with the prophet's staff.

This Gehazi stood for the proprieties. When this anxious, earnest woman cast herself at the prophet's feet, he had "come near to thrust her away." It was bad form to be so desperately in earnest as all that. Even as the woman's husband had failed to see why she should make such a fuss on a day that was not a new moon or a Sabbath, so this man of snow (alas! for he finished a leper white as snow) deprecated anything that was not in good taste. These enthusiasms offended him, he believed in the strictly proper manner. Had he lived in our day he would have been a sticker for the traditions. A text to suit all occasions with him would be "let everything be done decently and in order."

He served in the oldness of the letter, rather than in the newness of the Spirit. He did as he was told, because he was told, and went upon his errand because he was obliged to do so rather than because of heart-desires to help. His feet were leaden with legality, rather than swift to bear glad tidings of grace.

His service was cheaply rendered. It cost him no more than the physical effort of his journey to the Shunammite's house. No mental pain, no inward labour, no wrestling in prayer, no spiritual loss. Even the staff he bore was another man's. (This type rarely has a staff of its own—borrowed staffs and borrowed axeheads figure largely among Elisha's contemporaries).

He didn't expect much to come of his errand. He felt it right to do what he did, of course. How *could* he refuse when he was so definitely told to do it. But after all the boy was DEAD, you know, and what

could be hoped of such a case? He did as he had been bidden, went in and laid the staff on the boy's face, but nothing came of it ("I told you so"); and so he came away and reported that his expectations had been quite fulfilled,—nothing had happened—"the child is not awakened."

Behold him! Gehazi the prince of formalists, the champion of the frigid orthodoxy of that day. As straight and stiff as the staff he carried—and as dead. The man who could say "As the Lord liveth" as fluently as Elisha, but who could not at all add "before whom I stand." See him, and in your heart turn from the dead and useless order of professed service of which he is the type, with dread and abhorrence. Concerning his formalism we say, with all emphasis "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and flee away." It can accomplish nothing for God—it can bring no blessing to the children and it can only be the bringer of a curse to your own soul.

Alas! for our brave keeping up of appearances before our fellow-servants when our inmost heart is dry as summer dust; alas! for the iniquity of our holy things! Unprofitable servants have we been at best, and wicked and slothful ones at worst.

But no, this great woman would have none of Gehazi. She saw him go his way, but pinned no hopes to him. From him she turned to Elisha, and uttered words which declared her choice—"As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will NOT leave thee." What an association of terms—the living Jehovah, the living soul of His servant, these together were in the mind of the woman as the basis of her hopes for the boy. The power of the living God mediated and channelled thro' the soul of His servant—thus, and thus only, could the dead live.

Be sure of this in our work also, no faith is to be placed in that order of things typed by Gehazi and the staff; but in the living God operating thro' clean and prepared human instrumentality. For God is looking

for men thro' whom He can work.

Now, let us watch awhile Elisha's method. "He went in and shut the door upon the twain and prayed unto the Lord."

He began upon his knees. To pray was his first thought, even as it was Gehazi's last. That little room with its simple furnishings was hallowed by memories of prayer. Here, often and often, upon this very bed he had communed in the night watches with his God. There he had poured out his cries for Israel's blessings to the God of Jacob: for the sons of the prophets he had here waited upon the Lord. From the heat of travel and the day's burden he had found rest in this little room on many a day now gone, and as he steps within it the impulse to pray comes overpoweringly to him, and by the side of the bed whereon lies the pallid form of the Shunammite's lost boy, he kneels and prays. The dead child—the man of God—and the God who raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them are together in that room: the man of God pleading and wrestling with God for the life of the child.

How much do we know of this little room where we meet with God in prayer concerning the boys and girls? Does *our* work ALWAYS commence there? Do we, before seeking spiritual contact with our scholars, always establish spiritual contact with God thro' prayer? In this inner chamber all the conquests are won, all power is acquired, all wisdom is gained, all fitness is given that make our labours truly influential for Christ.

Do you know that saintly man who spreads the blessing of the Lord wherever he goes; whose conversation is always an uplift to the soul, whose presence is a benison to the spirit? His life is a light, his service laden with fruitfulness, and his spiritual children many. To him the worried and anxious turn in days of stress for cheer and guidance, to him souls that seek after God turn for light and leading. He seems

to move in the current of God's purposes, and radiate the fragrance of Christ around him. I am sure that some such one has come your way, and to-day your life is the richer for his coming; and you have sometimes wondered how it is that his life is so fresh and fair and fragrant—how it is that his influence is so constantly beneficent. It is this :

While we have been busy preaching sermons on prayer : while you have been pleased to listen approvingly to such messages : while we all have been singing beautiful hymns about prayer : while we have been buying and reading wonderful books about prayer : while we have had our heads together in solemn discussion of the psychology of prayer : this man, simpler, wiser, has been doing a better thing than any or all of these, he has been getting on with PRAYER.

“And thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and when thou hast shut to thy door—PRAY!”

“And he went up and lay (or bowed himself) upon the child and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child and the flesh of the child waxed warm.”

THE SERVICE OF LOVE.

From his knees to his work. No formal laying of a dead staff on the boy's face, nay, but the tense bowing of the whole being of the servant of God over the child he seeks to bless. “His mouth upon the child's mouth” : the warm breath of the living upon the cold lips of the dead; his heart throbbing against the heart that was still. Let us use it as a figure for our present purpose, of that spending of life which is the true activity of love. He who is truly Christ's servant will be marked by the costliness of his service. He will be a spender of those things which in their sum make up his life. Without niggardliness, without

reserve he will fling himself and all that he has and is into the labour which Christ the Lord has called him.

There are business houses where a little trade is carried on in commodities other than those for which the establishment chiefly exists. These are stocked and sold, not of choice nor with any desire to develop the trade, but simply to suit the convenience of certain valued customers. Not much is expected of the trade nor more time devoted to it than cannot be helped; it is what is called a SIDE LINE.

We must avoid that spirit which relegates our labours in the Sunday School to the place of a mere side line in our life, for immediately we do so we are following Gehazi rather than Elisha. We must let all go in, till we are able to say with Paul "God is my witness whom I serve *with my spirit* in the gospel of His Son." We must aim at the spirit of Carey who held that his calling was to make known the glad tidings, and who cobbled shoes simply to pay expenses.

We must love the children's souls as the Shunammite loved her boy; we must work for their salvation as Elisha wrought that day. Mere natural affection for children will not sustain us here; only the love of Christ constraining is enough. We shall love souls according as we see them through His eyes; we shall very gladly spend and be spent for them as we are entranced with Him who sold all that He had to bring the treasure, and shall be content to give time, thought, effort, sweat, and heart's blood for the children as we are abiding in Him who laid down His life for the sheep.

O! teach us what it cost Thee
To make a sinner whole,
And teach me, Saviour teach me
The value of a Soul.

Yea, teach me till there gloweth
In this poor heart of mine,
Some feeble, faint reflection
Of that great love of Thine.

The secret of influential service is Love which gives,

gives and yet gives willingly, gladly, joyfully that its object may be blessed.

THE SERVICE OF LIGHT.

The record further tells us that Elisha lay with his eyes on the boy's eyes: the seeing eyes peering into the darkened orbs of death. Let this contact of light and darkness figure for us that side of our work which has for its purpose the illumination of the child's mind, through the impartation of the word of the truth of the gospel. "The Light of the body is the eye." (Luke xi. 34).

The lesson is, as I suppose, our most direct approach to the soul of the child. In our spoken service week by week we must still aim at the Elisha-way of power and avoid the Gehazi-way of form. We are to be so in tune with the Spirit, so filled with the blessed theme of God's good news that our words shall possess that unique, subtle, indefinable quality that we are accustomed to speak of as "unction." It is this that raises the utterance of the servant of God above all other forms of human speech. It is well that careful preparation should go to the making of the lesson, well that thought and time be spent thereon, well that words, sentences, illustrations, be happily chosen, and well indeed that *truth* be set forth by it: but not all of these together can assure that the lesson shall be uttered with Divine unction. On the other hand, our lesson may transgress every known law of lesson-structure, our diction may be stumbling, our delivery halting and yet in our poor words there may be the very power of God. Unction makes the word grip the attention, and hold the heart: it is the word in power commending itself to the young hearer as being indeed the truth of God which may not be gainsaid.

Take heart, dear young teacher, this blessed power of imparting truth is not in the sole keeping of the learned, the intellectual or the eloquent. It is not gotten in the library, the school-room or the study.

It comes to those who know well that inner chamber of which we have already spoken, and rests, unconsciously to themselves, upon simple, trusting souls, who

Take time to be holy,
 Speak oft with their Lord,
 Abide in Him always,
 And feed on His Word.

THE SERVICE OF LABOUR.

But let us read again. "His hands on his hands." What does this signify—the strong living active hands of the prophet upon the powerless, motionless hands of the dead boy?

The hand is the symbol of activity, of work, and I would suggest that this may figure for us the place of good works in the service we render to the Lord on behalf of the children. Our scholars must see that we who speak to them of the precious things of God's grace are ourselves walking in the light and blessedness of them. A yawning gulf of moral disparity between the character of the message and that of the messenger will be intuitively known in the keen perceptions of the children. We must exemplify the things we teach. Character and service must harmonise.

Remember that Gehazi's service was what it was because Gehazi was what he was: and that Elisha's service was what it was because he rightly wore the highest title that can attach to any human being—"man of God." To aim at spiritual influence for its own sake is to envisage an untrue aim. To long for power and success in service may prove a snare to the soul, for these may well be sought from motives that are self-seeking and vain: but to aim at "Holiness unto the Lord," to live for His glory and to His pleasing is an aim that cannot but be true.

The heart of our message to you is this: No service can rise higher than the servant's level of Christian character. In order to *DO* we must first *BE*. There-

fore thou O man of God follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (1 Tim. vi. 11) yea, SEEK FIRST the setting forward in thy soul of that kingdom of God which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and all these things shall be added unto thee.

May we now seek to point out briefly the stages, indicated in the narrative, of the boy's response to Elisha's labours.

The first is this (1) "The flesh of the child waxed warm." The chill coldness of death left him and some of the warmth of Elisha's spent virtue laid hold of him.

How encouraging it is, when we are able to discern this earliest sign of the Lord's working with us. How it cheers us to mark the child's changing attitude toward the precious things we minister to him: to see inattention melt into rapt hearing; to notice the passing away of indifference and the coming of interest that deepens into concern and then into anxiety. These things are the sign of the Spirit's operation having begun within the child's soul. We may then be encouraged, but we must also be wise. Elisha at this point left off his labour and betook himself again to prayer—pacing to and fro in his inward crying to God. He knew that whilst there was that which he could do—there was also that which he could *not* do. Let us learn this well: we may roll away the stone from the mouth of the tomb, but only the Son of God can call Lazarus forth. Leave room, room for the Holy Spirit: stand aside and pray when the flesh of the child waxes warm.

Then, we read, a strange thing happened—"the child sneezed seven times." These are the only sneezes in the Bible. What can they mean? Now a

sneeze is a respiratory act,* including both inspiration and expiration, and the return of life to the boy was marked by the resumption of these vital functions. In artificial respiration (it is not suggested that Elisha merely employed this method that day—we believe implicitly, as the record says, that the child was DEAD) the object is (1) to remove those foreign substances† present in the lungs which prevent their responding to the action of the brain-control (2) to catch the first response made by the lungs to the signal given by the brain to inspire.

Now these seven sneezes or gasps were the signs of the coming of life, of the commencement of its pulsing within, the sure tokens that God had wrought that miracle which is ever and always in His sovereign keeping—the bestowing of life. Wondrous mystery! before which we can but bow and worship the Father of Spirits. How blessed to watch for the first signs of divine life stirring in the soul of the child for whom we have prayed and laboured: how glorious a privilege to be in at the birth of a precious soul! What earthly joy can compare with this?

Lastly we read: “the child opened his eyes.” The gasps had settled into the steady breathing of life assured, and then Elisha was rewarded by seeing those closed eyes open upon him. It is the moment of illumination, the time when the young soul receives the light you have so long been seeking to impart.

Some of us look back with thankfulness to that joyful moment in our own lives: the moment when we had revealed to us the Saviour’s beauty, when we first rejoiced in the sense of forgiveness, and knew ourselves saved.

* Apparently the last of the brain-centres which control the body is one lying far back in the skull near the “medulla oblongata.” Its hold is not severed for instance in the case of unconsciousness under anæsthetic. Indeed the Doctor’s aim in administering anæsthetic is to switch off the other brain-centres, controlling all those physical and mental functions which make up consciousness, without effecting this one which controls respiration. If by any miscalculation such a dose is given as unlooses this control—the patient is lost—death takes place.

†As water in the case of an apparently drowned person.

Oh! happy day that fixed our choice
On Thee our Saviour and our God!

Someone had prayed for us and loved our souls; through someone's self-effacing service we were won. Someone waited long before we gave any sign that his work was to be rewarded. Someone watched anxiously those earliest soul-gasps of yours, and then at long last someone's soul was filled and thrilled with joy unspeakable as your inward eyes opened and you saw the light of God's salvation. In that moment someone had his great reward—the choicest joy outside heaven, the joy of winning a soul for Christ.

Now it is your turn to pray, to labour, to teach, to serve, to wait, to watch. Now virtue must go from you that the children, cold with the chill of spiritual death may wax warm in the glow of your love. Many a long watch with God you must keep for these children of yours; patiently you must wait for the earliest signs of the Divine quickening in them: earnestly you must watch that you may be at hand to render service then. And then it shall be, *shall be*, SHALL BE, that to you will come the joy of seeing the child open its eyes on the Kingdom of God, and you will know that it has all been worth while. Like the Shunammite you will bow and worship, like her you will take up the new-born one and lavish on it a new ministry;—like her you will go your way satisfied.

Oh! sweet 'twill be at even'
If you and I can say
Kind Shepherd, we've been seeking
The sheep that went astray.
Heart-sore and faint with hunger,
We heard them making moan,
And lo! we come at nightfall
And bear them safely home.

Be it so, O Lord, to us thy poor, unprofitable servants,
for Thy Name's sake.—Amen.

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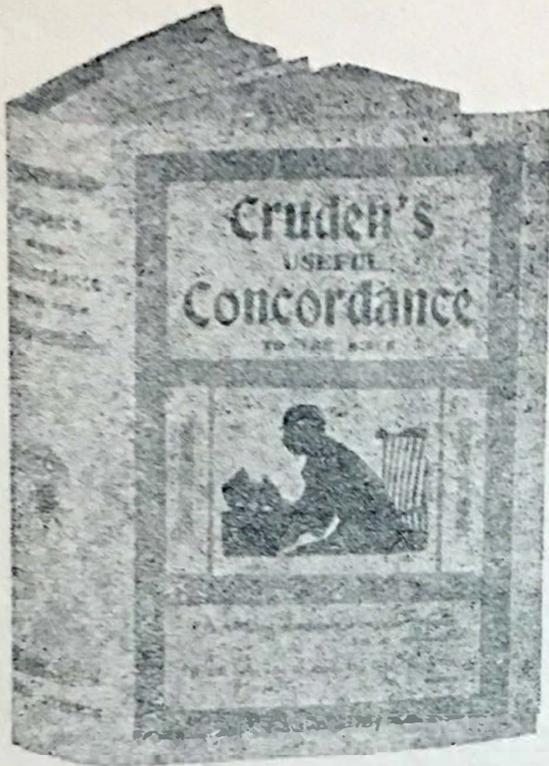
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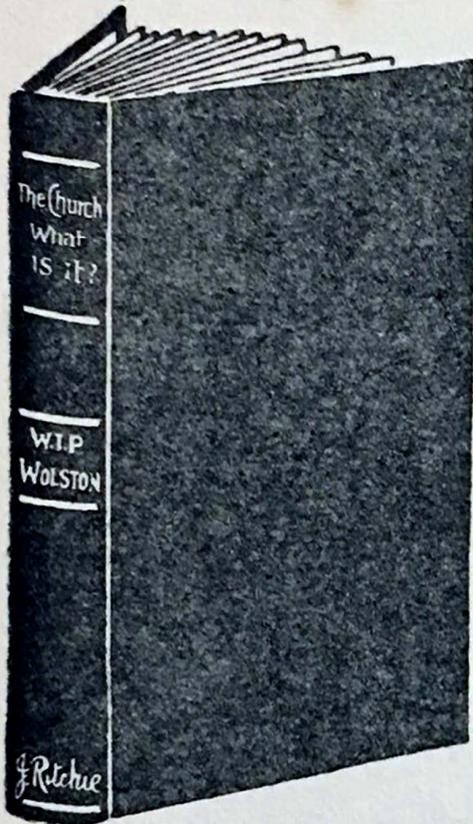
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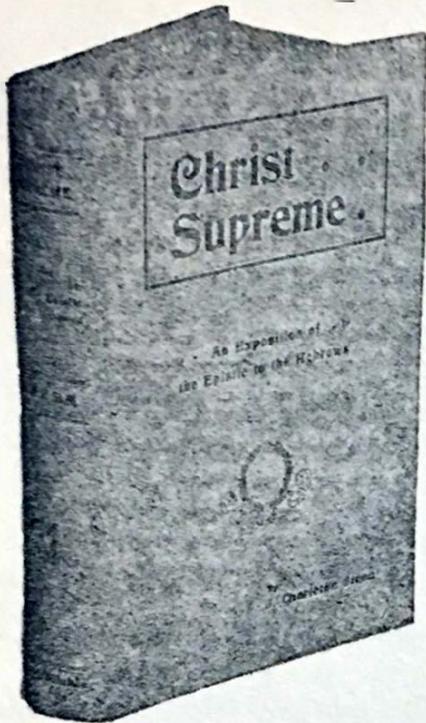
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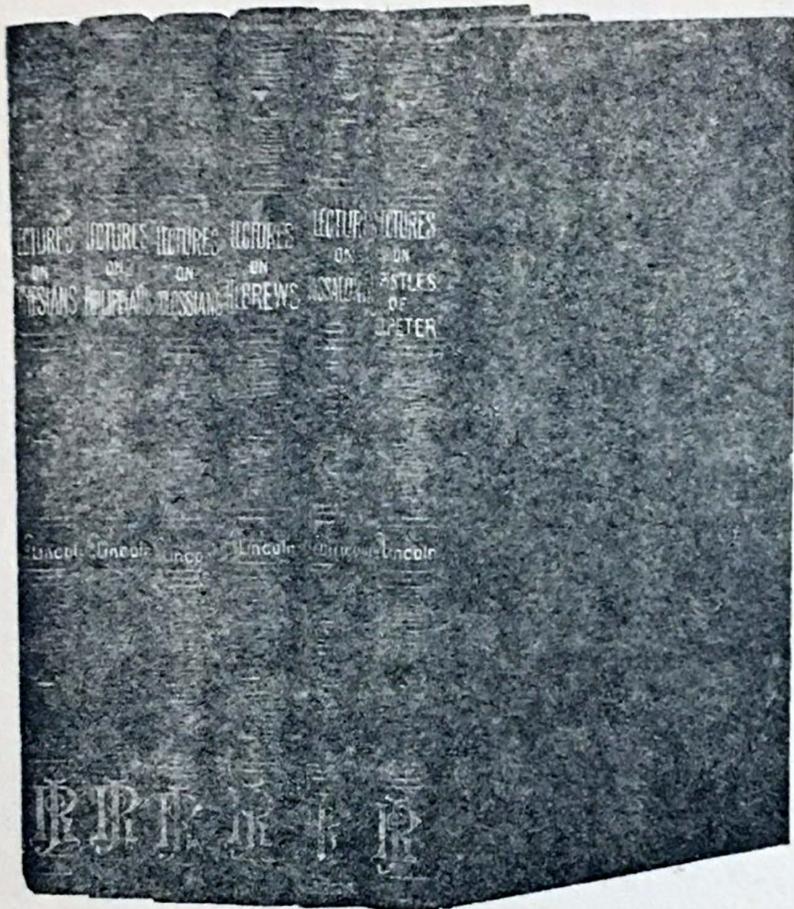
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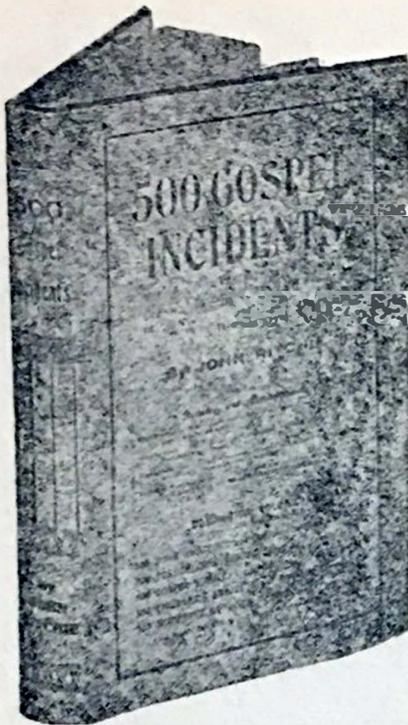
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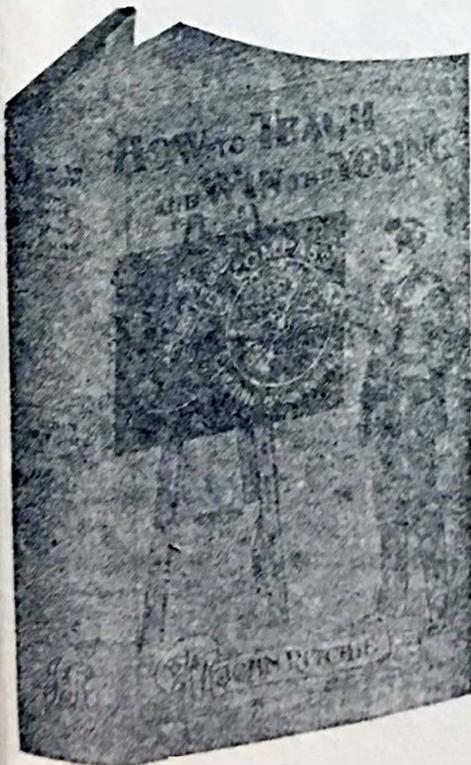
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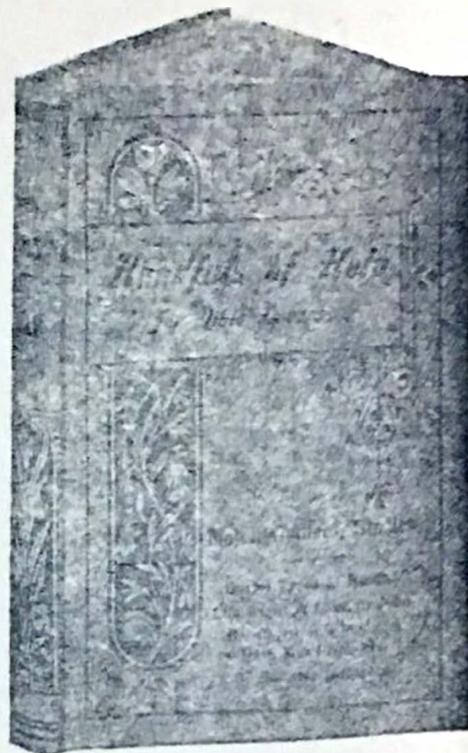
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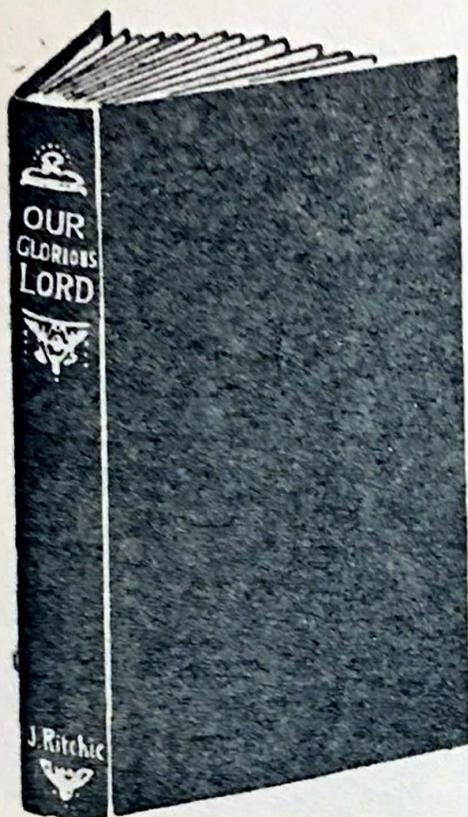
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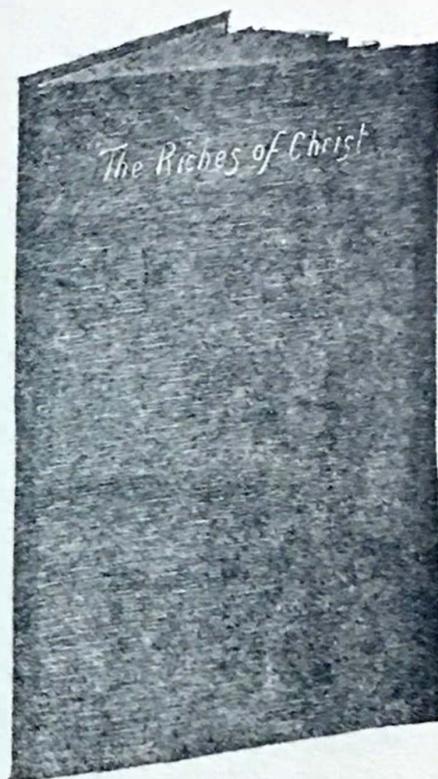
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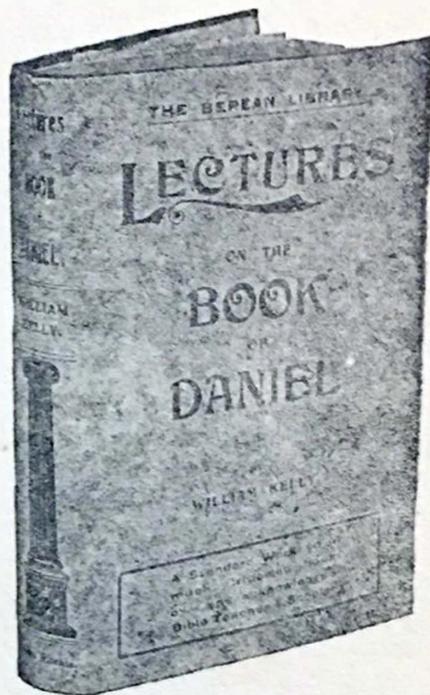
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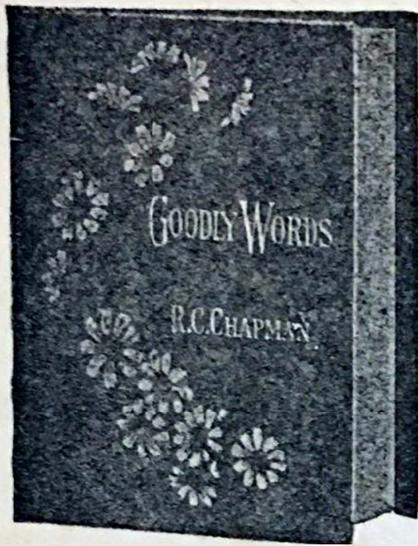
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