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LIFE STREAMS

FROM THE

RIVEN ROCK.

"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

"Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

LONDON:
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THE TWO ALEXANDERS;

OR, DELAY AND DECISION.

A HOSPITAL NARRATIVE.

CHAP. I.—"I'LL THINK ABOUT IT, SIR."

The work of the week was over, and the clock was just striking ten one Saturday night, during the session 1865-6, when, having seen the rest of the patients under my care in certain wards of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, I drew near to the bedside of Alexander S—. He lay in ward —, having been admitted four days previously with unmistakable evidences of consumption. This night I made a more careful examination of his chest than I had before done, and it was doubtless this that drew from him, the moment I had finished, the question—

"Well, Doctor, what do you think of my case?"

He was a carpenter, a fine, manly fellow of 20, and his calm, intelligent face did not give much evidence of the disease which had wrought frightful ravages in the lungs; however, he had been ill for some time, and I judged was prepared to receive the truth in reply to his query.

"You are pretty bad, I am sorry to say, Alexander," I replied.

"I guessed that, sir; but do you think I shall get better?"

"In this cold climate, I fear there is not much prospect of recovery for you, the only chance appears to me to lie in your getting to some warmer region, such as Australia."

"Well, sir, there is no hope in that quarter," he replied, "for I have no means to take me there, and no friends who could pay my passage. I hope you will do what you can for me here."

"You may rest assured of that," I rejoined; "everything that skill and care can furnish you with here you shall have."

"Thank you, sir," he quietly replied, in no wise perturbed by my communication, which I now saw he was evidently fully expecting.

A pause of a moment or two followed, and then, turning the subject, I said, "Well, my dear fellow, now we have spoken about the poor, frail body, what about the soul? Are you saved, Alexander?"

"Oh! I could not say that, sir."

"But is it not time for you to be looking the things of eternity fully in the face? Why do you not come to Jesus, and then you would be saved?"

"I have thought of these things sometimes, sir, and I've read my Bible occasionally, and when I was well I went to church now and then. I know I'm not so good as I ought to be, but I'm not so bad as a great many that I know of."

"All that may be quite true, Alexander, but it is beside the mark, and your not being so bad as some others will not help you before God, will it?"

"Oh, no, sir, that's quite true; but I have not

lived a very bad life, and I hope to be saved."

"You need not 'hope to be saved,' you may know and have salvation where you lie this very night, if you will receive Christ; and perceiving that he was now somewhat interested I sat down on his bed and told him the gospel as simply and plainly as I could. He answered freely enough any question I put to him, and, as I pressed his own guilt upon his conscience, I saw he was convicted that he was a sinner, and, further, a *lost* one, were he to die in his present state. Having unfolded the story of the cross, as God's only way of escape for a lost sinner, and assured him that God bade him do nothing, but believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and rest simply on His finished work, I now pressed on him *immediate* acceptance of God's offered mercy and salvation. Quietly he listened to all till the clock struck eleven, when he said rather emphatically, "I'll think about it, sir."

"Stay," I argued; "why will you *think* about it, when God wants you to *take* Christ just where you lie, and be saved this night. The Philippian jailor heard of Jesus, believed on Him, and was saved immediately. Don't put off deciding, I beseech you."

"I promise you I'll think about it, sir. Good night."

Seeing he was determined only to "think about" and not to "receive" my message, I very reluctantly bade him "Good night."

His bed was quite at the bottom of the long ward and opposite its foot was a door. I crossed the ward, opened the door and was partly out

in the passage, closing the door behind me, when, ere my hand released its grasp of the handle, a voice seemed to say, "Go back and speak to him once more." I hesitated. Was it fancy, or the Lord lingering in grace over one who was refusing His mercy? "Go back" again seemed to sound in my ears.

I returned to his bed, and, bending over him, said, "Alexander, I cannot leave you to-night with that terribly uncertain word, 'I'll think about it.' O, do decide for Christ. You may never have another opportunity of receiving or believing the gospel. God's word says 'Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.' I have come back just to beseech you not to 'think about' but to receive Christ."

A shade of displeasure, I grieve to say, rose upon his brow, and again repeating "I'll think about it, sir," a second time he said "good night," and sorrowful at heart, I scarcely knew why, I now finally left him.

CHAP. II.—A Morning of Death.

The next morning, Lord's Day, at eight o'clock exactly, the nurse of the ward came hastily to my sitting-room, which was some distance off, begging that I would at once pay a visit to Alexander. Very speedily I was in the ward. A death-like stillness pervaded it. Several patients and the two nurses were round the bed I had sat on nine hours before, pressing Christ

and salvation on the occupant thereof. As I drew near they scattered, giving me a view of Alexander's face. White as the sheet that came in contact with it, the truth was apparent, he was not faint, as some supposed, from loss of blood, but DEAD.

He had risen that morning as usual, was seated at the table eating his breakfast when, without the slightest warning, a torrent of blood flowed from his mouth (a large vessel in the lungs having given way), and, ere he could be placed in his bed, life ebbed away, and his pallid and lifeless corpse alone met my gaze, as, for the third time within nine hours, I stood by that bed at the foot of the ward.

That moment I shall never forget! Gone, and where? Into eternal night, I feared. To myself I said, "Ah! poor Alexander, you will have time enough now to 'think about it,' when, alas! it is too late to believe and receive it."

Oh, the horrors of a night without a morning! I fear, poor fellow, he entered it by the gaping doorway of procrastination.

CHAP. III.—"I'LL NOT SLEEP TILL IT'S SETTLED."

It was a cold, cheerless day in October, 1865, and "Auld Reekie," more than ordinarily enveloped in mist for the time of the year, was sullenly submitting to be drenched with rain, and pierced by the cold east blasts that came

fresh from the northern ocean. Without, all was wet, cold, and dirty, within, everything was as bright, tidy, and clean as the usual autumnal expenditure of soap, paint, and whitewash could render the ward, while a blazing fire at each end diffused a genial glow of warmth, all the more enjoyable from the contrast visible through the newly cleaned windows. A good many of the beds had each their occupant, but still there was room for more ere the complement of eighteen was attained.

The hour was drawing near for the arrival of the visiting physician when two young men entered the ward, and the elder, addressing me, said, "Would you be kind enough to prescribe for my friend, sir, he has a bad cold and cough?" Turning to see his companion, I beheld a youth of seventeen, whose face made a lasting impression on me, from its rare expression and almost feminine beauty. Fair as a woman, with a soft, speaking, grey eye, a finely chiseled Grecian nose, and every other feature in exquisite proportion, he seemed not a subject for hospital treatment, had not a delicate tell-tale blush in the centre of each cheek given a clue to mischief needing prompt attention. After a question or two and a cursory examination, I determined to induce him to remain in the infirmary, and accordingly urged him to do so. He hesitated, saying he had come from London for a little change and holiday, and to be in ward would be no holiday, and he did not think he was ill enough to necessitate this. There was some truth in this, but I was so interested in

him that I alluded to the inclement weather as making it imprudent for him to go much out with his then symptoms, &c., so, after a little pressure, in which his friend joined, he consented to come in the next day at noon.

On Saturday, Alexander U— entered the ward at the appointed hour, and at the usual evening visit, having seen my other patients, I proceeded to make a careful examination of his chest. The apex of each lung gave the faintest indication of that dire disease which I suspected from his cheek—consumption.

A question or two drew out the family history. His mother had died of consumption, and he had lost four brothers through the same fatal scourge, each of them having died, he said, within six weeks of taking ill, and then added, "I'm much afraid I'm going the same way, sir."

"Indeed, why should you think this?"

"Oh, they all began just like me, and, somehow, I don't think I'll get better .... Do you think so, Doctor?"

"Well, Alexander, your family history is certainly very bad, but, as your trouble has been detected thus early, I hope, with proper treatment, it may be arrested."

He looked incredulous but thankful, and, perceiving that he was beginning to have some confidence in me, I continued, "Supposing you don't get better, Alexander, what then? Are you ready to die?"

"Me ready? Oh, no, sir; I'm not ready. If I were to die just now, I know I should be lost for ever."

"Then you have thought about your soul sometimes, I should judge from what you say?"

"No, sir; I can't say I ever thought seriously, though I was well brought up. I had godly parents, and a praying mother, but she's dead long since and gone to heaven, I believe (and here the remembrance of a mother's faith and piety caused the tears to fill his eyes). I got good instruction when I was a boy, but I left my home some time since and went to London, where I have been a clerk."

"And what happened in London?"

"Well, sir, I'll tell the truth, I got amongst ungodly comrades, very soon I became dissipated and wild, and I believe it's my reckless life that has brought my illness on. It's all my own fault, I can blame no one but myself; I deserve punishment for my sins, and there's no chance for me to be saved, for I know I'm only a wicked sinner."

"But, would you not like to be saved?"

"Yes, indeed, sir; but there's no salvation for the like of me."

"There is where you are wrong. Did you never hear the word, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners?*' You are the very one that Jesus wants and came for. He is a Saviour, and you are a sinner. They are just suited to each other. The sinner needs a Saviour to save him, and the Saviour is on the look out for the sinner to save. More, He died for the sinner. The 8th verse of Romans v. says, 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that,

while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Now, don't you believe that Jesus died for you?"

"I believe He died for you, sir, for you are a good man, but He could not have died for a wretch like me."

"Wrong again, Alexander. It was not for the good Jesus died, for 'none is good save One, that is God,' and 'there is none that *doeth* good, no, not one.' So you see I am not good, neither are you, and yet Jesus died for us. The reason why He died was that He loved us, as Paul said, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me.' O, think of His love, and trust Him. There is in Him now a free, full salvation, if you will only receive Him. What say you, will you turn to Him now, and trust Him? He died for sinners, but, having completely finished the work of atonement, He rose the third day, in proof of the value of His work, and now, alive in glory, He is waiting to receive, bless, and save you, just as He saved the thief on the cross."

"Oh, Sir, it's all for the like of you, but not for me."

I shall never forget that night, nor Alexander's face, as I passed on to tell him more of the grace and love of Jesus. Lying flat on his back, with compressed lips, heaving nostril, and eyes bathed in tears fixed on me, he listened truly for life. Every word seemed to enter his soul, while the more he heard of the Lord's love, only the more deep became the sense of his own guilt. I had no need to press decision on him, he was only too anxious to be decided. By this time it was getting late, and the lights in the ward had

been lowered, so I was about to bid him good night and depart, when he said, "Please, sir, won't you pray with me before you go? I am so much obliged to you for speaking with me, but I'd so like if you would pray."

This I did, looking to the Lord that His blessing might fall that night on the awakened lad. Scarcely had I finished, ere he grasped my hand and exclaimed, "Thank you, sir. Good night. I'll not sleep till it's settled."

I bade him good night, and retired to my bed.

CHAP. IV.—A Morning of Life.

On the Lord's Day I usually visited the patients pretty early. So shortly after 9 a.m. I was again in the ward where Alexander was.

I had barely entered it when a sound, but rarely heard under similar circumstances, fell on my ear in the shape of a cheery but courteous "Good morning, sir." Looking up, I beheld my young friend dressed, and standing at the foot of his bed, which was the nearest to the door.

"Good morning, Alexander."

"It's all right, sir."

"'It's all right!' What do you mean?"

"Oh, what you were speaking of last night. I could not sleep after you left for thinking of my sins, and what you told me about the Saviour, and His love in dying on the cross for sinners like me. I lay awake thinking till four o'clock,

and then (pointing to a window across the ward, opposite his bed), I seemed to see the Saviour dying on the cross, extended there for me and bearing my sins, and I heard Him say 'Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' So I just came to Him, and I have rest now, sir. I have found Jesus, and I am so happy."

Had you seen his face at that moment, my reader, even you would not have doubted his statement. It was like the face of an angel, perfectly radiant with divine joy. There was no mistake about it. He had simply and unreservedly cast himself upon Christ (go thou, friend, and do likewise), and, as a consequence, was filled "with all joy and peace in believing." Alexander remained nearly a fortnight in the infirmary, during which time he gave every evidence of being a child of God, and grew rapidly in grace, while it was only too evident also that his bodily disease was taking the same rapid course as in his brothers. This being so, it was resolved to give him the chance of life which a voyage to, and residence in Australia afforded. A rich relation kindly paid his passage, so in November he returned to London to await the sailing of a vessel. While there I received two letters from him. One contained this expression: "I am very happy as regards my soul's salvation. *I hope that you do always remember me at the throne of grace.*" The second, "I am thankful to be able to inform you that I am very much better indeed, and Dr. I—— strongly recommends me to go to Australia at once. I am going, if spared,

on the 30th of this month (December), in a ship called 'The London,' of London .... I hope you do not *forget me* in your prayers."

CHAP. V.—GOING HOME IN A STORM.

January, 1866, will long be remembered. During the first week there called at Plymouth for passengers and letters a magnificent, full-rigged iron ship of 2,000 tons. Her captain was a man of skill and experience, the officers and crew being picked men. On the 6th, "The London" sailed for Melbourne, with a cargo valued at £120,000, and having also a freight of living souls, of untold value, to the number of 239, amongst them being my young friend Alexander. Scarcely was the gallant ship out of sight of land than she experienced a succession of gales, which culminated on the night of the 10th in a hurricane, which many will remember cast numerous vessels ashore in Torbay. Before the fury of this blast in the Bay of Biscay she succumbed. Tremendous seas at once stove in her stern ports, smashed her boats, carried away her engine-room hatches, extinguished the fires, and rapidly filled the hold with water. By vigorous pumping she was kept above water till daylight of the 11th. Then the brave captain called all into the saloon and plainly said there was no hope of escape. This intimation was quietly received, because expected.

In the saloon the Rev. Mr. Draper prayed

aloud, and exhorted the unhappy creatures by whom he was surrounded. Dismay was present to many hearts, disorder to none. Mothers were seen weeping sadly over the little ones about, with them, to be engulphed, and the children, ignorant of their coming death, were pitifully enquiring the cause of so much woe. Friends were taking leave of friends, as if preparing for a long journey. Others, crouched down with Bibles in their hands, were endeavouring to snatch consolation from passages long known, or long neglected. At 2 p.m. a pinnace was got out, into which 16 of the crew and 3 passengers stepped, and scarcely was the boat clear of "The London" than, stern foremost, she sank, carrying to a watery grave 220 precious souls, amongst them my beloved young friend and brother in the Lord, Alexander U——.

When this heart-rending tale reached me I was deeply grieved at having been the promoter of the Australian voyage, so, knowing his father and only sister were alive, I sat down and wrote to the old man a letter of comfort, telling of the Lord's grace to his son while in the infirmary, and the firm conviction I had that his son was now with the Lord. The first mail from the place where he dwelt brought a beautiful letter in reply. It was full of sadness and resignation. I give the substance: "I have had six sons. Four died of consumption, the fifth I heard of six months ago as lying ill in a hospital in China, and I fear he is gone; and now Alexander, my youngest, is taken, but, 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;

blessed be the name of the Lord.' I believe you have been the means of leading my boy to the Saviour. He wrote many times to his only sister, beseeching her to give her heart to the Lord, and when his vessel touched at Plymouth he would be so happy to receive a letter which she wrote him, saying, she too had sought and found the Saviour. So I am comforted, though it is hard to bear."

The ways of God are wondrous, and in nothing more sweetly seen than in the channels of blessing He uses, and the way the circle of blessing widens. The brother is converted in the infirmary, through his letters the sister is led to the Lord; he goes home to be with Christ in the way described (and what a blessing he may have been to many awakened souls on board that vessel God only knows, and the day of the Lord alone will declare), while the sister holds on her way rejoicing for a brief year or two, and then joins her brother in the Lord's presence, as I have since learned from another source.

And now, dear reader, I must have just one word with you as to the state of your own soul. Whereabouts are you? Have you received Christ yet? If not, don't delay a single day. Let the history above recorded be both a warning and an example. Could there be a greater *similarity*, and yet a greater *contrast?* Both had the same name, lay in the same ward, were suffering from the same disease, were nearly the same age, heard the same glad tidings, and each on a Saturday night. One *delays*, and within nine

hours is in eternity, I fear without Christ; the other *decides*, and in less than nine hours is in the full possession of joy and peace, through simple faith in Christ. True, he too now is in eternity, but I am persuaded it is "with Christ;" and often as I picture to myself the stricken vessel, and her fated freight, methinks, high above the roar of the wind, the lash of the waves, and the wail of sorrow, I hear, soft and sweet, the words of the young believer, "*I am very happy as regards my soul's salvation.*"

Could you, beloved reader, say the same were you in similar circumstances? Now, do be persuaded. If you have halted till now, halt no longer. Begin this new year with Christ. Let those that have rolled by suffice for *rejecting* Him. *Receive* Him now, by faith in His name, and start "in Christ a new creature."

Let not Satan lure you into saying, "I'll think about it," lest you be like the first Alexander in his end; but, the rather, may your language truly be, "I'll not sleep till it's settled;" then, surely, whether living or dying, your testimony shall be as clear and distinct as that of the second, "It's all right," and "I am very happy as regards my soul's salvation."

W. T. P. W.

Edinburgh, Jan. 1, 1873.

A PRESENT AND ETERNAL SALVATION.

"I don't think anyone has a right to say that he is saved," said some one to me lately, "because he may fall and lose his faith any day."

Now, I believe, on the contrary, that the believer has a right to say he is saved, and I do not believe that such a soul can re-cross the line that distinguishes between Adam and Christ.

Oh! who can tell the value of the precious word of God? What light it sheds upon the soul that receives it! And this word, not our thoughts, is to be the ground of our enlightenment.

First of all, the man who believes *is* justified, for we read in Acts xiii. 39, "And by him (Christ Jesus) all who believe *are* justified from all things." Notice that small word "*are*"—it does not say "*will be!*" They are justified the moment they believe. And so, again, in Romans v. 1, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." That is, whenever faith exists, then justification accompanies it, and peace with God, through the word of Jesus Christ, as the blessed consequence.

Now, I take justification and salvation in this case to be equivalent, and, therefore, the word of God shows that the man who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is saved. The believer is saved.

But can he know it? Yes. How? By that same precious word.

Thus, in 1 John v., we read, "These things have I written unto you who believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life," "*that ye may know!*" Could anything be clearer? The believer's authority for knowing that he *has* eternal life (*i.e.*, salvation), is the word of God. Nay, more; this same word declares that such an one who disbelieves the witness of God, in this respect, has made God a liar. "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son; and this is the record; that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life." So, then, instead of it being wrong on the one hand, or presumptuous on the other, for the believer to say that he is saved, he is guilty of making God a liar if he should not—that is, he falsifies the whole revealed truth of God on that point. But, then, what of the possibility of his falling? May he not fall from grace? Yes; and in so doing come under law, like the Galatian believers of old. But suppose a believer to put himself under law, is he therefore lost? Surely not, inasmuch as no true believer would ever renounce *in toto* the work of Christ as the ground of his salvation. He may not see the proper place for his own good works, as a consequence upon faith; but, however unenlightened thereon, he will never abjure and relinquish the blood, the redemption of Christ as his title.

But, besides, may he not fall into sin? If such be his cherished desire, it may be fairly questioned how far his faith is real. Can a child

of God, in whom the Holy Ghost has taken up His abode, cherish the desire of sinning? Never. "That ye sin not" is the word of God, in 1 John ii. 1. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. vi. 2.) Yet the same word says, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John i.) Thus, Peter denied his Master. In an evil moment he disowned before a servant girl Him for whom he would have died before the crowd of men. Yet Peter had faith, real and divine faith; and was he not guilty of sin? Alas! he was. But what marked the reality of his faith? That when Jesus had looked upon him "he went out and wept bitterly." Beauteous evidence of the Divine principle of justification! The faith that lays claim to salvation passes judgment on sin. Soon as ever the sin is committed, it is confessed with tears and is forsaken, and hence the suitability of the provision made for the believer who thus has sinned and fallen—viz., "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Thus we find that the word of God admits the possibility of the believer sinning, with a provision, not that he may sin, but to meet him in the event of his having sinned.

It is vain, therefore, to say "no perfection, no salvation." That there is perfection none deny; but it is found in Christ, who is the righteousness of the believer, and hence it is written, "There is, therefore now, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.)

They are in Christ as to position and standing before God, and not in Adam under trial or probation, either to obtain life, or retain it in their own strength when possessed, but in Christ, who is their life and righteousness.

J. W. S.

GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself."—(ISA. xxv. 15.)

Dear reader, I feel sure that at one time or another this question must have been raised in your soul, "I have to do with God, and how shall I stand before Him who knows me thoroughly?" Hebrews iv. 13 tells us, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Now, dear soul, is the verse at the head of this paper your thought of God? Are you inclined to say, like the unprofitable servant (in Mat. xxv. 24), "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man." Alas! too often this is man's thought of God, and this from judging Him by his own state or circumstances, instead of learning his character as *revealed by Jesus Christ*. But still the question rises, How can I meet God, "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and "in whose sight the heavens are not clean?" (Habak. i. 13, Job xv. 15).

Come, then, with me to God's own word for a little, laying aside all your own hard thoughts of Him; and oh! may He, the God of all grace,

grant that ere you lay down this paper you may see the God you have to do with in the depths of His love, giving up for you His well-beloved Son—not sparing His only Son Jesus, whom He loved (Gen. xxii. 2), that you, O sinner, might be *brought to God*, and *all your sins* for ever "cast into the depths of the sea" (Mic. vii. 19). From the very first God has been FOR man; and if we look at Adam hiding in the trees of the garden (Gen. iii. 8), conscious that he had sinned, there God is seen, not passing over his sin truly, but already telling him and Eve of the One who was coming to bruise the serpent's head, and providing them with coats of skin which clothed them; and yet (in verse 12) Adam—for such is man—would try to blame God with the sin, saying, "The woman whom THOU gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

Again we see the heart of God coming out, when He saw "that the wickedness of man was great," and "the earth filled with violence" (Gen. vi. 5, 13). An ark of safety is provided, and Noah, "the preacher of righteousness" (1 Pet. ii. 5), is a witness to us of the GRACE OF GOD, which then, and ever since, MAN has despised.

Who was it likewise that thought of delivering the children of Israel, and provided for them a shelter from the destroying angel, in the blood of the Paschal lamb (see Exod. xii. 13-23)? It was God, not "HIDING HIMSELF," but there, as again at the Red Sea, proving that He is FOR MAN, and oftentimes in the journey

through the wilderness do we get glimpses of God—though ever judging evil—yet providing the sacrifices, year by year, to meet the sins of His people.

Now let us look at Isaiah xlv. Verse 21 says, "There is no God else beside me." Clearly, then, dear reader, we have no other resource but God, for there is NONE ELSE; and let me tell you that if you go to God NOW, just as you are, a poor, lost sinner, your wrong thoughts will all be banished, and your heart filled with praise; for, as the rest of verse 21 tells us, He is "A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOUR," and there is NONE beside him; and have we not already seen that this is true in Gen. iii. and Exod. xii.? Oh, then, dear friend, betake thyself NOW to Him, believing that He is a Saviour God to thee, as the hymn says:

"The work is now complete,
Before the mercy-seat
A SAVIOUR you will meet,
Yet there is room."

But further in the gospels we will find the same, yet brighter testimony to what God is; and surely when the Son of God is on earth "*declaring the Father*" as John i. 18 tells us, you can no longer say "Thou art a God that hidest thyself." Again, that precious word, still sounding forth in all its fulness, "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life," is enough, dear reader, to show you that God is indeed a God of salvation and wishes to save you.

One more Scripture would I ask you to read—"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (II. Cor. iv. 6). What could be more blessed than to have to do with God, who has thus revealed Himself and His glory "IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST." O, sinner, art thou awakened to thy lost condition? Then turn thine eye and "Behold the Lamb of God" (Jno. i. 29). See Him in perfect obedience to God, and in love to thee, on the cross—draining that cup of wrath, bearing that awful load of man's guilt, and God hiding His face from His beloved Son. By faith learn it was all for thee, and EVEN NOW rejoice that God has thus met thy case, and see "in the face of Jesus Christ" that he does not hide himself from thee, but is indeed "*a just God* and a *Saviour*." Once again I would plead with thee, dear reader, that as God has sworn (Isa. xlv. 23) that unto Him "*every knee shall bow;*" so may'st thou even NOW have to do with such a God, whose glory shines "in the face of Jesus Christ."

"O the glory of the Grace,
Shining in the Saviour's face!
Telling sinners from above
God is light and *God is love.*

T. E. P.

DOUBTS DISPELLED.

"My father and grandfather doubted, and I should not think I was in the right way if I did not doubt, too," were the words that fell from the lips of a middle-aged woman I was visiting in the village of R. She had been a professing Christian for many years, and was what the villagers called a "good-living" woman. She was a stranger to me, but on passing her cottage door that morning I greeted her, and, after a few minutes conversation, inquired if she belonged to the Lord Jesus; to which she replied, "I hope so." I reminded her that God's word said, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life," and again, in Acts xiii. 39, "All that believe *are* justified from all things." If we fully and simply believed God's word that Jesus died for our sins, there was no room for doubt, we *are* "justified from all things," our sins *are* forgiven, and we *have* possession of eternal life. She appeared vexed, and gave me the above-mentioned reply. I pressed the question of sin and its forgiveness, at which she became almost angry, and evidently wished me to go. I told her I would not come to her again unless she wished it, but I must tell her faithfully, this once, God's message of a full and perfect salvation to poor guilty sinners.

Many times after this I passed her cottage, but, as she avoided even speaking to me, I waited, asking God to bless His own word; it

is the sword of the Spirit, and works conviction when man's word fails, and so in this case it had reached her heart and conscience, and, although the enemy had tried to hinder and harass, she at length found rest and peace in those words, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life," and one day called me in to tell me, and to apologise for her rudeness.

She, her husband, and three children lived in a two-roomed cottage. They had seen better days, and she was feeling keenly their altered position, and oftentimes want of common necessaries; indeed, the latter had told upon her poor weak body, and she was suffering so much that a few weeks subsequently she was confined to the bed from which she never rose. From this time I visited her constantly, and watched with joy the rapid progress she made in the knowledge of God and His ways.

There was nothing but a ladder into the upper chamber where all five slept, no fireplace, one small window, bare walls, no chair, a bed of straw on a four-post bedstead, her resting place, with the scantiest coverings—and this during six weeks of such bitter winter weather as we rarely experience in England.

And yet happy! Yes, dear reader, happier far than she had ever been during a lifetime of nearly fifty years, because she *knew* Jesus as her Saviour; *knew* for certain that all her sins were washed away, and that soon she would be with Him.

Many happy moments I spent sitting on the foot of her bed, while she listened eagerly for

something more, or the answer to questions which had arisen in her mind while reading the Bible.

At the commencement of the severe weather, I sent a warm blanket rug, with a few little comforts, and, on going to her room a little later in the day, was greeted with a bright smile and thanks, while she added, "Ah! not long ago I should have laughed had you told me that God would have answered such simple prayers, and now when we want bread or coals I tell Him. How gracious He is! When your present came I was in the greatest straits—cold and suffering. How good He is!

For nearly six months she lay thus, latterly too ill to converse, but only once I saw her faith waver. The clergyman had been visiting her to persuade her to take the sacrament, had reasoned with her, and told her it was great presumption to say she *knew* her sins were forgiven. On entering her room I saw instantly that something was amiss, by her clouded face; in a few words she told me, adding, "And what, if I am all wrong?" I answered, "'He that believeth hath everlasting life,' can that fail?" The cloud vanished in a moment. "Ah! it was Satan. How can I doubt His faithfulness! I am so glad you came then." And so she passed away to be with the Lord. But few witnessed the joy, or the patient suffering of those months, but He marked it all and cheered and comforted her with His tender love.

And now, dear reader, do you know anything of His love? It may be that you, too, have made

a profession, have named the name of Christ, and yet are a stranger to the peace and happiness we have been speaking of. Have you really believed God's word that you are "dead in trespasses and sins," unable to do one thing that will please Him, in your natural state? It may vex you, or wound your pride, to be told that "your heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," but it is God's own statement—true, whether you believe it or not; and "God has commended His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly." H.

THE PRISONER AT THE BAR.

The prisoner stands at the bar. He is accused of breaking, not one, but many, many laws, the case is clearly proved against him, and the sentence is passed—death.

Is there no respite? Must he die? Can't the Judge let him go free? That would be grace, but justice must be satisfied, there *must* be death. No reprieve, no respite. Hush! the Judge has found a way of escape. He has one Son, one only well-loved Son, who has never broken a single law, and He will give Him to die in the prisoner's place, and the Son voluntarily comes forward, and the innocent takes the place of the guilty. He is accused, but He answers never a word; how could He? He was innocent, but He stands in the place of the guilty, and of

His own free will He takes the guilt on Himself. The sentence is passed—death. It is executed. He dies. The prisoner goes free, and justice is satisfied; the price the law demands is paid. The law demanded death, and death it had. And what are the prisoner's feelings as he sees One take his place and bear his punishment? Can he coldly look on and say it is nothing to him? Will he treat His memory with contempt, and join company with those who scorn Him? And yet that is what man is now doing. He has broken God's laws. "*All* have sinned." No use in pleading "not guilty." "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," is God's word. But God loved the sinner, and "He gave his only-begotten Son that WHOSOEVER believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life," and Jesus came and stood in the sinners' place, and bare the punishment which should have fallen on them. He died that they might live. He was but one, and He died in the place of many; but Jesus, the dear Son of God, the spotless One, in whom was no sin, was made "sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," and so God can now justly pardon any poor sinner who comes to Him pleading the finished work of His dear Son, the One of whom He says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The atonement for sins was so full, so great, so perfect, that the greatest sinner can be pardoned, for "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." E. L.

REDEMPTION'S COST

Wondrous is the simple story
Of the blessed Saviour's death!
How the Lord of life and glory
Yielded, on the cross, His breath,
Spotless, Holy,
Sinless, as the Scripture saith.

There he bore that awful burden—
Wrath of God, because of sin;
Stooped, in grace, the costly guerdon
Of eternal life to win!
Blood-bought pardon,
Access, too, the veil within.

Lost by Adam's first transgression,
We in death and darkness lay;
Jesus, making full confession,
For us kept His victor-way.
All transgression,
Sins and sin, He put away.

Perfect reconciliation
Jesus evermore hath made!
Head o'er all the new creation,
See Him now, in light arrayed!
Full salvation!
All the purchase price is PAID!

All the righteous God required
Jesus hath divinely done!
All the Father's heart desired
He accomplished, through the Son!
Alleluia!
Glory to the Three in One!

Sept. 28, 1868. H. K. B.

"A GREAT WAY OFF."

"When he was yet a *great way off* his father saw him and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."—See Luke xv. 11-32.

"But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were *afar off* are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. ii. 13.

What a vivid description is this story of the Prodigal Son, of our condition by nature, as children of that Adam whose first act, on getting a conscience, was to go to a distance, to "hide" himself from God! (Gen. iii. 8.) Who can tell how far, to what a distance sinners have wandered from God? How truly, both by nature and practice, they are "a great way off" in the "far country" of sin and Satan—"a great way off" from heaven and home, from the joy, the beauty, the abundance of the Father's house, spending all their time, talents, and energies in the interests of this fading, hollow world, and seeking to get from it what, alas! it can never give—true rest, happiness, or satisfaction.

We read when the prodigal "had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want." Brief, but most comprehensive description of the worldling's portion and career. Sooner or later the pleasures and excitements of the world will fail, will pall upon the heart; and then comes a sense of "want," of need, which all the riches, and honours, and pleasures of this wide world cannot relieve, which nothing this earth could give can satisfy.

True, at first the world may seem to have

much to give its votaries—wealth, fame, distinction; and the soul may think, as it revels in its present enjoyments, that it has "much goods laid up for many years;" but, ah! the *end* of the sojourn in the "far country" can be nothing but "famine" and "want." Happy for us, if we discover this, and, like the prodigal, come to ourselves in time. Happy for us if, while there are the conviction and repentance which force the heart-wrung cry from our lips "*I perish* with hunger" there is also the *faith* which adds, "I will arise and go to my father." This was the turning-point in the prodigal's history. Henceforth, every step he took was a step nearer his father and his home. We may notice two weighty truths brought out in these words of his—first, that he knew and acknowledged what his true condition *was*, and he owned what it *might be*. He was perishing with hunger—he knew and he owned it; he confessed he was dying, and dying by his own choice, because he would not trust his father's love sufficiently to return to him just as he was. And so the soul that owns its lost and ruined condition, feels its need of salvation, and knows that salvation is in Christ, and to be had by faith, and yet holds back from accepting it as God's free and wondrous gift; that soul, if it perishes, perishes by its own free will and deliberate choice. It has chosen the "wide gate" and the "broad way," though it knows well that the "strait gate" and "narrow way" alone lead to life eternal. Here the prodigal had the two things before him—the option to drag on a miserable existence,

subsisting on the husks the swine eat, or to enter upon the abundance of the Father's house, where there is ever "enough and to spare."

But, though he seems to have known well enough what was in his Father's *house*, he certainly did not know what was in his *heart*, when he could think for a moment that his Father would permit him to be as a servant beneath his roof. He had but poor, unworthy thoughts of that unquenchable love, which all his bad conduct had failed to weaken or erase. And such, too, are the sinner's thoughts about God—feeble, faithless, and unworthy, not doing justice to the heart of that One who "so loved" them that He "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," that "whosoever believeth in him should *not perish* but have everlasting life." But, as has often been remarked, the prodigal did not say anything about being made a servant when he was in his father's arms. Ah! no; that "kiss," that reception, must have closed his mouth to such unsuited words, and must have dispelled such thoughts from his heart, and dispelled them for ever! He could not say, "Make me a *servant*," when his father was owning him as a *son*. Let us read the account of how he was received:—

"*When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him . . . . and said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.*"

And this is God's reception of returning sinners! It is no ideal picture, but one drawn by the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. O, with what a God we have now to do! One who "had compassion" on us even while we were yet a "great way off," "ungodly," "sinners," "enemies" (Rom. v. 6-11), and so loved us that He gave His Son to die for us, "the Just for the unjust," to bring us to Himself in perfect righteousness. Satan thought he had gained a victory when Christ died upon the cross, but that very act only served to open the floodgates of the heart of God, and let the deep unutterable love of that heart flow forth unhindered to perishing sinners. It divinely met and answered all the claims which He had against them, and thus a way has *righteously* been opened, by which all—even the "chief" sinner—can "draw near," *fitted* for the Father's house. And "now," says the apostle, speaking of such, "in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ (Eph. ii. 13). How much untold, unfathomable blessing is enfolded in this one little word "*nigh!*" How much it implies to every believing soul! Pardon, peace, reconciliation; yea, more, acceptance, relationship, liberty. We are brought not only into the thankful attitude of rebels pardoned, sinners saved, but into all the calm and happy sense of relationship and home! And this all in virtue of "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST," who "His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," and "suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Not

merely to save us from hell, but "*to bring us to God!*" Not merely to supply our souls' need, by giving us life in Himself, but to introduce us into a region of unmingled blessedness, and satisfied desire. Not merely to cleanse us from the stain and soil of the "far country," but, clothed and crowned, enable us to stand in all the happy liberty of *children* in the presence of God!

Reader, do you know anything of this experience? Have you known what it is, it may be for years and years, to have wandered far off from God in the dark and distant land of sin, where you have sought, oh, how vainly, to stay your soul's hunger by the passing, perishable, unreal resources of this polluted world, its luxuries, its honours, its gaieties, its gains? Have you been (consciously too) a "great way off," sunk in the lowest depths of degradation and sin, feeling, specially at times it may be, all the misery and wretchedness which are ever the fruit of sin, and the result of distance from God? And have you found the utter inability of man in any way to relieve your necessity or supply your need? If it is so, listen to this wondrous parable—this parable of *human* love, which so truly expounds us the divine—uttered in your ears by the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Gaze upon the wondrous picture of the love of God which He presents, and as you gaze may your heart be constrained to utter the cry of *conviction* and *faith* which burst from the prodigal's lips, "*I perish with hunger.*"—"*I will arise and go to my Father.*" But do not delay.

This day, this hour may be the turning-point in your life's history, when it will be decided what your future will be *for eternity*. Whether will you prefer to live and die in the "far country," forsaken by God, forgotten by man; or arise by faith and go to the Father, and accept, as a free, unmerited gift, all the joy, and blessing, and abundance, which He so willingly offers? The choice now rests with you! The decision now lies in your own hands! Oh, decide *now* for Christ! Do not delay, do not put off, but accept now God's great salvation, offered you so freely, through faith in His Son. This day of His grace is rapidly running out, the shadows of night are darkening around us, and true hearts are watching on the hills of time for the Bright and Morning Star to arise; but still He lingers, and His long-suffering is salvation to you, if you will only respond *now* to His gentle, loving entreaty. In His grace He has spread "a supper," and He bids you to it (Luke xiv.). He says, "Come, for all things are now ready." You have nothing to *do*, only to partake of His gracious provision; to accept as a free "gift" eternal life through Christ; to open your heart and let in His love; to be content to be a *receiver* at His hands of all that which He so freely gives!

I will just add this parable seems specially suitable to two conditions of soul—namely, the careless or indifferent, and the anxious. Reader, if you are amongst the former, going on day after day, uncertain and indifferent as to your soul's eternal salvation, it conveys a

solemn warning of the *end* of the course which you are now pursuing. You think there is much still to be had in the world—more pleasure, more money, more satisfaction, and that, as you have "much goods laid up for many years," you will "take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry," just what the prodigal thought when he turned his back upon his father's house. But, oh! listen to the solemn verdict of God upon such a decision: "THOU FOOL!" The end of all the things of this world, its brightest and its best, is only, is ever "*famine*" and "*want.*" And shall we lift the veil, and gaze upon the *eternal* state of such an one? We get it in the next chapter of this gospel—the solemn, the terrible, yet the real picture of the "hereafter" of one who in this life had lived "sumptuously" and received his good things, to the exclusion and rejection of Christ (and this drawn by the same Hand which had shewn us all the joy, and beauty, and abundance of the Father's house)—a ceaseless, unsatisfied, eternal craving for a drop of water to cool his tongue. For ever shut out, for ever "afar off." "*In hell*, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham *afar off*, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." (Luke xvi. 24.) Oh, unsaved reader, how solemn to me is the thought of the bare *possibility* of such an ending being yours! Yet, such is the prospect before every soul who has rejected Christ!

But, on the other hand, if you are conscious of your condition as a lost and ruined sinner; conscious of being both by nature and practice at a distance from God; conscious, too, of your unfitness for His presence, of your rags, your sin, your defilement, and yet anxious and longing to know the joy, and peace, and blessedness of being able to own Him as your Father,—there is nothing but encouragement, the sweetest encouragement, here for you. Delay no longer, but "arise" by faith and come to Him, and, rest assured, you will be received even as the prodigal was. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. You are not yet *too far* off, the "great gulf" is not yet "fixed" which separates *eternally* the sinner from the Saviour. True, you may be beyond the reach of an earthly father's love; out of sound of a human voice of entreaty, beseeching you to be "reconciled to God;" miles and miles of ocean foam may separate you from those who love you best in this world, and they can but follow you with their prayers as you read this paper, perhaps in the solitude of an Australian or New Zealand home; you are beyond their reach, but *not beyond the reach of God!* He still follows you with His love, He still entreats you in His grace, and pleads with you by His long-suffering to come to Him. Just *as* you are, just *where* you are, "*a great way off*," in all your rags and guilt and defilement, in all your misery and wretchedness and want,—arise, turn, enter into, and appropriate all the blessings and glories which He makes good to you "in Christ." (Eph. i.)

And oh! if there is one word which could touch a prodigal's heart which had never been touched before it is surely this: "While he was yet a great way off, his father saw him .... *and ran.*" With the desire to show his eagerness to reach his home, we should not be surprised if we read "the son ran;" but it is not so: we find instead (O mystery of love!) "*his father ran.*" What a marvellous expression of the *willingness* of God! All the anxiety and eagerness of a sinner to be saved are as nothing—we say it with reverence—compared with the desire of God to save him. "He is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance." And how fully He proved this when "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." He "*so loved* the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) He did all that love could do—He gave all that love could give; and now, in view of this great fact, He "*commendeth* his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners," rebels, enemies, "a great way off," hopeless and helpless, "CHRIST DIED FOR US." (Rom. v. 8.) Well may we sing, as we think of this marvellous fact—

Mercy and Truth unite—
O 'tis a wondrous sight,
All sights above!
Jesus the curse sustains—
Guilt's bitter cup He drains;
Nothing for us remains,
Nothing but love!

And, in beautiful connection with this expres-

sion of the Father's love, in the tenth of Luke (verse 33) we get the same words used as expressive of the Son's, "*when he saw him he had compassion*." He, and none else, was the true Samaritan who left the heights of glory and came down to this guilty, ruined, cursed earth, "to save sinners." Yea, more, not merely to save their souls, but to satisfy their hearts, and that for ever; to "bind up" and "heal the broken-hearted," and to pour in the healing "oil" of His Spirit upon the bruised, desolate soul, that found no eye to pity, no heart to sympathise, no hand to save, *but His;* and to give them unutterable "joy and peace" in the knowledge of that "love" which is "better than wine" (Song of Sol. i. 4). Thus, if we think of the Father's love, we read the wondrous words which disclose the affections of His heart to us, "*He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all*" (Rom. viii.); and if we think of the Son's, which flowed in such perfect unison of heart with His, we read, "*He gave himself.*" Oh, unfathomable wonder! "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). And now, at the first throb, the first faint motion of a sinner's heart for Him, at the first step which by faith he takes towards Him, He hastens to meet him; not so much with *promises* of pardon, peace, and reconciliation, as with direct, heart-assuring *proofs* of the same; the "robe," the "ring," and the "shoes," all expressive of perfect, because *divine*, fitness for the scene, and position, and of inseparable union with the One who has brought us into it all!

Oh, with what a God we have now to do! How gracious, how loving, how tender, and withal how righteous! Surely, as we find Him thus presented, the convicted sinner must be constrained to cry, "I will arise and go to him; I will accept him as my 'Bread of Life,' the One who alone can satisfy my soul-hunger, and I will trust myself, for time and eternity, in his hand." And what then remains for the one that thus takes Him at His word? What, but the "best robe," the "fatted calf," and the abundance and blessing of the Father's house for evermore! Blessed exchange! in place of the "famine" and "want" of the "far country;" in place of the craving for the empty, unsatisfying "husks" of this world's supplies, "*bread enough and to spare.*" It is not merely, "*I shall not want,*" but, "my cup *runneth over.*" "They shall be *abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house;* and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Psalm xxxvi. 8).

"O."

THE CALL OF GOD.

"COME unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"Let him that is athirst, COME!"

"Come!"—'Tis Jesus gently calling,
"Ye with care and toil oppressed,
With your guilt, howe'er appalling—
Come, and I will give you rest."

For your sin He "once has suffered,"
On the cross the work was done;
And the word by God now uttered
To each weary soul is "*Come!*"

'Come!" the "Father's house" stands open
With its love, and light, and song;
And, returning to that Father,
All *to you* may now belong!
From sin's distant land of famine,
Toiling 'neath the mid-day sun,
To a Father's house of plenty—
And a Father's welcome "*Come!*"

"Come!" for night is gathering quickly
O'er this world's fast fleeting day;
If you linger till the darkness
You will surely miss your way.
And still waiting—sadly waiting,
Till the day its course has run,
With His patience unabating,
JESUS lingers for you—"*Come!*"

"Come!" for angel hosts are musing
O'er this sight so strangely sad;
God "beseeching"—man refusing
To be made for ever glad!
From the world and its delusion
Now our voices rise as one;
While we shout *God's Invitation*,
Heaven itself re-echoes "*Come!*"

A. S. O.

NO WATER.

Some years ago, Coulthard, an explorer of the Australian continent, was found dead on the spot where, through want of water, he had dropped down in utter prostration; and, while the party who discovered him were standing over his body, they noticed these words scratched by him on his canteen, as death drew near.

"The last thing I remember is pulling the saddle off my horse and letting him go; my tongue is sticking to my mouth, I know it is the last time I shall express my feelings. Lost for want of water! my eye dazzles; my tongue burns! I can say no more. God help me."

Reader, what think you? had you been there to offer this poor sufferer a draught of water, would he have made any scruples about drinking it; would he have found any difficulties as to appropriating the cooling draught to allay his burning thirst? Ah, no! he *wanted water*, he *knew it*, and he perished for want of it. Do you thirst? I do not mean for this poor hollow world's so-called pleasures? Doubtless you have tasted them and found that they satisfy not, they leave an aching void within.

You may write on every fountain of this world's vanities and shams, "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again."

But do you know anything of soul thirst? Do you thirst for salvation, for forgiveness, for Christ? Behold, then a fountain near! Jesus, who once hung a victim on the cross of Calvary,

the sinner's substitute, is alive again, and now in the glory on high; and now "the spirit and the bride say .... let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely"—

"The river of God's grace,
Through righteousness supplied,
Is flowing o'er the barren place
Where Jesus died!"

O, what if you had offered the poor dying man water and he had refused to taste! One who cared not for the living water, but sought his fill of this world's draughts, was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, lifted up his eyes in hell and prayed for one drop of water to cool his tongue, and there was none for him. You are now in the place where rivers of living waters are freely flowing, and remember, he that drinketh shall thirst no more; for it shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life.

Some one has caused to be placed over one of the drinking fountains in a large town this inscription, "Pro bono publico" (for the public good). Who that passes by questions the truth of it? And is not the good news of salvation "unto all?" (Rom. iii. 22.) Did not Jesus die, the *just* for the *unjust?* Did He not die for the *ungodly*, for *sinners*, for those *without strength?* Remember, if *you* perish it is not because there is no water, but you perish a willing rejecter of the living water now offered you freely, without money and without price. W. R. H.

"DIP IT UP."

A vessel had been sailing near the north east coast of S. America, when, owing to some accident, and also some miscalculation as to where they were, the ship's crew had become short of water. Day after day they had drifted on under the scorching rays of a tropical sun, until at last the exhausted seamen lay scattered on the deck, totally unable to guide the vessel. Just as hope had died out of every breast, a sail hove in sight. It was espied by one of the sailors, who, staggering to his feet, feebly gasped through a speaking trumpet the cry of "Water, water, give us water, we are dying of thirst." Quickly and distinctly came back the answer, "Dip it up." How was this? It must have seemed strange to the seamen, but nevertheless they did not hesitate, but obeyed. The water was fresh. They had been drifting for days about the mouth of the Amazon, just where the tide affects the fresh water. They had been dying of thirst, and yet surrounded with water on every side.

And now, perhaps, this little anecdote will meet the eye of one who is thirsting for the water of life: to such God's word is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah lv. 1). Freely, fully, that water of life is offered. For many years the writer of this was blindly seeking

for it, not knowing that God was offering it freely, as He does now to you, dear reader, if as yet you have not accepted Him. Oh, take Him at His word! Believe, and be saved. Rest solely in what He has done, and I promise you that you will have such peace and happiness as you have never before enjoyed. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and let him that is athirst come; and, whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

S. E. C.

'IT'S NO USE! NO USE!" OR, WILL JESUS MEET YOU WHERE YOU ARE?

"And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them."—Ex. iii. 7-8.

"I know their sorrows." Surely this tells us of a tenderness in the love of the Lord that the soul is slow to learn. The Lord sees all the misery of the heart that knows Him not, and feels for the poor things that are bearing their own burdens and carrying their own sorrows. He knows them all, and, with the same grace that brought Him down to deliver Israel, and in which He came eighteen hundred years ago through death to deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage, He now, by the Spirit, breaks the links

that bind the soul of every one who trusts in Him. "I am come down to deliver." Jehovah Himself speaks, and all the power of Pharaoh could but perish when it withstood Him. When He came in the days of His flesh, in death He wrought the victory by which that enemy who has the power of death—the devil—will be destroyed too, and He who, in the weakness of God, could destroy the devil and death, now in resurrection life tells us of all power being His in heaven and earth. Are you feeling the power of the grasp of sin that holds you, and your own helplessness? Look to Him—He is the Conqueror, and that for you. You have no strength, but His is almighty power, and He loves you and bids you come to Him. All the power of the enemy may be seen as against you, but He can deliver; all Pharaoh's host encompassed Israel, but the very waters that proved the death of their foes were the gate of deliverance for those whom Jehovah led forth.

Do your circumstances appear altogether against you? Are you crying out that if you only lived in a happier sphere you would give your heart to the Lord? Take comfort from Israel. Jehovah did not wait till they were in the joy of the possession of Canaan before He showed Himself as their God. He did not wait till they were clear from the bondage of Egypt. No, they were poor, helpless captives; but Jehovah pitied them, and Jehovah delivered them. He knows all your trials, He sees each one. Do you cry to Him? Trust Him. Don't put off. He is able to save to the uttermost:

and He would never have died for you if He were not willing to save you. Satan would keep you in bondage by making you put off believing in Christ as your Saviour until you are out of your troubles. Is it not just where you are now that you most need the Lord? Is it not just now that the knowledge of salvation in Him would be the greatest comfort to you, and His power the greatest safeguard and strength? And is not a poor, needy one, such as you, just the one for Him to show out in you all He can be for those who trust Him? To say that the position you are in is such that you cannot be saved to-day, would be a denial of the sufficiency of Jesus. He saved the thief when he was nailed on the cross by His side, and was in the agonies of death.

Many a one perishes through this unbelief; and I would solemnly warn you by the following incident (which I shudder to recall) of a young girl, whom I first knew as a bright, fair-haired child, but who grew up the scamp of the street in which she lived, full of life, frolic, and mischief. I often heard her merry laugh, and sorrowed to see her yielding to all the influences around her, and as years rolled on that laugh grew coarser and more forced, and soon drunkenness and evil marked her ways. There was no sign of any thought but for the passing hour. I often desired to speak to her about her soul, but feared one so full of nonsense would never for a moment listen. The opportunity came, and I spoke to her about her reckless life, and how God saw all her ways, and that nought was

hid from Him—that sin brought death and judgment in, and how Jesus came and died, and bore the judgment due to us, that every poor sinner who trusts in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

She broke down at once, and said that she was wretched and hated herself, but nevertheless tried with laughter and nonsense to cover from others the misery she felt—that, with the others in the house drinking, she did what they did, and then fell into awful sin which she loathed when she was sober. I told her of a place in which she could be received, where she would be out of temptation, and thankfully she accepted it, and would go at once if her mother would let her. Her mother refused every entreaty; she could not think of sparing her child, she must keep her at home. Before many days had passed bitterly that mother regretted it, but it was too late then, too late for eternity; fretting herself to her grave, as she did, could not bring the lost one back.

Again I saw the poor girl, she was still but a child, and I told her of the sufficiency of Christ—that, as she knew she was a lost sinner, she needed a Saviour, and that Jesus would be such to her, if she would but trust *Him*—how He loves His sheep, and takes care of each one, making the crooked places straight, and leading them with such a gentle, tender care. Sorrowfully and hopelessly she left, saying, "It's no use, no use."

Two or three nights after this, she sank down in a drunken sleep beside their kitchen fire with

a bottle of brandy in her arms; the spirit trickled over her dress; a moment, and she was a mass of flames! A few hours of quivering agony, and she lay a charred and lifeless corpse!

"It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

Parents, Christian parents, beware lest for self, for your own ease, or for the sake of the world, and the good opinion of your friends, you let other things have a louder voice than the salvation and growth of your children's souls. The Lord has given them to you to train up in His nurture and admonition, to train for Him.

Christless parents, without hope yourselves, would you see your children have a Christless, hopeless life on earth, and a Christless, hopeless eternity of never-ending woe? If your influence urges them on in aught that is evil, and hinders them in every better thought, will God hold *you* guiltless concerning their souls?

And you, who know you are all wrong in your soul and your ways, and would be glad to be saved, don't think that your circumstances can shut you out from Christ. He can meet you as you are, in all your need, and sin, and ruin; it is there He must meet you, or you will never be saved; His blood can cleanse your sins away; His power can keep you, as you trust in Him. What is evil in your ways leave at any cost. If all around is dark, He can bring you into a more cheery path, or He can fill your soul so full of

His love, and show you such a sufficiency in His grace, as to make you, where you are, a bright and shining light, passing on the blessings your heart receives from Him to the thirsty ones around you. But, oh, never say you cannot be saved because of the circumstances the gospel message meets you in; never put off till "a more convenient season." "More convenient seasons" never come. Never doubt but He is *able* to save you, and we know He is *willing*, for His call to come is to "whosoever will."

"Behold, *now* is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation." W. H. B.

CERTAINTY.—No. 1.

Certainty is a wonderful thing in a world where there is so much uncertainty. It is uncertain whether you or I, dear reader, may see the sun of to-morrow, for "who can tell what a day may bring forth?" It is uncertain whether we may end our days in a pining sickness, or whether we may be cut off as the grain is quickly laid low by the stroke of the scythe. There are uncertainties in life, uncertainties in fortune, uncertainties in reason, uncertainties in science, uncertainties in philosophy. Possibilities and probabilities may exist; but seldom, indeed, can anyone sit down and say in these matters that such and such a thing is an absolute certainty. The ground beneath his feet is too frequently but sand, or the light in which he walks but

dusk. They who know the most are the readiest to acknowledge their ignorance; and, as field after field of information opens up to their apprehension, they find as many lying untraversed beyond. That which was a wonder in one generation may be a child's toy in the next.

Nevertheless, there is certainty even in this world of uncertainty.

Reader, it is certain that you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Whatever may now be your condition—whether high or low, rich or poor, old or young, saint or sinner—"we *must* all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. v. 10). Necessity is laid upon us all in this matter. Escape from this tribunal is impossible. When God makes use of the word "must," we may rest assured that the thing spoken of is certain; thus, for instance, "Ye *must* be born again" (John iii. 7). There is the need of a nature wholly and completely new ere a man can enter the kingdom of God. Mere reformation of outward life—turning over a new and clean leaf, endeavours after holiness, enrolment in the lists of church-membership, or any such external efforts, cannot substitute or stand as equivalents to the obtaining of the new nature here spoken of. That reformation of life will surely follow the second birth, none can deny; nay, without an outward change of life, as well, indeed, as of inward thoughts and aspirations, the profession of the second birth could be only in *name:* but it is getting this new nature on which hangs the salvation of the soul! Like a line which must be crossed, like a

gulf which must be spanned, like a stream which must be bridged, like an ocean which must be navigated,—so "ye *must* be born again." As much does this grand moral truth apply to the Gentile as to the Jew, for its obligation is universal; as much to the sober as to the drunken, to the moral as to the immoral. None are excluded; no exception is made. A new nature, and not a mere outward act of profession such as baptism, the supper of the Lord, confirmation, &c., &c., is demanded by the holiness of God. And, let me say, it is well to face such facts, such necessities, such certainties.

People would fain close their eyes to them and hope for the best, or seek to climb up some other way. But that book of certainties calls upon you, dear unpardoned reader, to consider your state in the light of this truth. You have not been "born again," you know it. You fear for the future, and well you may: In your present condition you could not enter the kingdom of God; nay, the lake of fire must be your doom, and you *must* appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Oh! take thought. What avails all your morality in view of this truth. See that your foundations are good; if not, the superstructure is valueless.

I say, therefore, that it is absolutely certain that the state of him who has not been "born again" is hopeless; he is "without hope," (Eph. ii. 12). Whilst, at the same time, it is absolutely certain that he "must appear before the judgment seat of Christ," and "give account of himself to God." Reader, the word of God

calls earnestly and solemnly upon you to "flee from the wrath to come." God ever keeps to His word. You may trifle, you may compromise, you may defer, you may find a cloak for your carelessness in the multitude of prevailing opinions in religious matters; yet you yourself "must be born again." No excuse will avail you before the judgment seat. Pass not judgment upon others before you pass it upon yourself. In plain terms, you yourself are lost, and none can meet your case but He "who came to seek and to save that which was lost."

J. W. S.

CERTAINTY. No. 2.

If, on the one hand, it is certain that the unconverted man, as such, has before him judgment and condemnation; so on the other hand it is equally certain, from the word of God, that the believer, the converted man, possesses a life that is imperishable and eternal. In the word of God there are no uncertainties. It does not consist in speculation, reasoning, or probability. It contains the truth, and is the truth: "Thy word is truth." It does not furnish conclusions from certain data. It is the revelation of the mind of God, and deals clearly and certainly with every moral question that lies between God and man. Whatever relates to the matter of salvation is stated in terms so distinct and certain that "he who runs may read." For this we may indeed be thankful. Our God has not left us in

the dark on subjects so vastly important as the deliverance of the soul from the fearful judgment that is merited by the sinner. His hatred of sin, and His judgment of the sinner's state, are faithfully unfolded. None can question God's abhorrence of sin. None need call in the testimony borne by the flood, the destruction of Sodom, the dispersion of Israel, and the curse upon that disobedient people, or any minor temporal judgments to prove this fact. The word itself speaks, again and again, with sufficient explicitness and authority, and carries its convicting power, too, to the conscience of man.

The way of life, too, the plan of salvation, the grace of God which brings that salvation, is recorded with divine simplicity, so that no cloud is left upon the soul of the believer as to the certainty of his inheritance. The word of God is explicit on the certain judgment of the sinner; it is equally clear on the certain and eternal security of the saint.

Blessed fact! Oh! the joy of *knowing* something for certain. Let life be uncertain, let the day bring forth what it may, let all human learning come short of the truth, this at least is a fact, that "*he that believeth on the Son hath eternal life*" (John iii. 36).

Notice, beloved reader, three points in this brief verse.

1st. "*He that believeth.*" Not he that worketh. Works follow faith, but the works that precede are *only* sinful. Neither is it he that waiteth for some special call, such as that which sounded in the ears of young Samuel (1 Sam. iii.), or for

some heavenly demonstration, such as that which was granted to Saul of Tarsus (Acts ix.), but simply "he that believeth."

Neither he that repenteth and weepeth over his sins, but "he that believeth." True, repentance is essential, but faith in Him before whom you repent must precede, for how can you repent over that concerning which, or before Whom, you do not believe? It is not sorrow for sin, nor even self-judgment, on which eternal life hangs, though both are connected with it; but faith in the Son of God—"He that believeth."

2nd. "*Hath.*" "He that believeth *hath* eternal life" is, therefore, the present portion and possession of the believer. It does not say "shall have," although everlasting life is also spoken of as the end of a life of holiness (Ro. vi. 22). He has it now. True, he is mortal, but he hath eternal life. His body may moulder to dust until Christ shall lay claim to His own blood-bought property; but the believer hath eternal life. Yea, he should *know* that he hath it (1 Jno. v. 13), for Christ is his life—that "life is in the Son"—that thus he may live under the power and in the joy of this life.

3rd. "*Eternal.*" "He that *believeth* on the Son *hath eternal* life." This life is not for ten years, nor 10,000 years, but for *eternity*. This life is not dependent for its perpetuity on him to whom it is given—as was that of Adam before he fell. With him it was a matter of human righteousness, and life forfeited in the event of disobedience. With the believer it is one of divine righteousness, and secured in Christ who

is hid in God. As the Lord has said, "because I live, ye shall live also."

The question is not one of the faith, feelings, nor efforts of the believer, but one of what God has given and of what Christ is. Are the gifts of God with repentance? Can Christ fail? Never! Oh, the blessedness of taking the word of God as it stands, and of appropriating all its promises just as though they had all been written for oneself alone! This is the faith God loves, and this is the faith that rides in triumph over the billows of time.

But will such apparent presumption not lead to sin? Will not the thought of eternal life lead to carelessness? Surely, dear reader, to believe what God says is not presumption, but the reverse. And to find beneath your feet a ground of most perfect security will enable you to fight the stern battles of the Lord against the world, the flesh, and the devil far more effectively than when you are uncertain whether you are saved or not. The possession of eternal life is the divine pledge of holiness. May the Spirit of God make this effectual in the souls of all the children of God, and through the written word grant each one to know the living certainty of the truth, that "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life." J. W. S.

Jesus says "Look unto me,"—"Come unto me"—"Abide in me"—"Follow thou me." Dear reader, does your heart respond to the spell of these words?

"BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH."

"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."
MATT. xxv. 6.

"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;"
Do you know His blessed name?
Have you heard how once He suffered,
When in lowly grace He came?
Do you trust His blood for cleansing?
Has it made your conscience clear?
Can you welcome Him with gladness?
Can you meet Him without fear?

"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;"
Have you heard the midnight cry?
It hath sounded long and loudly,
Surely now He draweth nigh.
Ye who trust in false profession,
'Tis in vain your lamps to trim;
Haste! we have no oil to give you,
Ye must look for life to Him.

"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;"
Ah! what joy to see His face,
If you now accept His mercy,
While He waiteth still in grace.
And what joy to Him to take you,
As the purchase of His blood,
To Himself, at home for ever
In the Paradise of God!

ANON.

ARE YOU BORN AGAIN?

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.... There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. . . . . And 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. 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. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."—JOHN ii. 23-25; iii. 1-7, 14-18.

Remark specially the closing verses of the second chapter of John, for they are closely connected with the third chapter. The Lord had been at the Passover, the memorial of God's dealings with Israel on the night of their deliverance from Egypt. The blood-shedding of the lamb recalled that which sheltered Israel from the wrath of the destroying angel—the blood on Israel's door-posts shut out God's wrath, and the subsequent passage through the Red

Sea fully witnessed the destruction of all their foes, and their establishment on a scene of perfect deliverance; a lovely type of what God is willing to do for you, oh! sinner, this day, that you may go with a lighter heart and more joyful song than any Israelite of old; for theirs was a temporal, a momentary deliverance; but yours, if you will let God save you, will be eternal. We have to do with *eternal* things.

Chapter ii. 23. "Many believed in his name when they saw *the miracles* which he did." Faith in His miracles was not faith in Him. It was not faith in His blessed person—not faith such as Simeon had when he took the babe in his arms and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes *have seen* thy salvation." It was intellectual faith, such as goes in families or nations, a faith that believes what history tells us—*e.g.*, of Napoleon Bonaparte. You are content to believe he lived, gained many battles, lost one, and died a captive. You believe the facts, but they in no wise affect you. That kind of faith will not save your soul. Does any one ask, Can I say *of myself* I am saved? No; you cannot. But when *God* says so, then you can know you are saved. Who told me I was saved? The Lord! When *He* tells me, then I have a divine, a positive faith, and *can* say I am saved. Do not think I can let you pass with the thought you are not to know whether you are saved or not. If your faith is real it is deeper far than any head work. If a man is bowed under the love of Christ, he is not troubled as to the kind of

his faith, but he confides in a living, loving person. They believed when they saw His miracles, not when they heard of Him *as Saviour*. They could not deny what they saw with their eyes; but that sort of belief never saved, and never will save, a soul. It was intellectual faith. So "Jesus would not commit himself unto them," for they were not *real*. They accepted divine facts, quite compatible with a man being unsaved. Such people would be very religious on Sundays—have a Sunday coat, and go twice to church. But, if you dare to speak to them of Christ on Monday, they will tell you. That is quite out of place now; there is a time for everything. Their *minds* are convinced, and, to ease their consciences, they would be good Christians one day in the week; but the Lord knows the heart. "He did not commit himself to them," and He will not trust that sort of faith yet. "The Lord has been so kind to me," I hear some one say; "I have had such wonderful answers to prayer." Just like those here! They *saw* the *miracles* He did, and therefore they believed. But Jesus says, You must trust *me*, not my miracles. "He needed not that any should testify of man; for *he* knew what was *in man*." "*He* needed not;" but you need to be told what is *in you*. What kind of faith have you got? Only that which rests in some miraculous thing done by Jesus? Right faith springs from a broken heart, from one that knows and owns himself a lost sinner. You are a lost sinner, but you need to know it. Look at Nicodemus, a good man; yet Jesus could not

trust him. There must be more in the man that Jesus trusts than mere good nature. What was there? An evil, rebellious, deceitful heart, and a garb of religiousness covering all. He was wearing his Sunday coat, making a "fair show in the flesh," going up to the feast and as yet not trusting Jesus. Who was it that slew the Lord? Who cried, "Away with him, away with him! crucify him, crucify him?" The religious people of the day! Are you one of these?

The Devil will help you to be religious and even have some happy feelings, if only they will keep you away from Christ. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." You may comfort yourself also with the thought you are as good as your neighbour, you never did any one any harm—you have a good conscience and there's the end of it. But with God the first thing is "Are you born again?" An old man told me the other day, "I have a good conscience, and am not afraid to face God." What a soothing draught Satan can give, and particularly to a good sort of person! The Lord deals with such an one here. "*He* knew what was in man." "But there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus." The Pharisees were the religious sect amongst the Jews, and most thought themselves better than others, passed to the other side of the way, and would say, "Stand by, I am holier than thou." Such Nicodemus does not appear to have been. He was high up amongst the religionists, for he was a ruler. He was at the top of the tree, and yet he knew no more of God than you do, unconverted sinner. He

knew nothing. "He came to Jesus by night." The writhings of his conscience brought him, and in chap. iv. we have a poor, outcast, fallen woman attracted by the heart of Jesus. Chap. iii. gives us the good Pharisee, and chap. iv., the ruined woman. "Both need blessing, both need *me*," says Jesus. "To-night I will send an arrow of conviction to the conscience of this good man, and by and bye he will come out and boldly own me." At the death of Christ Nicodemus did so. He stood with Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph asked the body of Jesus, Nicodemus joined the company, and confessed how Jesus had met him that night. Then he was bold for Christ, and cared not what his religious friends might say, but he was a religious man and came at first *by night*. There is nothing more damning than a Christless religion! Are you religious without Christ? Satan will do his best to make you satisfied with this sort of religion, and with his deceit would engage you with sermons, prayers, anything, if only he could keep you from Christ. I entreat you, fling all this religion away. Come now, as a ruined sinner to the *Saviour*—it's *salvation* you need, not religion. Nicodemus came *by night*. Why? Because he was ashamed to come by day. He said within himself, "I could not stand the ridicule of doing what that man wants. I could not come right out for Christ." Well, so gracious was Jesus, though he came by night, ashamed of coming, He did not turn him away. He saw what was the state of the man before Him, He knew his needs. Nicodemus did not know what the light

of His presence was. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest." Nicodemus was manifested that night.

I like to picture that solitary scene at night, when Jesus, the Saviour, and Nicodemus, the sinner, talked together. I want to hear what passed between them. "Rabbi," said Nicodemus. He did not know his own state, he addressed Jesus as a *teacher*. If I send a child to school to be taught, I suppose there is some ground that can be turned to account, in which the seed cast will grow. Nicodemus was one of those, whose faith at this time stood in the miracles he had seen Jesus do. "We know thou art a teacher come from God." He is most respectful, receives Him as one sent of God. Jesus said, "Verily, verily,"—and notice, when you hear these two words from the Saviour's lips something, very important is about to follow,—"Verily, verily, *I* say unto *thee*,"—what close quarters, how personal! Have you come to deal thus closely, individually, with Christ? If you are to be saved, there must be this close contiguity of soul with God. "Except a man be *born again*, he cannot *see* the kingdom of God." Dark was the night, but darker still was the soul of poor Nicodemus. "Except a man *be born again*," you must first come in at the door before you can reach the teacher. Before you come to Him, as such you must know Him as *Saviour*. Nicodemus wanted to be taught as he was. This is what you do when you send your coat to the dyer to get a new colour upon it. The Lord seems to say here, Bring no coats to be dyed. The coat must be an

entirely new one, no improvement of the *old* nature will meet your case, but a *new* one must be had. "Except a man be BORN AGAIN he cannot *see* the kingdom of God." He has no eyes to see the things of faith. He *cannot* be instructed till he is born again. Head faith will not do for the things of God's kingdom. Such faith is very common now-a-days, and it is got up as men learn the first few books of Euclid; the mind, not the heart, is exercised; such will not do. "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." "Except *a* man,"every one individually, no exceptions, all must pass through this door. Nicodemus asked, "How can a man be born when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" It was a stupid question, but Nicodemus put it, and he was a wise ruler.

Jesus again said, "Verily, verily," but adds to what He said before, "Except a man be born of *water*, and of the *Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." No man can see *that* kingdom unless born again, and now He explains *how* he is born again—"of water and of the Spirit." This is not baptism. Jewish washings there were, but baptism, as a Christian looks on it, such an one as Nicodemus would not have understood. "Born of water!" What is that? Man's flesh will not do for God's Kingdom. Man, as he is, will not do for God, whether he be religious or not. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." You cannot change a crab tree, dress and prune it as you like, the apples are crab apples after all. Nothing

but a crab will come from a crab tree. So nothing can come out of man but the deeds of the flesh, and that will not suit God. Salvation is in Christ. Have you got it? I *hope* so. That will not do. Have you gone through what the Lord speaks of here? I have been baptized. But, supposing baptism was the water spoken of here, you have not the Spirit. Has your soul passed through this, without which there is no entrance into that bright scene? The soul that is real is not ambiguous, but speaks with positive certainty. "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" Jesus spake of something a Jew should have known. The Lord refers to Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." *Water*, then, is a figure of what God will do for Israel by and bye in His grace, through *His Word*. In John xiii. Jesus took water and washed their feet, and said, "Now ye are clean, but not all." Judas was there, so He could not say they were all clean. Chapter xv. 3, gives more definiteness to the meaning of water, "Now ye are clean through *the word* which I have spoken unto you." In chapter xiii. the water was the figure of what removed defilement, and in chapter xv., when the false man had left, Jesus could pronounce them clean. In Ephesians v. 26, of the church it is said, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the word*." Then in 1 Peter i. 23, "Being born again, by *the word* of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

"Born of water and the Spirit" refers to *the Word* of God brought to bear on the soul by the Spirit, that you may know the truth. When the word of the gospel is brought to a sinner, he takes it, if he is in earnest, and lets it judge him.

Nicodemus was puzzled. "How can these things be?" He had come to an end of himself. Jesus goes on to tell him, No one knows what God requires but the One that came from God. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we *have seen*. No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." The Son of the Father's bosom *alone* could tell what Jesus was now revealing to this Master in Israel. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (when the many in Israel were dying, and it came to pass if a serpent had bitten any man, *when* he beheld the serpent of brass he lived—Numbers xxi. 9), so must the Son of man be lifted up, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but *have* eternal life." *God* brought in a remedy that met the case of the dying Israelites, and "*God* so loved the world that *he* gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "I *must* be lifted up," said Christ; and you "*must* be born again." What lovely words, these two musts! If you are to escape judgment, I must bear it for you. Mark the person God calls you to confide in—a real, true man. That precious, precious Jesus! He could not trust one man; but I am the man, He says, whom you can trust—must trust. "I will

be lifted up on the tree, as the serpent of brass was of old, and whosoever trusts in me shall not perish." But who is this Son of man? Jesus tells, "God so loved the world that he gave *his Son*." Oh! I see it! This Son of man is the Son of God—God and man!

"How wondrous the glories that meet
In Jesus, and from His face shine!
His love is eternal and sweet—
'Tis human! 'tis also divine!
His glory—not only God's Son—
In manhood He had His full part,
And the union of both joined in one,
Form the fountain of love in His heart."

Only think of being loved by that heart of Jesus, the God-Man—to have that fountain of love ever to repair to! those streams of living water that quench the thirsting soul! Will you not bow to Jesus now, and drink of His love? He, as the substitute, died that you *might* get life. He drank of the cup of sorrow to the dregs, that you might get the cup of peace, joy, and gladness. Naught could meet the righteous requirements of God's throne but the blood of that precious One. Behold that blessed Saviour, bleeding, dying for you! Precious Jesus! Belied by a false friend, denied by a true one, deserted by all, forsaken of God!

"There, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flowed mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

Oh! reader, wilt thou not henceforth bow to that blessed One? I ask you, Was ever love like that of Jesus? He died and bled *for sinners*. The Son of man has died and finished

the work that will bring your soul perfect into God's presence. He took all our spots and made them His own on Calvary's cross, died, and lay in the tomb; but the tomb could not hold him, for He was the resurrection as well as the life; and, seated in righteousness, He is now at God's right hand. Blessed risen man! Will you not trust Him? If *you* want to spend your eternity in glory you *must* trust Him. How free is the grace of God! "Whosoever will," "Whosoever *believeth* in him hath everlasting life, and shall not perish." You must either perish in your sins or believe in Jesus; simply *trust in Jesus*, or *perish for ever in the depths of the Lake of fire!* Make your choice. But you say, "God is love;" He will not consign me to hell. Yes, "God so loved the world that he gave his Son." Careless and Christless ones, He so loved you, that He gave His Son to die for *you*, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish." Only believe; but, if you will not believe, you *must* perish. There is God's side, and there is man's side. On God's part it is LOVING and GIVING; on man's, it is BELIEVING and HAVING, and that *now*. Then I can say, simply and truly, I am born again, I have eternal life, I do not *hope* to have it. It is all *having* in scripture.

Yes, but whom does it mean? Whom do you think it means? this "*Whosoever?*" In my native county there are many orchards, and as you pass along the road, hot and thirsty, you would like to climb the fence and treat yourself to one of the juicy apples that cluster on the branches of the trees,

but your eye rests on a placard, with these words printed in large letters, so that all may read, "WHOSOEVER IS FOUND TRESPASSING WILL BE PUNISHED WITH THE UTMOST RIGOUR OF THE LAW." You would not dare to pass into the orchard; why? Because it says, "Whosoever is found trespassing, &c." Is your name there? No! But it says "*Whosoever*," and that's I, and everybody. Whom does it not mean? The word of man keeps you out of the orchard, but will you not have confidence in God, when He says, WHOSOEVER will may come into my banqueting house. Will you understand man's WHOSOEVER and not God's.

The work *is all done*, Christ is gone on high, and God calls you to believe. The moment you believe you are saved, and *have* life. Did the dying Israelites *feel* cured, and *then* look to the serpent? No. The moment they looked they lived, and the moment you look to Christ you are as safe as if you were in heaven. Does God deceive us? No. He gives us His word, that we may trust Him, and *know* that we have eternal life. What is it to have eternal life? To have Christ. "He that hath the Son hath life." The Lord closes with a few words, showing that on him that believes no judgment will fall, but on him who does not believe judgment *now* rests. Why? "Because he hath not *believed* in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And what will be the sorrow of an eternity in hell? This is what is meant by punishing. You will carry there the most vivid remembrance of the preachings heard on earth. You

will remember salvation was pressed upon you, but you preferred and loved the world.

Oh, decide for Christ now, and to-morrow, if asked, tell your friends and companions, I have got hold of Christ, a *Saviour*, for He saves *every* soul that trusts Him. "WHOSOEVER" means me.

W. T. P. W.

GOD IS LOVE.

The love of God! no words could ere express it!
Too great, too wonderful it was to tell;
And so He sent His Son on earth to prove it—
His only Son He loved so well.
He sent His Son for man—undone, unthankful;
They cared not for the gift so rich, so great;
And when He came to do them good and bless them,
They treated Him with deepest scorn and hate.
But yet His love changed not, no floods could drown it;
Stronger than death it was—Himself He gave!
His love, not all man's black ingratitude could quench;
He came—blest thought!—His enemies to save.
Oh, love of God! unequall'd love, excelling
All that e'er was heard or known before;
Tell it abroad, till earth takes up the story
And echoes it around from shore to shore.
And then, when all our days on earth are o'er,
And we have joined the ransom'd hosts above,
God's love shall be our sweetest theme and story,
For then indeed we'll know that "God is love."

E. L.

SIN: HOW PUT AWAY.

(Hab. i. 12-13.)

It is a necessity of God's nature that He cannot be occupied with sin; it must be put out of His presence, as He abhors it. Therefore, those who die with their sins upon them must necessarily be shut out from God's presence, as there is nothing to remove their sin when *His grace* has not sufficed them.

We see this—all this, and far more, both as to God and man; for was not *the truth* wonderfully declared when the Lord Jesus was made sin? Although He was the Son, and infinitely acceptable to God, yet then God hid His face from Him. In one sense, God had then to be occupied with sin, because it was at such a cost that He then turned away from it. His only-begotten Son never more truly did His will or glorified Him in His nature and majesty than then! And yet it was just then that He *must* turn His face from Him. We know, through grace, that this was undergone for us, and that if God had to put sin away from His presence under such circumstances it was to put it away for ever for us, so that we can now in peace survey these wonderful things, and learn of the majesty of His nature without fear being the possession of our souls, as we know we are sinners.

Jesus, knowing infinitely, as well as perfectly, what it was to enjoy God's presence, and to walk in the light of it as in complete dependence on

Him, without one motion of will or desire apart from Him, knew infinitely what sin is, and what its punishment—exclusion from God's presence—is. It did not need any length of *time* for Him to enter into and taste this; the very fact that *He* did *enter* into such a position was enough. Sin was perfectly estimated as God estimates it, and the acceptable and beloved One bowed His head under the penalty of it, and thus God was free to interpose on His behalf, and on that of the sinners, whose cause He had undertaken.

In the case of the punishment of sinners who come into judgment, *time* is nothing either; for the lost simply *can never* estimate sin after a divine fashion, and must, therefore, be left for ever to the consequences of their sin.

THE STORY OF MY CONVERSION.

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17.

I have greatly desired to put on record the facts connected with my conversion, in the earnest hope that God may use them for the blessing of some of those who knew me well before the light of the grace of God, and the love of my Saviour, had shone in upon my poor dark soul; who knew me in those days when the pleasures of the world were all the pleasures I cared for; and when, if the thought of eternity ever crossed my mind, it was dismissed as quickly as possible, as something not

pleasant to think about. Dear friend and reader, look for a moment at the initials at the end of this little story, and you will know, perhaps, who it is who has written it. You will remember one whom you knew well as one among your many acquaintances who was probably in your sight neither better nor worse than other men; who went occasionally to races, theatres, balls, &c.; who played cards, sang comic songs, and, in short, as I have said above, did his best to enjoy the world, and to spend *time* with as little thought as possible about *eternity*. True it is that now and then, at the end of a day which perhaps had been an unusually happy one (as I then thought), when I had perhaps returned home after a day spent on Ascot race-course, or after an evening with friends of my own age, when the wine had gone freely round, or a visit to some attractive piece at a theatre, the thought *would* come across me, "Well, I've had a very happy day, but, after all, *it's a day nearer to death and eternity;*" I say that thought *would* come, though I would do all I could to dismiss it, for it was not comfortable to think that each day brought me nearer to that moment when I must stand before God, and I knew that *all was not right*, and that if I were to die I must stand before Him with all the burden of my sins upon me. Not but what I used to "say my prayers" night and morning, to go occasionally to church, to read my Bible now and then (very seldom though, and not because I really loved it), and, in short, to do what I dare say most of those who read this are doing now,

and thinking that in so doing they are going straight on the road to heaven. Oh, dear friend, if there be *but one* among you who is going on thus, *but one* who has a thought that by your righteousness or morality you are earning a title to live for ever with Jesus, with Him who died to save *the lost* (not the *moral*, not the *self-righteous*), abandon at once, I implore you, your false and foolish hopes, for they will lead only to hell. Your house is "built upon the sands," and when the storm comes—the storm of God's judgment upon a world which has crucified His Son—and you have nothing to rest on more solid than your own good deeds, you will find how fatally you have been deceived when it will be *too late*. But to begin my story.

In January, 1869, my son had returned to school in Germany, after his holidays; and in his first letter to me from there had asked me to thank his sister for the letter she had put into his hands at the railway station on taking leave of him, adding that it had been a great comfort to him. I felt curious to know what this letter could be, and wrote and asked him if he would mind sending it to me to read. He did so, and I give it *verbatim*.

"My own darling A.—When you are quite alone on your voyage, and have left us, think of that dear Friend in heaven who will never leave you, and who will protect and guard you night and day, for He loves you dearly. I have lately learnt to know Him as my Saviour, and, oh, I want you to know Him as yours too. I always, every evening, pray for you, and many

others that I love, and I am sure Jesus will answer my prayers. And, if He come before we meet again, I pray to God we may meet in heaven, my darling A., where there will be no more sorrow, nor crying, and where we shall never be parted again ; where you, and I, and all I love will be together for ever and ever with Jesus. Darling A., He died to set you free ; oh, do accept Him for your Saviour, and do believe that I say all this in love and not for preaching. God bless you, and keep you, my own precious brother, for Jesus Christ's name sake. Amen."

This was the letter, and I read in silent astonishment. Was this my child who was writing thus, the child whom I had educated for this world? the child whom I had brought up to look on the pleasures of this world as things to be desired, to whom, if I ever spoke of things belonging to the world to come, it was merely to make her learn a few verses out of the Bible or a hymn as a lesson, or to take her to church, and think I had done my duty? And she could write and say she had found Jesus to be her Saviour! What did it all mean? In my *conscience* I knew well what it meant, though I tried not to. I knew it meant that she had got what I had not ; that she was right, and I was wrong ; and that the very child, whom I had tried to lead into the pleasures of this world, had, by the grace of God, been brought to see how hollow and false they all were, and had been led, indeed, to know Him for her Saviour whom this world put to death. I knew in my heart that she was on the Rock, safe for

eternity, while I was not. For a few days this letter much impressed me; and I believe sincerely that to it I can trace the first working of the Spirit of God in my soul. But I did my best to shake off the impression, and, with the help of the enemy of souls (too ready to help in such a case), I succeeded. I even took my child to the theatre again, thinking it might get rid of the impressions on her mind. But, oh! I bless God that His grace was stronger than my wretched will, and that the very one, who tried to lead his child away from God, was soon himself to be brought under the power of that grace, and to be prostrated in the very dust before Him from whose presence he tried to get in vain. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans v. 20).

My daughter went to school, and I was left alone in my home; but it was not until two months later that I can say that the work of God in my soul became apparent to me. I had no one to speak to about myself. I went to and from town daily, as usual, to my office; but slowly and imperceptibly I awoke to a sense of my real condition *before God*. I was not leading what is called an immoral life. I was not even entering more than usual into the pleasures of the world. Outwardly people spoke well enough of me; but God was showing me what I was in *His* sight; and, in the presence of that light, all the darkness of my heart was shown out. Day after day passed on, and I became more and more unhappy. I tried what the society of my friends would do. I dined with men of my

own age, and entered into their amusements, to try and find relief in them. All in vain. The hand of God was on me—the Spirit of God was striving with me, and, when He strives, He cannot strive in vain. *God was breaking me down;* and, oh! how can I ever bless and praise Him enough for it! At last, on an evening I can never forget, I had gone home as usual, and, having tried to eat my dinner, I went upstairs to the drawing-room, but was so utterly wretched about myself and my condition, that I could neither read my Bible nor pray. All I could do was to weep, and weep bitterly, until at last, in the very agony of my soul, I threw myself down on my knees, crying aloud, "Lost, lost, lost!" What a moment was that! I lived a lifetime in it. It was the moment to which God, in His infinite grace, brought me, that He might reveal to me the One who *died* for the *lost*. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). And that was what I now knew myself to be. "In due time Christ died for the *ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6). There I was again, accurately described; ungodly, indeed, though with plenty of the "form of godliness" (2 Timothy iii. 5). And wherever I found myself thus pointed at, as it were, in the Word of God, there, side by side, I found what met my need—a SAVIOUR; and what a Saviour! The Son of God, who had become a man, and died upon the cross for *me*—yes, for *me*. I could take it all to myself now, for there it was, in God's Word; and, as surely as I found more and more the depth of my need, so more and

more I learnt that the only One who *could* have met it *had* met it, and met it perfectly; and I knew, *knew* that I was saved, saved for ever. I knew that *He* who knew no sin had been made sin for me. (2 Cor. v. 21.) I knew that His own Self bare *my* sins in His own body on the tree. (1 Peter ii. 24). Not *part* of my sins, but *my sins*, all of them; and that God's own Son having borne them, and borne the punishment due to them, they were, in God's sight, gone, and gone for ever! For *where* did He, my Saviour, bear them? "On the tree!" more than 1,800 years ago; and I could take all this to my own very self, and bow myself at the foot of that cross where my Saviour—*my* Saviour! what a word!—had died, and died for me.

Oh! dear friend and reader, pause for one moment, I entreat you, and ask yourself, Can I say, *my* Saviour? Do I know Him as *mine?* Not, surely, unless you have known yourself as *lost*, will you know your need of a Saviour. What, you say, Lost? I, who lead really a moral life; I, who always attend my church, who say my prayers, read my Bible; I lost? Impossible! Oh! wake up from your self-righteous dream, I pray you. If you are resting on these you are resting on a broken reed. They are *your* righteousnesses, and the Word of God says, "All *your* righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah lxiv. 6). "*Filthy rags.*" That is what God thinks of them. Wake up from your dream before it is too late, before "the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door"

(Luke xiii. 25). For that door, the door of grace, is still open, though who shall say how soon it will be shut? Shut, perhaps by death, perhaps by the coming of the Lord. Who shall say? And how will you stand before Him in your own righteousness, before that Holy One who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity" (Habakkuk i. 13); before that One whose precious blood, (that blood which "cleanseth from *all* sin,") was shed at Calvary, and yet know that you have all your sins upon you? Too late, then, too late! "*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). God gives you *to-day*, He does not give you *to-morrow*.

Never can I forget the joy that filled my heart as I learnt all these precious truths, and could take them all to myself. Never can I forget the joy I felt one afternoon, when walking home, the thought once more came across me in a new form. A day is passed away, but it is a day nearer to *life*, life eternal with the Saviour who died for me. All fear of death was gone, for "the sting of death is sin," and I knew that my Saviour had borne the judgment of *my* sins, and the sting was gone. Not but what Satan troubled me, and troubled me terribly sometimes. And why? Because he knew he had lost me. He did not trouble me while I was his; he let me go on quietly enough as long as I was in his power and content to be there; but, once he saw I was slipping from him, drawn by a power stronger than his—drawn by the grace of God, he poured

out all my sins before me, like a flood, and, but for that same grace keeping me, would have driven me to despair; but God in His love pointed me again and again to the cross of my Saviour, and there I could rest. Among other things in my unconverted days, I had been a great swearer; now, the very thought of it was hateful to me; and yet Satan would bring to my very lips blasphemies against my God and my Saviour, such as in my worst days I had never thought nor dreamed of; but they recoiled against himself, for I recognised in them his work and could look for strength where alone I knew I could find it. And now God in His love raised me up Christian friends, for I had learned to love His word, His precious word, and His children. I remember that at this time I was not happy even, unless I had that word, my Bible, under my pillow at night. And I received about this time a letter from a dear servant of God, to whom I had written after one of these attacks by Satan, which was a great help to me, and I give it here in hope that it may be a help to any who may be suffering as I then was. He says: "What you have been passing through is quite a common experience among awakened souls. Satan thrusts at, and tempts you now; you were his captive before, but now you suffer, being tempted. Christ sympathises with you, and will succour. Fear not to lean all your weight on Him, and receive the word of His grace with all simplicity. For such as you feel yourself to be, He died; and He is risen, not for your judgment, but justification. What can Satan do to shake

you when you own your entire ruin, but plead His cross? What meaning has the cross if not to save him who believes in Christ? Be assured God is only letting Satan tempt you for your greater blessing, through a deeper self-judgment; and to lead you to rest only on Christ." Indeed, it was for blessing, for it showed me more and more the inmost depths of my poor, bad black heart. It revealed me to myself; and day by day, through the grace of God, I am learning myself more and more; learning, too, the depths of that love and grace that could stoop so low to touch such an one as I. And the more I learned of the love of my Saviour, the more I learned that I had nothing in common with the world which had put Him to death. The pleasures of the world were no longer pleasures to me. I read what He had said of those whom He had purchased with His own blood. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 16). *In* the world I was, but not *of* it; in it to bear testimony to His love and grace, who had died in it for me.

Not long after, the time for Ascot races came round, but through the grace of God I was enabled not only to refuse to go, but also to confess Christ to the friend who for years had gone with me. He could not understand me. How should he? "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him" (1 Cor. ii. 14). I was to go to him, and he "would set me right," he wrote. Ah, blessed be God, *He* had set me right, set me right by showing me how utterly wrong I was,

how fast I was travelling on my road to hell. From that day to this that same grace which sought and found me has kept me, and will keep to the end. I can look up now and call Him my Father, of whom before I stood only in fear. Dear reader, can you do the same? Can you look up to the high and holy God, and call Him Father, with all the confidence of a child who has learned a father's love? For He is the Father of all His children, and, if you are not His child, whose are you? And now my tale is done. It is the tale of God's infinite grace to a poor lost sinner; now, a sinner saved. Perhaps, after reading it, you may imagine for a moment that I am setting myself up as something good, as something better than others. Dismiss the thought. I never knew how bad I was till I was brought into the light of the presence of God, and found the darkness that was in me. And now let me ask you, earnestly and affectionately, dear friend, how stands it between God and you? Is the great question settled? the question of eternity? Just read the text at the beginning of this little story. *In Christ*, or *out of Christ*, which is it? It must be one or the other, for there is no middle path. Have "old things passed away, and all things become new" for *you?* In your heart and conscience you know well which it is, do you not? Why do I write thus to you? Because I earnestly desire that you may find the Saviour that I have found; that you may not be among those mere professors who call themselves Christians, but do not follow Christ; who take His name into

their lips, but know Him not in the heart; who will come when the door is shut, and shut for ever, and cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," and He shall say, "I know you not" (Matt. xxv. 11, 12). Oh, what terrible words will those be, which will shut out for ever from the presence of God those to whom they are uttered.

I have told my tale, and earnestly pray that God may bless it to those who will, I am sure, kindly and patiently read it.

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). A. P. G.

A FRAGMENT.

Once there was one who dared to spit in His face; once there was one who dared to pluck the hair from off His cheek; and once there was one who dared to do the most cruel thing in the world to Him—to put vinegar upon His parched lips; but now, do not *identify yourselves* with those wicked, those hardened men. Don't take their part against the blessed Lord, but honour Him whom God has honoured. Confess that they were wicked and did wickedly, and that God was right to exalt the One who glorified Him on the earth. Don't share, oh! never share the hell of those wicked men who dis honoured Him!

THE EFFECT OF LOVE.

I was loved *so* in sin and in blindness,
My enmity melted away,
And the choicest of all human kindness
Grew dim, like a star at the day.

I was wild as the heath of the mountain,
And dark as the depths of the sea,
With a heart never filled by the fountain
Of love—ever full, ever free.

While the meteors of fancy were glaring,
They dazzled, but faded in gloom;
And the hopes that have kept from despairing
Were bounded, alas! by the tomb.

Yet an eye, as I wander'd, was on me—
A power overshadowed my way,
And so lovingly lighted upon me
A hand that so tenderly lay;

While a face of affection and pity
Broke in on the shade of my night,
That, in tears, to His heavenly city
I turned, and trod in His light.

Then away with the idols of folly,
Too long I have lain in their dreams;
I am bought, and the heart should be wholly
His own, who so dearly redeems.

Shall my song of confession be closing
And bear not the stamp of His name?
On JESUS what spirit reposing
Could cover His glory and fame?

W. S. H.

ANSWER TO A QUERY.

Matthew xviii. 23-35 must not be severed from the previous part of the chapter, or it will be misunderstood. In this chapter the Lord Jesus speaks of the two subjects named in chapter xvi.—viz., the Church and the Kingdom, and inculcates the great principles which are to govern the disciples during His own rejection and absence from earth. That which befitted a kingdom, of which the King suffered Himself to be rejected, was the spirit of meekness. The disciple must become as a little child, who has no power to assert any rights, and is compelled to be dependant and withal humble. Further, during the absence of Christ, the Church has to occupy the place of Christ on earth, as a witness and testimony for God. If, in the Church, offences arise against oneself, this same spirit of meekness is to be manifested in the effort to gain one's brother—*i.e.*, grace should lead one to go after and win back an offender, instead of waiting till he comes to confess his fault. Christ is the pattern for the saints; hence the only thing that suits the kingdom is unlimited forgiveness (see v. 22), for we are to be imitators of God, whose pardoning grace has been fully manifested in Christ, so that there must be no end to our forgiveness of any wrongs done to us. In verses 23-35, however, God's dispensational dealing with the Jews (which Matthew is full of) is described, I think. They were guilty not only of law-breaking, but of rejecting and slaying Jesus the Son of God. On the cross, in the deepest grace, Christ interceded for them, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." By the lips of the apostle Peter, the Holy Ghost proclaims a provisional pardon (see Acts ii. v). This grace of God they reject, kill Stephen, and are enraged that grace should be shown to the Gentiles (see Acts xxi. 28-29), who may be regarded in the light of owing there the hundred pence. The fruit of this, in the righteous government of God, is that the Jews, as a people, are now rejected and given up to punishment till the day the Lord can say, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand *double* for all her sins" (Isaiah xl. 2). This will be literally fulfilled when Jesus, as Son of man—Israel's Messiah and deliverer—comes in glory; and, the long dark night of that nation's unbelief having passed away, they will receive Him, and He will bless them, and stablish them for ever in their own land. Luke xxii. 32 refers to Peter's restoration (see John xxi).

"JUDGMENT TO COME;" ITS CERTAINTY AND DURATION.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "Come unto *me* all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28), has instructed us beforehand as to the doom of the rejector of the gospel. What, then, will be that judgment?—"Depart from *me*, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41).

Reader, hast thou accepted the invitation, "Come unto *me?*" Hast thou bowed to the grace and glory of the gospel? Every reader of these lines must either listen to the Saviour's "Come," or obey His awful word, "Depart." Which is the word, then, that is to settle your eternal destiny? Upon the acceptance or rejection of His blessed word of love and entreaty rests thine everlasting weal or woe. I beseech you give heed to the message; in it there is life, rest, and peace. Trifle not with the messenger, Who is none other than the Son of God come down from the glory, offering Himself a hiding-place from divine wrath.

Judgment is certain. God has graciously delayed it, affording thee space for repentance, "not willing that *any* should perish" (2 Peter iii. 9); but don't presume upon *further* delay, for "the day of the Lord will come." The world is deceiving itself and being deceived by the devil. These are days of man's glory, days of

vaunted progress. The inventive faculties are being largely and rapidly developed, having, for their object, ministering to the "flesh"—*i.e.*, bad propensities,—and the "mind." All this will have a terrible ending. Judgment will shortly sweep over these lands, surprising men by the "sudden destruction" which will overtake them in the midst of their fancied security, "for when they shall say *peace* and *safety then* sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and *they shall not escape*" (1 Thes. v. 3).

This judgment is certain and imminent. The stroke is about to fall upon *all* the ungodly. Already the heavy clouds are gathering. Oh, my reader, be warned! Man, are you mad? Flee, O flee from the wrath to come! Sleeper, awake to the solemn reality of your position. Judgment is impending; it overtook the inhabitants of the old world *unawares*—they knew not "until the flood came and took them *all* away." They were warned, as you are now; they were entreated to enter the ark—the refuge of God's *own* providing—even as you now are; there were scenes of festivity and gladness *then* as *now;* but the morning of judgment arrived for them, calm and bright as before, with no appearance of the threatened judgment. The scoffer of that day, even as the scoffer of *this*, laughed to scorn the thought of coming judgment. But the "flood" did come, and they perished; the "fire" will burn, and into it the wicked will be cast. O! sinner, may the awful end of the rejectors of Christ wake thee up to

concern! Now He calls thee to His love, to His heart. He would give thee rest, life, peace, besides sheltering thee from coming wrath. Do not set at nought the beseeching of a Saviour-God. Do not turn a deaf ear to His earnest pleadings with thee. The glory of God is shining in the face—the blessed face—of Jesus Christ.

> "There is life in a look at the glorified One—
> There is life at this moment for thee."

If I have gazed upon the face of Jesus Christ, I see that God has triumphed over my sin, I *know* that "the judgment-day" will produce *nothing* against me. His face was "once marred more than any man's." Oh, I read the story of life, love, and peace in His blessed countenance!

Sinner, thou wilt "see *Him*," thou wilt hear *His* voice; that word, "Depart from *me*, ye cursed," shall, like iron, enter your soul, and be indelibly and eternally engraven upon thy memory. How wilt thou shelter thyself then? Bring forth thy strong reasons now; have them weighed in the "balances of the sanctuary." God the offended invites thee, the offender, to reason this matter of sin with Him. "Come *now*, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah i. 18).

Dear friend, I must not, if I dared, gloss over the very plain statement of Scripture as to the punishment of the unbeliever. Those statements *never* go beyond the sober truth. The Holy Ghost has written Scripture—every word of it; hence the Word of God from its *very title* claims

authority over the whole man. I write thus because we are assailed on every hand by the open denial of the eternity of future punishment; and what is the effect of this "damnable heresy" upon men? Why, the sense of responsibility to God is immensely enfeebled in the soul, and, in many cases known to us, utterly destroyed; the nature and character of God are measured by the limits of the human mind, and the conscience gets defiled; sin in its relation to God is lightly thought of, and as a consequence the true character and value of the Atonement misunderstood. Who must not deplore such awful results?

Earnestly do we beseech you, dear reader, firmly to reject every effort of the enemy of souls to deceive you on a point so vital as judgment to come. The deniers of this Scriptural truth are sowing broad-cast over the land their deadly poison; verily, "these last days" are "perilous times."

That the punishment of the wicked will be eternal in the full force and meaning of the word is evident to simple readers of Scripture. In every country the mass of simple believers in divine revelation have readily owned the truth of the eternity of future punishment.

But to return. Where will *you* spend eternity? In heaven, or the lake of fire? In company with the myriad gathered around the Lamb once slain, and tasting in *His* presence everlasting pleasures, or will it be in the lake of fire, where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever?"

O! sleeper, thou are sporting on the brink of eternal woe! Arouse thee, come to Jesus, and be saved! Were judgment to come to last for a limited time, say millions of ages, this hope would lessen the misery, and light up the gloom and darkness of those regions of despair. But, no, no; on this the Word of the Living God is most plain. The Lord Jesus Christ—the Beloved of the Father—has with His own hand lifted the veil of "hades" (Luke xvi.). Most awful, yet most true is the light there afforded us of torment, from which there is no escape. "The rich man also died and was buried. And in hell (hades) he lift up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Abraham replies, "There is a great gulf *fixed:* so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that will come from thence." One drop of water refused! He might have drunk of the waters of life *freely;* the "*whosoever* will let him come" as surely included the rich man as the beggar; but the invitation was despised; grace was rejected. The fountain might flow *on* and *over*, satisfying with life and blessing the sinner who would *only* come and *drink*, but the dwellers in hell would *not* drink in time; *now* in eternity it is too late! too late! The "great gulf *fixed*," between the regions of the lost and the blessed, tells of *settled* misery. That "parched tongue" and "tormenting flame" are figures of

conscious misery in an abode whence there is no escape.

Dear friend, the coming judgment will be a day unrelieved by one gleam of hope. The fire shall *never* be quenched, the worm shall *never* die; there *never* shall be forgiveness. Yet that pit of woe was *never* dug for the sinner, it was "prepared for the devil and his angels," but, man, thou art preparing thyself for *it*. The misery of fallen angels who can fathom? But they have not added to their sin the damning one of rejecting Christ, but this awful sin is thine, and I tell you deliberately that, if you die a rejector of Christ, your judgment will be tenfold worse than theirs.

"For *everyone* shall be salted (or preserved) with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt" (Mark ix. 49). Most awful thought! instead of the fire consuming the guilty, it preserves them in it. Ever burning! never consuming! "Where their worm dieth *not*, and the fire is *not* quenched;" three times does our blessed Lord speak of the never-dying worm, and quenchless fire (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48). Figures these may be; but figures of what? Of conscience at her busy and eternal work. "REMEMBER," will be the barbed arrow—the poignant word of anguish in the regions of the lost (Luke xvi. 25).

O, my reader, the wrath of God is revealed against "all ungodliness!" It will be found out by and bye; in the meantime, the testimony to God's grace and love is being preached far and near; on the rejectors of this testimony the storm of divine wrath will spend itself. Rev. xx. 11-15; xxi. 8,

is the fullest account we have of the judgment of the wicked. What a scene is there presented! All the wicked and unbelieving *dead* come forth to the "resurrection of damnation;" the judgment of the *living* upon earth had already been executed at the hands of the *living* Lord. The books of works—those divine and unerring records—are opened and in righteousness all are judged. The judgment is impartial and individual; men are not to be judged in the *mass*, every one will bear his own judgment. But there is also a "book of life;" its registers are searched, "and whosoever was *not* found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." The final issues of all are now settled according to the principles of responsibility in the first man, and purpose and life in the *second* man; this the trees in the garden of Eden set forth—"the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," responsibility of Adam, and "the tree of life," purpose in Christ before the world began. "Death and Hell" *(hades)* the respective depositories of the bodies and souls of men give up their dead, and are themselves cast into the lake of fire, which is the "second death." The wicked do not cease to be—there is no annihilation in the lake of fire. The *first* death left untouched the question of the soul's existence; neither will the "*second* death" raise a glimmering of hope that men will ever cease to be. Alas! no, "the lake of fire *is* the second death." The doom of every responsible creature of God is *then*, if not *now*, settled irrevocably according to the principles of equity and of grace. Eternity

is then entered upon; but why that break in the glowing and magnificent description of the bride in the 21st chapter? Why was the 8th verse of that wonderful chapter penned? Because God would have it written in living characters before the eyes of men, that he who refuses a part in the grace and glory of the eternal state will have a place assigned him in "the lake of fire." *Then*, as *now*, the joy and blessedness of the righteous are put in sharp contrast to the doom of the wicked.

Now, my reader, you have to meet God about your sins; *after* death comes the judgment. Are you *now* standing on your own character, religion, or doings? Will these avail as a standing before God? Will not the dazzling brightness and intense purity of the "great white throne" wither up thy doings and feelings, and leave thee exposed before the gaze of God? Why hast thou *not* on a wedding garment? will be the question *then*. There is one provided for thee: why not put it on? Why deck thyself in these "filthy garments" of morality, character, and merit? Is not the "best robe" better than the best thou canst appear in? Thou hast not to make God's robe of righteousness; not one stitch of thine will be allowed. He who invites thee to partake of "*His* supper" has provided the fitness in which every guest must appear. All is ready; but where are the guests? why these empty chairs? Most marvellous! The invited will not come. Is God not to have His guests? Yes; grace goes out to the "highways" where the mass are to be

found, the "hedges" are searched for wanderers and outcasts, and the "lanes" of the city where the poor and wretched congregate are to swell the number of God's guests at His feast of grace. What guests, what grace, what a God! What title can such have to the grace of God? Merit they have none, character they have not, worth they have none to plead; their *alone* title to partake of God's feast being God's call. All this is a deep *reality*, heaven is a *reality*, the lake of fire is a *reality*, grace is a *reality*. "And when the king came in to see the guests he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he said unto him, Friend, how comest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment? And he was SPEECHLESS. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxii. 11—13). W. S.

RECEIVE HIM TO-DAY.

"To-day if ye will hear his voice harden *not* your heart!"

O sinner, thy days are flying,
And swift is the wing of time,
There are millions around thee dying,
Though they scarce have reached their prime;
And thou, too, in their train art speeding,
With a certain step and sure,
But, oh, say at the goal before thee
Hast thou a rest secure?

RECEIVE HIM TO-DAY.

Thou hast heard of a Saviour's love
  Who came from the land of light,
Down, down from the heaven above,
  To seek thee in death and night.
Thou hast heard how the world received
  Him whom the Father thus sent,
Hast heard the cry of bitter hate*
  Which back to the Father went.

Thou hast joined in that cry, perchance,
  Hast gone with the madden'd tide,
And lifted thy voice amid the throng,
  'Gainst Jesus—the Crucified!
Yet, stay thee, oh, stay, and pause awhile
  In thy reckless, wild, career,
This offer of pardon, peace, and love,
  Shall fall on thy listening ear.

Oh, haste thee and heed it, ere yet
  That message of mercy cease,
And thou, in thy darkness and death,
  Oh, vainly shalt seek release.
Now, now is the day of His grace,
  His blood has been shed for thee,
And thou, in the light of His face,
  Mayst read of forgiveness free.

Ah! free is the pardon to thee,
  Poor lost one, for He hath died,
The burden of guilt He bore, when He
  For thy sake was crucified.
And with yearning heart He bends o'er thee
  How canst thou say Him nay?
He has waited long, so long for thee,
  Oh turn not thou away! E. C. L.

* Luke xix. 14.

"GIVE ME THINE HEART."

It is the voice of the Father, and He says. "My Son, give me thine heart." Is it not a gentle call, "my Son?" Not "guilty sinner," not "rebellious law-breaker," but "Son beloved." "*My* Son!" See, He claims you—you are *His* altogether, His only. "Ye are *not* your own, ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 21). "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and *they that dwell therein*" (Psalm xxiv. 1). . . . "Whether we live therefore or die *we are the Lord's*" (Rom. xiv. 8). On two grounds you are the Lord's: He created you; He has bought you. "God so loved the world that he *gave* His only begotten Son." "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." "If one died for all then were all dead; and he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died and rose again." So you are God's rightful possession. He claims you as His own. True, like all others, you have turned from Him, still He claims you. You have gone out from the Father's house into a far country, yet His gentle voice is "My Son, give me thine heart."

Oh, return to Him! Come back to His love and He will abundantly pardon; for hear His

words, "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace and not of evil" (Jer. ix. 11). "I will spare thee as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. iii. 7). "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool" (Is. i. 18). "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John vi). Surely these are gracious words, and, poor wandering one, they are to thee. Oh, then turn to Him as to a Father. He waits in tender longing to fall upon your neck and embrace you, to clasp you to His bosom, to gently whisper to your trembling heart, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine" (Is. xiii. 1).

"My son, give me thine heart." Again He sends forth His voice of gentle pleading! Is it an unreasonable demand, to restore *His own* unto the Lord?

And, then, oh think what it is He asks; not riches and honour, not health and strength and life, these you could not give, He asks your heart. Oh, remember what the Lord says comes out of that heart before it is given to Him. It is black and sullied, stamped with iniquity,

graven with sin. "From the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. xv. 19). "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9). Oh, give Him your heart. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin." In His hands you will become "a new creature." In Christ Jesus, pure and spotless, "Meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." How tender His entreaty, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come into him, and will sup with him and he with me."

A.

BELIEVING RAHAB.

"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace."—Hebrews xi. 31.

Such is the comment of the Holy Ghost on her, a narrative of whose history is given to us in the Book of Joshua; and a most deeply interesting record it is. They were momentous times, for the unsparing judgment of Jehovah was about to fall on Jericho; and thus we read in the second chapter of our Book, "Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho; and they went and came into an harlot's house named Rahab, and lodged there." This is the state of matters when Rahab is first introduced to us, and her visitors were not long unsought

for, as it came to the hearing of the King that two men of the children of Israel had entered her house; nor did their visit fail to arouse his anxieties, as we may learn by the message he sends to Rahab, "Bring forth the men that are come to thee."

We care not now to criticise the means by which Rahab gets rid of these messengers; it is with what God has written of Rahab's faith that we have to do. Mark first her *earnestness.* She has no sooner got rid of the pursuers than she seeks after the spies; and we read, "*Before they were laid down* she came up unto them upon the roof, and she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you, for we have heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea for you when ye came out of Egypt, and what he did to the two Kings of the Amorites that were on the other side Jordan—Sihon and Og—whom ye utterly destroyed;" and, after further details, she concludes, "The Lord your God he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath." Hers was no mere creed of a judgment that was at hand, nor did she deal in generalities. It is true she could speak of "us," "Your terror is fallen upon us;" but it is for herself she adds, "The Lord your God he is God," and hence the visit of His servants absorbed her soul. *She* was lying under judgment; *she* belonged to the doomed city, and for her there was no time to lose. Reader, hast thou thus applied to thyself that awful truth, "It is

appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment?"

Again, observe there was no excusing of herself or attempt at self-justification. She does not for a moment call in question the righteous judgment of God; but, on the contrary, submits herself to it unquestioningly. She owns that the God of Israel is God; she receives the spies with peace. Ah! my reader, let me ask thee, Hast thou taken as God's word of thyself, "There is none righteous—no, not one;" and "All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God" (Romans iii. 10 and 23)?

Further, let us notice her plea and request, "Now, therefore, I pray thee swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that you will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token." This was Rahab's sole plea, mercy; and her one request, a true token, and she pleaded not in vain. She took her true place before God, and she gave Him His true place, and this is ever the path of blessing, for it is the glory of God that He can be "a Just God and a Saviour"—the Just and the Justifier of the poor ungodly one who believes in Jesus—and when thus the lost sinner takes his own proper place before Him there is no hindrance to blessing flowing in. But, my reader, let us leave Rahab awhile, and let us deal faithfully with thee. Dost thou know that the wages of sin is death, banishment from God for ever, and that there is no remedy for sin—nothing that can make atonement for the soul of man—but the outpoured life of another, and

that a spotless victim. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Behold then thy ruin, and own in the presence of God what thou hast earned,—"Death," and let thy cry be, "not wages, but mercy." Well; this being thy supplication, and the value of thy never-dying soul being before thee, thou wilt desire with Rahab a true token. God has both for thee. Look to Jesus, "whom God hath set forth a propitiation (or mercy seat) through faith in His blood" (Romans iii. 25). Thou canst not look in vain. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;" that is, rest the confidence of thy heart in Him. It is not a legal thing. Jesus says, "Come;" there could not be a sweeter word; we use it to the merest infant, and the little outstretched arm or responsive smile we take as answer. Jesus, "the Truth," says, "Come unto me" and "I will in no wise cast out." Come then now, and you will have mercy and peace by resting in His precious blood; for

> "Justice God cannot twice demand,
> First at the bleeding Surety's hand
> And then again at thine."

No! Beloved reader, Jesus has paid the debt. He by the grace of God tasted death for every man (Heb. ii. 9). This was the work the Father gave Him to do, and of which upon the cross He said, "It is finished;" and again, "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again; no man taketh it from me, I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it

again; this commandment have I received of my Father." The laying down of His precious life was essential, for "without shedding of blood is no remission," the taking of it again was also essential, that others might be associated with Him, for the corn of wheat having fallen into the ground and died does not in resurrection abide alone, but bringeth forth much fruit. Every one who believes in Jesus is seen of God in Him and linked with Him, for "as he is so are we in this world." Thus, my reader, with accomplishing the needed work for saving the soul thou hast nothing to do, the only question is, Is thine heart's trust in the Saviour who has accomplished it?

Our business, however, in this paper is not so much to elucidate the gospel to our readers as to press it home upon them, and to warn them of the awful consequences of not hearkening to God's word. Hence we merely observe Rahab gets what she wanted. "Our life for yours," say the spies to her; "if ye utter not this our business, and it shall be when the Lord hath given us the land that we will deal *kindly* and *truly* with thee," and she then receives from them as a sign of safety the scarlet line (surely a foreshadowing of that precious blood which flowed from our Lord Jesus Christ), and it is in connection with this emblem that they say to her, "Behold, *when we come into the land*, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window" (chapter ii. 18). But how did Rahab deal with the sign? Did she wait till they came into the land? Nay; we read, "She said,

According unto your word so be it; and she sent them away, and they departed, and she bound the scarlet line in the window." It is evident she slept not one night without it. Reader, how is it with thee? Hast thou yet received Christ? All important is the question. The grace of God, otherwise boundless, has one limit, and that limit is *to-day*. *To-day*, if ye will hear His voice. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Chapter 6 of the Book of Joshua gives us Jericho's destruction, but also records Rahab's safety. "Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household and all that she had, and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day, because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho" (verse 25).

Happy, saved Rahab! In figure may we not say a possessor of "eternal life?" "She dwelleth in Israel unto this day." She had bowed herself to God's word; she had rested on it. "Be it unto me according to your word," she said; and God was true, as He ever is, to His word; and as all shall find whose trust is in Jesus, "He that believeth on him shall never be confounded."

Reader, there was no doubt of Rahab's being a sinner. She was saved simply by the grace of God through faith. She is almost invariably described in Scripture as "Rahab the harlot;" and the Spirit of God has a purpose in this. It is a solemn warning to thee if thou art staying thyself on thy respectability in the sight of men. Alas! for self-respecting sinners, "the publicans

and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. xxi. 31); for the former have a character to maintain which the outcasts have not, and, alas! it leads them to be untruthful in the presence of Him who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, and who has declared of man's heart that every imagination thereof "is only evil, and that continually." To such we say, in the words of our Lord, "Except ye repent she shall all likewise perish."

One word as to faith, or believing, ere we close. Faith in Jesus means trust in Him. The King of Jericho trembled, but Rahab trusted. Speaking of Jesus, the Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesian believers (chap. i. 13), "In whom ye also trusted." "Blessed are *all* they who put their trust in Him" (Psalm ii. 12).

W. N. T.

"REPAIRING THE BREACH."

While walking along a quiet country road, I observed an old, grey-headed man, whom I knew to be a Christian, busily repairing the breach in a stone wall, part of which had fallen down. Going up to him, I said, "God never repairs man's ruin." He replied, "Yes, we must have a new standing before God—we must be new creatures in Christ Jesus." Dear reader, are you trying to "repair the breach" between your soul and God? Have you still some thought of

working out a fitness for His presence, or building up a wall of your *own righteousness*, instead of "submitting to *the righteousness of God*" (Romans x. 3)? Is it so? Then, believe me, this is one of Satan's best devices to keep you away from God, and to make the cross of Christ of none effect (1 Cor. i. 17-18). The Apostle Paul gloried in the cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 14), for, there, all that he was as a man in the flesh was judged, and all his righteousness proved filthy rags (Isaiah lxiv. 6).

In the cross, dear soul, thy ruin is proved; for think you that God would have given up His well-beloved Son to be the sin-bearer, and, as such, to have Jehovah's face hidden from Him, if in any other way a righteousness could have been provided for us, which the holiness of God demands? Oh, no; our ruin is complete—the breach is irreparable; the gulf between God and the sinner cannot be spanned save by the death of Christ, and "If *righteousness* come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. ii. 23). Blessed Lord Jesus, *Thou* hast spanned the gulf; Thou hast stood in the breach by dying the *Just one* for the *unjust*, to bring us to God; and "as the Scripture hath concluded all *under sin*" (Gal. iii. 22), and *all* the world has become *guilty* before God (Rom. iii. 19), so Jesus, "the Lamb, without blemish and without spot," the sinless One, has been *made sin* for us, that we might be made the *righteousness of God in Him* (2 Cor. v. 21).

Clearly then the old man was right when he said, "We must have a *new standing* before God;"

and this, not by His repairing man's ruin, nor by seeking anything good in you or me; but by judging sin and setting us aside in the cross of Jesus, who "was made sin for us;" and giving us a new place *in* Christ according to Ephesians ii. 4, 10. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were *dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ* (by grace ye are saved); and *hath raised us up together*, and *made us sit together in heavenly* places *in Christ Jesus.*" . . . "we are *his* workmanship, *created* in Christ unto good works."

Dear reader, cease thy doings; try no longer to repair the breach; submit *now* to the righteousness of God," learn that thou hast been condemned, and that the judgment has already been executed. Take thy stand on that eternally finished work; believe it was *all* for thee, and, as my old friend said, "We must be *new creatures* in Christ Jesus" (2 Cor. v. 17). So believing, God sees thee *in Christ*, where "there is *no condemnation*" (Rom. viii. 1), where *old things* are passed away, and *all things* are become new; yea, where "*all things* are *of God.*"

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before—
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus
There exhausted *all* their power.

"First fruits" of the resurrection,
He is risen from the tomb;
Now I stand in *new creation*,
Free, because beyond my doom."

T. E. T.

A WOMAN WHICH WAS A SINNER.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 JOHN i. 7.

The writer of the following little narrative wishes to record one more instance of the *power* of the blood of Christ, and that there is *no limit* to its saving efficacy. "*Clean every whit*" is the full effect of being washed in it, and this efficacy extends to the *vilest*, the most abandoned of the human race. The Lord, the Spirit, convinces of sin, and leads the soul to Jesus, *when and where He pleases.*

Meeting, at the house of a Christian friend, a lady who had visited the city gaol, I felt anxious to go myself to see the female prisoners. Having obtained the Governor's permission, I went one afternoon for that purpose. It was a lovely day. All was smiling and gay without the walls of the old grey building. The matron received me gladly, for she had the spiritual welfare of the inmates at heart. Taking down from a nail a very large key, she desired me to follow her, which I did, through massive doorways and long, dark passages; presently we came to a large door, which she unlocked and threw open. We were in the presence of 15 women; some, convicts suffering the sentence of the law; others, awaiting their trial. The matron beckoned to them to assemble in an inner room, where some benches were placed; but she said, "You cannot now speak to them at any length, they are just going to tea."

I lifted up my heart to ask the Lord to give me a word for these poor creatures. I can never forget them—such worn, *hard* faces, with such a premature *old* look, telling a tale indeed of sin and misery; and one poor woman particularly arrested my attention, standing apart, the very picture of suffering, her thin, bony hands clasped on her bosom, which was covered with a warm plaid shawl. She had a terrible cough, and the hectic flush on her cheek told too plainly her malady. I said to them, "My dear friends, I want to tell you that there is a *way* by which *you* can reach heaven; and what a change from this sad place to that blessed abode! I will tell you *how* you may find entrance there—through the blood of Christ! Yes, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin;' the lost, the wretched, the miserable, the vilest, 'it *cleanseth* from *all sin*.' It is not a question of the *blackness* or *umber* of our sins, but a question of *washing* and being cleansed, and that, when *once* washed, the soul is *fit* for heaven, fit for the *presence* of God Himself."

At these words, the poor woman before named gave a shrill shriek of agony which startled us all. She said, "Oh! I can never go to heaven; I am an adulteress, a lost sinner; I can never go to heaven! I'm everything that's bad!" and the tears rolled down her cheeks, while she writhed in agony. All eyes were upon her, and the matron, seeing the other women look disturbed, said, "Perhaps, ma'am, you had better come and see her alone some other day."

I lingered awhile to reassure her, and repeated very slowly, "'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' Will you believe in it and *trust* it? *there is no limit to the power of the blood.*" Poor Poll Ann — for this was her name—quite glared at me, and, with a voice raised to a most unnatural pitch, said, "It's not for me, not for me!" Most reluctantly I left her, and heard that key locking me out and her in. I left with a sad heart, yet not without hope that the Lord had a purpose of love in all this.

A short time after, I went to the prison again, found that Poll Ann had grown rapidly worse, and was in bed. One of the prisoners showed me up a flight of stone steps to her bedroom, and there she was, upon the hard gaol bed, very pale, but with a countenance more composed but still much distressed. She had wept, and wept, and wept; mocked and slandered by those around her; but now there was a calm. She gladly welcomed me, and wished to hear again about the blood of Christ, and earnestly listened to the word of God. But all seemed dark. "No heaven for me! *my sins* are *too black!*" The agony she felt on account of sin is beyond description, and it was quite plain that God's Holy Spirit was working mightily in her, "convincing of sin." Yes; this is His first lesson. He convinces of sin; He makes the sinner feel "I'm undone, ruined, lost, hell-deserving." Poor sinner! if you feel and know this to be your state, if you hate your sin, take courage; there is hope, there is

life—*not* in *yourself*, but *in another*, in Jesus and in His blood. Doubt not for a moment the cleansing power of His blood, so freely shed for *you*. Hear His voice, "Come unto me;" hear His cry, "*It is finished!*" and never doubt His love or His power. There is *no limit* to the power of the blood.

The next time I saw Poll Ann she was quite a changed woman, peace and joy in the Lord lighted up her still beautiful countenance. Yes, the Comforter had been with her, and she was enabled to rejoice in the Lord. She held out her hand when I entered the room and smiled, saying, "How many kind friends God has given to me, how wonderful that He should love and care for ME!" She pointed, with a smile, to a book of hymns which was near her bed, and said, "I have been learning this hymn. Oh! how it tells my case!

'I was a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
I would not be controlled.'"

I ashed her *how* or by what means she was first led to feel her sinful state? She said, "*I cannot tell how—it came over me like* soon after my sentence (six months' imprisonment, for theft), and I used to weep about my sins until my heart would almost break. My fellow-prisoners laughed at me, and said, 'Ah! you are crying because you have such a long time to remain here.' But oh! no, ma'am," she said; "my sins made me weep. *Oh! what a vile sinner I am!* Ah! ma'am, if you knew what a sinner I

have been! If there was a worse oath uttered or a worse deed than usual done in this town, it was often said, 'Ah! that's Poll Ann,' and I gloried in my shame!"

On reading to her the chapter in the Acts which speaks of Paul and Silas singing praises to God in the prison, and showing the difference between the Lord's prisoners and those who are led captive by Satan at his will, I said, "Satan's chains are cruel ones, but the Lord's chains are chains of"—"of love, ma'am," said Poll Ann, before I could finish the sentence. "Oh, yes, I do believe that the Lord Jesus has saved *me*, and I can say now I have no doubt!" I said, "It may please the Lord to raise you up again and restore you to health." "Ah, ma'am, I want health, but it's spiritual health I want." She was very anxious that those around her should love Jesus, and some of the convicts who were allowed to wait upon her seemed much affected with her love towards them. She never complained of suffering in the body, though it was but too evident how much she did suffer from her poor, emaciated frame, shaken continually by the constant cough, want of rest, and real discomfort she must have experienced from the hard bed. Everything to her seemed a *mercy*. She said, "The nights do not seem long, I spend them in prayer." The last time I saw her she caught hold of my hand, and said emphatically, "God bless you, ma'am, for ever coming to see me. I have no doubt, no doubt, I believe that the Lord will take me to His heavenly kingdom. He has washed my sins away in His own blood."

A season of illness prevented my seeing the poor woman again, but, upon inquiry, I always heard the same testimony. Poor Poll Ann was rapidly sinking, but her faith was strong, and her love and joy abounding; truly, she loved much, for she had been forgiven much.

Calling one morning to ask for her, the matron said, "Oh, ma'am, she is dying, she cannot live long." Soon after she entered into rest; her last words were, "Blessed Jesus, come!" I heard afterwards from a friend, who lived near the gaol, that she saw the convict's funeral, the common gaol coffin, borne along at a quick pace by two men, to the silent grave, where the body will remain until the "trumpet sounds," which shall wake the *righteous* dead to "be *ever with* the Lord!"

Yes, the once wicked, vile Poll Ann was washed in the blood of Jesus; and she is now waiting with Jesus in the Paradise of God. Do you doubt this, poor sinner? Doubt not, for "Salvation is of the Lord;" and, black and vile though you may be, and *are* by nature, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin," and, truly, *there is no limit to the power of that blood.* "Wash you, make you clean."

"It is the Blood, it is the Blood,
Which has atonement made;
It is the Blood which, *once* for all,
Our ransom price has paid.

"'I see the Blood, I see the Blood,'
A voice from heaven cries;
The soul that owns this token true,
And *trusts* it, *never dies.*"

C. S. M.

LOVE'S REMEMBRANCE

Can I forget the love that left
The loftiest seat for me,
That came so far, and bowed to bear
My doom of agony?

Can I forget the love that still
Sustains my pilgrim way,
That pours His comforts o'er my soul
And feeds from day to day?

Who bore His manhood to the throne,
And 'mid the glory there,
Whose eye is fondly fix'd on me,
Till I that glory share.

O Love divine! those wounds of Thine,
The scars upon Thy brow,
Shall speak for ever to my heart,
While captive there I bow.

O grant that while I wander through
This wilderness of sand,
My spirit free afar with Thee
May dwell in Love's own land.

But come Thou precious, peerless one,
And let me gaze on Thee,
And let me sing while heaven shall ring,
Thy love eternally.

W. S. H.

GOD JUSTIFIED, AND THE SINNER SAVED.

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptised with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised of him. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! But wisdom is justified of all her children. And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven;

for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, THY FAITH HATH SAVED THEE; GO IN PEACE."—LUKE vii. 29—50.

It is an immense point gained when the soul gets a distinct sense on the one hand of what its own case is, and on the other hand of what the true grace of God is. This scripture most beautifully enunciates and illustrates both the one and the other. I have from the lips of the Lord the true state of man, viz., complete ruin, and the woman illustrates it. She was a sinner, and she knew it; but there was a Saviour there, and she knew that too. This scripture brings out two classes of sinners; those who, like Simon, do not care about Christ, and those who do; and you, my dear reader, are either in one or the other class. I do not know which class you are in, but I know where I am; I have learnt the value of Christ.

The Lord had been bringing out some very salt truths before He went into the Pharisee's house, truths that concern you as much as they concerned those who heard them then. You say, But we do not belong to that generation. Stop; the generation that the Lord spoke of is a generation that is going on now, a generation which has been going on, I might say, ever since the moment that Adam and his wife stepped out of the garden of Eden, a generation that cares nothing about God. "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you and ye have

not wept"—the very antipodes of human feeling, joy and sorrow. Both had been tried, and both failed. What does the Lord mean by this? That they rejected alike both righteousness and grace, both John's teaching and His own.

John, coming in the way of righteousness, told them of their ruined state and of coming judgment, preached repentance, and baptised them *confessing* their sins. The Pharisees and lawyers would not have it, for there were some in John's day, and there are plenty in ours, who will not own they are lost. Still John's was a powerful preaching, and numbers came out to this messenger of God, took their real and true ground, that of repentant, self-judged sinners, so John baptised them, telling them of another who was coming to take away the sin of the world, and who could preach forgiveness to them.

"And all the people and the publicans that heard him justified God." Elsewhere, scripture tells us how God justifies a sinner, but here we are told how a sinner justifies God. How can I justify God, says a soul? By taking God's part against yourself, by bowing down thoroughly under the judgment God passes on your state as a sinner, and honestly confessing it. David is justifying God when he says, "I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me; against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" (Ps. li. 3, 4). Look at that man, really deeply repentant, broken-down, and self-judged in

the presence of God, "against thee, thee only, have I sinned." He had forgotten Nathan then, he had forgotten Bathsheba, he had forgotten Uriah, and was then just a broken-down, repentant man, owning his guilt before God. What does he do? He justifies God. But, you say, he is condemning himself. Yes, he is condemning himself. Friend, have you ever got into the presence of God in this fashion? The soul that justifies God ever condemns itself. If I blacken myself ever so, it is all true, all correct; and O! unsaved soul, when God begins to deal with you about your sins at the day of judgment, that awful, terrible day, when you must stand in the presence of God, and when all your sins, every one of them, shall stand out before your own gaze as clearly as they stand out to the eye of God, when you shall see the long catalogue of them, and when you shall hear those fearful words "*Depart from me, depart from me,*" what will you feel, what will you say then? Will you go down into the pit saying, He is a cruel God, He is an unjust God! No, no! Oh, lost soul, you will justify God then, you will say then, It is all true, it is all just. Ah, yes, but will you not rather go down on your knees and justify God now? Condemn yourself and justify God, just where you now read this.

"But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves." Have you not done just the same? Have not you been aroused, while listening to the gospel, to see your own sins before you, and you have trembled? The keen eye of the preacher has seemed to be

fixed on you all the time, and the word brought home to your conscience has made the whole history and sins of your life come before you till you have said within yourself, Who told that man all about me, who told him my history? he only spoke to me. And yet you have left that preaching and gone out into the world again, and the whirl of gaiety and pleasure or of business has swamped you, and you have remembered no more, and you have gone on till this moment still unsaved, still without Christ, having rejected the counsel of God. Tell me, will you reject it any longer?

What is the counsel of God? That you should bow to Jesus now, judge yourself and justify God where you are.

The testimony of John was little liked, but soon he is followed by another, the gracious, loving Saviour, and what does man say? Here is the one we can welcome, the one suited to us, the one we can accept and follow? No, no; not at all. Man's judgment is, *John*, thou hast a devil; *Jesus*, Thou art a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber! John came in the way of righteousness and they said he had a devil, Jesus came in the way of wondrous grace, and they said, "Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." The foulest lie that ever came out of man's mouth was to call Him a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, but there never came a truer word than this, "a friend of publicans and sinners." Glorious Jesus! precious Saviour! it is true indeed of Thee; Thou art a friend of publicans

and sinners. What a Friend! Do you like to hear about this Friend? Is He your Friend? People are glad to hear about their friends, you get at their hearts directly if you can tell them something about their friends.

A short time ago I was travelling on a Scottish Railway, and there was in the carriage with me a fine, bright-eyed boy, on his way home from school. Putting his head half out of the carriage window the wind caught his Scotch bonnet, and he would have lost it if I had not promptly seized it. He thanked me as I restored it to him, and we got into conversation. Presently I said to him, "Robert (he had told me his name), Robert, I know a friend of yours." "Know a friend of mine, do you really? I never saw you before." "Yes, I know a friend of yours." "Who can it be?" he said. "How is it that you know a friend of mine?" and his whole face brightened up with expectation. He guessed some half dozen names and then he gave it up. "Shall I tell you," I said, and he was all attention, expecting to hear the name of some school-fellow or play-mate. "Jesus," I said, "Jesus;" and his face fell. Alas! the dear boy's heart was just like yours, a stranger to Jesus, and he had no interest in Him.

Has He not shown himself your Friend? Why, He shed His precious blood that your soul might be cleansed, look what He has done, what He has gone through to show Himself friendly. He has died to show Himself thy Friend, and thou hast given Him no kiss, broken no ointment

over His head; the only real, true Friend, the best Friend thou hast ever had, thou hast done nothing but neglect Him. Will you not turn round to this Friend? will you, can you, neglect Him any longer? His love will put aside all the past neglect, remember it no more. The love of Jesus has risen higher than any other love. The tide of human affection may rise so high, at moments, that it covers the tablet of memory, on which are engraved the wrongs you have committed; but that tide recedes, and when it recedes, the tablet is left uncovered, and there they stand out engraven as plainly as ever. But His love is no tide advancing and receding, but a deep ocean which covers our sins in its depths for ever, so that they are no more seen, never uncovered. What a Friend! The Friend of sinners? Yes, oh, yes! Hear it, oh heavens, and listen, oh earth, and let hell resound with it too!

He is the Friend of the worst of sinners, He is my Friend, a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Have I a brother who would die for me? I do not know his name. But I have a Friend who *has* died for me, a Friend who has suffered everything for me, given everything for me, given Himself. Oh, will you not now turn round to this Friend, will you not say, "I see how disgraceful my conduct has been, I have never loved Jesus, never served Jesus, never thought about Jesus; I have lived all this time and never a pulse of my heart has beaten for Jesus, but now I see it all, I see my own base ingratitude; I condemn myself, I justify Him, and now, oh, tell me, will He have me?

Will Jesus have me? I have neglected Him so long, will He have me now?" Try Him, I say, put Him to the test, see if He will have you; did He ever send one away? Never.

Here is a counterpart of your own case, anxious soul, in this woman. Here is a sinner just like you. "When she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house." Ah, but, you say, Jesus does not sit at meat in the Pharisee's house now. No, it is true, He has been cast out of the Pharisee's house, but where has He gone? Into the Father's house, that's all, and though there was a frown on the Pharisee's face when he saw that woman enter, because she was a sinner, do you think there is a frown on the Father's face, when He sees the sinner entering? are there frowns in the Father's house? No, no! Luke gives us the answer, "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Joy, only joy, there. Shall heaven find its joy to-day over your soul? You, who till now have cared neither for God in rightcousness nor for God in grace, will your heart turn to this gracious Saviour? But, you say, she, this woman, brought a box of ointment; I have none. Never mind, come without it. Do you think the box of ointment opened the way to His heart? No, no! it isn't the ointment that moves His heart, it is a sinner coming to a Saviour; she comes up quietly, unseen, behind the eastern couch. I must get to Him, she says, I must have Jesus, oh, I must have Jesus; there she stands weeping. Does He rebuke her? Not a word. Did ever you shed one tear at the feet of Jesus? has ever

one tear fallen from your eyes at His blessed feet? No? You have never come to Him, never wept at His feet; but she stands and she weeps, and He does not rebuke her. I doubt not, every one around looked on in astonishment at the sight; but is there not a more wonderful sight still, when the Son of God shed His blood, to wash away sin from our souls?

And now she comes nearer, she stoops and begins to wash His feet and to wipe them with the hairs of her head. She uses what God gave her as a covering and glory, all for Him; uses it as a napkin to wipe His feet, and now she begins to grow bold, she kisses them; and He receives the kiss, He loves the boldness that trusts Him. Oh, she says, He is not going to spurn me, to send me away. No; He lets her do as she pleases, He receives it all, and, oh sinner, you may come and weep at His feet now, though you cannot wipe them nor bring an alabaster box. He will receive you. And why? Because He so wants to have you, wants you to trust Him, there is nothing so delights His heart as for you to trust Him, He loves to be trusted, and you know there is nothing that so pains the heart as to be distrusted.

"This man," said Simon in his heart, "if he were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner." Ah, Simon, a prophet do you say? He is a Saviour, a *Saviour*. He knows well that she is a sinner, but He is going to save her. A sinner and a Saviour are the very persons to meet; and now He shows He is

a prophet by revealing what is in Simon's heart. "A certain man had two debtors," &c. And now, my reader, I ask you, do you think you can meet the claims of God? can you meet even one of them? You cannot! You ought to have loved Him with all your heart, and you have not, and I have not; and you have broken the law in heaps of ways besides. You are deeply in debt to God, and He is going to settle this question with you, and soon too. Can you pay Him? Ah, get into His presence now; do not wait for that day, tell Him you have nothing to pay. "Nothing to pay." Suppose you and me to be these two debtors, will you take the five hundred, or the fifty? I do not know your sins, but I know my own. I will take the five hundred, and you the fifty. Can you pay? Can I? No! not a single thing. What, nothing? No, nothing! "And when they had nothing to pay he *frankly* forgave them *both*." That is the style of God's forgiveness, He frankly forgives. Are you sure all your sins are forgiven? you say. *Quite sure;* why, it is the only thing I am sure about. I am not sure of life, even for a day, but I am quite sure of this, for I have God's word for it, and *frankly* forgiven is His word. He does not raise the question of how much we owe, but do you take the ground of having nothing to pay, then He frankly forgives. I love that word frankly, it tells out the heart of God.

"Seest thou this woman? thou gavest me no water, no kiss, no ointment." It was but common courtesy to any ordinary guest in an eastern country to give water for the removal of

dust from the feet; they only wore sandals, and the foot was exposed to all the dust of the road, it was outrageous neglect not to provide water to refresh and cleanse: then the kiss spoke of friendship, and there was the ointment for the head. Christ lacked all in the Pharisee's house, and He has lacked all in your heart up till now, but shall He not have all from you henceforth?

The Lord now justifies the woman in the face of Simon: saying, "her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much." But what about the woman? He does not say to her, because she loved much she was forgiven. No, but simply "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN." The first word He says to the woman is the first word He always says to an anxious soul, "Thy sins are forgiven." Do you say, I want Christ? Do you trust Him? I ask. Yes, I can trust Him. I have never trusted Him before, but now I must confide in Him, I must trust Him. I hate and abhor myself for what I have been, for how I have forgotten Him and neglected Him; I condemn myself, I justify Him. He replies, "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN." "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" they begin to say, and to wonder can any one but God forgive sins? But it was God, God really, though a man in lovely and lowly grace.

Well, the woman trusted Him, and He adds, "Thy faith hath saved thee." "*Thy sins are forgiven*," that was the first word." "*Thy faith hath saved thee*," that was the second. Her cup is full to the brim, she must go home and drink it, so lastly, Jesus says, "*Go in peace.*"

Do you think, as she left that house, she had

any doubt as to whether she was forgiven? Oh, no. From His lips the blessed words, "Thy sins are forgiven" had fallen. That was enough for her. Did any ask her, as she went away that day, How do you know you are forgiven? Oh, He has told me, she says, and He did not forgive me because I was worthy, but out of the grace of His heart.

Yes, He forgives *frankly*. I know very well that I do not deserve it, that I only deserve to stand at the bar of judgment and to hear from His lips, "depart!" but when I look in His face I see the love of His heart, I see He wants me; He wants me, and I want Him! I must have Him. There are no sins left unforgiven when He says, "Thy sins are forgiven," for He knows them all, and is not this a ground for assurance? You tell me not to be too sure, and to go softly, and not to be too certain, for He will think it presumption. Is it presumption to believe Him? I ask. Would it not be presumption to doubt His word, and when He says "Thy sins are forgiven" not to believe Him? People say, Is it not necessary to feel something very great, must I not feel some extraordinary joy? No; it has nothing to do with feeling, but simply the soul turns to Him, and trusts Him, believes Him, rests on no feeling, no ecstatic joy, but on the word of the Saviour, "Thy sins are forgiven." Did the woman entreat Him to forgive her? No. Did she pray to Him to forgive her? No, she only came to Him with her sorrow and her sin, and trusted Him, and do you think she would have answered as she left the house that day, "I *hope* my sins are

forgiven?" No; she was *sure* of it. Numbers would say, if asked, Do you know your sins are forgiven you? I hope so. Do you only hope so? Why do you give the Lord Jesus such a bad character? How, a bad character? you ask. Oh, because you say you trust Him, and He does not answer your trust, does not give you assurance. Does the woman doubt it? No; we never even hear her voice, and I think that's beautiful. The Devil does not like a soul to know what joy and forgiveness are, and consequently he will raise a hubbub, but what matter? May you, dear reader, have this assurance—the Lord has nothing against me, my sins are forgiven, for the *past* my sins ARE FORGIVEN, for the *present* I HAVE PEACE with Him, and for the *future* I know that there is a day of wrath coming, but I AM SAVED from wrath through Him, and shall be in glory with Him. Oh, glorious gospel! Precious Saviour! May your heart know Him fully! W. T. P. W.

"JESUS SAVE ME, MASSA."

Many years ago, a missionary was proclaiming to the benighted inhabitants of the city of Benares the message of peace and salvation through the blood of Jesus. He took for his text, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved."

In earnest, loving tones he told them that there was One above greater than their idols,

One who had done more for them than these images of wood and stone could ever do—One who loved them better, far better, than their best or dearest friends—One whose love knew no distinction of age or sex: the black man or the white, the man of high caste or of low caste were all alike to Him, His loving arms were open and ready to enfold them all. He who loved them so much had left His bright and beautiful home above to give them proof of His love, and had died to save them that they might live with Him for ever.

During the discourse, an aged man, of darker skin than those around, was seen to enter the building and stand near the door, as if afraid to approach. The words of love and inspiration met his ear, probably for the first time; eagerly, anxiously, he listened to the preacher, as though he feared to lose a word, and so intent was he that soon his fear was forgotten, and he went a little nearer. A seat was offered him, which he accepted. His attention to the message of salvation now became so absorbing that he was soon noticed to stand up, and afterwards to climb upon the bench, as if to stand nearer to the man of God; and in this posture, with face upturned and hands clasped, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "Jesus save *me*, massa, Jesus save me!"

Reader, do you know anything of this Jesus? Can you say He has saved *you?* It is not enough to call Him our Saviour, and speak of Him in general terms as the Redeemer; each one of you must say for himself "He died for *me*," as though there were not another being in the

universe whose sins had crucified Him, or who needed to be saved. If you are still unsaved, what is it you are trusting to? some fancied goodness of your own, that will win you God's favour? Listen to His word; "All your righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Are *they* worth having? No. Remember that there is none other name under heaven, but that of "Jesus only" that can take away your sins. Come *now*, and make trial of His love; in pitying compassion He is pleading with you, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else."

He is ready and willing to receive you just as you are, you need not wait till you fancy you are good enough, till you can purchase His love. Come, "without money and without price." His love is free, it is unmerited and undeserved. All He asks from you is, "*only believe.*" Believe His love, believe His power. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." S. J. B.

A PRAYER FROM HELL.

"And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame."—Luke xvi. 24.

Of the earthly history of the "certain rich man" of whom these words are spoken but four circumstances are related. First, that he was clothed in purple and fine linen; secondly, that he fared

sumptuously every day; thirdly that he died; and, fourthly, that he was buried. And there the curtain drops.

But the Lord takes us behind the scenes to witness the events after the burial. The rich man sinks from the lap of luxury into the lake of fire. We read, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom;" and then follows the prayer cited above.

How rapid the steps—in life, in death, in the grave, in hell, in flame, and in torment! Reader, let us pause as we contemplate the fearful descent of this once rich man. He falls from wealth to poverty, from honour to shame, from ease to torment, from the enjoyment of earthly privilege to the heavy chains of unending remorse and pain. And in the midst of his suffering he lifts up his eyes to see—what? Abraham *afar off*. Yes, far distant from his place of torment, far removed from his sphere of eternal woe, and Lazarus in his bosom, having received consolation from all his earthly sufferings and want. To Abraham he, therefore, cries, and says, "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue." A small demand indeed; but he knows that his time of privilege and opportunity is gone—he can expect no more the exercise of grace or pity. He feels that mercy can no longer warrant "large petitions." His prayer is regulated, not by a sense of hope, but by one of need—it is circumscribed by his circumstances. He does not say, "Send Gabriel," but "Send Lazarus." He does not

say, "with a pitcher of water, that he may slake my thirst," but "that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue." He craves one meagre drop of water, that his tongue may be cooled. That is all. In hell there is thirst, but no water, as one has said. There no gushing fountain of the water of life rolls its copious tide. No chalice of faith can be filled from its life-giving flood; nay, one drop can never be tasted. No mitigation, no alleviation, no relief, no ray of hope can ever shine in that dreary region of eternal gloom, nothing to break the merciless reverberating of the response of Abraham in answer, to his prayer: "Son, *remember!*" Oh! the agony of the retrospect of mercies abused, resolutions broken, intentions unfulfilled, privileges neglected, opportunities avoided! Memory is master of the scene, acting in terrible exactitude, and recalling each mercy, each privilege, each call, each warning, each invitation, and, alas! that the ear was wilfully deaf to all. Oh! *that* memory! "Son, *remember*," said Abraham.

"Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my counsel and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you; *then* shall they call upon me but *I will not answer*, they shall seek me early but they shall not find me" (Prov. i. 24, 28).

Unpardoned Reader, thou art now in the place of privilege. The water of life is now to be had. Say, Dost thou thirst? Hearken, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life *freely*" (Rev. xxii. 17). Oh, drink of that sweet water and let thy thirst be slaked for ever. "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst," said the blessed Lord Jesus (John iv. 14). Fail to do so, and I forewarn thee that the day will come when thou, like the "certain rich man," shalt lift up thine eyes in torment, and hopelessly cry for one drop of water when, alas, thy tears and thy prayers will all prove unavailing, for prayers from hell pass by unanswered.

J. W. S.

THE GROUND OF PEACE—THE WORK OF JESUS AND THE WORD OF GOD.

What is the ground of peace with God? What are those divine and imperishable foundations on which faith may rest and be at peace? I answer, unhesitatingly, the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, and the word of God. Can foundations like these shake? Now, dear friend, I at once turn you to the cross, to the death of Jesus. Here I must remark that the ground on which I can have a full, frank, and eternal settlement of sin has been divinely laid. It is God's work. It is finished! God is not doing the work by the Holy Ghost; neither is He doing it by His beloved Son. It is done. It is quite true the Holy Ghost produces in me a

sense of sin, brings before me the reality of my condition as a lost sinner; but this conviction of my state, anyone may see, cannot be a righteous ground for the removal of my sin. It is also true that Christ loves "His own," that He is *presently* maintaining them in righteousness and practical cleanness before God; but this present grace cannot be the foundation of their justification from "all things," for it is a saved and justified people whom He thus cares for. The ground, then, of peace is the death of Jesus. On this, Scripture is most conclusive. "*He hath made him sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*" (2 Cor. v.); "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree*" (1 Peter ii. 24); "*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood*" (Rom. iii. 24, 25); "*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*" (Heb. ix. 26, 28).

Now, in order to settled peace, I need three things—1. The *willingness* of God in perfect love to deal with my sins and put them away. 2. That *the work* by which this can alone be accomplished *be done.* 3. The *knowledge* that all I have done, and all *I* am, has been righteously judged and set aside; this I get by the Holy Ghost's *witness.* God in perfect love gave Jesus for my sins; He spared Him not; He willed my salvation; He willed my sins

away (Heb. x. 7-10). I do not consider that the words of the well-known hymn express the truth—

"*I lay* my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God."

No, "*The Lord hath laid* on him the iniquities of us all" (Isaiah liii. 6). The truth is,

God laid my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He took them *all*, and freed me
From the accursed load.

Jesus stood for me on the cross. He answered to God for all the sins I had committed. The judgment due to them and to me—the guilty sinner—was borne by Him. The stripes which were laid upon Him were deserved by me. He met the full penalty of my sins. He drank the bitter cup; the dregs of that terrible cup He took, that salvation full and free might be mine.

Oh! it is done. It is finished. Jesus said, "*I have finished the work* which thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). On the cross He said, "It is finished" (John xix. 30). Either your sins, and their judgment, too, were borne by Jesus, or they never can be put away. "This man, *after* He had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever *sat down* on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 12). Are you looking for the putting away of your sins in the *future?* It cannot be done, or else Jesus will have to die again; but no, His ONE sacrifice has purged the sins of all who believe, and the proof is here. *He sat down.* On the cross He stood before God for me, my sins being *on* Him; now He appears before God in heaven for me, *because* the sins are all gone. His work of

putting away sin is *done*, that is why He is crowned in heaven, *without* my sins. When does a man sit down? Is it not when his work is done? So He, when "He had by himself purged our sins, *sat down* at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). "For by *one offering* he hath perfected *for ever* them that are sanctified, *whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us" (Heb. x. 14, 15).

Of what is the Holy Ghost a witness? Of the present and eternal efficacy of Christ's precious blood—of the value of His "one offering" in perfecting the sanctified—of God's forgetfulness of the believer's sins and iniquities—of the remission of sins—and, lastly, that there is "*no more offering for sin.*" Jesus will *never* die again, He will *never* again offer Himself *for* sin—this He did, and of it the Holy Ghost is the *witness.* God did not put away sin by the Holy Ghost: Christ was the *doer* of this mighty work; the Holy Ghost come down since Jesus went up to heaven witnesses to its being *done.* Jesus was abandoned *on* the cross that God might take towards you the title and character of a Saviour-God. Perfect love was there expressed, while holiness and righteousness were maintained, and the glory of God secured by that "one sacrifice," such its wondrous efficacy. All my sin has come fully out; all has been dealt with and judged according to the glory of God; nothing has been compromised. The work was done by One who, in His own person, gave to the throne of God all its demands—the Son of God meeting and sustaining the dignities and rights and glories of God;

but it was also undertaken and *finished* by Jesus, the Son of Man, thus meeting in human nature the deep necessities of the sinner. The veil is rent. God rent it from "the top to the bottom;" thus I know my sins are all gone, for that rent veil is a silent but eloquent witness that the work *is done*, and that heaven is *open* to me a sinner. I can pass through the rent veil *a worshipper*, and stand before God in the value of the blood of Jesus. Could I pass into *His presence* with my sins? Nay, that were impossible! Then I know they are *all* gone—passed away for ever, and I am clean in God's sight—fit for Him. Does not that rent veil, therefore, as a witness from God, assure me of His finished work? How could I stand before Him and meet His gaze unless the sins I had done, and the nature, too, which produced them, had been swept clean out of His sight, according to the claims of His glory and righteousness?

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was the most sorrowful cry creation ever heard. It was a *truthful* cry. He was abandoned by God, cast off, *made* sin. Now all is changed. All is brightness and light and glory *above*, for He is there; sins, therefore, *must* be gone. Think you heaven would be His dwelling, or God's throne be filled by One on whom a stain or trace of sin were found?

God raised Him up from the dead. Those laid aside "linen clothes and napkin" tell of Satan, hell, and death completely defeated. Come, see this mighty work of love. The tomb is empty. Jesus has been raised by the *glory*

of the Father; thus the value of His atoning work has been declared. His resurrection tells of His triumph *over* my sin and sins. His cross tells of the judgment executed *upon* them. Oh, the wounding, bruising, tormenting, and chastisement were on the cross endured by Him, but deserved by me; now resurrection, life, light, and glory are *His;* and the fruit to *me*, *peace*, PEACE, only PEACE. God's pleasure in the work of the cross and in the present and eternal efficacy of Christ's blood has been triumphantly declared. His awful cry of desertion because sins were laid upon Him, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" has been answered by God raising Him from the dead and taking Him to glory because the sins had been all borne away. The work is finished and Jesus is risen.

The ordinance of the Passover in Egypt finely illustrates the power and value of the blood of the Lamb in meeting the claims of God in righteousness. God came down to deliver His own people, but He does so in perfect consistency with Himself. The claims of holiness, righteousness, and love are all answered on that awful night of judgment which *morally* closed Egypt's history. The hour of *its* judgment was *fixed;* like Egypt of old this world is under judgment and the hour of its terrible doom *fixed:* a serious thought to the poor worldling! The nine previous judgments had fallen upon Egypt and her people; but now God is about to raise a more serious question than the deliverance of His people. Man's sin and God's righteousness were the great questions of that day,

even as they are of this day. All are to stand before God on one common ground. All in Egypt are sinners, and *death* is the terrible necessity of righteousness. God is holy, sin cannot therefore be slurred over, or lightly treated. God is righteous, sin must be punished. God is love, He provides a substitute for His guilty people and they go *free*. God cannot compromise His claims, or abate His demand in any wise. If any are to be saved, *another must die*. God provides the remedy. He furnishes the answer to His *own* judgment. He provides the Lamb which was to be *without blemish*, a *male* of the *first* year. (Exodus xii. 2.) God's Lamb was absolutely holy in His life and nature; was also cut off in the midst of His days; on the cross He cried with a *loud voice*. This as to the Lamb; now as to its blood, and its use and application; "They shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, and THE BLOOD SHALL BE TO YOU FOR A TOKEN upon the houses where ye are. And WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD I WILL PASS OVER YOU, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt."

Surely all this has a solemn voice to you, beloved reader. It was not enough merely to *know* that the lamb had been killed, that was done by the whole congregation (verse 6), but in order to escape the judgment its blood was to be *individually* applied. Have you made use of the blood? It is efficacious to cleanse the foulest stain, but it must be used. Are you then

sheltered by it? Is the blood of the Lamb your security from judgment? Many talk *about* the cross, *about* Christ, *about* what He did, *about* His love, and *about* His death; but, alas! all this is very different from a *personal* application of His cross to *me, a sinner.*

"The blood shall be to you for a token," a token of what? of immunity from judgment, of sure and certain escape from the "wrath to come." Have *you* this token? Are you trying to find one in your tears, feelings, faith, or ought else? God's token of safety to the Hebrews was THE BLOOD of the slain lamb. What is yours? Is it the precious blood of His own dear Son? God says "*when I see the blood I will pass over you.*" This is a vital point as to the soul's peace. The delivering word for thousands is "when I see THE BLOOD I will pass over you," it is this, because it is the voice of God. Oh, what rest to the heart; what peace to the conscience! God in saving *me* has respect to His own work. He sees the blood, He has estimated that blood at its *value;* its eternal and infinite efficacy is ever before Him; the Lamb, *as* it had been *slain*, is in glory. The Lamb was carried into heaven, and before God is the memorial of His finished work. His once wounded hands and feet and pierced side declare the unfailing efficacy of His precious blood. Now I am called upon to know and believe that God sees the blood, and according to His estimate of its worth I am blessed. God put His Son in Glory; this was His answer to the work of the cross; now as the fruit of *that* I too get glory with Him.

Another point; the blood was sprinkled *outside* their houses, an important truth for those who are looking *in*. *Inside* the blood-sprinkled dwellings all was peace; the people were calmly feasting on the flesh of the slain lamb, but their security was founded upon the blood being sprinkled *outside*. The act of blood-shedding and its application to their households had not the slightest reference to their *inward state*. They might have felt, wept, prayed, experienced, and realised as much as you choose, but that had nothing to do with the sprinkling of the blood *outside*. God did not say He would take into account their state and how they felt, no; but, "when I see THE BLOOD I will pass over you."

"The plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt." The hand that carried the sword of judgment had appointed the means of safety. The executor of judgment "passed over" every blood-sprinkled dwelling; had He *not* done so He would have impeached His own work. The people were absolutely safe, having divine and eternal securities on which to rest. Judgment sweeps through the land, it falls upon the *Lamb* instead of the *Israelite*. The blood of the Lamb is the answer to the divine judgment on the part of every spared Israelite. The "blood" stood between the sinner Israelite and God, the Judge. Thus the claim of righteousness has been answered to the *full*.

But the people, though *safe*, are not yet *saved*. Pharaoh, his chariots, and horsemen are yet alive.

The strength of Egypt is yet untouched by the judgment. Now, it is one thing to learn the value of the blood in respect of my sins, but quite another to pass out for ever from the land of my bondage and slavery. The third chapter of the Romans, 24-26, shows the righteous ground for the remission of sin—Christ "a propitiation through faith in his blood." This answers to the Passover. Romans vii. 24. 25, gives the cry for deliverance *after* the soul has been made to own that "flesh" is *bad*, producing no good thing; this answers to Pi-hahiroth on the banks of the Red Sea. In the black *night* of Exodus xii. judgment is righteously averted. In the *morning* of Exodus xiv. God's salvation is triumphed in. In the passage of the Red Sea I read the triumph of Jesus *over* every enemy. His open grave gives me liberty to sing, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The 7th of Romans gives the passage of the soul right up the gates of Pi-hahiroth, which bears the significant meaning, "*Opening of the door of liberty*" (verses 24, 25). The man has ceased struggling and effort-making: he cannot extricate himself. He no longer looks for help, but in the mire is learning what He *is*—not what he has *done*—but what *he is*. Now he owns what every soul must learn before peace is enjoyed; "*For I know* that in me—that is, in my flesh—dwelleth NO GOOD THING" (verse 18). He looks for DELIVERANCE from his sinful state, and *is delivered* by Jesus Christ our Lord.

This, then, is "salvation" which word occurs for the first time in Scripture in

Exodus xiv. 13, 14: "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand *still*, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." God is *alone* in His mighty work. It is *His* salvation. The waters part on either side, and the people pass over *dry-shod*. They stand *every one* on the desert side of the waters of death. The strength of the enemy follows on, but the waters return, and all are engulphed in the mighty deep. "There remained not so much as *one* of them." Judgment has cleared the scene of every hated foe; and saved, *delivered* Israel "*saw* the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore." Now the people sing; not one note did they raise in Egypt. The timbrel, dance, and song tell of Israel's gladness in the day of salvation.

Have you known, dear reader, what it is to look back upon the cross and grave of Christ as one having traversed the passage of death "*in Him*"? Can you look *behind* and see every doubt, perplexity, question and fear, drowned in the depths of the Red Sea? Have you peace *with* God, that is, in the scene where He is? Can you by faith and in the experience of your soul stand in the glory bright above, in the knowledge that God is holy, and say, as His eye rests upon you,—"*I have peace with God.*" Oh, take God's word as your warrant for accomplished redemption. All is done. Go in peace.

W. S.

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD.

There are two all-important and grand foundation truths which strike at the very root of everything: the one is the complete and absolute ruin of man, and the other is the complete and absolute perfection of God's salvation.

Every page of Scripture bears the most unqualified testimony to these two plain and simple facts; and it is, therefore, of infinite value to fling aside all the thoughts and opinions of man, and to rest simply and confidingly on what God reveals in His own word on both these points. Man's condition before God is presented in seven different aspects, and the salvation of God, present, perfect, and eternal as it is, meets each of these conditions by one and the same infinitely precious and priceless remedy. Every unsaved soul is seen of God in one, or all of these conditions. 1. *As a rebel or enemy* (Psalm v. 10; Job xxxiv. 37; Rom. v. 10). 2. *As a sinner* (Rom. iii. 23, v. 8). 3. *As filthy and unclean* (Job xv. 16; Isaiah vi. 5; 2 Peter ii. 10). 4. *As having an evil and defiled conscience* (Titus i. 15, 16; Heb. x. 22). 5. *As ungodly and unjust* (Rom. v. 6; 1 Peter iii. 18). 6. *As troubled and restless* (Isaiah lvii. 20, 21; Job iii. 26). 7. *As absolutely lost* (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; Luke xix. 10). What a terrible list it is, but alas! how solemnly true! It comes with all the authority of God Himself, the God that cannot lie, as a fearful picture of the completeness of the ruin

into which man has fallen through his own disobedience, and believing the lie of Satan rather than the simple word of God. But, oh! with what intense relief do we turn to the other side of the picture, to find that God's own matchless love and grace have never changed, but shine out in all their living power, and that, too, in the very scene where death and misery seemed triumphant. Yes, the precious blood of Jesus, in its own peerless excellency, has settled the entire question of sin as before God, and that for ever, and brings in, as we shall see, *mercy* for the rebel, *forgiveness* for the sinner, *cleansing* for the filthy and unclean, "*a purged conscience*" instead of an evil and defiled one, *justification* for the ungodly, *peace* for the troubled and restless, and *eternal redemption* for the absolutely lost.

How sweet is the sound of mercy to the poor rebel who is about to expiate his crimes on the scaffold! The law has been broken and justice must take its course, when lo! a message comes from the sovereign to spare the culprit's life; a respite is granted, and the one who least deserved mercy has received it from the hands of offended royalty itself. Look at the cross, and what do we see there but a whole world of rebels banded together to crucify and put to death the Christ of God? each and all with one accord joining in that terrible cry, "Away with him, away with him! crucify him, crucify him!"

Yes, the world had its choice once, and it preferred a robber to the Lord of life and glory. "Not this man but Barabbas," so "Jesus was

delivered to their will," and the enmity of man's heart reached its climax when that Blessed One who "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" was nailed to the accursed tree, there to pour out His life's blood for His enemies, and to make atonement for that mountain of sin which stood between man and God. When we were enemies Christ died for us; and, though man shewed no mercy to God's beloved Son, yet, so does God delight in shewing mercy, that He has, in the very place that consummated man's guilt, set Him, Christ, "forth as a propitiation (or mercy-seat), *through faith in his blood*" (Rom. iii. 25).

"The very spear that pierced Thy side
Drew forth the blood to save."

Ah! but you say, I do not feel that I am either a rebel or an enemy; I would not go so far as to crucify Christ, although I know I am a sinner and need forgiveness. To such we say, Thou little knowest thine own heart—but be it so! Dost thou really feel thy sins to be a burden? Wouldst thou gladly be freed from the load of guilt which weighs upon thee? Listen, then, weary, heavy-laden one, to the words of Him who has not only the will, but the power, "to forgive sins." 'Tis Jesus speaks in tones of tenderest pity, and, amidst the solemn realities of Calvary's awful hour, that voice of love is heard ascending to the very throne of God, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do!" With what a thrill of deep delight did that prayer fall upon the ears of the dying thief who but a

moment before had mocked and taunted that blessed Saviour! But what a change now! Owning his sin, he exclaims, "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss;" and then, turning his eyes on Jesus, he adds, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom!" With what divine swiftness came the answer, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise!" Such were the words of the sinner's perfect substitute; and, though that solemn hour has passed away for ever, there is the same forgiveness for thee, beloved reader, for God declares from heaven itself, "In whom (Christ) we have redemption *through his blood*—the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians i. 7).

Dost thou rest satisfied with this, or art thou troubled in mind because of those secret, hidden thoughts of thine heart which, it may be, come and go, thou scarcely knowest how—those unclean, sinful thoughts that trouble thee, so that, like David, thy cry is "Cleanse thou me from my secret faults?" Again, does that precious blood meet thy case, and bring thy spirit the longed-for relief? Let thy soul drink in the infinite value of these glorious words: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). Yes, cleanseth even *now*, and that from *all* sin—not one or two, not hundreds or thousands even, not big or little sins, not merely open sins or *secret* sins, but (blessed reality!) *all sin*. What rich magnificence of grace! God says it cleanseth *now*, on

the spot, the very moment faith rests on that precious life-giving stream; and such is its present power and eternal efficacy that not only does it secure mercy and forgiveness, but an entire and absolute cleansing from all and every spot and stain of sin, and leaves the very filthiest and vilest sinner who simply rests on it "clean every whit," pure and white as Christ Himself, and fit at any moment to leave this scene of ruin for the mansions of eternal bliss.

"Clean every whit! Thou saidst it, Lord;
Shall one suspicion lurk?
Thine surely is a faithful word,
And Thine a finished work."

We are persuaded, however, that there are many hundreds of precious souls who, while owning in a certain way the value of the blood, have yet never had their consciences truly exercised as to the real character of sin in God's sight; and, through having only a superficial appreciation of the finished work of Christ, they look, as it were, for a fresh application of the blood each time they are conscious of failure—in other words, they have never yet learnt in the Divine presence the difference between *a consciousness of sin* and having "*no more conscience of sins.*" Now, the passage referred to already (Titus i. 15, 16) shews clearly that "a defiled" conscience (or "a conscience of sins") is really what appertains to an unconverted man, simply because he has never known the value of the blood at all; whereas, the moment a soul accepts Christ and His "one offering," it is its highest privilege to rest on the sweet assurance of God's

faithful word that, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, *how much more* shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God!" (Hebrews ix. 13, 14). And, again, had those sacrifices been the substance instead of only the shadow of good things to come, "the worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins" (Hebrews x. 1, 2). These passages clearly show that the "conscience of sins" I had as an unbeliever is for ever gone through the "one offering" of Christ, and this is quite a different thing from having a consciousness of sin, for, the fact is, it is only the Christian who hates sin; but, directly he is aware of his failure, he of course at once goes to God about it, remembering that "If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just (not to us, but to Christ) to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). Hence what Israel never knew through the blood of bulls and goats, the simplest believer in the Lord Jesus may now fully appropriate—yea, more, have boldness to enter into the very Holiest of all by virtue of the blood of Christ. It is a question of the "root" and not the "fruit" (both alike were judged in the cross); and now such is God's grace that He would have me brought from the distance where I once was through having a "conscience of sins" into the light and liberty of His own presence through

the power of the blood, without a stain on the conscience, *a forgiven, cleansed, and "purged worshipper."*

There are yet three more aspects of the blood, of deep importance, to which we must briefly refer. While Scripture is emphatic upon the point that Christ died for "the ungodly" and "the unjust," it is most blessed to see that these are the very persons that God justifies the moment they simply trust in Jesus.

Now justification is even more than mercy, forgiveness, cleansing, or "a purged conscience." It takes the sinner who believes altogether and entirely from off the old platform he once occupied, as one, it may be, who was seeking acceptance upon the ground of something in himself, and places him at once, not only in the unclouded sunshine of divine favour, but in all the perfect acceptability of Christ Himself before the throne of God.

It is *God for me* against *everything*—sin, the world, Satan, and last, though not least, my own deceitful heart. Yes, God justifies me as one who believes in Jesus neither upon the ground of what I am, nor what I have done, but upon the ground of all that Christ is, and all that Christ has done; and who can so well estimate the worth of that as God Himself? Such is the priceless value of that precious blood as now seen by God in heaven itself, that He can be not only "just, but the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," and Rom. v. 9 tells me that *I am justified by that blood even now*—not waiting for the Judgment Day to

know my acceptance, but, "being *now* justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Oh, what deep, unutterable joy is this! *God for me.* The message comes straight from the very throne and heart of God, with a living power that sweeps away every human barrier, and sets the soul at perfect rest and liberty in the very presence of God Himself. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

And this brings us to the sixth link, as it were, in the golden chain of God's salvation. The soul that has once apprehended God for it is no longer "*troubled and restless.*" It is the true character of the wicked, as we have seen, to be "like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt;" and rightly so, for how could it be otherwise with a Christless soul awaiting the judgment of God?—"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." But, for the soul that is safely sheltered by the blood, all is peace within, because all is peace above—

"Not a cloud above, not a spot within."

The soul looks back and sees judgment gone for ever, because that bitter cup has been drained to the dregs by that Blessed One who has for ever glorified God. It sees in that shameful cross an entire end to the flesh, and everything that was contrary taken out of the way and buried for ever in the grave of Jesus. Peace, sweet peace, is the result, based not on frames and feelings, but on the blood of the cross.

Resting on that eternal foundation which can never be moved, and which all the powers of hell

can never shake, the heart loves to gaze, where God gazes, on the poured-out life of His Son. God has whispered to the heart of such an one "*When I see the blood*, I will pass over you, and the blood shall be *to you* for a token," and the soul answers God in the language of His own words, "He (Christ) has made peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20), and if He—my Lord, my Life, my All—has done it, it is settled for ever. I am satisfied because Thou art satisfied, O my God!

"There, where the sprinkled blood
Doth in the light abide,
We both rejoice before our God,
Together satisfied."

One more Scripture and we have done. It is a solemn word to you, dear reader. If, at this moment, God sees you without Christ, your condition is a truly awful one. *You are absolutely lost*, your life is forfeited, you have nothing but death and judgment to look forward to. What a fearful reality will that "second death," which the judgment of the wicked is called in Scripture, be to thee! Called from thy long resting-place, thy body shall be raised from the dust of death to meet the eyes of Him who shall sit upon that "great white throne," but only to hear the sentence from His lips which fixes thine eternal doom, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

But no! we are assured thou canst no longer resist the love of Him who died for thee, for what hast thou not got if in Christ? Listen to

what God freely offers thee this moment, and that "without money and without price."

Mercy, forgiveness, cleansing, a purged conscience, justification, peace, and, crowning consummation to it all, "*eternal redemption*," and all purchased for thee through the precious blood of Jesus.

Yes, the sinner that believes in Jesus can say I have "eternal redemption" through His blood, not only am I saved now but saved for all eternity, not only as regards my soul, but my body too, for I am only waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, and this may be at any moment. Scripture declares it will be directly Jesus comes; the very moment the eyes of the believer and the eyes of Jesus meet, the result is instantaneous, this body which He has claimed for His own shall be changed in a moment and made like unto His own glorious body, "for we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." The believer simply waits in patience for the coming of His Lord, for "we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Blessed reality! wondrous salvation! present, perfect, eternal! May your soul know it, beloved reader; believe it and rejoice in it, for the sake of Him who so freely shed His own precious life's blood that you might make this great salvation all your own for time and for eternity. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" believe now, "and thou shalt be saved!" S. T.

HAVE YOU PULLED UP THE ANCHOR?

We may well imagine the dilemma into which two drunken sailors fell who wanted to cross a Scotch firth at night. They leaped into the boat and pulled away at the oars with all their might; they pulled and they pulled, and wondered they did not reach the shore. In their intoxicated state they thought the tide was set against them, and so in a wild fashion they took spells of pulling, but no shore did they reach. Great was their astonishment, for the firth was narrow, and a quarter of an hour should have seen them at the opposite beach. "Surely," they said, "the boat is bewitched, or *we* are!" The night wore on and passed away, and the morning light explained the mystery to their now sobered eyes. "Why, Sandy, mon," said David, looking over the bow, "we never pulled up the anchor!" Just so it was, and thus, tug as they might, they laboured in vain. Many and many a poor sinner has been in like case—he has tried and tried to believe (always a strange thing to do), but all his trying has come to nothing; peace has been as far off as ever—the means of grace have been unavailing, prayer has brought no answer of joy, the man has been ready to despair, and blamed fate, or the devil, or a thousand things. Meanwhile, the real cause of the soul's long delay has been unnoticed; the heart has never really loosed its hold of its self-righteous hopes, never fully broken ground from that which held it in death's thrall, and trusted

itself to Jesus. Reader, how is it with you? Have you pulled up the anchor? Have you broken away from self? If not, all your efforts are idle, all your prayers fruitless. Up, then, with *your* anchor, break ground from every trust that has hitherto held you, cast yourself just as you are, without oar or rudder, upon Jesus, and learn the truth of that word, "Him that cometh unto *me I* will in nowise cast out." F. L.

DIFFICULTIES.

No. 1.—"Does God Love Me?"

This is a *real* difficulty to many. They cannot find *in themselves* a reason why *they* should be loved, hence the question, "Does God love *me?*" Many a soul would give worlds, if they had them, could they truthfully say, "I am certain God loves me." It is easily owned that God loves the good and pious; "but," says many an anxious one, "I am not good—I am bad, wicked, vile; I'm a sinner. Does He love me?" He does. He loves *just such as you.* I will give you His own word for it, so that you may not be uncertain or deceived on so important a matter: "For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans v. 6-8).

Do not these passages meet your difficulty? Are you one of the "ungodly," one of the "sinners?" "Oh, yes," you answer; "it's *because* I'm a sinner I doubt His love to me."

Why, it's the very reason given in the texts that He loves you. God is not commending His love to saints, but to *sinners*. It was because He loved sinners that He gave His Son to die. He not only loves you, but *commends* His love in giving His Son to die. Could a stronger proof or witness of love be given than the cross supplies? God loved His enemies, and so gave Christ to die for them. Canst thou doubt God's love as thou beholdest the Blessed One pouring out His soul unto death? What is thy claim upon His love—what thy title to say, "He loves *me?*" Your claim is a simple one. Are you an enemy, a sinner, and ungodly?—then your claim upon His love is a valid one, because it is to sinners, ungodly, and enemies, God is actually commending His love; and, lest any might suppose that His love is being commended to those who *were* bad but are *now* saints, it is said to be commended to us while YET sinners. God loves you; no longer question it—rather rejoice that your difficulty is clean gone. God declares most plainly that He loves ruined, guilty sinners. The whole question is, Art thou one? Art thou a dweller on this poor world? Art thou a *creature?* Art thou a living man on the earth? *Then* I have the best of news for you—the Son of God come down from heaven *has said*, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). After dying on the cross to prove His love, He commissioned His disciples thus: "Go ye into *all* the world and preach the Gospel to *every*

creature" (Mark xvi. 15). "Oh!" say some, "I am not a man, I'm unworthy of the name; I have acted so badly, so wickedly." Well, are you a creature? Do you breathe? If so, God meant the tale of His own love to be poured into your ears; the risen Jesus, the accomplisher of redemption, has sent a direct message to *you*. He anticipated your case, and has directed the Gospel to be sent *just* to you. He says, Preach it "to *every creature*." He makes no exception, He leaves none out. God loves the world; then, how simple, how conclusive the argument! He loves *me*, for I am part of the world. Now, this is a happy conclusion; in fact, you can't get outside the pale of His love. He loves you whether you believe it or not, and whether you feel it or not. The vilest sinner that breathes is loved by God.

"Oh! but," say some, "it is the elect world He loves;" others say, "No, it is the innocent, unfallen world God loved." Both are wrong. Take up your Bibles and read the passage for yourself; read it slowly, distinctly, and in God's presence, taking in each word: "God—so—loved—the—WORLD." O to be simple in divine things!" Now put it to your heart, *I know God loves me, sinner as I am.* What follows? If trusting in Jesus, then you are saved—not because *you* love Him, but because *He* loves *you*. "We love him *because* he *first* loved us." He *first* loved *us*—we were sinners *then;* we love Him—we are saints *now*.

An Infidel, converted to God, replied thus to the jeers of his companions:—"Lads, I could

not help being converted, whenever the truth flashed upon me, that *God loved me in my sins*, and gave His Son to die for me that, believing on Him, I might have everlasting life."

Are you *trying* to love God? Give it up, you never will succeed. You will never love by trying. Love cannot be forced. The *only* way you can love Him is not by looking into your heart for it, but in *knowing* and *believing* the love God has towards you. God loved you and gave His Son to die. His love is a *reality*. Can I doubt it as I take my stand at the cross of Christ and listen to the most sorrowful and desolate cry ever uttered in this world—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken *me?*" Do not be asking yourself, "Do I love Him?" that will only turn you in upon yourself; you can't help loving Him *after* you have made the wonderful discovery that He loves you. He spared not His own Son, that He might spare *you*, that His love towards you might have a righteous outlet. Jesus died, *not* to cause God to love you—to move His heart towards you. Oh! no; Jesus died *because* God loved you. The death of Jesus was not the cause of God's love, but the witness of it—the proof of it. God loves you, dear anxious one; believe Him when He says it.

No. 2. "Am I One of the Elect?"

This I cannot tell; but this I know, that election cannot meet your case. Do you suppose that God will hand you down from heaven "the Lamb's book of life" to see if your name is written there? Why, the "book of life" is *not*

opened until the great white throne-judgment takes place at the introduction of the eternal state. Thus, none can possibly know their election of God, but saints. "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter i. 2). "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter i. 10). "Knowing therefore, beloved, your election of God" (1 Thess. i. 4). These passages are addressed exclusively to saints of God, to none other. Election is a most blessed and comforting truth of Scripture, but it is one of the family secrets of the household of faith. Now the awakened sinner needs a Saviour, for he is *lost*, he is *dead* and needs life, *guilty* and needs justification. Will election save, will it quicken, will it justify? I am a *personal* sinner and I need a *personal* Saviour. Did election die for you? Has not God taken to Himself the title, Saviour God, and think you He will share His glory with another or with aught else? Even supposing you could search the registers of heaven and find your name inscribed there, would that help you to peace, would such a piece of information put your sins away? O dismiss this foolish thought! Rebuke the enemy by at *once* accepting Christ.

"*Am I one of the elect?*" I cannot say; but I can assure you of this, on the authority of God, that you are a sinner, and unless you repent and believe the gospel you *must* perish. Election did not die on the cross for you, and it is the cross of Jesus Christ *alone* which determines your character and position before God.

"Lord, are there *few* that be saved?" was a *curious* question once put to our Lord. Did He gratify the *idle* curiosity of the man? No; but He addressed a solemn word to the consciences of His hearers. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke xiii. 23, 24). The "gate" was fitted and made *just* to allow sinners to get in. It is "*strait*," too much so, if thou comest *as* a saint or as an elect one, but quite wide enough if you come as a sinner. Many now occupying themselves with election will at the last find themselves standing outside the *closed door*, unsaved and unsaveable.

O why will *you* raise up barriers where God has erected none; why will you oppose your own salvation; why trouble your mind about that which in no wise concerns you? God will save you *now*. If you wait longer you may perish. Is not Christ, in the glory bright above, the witness of the perfect putting away of sins? What more wouldst thou have? Could God do more than He has done to set you in peace before Him? He gave His Son, who "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. ix. 26). Now all is done, and God rests in divine satisfaction in that work. The "*one* sacrifice for sin" is either sufficient for thy ransom, or, if not, thou must perish. See to it, that you will not be among the many who will be taken from discussing theological points to meet God in eternity. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

W. S.

THE INDIAN CONVERT; OR, "I BELIEVE IN JESUS."

In a wild and mountainous region of India, early one morning, a small band of Indians might have been seen, some years ago, quietly moving along the banks of a lake situated close to a beautiful grove of mango trees. Among the group were two youthful enquirers after eternal life, who had renounced the sinful and heathen practice of idol worship. They had heard about Jesus, their Saviour, through the preaching of a missionary, who was spending his life and strength in that foreign land for God; and in true simplicity of heart they believed what they heard, and desired to know more about the God whom the white man worshipped.

On the morning referred to, they were going to listen again while the teacher spoke to them about Him who had sent His only Son Jesus to die for them; and they returned to their mountain homes with joyful, chastened hearts, having "peace and joy in believing." A short time afterwards one of them was seized upon by the headman of their village, who roughly questioned him about this "new religion." He readily replied, "I believe in Jesus Christ, and no longer worship the guäts (a lower order of Gods), the images or the pagodas, nor drink spirits; I worship the eternal God." He was ordered to pay a certain number of rupees as a fine, and then to give up the "foreigners' religion" altogether.

Upon another occasion one of his own tribe said,

"Come, join our worship again, and feed the gods?" "No," was his unhesitating reply, "I mean to worship the eternal God to the end of my life, and I mean to find out more about Jesus Christ."

An interval of some months elapsed, and the scene was changed. Very late one night, when the faithful, earnest missionary, before mentioned, had retired to rest, wearied with his day's work, a messenger from without woke him from his slumbers, saying "Teacher! teacher! you are wanted!"

In a few moments both were hurrying along to the spot where the dying one lay, who had wished the teacher to be fetched.

As they approached the low bamboo house, a wild, wailing noise, proceeding from it, reached their ears, which intimated the presence of death. The missionary passed through a crowd of friends and relatives gathered at the door, and in a moment more he was gazing with much emotion upon the corpse of a native youth, whom he had often seen, and well knew. "He is gone to the golden country," whispered a voice close to his ear, "to bloom for ever among the flowers of paradise." Startled, and suddenly turning, he saw before him a middle-aged woman, holding a palm-leaf fan before her face. And, amidst the confused wail of the mourners, she added "He worshipped the true God, and trusted in the Lord, our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; he trusted in Him, he called and was answered; he was weary and in pain, and the Lord who loved him took him home to be in His bosom for ever."

"How long, since his soul took its flight?" asked the missionary. "About an hour, teacher."

"Was he conscious?" "Yes, and full of joy."

"What did he talk about?" "Only of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose face he seemed to see."

Reader of this little narrative, let me ask the question "Can you say, like this simple hearted Indian, "I believe in Jesus Christ?" Do you know Him as your Saviour, the One who has borne your sins in His own body on the cross?

This poor native youth had been a heathen, who knew nothing of the only true God; he was a worshipper of stocks and stones. But when he heard about Jesus, the Son of God, having come down into this evil world to be a man and die, that through His death and atoning work all who believe and trust in Him might be saved, and possess "eternal life," then his poor, ignorant heart was touched by such redeeming love, and he "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." He gave up as a wicked, worthless thing the so-called religion of his ancestors, with its heathenish rites and practices. He knew himself to be a sinner, but believed that Jesus had died for him, and so had the sense of his sins being all forgiven, that he was made clean through the precious blood of Christ which "cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Fellow sinner, do you know yourself to be guilty, lost, hell-deserving, by nature unfit for the presence of God? Turn then to Him who is "mighty to save," believe in the One who came to seek and to save that which was lost, listen to the gracious loving words which fell

from a Saviour's lips, "He that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;" "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;" "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on *me* HATH everlasting life" (John vi. 35, 37, 47).

Head knowledge or a mere profession of Christianity will not save you, neither can the observance of certain religious forms and ceremonies fit you for heaven, or make you acceptable in God's sight! They may quiet your conscience for a time, nothing more than this, and if you place any virtue in cold religious observances then you are one of those who are lulled into a state of insensibility and indifference by this opiate of Satan. Be not deceived, that great enemy of mankind and destroyer of souls wishes to retain you for ever in his clutches, and would have you eternally sunk in the dark, fathomless depths of perdition.

But, through the wonderful long-suffering and mercy of God, there are yet time and opportunity to be saved from such a dreadful, awful eternity; there is still a way of escape.

By nature we are all ruined and undone, irreparably bad, rebels against a holy, loving God. But, marvellous grace! "God *so* loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jno. iii. 16).

Let me ask, dear reader, do you see in Jesus, the crucified One, the manifestation of God's love to you, as the One who came to seek and to save *you?* Oh! can you not in your heart say,

"I believe He came to seek and to save lost, perishing sinners, and this is just my condition"? What are your thoughts of Jesus while He was suffering, dying on that terrible cross? Do you see Him there, with the eye of faith, as bearing your multitude of sins and dying to put them all away for ever? It is at that cross upon which the blessed, perfect Son of God hung and was crucified, that we learn the fulness, the reality, and the perfection of God's redeeming love.

Ah! my fellow sinner, it is a wondrous, yet undeniable fact, that the holy, just, and beloved Son of God came down into this wretched, polluted world to save such as you and me from everlasting ruin and condemnation. He has accomplished a mighty work, a great salvation, nothing more remains to be done: "It is finished" were the last life-giving words of the blessed Jesus, ere He "bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

Will you still doubt, still disbelieve that the atoning work is complete? Think what a dreadful thing is unbelief. It makes the God of truth a liar! It also dashes from a sinner's lips the cup of everlasting happiness, and closes the door of mercy in his face!

Do you, reader, like the young Indian, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," and have you "trusted in Him?"

"I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.
'Tis everlasting peace,
Sure as Jehovah's name,
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
For evermore the same."

S. L.

"I AM LOST BUT FOR HIM."

So said to me a young man as he lay on his bed of disease and death. Consumption was doing its deadly work. His frame, once robust and vigorous, now lay lean and worn, and cruel death was fast eating it away. Ah! thou "King of terrors," thou hast made this fair creation the dark scene of thy fell slaughter; thou hast entered this forest, and hast strewn the ground, as by a hurricane blast, with the sapling and the monarch; thou hast broken in upon the harvest field, and with thy sharp and mighty sickle hast laid low the young and tender, as well as the ripe and mellow!

"There is a reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between."

And as the fair and fragrant flower falls beneath thy stroke thou leavest the mourner's tears to flow but the faster, and his heart to sigh but the deeper, as he ponders with sorrow the cause of thy merciless and mighty power. Oh, sin, sin, sin! thou foul spring of poisoned waters, whate'er thou touchest is blackened and ruined by thy hand. Thou source of sorrow, thou cause of anguish, thou parent of death, 'tis thou by whom all this evil hath arisen. Hand in hand with death dost thou travel o'er this earth, creating havoc and desolation, and leaving on thy track nought but wreck and ruin, and sorrow.

Oh, for some mightier hand; oh, for some stronger arm; oh, for some sharper sword; oh,

for some unvanquished victor to oppose thy lawless footsteps; oh, for some far sounding voice of authority to arrest thy march, and call thee to His feet!

Say, poor sufferer, about to close thine eyes, about to step beyond the narrow confines of time, say, fearest thou this proud conqueror; faintest thou at the thought of the stroke of his sword? Nay, for in "the visions of God" I beheld a struggle, a fearful contest between two foes. The "Prince of Life" fought with the prince of death and gained the day. For my sake entered He the lists, for my sake bore He the awful trial and passed through the dread ordeal; but, as I gazed, I saw that His arm won the victory. The brow once clouded in conflict is graced with the chaplet of victory, and the hand that wielded so faithfully the sword has received the sceptre of eternal power, and oh, the sight was glorious. Down fell the foe, beaten at every point, and, as he fell, "death was abolished, and life and incorruptibility came to light."

"So I fear not the wave
Of the gloomy grave,
For I know that Jehovah
Is 'mighty to save.'"

"Oh, death, where is thy sting; oh, grave, where is thy victory . . . thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But for wealth a man would be poor, blind but for sight, naked but for clothing, weak but for strength, and dead but for life. But wealth, and sight, and clothing, and strength, and life make all the difference, and so, if Christ be "all and in all," without Him a man is poor, and blind,

and naked, and weak, and dead, but having Him the soul possesses all. Lost without Him, but saved with Him,—"lost but for him," saved with Him

And as wealth suits the poor, sight the blind, clothing the naked, strength the weak, and life the dead, so *Christ suits the sinner.*

Again, as wealth was intended for the poor, sight for the blind, clothing for the naked, strength for the weak, and life for the dead, so *Christ was intended for the sinner.*

Lastly, as poverty is dispelled by wealth, blindness by sight, nakedness by clothing, weakness by strength, and death by life, so *Christ displaces all the ruin of sin and death.* Oh, what a treasure is He ; what it is to have Christ!

"What have they that *want* Christ? what *want* they that have him?" is a fine old Scottish aphorism.

Now mark, my reader, that sin and death, with all their terrific and overwhelming accompaniments, are gone as to him who has Christ. His sins are pardoned, and he "is passed from death unto life."

Eternal life with all its unspeakable contents of pardon, adoption, and glory to come, are his. What a portion! Sin was his slave-master, but he is now discharged from his service, he has died with Christ from out of his grasp. Death was to him the "king of terrors," but now he can exultingly sing "Oh, death where is thy sting?" Death, if it should come, is to him but the convoy to regions of sinless and immortal glory, the transport to the bosom and beauty of the One who fought and won for him.

And all this is real. If real on the one side it is real on the other. Sin is real, death is real, Satan is real, Christ is real, the cross is real, the sepulchre where He lay but whence He arose is real, the crown that now sparkles on the Victor's brow is real, and none the less is the word "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 condemnation but *is passed* from death unto life" (John v. 24).

Oh, beloved, unpardoned reader, look up to yonder throne where He sits and see in that once marred and bruised body the glorious answer to all that was caused by sin, accept His word, believe, and live. J. W. S.

GREAT DISCOVERIES.

"When I try to review all the love that has been spent upon me—the infinite love and the finite love—I lose myself in an abyss of shame at my utter unworthiness, or rather worthlessness. I seem to have absorbed it all, and to have given nothing back. If that love were to leave me I should become just like the Sahara which has swallowed an ocean, and remains nothing but a dry sandy waste. But God, in His infinite patience, still continues His love, notwithstanding all my hatefulness. Lately I have come to see that no words whatever—not even the Parable of the Prodigal Son—can convey anything like a right idea of the love of

God; it must be felt to be known. *My* Father did not wait till He saw me returning—no, He went all the way to seek me in the far country into which I had wandered—He made me loathe swine's food—He put into my heart the longing for home, and, as soon as I rose up to return to Him, He embraced me with His loving kindness, and now He is leading me by the hand along the homeward path. And all this time He has not uttered a single word of reproach, but the tenderest words of comfort and forgiveness. Oh, but the love in His eyes, and in the tone of His voice, fills me with the bitterest self-reproach. How *could* I grieve such perfect love? how forsake such utter loveliness? I must have been mad. No, it was not madness, but wickedness, that made me do it. Now I know what *sin* is, and how it *must* bring forth death—separation from that eternal life (the life of God) which the Son came to reveal. But I cannot see why the Father does not bring back all His prodigals as I feel He is bringing me: if His infinite love were once displayed before their eyes, as clearly as it was before mine, I feel sure they would also arise and go to the Father—they *couldn't* resist? For I know that I have not returned *of myself* to God, indeed it seems as if some loving violence had been used to *compel* me to return. I must believe that all is in God's hands, that His will shall be done, and His will is perfect love. Eternal love in the end will prevail over everything."—*Extract from a letter of one newly converted.*

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

"The love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

O love of Jesus, deep and wide,
Wider than the swelling sea,
Deeper far than ocean's tide,
Love, oh, love, that thought on me!

Love that from thy mighty source,
In the living heart of God,
Found through Christ thy boundless course,
Flow'd through Him, and flow'd to me!

Love that burn'd with quenchless might,
Though deep waters flowed o'er thee;
Love that fought the deadly fight,
Agonised and bled for me.

Love, ah! love that passeth telling,
Love no angel could unfold,
Love, our largest thought excelling,
Only at the cross thou'rt told!

There the thorn-clad brow proclaims thee,
Pierced hands and riven side!
There the wounds of Jesus tell me,
"'Twas for thee, for thee He died!"

There the river found a channel,
There it flow'd in crimson tide,
There the sin-stain'd soul finds cleansing,
There my God Thou'rt satisfied.

E. C. L.

DELIVERED FROM THE PIT: OR, A SAILOR'S CONVERSION.

"There's a sick sailor man bides over yonder as wants to see you, and I'm to carry him back an answer, please."

The words were spoken by a bright young boy at my side, and his message led to my knowing the sailor Andrew ——, and being a witness of the work of God in his soul, delivering him from the power of Satan and leading him to find his soul's salvation and his heart's rest in the work and person of Jesus, the Saviour God.

"Tell others," he often used to say, "how He snatched me from the very jaws of hell and spared my life to save my soul; there's many a lad as sails under the union jack that would listen to the story of how a mate got safe into port, for I am *in port* you know, though I havn't got my discharge yet," he would add with a smile, quoting the lines of a well known hymn,

"Amid the stormy, wintry sea
We are in port when we have *Thee*."

It was a bright, almost a cloudless day, after a week of storms, the blue waves were dancing and sparkling in the sun-light as if the whole face of the mighty deep were welcoming with a smile the unveiled presence of the sun again. The shore was a busy scene, the most adventurous fishermen had been compelled to a week's inactivity in that height of the fishing season, and now all seemed bent on making up for lost time, and as I watched boat after boat put out to sea I

longed with a special longing to be the bearer of God's glad tidings of eternal life through Christ to some of those whose natural lives were thus, by their calling, peculiarly exposed to danger. While the desire was forming itself into a distinct prayer in my heart, the boy's words sounded in my ears. "Where does 'over yonder' mean?" I asked of the young messenger, for I had previously discovered that the phrase was ambiguous in this locality and might mean the opposite corner of the street, or it might mean any number of miles away. "Well, ma'am, the bit cottage is away out beyond that point that you see, you can't miss it, for there's no other, when you get to that point it's just ahead of you, it's not so far if you could go by the shore and up the cliff as I do, but it's a goodish way round by the road."

I looked in the direction he indicated and hesitated, many circumstances seemed to make it impossible to go, while still I shrank from refusing.

The little fellow evidently saw the look of doubt in my face, for he said entreatingly, "I was to carry him back an answer, PLEASE, and he's very bad and lonesome like." As he spoke a voice seemed to say in my ear, "Have not I commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage," so clearly and distinctly that, without waiting to think of the obstacles, I answered rather this voice than the child's, with the words, "Tell him I'll come." "*When*, ma'am, please?" "To-day."

The boy lingered still. "Please, I was to tell you," he said, "that it's a bad road, and not fitting for you, unless you get back into the town before

dark begins;" and he looked at the sun and then back at me as if to remind me that the day was wearing on.

"I will follow you *now* as soon as possible," I said, and quite satisfied with the *now*, which meant something definite to him, the little fellow hurried off with his message.

An hour or two later I stood by the bedside of Andrew ——, the Lord had cleared the difficulties out of the way one by one, and had done much more, given me the fullest confidence that He was going to work, and was going to let me stand by and see His salvation.

I had expected to find an aged tar, worn out by the storms of many a winter; to my great surprise the "sick sailor man" was a fine, powerfully built young man of two or three and twenty, laid thus low and helpless through the effects of an accident. "As strong as Andy——," had been a proverb among his ship-mates, and his appearance even now impressed you with the idea that he had been possessed of unusual physical strength. He had a very pleasing face, so open and honest, with clear, blue eyes, that had a truthful as well as a fearless look in them, and the almost sunny smile with which he bade me welcome seemed natural to him; the expression of bitter agony which followed almost instantly sat strangely on his face. The same young boy whom I had already seen was standing near the bed, busily engaged with a ball of twine.

Poor though the sick man's surroundings were, yet everything was so exquisitely neat and clean, and arranged with so much care that there was

an air almost of comfort about the room, it was evident he was ministered to by some one who loved him. One great lack, though, I remarked at once, there was no book of any kind near him; the reason of this I learned afterwards.

"Come in, ma'am, and welcome," he said as he saw me; "I'm real glad to see you, for it's but few faces I see most days, and it's weary work lying brooding over our miseries. Tim, draw mother's big chair over nearer for the lady. Eh! but it's hard lines not to be able to jump up and get it for you myself, very hard, but I'm nought but a log now, no use to any body nor myself neither, and never shall be again, that's worse."

"But sick people are not expected to get up and wait on their visitors, and I came to see if I could help you in any way, so you must not let me begin by distressing you."

He half smiled, and said simply "Thank you," then added apologetically, "Harry ——, that's a mate of mine, told me you would tell me something that would be a comfort to me, that's more nor a week since. I did'nt half believe him, but yet his words have stuck by me till, this morning, I couldn't help sending little Tim with the message."

"Then you are in need of comfort?" I said, hardly knowing what to say, for all the circumstances were so new and strange to me.

"You may well say that, ma'am, the doctors say I'll never move about again, and oh! to spend one's life chained to one spot, it's enough to turn one's reason;" and his brow contracted,

while a low groan of more than physical agony, escaped his lips.

There was a moment's pause and then I asked "Have you been long ill?"

"It's nigh on to four months now since my accident, I was over three months in the hospital."

"Will you tell me how you met with your accident, or does it trouble you to talk of it?"

"No; it would be a bit of relief to speak of it to you, for you see, when mother comes home from work of nights, I mustn't give way; it's hard enough on her to have to work all day to keep me. I couldn't let her come home to hear my groanings too, poor mother! I could bear it more like a man if it wasn't for her; but just as I thought she should be comfortable for the rest of her life, and never have to work hard again——" He stopped, a sob that was more like a groan choking his voice; but, mastering his emotion presently, he went on to tell me how he had been a ship's carpenter. The sea was his delight, and he had made many a prosperous voyage, come through many a storm, till, from his great strength and his "great luck," as he expressed it, he had grown reckless as to danger; but, returning from his last voyage, and when almost within hail of the harbour, he was up in the rigging repairing some slight damage. The day was very fine, and the sea like glass, but a breeze from the land suddenly caught the vessel, and she lurched to seaward. He, as usual, careless and thoughtless of danger, was taken unawares just as he was about to come down, missed his hold, and was

thrown violently backwards from a great height. As soon as the ship got into port he was removed to the hospital; but, after all had been done for him that could be done, the surgeons pronounced that his spine was so injured, he would never walk or even stand again.

"When they could do nothing more for me in the hospital I was brought home," he said; "and here I am, more helpless than a baby, and nought but a trouble and a care. It drives me well nigh crazy to see mother come in so pale and tired, and I to lie here; though *she* never grumbles, but always says that God has done it, and His ways are best. I'm glad she can think so, if it helps her; but it seems to me as if, instead of being the God of the widow and the fatherless, as she says, He has forgotten her, and kept me from helping her too."

"Has your mother no other child?"

"None; she had five, but the others all died when they were little, and father was drowned at sea, when I was no more than three or four. He told mother when he started on that last voyage, 'Please God, when I come back I'll settle down ashore;' but the Caroline—that's the brig he sailed in—put to sea and was never heard of again. God Almighty has been hard on us, ma'am—very, very hard."

I felt powerless to attempt a word of comfort, and could only look to God to reveal Himself in His own true character to this poor, broken-hearted one, who had such dark thoughts of Him. It seemed as if I could go with all the more confidence to Him because the case

was so far *beyond* human aid, just fitted for a Saviour God. The sick man watched me strangely, then said, in a disappointed tone, "I told Harry no one could bring *me* comfort; but it was kind in you to come, ma'am, all the same."

"Your's *is* a great trouble, Andrew, and human words are of little use, I know, though ever so full of sympathy; but there is One who *can* help, can comfort you, and I know Him, but you have let in bitter thoughts about Him. You may think it is easy for me to talk, not suffering as you are; but will you answer me one question? You have brought some heavy charges against God—He has broken His word, forgotten the widow who has trusted Him, dealt hardly with the fatherless; have you *nothing* to say on the other side? *No* mercy to remember?"

He turned his head on his hand and looked fixedly at me, but did not speak.

"You believe there is a God and a devil, a heaven and a hell?" I asked.

"Yes, I believe the Bible; it's mother's book, and it was father's."

"From what height did you tell me you fell?"

He seemed astonished at the sudden change in the question, but answered readily,

"Nigh on to 60 feet."

"And was that high enough for the fall to have killed you?"

"Why, yes, ma'am—high enough! Why, the miracle to everyone is, that I was picked up alive. Two mates of mine, when we were out in South America, fell not over 30 feet, and they never spoke again."

"And, if you had never spoken again on earth, where would your voice have been next heard, where would you have been at this very moment, in heaven or in hell?"

There was a silence. The unseen world seemed very near as I recognised how close he had been to it. After a moment or two, in a deep, hollow tone, he said,

"I should have been in hell, for the devil had a fast grip of me then."

"Yes, and was seeking to hurry you straight down to the pit, saying to himself, 'Now, while his heart is far off from God, without any warning of coming danger, or any time through a wasting illness to think of his soul's salvation—now, whilst I have him captive, I will compass his swift destruction, and he shall be my prey for ever.' But the Lord's eye was on you—the eye of Him whom you charge with forgetting the widow and dealing hardly with the fatherless, and the mighty word went forth from that heart of love, 'I want that soul; deliver him from going down into the pit—I have found a ransom.' You say it was a miracle that you were picked up alive, that no one can tell what broke the violence of your fall. It was the Lord's love and mercy going out after your soul. He spake the word, and those messengers of His that do His pleasure interposed unseen hands between you and the eternal destruction the devil had planned for you, and, though you are crippled, yet oh! you are still outside hell. You have still the door of heaven standing open to receive you, still Jesus is wait

ing to be gracious to you, offering you salvation through His precious blood, saying, 'Come unto me and I will give you rest.' He offers you eternal life—Himself as your companion through suffering here, and an eternity of glory with Him by and bye, instead of the eternal hell from which His love alone rescued you four months ago. *Did* He forget the widow and her fatherless boy when He did this?"

I shall long remember the expression of his face, or rather the changing expressions of it, though he never stirred. I had spoken rapidly, the whole scene seemed like a vivid picture before me, of which I was only reading him the description, and little Tim had crept up closer, and was gazing wonderingly first into my face, then at his friend, as the words burst forth at last from the latter, "I'm the biggest fool and the blackest wretch outside hell's gates to-day; I've let all my chances of heaven go by, and blackened the God that offered them."

"He offers them still. He says still, 'I will in no wise cast out him that cometh to me.'"

"No; He can't offer them again to the wretch that has done nothing but abuse Him for His love. Why, my sins were nothing, before my accident, to what they've been since. I've done nothing but blacken Him. I wonder He hasn't killed me with the words on my lips."

"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin," I repeated.

"But mine can't be meant. Mine is worse than any; oh, if I had only seen His love before."

"When *God* said *all* sin, didn't He know what

He was saying, and didn't he mean it? He did, and, oh, He knows too, He only knows the *full* value of the blood of His Son."

The sick man covered his eyes with his hand, and I waited silently. After a long pause, he suddenly looked up and said, "It seems too great that He could forgive me outright; but, oh, do you think He'd listen to me if I told Him what a wretch I've been, and asked Him to let me love Him for all He has done for me, *if it's even in hell.*"

The broken-hearted earnestness of the man, and the strangeness of his question on the one hand, and the unutterable joy of knowing the love that was yearning to give the Father's kiss to this returning prodigal on the other, almost choked my voice as I said, "That wouldn't be worthy of God, He does not forgive by halves. That is like the prodigal who thought in the far country that he would ask his father to make him a hired servant; but do you remember how his father received him?"

"Nay, I don't mind it. I never read the Bible for myself, and, all those years at sea, I forgot what mother used to read; but I do mind there's something there about it."

The day-light was waning fast, and by the flickering fire-light I could not see to read; but I repeated from memory the well-known parable, to ears that listened eagerly; he sobbed aloud as I finished.

"That was love, sure, but, oh, even that man was never so bad as I, the Father hadn't sent out after him as God has after me."

"But, Andrew, it is not a question of how bad you are, but whether the blood of God's Son is enough to cleanse you. God cannot look upon sin at all, and only the blood of Jesus could bring one of us into His presence; but God says that His blood cleanseth from *all* sin. Will you say that there are some sins it cannot wash away; or, will you say there are some returning prodigals the Father has not love enough to receive? I must go away now, and I want to leave you two short verses to think over, 'God is love;' and 'The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin.'" He repeated them two or three times after me slowly. Then, as I rose to leave, suddenly he seemed to notice the fast-growing darkness, and was distressed at my going alone, would have had "Little Tim" come with me, but I assured him there would One go with me to whom darkness and the light were both alike, and, promising to return if possible on the morrow, I left.

It was not possible to return next day, much as I longed to. When next I entered his room, he almost shouted out, "I've got it! I've got it!" his face was beaming.

"Got what, Andrew?"

"Why, everything 'most, ma'am, except the glory, and that's the port I'm bound for, and I've got my Pilot aboard, and given up the helm to Him, and He knows the way in sure enough."

"Tell me all about it."

"Well, ma'am, after you went away, I was just miserable again. I could only see my sins and my black ingratitude as the very worst of them

all. What a night of it I had, and all yesterday when you didn't come I thought God had given me right up now, and I couldn't tell mother though I saw her look at me and sigh, but in the middle of last night when I was 'most in despair, I don't know how it was, but I left off thinking about myself and my sins and began trying to call up all that about the Father going out to meet that poor man in his misery, and forgiving him out and out like; and then when my sins came back again something seemed to say to me, 'Andrew man, if you're a bigger sinner than that man, that only makes Him a bigger Saviour to be able to save you;' and I just said out loud, 'That's it, Lord, I've got it now; Thou art a big enough Saviour to save even such a wretch as me, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;' and with that it almost seemed as if I were in heaven. I don't know how the night went. I never felt any pain or anything, and I just kept on talking to Him."

"Does your mother know your joy?" I asked.

"Aye, aye, that she does. I couldn't keep it in. As soon as I heard her stirring in the morning I just sang out to her, and, when she heard, she went straight down on her knees and told the Lord He had made the widow's heart to sing for joy, and answered all her prayers; but I couldn't tell you half she said, for we were both just crying for joy together. You see it's *His great love* that knocks one over."

It was touching to hear him tell his tale so simply like a child. His every thought of God was changed: instead of feeling himself hardly

dealt with and blackening God, he now blackened himself and justified God, while his heart seemed brimming over with a sense of His unutterable love.

"Will you tell me that again about being delivered from the pit?" he said presently. I read him Job xxxiii., and then, at his request, read it a second time. "I have found a ramson" he kept repeating, as if the words verily entranced him. "'Deliver him. I have found a ransom.' Oh, how good He is, and I had been a rebel all my life, and hard to mother too, for she never wanted me to go afloat, and apprenticed me to a carpenter, but I couldn't rest. All our people had been sailors, and when I saw the blue waves come curling round that bit of rock yonder, the land seemed unbearable, and, when the wind rose angry-like and dashed the big waves all white with foam against the cliffs, I wanted still more to be out fighting with them, till at last I couldn't stand it no longer, and came to mother and said, 'Mother, give me your blessing and let me go;' it was cruel of me, for she had only me, but she just said, 'the Lord has been beforehand with you, my son, and given me strength even for this.' Often when I kept watch of nights I wondered and wondered whatever mother meant. The words always made me feel like a coward, but I know all about it now."

I greatly desired to see this widow whose faith seemed so bright, and of whom her son spoke so touchingly, but weeks passed on before my desire was gratified, for she could not return from her work earlier, nor could I be later. At

last we met; one look at her face told of the peace within. Her son was very like her; she had the same clear blue eyes and frank expression, and the same sunny smile I had noticed at first in him, only with her there was a look of indescribable sweetness and calm that was more than mere patience and resignation, the look of one who had long walked "softly" with the Lord. I took knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus, so much with Him that I seemed to know Him better from knowing her. There were no glib expressions nor set phrases, though when she spoke of Him it was as of One whom she knew well, and on whose love for her she had long been used to reckon; yet her tone was as reverent as her answering love was deep.

She was far too humble to dream what a time of refreshment, and strengthening, and encouragement that visit was to me, what a sweet savour of Christ it left; but, as she thanked the Lord for His tenderness in answering her prayer that we might meet, I could only feel the gain had been all mine.

Meantime, I had seen her son very often, nearly every day for some weeks; for I soon found out he was unable to read, knew little more than the letters of the alphabet, and this accounted for there being no books of any kind near him, which I had noticed at first; but his eagerness to be able to read the word of God for himself was so great that he hailed with delight my offer to help him, and his progress was wonderfully rapid. Some days he was too suffering, and then I only read to him. There

were days when he seemed hardly fit for this even; but his disappointment was so great when once I went away quietly, because he was lying with closed eyes, looking, as I thought, too ill to be disturbed, that I never did that again.

"It never wearies me, but always does me good," he said; "it's like going aloft to catch the first sight of land when you're homeward bound to hear all the beautiful things you read, and I understand them better as you read them to me."

He delighted in the Word and in hymns—his naturally bright, joyous spirit found now expression in songs of love and praise to the One who had redeemed him. I wondered sometimes if, after the first joy, there would come back any of the old feeling of trouble at his helplessness, but there never did, though many a time I marvelled as I thought "what hath God wrought" for the strong, fearless sailor! The one who had been foremost in helping and doing for others, who had so gloried in his independence, to be content to be wholly dependent even for the smallest thing, seemed a stranger sight than the suffering so cheerfully borne. Once I asked him if the days were ever long? "Why, no, ma'am," he said so simply; "you see, I'm never alone now, for Jesus is here, and, though I'm helpless, yet He's strong; it isn't hard to be dependent on Him. And, as to mother, why I just tell Him He loves her better even than I do, and I know I can trust Him to look after her. After all His love, how could I ever doubt Him? And, oh! you wouldn't believe the lots of little bits of things He gives even to

me to do for Him; I ask Him to, and He does."

Once only I saw a cloud cross his face, when some shipmates were saying to him what a sore thing it was, and that God Almighty had dealt hardly with him—he shrank then, as from a blow. "Don't say it, mates, *don't;* it minds me of my own black ingratitude to Him; why, He snatched me out of the very mouth of the pit of hell, and oh! if you only knew Him! I wouldn't change places with either one of you, for He has done so much for me. I would not be again your old mate, Andy, for I didn't know Him then." And then he spoke to them so simply, so touchingly of Jesus, till a coat sleeve was brushed rapidly across more than one rough face to remove the unbidden tears that would trickle slowly down from eyes little used to weeping. To several of his old companions the Lord used him for blessing, and "little Tim" learnt the blessed story of the love of Jesus from his lips.

It was his own "black ingratitude" that convicted him, it was the "wonderful love of God" that converted him; the devil had been at work with him, repeating to him his old lie, with which he has deceived thousands of others besides Eve, that God was a hard God who had withheld good from him, but he had learnt now the true character of the God who so loved us as to give His Son,—learnt the heart of God in the person of Jesus, of whom he could then say thankfully, aye, exultingly, "He loved *me*, he gave *himself* for *me*." Reader, can you say the same?

X

DIFFICULTIES.

No. 3.—"I'm Trying to Repent."

Is this thy difficulty, anxious one? Art thou really desirous to have thy sins thoroughly out? Art thou willing to bow to the truth of thy condition as a *lost* sinner, helpless, hopeless, and undone, giving up all pretension to either goodness or righteousness? If this is so, right, I say. You never will have settled peace until you have owned your state before God, and, the more thoroughly this is done in the conscience, you lay the deeper, the grand, moral foundations in the soul of perfect peace with God.

But you never will repent by *trying*. You may try to repent as a help to Christ, and, after all your trying, it will be found a miserable failure. You can't force repentance. Let us see what "repentance unto life" really is. It is not sorrow for sin, nor a change of mind, nor a determination to forsake sin only; it is a much deeper thing than any of these. It is the soul's judgment of evil in presence of divine love, and divine judgment expressed on the cross of Christ. How then may I repent? How may I be enabled to pass a true judgment upon myself, and what I have done? I can only do this as I gaze upon the Holy One of God, "made sin for us." In Him on the Cross I got a divine judgment upon sin, *its* hatefulness to God such that it could not be borne with when laid *on* Jesus. The storm of divine wrath spent itself

upon Him. *All* the waves, *all* the billows rolled over Him. The cry of agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," was the awful necessity of righteousness; for a season He was cast off by God that I, the wretch, the sinner, whose sins brought Him, in grace, into that forsaken place, might be made nigh to God. He *made* sin, that we might be *made* nigh to God. Ah; I can only have anything like a true judgment of the enormity of my sin as I stand and muse o'er the wonders of His cross. Why is He there? Why does He hang on yonder cross? *My sins put Him there.* My heart was expressed and exposed in the murderous cry "Crucify him, crucify him." The cross is thus not only the revelation of what God is—*God is love*, but is also the expression of what I am.

Now, would you repent? Do it in the light of God's love. He gave His much-loved Son. God's goodness when *known* leads to repentance (Romans ii. 4). You never once repent aright, or repent sufficiently, until you see that God is altogether as good as He says He is, and you as bad as His word declares you to be; and when may this be known? Only in the cross, I answer. The full truth of your state and condition has come fully out; own it, do not keep back the heart confession of what that cross tells as to God's love and your condition. If I look at my sin in the light of its consequences *to me*, it will lead to remorse, but not to repentance and sorrow after a godly sort. Judas repented and hanged himself; Peter repented—had his heart broken in presence of divine love (Luke xxii. 61, 62).

Turn away, then, dear anxious one, from every *effort*, from all *trying* to repent, to Jesus on the cross. I see from Scripture that repentance was proposed to man *only* in light of divine grace having triumphed over his sin (Luke xxiv. 45-47). W. S.

THE LEPER.

Leviticus xiii.

"Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean!" (Mat. viii. 2).

Lord, before Thy searching eye,
See a helpless sinner lie;
From my heart goes up the cry,
"Unclean! Unclean!"

Leper-like, disease within,
Hidden "deeper than the skin;"
All my nature full of sin,
"Utterly unclean!"

To Thy Priestly eye alone,
This, my case, is fully shewn;
All its depths of evil known,
"Proving me unclean!"

Depths of dark deceit and pride,
By my fellows undescried;
Nothing, Lord, from Thee I hide,
"Hopelessly unclean!"

Priest of God, on heaven's high throne,
Thou for sin did'st once atone;
"If Thou wilt," Lord, Thou alone,
"Thou canst make me clean!"

ANON.

THE LEPER CLEANSED.

Leviticus xiv.

"And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him; saying, I will, be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed." (Matt. viii. 3).

The One who healed the leper
  Is looking on thee now;
But, though thy case discerning,
  No frown is on His brow.
Not all thy sin's dark story
  Can turn away His love;
'Twas need, like thine, which brought Him
  Down from His throne above.

The One who touched the leper
  Was undefiled by sin;
As God, for ever holy,
  As man, all pure within.
Behold His grace and goodness
  In every action shine;
His words and ways expressing
  Both light and love divine!

The One who cleansed the leper
  Can surely make thee clean;
His blood outweighs the utmost,
  Whate'er thy guilt has been.
Oh! doubt not He is willing,
  But take Him at his word;
Without the "IF" exclaiming,
  "THOU WILT, THOU CANS'T, O LORD?"

ANON.

ETERNAL LIFE OR JUDGMENT: WHICH SHALL BE YOURS?

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON JOHN V. 19—29.

There are two incomparable mercies in the gospel. God is *giving* the highest blessing, giving it freely; and, further, God makes it *clear*; for, were there some blessing beyond all thought of man, what drawbacks and anxiety if we were left in uncertainty! But it is not so, and, reader, I put it to your own soul, if God meant to shew the richest mercy would it be consistent with that mercy, to leave it doubtful? to wrap it up in clouds and obscurity? This I do allow—man makes it uncertain. Satan seeks to veil it, God *never*. God has removed the clouds—rent the veil from the top to the bottom. The very essence of the gospel is, that the true light now shines. How solemn, yet how blessed for the heart that desires at all cost to know the truth; for anxious disquieted spirits, if God is as good as He is.

And, surely, *you* who feel the want of it, groaning because you know you are guilty, you will not resist either the mercy or the truth of God. Satan would fain keep you, turning your soul's eye upon itself, upon past folly—for he may turn himself into an angel of *light*, he never pretends to be an angel of *grace*—it is above him.

"Then, answered Jesus, and said unto them, verily, verily I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the father do," &c. God is now speaking by the lips of Jesus. How blessedly the Son speaks! He was on earth. He was a man, and He had come here expressly to establish a sure ground for God and man.

He was competent to do it, and He alone. He avoids nothing. God tried Him. He was manifesting the perfection of a Son, and this as man on earth. He was subject to the Father. He honoured the place. He brought divinity into humanity—a divine person, yet a man, just what we want. Had He been one whit less, He could not have suited God or man.

Adam and Israel had failed : God meant to lay a ground of righteousness. "The Word was made flesh,"—the Son of God, a true man on earth, born of a human mother. That which was supernatural was essential to the work of redemption, even as to the dignity of His person. There was no sin *in* Him, that all sin might be laid *on* Him. He had been for years on earth, was grown up to manhood, and now entered on His ministry. He speaks and tells you that which is of the deepest moment to your soul for ever. He came to manifest perfect subjection to the Father. There had been saints on earth ; but not one who had not been a sinner. Clearly it was a question of God's mercy saving such souls.

Where was the Saviour ? Here, on earth speaking to sinful men, to such as are here now. There were souls who believed on Him, and souls who believed not. That Saviour tells all the truth of the future for eternity : Moses never did ; none could tell it like Jesus. He has told it, that you might be blessed. It is *not* a promise, it is blessing brought now, forgiveness of sins now, eternal life now. What mercy ! God does not put one moment's delay ; but eternal life for you to receive and enjoy this

moment, in all its freeness and certainty. God is calling you now to look to this Saviour and live.

He and His Father were in perfect communion in all their ways of love and grace here below. The world did not know how good God was; their feeling was, He is going to punish in that dreadful day; that was the thought of the heathen and of the Jews too. It is true; but is it all the truth? Here was the Son who tells the truth. Never shrink from knowing the truth; if you receive it, "the truth will make you free." The truth declares you are the slave of one whom you do not see, who will mock your sufferings. What a difference between the enemy and the gracious God whose Son was on earth to vindicate Him and make Him known! to suffer for sins and save your soul!

The greatest use of miracles was to manifest Him, and point to the gift He had to give. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (v. 21). Nothing so bespeaks God. Creation was a grand testimony to God; but there is no such manifestation of God's goodness on the one hand, and of His power on the other, as raising the dead; for clearly, when death comes in, there is sin. What the Father does, so does the Son—quickens whom He will. He is God. He gives life to the dead; this is the Saviour for poor sinners. How many poor sinners would leap for joy if they could know that! He tells it that you may escape. He wants to fill your heart with confidence in God: this is His present object, if it be not the

work nearest to His heart, for He has glorified the Father. What a name is His? *Jesus!* He saveth "his people from their sins," and not His people only; for He is saving the worst of sinners, His enemies. He wants to bless you now; all is ready. The only thing waiting is for you to bow down to the Lord, to receive Jesus.

Do you not know how you liked to get away when you heard the name of Jesus? how you said, There's a time for everything, don't speak of Him now? What hatred and contempt of His name! and yet *that* Jesus is waiting to save such as you. There is only one way of being saved, not by being good but by owning your badness, and turning to the man who is God, who only is good.

But, if Jesus *is* only a Saviour now, to every soul who hears His word and believes the God that sent Him, He *will* judge. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (v. 22). Many an infidel has written eulogies on Jesus; he forgets, he does not believe, that He is the One who will judge him. Why? Because God's resolve is that all shall honour the Son, even as the Father: "every knee shall bow to him." There are no changes after men are raised. God will compel every creature to bow to the name of Jesus. Oh! then, I implore you to bow *now*, for thus only will He bless you. Believe, and receive eternal life from the Son of God.

The Son was despised and rejected of men. What baseness! He, a divine person, stooped down in love. Alas! men became the slaves of

the devil in rejecting the Son. God puts judgment into His hands, as the Son of Man. Judgment is the final means of vindicating the Lord Jesus, because of the insult man has put on Him. Whoever enters into judgment will be lost. Judgment will be a reality for the lost then, as eternal life is for the believer now: then there will be two great realities, eternal life and judgment.

The person of the Lord Jesus is the test of every soul. As the Son of God, He gives life. The sufferings of the Lord Jesus were because of sins. He became man to glorify God about sin; and, by the grace of God, the Son of God tasted death for every man. The greater the grace and love, the more awful it is not to believe it. You will be lost if you persist in rejecting Him. Before long the Bible will be counted as a bundle of lies by learned and unlearned, but faith is the heart bowing to God's word, receiving God's testimony about His Son.

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (v. 24). Said I not, it is *present* blessing He brings? It is only man's unbelief that keeps him out of it. It was suited to Moses to declare the curse. It became the gracious Saviour to say, "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life." The Father sent Him and delights in Him. As the Son of Man, He judges; as the Son of God, He gives everlasting life. Which is to be your portion? Life for ever with Jesus, to love and adore Him? Then at once, humble yourself at the feet of

God's Son ; delay not, He is willing to save you. Give up yourself altogether, receive the truth of God. He is all that He is for *you*. How could God give a clearer, simpler declaration for those who believe the Son ?

"The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (v. 24). That is really your condition. Do you believe *that?* In that which is really life, you have no part ; death is the condition of every soul till it receives Jesus. I am afraid this is not believed; most believers have filed down the difference, and slide over the solemnity of that truth. Nothing is gained by denying the awfulness of the pit, from which you are taken, any more than the lake beyond.

Another hour is coming, and the voice of the Son of God is heard again in a very different way ; and then "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment" (v. 29). Which is to be yours? One moment suffices now. I deny that conversion takes a long time—life is given in a moment, if peace by no means so soon. The turning point for the soul is when it looks to Jesus ; it is impossible to believe what God declares about His Son and not have life ; it is worthy of God.

It may be His will that you should breathe out your natural life and shortly be with Jesus; it is no want of love on His part to call you from this world of sighs and tears to heaven. "To

depart and be with Christ is far better." He is coming ; His own will go to meet Him, and be changed into His glorious image. What of the others ? They will be compelled to rise and take their bodies, the instruments of their sins, that their guilty souls may be judged by the Son of Man whom they refused. This is the resurrection of damnation, or, rather, of judgment.

Each must give account and be manifested. Only those who refuse Christ are judged ; and judgment issues only in damnation.

You cannot be holy without life ; wherever there is life holiness follows, as the fruit of that, which is the free gift of God. That life is the nature which produces the fruit which is acceptable to God, after they have believed. "They that have done good :" so acts the life of Christ. How blessed ! When it was a question of salvation, it was only Jesus ; when they are raised, God vindicates them. They are shown to the only persons that practised good. All the truth of God is thus kept in its proper place.

Therefore I implore you, reject not the solemn declaration of the Son of God. It may be the last time for you to hear the gospel. If you hear His voice, you have eternal life ; if not, judgment awaits you. W. K.

A WARNING WORD.

Reader, if you have already "received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk* ye in him ;" and forget not to warn and exhort those who are yet "*without Christ.*" But do these last two words describe your state ? Then, indeed, it is truly

awful! Whatever else you may have—youth, beauty, health, wealth, honour, religious reputation, the esteem of men, and the smiles of the world—you are CHRISTLESS. Fearful condition! Friend, wake up to see your case in its true light! You have not on a wedding garment. Your sins are your only clothing in God's sight. How can you stand before Him? You cannot. You dare not, as you are. An unclean, unwashed, unrepentant, unforgiven sinner, your case is desperate. You are LOST.

Do you own this? Do you confess it? Do you take the place of self-judgment before God? Then I have good news for you. God loves you—spite of your sins. Jesus has died to blot them out by His precious blood, which "cleanseth from all sin." The Holy Ghost has come down from heaven to bear this witness from God to all who believe, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17). He forgives and forgets.

Now, then, delay no longer. Come to Jesus at once. Trust Him simply. Cast yourself on Him. Believe His words, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jno. vi. 37). "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts x. 43). "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" (Jno. iii. 16). Space fails to allow more, but you have read enough surely to lead you to Jesus.

W. T. P. W.

"WE PERSUADE MEN."

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God .... For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again .... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 COR. v. 10-21.

A distinguished theologian is reported to have once asked a noted stage actor, "How is it, when you act, you can move your audience, almost at your will, either to laughter or tears, whereas when I preach they are unmoved?" To this, quoth he, "My Lord, the answer is easily given. I PLAY FICTION as though it were FACT, whereas you PREACH FACT as though it were FICTION." Pointed, though doubtless unpalatable words which all who preach or write to souls may well give heed to. Paul needed them not. FACTS pressed heavily on his spirit, and made him most urgent in dealing with precious souls. If you doubt it, my reader, afresh peruse the solemn, most solemn, yet blessed verses at the head of this paper, and then ask yourself, Do I believe this fervent ambassador?

I shall briefly draw your attention to TWO FACTS in this passage which were the mighty

springs in the Apostle's soul of earnest and affectionate appeal to men. They were 1, "*The terror of the Lord*" (*v.* 11); 2, "*The love of Christ*" (*v.* 14).

The verses I have quoted give a wonderful picture of the whole family of man. Christ is the central object. His wondrous love to ruined man evidenced in His death is the theme. His love, and His atoning work for sinners, blessed, and reconciled to God by His death are in bright relief in the forefront of the picture, if I may so say, while the background (for every picture has its background) is the judgment-seat of Christ, with "the terror of the Lord" for all those who know not His love.

Let us look at the picture a little more closely, and, first, we will examine the background.

1.—"THE TERROR OF THE LORD."

Remember this is a fact, not a myth. "*Knowing* the terror of the Lord, *we persuade* men." What will produce this "terror"? "We must ALL appear (be manifested) before the judgment-seat of Christ." Does Paul fear it for himself? Certainly not. He says, "We ARE *made manifest* unto God," *i.e.*, even now. He has had all out now with God, sins, sin, guilt, ruin, everything he has had fully exposed to God's eye, and he knows how all has been fully met, by that death of which he speaks in a moment. He does not wait for the judgment-seat to detect anything; grace has led him into God's presence in the full acknowledgment and confession of all even now, and *that all* has been fully met by Christ's death. He is very clear on this. "*We*

ARE *made manifest unto God.*" Reader, are you? But what a terrible moment will that be for the sin-screening, guilt-hiding, iniquity-covering, transgression-veiling, gospel-neglecting sinner, when, compelled to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, ALL will be exposed, manifested and brought to light. "The things done in the body" are in view. Of things "good" there are none; of "bad," abundance. The Christless soul, having "done evil" only, comes forth "unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 29). What can be the only issue? The lake of fire. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). Unsaved reader, do you believe this? God *says* it. Paul *knew* it. I believe it. The devil believes it. And you doubt it? You—who are most concerned in the matter! Can it be? What madness! what utter folly! Be persuaded. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men." Yes, beloved reader, I would persuade you to flee from the wrath to come. It is a fact. It is no use your denying it. God has said "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i. 9). Paul was so impressed with the terror which that moment must bring to unsaved souls that his whole heart longed for their salvation, hence his words "we persuade men." The last account the Holy Ghost gives of his preaching is in Acts xxviii., and then he spent "from morning till evening" "*persuading* them concerning Jesus." It is a mighty, solemn fact,

there is judgment coming most surely. Sinner! I warn you, flee!

Do I hear you saying—I am persuaded, I see my danger, my sin, it's certain judgment, my inevitable destruction if I go on as I am going; how am I to escape? Oh! you have seen the background of my picture and like it not. It is well. Fix now, therefore, your undivided attention on the lovely One who is found in the front, and all your terror shall vanish, and your fears flee away.

2.—"THE LOVE OF CHRIST."

"For the love of Christ constraineth us." Charming words! Earnest as this blessed ambassador might be, urged by the sense of the "terror" of the day when the majesty of God will be maintained by the final and eternal judgment of sin, personally, in those who are there found in their sins, he was only the more urgent because he had discovered that, in order to save men from that day of judgment, He who will then be the Judge had Himself died to deliver the guilty.

Love was the spring of this marvellous act. Sin had come in. This, God must judge in maintenance of His own character. But sin brought death, and, viewed in this light, "ALL were dead." Further, "ALL must appear before the judgment seat of Christ." To appear there with a single sin is certain and everlasting condemnation. What is to be done? He who knows the extent of man's offence alone can meet or atone for it. After the offence, but before the day when He will judge it, Christ

(who will be the Judge) enters the scene and becomes a man that, as a man, He may die and bear the judgment resting on man. This indeed is love! What was man's condition in God's sight because of sin? "*Then were all dead.*" But oh! what news! "*One died for* ALL." Magnificent grace! Unparalleled love! Uncalled, unasked by one, He "DIED FOR ALL." This is a new kind of love. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jno. xv. 13). Mark the words "no man." Here, however, dear reader, is love which exceeds that. The love of Jesus, the God-man, far exceeds this limit, for He died for all—for *His enemies* certainly, not the less for His friends, if He had any. Blessed Jesus! It is this love manifested in death—love stronger than death, and which many waters could not quench—which wins the heart to Him. Does He love me? Yes. Does He love you? Yes, without a doubt. Are you sure? Positive. Why? Because He died. For whom? "For ALL." Now get out of that number if you can.

But how can I be sure that He loves *me*? Because He died for you. Why did He die? Because He loved you. Well, if this be so, I ought to live unto Him who died for me. Quite so; and that is just what Paul judged. So wonderful is His love in dying for such guilty sinners as we have all been, that the moment the heart discovers it the judgment is formed—I ought to be for Him who is so thoroughly for me. The soul that gets hold of this is "a new creature" truly, and has the sweet sense of being "recon-

ciled" to God. Enmity is cast out and annihilated by such overwhelming love as the cross displays. All is of God. The desire to have us near Himself, and the love that effects this blessed result by the cross are both divine. Further, He sends out the message of reconciliation first by Christ, next by ambassadors, who, standing in the very stead of Christ, proclaim the heavenly tidings in the ears of all who will listen. It is suited to ALL, it is designed for ALL, it is proclaimed to ALL, that "One died for ALL," and if "ALL" do not believe, it is their own fault and to their own eternal loss. Reader, beware lest you slight heaven's message. Hear it!

"*Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though* GOD DID BESEECH *you* by us; WE PRAY YOU *in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* FOR *he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*" What a message! God now beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself, because He once on the cross took up with Christ the question of sin, there and then His judgment of it fell upon Christ, so that now whoever believes in Him stands before God in all the value of that work by which God has been glorified and sin put away. God's righteousness and His estimate of that work are seen not only in His taking Christ out of the grave into glory, but by His putting the believer in Christ in the very same place before Him that Christ now has. In death on the cross He took our place, in life now before God He gives us His place. What righteousness and what love!

My reader, can you find it in your heart once more to refuse God's appeal to you? Say not like Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"—but, receiving the word simply, may your response be in the words of the ambassador elsewhere, "I AM PERSUADED, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38 39). W. T. P. W.

SAVED ON THE SPOT.

On my way home the other night, a Christian woman stopped me and begged me to go and visit a friend of hers who was dying of consumption. So the next day, on my way to the office, I turned aside to see her. She was a married woman, and had a kind husband. Hearing she was so ill, I was scarcely prepared, as I opened the cottage door, to see her lying on the sofa by the wall. Her sister, a Christian I had known for years, was in the room, nursing the woman's child, a little girl about two years old. From what I had been told, I believed that the poor woman was anxious about her soul.

"Well, Mr. S., I am glad to see you, I have been waiting for you all day, and I have been wondering every moment if you would come, and whenever there was a knock I thought it was you," were her first words of greeting. I

immediately took the chair set for me by the head of the sofa.

"And why have you sent for me?" I asked.

"I want to know how my soul is to be saved," was her deeply earnest answer, with her eyes riveted on me.

"'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' is God's word—can you trust it?"

"I wish I could."

"If you rest your soul upon the finished work of Christ, all your sins are for ever gone."

"Ah," she said, "I am too great a sinner for God to save me; I have been such a sinner."

I learnt afterwards, from those who had known her from childhood, that she had been outwardly a most blameless character all her life, a regular chapel goer and Sunday scholar, a good wife and mother, and yet her deep conviction of sin was most marked. Her sister told me that for ten days she had had very little rest day or night on account of her sins. Hers was a deep conviction wrought by the Spirit of God. Indeed, I soon felt the Spirit of God was working with her. I had no need to press "repentance toward God" to such an one, all that she wanted was "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." This I urged on her.

When I argued on the sufficiency of Christ's work, she fully assented, and appeared to see that God was satisfied. But, when I told her this was all she had to believe, she immediately drew back, and feared she was a hypocrite, for she was not saved, "she wished she was."

"If you were drowning in the river," I said,

"and a man was on the bank and threw you a rope, what would you do?"

"I should seize it," she said.

"Well, you are drowning, God has seen your lost state, and has given Christ to save you, and now He is waiting for you to accept Him as your Saviour."

"*I wish, I wish* I could," she said.

"Well," I said, "if you owed a month's rent, and I were here this afternoon with the money in my hand offering it you, would you lie there and keep saying, I wish I could take it! I wish I could take it?"

"No, I should take it at once."

"Well, then, do so with Christ."

"I would like to, dearly, but I cannot," she replied.

As my time was now gone, and I had urged every point, and explained everything as plainly as I could, and the woman was yet clearly undelivered, I looked to the Lord in silent prayer for some word that might set her free, and that prayer the Lord heard.

"You have been a great sinner," I said; "but of all the sins you ever committed you are committing the worst now, for you are rejecting the love of God. I must go now, and I shall have to tell God the result of this visit. I shall have to tell Him that I offered Christ to you and you wouldn't have Him, that I offered you a free pardon in His name and you rejected it; and," I added, "the worst place in hell cannot be too bad for such a sin. Here you are, a sinner needing a Saviour, and God has sent me to offer

Him to you this afternoon and you will not have Him."

"Oh, don't say that," she said, as the perspiration stood on her face in her agony of mind.

"Well," I said, "I must go now. Will you accept Christ or will you not?"

She paused, and then replied in deepest earnestness, "*I will accept Christ.*"

"Can I tell God that you accept Christ?"

"Yes," she said, "You may tell Him now."

I knelt down with a full heart and thanked the Lord for having enabled her to close with the offer of mercy. When I rose from my knees, her eyes were filled with tears.

"Ah, Mr. S., I can die now!"

"Well," I said, "don't you see how simple it is?"

"Yes; and I often lay awake at nights trying to believe it, but I could not bring my mind to it; but now I see it all."

I then left. Next day I made my way to the cottage. I lifted the latch with fear and trembling, for my heart was very unbelieving, and mere natural excitement is often mistaken for the work of God. My unbelief was soon rebuked, however. The sofa was empty, and I saw the woman, to my surprise, sitting at the table.

"Well," I said, "how are you?"

"Weak in body, but all right in soul."

"How did you get on after I left you?"

"Well, I was so full of joy I hardly know what I did. One or two neighbours who knew my misery came in, and, when I told them I was happy, they were amazed and asked what you

had said. I said, 'He told me nothing but what I knew before, but he gave me no chance but to accept Christ.'" And she added to me, "I never should have been saved, only you drove me into a corner and I had no choice."

"Ah," I said, "you stayed away from Christ till you could stay no longer. No one ever comes to Christ until compelled."

She spoke very calmly and happily, and appeared hopeful about her recovery. This was on Friday.

Soon after I left another Christian, Mr. B—, for whom she had sent some days before, having just arrived in town, came into the cottage.

"Well," she said, "you're come at last."

"Yes," he said, "what can I do for you?"

"It's all done," she said.

"What?" he asked in surprise, for he had not heard of her conversion. "Are your sins all gone?"

"All gone."

"And is your soul saved?"

"Yes; I am saved, through the blood of the Lamb."

"Then my work is done?"

"Yes," she said again, "it's all done; but you can praise the Lord for it."

Mr. B—— knelt down, and thanked the Lord for His goodness in answering prayer, and saving another soul from hell.

Unsaved reader, what is there to hinder your being decided for Christ, just where you read this, and being likewise saved on the spot?

A. T. S.

DUPED BY THE DEVIL.

"Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."—REV. xii. 9.

Solemn is the truth contained in this verse—the whole world subject to Satan's wily deceptions!

The word *Satan* signifies *adversary*. Now, the work of an adversary is to oppose, to injure, and to deceive in any and every way. And thus it is that Satan deals with man as his object; malignant and diabolical, and fully in accordance with his loveless character, is it to allure to his own fearful doom of "everlasting fire" the "whole world."

World, beware! be on thy guard! Awake to the net spread beneath thy feet! Slumber not nor sleep! Thine adversary is abroad and seeketh thy ruin! Oh! arouse thee to a full sense of his terrible purpose! He wants thee to share his hell—to be his miserable companion and dupe in his dreary abode of wailing and weeping and gnashing of teeth, for ever and for ever.

World, bestir! Men, women, awake! awake!

The experience of thousands of years has made him an adept in his deceptive arts and practices. His plans have been successful to a fearful degree, and these plans are being developed from year to year. Scheme after scheme, device after device, invention after invention, have been brought to bear with terrific effect on man, and yet, not content with past achievements, past victories, and past successes, the forge of hell

still rings with the manufacture of new weapons of seduction and deceit!

Different kinds of fish are caught by different kinds of bait; the same would, of course, never suffice for all; and hence the skilful angler adopts that which suits his purpose the best.

So with Satan! One kind of bait for one man, another kind for another.

First, *the habits of open sin!* See that young man grasp the sparkling glass and drain its contents! The taste is sweet! He takes another, and yet another. Time passes on. Moments of conviction, and resolution, and temporary reformation come, yet these are succeeded by awful relapses; and as restraint gives way to intemperance, intemperance to delirium, and delirium to death, Satan stands as spectator over his poor victim, and chuckles his fiendish notes of satisfaction, as he finds the success of this soul-destroying habit.

Oh! drunkard, bethink thee of the truth that thou "shalt not inherit the kingdom of God."

In close connection with this deception is the racecourse, the theatre, the card-table, the phantom of pleasure, all, in fine, that ministers to the "*lust of the flesh.*"

Oh! lovers of pleasure, remember that "they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Secondly, *the habit of business!*

What! can business, earning our daily food, be one of the flies on Satan's hook? Yes! What, even where no dishonesty, no chicanery, nothing underhand is tolerated? Yes! It little

matters to Satan what engages the heart of his victim so long as salvation, eternity, God, have not their due, their full, their proper place.

True it is on the other hand that "Satan finds some mischief still, for *idle* hands to do."

But, if he find mischief for *idle* hands, he can also persuade the busy hand that it has "*no time*" for God. Morning to night and night to morning he can fill up each moment with business, business, business,—work, work, work—and thus the wheel is kept revolving with such rapidity that time flies away and thought is excluded until the bait is completely swallowed and the heart closed against God.

Once on a time there lived a farmer, his ground was fertile, his stock increased, the markets were good, and so he prospered. Now this man accumulated much wealth and had to add to his farm and house accommodation. His neighbours spoke highly of him, and he himself looked forward with confidence to "easy times." But one night his dreams were arrested, and he heard the dread voice of a much neglected God saying to him, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee," and that very night he had, perforce, to leave his bursting barns and all-engrossing business, his time for self and "no time" for God, for an eternity, where the will of God, and that alone, is paramount.

Ah! how readily can Satan turn a "piece of ground," "five yoke of oxen," and "a wife," into a bait of allurement, or a net of betrayal, into his own labyrinth of woe! Men of business beware! Men of earthly care, domestic duty, or

social ties, remember that the thorns choked the seed, and that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches drown the word of God and make it unfruitful!

Thirdly. Another bait of strange colour and of remarkable power has lately proved exceedingly efficient, and Satan plies it with uncommon dexterity. It is not open sin, and it is not business, it is *religion*; not that religion which leads its professors to the present enjoyment of forgiveness, peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost, with the consequent outflow of a life of Christian activity, energy, and holiness, but one of form, of habit, of constraint, of duty, of legality, and of painful uncertainty!

Thus, Satan, finding that the paths of open sin, and of all-absorbing mercantile pursuit fail to command the heart or the interest of many, persuades them as to the advantages of a "religious life." He bids them esteem its purity, its hallowed associations, &c., and throws open the monastery, the convent, the cell, or, if indeed, such a path should be too restricted and too narrow, then, if only there be a strict observance of ordinances, rites and ceremonies, nothing further is required and the end cannot fail of approval. Let Satan succeed in getting a man dressed in the garb of profession, and bind his eyes with the bandage of formality, and he is content. Professor, beware!

We are told of five young women who attempted to ape the Christian, and who became outwardly religious. Their conduct was good, their zeal was great, their profession was loud.

They went a great length in this way, yet they lacked the one thing which could stand them in good stead at the moment of trial, they had "no oil in their vessels." They had not been "*born again*" of the Spirit of God! and when they came to knock at the gates of heaven the solemn voice from within said "I know you not." They fell into the hands of Satan! Empty professor, *thou* "must be born again!"

Fourthly. *The bait of procrastination.* Undeceived by the bait of mere profession, and fully assured of the sufficiency of Christ as both able and willing to meet their case, many, very many, are entrapped by Satan's gilded "*to-morrow.*" "Only put off till to-morrow" says the arch deceiver, and, when to-morrow comes, then to-morrow again, for *to-morrow never comes.*

Ah, procrastinator! God says "*to-day.*" "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." Smother and stifle conviction no more; thy day is drawing to a close, to-morrow will never come!

"Child of sin and sorrow,
Filled with dismay,
Wait not for to-morrow,
Yield thee to-day.

Heaven bids thee come
While yet there's room;
Child of sin and sorrow,
Yield thee to-day."

Beloved, unpardoned reader, whatever may have been the device which thine enemy has been using as a spell, a fascination, a leading string to hell, do,—do open thine eyes to thy danger. Some run thither wide awake, others

wander and fall therein blindfold. Some live and die in sin, others die lulled to sleep in the cradle of mere profession—but all alike meet the same doom, that of "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Nothing, nothing will do but decision for Christ, unreserved, absolute, and whole hearted decision! Decide, and decide *now!* He waits thy coming, He longs to have thee, and make thee know and enjoy that other spell, the charm of His truth and love, that thou mayest wander and err no more, but mayest find a perfect rest for thy guilty conscience in His sin-cleansing blood, and a pillow for thy wearied spirit in the tender bosom of His love. J. W. S.

"ARE YOU AFRAID TO DIE?"

I was requested by a friend to visit a girl who was dying of consumption, so I called at the house where she lived. She was, however, asleep at the time, but her mother appeared and invited me in. We soon got into conversation, and as her trials, which were very severe, were uppermost in her mind she spoke freely of them.

She told me her husband had died of consumption and that she had already lost five of her children by the same disease, and that the sixth (the one I had called to see) was now dying of it too; that, although once in very comfortable circumstances, she was now reduced to poverty, and altogether her case was one of deep trial.

"May I ask," said I, "*are you ready to meet God?* because, if you were, it would be a great comfort to you."

"Oh, no," she replied, "Indeed I am not; there are very few that can say that."

"Very few indeed," I replied, "but perhaps not as few as you think."

"I don't mean to say that I am *very bad*," she continued, "for all that know me can bear testimony to my *unblemished character?*" and she went on to tell me how much she was valued in her last situation as matron of an hospital.

"Both my grandfathers and my father were clergymen," she added, "so I ought to know enough about religion."

This at once explained to me why she was not ready to meet God. She was, like many another, trusting to her "unblemished character" and so forth, and thinking that these things counted more or less in God's sight as a set off against her sins; so I said to her, "Are you aware of what God says? '*All your righteousnesses are as FILTHY RAGS*' (Isa. lxiv. 6); consequently your 'unblemished character' and all you have spoken of are only 'filthy rags' in God's sight, as a ground work or help towards salvation."

She expressed astonishment at my saying so, and said it was contrary to what she had been taught. "I am a Protestant," she said. "Yes, but that won't save you either," I replied.

I then asked her to listen to me while I read her a part of Rom. iii., from the tenth verse, "*There is none righteous, no, not one.*" "*There is none that doeth good, no, not one.*"

"Do you ever do good?" I asked.

"Oh, of course I do *sometimes.*"

"Well, but God says you *don't.* 'There is *none* that doeth good, *no, not one.*' What you *think* is good in God's sight, is not so; *you have never done one good thing yet*, and your *best* works are only 'splendid sins!'"

I continued in this strain for some minutes and was glad to find, some days after, that our conversation had not been without effect, in showing her what a poor, sinful, wretched thing she was before God.

I left, promising to call back in two hours to see her daughter who, I heard was most anxious for an interview, and would probably be then awake. I returned accordingly, and shortly Miss —— came walking slowly into the room. She was very tall and pale and thin, and disease had already made sad havoc of her poor body.

She sat down near me and her mother left the room. After a little introductory conversation which naturally turned upon the subject of her illness, I said, "Do you think you will recover?"

"No," she replied, firmly and solemnly, "the doctors have given me up, and one of my lungs is already gone."

"I suppose, then, you sometimes think of ETERNITY and where you will spend it?"

"Oh, yes, since I got ill, I am always thinking about it."

"And, *are you ready to die?*"

"No, indeed, I am not: I have lived for the world and its pleasures and I should be terribly afraid to die."

"Has any one been to visit you and tell you how to be saved?"

"Yes, four or five have called, but I cannot understand them. They don't tell me *clearly* and *distinctly* in a *few words* how I am to be saved, and salvation seems altogether out of my reach, for I am so bad."

"It is *not* out of your reach," I answered, "do you imagine that you have to get good first and give up your sins before you can be saved?"

"Oh, of course, I know I must."

"Well, this is your *mistake*, you will find that, if God's word is clear upon any point, it is on *this*, that you have *not* to get good first, nor give up one of your sins *before* you are saved, but that God is willing to save you *now*, *as you are*, dead in your sins, and you can be saved before I leave the room."

Miss —— laughed, as *I* thought, in ridicule, at my supposed ignorance, so I said "Why do you laugh?"

"Oh," said she, "it is not that I doubt what you say, but it is so different to all I have ever heard before."

"Well, look at this verse, "*God commendeth His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us*" (Rom. v. 8). Do you see it is '*while we were yet sinners*,' NOT *after we became good?*"

This seemed to strike her in a light it had never done before. Following up the subject, I turned to Eph. ii., and read from verse 1: "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past

ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

"Now," I said, "read those verses again carefully, and tell me do you think you could add anything to that black description of these people that would make it *worse?*"

She read the passage to herself carefully, and then said, "No; *nothing could be worse.*"

"And yet," I said, "they were saved *while* in that condition; for it goes on to say, 'But God who is RICH IN MERCY, for HIS GREAT LOVE wherewith HE LOVED US EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN SINS, hath QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST.' Is it not wonderful that God should have 'GREAT LOVE' for these poor sinners, even when they were dead in sins?"

"It is, indeed, wonderful."

"And how did He prove His love? The verse tells, 'even when we were dead in sins, HATH QUICKENED US TOGETHER WITH CHRIST.' You see it does not say a word about getting good first, but that God made them alive in Christ who till then were still dead in sins, and so is He willing to do with you now if you will only allow Him. Do you see," I asked, "that God is willing to save you as you are, dead in sins?"

"Yes, I do," she said with great earnestness. She seemed greatly struck by that beautiful expression "For his GREAT LOVE wherewith HE LOVED US." GREAT LOVE. "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).

And, dear reader, what I want you to grasp is that your sins need now be no barrier between God and you. It is quite true that God hates sin, that He is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," but in order that the sinner, whom He loves, should not be shut out for ever in an eternal hell, He has given His own precious Son to die on Calvary, and there, upon Him, He has poured forth His wrath against sin. That cry that broke the silence of those three hours of darkness, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" tells us in some feeble measure what an awful moment it was for the Lord Jesus. Christ has drunk the cup of wrath and exhausted God's judgment upon sin, and now God is free to offer to the *worst* sinner on earth forgiveness, pardon, and eternal life.

My time was up, so I left the poor girl looking much happier, and as I went she thanked me heartily for coming to see her. The word had, doubtless, begun to do its work in her soul. Five days after, I called back again and found her this time worse and not able to stand up, but she was the picture of happiness.

I asked, "Are you afraid to die?"

"Not the least; why should I be afraid now?

I *know* my sins are forgiven and death would be a happy thing to me now. All I should regret would be leaving my mother, to whom I might have been some help."

I never saw any one speak of death so happily and peacefully, but death is no trial to the Christian, it is but the portal into paradise.

Another day she said, "I am sure I should never have come to Christ had I not been *forced by dire necessity*, but now I thank God for this illness from the bottom of my heart."

"Supposing," I said, "some one asked you now if you had everlasting life, what would you say?"

"I should say Yes, because the Lord Jesus Christ says 'Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth in me HATH EVERLASTING LIFE'" (John vi. 47.)

O, how many hundreds of souls have found peace by believing what Jesus says in that simple little verse. Reader, consider it well, and may God bless it to your soul also.

I was happy after this to see the power of the new life which she had received manifesting itself increasingly in her walk and conversation, and her earnest desire to see other souls brought to Christ. But, in truth, it is not until the soul has received eternal life that any fruit for God can be brought forth. The heart, that has been touched by the sense of the love of God, delights itself in spending and being spent for Him who loves us, and has washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father! It is only to

be expected that, if we do really love Jesus, our lives should be spent in His service.

Miss—— fell asleep in Jesus two or three months after my last interview with her as given above. Towards the close of her life on earth her longings to meet her precious Lord Jesus were very great, and they were not left long unsatisfied.

Reader—*Are YOU ready to die?* J. C. T.

DIFFICULTIES.

No. 4.—"I AM TOO BAD TO BE SAVED."

"I am too bad to be saved," is oftentimes the language of an awakened soul. We have frequently met with persons in this state, and have, *as a rule*, found that they *did not* believe it; the real hindrance being that they did not believe they were as bad as God declares them to be. I believe a soul that has accepted God's judgment as to his state will shrink from anything like a *public* confession of sin, hence I have no sympathy with public confessions of sin, believing that they are in most part wanting, either in depth or reality, or perhaps, both.

Now, I know very well that many deeply exercised persons have the thought that somehow the Lord is pleased with these exercises, hence they are encouraged, instead of at once resting on the finished work of Jesus. But does God need my convictions and anxieties to add to the value of the blood of Christ? Does He save the poor sinner *because* he is troubled about his sin? God is *waiting* to be gracious; He saves,

having respect to His Son and His accomplished work. You may be feeling, or not feeling; realising, or not realising. God is a Saviour, irrespective of what you feel, think, and realise. I have known people who have been converted and have *felt* their sins after; others, again, get a judgment upon their state *before* getting peace.

Some put faith as an object before the soul; others their badness; but it really matters little what is before the soul, if it is not Christ there is no salvation. If I am occupied with my sins, I may make up my mind *to be unsaved.* I must break with every hindrance and receive Christ simply as a sinner: not as a sinner too bad to be saved, for then that is a qualification. You cannot be worse than *lost*, can you? Well; "The Son of man is come to save that which was *lost*" (Matt. xviii. 11). "Him that cometh to me I will in no-wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Now you may tell me about your sins being numerous as the sand on the sea-shore; you may tell me you are the worst sinner *out* of the lake of fire, and I will not question its truth; still, it remains true at this moment of time, "him that cometh to me I will in no-wise cast out." Now I am warranted in saying that the reason you are not saved is because you will not come to Jesus Christ; it is not because of your sins and badness and vileness, but simply this, you will not come to Jesus. "But," you may say, "are there none excluded?" Yes, there is a class who will not be saved, and a numerous one too. Do you say, "I know who they are, they are sinners like me, too bad to be saved?" There, friend, you are

mistaken. The unsaved and unsaveable persons are those who *will not come to Jesus*. None others are excluded from salvation, and they exclude themselves.

"But, if I come to Him, will He receive me?" You had better try Him, if you are not inclined to believe His word, "I will in no-wise cast out;" test Him on that very point. I know His heart and His love better than you, for He received me *in* my sins. I have been told by anxious enquirers that they have *tried* to come to Jesus and could not; I dare say that the mistake is that people overlook the little word of two letters ME. Suppose a friend said, "Come to me;" I make no difficulty about coming. What would my friend think, were I to say, "I can't come, for my clothes are bad, I am in rags?" Would he not say, "I saw you were in rags when I called you, I want you to come to me as you are." Am I to put my rags before me, when my friend puts himself before me? Now, anxious one, Jesus calls you; He sees your rags, your badness, but He bids you come! Never mind *how* you come, only see to it that it is to Him you come.

But is He changed since He was on earth? No; He then bore the title, "Friend of publicans and sinners," and He bears it still. The circumstances are changed; the anguish of the cross having been exchanged for the glory of the right hand of God—but His heart is unchanged and unchanging, amidst the brightest glories of heaven.

Art thou a despairing sinner? despairing of

help and salvation because thou art *so* bad? Oh, I have news that will make thy poor, wretched heart happy; but the news *must* be received. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of *all* acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the word to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15). The distinct object of Christ's coming into the world was to save sinners; the Holy Ghost would *fix* your thoughts upon the *why* Jesus came from heaven to earth. Believe and accept this saying—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He came for the express purpose of saving *bad* people—there were neither good nor righteous to be saved. (Rom. iii. 10, 12.) Do you say, "I am too bad?" He makes no qualifications. Are you a sinner? is the question; did He come on purpose to save *such?*

I have no doubt you are very bad, but you cannot lay claim to the title "chief of sinners," for he has been with the Lord for 1800 years. Jesus met His bitterest enemy on the road to Damascus. Light, love, grace, and glory triumphed on that memorable noon when the Saviour met the sinner. Jesus, the *persecuted*, poured His grace into the heart of His *persecutor*. Saul, the "chief of sinners," is in heaven, the richest trophy divine grace ever produced. Jesus came down from the glory and met Satan's master-piece—met him and saved him. Canst thou take encouragement from this? You cannot feel yourself bad enough, but, most blessed it is to know that the chief of all sinners has been met by the risen Saviour, and *saved*.

Now, my friend, will you come to Jesus just

as you are? I assure you you won't in the very least improve your position, or increase your prospects of being saved, by thinking of your good self, or bad self. May the Lord lead you to break every snare with which Satan would hinder you from getting to Christ.

W. S

SHUT IN OR OUT.

"And the LORD shut him in."—GEN. vii. 16.

"And the door was shut."—MATT. xxv. 10.

The door was shut, the flood rose high,
In vain those shrieks of agony;
While, sheltered from that awful flood,
The saved ones lived, shut in by God.

The door is open, open now
For all whose hearts to Jesus bow;
And sheltered by His precious blood
They're saved from sin, and live to God.

"Come unto me," the Saviour cries;
Haste, as the day of mercy flies,
Or soon that freely opened door
Will shut, and ope to you no more.

ANON.

HOW GOD SAVED ME.

I desire, as the Lord shall help me, to record His wondrous dealing with my soul on April 8th, 1869, and may He condescend to use it to some poor burdened one for His Name's sake, that He may be glorified!

I was brought up religiously, as the world uses the expression; my parents were Dissenters, and taught us that to go to a theatre was the height of sin and evil. While at home I was strenuous in "dead works" (Heb. ix. 14), teaching at the Sunday school, playing the organ at the Parish Church, (where we were allowed to go, the services being more attractive than at the chapel,) tract distributing, holding Bible classes, etc., etc. All my friends seemed satisfied as to my state, never questioning but that all was well with my soul. After my marriage I was persuaded to go to London amusements, theatres, concerts, and the like. At first I had misgivings of conscience, but soon they were all hushed, and in the spring of 1869 I was looking forward to a gay season in town. Having taken tickets for a reading by Charles Dickens, before leaving my country house I went into my conservatory and gathered a white camellia to wear in my hair, sealing the stalk and putting it carefully into a little tin box to keep it fresh for the occasion, little thinking that before the time came to wear it I should have lost all taste for such amusements, and the flower would be left to die in its little coffin, my soul having, through grace, obtained "eternal life."

I was invited to stay two days with my sister and her husband, who, through mercy, are Chris-

tians, not in name only, but in deed and in truth. I regretted that I could not refuse the urgent wish expressed for me to be with them, knowing the time would hang heavily on me, the only subject in their household of real interest being the Lord Jesus and His glory. When I arrived I found my brother-in-law at home, suffering from indisposition. During conversation he said, "Have you ever heard me relate the circumstances of my conversion?" On my replying in the negative, he told me how he had had exercise of conscience and knew that his soul was not safe for eternity, but Satan whispered, "If you give up the world and make a profession of religion you will be sure to fall, and then you will be worse off than ever, for it is written, 'No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.'" Continuing unhappy and unsettled, he spoke to a brother in Christ, who took him aside and read to him the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. When he came to that blessed verse, "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 . . . with his stripes we are healed," he could see it all. The way of escape had been provided by the judgment being borne by the sinner's substitute. It seemed to him like a glorious pattern weaved by a skilful workman, every colour in its place shining brightly, and he finished the account by saying, "Blessed be God! ever since that moment I have never had one doubt of my complete acceptance and salvation."

How I secretly longed to be able to echo that

joyful certainty in my own heart; but, instead, there was nothing there but the hollowness of the world, the blank wretchedness of uncertainty. I was told some of the Lord's people were coming to read the word of God. I cannot forget the happy faces of those who came with their bibles in their hands. I knew I was the only hypocrite present, and when they knelt to ask the Lord's blessing I said, "Lord, do not hinder the blessing because I am here." I rose to leave as they were meditating on Hebrews xi., when this thought came with mighty power into my soul—I shall be punished for ever in hell if I do not believe Jesus died for *me*. I had believed that He died on the cross, but never that His death there had atoned for *my* sins, and now I saw with terrible reality that unbelief as to *this* would sink my soul into the lowest hell. Then came the word of God over and over in my stricken heart. "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

On arriving at home the word of God said to me, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." I said, "What, Lord, all the long black list of the sins of my whole life?" The answer came, "As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Then I began to praise. "Jesus, thou shalt never hear the last of this."

"Loudest of the crowd I'll sing—
While heaven's resounding arches ring
With shouts of sovereign grace"

I longed for a voice so loud that all the world might hear that Jesus had stooped to save such a guilty one as me. I could see, by faith, my new found Saviour, once bleeding, dying on the cross—bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree." My head was a fountain of tears of joy, and, failing to sleep that night, I said, "Lord, I will lie down in Thine arms for the first time in my life." And now I can say those same sweet real words, "Blessed be God, never since that hour have I had one doubt of my complete acceptance and salvation."

And now, dear reader, surely you can see how condemned I was in that momentous hour by the word of the living God. I had all my life been making God "a liar," for I had not believed the record "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;" but, thanks to His mighty and effectual grace, I then believed the record, I took the gift of eternal life, and was "born again by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever." Do you not see also that the blessed work wrought in me was not by my looking into my heart to see what I thought about God's word, but by believing that what God said, He meant, that "He hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son?" (1 John v. 10, 11). Believe this precious record and you will rejoice as I do. I ask "Do you believe on the Son of God?" You answer "Yes I do." Then God says you have everlasting life—for it is written "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life."

M. C.

THE THREE INQUIRERS.

In looking into the word of God, which as a mirror reveals fallen man in all his various phases of sin and unbelief, we find three classes of inquirers, and it will be profitable, with the Lord's blessing, to look on each for a little, and see how their characters therein pourtrayed are re-produced in these last days. First, then, let us look at Isaiah xxi. 11, 12, where we have the sceptical or scoffing inquirer. Dumah, it appears, was the son of Ishmael (1 Chron. i. 30), the child of the flesh, son of the bondwoman, the persecutor of the one born of the Spirit, and he dwelt in the country of Seir, the country of the "profane man," Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright: he calleth to the watchman and says, "Watchman, what of the night?" The answer he gets is a most solemn one, for the hope of the watchman is, "The night is far spent and the day is at hand," a morning without clouds; but, for the poor scoffer, the night cometh, a night of endless woe that never knows a morning. These children of nature, the sons of Edom and Ishmael, are described by Peter in his second epistle as "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" and *willingly* ignorant withal of the judgment of the old world, "of the men who were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood, who said unto God, Depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for us" (Job xxii. 15-17). "Walking after their own lusts" tells

us the secret of their being "*willingly* ignorant," for those lusts will not bear the light of His coming, and they know that for all these things God will bring them into judgment, and therefore they would fain persuade themselves that only half of the 27th verse of Hebrews ix. is true, "It is appointed unto men once to die;" there they would stop, compelled to believe what they cannot deny, because of what is every day before their eyes, *willingly* forgetting that the same book that tells of death speaks also of judgment to come. Like the poor hunted ostrich in the desert hiding its head in the sand, thinking thus to elude its pursuers, so these poor blinded hearts would believe Satan's lie, and think thus, by persuading themselves that these things are not so, to escape the sure judgment of God. "But the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering is narrower than that he can wrap himself in it" (Isaiah xxviii. 20).

In Luke xiii. 23 we have the second class, the curious inquirer, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" To this class belong those who pride themselves in their power of proving their favourite points of doctrine, for whom the Gospel of God's love is either "too high" or "too low," who will reason and argue on the counsels of God, His sovereignty and man's responsibility, while, as described by Paul, their souls are destitute of the truth, proud, knowing nothing, but doubting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strifes, railings, &c., instead of being content with whole-

some words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. The answer he gets from the lips of the Lord Himself is indeed also a solemn one, and tells him to consider his own eternal interests before he enquires about others in this momentous matter, to see to it that he is amongst "the saved" ere the door of mercy is closed. The One who gave that answer is now the seated One at God's right hand, He has died for sinners on the cross, He lives to die no more, and He is coming again. While He sits upon the throne of God the door of mercy stands open wide, but, when He rises up, the door is shut for ever, and then many a poor curious inquirer, many an unconverted reasoner, many who have eaten and drunk in His presence and who have heard Him teach in their streets, those who have been found at the table of the Lord and who have heard Him speak through His servants in His word, yea, who have themselves even prophesied in His name and done many wonderful works, will stand outside that closed door and say, "Lord, Lord, open to us," and must hear Him say, "I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Man, intent on the things of this life, says to God, *Depart* from me; but God says, "*Come*," "*Come* unto me," "inquire, return, *come.*" "*Come*" is the gospel word: "*come* to the waters," "*come*, buy wine and milk without money and without price," "*come* unto me, all ye weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" but the word to the refuser on that day will be, "*Depart*, I *never* knew you."

And now we turn to the third class, the anxious inquirer, in Acts xvi. 30. How blessed to hear the cry welling up from the depths of a broken heart, "What must I do to be saved?" What a relief to turn from the caviller, from the mere intellectual reasoner to the heart-broken sinner, and tell out that simple but blessed answer to his cry, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." What can be simpler than the means, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"? What more certain than their operation, "and thou *shalt*"? What so blessed as the result, "be saved"?

Yes, saved from yonder burning lake, saved to be in heaven for ever, saved to be with Jesus and like Him for ever. "It is finished" is the dying Saviour's cry, nothing can be added to it, nothing can be taken from it; He has, by Himself, met all the claims, infinite and eternal claims of a holy God, and all the infinite need of a poor guilty sinner's soul; the message has gone forth, God's own record of His Son, and he that believeth shall never perish, but hath everlasting life.

"I dare not work my soul to save,
For Christ that work has done,
But I would work like any slave
Through love to God's dear Son."

Reader, may I ask you one question? on your soul's answer hang your eternal interests. "What think ye of Christ?"

W. R. H.

"WHITER THAN SNOW."

Reader, do you know of anything whiter than snow? I put that question some time ago to an old man, one who was tottering on the brink of the grave, and to whom I was endeavouring to speak of Jesus. Some remark having been made relative to the late fall of snow, I seized the opportunity, and asked him the question I now ask you. He seemed surprised, hesitated, and then declared he did not. I said I did. He, looking very hard at me, asked what it was? I replied, a sinner washed in the precious blood of Jesus. I then told him of the verse in Isaiah which says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah i. 18); also the end of the seventh verse of the first epistle of John, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin;" and of David's prayer, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm li. 7).

And now, dear reader, I would ask you another question, Have you been washed whiter than snow in the precious blood of Jesus? You can never enter heaven unless you are. Even if it were possible for you to enter unwashed, think what a black spot you would be midst the dazzling brightness. Unless born again with a new nature, heaven would be no heaven to you. Oh, dear reader, in the light of the coming eternity I solemnly ask you to consider this matter. Decide now for Christ.

Do not say I will wait till another time. How do you know you will have another time—another opportunity? You have not a lease of your life. Now God offers—to-morrow might be too late. Oh, let me intreat of you, before you lay down this paper, to settle the question. You might be called at any moment to stand in the presence of a holy, sin-hating God, Are you prepared to meet Him? Could you bear His eye looking deep into all the secrets of your heart? Oh, no, you could not! But, let me tell you how you can. Suppose you owed an immense sum of money and had nothing wherewith to meet the demands of the creditors, who were likely to come down on you at any moment for the amount, what peace of mind could you have? But suppose a friend steps in and pays the whole debt, you can then walk boldly through the streets, no fear of being arrested. And why? Simply, the debt has been paid. So it is with the sin-debt; we have nothing with which to meet the demands of a broken law, and a sin-hating God. Christ met all, for those who believe, eighteen hundred years ago. On Calvary the Lord made to meet on Him the iniquities of us all. (Isa. liii. 6.) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet. ii. 24). Jesus descended into the grave without those sins, and, rising the third day without them, ascended into the presence of God as our accepted Representative. God looks on Him, not on the sinner,—

"WHITER THAN SNOW."

"Because the sinless Saviour died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on Him, and pardon me."

This is the message of God to you, believe it, and you are saved. Oh, do make Him your choice!—His loving arms are open to receive you, let Him hide you in His robe of perfect, spotless righteousness. What is there in the world to attract? its pleasures, its friendship—are they not hollow? Oh, take the reality!

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life" (Deut. xxx. 19). S. E. C.

RESURRECTION.

The gospel may be looked at on many sides. From God's side and from man's—the dark side of death and judgment—the bright side of life and glory. Grace, glory, righteousness, judgment, are all presented in the gospel of Christ. If there is one side, however, more than another that may be called bright, it is the resurrection side of the cross.

Resurrection is therefore a great truth, and is indeed for the Christian a blessed hope. Often one may see, in old church yards on the grave stones, the Latin words which signify "I shall rise again." Well, it is true of every body that lies in the grave. Whatever the state of the person whose dust lies there, it is true that the body shall rise again.

But how will it rise? Think you, dear reader, as many do, there is one general resurrection of all the dead, and a final judgment at which the fate of each soul will be decided? This is a common thought, but entirely contrary to the word of God. That all *will* be raised is true, that all will be raised *together* is not true.

God says there are two resurrections; the resurrection to life, and the resurrection to judgment. (John v. 29.) The resurrection of the just, and the resurrection of the unjust. (Acts xxiv. 15.) The first resurrection (Rev. xx. 5, 6), and the second (Rev. xx. 13, 14, 15).

This is a deeply important matter. If there be no general resurrection at which the eternal destiny of each soul is to be fixed, it tells us that the destiny must be determined *now*. It insists on the paramount importance of settling in this present life *now*, *to-day*, the question of our salvation. As the tree falls so it will lie, and so will man, until the resurrection day, and he will be then raised according to the state before God in which he fell. Those who have believed and received Christ *now*, and die in faith, are partakers of the first resurrection, the resurrection to life, to glory, and "blessed and holy are they." Those who die in their sins are raised for the second death and outer darkness, not to be examined as to their merits, but to receive the execution of that sentence of death already passed upon them *here*, but to which they would not bow. They refused the only way of escape by sheltering themselves under the atoning blood of Christ. The sentence has already

gone out, "The soul that sinneth it shall die' (Eze. xviii. 4). "All have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23), and "All the world become guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19), and "The wages of sin is death."

Again, dear reader, we beseech you to look into this subject, and at once resign every thought of refuge, every idea of escape under cover of a general resurrection. Thousands have done this, and have perished only to find out their error in that day when they shall be "judged according to their work."

We fear that multitudes of professing Christians are induced, by the idea of a general resurrection, to put off their decision for Christ, and live on in a doubtful and doubting condition, half in the world, but yet with troubled consciences trusting that God will have mercy on them in the last day; when, as they wrongly believe, He will set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. Many souls, who will not honestly and boldly inquire to which class they *now* belong, have a feeble hope that they may be found amongst the sheep in that day. The reader may be such an one. If so, we would urge upon you this point, that there is not in fact, and ought not to be in your thoughts any question as to the entire difference between a sheep and a goat. A sheep is always a sheep, and a goat a goat. They are not interchangeable, nor transformable the one into the other. A goat now will not become a sheep before the throne of judgment. There are more points of resemblance between a sheep and a goat than between a sheep and a wolf, but, in

the eye of a discriminating person, a sheep is no more a goat than a wolf. In saying this, however, we do not admit this ordinary interpretation of the parable in Matt. xxv., which is not a scene of resurrection at all, nor of the judgment of the *dead*, but of living *nations* on the earth: in fact the "judgment of the quick," as distinguished from the judgment of the dead (see 2 Tim. iv. 1).

No, dear reader, believe what we say, or rather believe the word of God, which says that "*Now* is the accepted time, behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

It is now in this present life that your eternal destiny for weal or woe must be determined, and it is now, even while you read these pages, that you may, through faith in God's testimony, know your place before God, know that you are an object of His favour, and *know*, beyond one single doubt, that you have passed from death unto life, and shall be raised "in glory" to share for ever with the Lord Jesus the fruits of that atoning work which He Himself has wrought in His death to and bloodshedding for sin, and in His resurrection unto life.

Those who believe in Jesus the Lord, who, through faith in His blood, receive justification, are partakers of the first resurrection, of which He is the first fruits. (I Cor. xv. 20, 23). By faith they see *their* judgment already executed in the person of their Substitute, the Son of God, upon the cross. They look by faith and see—

"The burden he did bear
When hanging on the accursed tree,
For all their sins were there."

Thus they wait not for a day of judgment, but for the Lord's coming, and a day of glory. There is no condemnation to them, for Christ was condemned in their place. (Rom. viii. 1—3.) They being justified by faith have peace with God, who has reconciled them unto Himself by Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 1 ; 2 Cor. v. 18.)

When Christ returns He will raise them from the dead, if they have died before His return, or, if they are alive and remain, He will, without their passing through death, change their vile bodies, and take them to Himself, and so shall they be for ever with the Lord. (John xiv. 3 ; Phil. iii. 20, 21 ; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.)

But those who refuse His message of love now, who think they can do without a Saviour, who die in their sins, will be raised to be *judged according to their works*, and the result, *without exception*, is that they are cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 11—15.) There is no separating process then between good and bad, between believers and unbelievers, between sheep and goats, between saved and unsaved. All that is done now by the message of the gospel. The word of God now settles the question. He that believes is saved, he that believes not is condemned already. As they die so will they be raised, either to life and glory, or to eternal punishment.

Dear reader, close with the offer of the gospel, the good news of the grace of God. Is the world, is sin so dear to you that you will cling to it at the risk of your eternal happiness? Hear what the gospel tells you ; that Christ has died for sinners

and for sin ; He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He has once suffered for sins, the just One for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. This One, who once bore sins, God has now raised from the dead, thus proving His full satisfaction with the ransom paid in the precious blood of His own Lamb. The debt being discharged, the prison of the grave could no longer hold Him who entered it as our Substitute. God would "not leave his soul in hell (hades) nor suffer his holy One to see corruption." What rest it gives to the heart of a *believer* thus to realise that his Substitute has discharged his debt so well, that he is for ever free from every claim that a holy and righteous Judge could have against him. For "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more : death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. *Likewise* reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans vi. 9—11).

H. B.

"UP YONDER."

I had been for some weeks attending upon Mrs. H——. An incurable disease slowly, but certainly, was shortening her days, but, God be thanked, as the outer man grew weaker and more attenuated the inner man developed in vigour and power. She had known the Lord many years, her heart was in the enjoyment of

His love, and, as she felt the chill hand of death each day more firmly settling on her, her spirit brightened as the prospect of soon beholding Him who had loved her and died for her became more distinct before her soul. Two or three days before she passed away I said to her, "I am going to speak this evening at a cottage meeting in a village, there will be many young people there; have you any message for them?" She looked surprised at my question, and replied,

"I do not know them; how can I have any message for them?"

"True," I said; "But you are on the very verge of eternity, on the border land, within sight of the gates of glory; have you no word to send back to those that are young and careless?"

For a minute she fixed her eyes on me in silence, and then, deeply feeling the words she uttered and which came with great power and solemnity, she replied, "Tell them to come to Jesus, and bid them come *now*, and warn them not to put it off till a death-bed, for it takes it all ——." Here her strength and breath failed, and she could not finish the sentence.

I gathered her meaning, and responded, "By 'It takes it all,' I suppose you mean that when the death-bed is reached the body is so racked with pain and the mind so feeble that the affairs of the soul, if not previously settled, are neglected then, as the body claims such attention." She nodded her head in full assent, merely adding,

"Yes, bid them not put it off."

I then said "Good-bye! I will take your message, we shall not meet down here perhaps any

more, but we shall meet by and bye, shall we not?"

Slowly she withdrew her emaciated hand from beneath the bed clothes, and, pointing with one finger upwards, softly replied—

"Up yonder."

They were her last intelligible words to me, I have never forgotten them though years have rolled by since they fell upon my ear, and sure am I that "up yonder" I shall meet her.

And now, dear reader, permit me to ask, shall I meet you "up yonder?" Will you form one of the ransomed throng that will gather round the Lamb, and swell the chorus of redeeming love "up yonder?" I hear you say, I hope so. This will not do, it must be more than hope. With you hope means uncertainty. In scripture it never does; there, it is the heart's bright anticipation of things not seen as yet, but which it *knows* it possesses. The personal knowledge of Jesus alone can give this. Have you come to Him? If not—Oh! I beseech you give heed to the pointed word of warning above related. If unconverted, the enemy knows well how to whisper in your ear, "There's time enough." God's saint replies, "Warn them not to put it off till a death-bed." Friend, this is a true witness, beware lest thou shouldst despise her testimony, and find at length that instead of being "up yonder," as you vainly "*hope*," your portion is in "outer darkness," and your bed in hell for ever. This is the inevitable issue and final condition of all procrastinators. If you would be "up yonder"

you must respond to the words, "Tell them to come to Jesus, and bid them come *now*." Yes, *now*, even NOW, while this paper is in your hand. Come, simply as you are, to Jesus. Your sins are no hindrance. For sins and sinners Jesus came—to purge away the former, to deliver and save the latter. If you come to Him by simple faith, He will not put you away, but He will give you to know that by His death and blood-shedding He once and for ever put your sins away from God's sight, so that they can never rise again, and, further, that in His own death a foundation is laid in righteousness on which you can stand before God "clean every whit," your heart also now possessing the blessed assurance that through His love and finished work you will shortly be with Himself "up yonder." W. T. P. W.

DIFFICULTIES.

No. 5.—"HAVE I BELIEVED ARIGHT."

I once visited a young person, a quickened soul I am sure, but not at peace with God. I give, as nearly as I recollect, the following fragment of conversation.

"Are you quite happy?"

"I cannot say I am."

"Why are you not?"

"I don't know whether I have believed aright, and whether my faith be of the head or the heart."

"Is this matter of faith very much before your mind?"

"It is. I think I would be perfectly happy, if I only knew whether or not I had the right kind of faith, and if I have believed enough."

"Then *your* ground of peace would be faith whereas God's ground of peace is the blood of Jesus. You are practically putting faith into Christ's place. Faith's object is Christ. Faith, in itself, is not an object, but you are making it one. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house' (Acts xvi. 31). Does it say, 'Believe on faith?" No, it is 'on the Lord Jesus Christ;' then He ought to be before the soul of the inquirer. Occupation with faith should be substituted by occupation with Christ. The Holy Ghost, in the word, would ever turn the eye of the seeker, from looking *in*,—off to Christ and His blood. He would ever turn the gaze *out* and *up* to Him who 'died and rose again.'"

My reader, has faith assumed the prominence of an object or question before *your* soul? Suppose the serpent-bitten Israelites had kept looking *on* their wounds, would they have been cured? Were they told to look upon their wounds, or the lifted up serpent? Or, had they occupied themselves with what it was to look, would they have been cured? No, they looked away from themselves to God's remedy (John iii. 14, 15). Christ has been lifted up; do you believe it? Are you looking upon Him? Is your eye turned in upon yourself? Oh fatal occupation for an anxious soul! Christ is on the throne of God; cast up your eyes and behold Him *there*. Do not look within to see

whether you believe. Strike out boldly. Make a clean sweep of everything standing between you and God. Look straight out to Christ. Never for a moment concern yourself *about* coming, or believing. God has settled the ground of peace. Christ once *on* the cross *for* my sins, then buried, but now raised again, is God's object for my faith.

What is faith? I take it to be the firm conviction, resting on a divine testimony, of things not seen (Heb. xi. 1). I do not see Christ, I have never seen Him, but I *know* that He bore my sins in His own body on the tree; I *know* He was buried for me; I *know* God raised Him up from among the dead for my justification. Faith is this, the soul's assurance of divine realities. Faith has to do with Christ—He must be "touched," the more boldly the better, for "strong faith" glorifies God; yet "as many as touched *him* were made whole" (Mark vi. 56). Faith engages the *heart* with Christ, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe in thine heart* that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For *with the heart man believeth* unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9, 10). Faith is not a long and laboured process of the mind; it is the heart's reception of God's testimony as to Christ and His finished work.

Turn away from faith, and the strivings and workings of your mind, to God and His Son.

No. 6.—"I AM WAITING FOR THE SPIRIT."

In my experience I have never met a *deeply* exercised soul "waiting for the Spirit." In general I have found such people either indifferent to their soul's eternal interest, or, if concerned at all, using this objection as an opiate to deaden the voice of an awakened conscience.

It *seems* most reasonable to say, "I cannot believe of myself; I am a helpless, undone sinner, lifeless as to any movement of the soul God-ward, so I am waiting for the Spirit to make me believe." All this seems truthful; but, dear friend, it has this deadly error in it, you are shifting the blame of not being saved from yourself to God. This is serious work to be engaged in, and I warn you that a day is coming when your tongue will fail to give utterance to such a Satanic suggestion, *then* you will be "SPEECHLESS." (Matt. xxii. 12.)

"Waiting for the Spirit" can only end fatally; He is waiting on you. He is bearing witness to Christ and His finished work. By "one offering" Christ hath perfected for ever the sanctified, "*whereof* the Holy Ghost is a witness to us" (Heb. x. 12). The Holy Ghost has come down from the glory as the witness *on earth* to the finished work of Christ; on His assurance *we know* that the work is *done*—not doing, *finished*—not finishing. Now the work of the Spirit is *in* the man, the work of the Son of God *for* the man. I must rest on the latter *before* I consciously have the former. You are reversing things altogether; the Spirit of God would have you *rest* on what Christ has done, and then He

will give you to know His working in you. The Spirit *never* makes Himself an object; He does not speak of Himself (John xvi. 13); He glorifies Christ (verse 14); His testimony is of *Him* (John xv. 26). O, dear anxious one, there is a spell over you! Your mind is blinded to the glory of Christ and your true condition. The sun is shining in the heavens, you do not see it; why? Because you will not look! Open your eyes and gaze upon the sun. Let in the light.

The real secret of your difficulty is not that you *cannot* come, but that you *will* not come; "and ye *will* not come to me, that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

Let us illustrate your case thus :—

You are securely bound with chains of iron. It is an utter impossibility for you to break the fetters, your hands as well as feet being firmly riveted. Well, a friend in an adjoining apartment says, "Come to me, I have power to break your fetters." You say, "He mocks me; why does he bid me come when he knows I *cannot?* I will just wait until some one comes and unlocks my fetters." Now, waiting one, cannot you see yourself in all this? Is it lack of *power* or *will* which hinders thee coming? Surely, the latter. Was not Christ sent for the very purpose of breaking the prisoner's fetters? This is not the work of the Holy Ghost, and here is your mistake. Why, the Spirit of the Lord anointed Jesus with power for this very work: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the

captive and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 18, 19).

No. 7.—"I Hope to Believe some day or other."

Paul stood a prisoner before the "noble Felix," and as "he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix *trembled* and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a CONVENIENT season I will call for thee" (Acts xxiv. 25). Did this convenient seasor ever arrive? I believe it did not. Only think of an immortal soul having to meet God in judgment, talking of a "convenient season!" Salvation a thing of convenience! Eternal life a matter of convenience! O man, art thou mad? Were a fortune left me I would make the *present moment* the "convenient season" to examine the title deeds. Were I drowning—would I put off for an instant grasping the rope of safety?

The devil is most surely luring on men to their eternal ruin. "Time enough to be saved" say they, "Let us have our fling of the world, and when we are tired of its joys, when the heart gets wearied and sickened, we will think of Christ. Just let me have this concert over, or the ball next week; I want to go to that gay and fashionable party, and *then* I will think of my soul." To-morrow with some, next week or a month with others; old age, or a death-bed with numbers. O sinner, the sleep of death is upon you! Break; O break at once with the concert, ball, party, or whatever else it may be.

Oh, your dreams will be rudely broken in upon *soon*. God has anticipated your case; you will find the end of a fellow-procrastinator in Luke xii. 16-21. How does God style the procrastinator—"*Fool*;" no doubt the man thought himself very wise, so would his neighbours and friends. Was it not right in the man to increase his property—to enlarge his business? No, reader, the man was a "*fool*;" there is a prior question, one immensely more important than business—where am I to spend my eternity? God settled *that* question for him. On the very night of his finely laid plans God summoned the rich farmer into his presence—"*Fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." (Verses 20-21). Ah! my reader, anxious or not, I would solemnly warn you of the awful risk you are running. Will you lay down your head upon your pillow and close your eyes to rest taking your chance of awakening in the presence of God? Are you leaving salvation an unsettled question?

Eternal shame upon the thought that would offer to God "the devil's cast-aways," as one has said. True, He will receive the vilest, and at the eleventh hour. The dying thief—shall I say on the stroke of 12?—was saved for paradise. But then how awful the thought that because I can't do better I will come to Christ; because the world has failed to charm me, I will seek Him to save me from hell. Is this thy

thought, my reader? To-morrow is not yours; come it will, but *your* to-morrow *may be* the lake of fire. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Satan's most successful method of ruining souls is not by diluting the grace of God, nor by clouding the glory of God's grace, but by whispering in the ears of people, "Time enough yet, God is very gracious, He will receive you any time, so just wait a little, don't be in a hurry, think about it a little longer;" and the bad advice is taken. Some *think* about it, and *perish thinking about it.*

"*Almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian," was the answer of King Agrippa to the faithful and personal dealing of Paul. "*Almost!*" Thousands will find themselves *lost* who were "almost Christians."

At the close of a gospel meeting, an old man said to me, "I am quite ready to meet God. He is very, very merciful, and I am doing the best I can." Poor aged sinner, how my heart pitied him. It is true God is very, very merciful, but He is that *now*, He will not be that on the judgment-day. He is holy, He is righteous, and He must punish sin. It is a necessity of His nature that He does so; and so "judgment to come" will be of the most unsparing kind. Do not suppose for an instant that you will meet with mercy *then.* O, are you deluding yourself with the thought of future mercy—that at the end all may turn out right? Miserable delusion! "The hypocrite's *hope* shall *perish.*" W. S.

"HE CALLETH THEE."

"And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee."—MARK x. 49.

They spake to him of old, who sat
In blindness by the way,
Of Christ the Lord, who drawing near
Could turn his night to day;
But still he lingered trembling there,
Till o'er that living sea
The words of welcome reached his ear,
"Arise, he calleth thee!"

And still those words from heaven fall
On every sinner's ear;
And still the Lord delights to bid
The trembling soul draw near!
The old, the young, the rich, the poor,
He calls from wrath to flee,
And from the death-like sleep of sin;
"Arise, he calleth *thee!*"

He saw thee when, "a great way off,"
Thou hadst no thought of Him;
The door of grace He open threw,
And sought to bring thee in.
As a child within its father's home,
As happy and as free;
He longs to have you with Himself—
"Arise, he calleth thee!"

From all the joys this world affords
Which perish in a day,
The gilded snares which Satan spreads
To lead your steps astray;
From sin, from guilt, *however great*,
From want, from misery,

"HE CALLETH THEE."

From all the sorrows of this life—
"Arise, he calleth thee!"
From the want which urges on your feet
In sin's dark path to roam,
To the feast His hand of love has spread,
And the endless joys of *home;*
From the memory of your by-past life,
However dark it be,
To a place with Him in glory bright—
"Arise, he calleth thee!" A. S. O.

FRAGMENT.

"If where sin reigns righteousness had reigned, it would have been to condemn the whole world. It is grace that reigns—the sovereign love of God. Righteousness is on a level with the evil when it deals with evil, by the fact that it is righteousness; but God is above it, and acts, and can act—has a right to act, according to His own nature; and He is love. Is it that He sanctions unrighteousness and sin? No; in His love He brings about the accomplishment of divine righteousness by Jesus Christ. He has accomplished in Him that divine righteousness in raising Him to His right hand. But this is in virtue of a work wrought for us, in which He has glorified God. Thus, He is our righteousness; we, the righteousness of God in Him. It is the righteousness of faith, for we have it by believing in Him. It is love which, taking the character of grace when sin is in question, reigns and gives eternal life above and beyond death."

"SUDDENLY."

A WORD FOR YOUNG MEN.

PART I.

On a sunny July evening, in 1867, I walked, according to custom, to a Bible class, conducted within the rooms of a "Young Men's Christian Association." As I walked to the room, that beautiful Lord's Day evening, the brightness of the scene responded fitly to the radiance which filled my soul. The deadly darkness which had once reigned there had been chased away by the reviving beams of the light of life. The same God, which commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined in my heart to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. That Christ I now could claim as my Saviour, who had, by His cross, met all my condition as a lost sinner, and in resurrection had become my present life, joy, and hope. Oh, how my heart longed to communicate this blessedness to others!

There was a young man named S—— who regularly attended this class. He spoke occasionally, but was naturally reserved. There was something, however, about him which attracted me, and, although he was what might be called not very demonstrative, there was in his whole demeanour that which caused me to think he was one of the redeemed.

That night I purposed to test him by telling him what great things the Lord had done for me. The meeting was in a cool sombre-looking room on the shady side of the way, and contained

little more than a few long seats, a table, desk, and chair upon which the dear old saint, who usually presided, was wont to sit. Through the windows, which were some yards back from the street, could be seen the gay crowd passing along, some returning decently from evening service, but most strolling carelessly to see and be seen. The class concluded, I drew S—— to one of these windows, saying I wished to talk with him. We were soon left by ourselves in the room, then placing my hand on his shoulder, and looking him full in the face, I said, "Rejoice with me, my brother, for I have found the Lord."

A flush covered his expressive face, an inquiring look filled his eyes, and then, after a pause, he replied, "I am very glad to hear you say so." He seemed embarrassed, there was a deep working within his breast, and then, with much emotion, he exclaimed, "I am seeking Him, too." "Oh," I cried, "but I have found Him, or rather He has found me." There followed a profitable conversation, the details of which have now escaped my recollection.

He was a fair specimen of a troubled soul quickened by the Spirit, conscious of his guilt, and trusting in Jesus, but not with that simplicity of faith which brings immediate rest to the conscience. He required to be established in grace. Dear S——, so soon to be plucked from earth, severed in a moment from all below!

Reader, are you a wavererer, are you only *partly* believing in the Lord Jesus Christ? Indecision is the bane of a Christian, and "a double-minded

man is unstable in all his ways." Oh, behold! how that, once for all, Christ has surrendered Himself to death for you. Can you forbear surrendering yourself wholly to Him? Henceforth let your motto be, "For *me* to *live* is Christ." Shine as a light in the darkness. Be true to Jesus now, for the coming Lord may soon arrive to gather His ransomed ones home.

PART II.

January 24th, 1868, was a day much to be remembered. A hurricane raged over a large portion of Great Britain, causing grievous loss of life, painful accidents, and destruction to property.

In a quiet office in the city of ——, on the afternoon of this day, sat three clerks. S—— had returned from dinner, and, to some inquiries put by the others as to the effect of the storm, replied that he had witnessed nothing extraordinary, or to cause alarm. This was the last remark uttered by these lips, so soon to be closed for ever. The other young man expressed himself as being much amused at the freaks of the wind, and gave some details of the damage he had seen. The senior clerk sat at a desk apart. He was a man respected by many, and a tried faithful servant; but, alas! sceptical about the Scriptures and God's beloved Son. During that day he betrayed much disquietude. As the storm increased, so also did the nervousness which he evidently strove to conceal. At length, an alarming gust of wind rolled down the chimney, extinguishing the fire and filling the room with a cloud of smoke. The sceptic

jumped from his stool, exclaiming, "Good God! what is that?" A moment later, and the exposed gable of the house, against which the tempest had been beating with increasing fury, fell with a dismal crash, carrying all before it, burying several human beings under its ruin, and launching four of them into eternity.

Of the three clerks one only escaped. He, like the messenger to Job, could say, "I only am escaped alone to tell thee." S—and his senior fell, pen in hand, a feeble moan alone coming from the latter. There, side by side, lay the lifeless bodies of the Christian and the sceptic. The believer's soul, happy with the Lord, whom in truth he loved, as both his life and letters proved; the other hurled into eternity, to learn and prove the awful reality of that which he despised and derided here. As the tree falls, so shall it lie.

Oh, careless young man, take warning! Beware of the old serpent, who would fain beguile you to make a mock of sin, to question God's truth, and seduce you downward to perdition. Turn, now, at Wisdom's reproof. For "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall *suddenly* be destroyed, and that *without* remedy." Oh, sinner, think of the uncared-for Jesus, the Nazarene, the crucified. By faith have to do with that risen Saviour who, on the cross alone, bore God's judgment against sin. "For to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," and "whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed." Jesus Himself also said "Whosoever, therefore, shall be

ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." "He that hath ears to ear, let him hear."

T. R. D.

"THE WAY OF PEACE."

"The way of peace have they not known."—ROMANS iii. 17.

This can be said of all ignorant of God's love toward them as *sinners*, and of His ways toward them as *such* in the CROSS of His dear Son. It is *there* I learn what God is as the God of peace; it is *there* I learn how *peace* has been *made;* it is *there* I discover, to the joy of my soul, how God, resting in His love toward me, a *sinner*, can righteously come and speak peace; it is there, and there alone, I see mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissing each other. In the cross I see God's righteousness, so to speak, sustaining Him, as His own arm brings salvation to me. No other way is there for me, a sinner, to come to God. No other way is there for God to receive me, as a sinner, in righteousness and peace.

If I can look down and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner," I can also, by faith, look *back to the cross* where the Son of God suffered for sin, and see mercy, *nothing* but mercy to me, a sinner, and all my sins gone; I go away justified; nay, more, I know God loves me as a sinner, and that He has a blessed way of His own in bringing

me back to Himself, and His own joy in receiving me. His joy is expressed in the presence of the angels in heaven over every sinner that *repenteth.*

And here let me remark that repentance toward God is just this—the discovery of His goodness in connection with my badness. His goodness breaks my heart to pieces. I judge myself because of what *I am*, and am drawn to God because of what *He is.* His *goodness leads* to *repentance.*

My reader, do you thus know God as the God of peace? It is the first thing to be known before your feet can tread "the way of peace;" not *a* way of peace—there are not many—nay, there is but one. If there were two I should want to know the better, but there is but one. Are you, am I, treading that blessed way? Blessed be God *I* am in it, with *joy* and *peace* through believing, for "being justified by faith we have peace with God, *through* our Lord Jesus Christ;" through Him alone, God's beloved Son, who said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Peace I leave—an accomplished peace—a peace made through the *blood* of His *cross;* and God, as the *God* of *peace*, delights in proclaiming in the ears of every child of Adam's fallen race the blessed news.

The *peace made* was accomplished on the cross. God and His beloved Son went "both of them together," not to Mount Moriah where Abraham went with his Isaac, his only son, but to Calvary. Did you, my reader, ever observe those touching words of Isaac in the deeply interesting scene portrayed in the 22nd of Genesis? "Behold the fire and the wood, but *where* is the lamb for

a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will *provide* himself a lamb for a burnt offering; so they went both of them together." How little did Abraham think that, inspired by God, he was uttering prophetic words to be accomplished on Calvary. The lamb has been provided, the son *not* spared; such the grace and way of God.

Reader, did you ever observe those touching and piercing words of God's beloved Son when *on the cross, as the sin bearer?*—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Ah! if you are a sinner saved, the reason why is known. If not saved, the reason why must be known before one step in "the way of peace" can be taken. It is a simple question of my owning what I am, a sinner, and knowing God as a God that has His delight in receiving me, *as a sinner*, through Christ. I know God in Christ as a father falling on my neck with kisses. On my owning what I am, He soon gives me to discover what He is; for with the best robe provided, the ring on my finger, my feet shod, the fatted calf killed, and seated at His table, I listen to the music and rejoicing which His own word sets a-going.

Why this, my reader? Why this joy on God's part? Mysterious love indeed! the learning of which leads to the deepening of that repentance toward God, produced by a sense of His goodness in connection with my unworthiness. Only let there be a returning, and, in returning, the admission of what I am as having sinned, and God is with me first of all to greet me. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and love to Him increase, too,

as we learn Him in His love bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Peace is made. I have not to make it, how could I, a sinner, make peace with God? Christ could alone make it through the blood of His cross, without the shedding of which God could not have remitted sins. Now that blood has been shed, God is righteous in forgiving me my sins, and, as has been said, has His own joy in forgiving and receiving. Thus, I am at peace with God; I know God as the God of peace.

There are two kinds of peace connected with "the way of peace" totally distinct. Confounding one with the other is ruinous, and destroys the distinctive character of each. The Spirit of God would keep each of them before the eye of the soul as distinct as light from darkness, yet often the mingling of them is the means Satan uses to hinder the soul's peace and progress. As our feet tread "the way of peace" through this world to the "God of peace," the soul delights to distinguish how perfectly distinct the one is from the other, yet how blessedly connected.

I have dwelt a little at length on the first peace—the peace that Christ *made*—and for this reason, because I find so many who ought to possess it, but are without it, and no wonder, because, at bottom, they think they must do a little themselves to a work already DONE. There are, nevertheless, not a few who can say they have peace, yet are not peaceful. Their *consciences* are satisfied in respect of judgment, because they see distinctly all hangs on a work *done*. They

have nothing to do, yet they are not peaceful. Their hearts are not satisfied, and no wonder. They stop short, and think not that the second peace—the peace Christ left—His own peace—is enjoyed by following Him. Mingle the two together, and you destroy the distinctive character of each. Let them, therefore, stand out before the soul in their own precious and positive distinctness. It is one thing to have *life* through believing on Christ—it is quite another thing to *live* by Him. "He that eateth *me*, even he shall live (not have life, this you must have first) by me" (Jno. vi., 57).

Have *you* Christ's own peace, which He gave? You have it as the fruit of living on, and following Him.

If unsaved and not in "the way of peace," rest not till you know it. If saved and in "the way of peace," do not rest satisfied without enjoying Christ's own peace whilst passing through this unpeaceful world.

How much better to have our feet treading "the way of peace" through the world, than to be seeking to get on *in* it! In the end, we must pass *out* of it, and what then? If not in "the way of peace," we shall never go to the God of peace; all our thoughts will perish. But, if in "the way of peace," instead of our thoughts perishing, our labours will abide, it will be gain, even as Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" we shall soon be with the God who loved us and gave His Christ for us, the God we now love and serve.

J. M. R.

A MESSAGE TO YOU.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"—ROMANS vi. 16.

Are you then a servant of sin? if so, you shall receive the wages of sin; which is death. How plain are those words of St. Paul! yet think of the thousands who are hurrying on to the night when no man can work; thoughtless and worldly as ever. Behold! "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm ix. 17). Will you come now to Christ? or will you awake hereafter only to realise your own self-wrought ruin, to be tormented day and night for ever and ever? Oh! how horrible to be snatched some day from the all-engrossing business and pleasures of this world—not to meet a loving Saviour, but a just and holy Judge—to receive the merited punishment of a mispent and godless life. "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 44).

Looking back on the much sought for baubles of this world, in which you trusted to find happiness, you will not be able to give a single instance where they obtained for you unalloyed or lasting pleasure. In your last moments the vanity of this world will start out suddenly before your horrified vision, like an unmasked corpse; the madness and folly of your past life will make you tremble for the safety of your soul, for "The wages of sin is death" (Romans vi. 23).

You have perhaps been accustomed all your lifetime to scoff at death and judgment in your secret heart, if not openly. You may have thought that going to heaven was all a chance, and you were as likely to get there as anybody else; but what says God? "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. xviii. 4). Then pause before it be too late, for "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31). Consider the things that pertain to your everlasting peace; cease to follow after the shadows which so many grasp at, for they are all vanity and vexation of spirit. This earth shall pass away as a flower of the field; but death—and after that the judgment—have yet to come.

Wandering soul! listen to what Christ has done for you—listen to the message He sends you to-day:—He offers you a free pardon, purchased by His own blood; offers it without money, without price! "When we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. v. 6). "He was wounded for our transgressions: He was bruised for our iniquities (Isa. liii. 5). "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). Can you say that there is nothing assuring in those words? or will you despise the gift of God, which is eternal life? If God so loved us while sinners, we need not fear to trust Him.

Oh, the inconceivable love of Christ! that led Him to make so great a sacrifice for us, while we were in a state of open enmity towards Him. Then

cast yourself down at the feet of Jesus; pardon and forgiveness shall be yours. Eternal life you shall receive freely: doubt Him not. Some think they must be good before they can come to Jesus. How can that be? If you can make yourself good and holy, what need have you of a Saviour? Come as a child, simply trusting to what has been done for you; not to what you do yourself. You may say your sin is too great to hope for God's mercy, but God says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The greater sinner you are, the more need you have of God's mercy: it was not to call the righteous to repentance, but to save sinners, that Jesus came.

Dear reader, do not let this hour pass, come to Jesus now. Do not put off till to-morrow; it may never dawn on you. This day, this night may find you in the presence of a sin-hating God! Even if spared from sudden death, those who put off too often sink from sickness or old age, while the mind becomes too clouded and enfeebled to comprehend the danger with which their souls are threatened, and they leave the world without real repentance and knowledge of the Saviour. Others, while aware of their danger, only become a prey to ineffectual despair and remorse. Come then this day, Christ calls on you with loving voice to accept a free salvation: eternal life! "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

H. C. K.

"A LITTLE CHILD."

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—MATT. xviii. 3.

While preaching in a town in the south of Ireland, I was much struck with the earnest attention of a little girl about ten years old, and, when the address was over, I made my way to her, to try and find out if she was at peace with God, in the knowledge that her sins were forgiven. I asked, "Do you know the Lord Jesus?"

She looked up with a bright smile and answered:

"Yes; at least I know that Jesus died for me."

"It is very blessed to know that," said I, "but how can you be so very sure that the Son of God came down into the world and died on the cross for a little child like you?"

"God says He died for sinners, and I am a great sinner," she said very solemnly.

"Yes, dear child, it is written in His blessed word, 'God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;' and again, 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' He has shown you what a sinner you are, and now you see that you must believe what God has said. So your sins are all forgiven."

For a moment there was no answer, and the tears filled her eyes. At last she said:

"I am afraid not."

"What!" I said, "can it be possible that you know that Jesus died for you, and yet do not know that you are forgiven?"

She looked up with an expression of deep anxiety, as though she would find out what I meant; for, like many, she had truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, but she did not know what His work had done for her. She had been attracted to Jesus; her heart had opened to His love like the dear woman in Luke vii., but she had yet to hear Him say, "Thy sins *are forgiven* thee; go in peace, thy faith *hath saved* thee."

So I asked, "Why did the Lord Jesus die for you?"

"To save me," was her prompt reply.

"But why must He have died to save you?"

She thought a moment, and then said very solemnly, "Because He bore my sins on the cross."

"Where were your sins, then, when Jesus hung on the cross?"

"On Him."

"Yes," I said, "for 'the Lord hath *laid on him* he iniquity of us all;' and where are they now?"

She had almost said, "On Him still," but checked herself, and was silent.

"Think of where He is now," I said.

She answered at once, "He has risen and gone into heaven."

"*Where then are your sins?*"

"Left behind in His grave," was the dear child's happy answer.

Her difficulty was gone now. She saw that He who was delivered for her offences had been raised again for her justification, and, being justified by faith, she had peace with God through Him.

"Yes," I replied, as God says again, "'When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high'" (Heb. i. 3).

After a little further talk with her, she was called away. On reaching her home, she ran to her mother, a dear Christian woman, then unable to leave the house, and threw her arms around her neck, saying, "I shall go to be with Jesus too, mamma."

She was startled and wanted to know what it all meant.

"My sins are all gone. Jesus, who bore them on the cross, is now at the right hand of God, and don't you see, mamma, they could not be on Him there. He has left them all behind in His grave."

The mother and child, now more dear to her than ever, rejoiced and praised the Lord together. Years have passed since then, and the risen Christ, at the right hand of God, has been the ground of a peace for her that never could be disturbed.

How many a dear, troubled, anxious soul wants what that little child learned so simply and blessedly—that the knowledge of forgiveness comes from the eye being turned to Christ, and not from the feelings passing in our poor hearts.

The moment the eye rests in simple faith on Him, all is settled as to sin before God, by His work on the cross; and the proof is that He has raised Him to His own right hand. If God is satisfied, surely we may well be, for have not all our sins been against Him?

Besides, just as surely as Jesus said, when He

was here upon earth, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48), so the Holy Ghost conveys the same blessed assurance to the faith that believes God now, saying, "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).

Reader, let me earnestly ask you, Are your sins forgiven? J. A. T.

DIFFICULTIES.

No. 8.—"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

A certain man was one of the most upright, benevolent, religious persons in the village. A Sunday-school teacher, a faithful visitor of the sick, a tract distributor, an office-bearer in the church, a rigid teetotaller—what more, what else was needed?

If goodness and worth, or a moral standing with God could be had on the principle of *doing*, he, of all others in the village, could lay claim to it. But something *else* was needed; not all these excellent things could give what his soul craved—SALVATION.

This man was a seeker after salvation. His sins and their punishment — death, and after that the judgment, stared him in the face. His soul was filled with the most fearful apprehension of the future. He had to meet God—a holy and righteous God: this terrified him,

for he was a sinner, and totally unprepared to enter eternity.

Reader, this man religious, teetotal, and amiable as he was, was yet a sinner, over whose head the wrath of God rested. All the righteousness of man with God is worthless ; it can only wither in His presence : and so *acceptance with God, forgiveness of sins, present and perfect justification from "all things,"* are not to be had by all the doing, striving, feeling, or religiousness of man. Salvation is in Christ. Peace only through His precious blood. *He did* all the doing and suffering needed.

Christ is now risen from the dead. There is a glorified man in heaven. Once He hung upon the cross for sins. Drop, then, dear reader, your deadly doings at His pierced feet, and gaze, oh ! gaze, upon *that* work—the Son of God answering for sins, and for the very nature, too, in which the sin was committed—answering for it in agonies and blood—answering for it during the silence, loneliness, and darkness of the three hours' anguish and abandonment by God. "My God ! my God ! why hast Thou *forsaken* me ?" was His cry ; and why such a cry from the soul of the spotless Lamb of God ? Absolutely spotless and pure in Himself, yet on *that tree* our iniquities are made to meet on Him. He stands in the sinner's place, bears his doom ; gives a divine answer to God for His righteous judgment upon the sin, the nature, the condition of man ; and so removes every barrier to peace. So priceless was the blood, so perfectly finished was the atoning work, that the God of

Glory and Resurrection, on the third morning, *did* triumphantly raise His Son, and seat Him in victorious power at His own right hand in heaven.

The empty tomb and a risen and glorified Christ are God's answer to the finished work of His beloved Son. Christ carried not with Him to His grave the sins, and sin He answered for upon the cross; *by* His cross *was eternally settled every question connected with every believer's sins.* God has a memory in which are treasured up the doings of the universe; all is remembered but the sins of the believer; for He says, "their sins and iniquities will *I* remember no more." Blessed truth! Jesus risen, exalted and glorified, and my sins *gone for ever from God's sight*! Risen from the dead! Glorious news, indeed. Reader, that Jesus, before whom angels bow and saints adore, was *once* smitten to death for thee. What is He doing in the glory? He is there offering to thee a *present, full,* and *perfect salvation.* He is no mean giver. He died to procure it; He delights to give it. Accept, then, the gift of eternal life and present forgiveness of sins. The gift is only to him "who worketh not, *but* believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly."

But, to return, one, hearing of his distress, sought to allay his anxiety by a recital of his good deeds, his morality, teetotalism, and the like. "Don't speak to me of these things," he answered; "*I need salvation.* I'm lost, undone. Tell me how I am to be saved. *I want salvation.* I'm afraid to meet God with these rags of human righteousness clinging about me. *I want salvation.*"

His friend had no gospel to meet a case like this. He left the scene. A sinner stripped of his rags, and standing trembling and affrighted in the very presence of God, was too much for the poor legalist, who retired, and left the sinner *alone* with God. Legalists do not know grace.

One newly converted resolved to visit the anxious one. This saved one only knew the following truths :—1st, That his sins were forgiven ; 2nd, That he had peace with God through Jesus, who had made it by His blood ; 3rd, That God had raised from among the dead His dear Son, and given Him glory in the heavens ; 4th, That the Holy Ghost, the glorifier of Jesus, is as truly in this world as Jesus is now in heaven ; 5th, That Jesus is coming a second time to take to Himself every soul who has truly apprehended the work He accomplished at His first coming. Very slowly and distinctly did he utter these words to his fellow-sinner :—"He (God) is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit ; *I have found a ransom.*"

"Who says that? who utters those blessed words?" exclaimed his eager listener.

"God," was the answer. "Turn to the 24th verse of the 33rd chapter of Job, and you will find the very words." It was enough. God spoke through the living power of His own word. Instantly he passed from death unto life. He received a divine and eternal salvation on the *very spot.*

"What must I *do* to be saved?" said the jailor at Philippi. "Believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," was the simple and divine answer (Acts xvi. 30—31). The Jews proposed a somewhat similar question to the Lord:—"What shall we *do*, that we might work the works of God?" The answer was, "*This* is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent" (John vi. 28—29).

In heaven they sing to the Lamb, "Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast *slain*, and hast redeemed us to God by *thy blood*" (Rev. v. 9—14).

Would you change the song to "Worthy are the Lamb and *I?*—He by His blood and I by my works redeemed me to God?" Nay, nay; His blood, His agony on the cross, His sin-bearing *there*, are either sufficient for thy ransom, or thou must perish for ever. Did the dying thief reach paradise by his works, or by Christ's atoning blood? Let us see. He was a man stained with crime; but, more, he was a sinner about to appear before God. He is on the threshold of eternity; and, as he gazes into the future, all is dark and uncertain. He is a sinner, and he knows it—lost, and he deeply realises it. But the ever-blessed Spirit of God is at work. The first sheaf of fruit from Christ's sore soul-travail and passion is to be this notorious sinner—saved about the twelfth hour of time—saved on the brink of eternity. Yes, God would raise the question in His own blessed way. Can such an one be saved, to the absolute exclusion of works, be they good, bad, or indifferent? Can such a sinner be made meet for heaven in a moment—*at once*, without baptism, without the Lord's Supper, without attending the means of

grace? What! a thief taken right from his crimes, instantly fitted for God's presence, and all without doing, or preparing himself, or helping one bit? A thief made meet for heaven! Can it be possible? Yes, reader, you have in this man's conversion a sample of what God in grace can do, for Jesus said "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

How many are working, doing something or other, patching themselves up for God. A bit of reformation, a piece of religion, a patch of tee-totalism, or something of that sort, many think will stand the dazzling brightness and intense purity of the great white throne; but God will only pronounce the man that stops doing, "who worketh *not*," a righteous man. He will lay His hand upon such an one, and say, "Thou art righteous." He imputeth righteousness without works. His beloved Son did the work—all the doing. It is now done, it is finished, and God has been greatly glorified by this blessed work. He has put His divine seal to its value, by raising Jesus out from among the dead. He can now, in virtue of that accomplished sacrifice, at once fit the worst sinner for paradise. The dying thief, in virtue of the precious blood which flowed from the Saviour, had an immediate passage from the sufferings of the cross to the joys of paradise. And all this must have been so if that rough thorn of nature's soil is to bloom and blossom as a rose in the garden of God; for don't you see that the man was shut up either to salvation or eternal ruin. He lacked the power to work, for he was nailed in helplessness to the cross of wood. He had no time for

preparation, for he was on the eve of entering eternity.

Is it not as plain as the sun shines in the heavens, that, if paradise depended upon his doing one iota, it ne'er were his. But God furnishes the thief with a divine answer to His own solemn judgment upon sin and sinners. The Son of God in death—the full expression of divine love—the Son of man lifted up—made the curse of God upon the tree—forms the sinner's only answer to the wrath of God. Woe to that man who dares bring in his hand any answer to the judgment of God other than the precious blood of the Lamb! To the Atoning One the thief turns, and prays, "Lord, remember *me*." All conversions are after this model.

"Being justified *freely* by HIS GRACE, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24). Oh, that the words were imprinted on the conscience of every *worker* and *doer* for salvation; "*By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight!*" (Rom. iii. 20); "NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH WE HAVE DONE, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus iii. 5).

Abraham and David *practically* illustrated justification *without* works: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that WORKETH NOT, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness

of the man, unto whom God imputeth RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS" (Rom. iv. and Psalm xxxii).

Shall I tell you of one who struggled and toiled for peace, and after all had to take salvation as the free gift of God?

For the first time in his life he solemnly proposed to himself the vital question, "What must I do to be saved?" The soul thoroughly in earnest at once commenced doing. Eternal life, peace of mind, and present forgiveness of sins were believed to depend upon much *being felt*, much *realised*, and for this purpose, viz., that convictions of sin might be deepened, that the anxiety of his soul might be increased, he cried, night and day, "Lord, show me *my* sin, *my* vileness, *my* ruin. O Lord, make me *feel* that I'm a sinner, richly *deserving* hell! Lord, save me!" It was a solemn time. Friend after friend pointed him to the Lamb of God—who was made an offering for sin—who made peace by the blood of His cross—and, because of His FINISHED work, from the throne of God in glory now presses upon every soul the message of reconciliation, "Be ye reconciled." It was all in vain. His distress increased with the fervour and urgency of his prayers.

Weeks and months rolled on, and found him still a stranger to the peace which passeth *all* understanding. And no wonder, for vainly imagining that he had to make his peace with God, and that the ground of *that* peace must be laid in the shedding of many tears, agonising emotions, stirring and deep convictions of sin,

as one might expect, he was labouring at the task with all the fervour and resolute determination of one, on whose *doing* depended eternal life and peace with God.

"God will have mercy upon me," he said to a friend on one occasion, "God will save me, but not now. I don't feel enough, I don't half realise my condition as a guilty sinner. *I must cherish my convictions*, I must feel more, I must grieve over my sins, I must weep and pray more." And again he gave himself to the sad, sad task of propitiating God. Alas! how vain and foolish. The peace of a sinner in the presence of the Holy God has absolutely nothing to do with his prayers, tears, and soul troubles. The foundation of an *immediate* and *perfect* forgiveness of sins—the clearance of *all* guilt—the removal of *all* iniquity, have not the slightest reference to his moral or *felt* condition.

The sinner is "made nigh to God," not by his tears of repentance—his bitter sorrowings for sin—but by the BLOOD OF CHRIST, GOD'S BELOVED SON. The peace of a sinner is not founded upon his feelings, be they good, bad, or indifferent—nor upon his faith, be it weak or strong—nor upon his experiences or realisings. No, no. The blood of the Cross *has* made peace—the blood alone. The dying, dead, buried, risen and glorified Son of God has *obtained eternal redemption*—for whom? For sinners, for poor lost, hell-deserving sinners. Will *you* trust Him? Will *you* believe on Him now? A lifted-up Christ is God's remedy for

sinners ; the Cross is His answer to the ruin, sin, and guilt of man. Has my reader believed on Christ? Has he believed on God who gave Jesus and raised Him up again from the dead? Has he eternal life in the Son of God? Have *you*, dear reader, yet gazed upon Christ in the glory? Have your eyes been riveted upon His side pierced for your sin, upon His hands and feet nailed to the tree for your guilt? Why look there? do you say. Why? Because that once wounded *man* is in the glory. He fills the throne of God. The Son of Man lifted up upon the Cross—the atoning victim for sin—has accomplished His work. It is finished. He has appeared to *put away* sin. The victim's blood has been shed—His life laid down—justice thereby perfectly satisfied, and the throne of God divinely vindicated. "But," you say, "it was against God I had sinned, against His law I had transgressed, His beloved Son I crucified—is *He* satisfied? Is He well pleased?" Yes, dear friend, He is ; and the proofs of it are the empty grave, the tenantless tomb, the risen Saviour. The Son of God has been raised from among the dead—raised by the glory and power of God, and at *this moment of time* fills the highest point in the universe—the throne of Jehovah.

This truth, which when believed, carries salvation, life, liberty, and peace with it, was put simply before the *working sinner*. He was pressed with that truth that all his "righteousnesses were as filthy rags," *i.e.*, human goodness of any sort ; that divine righteousness, perfect peace, instant salvation, and eternal life, were each entirely

grounded upon Christ in death, in resurrection, and in glory; that *no other* foundation can any man lay than that is laid, even Jesus Christ, the Lord; that any foundation other than this, having a grain of human composition in it, would assuredly prove a standing, weaker than the sinking sea-shore sand; that salvation was in NONE OTHER. "I see it," said the young man, "I see it now—I'm saved by the blood of the Lamb—Hallelujah for ever to His blessed name." May the Lord in His rich love lead every reader of these pages to rest *only* on the blood of the Lamb!

W. S.

THE LOST HORSE.

One lovely evening, when stopping at a charming little seaside place in Somersetshire, I strolled away back to a range of hills, and whilst thinking of Him "who loved me and gave himself for me," and thereby saved my soul from a never-ending hell, and for eternal glory,

> "*Not only* saved from yawning hell,
> But to God's bosom brought,"

in the distance I saw a man making his way towards the spot where I was standing, and soon we were together. A conversation commenced by his asking if I had seen a stray horse for which he had all day been making diligent search. It belonged to a baronet (who was a child of God, and has since gone, "to be with Christ"), and some one having left a gate open it got out. The man must have been nearly 30 miles

in search of it, and seemed downcast at the thought of having to return empty handed. I said, "Wouldn't it make you very happy if you could find it now?" He replied, "It would, and *no mistake.*" From this we got to the "things which are eternal," when I discovered that though respectable and industrious he was not "*saved*," and, alas, like many others, he was not alive to the value of his immortal soul. "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

But, before going further, let me affectionately ask you, dear reader, Are *you* saved? Now look at the question, and answer it in God's presence. Don't say, I hope so, or I hope to be, but be honest, and say Yes or No. Supposing you should die whilst reading this, would your spirit go to be "present with the Lord," or to hell? Remember that "as the tree falleth so must it lie," consequently your eternal destiny must be settled on earth.

How often one meets many who acknowledge they are not saved, but who won't own that they are "lost;" but God says they are one or the other, and His decision must be final (see John iii. 36).

Now, the man was sent to seek for the horse because it had gone astray and *was lost*; so, dear unsaved friend, I tried to show him, and want to show you, that "The Father sent the Son to be the *Saviour* (not the improver) of the world," and Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to *save* that which is *lost.*" A sick man needs physic, but a *lost* man needs a *Saviour;* and it being written, "without shedding of blood is no remission," Jesus, "through the

Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God;" Who, being satisfied with the finished work of His Son, raised Him up from the cold grave, and "crowned him with glory and honour," and now declares "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Oh rest then *now* by simple faith on "the precious blood of Christ." Then will you be able to sing with us:

"I do believe it, I do believe it,
I am saved by the blood of the Lamb,
My happy soul is free,
For the Lord *hath* pardoned me,
Hallelujah to Jesus' Name."

Now suppose the man had found the horse, and taken it home, what would have happened? Why, the master would have been made glad, and, as the servant said, "he would, and *no mistake*." And suppose even one dear reader of these lines should rest wholly and solely on "the blood which makes atonement for the soul," and gets saved, what will take place in heaven? Oh, wondrous to write, God the Father will say "Let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was *lost* and is *found*." And God the Son will say "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was *lost*."

Reader, first "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be *saved;*" afterwards let your delight be to walk in His ways and do those things which are pleasing in His sight, till He comes and "presents you faultless before the presence of His glory with *exceeding joy*."

H. T.

FAITH WITHOUT HEARING;

THE CONVERSION AND DEATH OF C. F., a DEAF MUTE.

The following simple account of the Lord's grace in taking to Himself a dear lamb of the flock cannot fail to interest those who have a heart for Him, and a desire to see His name glorified in His saints. The peculiar circumstances connected with this case throw out into wonderful prominence the grace which will act and effect its purposes, however great the difficulties. God's grace is, indeed, a majestic thing. His order is, "Faith cometh by *hearing*, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17), but, in this case, He must step out of His ordinary course, and faith must come *without* hearing; for the subject of this little account was one of those to whom sound was a thing unknown. She was born deaf, and was, consequently, dumb. But, notwithstanding this, the gracious Lord wrought in her soul, giving her to see her ruined state, and to rest on that one great finished work which is the sinner's perfect plea; and of her it can be said, her path was brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

Though I am sure this simple account will interest many, the special object in putting it in this form is to reach and be a blessing to those who are afflicted in a similar way; and who, we know, take a deep interest in all that affects their class. I need not, however, say more, but commend this little paper to the God of all grace, (who made His voice to be heard in her

soul,) that He may use it in speaking to many others in similar circumstances.

From infancy the perceptions of C. F. were so acute, and so readily did she respond to everything addressed to her—as if she had the sense of hearing—that, until the time we thought she should begin to speak, we had no suspicion of her infirmity. Delicacy of health delayed her being sent to school at Claremont (an institute for the deaf and dumb), but, being gifted with much intelligence, and an excellent memory, she learned at home to write a good hand, to spell readily the names of things in general, and, in some degree, to know their properties, &c.; but, until her mind unfolded in course of time, she preferred play to books, and those around her wondered that she learned her lessons so well while devoting so little time to them.

Love of home was always a very strong feeling with her; she was never happy if long away from it; so we obtained for her a holiday from Saturday afternoon until Monday morning, about once a fortnight. This sometimes led to curious scenes, as she would suddenly scamper back from the servant or her sisters who brought her to school on Mondays; but in general their representations that it would grieve Mamma or her beloved friend, Miss S., head governess at Claremont, were sufficient to at once bring her to reason. Her temper and disposition were of so happy and buoyant a nature that, up to the last, she scarcely seemed to think her deprivation of hearing an affliction. When she saw people quarrelling in the street, she would say, "I am

very glad I cannot hear bad, wicked words." If asked, did she feel lonely? she would answer, "No; I can read in the Bible about the dear Saviour, and can converse about Him with those who know my language, though I have only eyes, and they have ears and eyes. No matter, it is God's will; in heaven I shall be able both to hear and speak."

Her never-failing willingness to oblige, and her loving ways made her the centre of the domestic circle, and the life of it. Scarcely anything could be discussed (if she knew of it before) but she at once discovered it by the countenances of the speakers, and she was always childishly delighted at the surprise this created. Strangers, seeing her follow each speaker intelligently, often went away without knowing she had not *spoken* a word!

Some of her friends were of opinion that she was a child of God for several years, but it did not appear clearly until about three years before her death, when Dr. W—— preached on the second coming of the Lord. She then burst into tears, and signified to her sister—who, as he spoke, was reading his discourse for her by the manual alphabet—that Jesus died for *her*, and that He would come for her; and she never from that moment felt a single doubt as to her eternal safety. Soon after she dreamed she was "Remembering the Lord in his death," with His people, which gave her great delight; and then she expressed to her friends the desire to realise the dream, and was received into fellowship.

A severe attack of pleurisy, which induced other

diseases, led remotely to her death; three or four months before which she was sent to the South of England, where her brother, a physician, was residing. It soon became evident to him that she could not recover; she seemed to know it herself, and, on enquiry, having it confirmed, *rejoiced.* From that time to the day before she "fell asleep," she sent her friends *such letters* as caused them to rejoice with her with exceeding great joy. She told them about *her* Jesus—that she was, as she expressed it herself, "awful, great, happy."

Her sister, T., who went to her on her becoming so ill, and remained with her to the last, writing home, says, "I suppose you are astonished to see so many letters from dear C., and she so very weak; but, at times, she gets wonderfully strong for half an hour together, and it relieves her mind when she writes to those she cannot see. Dr. M—— was here to day, and said she might not live more than twenty-four hours, as he saw a look on her face that betokened the end was near. We told her so, as we knew it would be great happiness to her, and then she thanked Jesus for a long time on her fingers, and said, 'He is very kind to come for me so soon.' She prayed to day that God would keep us from grieving for her when she is gone. She got quite excited, and called on Jesus to come quickly for her. I told her she ought to be patient, and wait *His* time, and then she got quite calm, and said that she would. * * * She got me to cut off some of her hair, to give to her friends. She is always pleased when doing anything of that kind. She

has great pity for us all, because we are not going with her. The Lord has given her wonderful peace and joy. * * * "

Her brother, with whom she was staying in England, writes : " My dearest mother,—Just as I had finished a letter to you last evening, I was called upstairs to see dear C——. She appeared to be dying. She is this evening very weak indeed, and cannot last much longer. Dr. M—— saw her to-day, and perceived a great change in her for the worse. I will try and describe last night to you. Well, it *could not be described.* Such a *heavenly* countenance never was before beheld. She kissed me, patted me on the cheek, then kissed F——, more than once spelled 'no pain ;' *said* distinctly, over and over again, '*Papa* ;' we all thought she said 'Robert' too ; in fact we thought a miracle was going to take place, and her *speech* about to be given her. She was then, apparently, fast dying, but sal volatile roused her. She half sat up in bed, looked at us all round, then fixed her *joyful, beaming, heavenly* countenance on her Saviour, and all the angels who hung about her, and put out her arms as if to escape out of this house of clay, and be off with them. She made motion with her hands, as if addressing a number of people, doubtless telling them of Jesus ; asked us, did *we love Jesus?* and seemed as if really inspired. No such scene of happiness and joy ever was enacted on this earth, I believe. She then went off in a kind of doze, and, when she awoke, spelled, '*Dis-appointed,*' as she thought she was dying . . . . Her intellect is as clear as possible ; and when

she requires anything, if no one is in the room, she touches the bell beside her."

Her brother G—— went over to her, being telegraphed for. After seeing her, he writes: "There is a slight change for the better in dear C—— to-day, but, of course, only a temporary one. She was in great delight when I arrived last night. As to her state of mind, she is indeed a surprise, not only to all in the house, but to myself also. Her peace and joy are *full*. It is not the joy of one who, on a death-bed, is forced to let go what may have been hindering before, but the calm quiet of one who knows *where* she is going, while the little *passage* to it appears as *nothing* to her. She told me with tears how happy she was, and how her good, kind Jesus was always with her, talking to her, and that, though she would greatly like to see you all again (when I spoke to her of getting better and coming back to D——), only '*if it is the Lord's will*'—as if to correct me. It is such a real thought with her, the meeting us in heaven in a little while, that she is *quite* satisfied. When speaking of this she mentioned father (who was then unconverted, but since her death has been both brought to *know* the Lord and taken to be *with* Him), and H——, as asking Jesus a great deal for them. She is quite happy, even with the thought of not meeting any of you here. It is not that she is *indifferent*, but, as she says, 'It is the Lord's will, and I can wait patiently.'"

In another letter the same brother writes: "All in the house appear impressed by the

wonderful calmness with which dear C—— looks at the whole thing. With her, heaven and the Lord Jesus *there* are such real things, that she speaks of them in the same way in which we speak of what is happening round us every day. The simple way in which she speaks of *her* Jesus is most blessed. She says, 'He talks with me when I am alone, He comforts me when in pain, and He is always with me.' She is indeed a wonderful witness to me of how *grace* can lift one above most trying circumstances. She contents herself when she thinks of being absent from all in D—— with the thought, 'It is the Lord's will; He knows best, and I will meet them again *soon*.' There is a calmness about her I have never witnessed before in old or young. She speaks of the *surprise* she will have, and of how much the Lord must love her, when He is going to take her away so young; and she has got so to understand the love of God, that she interprets everything in the light of it. Two or three times I could not avoid weeping, and she at once stopped me with a sign that was unmistakable."

After her death, her sister writes, "Our darling C—— is now singing the praises of Him she loved so well. She has seen His face—has left this world of sorrow, to be happy with Him for ever. She fell asleep so calmly—there was no pain. She had been very calm all day, smiling at me, and talking of Jesus. She saw Him—He was round her bed all night. About ten minutes before she died she saw Him, and called out, as if wishing Him to come near, and put

out her hands to Him, and smiled, as if into His face! Oh, it was beautiful! I never will forget it. I felt almost as if I were in heaven myself. Darling C——'s face had so much of it about her. She looks lovely in death; you would never tire of watching her. * * *"

Thus did this precious lamb pass through the valley of the shadow of death almost imperceptibly. Assuredly, for a little while before her final removal from this scene, she could say, "Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth." And now, dear reader, in much love, may I ask, have you learned to love and put your trust in C——'s dear Jesus? Have you, dear afflicted one, (for I address myself more especially to you who may—like the loved one of whom I write—be deprived of hearing or speech, or perhaps of *both*,) have you discovered *in Him* your sufficiency for every need? Are *you* thankful to Him that you cannot hear "bad, wicked, words?" Oh, dear friend, whoever you are, if you have not yet come to Jesus, do so without delay. *To-day* is given to us, *to-morrow* we may never see. The Lord Jesus loves you, and longs to take you to His bosom, poor feeble one!

Come, therefore, to Him, having nothing, bringing nothing to Him in return for all His love to you, but your poor guilty self, remembering that the "blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin."

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O! Lamb of God, I come." E. L. F.

DEATH DISGUISED.

An express train is dashing through the midnight air with lightning speed, the "facing points" spring from their fastening, an axle-tree breaks, something goes wrong with the train, and in a moment the carriages are thrown off the line into one fearful mass of inextricable confusion. The screams of the wounded and dying are heard, and horror sits upon the face of every spectator of the sad catastrophe. Death is abroad, undisguised, uncloaked, unmasked, unshrouded he stalks forth to claim his victims.

A noble vessel sails from port. She is swiftly borne, beneath the combined power of wind and steam, across the mighty deep. She nears the distant shore. For some reason she is turned from her course. At the dead of night is heard the cry of the watch, "Breakers ahead!" But the cry sounds too late to avoid the danger, she strikes, she trembles, she reels, and, ere the sleeping inmates reach the deck, the mighty waters rush in to seal their doom. But above that watery grave is seen to hover the spectre of death. There, in solemn reality, he gloats over and seizes his prey, leaving the tears of the mourner to flow as he hears the oft-repeated tale, "Lost, with all hands."

Witness yonder battle-field; that field of carnage, of bloodshed, of death! The hostile forces had met face to face, the order of battle had been made; but, ere the first shot sped its fatal course, hearts had been uplifted in prayer.

Each warrior had to carry his life in his hand, had willingly to lay it down in his country's cause, had to tread on ground about to drink the life-blood of thousands; and there was grim death sitting ready to enfold in his wide embrace all who should fall in that bloody scene.

There death was heard in the report of every gun, and was seen in the stroke of every sword.

The battle-field, the shipwreck, the railway accident are his native place. There he finds himself at home. There he is expected. There he requires no dress, no cloak, no disguise. He may be unwelcome, but he is none the less there. There as the "grim monster;" there as the "King of terrors;" there in all reality for young as well as old, for rich as well as poor, for strong as well as feeble, for master as well as servant.

But death is not always undisguised. To pass unknown he adopts a variety of cloaks. Intrude upon the scene he must, and to do so unobserved by his victim he lends himself to that plan of approach by which he deems himself most likely to succeed. Down to the "depths of hell," he leads by a skilful hand.

See that young man beguiled by a taste of the sweet and sparkling glass, trace his downward course until you find him laid in a drunkard's grave.

See that young woman, caught by the beauty of a dress, allured into a course of sin, to perish unhonoured in an early grave.

But, turning away from that which is so manifestly the cause of ruin, look at those who are treading a "way that seemeth right in their

own eyes." It is not one of drunkenness, nor of uncleanness, nor of theft, nor of blasphemy; it is one where the conscience is lulled to sleep by the idea that there is "*peace, peace,*" when the soul remains unrenewed, when the "second birth" has not been known, when the blood of Christ has not been sprinkled, when the heart finds pleasure, not in open sin indeed, but in the things of this life—in the interests, the politics, the business, the ways of this world!—and when the word of God is all along declaring "*there is no peace;*" and, oh! solemn thought, "the end thereof are the ways of death." That is the end of the way that *seemeth* to be right.

Little did that young man think when first he tasted the sparkling contents of his cup that it was pressed to his lips by the hand of death. He could not see beneath the disguise. He was deceived. Nor, again, did she discover, who came to an untimely grave, that beneath the glare of the attractive dress, which, alas, proved to be the first step in her downward career, there lurked the dark destroyer. She perceived him not, yet he succeeded, and she became his prey.

And, lastly, little did they dream of his devices who were busily engaged in the performance of that which seemed in their eyes to be right. Yet death was using things, right in themselves perhaps, to blind them to the other truths of their own lost condition, and was hushing them, lest the searching sound of the second birth and life in Christ should reach them.

Oh! to get the unawakened aroused! Oh! to

get the blindfold that darkens them torn to shreds! Oh! that the sinner would learn that "the wages of sin is DEATH!" Oh! that the sleeping professor would believe that he possesses nothing but a name to live, and would therefore bestir himself! Unsaved souls, *awake*, AWAKE! Why sleep, why slumber, why fold your hands to sleep? You are being led captive, and one of the worst features in your moral disease is that you have no adequate sense of your danger. Your sins are bad, but what shall we say of your indifference both as to sin and judgment? Think you that God is not in earnest? Think you that the eye of death is not fixed upon you? Think you that the word of God will fail of fulfilment? You are warned now. Turn a deaf ear to that warning, and nothing remains for you but a certain fearful-looking form of judgment. Death will place you in the hand of judgment, and judgment will award you that "everlasting punishment" which your sins deserve. Unsaved reader! earnestly, lovingly do we bid you awake and hearken to the call of Him who "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." "*Be ye therefore ready.*"

It is *life* you need, and, blessed be God! that life may be had to-day. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 36). "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John v. 12). "I am the way, the truth, and the *life*" (John xiv. 6). And, thus believing, you have "passed from death unto life" (John v. 24), and are enabled to sing "Oh! death, where is thy sting?"

J. W. S.

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

It is a lamentable proof of the blinding power of Satan to find the greater number of God's children without the assurance of a *present* and *personal* salvation. I have known many who have been seeking this assurance for years. They think it is an advanced state, only to be obtained by experience; whereas, on the contrary, I know I am saved on precisely the same ground as I know I am lost. How do I know I am a lost sinner? By my experience of the fact? By my realising it after a long and laboured process of the mind? No, but by the word of God, and that *alone*; so, in like manner, I know I am saved; not by my experience or feelings, but *solely* on the testimony of the word of God.

Were my doubting heart to suggest after all, "You must not be too sure. good men and learned men doubt and fear," I can give a triumphant answer from 1 John, v. 11, "And this is the record (or witness) that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Will experience or exercise ever witness to me the *possession* of eternal life? Experience, *following* on the reception of God's testimony, is valuable, and may be helpful to souls; but experience—such as is found in memoirs of persons who struggled to obtain assurance of salvation—experience *preceding* assurance is, I judge, hurtful to souls. Is not the "witness of God" enough to satisfy me of my *present* and *eternal* safety? Does not His word pledge me present

justification from all things, in Acts xiii, 38, 39? I do most earnestly desire the emancipation of my reader from doubts, fears, and questions. The knowledge of salvation is not at all a question of what I am—of what I experience, of fitness or unfitness, but its truth rests simply on the word of God. I have, therefore, a *solid* ground of rejoicing, and, instead of its being presumption to *know* that I *have* a *present* salvation, it is presumption to question it.

Do not, my fellow-believer, go longer without the knowledge of a present, full, and eternal salvation. You have heard His life-giving word, "Come forth;" shut not your ears against His blessed and emancipating word, "Loose him, and let him go." Liberty and life are both founded on the word of Christ. May the golden sayings,—"Thy sins *are* forgiven," "Thy faith *hath* saved thee," "*Go in peace*," dispel the mists and clouds of unbelief which have gathered around thy soul (Luke vii. 48-50; Luke viii. 48; Mark v. 34).

"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 condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). In order to establish our *naturally* doubting hearts in unshaken confidence in His own word, the Lord Jesus uses this double "Verily," only found in this Gospel. Note these three points:

1.—HEARETH. 2.—BELIEVETH. 3.—HATH.

His word, say John iii. 14-16, you have *heard* and *believed*. What then? You *have* "everlasting

life;" and are "passed from death unto life." O, doubting one, open your heart and take in, in all its grand, Divine simplicity, this "witness of God" to thy present possession of the gift of eternal life.

Many a dear doubting one has poured out his complaint in the language of the well-known line :—

"'Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His, or am I not?"

Oh, how Scripture meets the longings of the heart! The "point I long to know" may be known *at once*, and known, too, with Divine certainty: "*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).

Perhaps the richest passage in God's word upon the truth of a present salvation *known* and *enjoyed* is Ephesians i. In that wonderful and magnificent chapter the Holy Ghost grounds the present blessing and security of the saint on foundations which can never be shaken. There is not an "if" in the whole chapter, but all is made to rest on the purposes and counsels of God for the glory of Christ. We have blessing, choosing, predestination, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, glory; *we have it all now* (verses 3-14). These are not truths for advanced saints, for those who have made progress, for "Fathers" in Christ only; they are equally the heritage of

the "babe" as of the "father;" of the feeblest lamb of the blood-purchased flock, as of the most advanced and matured saint.

There are three "*hath's*" in Col. i. 12-14: "*Hath* made us meet to be partakers of the saints in light." I am fit for heaven at this moment, will never be more fit than I am *now*. "*Hath* delivered us from the power of darkness." I am as clean delivered from Satan as if I were in heaven. "*Hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." I am in His kingdom *now*; when He comes in the glory of His kingdom, I will appear too, for I am in it *now*. Further, "We *have* redemption through his blood." The efficacy of that past redeeming work effected by blood-shedding to deliver me from my sins and Satan is *eternal*. All is present possession nevertheless.

Would you know the secret of your lack of assurance? It is a heart that has not yet found Jesus *enough*. Many a troubled one has said to me, "*Thoughts* are ever and anon springing up in my heart; doubts and fears trouble me, and I know not how to dispel them." Beloved! what business have *you* to have *thoughts?* Rather should it be, What is His love? What are His thoughts? Is He unchanged? Is His heart unchanged and unchanging to me? We have a fine case in Luke xxiv. 36-53, of a doubting company of saints so *fully* assured of His love that they believed not for very joy. He came to them, a people terrified and affrighted; He left them, a people filled with peace, great joy, praise, and worship.

Redemption had been wrought out amidst the unfathomable anguish of the cross, and now the risen One would bring the spoils of His victory over death, guilt, and Satan to "his own." He had *made* peace by the blood of His cross, and now He would be His own messenger and carry it to them. He stood in their midst and said, "Peace unto you." They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit; and He said unto them, "Why are ye troubled? and why do *thoughts* arise in your heart?" How does the blessed One calm their fears and dispel the rising thoughts of the heart? Oh, the *cure* for a troubled heart is a sight of the Lord *Himself*. "*He shewed them his hands and his feet.*" Beloved, look upon a risen Christ presenting in His person the pledges of His undying love, and of redemption accomplished for "his own." Still further to re-assure their hearts and set them in peace and liberty in His presence, "He did eat before them," but *they provided the feast*. Blessed Lord Jesus, well Thou knewest how to win hearts to Thyself! "Peace unto you," dear, trembling, fearing saint! "Peace unto you," doubting one! The Lord would feast at *thy* table. Oh, child of resurrection, life, and glory! gaze upon thy risen Lord, and in Him read thy present, perfect, and eternal acceptance with God. Why fear any more? Why doubt any more? The Son *hath* made you free. "*Stand fast* in the *liberty* wherewith Christ *hath* made us free, and not be entangled AGAIN with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. v. 1). In the conscious liberty of the gospel, "cast out the

bondwoman and her son" (Genesis xxi. 6, 10). May "legalism" be cast out of thy heart, and be for ever rejected as unworthy to be an heir of God and joint heir with Christ!

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins *are* forgiven you for his name's sake;" "I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father" (1 John ii. 12, 13). Was it presuming, on the part of those *babes* addressed by the apostle John, to hold to the truth of a present and known forgiveness of sins? Surely, it is clear from these texts that the youngest in Christ had Divine certainty that their sins were fully forgiven; why, it is on that *very ground* that the apostle addresses them. Surely, no one would venture to assert that the Holy Ghost could own presumption; and yet, according to the modern doctrine, believers asserting positively that they *are* saved are regarded as being presumptuous, and I know not what beside!

"Herein is love with us made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17). I beg you very carefully to notice this interesting passage. A more decided statement upon the question of "full assurance" will not be found within the boards of your Bible. The perfection of God's love *with us* is to give *present* boldness in view of the day of judgment. Days of judgment will arrive, scenes of terror such as never have been dreamt of will soon be witnessed; but the saints will never be in those days of coming woe and wrath, save *to judge* (1 Cor. vi. 2); we will have boldness *then*, we have boldness now

even in the anticipation of "judgment to come." Why have we this boldness, why this perfect confidence? "Because as he is so are we in this world." As He *is*—in the glory bright, so am I here; is He accepted, and loved? so am I; not, I will be after death, but, so am I *in this world*. I do not need to wait until the judgment day to know acceptance with God. Read the passage in *His* presence and then rise from your knees in the conscious enjoyment of being *now* a sharer in Christ's life, place, blessedness, and glory.

I do not know a better antidote to the practical unbelief of the heart that questions the truth of the full assurance of sins judged and put away, than an hour's study of the First Epistle of John; but, in fact, *all* the epistles breathe the spirit of conscious liberty in Christ. Uncertainty as to the soul's acceptance with God is a thought foreign to the Scriptures. They never suppose a saint ignorant of or undecided as to his relationship with God; on the contrary, the commands, exhortations, and admonitions of the word invariably take for granted that those to whom they are addressed *know* redemption.

I will now leave my reader to make his own use of the following list, commending him to the God of all grace in whom he has believed.

1 JOHN, CHAPTER II.

	Verse.
1. Fathers have *known* Him (Christ)	13, 14
2. Little children have *known* the Father	13
3. We *know* it is the last time	18
4. Ye *know* all things	20
5. Ye *know* the truth	21

		Verses.
	CHAPTER III.	
6.	We *know* we shall be like Him	2
7.	Ye *know* He was manifested to take away our sins	5
8.	We *know* we have passed from death unto life...	14
9.	We *know* we are of the truth...	19
10.	We *know* He abideth in us	24
	CHAPTER IV.	
11.	Hereby *know* we that we dwell in Him, and He in us	13
12.	We have *known* the love God hath to us ...	16
	CHAPTER V.	
13.	We *know* that we love the children of God ...	2
14.	Ye may *know* that ye have eternal life... ...	13
15.	We *know* that we have the petitions that we desired	15
16.	We *know* that whosoever is born of God sinneth not	18
17.	We *know* we are of God	19
18.	We *know* that the Son of God is come	20
19.	We *know* Him that is true	20
20.	*We are in Him that is true*	20

W. S.

INCORRIGIBLE AND INCURABLE.

Among my patients to-day there came one, a gentleman, about thirty years old. His condition could be clearly traced to the sins of his youth. He, in no way, disguised this to himself or to me; he spoke simply and frankly, and yet, withal, with modest shame. As he was about to leave, after our consultation, I said to him, in effect, "Have you yet discovered your real state as a man in the presence of God, and its remedy?

He replied, without hesitation, "I have, and I find that God has considered, and condemned me as incorrigible."

"Add to that," I said, "incurable, and your whole case morally is stated."

He assented to this complete condemnation of himself as a child of the first Adam, and we parted, after a few words of fellowship as children of the resurrection—dead with Christ, and risen with Christ; Him, of whom Scripture speaks as the beginning of the creation of God, in which we know, from the same source of light, as to the ways of God, that the incorrigible and incurable outcome of the first man can have no place, save through the new and living way, opened through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a comfort to know the worst of ourselves before God, and to know that the worst has been met in a way worthy of God and His glorious eternal purpose; that the Samson of God, the stronger man, has rent the lion who roared against the One commissioned to carry forth the way of light and love in this world of darkness and of death; and that he hath not only rent the lion—he who hath the power of death, the wicked one, the liar and murderer from the beginning—but that out of the carcase of the slain—out of the eater—He hath brought forth meat and sweetness, to give to His own. "Out of the eater came forth meat, out of the strong came forth sweetness."

What a riddle to the natural man!

How simple, how sweet, how sustaining to the spiritual man! T. M.

A LETTER TO AN ANXIOUS SOUL.

"Dear ——, It is upon my heart to write you concerning that which I know has much occupied your mind of late,—the salvation of your soul. I can sympathise with you in the exercise of soul through which you are passing, because I remember so well my own agony before I learned eternal redemption. Many precious souls are not thus troubled, because they do not know the state they are in. They are asleep, like Jonah when the tempest was raging, and the awakened ones were sorely afraid, and, like him, they have to be awakened before they see the danger they are in. What an unspeakable mercy to have been awakened in *time*, instead of in *eternity!*

And so, dear soul, you need not be surprised that you have been passing through deep trouble, for this is a necessary consequence of our being brought face to face with our sins and God's holiness. It teaches us something of the awful character of sin which, when we are in some measure alive to it, makes us utterly and anguishedly wretched; showing us in fact a little of what hell must be.

But "the bitter coming before the sweet makes the sweet the sweeter;" and the utmost misery on account of sin is often the path to the unbounded joy of the knowledge of acceptance. May it be so in your case.

Well, to begin to endeavour to unfold the heart of my God and Father towards you, I

must tell you that God loves you—loves you more than human tongue can tell, or human heart conceive; and that there is not one single feeling in God's heart towards you but LOVE. Do you ask me how I know this? Will you reach your Bible, and turn to John iii. 16, "God so loved *the world* that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" Now, dear soul, are you not in the world; one amongst the world? Of course you are. Then God loves you, because He loves the world. You will see, by-and-bye, I trust, that your emancipation depends upon your taking salvation home to yourself.

If I say I love a certain family, it is manifest that I mean all the members of that family; and, if God says that He loves the world, it is manifest that He means the whole world, every human being in that world—just what He says, in short. Not one single human being that dwells upon the face of this wide, wide world, is left out; not one! To every creature under heaven does the word apply. Not one can get out of that number. Not one can truly say, "Salvation is not for me;" for, so long as he is in the world, this word looks him in the face, and meets him whichever way he turns, "God so loved the world." Yes, God is "reconciling the world unto himself." It is not God who needs reconciling to you; but you who need reconciling to God. It was not the father who needed reconciling to the prodigal—his heart was never unreconciled—but the prodigal who

needed reconciling to the father—needed to learn that in that big, almost bursting heart of his father, there was nothing but love towards him. How is God reconciling the world? "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, *not imputing their trespasses unto them*" (2 Cor. v. 19).

Let us return. "He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life." God loved the world—most unspeakably blessed truth. God gave His Son: but for what? for what? Ah! look back a little in the chapter to the 14th verse—to be "LIFTED UP!" And 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." Oh, my blessed, blessed Jesus! what, WHAT, WHAT did it cost Thee to purchase for me, even me, eternal life? Oh the anguish of that hour of hours, the hour of Calvary!

Listen! "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What does this mean? Had not the voice been heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased?" What, I ask, does this mean—what CAN it mean? Listen again: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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. 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" (Isaiah liii. 4-6).

Oh that is the meaning! It means that Jehovah is striking, smiting, afflicting, wounding, bruising, chastising, and laying stripes upon the righteous soul of His Son, in order that PEACE might be made for helpless, guilty sinners!

Human history contains some touching records of affection; but ransack history, exhaust every record, and tell me, when you have done, if you can find the most distant analogy to the character of the LOVE displayed by God in the cross of His Son.

Oh, solemn, solemn word, word which shall be the basis of eternity's praises, LIFTED UP! "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

And that lifting up was for YOU; for you belong to "the world."

Do you ask, "How am I to avail myself of it?" "*Whosoever* BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but HAVE everlasting life."

You avail yourself of it, precious soul, simply by BELIEVING. That is all. Yes, standing still and believing—crediting what God says, that is all. Like Israel before the Red Sea, if they went forward they went into the sea; if they went back they went into the midst of the Egyptians. What was to be done? NOTHING.

"*Stand still*, and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show you to-day." God will do everything for them *when they can do nothing for themselves*; and He opens the sea for them, and drowns the Egyptians. So, when man is utterly lost and ruined, and cannot stir a finger to help himself, God, in love, which eternity cannot tell out, came into the scene, and wrought salvation in the person of His Son. I say wrought *salvation*, not a part of salvation, leaving the sinner to work out the rest, a thing which, it is needless to say, the sinner could not do; but Jesus finished the work so perfectly that God can now righteously, and *with glory to Himself*, GIVE "everlasting life" to every believing sinner.

Apart, for a moment, from the fact that the sinner can do nothing to purchase salvation, if God could receive any further payment for salvation from the sinner, it would be a proof that the work of Christ was not sufficient payment. Suppose I am unable to pay a debt I have contracted, and another pays it for me, how much does the creditor want from me? NOTHING AT ALL. Why? Because he has been paid the whole. Yes, but I have not paid it. No matter; it has been paid for me, and the creditor reckons that payment to me. And, more than that, he cannot righteously demand one single farthing from me, because he has been paid in full. So, I reverently say, since Jesus has paid in full all the debt of the believing sinner, God cannot righteously punish that believing sinner for the sins for which He has already punished Jesus. And, therefore, that believing sinner is entirely free

from judgment, for "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have *boldness in the day of judgment;* because, AS HE IS, so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17); that is, just as Jesus is free from judgment because He has borne it, so the believing sinner is "*in this world*" free from judgment, because Jesus has borne his judgment, and the bankrupt sinner avails himself of all this by believing. The moment I *believed* that my friend had paid my debt, I should be happy, and should have, I trust, no further concern but to show how much I loved my friend. Exactly so: the moment the bankrupt sinner believes that Jesus has paid the debt due to God on account of the sinner's sins, that very moment he has peace, is at rest, and seeks, in the strength of God's grace, to show his love to that Saviour who has loved him with such an untold love. "We love him because he first loved us" (1 John iv. 19).

And now, do you ask, "How am I to know that *I* have everlasting life?" "Whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Can God, will God, twice demand payment for the believing sinner's sins? Impossible. His word is pledged to two things, first the believing sinner shall not perish, and next, that believing sinner *shall have* everlasting life. The same God, who tells me that He has given His Son to be "lifted up" on the cross for my sins, tells me that, if I believe in Him, I *have* everlasting life, for He says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life" (1 John v. 13).

Are you, then, in the world? Then God loves you, and has given His Son, who has been "lifted up" on the cross of Calvary, and has suffered all the judgment that was due to sin.

Do you believe in Jesus?—in other words, have you cast aside all your fancied goodness and supposed good works, and are you trusting for your soul's salvation only to the "lifting up" of Jesus, and to the work which He "finished" when thus "lifted up"? (John xix. 30). If so, God Himself assures you that you shall not perish, but have everlasting life. The moment you thus rest in Jesus only, "your sins *are* forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John ii. 12) and you are a child of God (1 John ii. 1-2); God's Spirit witnesses that you are a child, and is within you the spirit of adoption, whereby you cry, Abba, Father; you are "an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ" (Romans viii. 15-17).

And now, dear soul, in the presence of God, can you say, "I do believe the love which God has towards me?" If so, perfect love has cast out fear; you dread God no longer, but love Him because He first loved you, hence "to live is Christ, to die is gain" (Phil i. 21). "If God be *for* us,—who can be *against* us?" (Romans viii. 31).—In deepest interest, yours,

R. H. G.

THE WARNING DREAM; OR, "YOU MAY YET ESCAPE."

"God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—JOB xxxiii. 14, 16.

Many and varied are the ways which God, in His sovereign grace, uses to touch the conscience, and the above Scripture tells how He convicted me. The story of my conversion has, when simply related, been the means of awakening some souls, and I now commit it to paper, trusting that the Lord, in His infinite grace, may use it to arrest the thoughtless. Such was I when He spoke to me in a vision of the night, and created in my soul a fear of hell, and an earnest longing to know God.

The tender years of my childhood were watched over by one who knew Jesus. Our old nurse prayed much that those committed to her care, whom she always called her children, should early receive into their souls the spark of Divine life. She warned us often of our terrible condition, as being yet unsaved, and pictured strongly to our young minds the magnitude of God's wrath against sin. She told us this wrath hung over the unsaved, over *every one* who does not believe in Jesus, Whom God in love gave to bear His judgment on sin, and to Whom the saint can sing—

"Such was Thy love, that for our sake
Thou didst from heaven come down,
With us of flesh and blood partake,
And make our guilt Thine own;

Our sins, our guilt, in love Divine,
Confessed and borne by Thee,
The gall, the curse, the wrath were Thine,
To set Thy ransomed free."

Her warnings and entreaties failed to arrest my foolish, thoughtless spirit; but her prayers, and those of others who loved me, were not forgotten. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers." The Lord had heard, and the answer was on the wing, but He was to take His own time and way of dealing with me; a way that claimed for Himself exclusively the glory, and bowed my heart in His praise, who worketh wondrously.

Naturally I enjoyed life greatly, and companions were my delight. The pleasures of childhood attracted my active mind. The future did not press upon me, the present moment was what engrossed me, and I was happy in a very simple way; but God, in His wisdom, through the dream of one night, changed the thoughtless into the thoughtful, and burdened my young heart with care. From a forgetter of God I became a seeker, one who would have given anything to know Him. This is the picture as man views it, but, if we could draw the curtain that veils His actings, how different all would appear! He had chosen me, He had set His love upon me, He called me, the Shepherd sought the lost sheep, and at length, in love, He brought me home upon His shoulder rejoicing. I have known joy, but deeper far has His been, Who seated me as a child at the table, and made me a sharer in the joys of the Father's home and heart.

I was about ten years of age when I dreamed that I was walking in some beautiful grounds: the noon-day sun shone brightly, the grass was soft and green, and the trees waved luxuriantly their feathery branches in the balmy air. It was an attractive scene, one likely to beguile thought and detain the wanderer. A fresh rushing stream invited the weary to drink. I stood looking at the bright sparkling waters, but did not drink. I passed on. Near this stream I observed some steps, and was curious to know whither they led. The pathway widened towards them, and the steps looked broad and easy. I thought not of the sparkling water I had passed, nor the bright scene I was leaving behind—something impelled me to go on. As I descended a noise made me halt for a moment. It sounded like a door closing over the opening above, and a rattling chain fell heavily upon it. A strange fear crossed my mind as to how a poor feeble child could raise this great doorway, and again reach the pleasant grounds above; but I comforted myself with the thought, I shall find another way of exit. At last I reached the bottom of the steps, and found myself in cellars of great extent. They were dimly lighted by means of gratings above. Amazed, I looked around me on all sides, and saw in this dingy dismal place many figures moving to and fro. They seemed very restless. I wondered where I could be. I thought how easily I had got into this terrible place. Fear began to lay hold of me. I felt I must enquire from some of these strange people where I was, and how I could

make my escape. They seemed to avoid me, but I was determined to have my information.

In the gloom I approached one very tall person, and demanded of him where I was, and if he would kindly show me my way out of these vaults. I looked anxiously for his reply, and his countenance struck me. It was marked by a sad expression of hopeless endurance, yet of painful restlessness. He gazed on me, but did not speak. Again, I said "Do please tell me where I am." Still no reply. He was wrapt in a long black Spanish mantle, this he slowly unfolded, and displayed, to my affrighted gaze, not his body, as I should have expected, but a pillar of fire. Horror seized me! I rushed to another figure, similarly dressed, and put the same questions, he too was silent; but, after repeated entreaty, he in like manner unfolded his robe and displayed another pillar of fire. The thought was dawning on me of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched."

But, to my relief, I saw a face I knew. Now, I thought, I have found a friend who will safely deliver me from this dungeon. I addressed her by name, telling her how afraid I was, and how foolishly I had yielded to curiosity, and thus got where I now was. She looked on me with sad but eager interest, and said, "*You* are not here *for ever*, *you* may *yet escape*, this is hell! I have crossed the gulf, of which Scripture speaks, 'Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot.'"

As she spoke I awoke, and oh, how thankful I was, I was not yet in hell for ever! I resolved I

would never be there. I would diligently seek and find the way to heaven; but what gloom filled my soul! I believed God had unveiled to me the miseries of the damned, and the torments of the lake of fire. Could I help going there? I cried to God "What must I *do* to be saved?" This was my first earnest thought, in God's presence, as to my soul's salvation; but He had much to do to break down my pride of heart and self-sufficiency before He could say, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven, go in peace." I did not tell anyone of my dream. I hid it in my heart, and pondered God's dealings with me, for I firmly believed He had ordered the dream to warn me of my lost condition. Time wore on. I was very unhappy and would have had recourse to almost anything to drown thought. I sought the society of the thoughtless, vainly endeavouring to enter into their amusements, and laughed at their jokes. My outward manner, however, was no index to my state of heart. I could not forget my dream, God would not let me do so. I had given myself up to novel-reading, especially that of an historic character. These, more than anything, absorbed my thoughts, and for the time being made me less anxious; but God again spoke to me, and in a very striking manner.

My maternal grandfather, an aged saint, was dying. I went with my dear mother to the chamber of death. He was very happy, and about to have an abundant entrance ministered into the presence of His Lord. His mind had begun to wander, yet he spoke of his blessed Master. I sat by the

fire-side, while my mother stood by his bed-side. I heard him address her thus : "My dear child, your daughter is just now reading a book that is drowning thoughts of eternity. Oh, take it from her, it will damage her soul." My mother regarded this remark as the fancy of delirium ; but I knew better, God had spoken home to my soul. I felt I dare not again open "Thaddeus of Warsaw," the book that then engrossed me. My grandpapa's words were as a message from the eternal world. No one knew what I was reading, but God made this dying saint His channel of communication with me

Stripped of these resources, I was again a prey to the workings of an awakened conscience. Shortly after this I was sent to school. The lady was a Christian. She devoted an hour, after the early dinner, to reading and prayer, and I was told that those *who cared for their souls* might be present, if they asked permission. To own I was an anxious soul was a great struggle, but I felt it was the moment when God called me to own whether I desired Christ or the world. I thought I might get blessing and the light I sought at this little meeting. I gave in my name as one who wished to attend. The instruction given was of a legal character, yet our teacher was real before God, and very earnest for our blessing. She pressed much, what I have ever since been thankful for, the solemn responsibility of being a Christian, and that the world forms its estimate of the Lord by His people. Alas ! how often is the picture a false one, through the carelessness of their walk !

I now sought Christ with my whole heart, but I was perfectly ignorant of the *grace* of God. I prayed much, read the Scriptures, and gave myself long portions of them to commit to memory. I declined going to evening parties of young people of my own age. I took the place of being *for* God, and had a sense that separation from the world was right; but I did not know the love of God, nor that He compensates before He asks any surrender. I was still on the principle of works, and had not

"Cast my deadly doing down—
Down at Jesus' feet."

The Lord was working in my soul, and He who had begun the good work would perfect it.

A year later I was removed to another school, in the town of E———. While there I attended the ministry of an able servant of Christ, one who possessed great mental powers, and who doubtless knew the grace of God; but his teaching was doctrinal and argumentative in character, and not much directed to the heart. My *mind* feasted on all he said, and I sought to make others share my enjoyment of truth; but I had no assurance yet as to my salvation. I dreaded sin and avoided it, as far as my light went, but how dark was my spiritual understanding! I believe I had life at this time, others could see signs of it; but, if asked, I should not have dared to say *I was saved.* Like the Prodigal, in Luke xv., I had turned my back on the far country; I loathed the husks that the swine did eat; but the Father's kiss I had not yet received, nor was I seated at His table sharing

His joys. With the light I had I spoke for Christ, and was used in awakening others. One thoughtless girl was sent to sleep in my room, that I might gain an influence over her, for I was believed to be a Christian.

I had left school and was paying a visit, when, one morning, I received a letter from my eldest sister, telling me of her own conversion and that of two others in the family. It was in 1859 when God, by His Spirit, wrought so mightily in Scotland, and many were turned to the Lord. She was brought at once into conscious light and liberty of soul before God; the thing I had for years sought. At once I said to the friend with whom I was staying, "I must go home and see if I cannot also receive this blessing." She remonstrated, telling me I had long been a Christian, but I knew I had not peace with God, and I would not be detained. The evening I arrived at home I conversed with an aged servant of Christ, a lay preacher, whom God was greatly using in conversions. He thought I was saved. Next night I went to hear him preach; he spoke on John i. 29, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and 1 Peter ii. 24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." He dwelt on the great truth of "Substitution." I had never before heard it preached so clearly or simply, nor the love of God in giving this blessed Substitute so presented. *While* he spoke the burden of years dropped, the darkness passed away. "The entrance of thy word giveth light." I felt as a caged bird set free. My soul was filled

with joy. I could sing *my* song of deliverance and would like to have gone at once to Jesus, to sit for ever at His blessed feet. *He* had done it all. The blessed Scapegoat had carried *my* sins into the land of forgetfulness. God remembered them no more. I thought with God as to myself, my sins, and my Saviour.

In a dream He showed me I was lost, and the portion of the lost; in His word He pointed me to Christ who died for the lost, and that same word assured me "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life." I believed God's testimony and I was happy. *Now* I could say I am saved, I *have* eternal life, and I only want to enter bodily into the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who now are kept by the power of God, through faith." I was about to go abroad when the Lord so blessed me, and during a voyage of six weeks I had much time to think of Jesus. He was the burden of my thoughts. I read of Him, I prayed to Him, I talked with, and of Him.

> "My hope, my solace, and my song,
> He sweetly led my soul along."

It was as if God had whispered to me—

> "Now rest thy long divided heart,
> Fixed on that blissful centre, rest:
> Nor ever from thy Lord depart,
> *With* Him of every good possessed."

What light I had received I greatly enjoyed, and sought to use for His glory who had done so much for me. The Lord's words to the demoniac "shew how great things God hath done unto thee" made me speak of Jesus, and before the

end of the voyage one soul was manifestly brought from darkness to light, and I afterwards heard of others to whom God had given blessing ; but I had only entered the school of God, He had deeper things yet to teach me. To know and do the will of God is the Christian's life-long lesson. The pathway is one where trials may be expected, these are useful to us, but the end is glory and to see Him. The inheritance is kept for us, and we are kept for it.

Earth's best gifts were bestowed upon me, for a short season. I blessed my Father when He gave them, and I enjoyed them richly ; but it was long before my will bowed and I could praise, when He asked me to lay their precious dust in the silent tomb. He was preparing my heart for higher blessings. He makes a blank that He may reveal Himself more fully. Earthly love had to give place to that which is heavenly and eternal, and I had to learn the superiority of

> "Love that no tongue can teach,
> Love that no thought can reach :
> No love like His,
> God is its blessed source ;
> Death ne'er can stop its course,
> Nothing can stay its force :
> Matchless it is ! "

Heavenly truth I did not yet know, but He who watched over my soul first prepared my heart, and then caused the messenger, from whom I was to receive it, to cross my path. This faithful servant of Christ unfolded our heavenly relationships, as children of the Father, our acceptance *in* the Beloved, and the gracious news

that we *are* blessed, with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ; that by the Holy Ghost we are linked with the Man Christ Jesus, "one spirit with the Lord," who trod this earth in lowliness, where He has left us, in all the power of His resurrection, to follow in His footsteps; and for our hearts, while pilgrims going home, He is an object in the glory of God, till we see Him, when the word says we shall be like Him.

The reception of these truths was another milestone in my spiritual history, turning my feet into new paths of service, and guiding affections that had been wrapt on earthly objects, to find their outlet on "the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, *all* things are become new, and *all* things are of God." When the soul grasps these glorious facts, the victory is sought over all that would hinder onward progress; the trials of life are deemed light because of the exceeding weight of glory in reserve; and the heart depends, moment by moment, on Him, for the faith that alone gives victory. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

About this time I became more alive to the fact, that the pathway of the Christian is *entirely* one of faith, and the *power* to walk in it faith too. "The just shall live by faith;" "According to your faith be it unto you." Every blessing is received by faith, but faith is as essential to its enjoyment as to

its reception. How dependent are we on Him, who alone can keep the eye of faith undimmed! To do the will of God is the one object, through life's long story; for this we need patience, and, after it is done, He will make good the promise to come, and receive us to Himself, "That where I am there ye may be also" (see also Heb. x. 36; John xvii. 24.)

Dear unsaved one, let this story speak to your heart, "You may yet escape." The sunny plains of my dream picture the world in its most charming but most delusive aspect. Your life may have been one of thoughtless pleasure, trials you may not have known; therefore you have not tested the falseness of all that which now engrosses you. One fact, if you weigh it, will unveil the wretched poverty of your present condition. You *must leave all* that which now comforts, supports, and pleases you, and you *must* meet God! Lovely and amiable you may be, but hear His verdict, "Born in sin!" "Lost!" "Dead!" I do not speak of your sins, those may not yet have troubled you; I speak of your *state* in His presence. It is one of *condemnation*, and His wrath *now* hangs over you. "All have sinned," "There is none righteous, no not one." Be entreated! Take your true place, as lost before Him, and "you may yet escape" the wrath which is your due. The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. He *pleads* with you! Hear His words, "Ye will not come to *me*, that ye may have life." The blessing is *all in Him*. To *Him* you must go. His arms are wide open to receive you, and "Come unto me, *all* ye that labour and are heavy laden,

and I will give you rest," are the gracious words that fall from His lips.

To another class I would speak, to you who have drunk deeply of this world's pleasures, but whose hearts are not satisfied—aching after something, you know not what. Let me tell you, you are heedless of the only One who can give that which will satisfy you. Your heart is too large to be filled with anything this world could supply ; but He will fill it to overflowing. My dream speaks a word of warning to you. I passed the bright sparkling waters that invited me to drink, and wandered on into paths of danger. Jesus says, " If any man thirst let him come unto *me* and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters." " Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Why? Because what Christ has for the weary aching heart so thoroughly meets every sense of need, that not a desire remains but to enjoy its portion. Take Him now as your Saviour, and He will make you sit down by those living waters, and feed you on the green pastures of His word. He wants to be your Shepherd. He will care for you, till at last He safely lands you in realms above, where " the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes " (Rev. vii, 17.)

Let not Satan beguile you! You are on the broad easy road, and where will it land you? Be warned! In a moment you may have reached

the end of the descent! There no friendly voice will say, "You are not here yet for ever, you may yet escape," for God's judgment on your soul will then be sealed. "As the tree falls, so shall it lie." He who now says, "Why will ye die?" will there utter the awful word "Depart." "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Let the dream that converted me speak to you, for there is "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot." If you are heedless of God's warning now, you will one day believe in the reality of hell, and you may pray in hell; but the day of prayer-hearing and prayer-answering will be for ever over. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." These words fell from the Saviour's own lips, and they describe the awful reality of hell, and the misery of the damned. I would not add mine to them lest I should weaken their power on your soul.

But heaven, too, is a reality, and the realms of glory are yet open to you. Jesus died that you *might* be there, such was the measure of His love; and now from the glory He lingers over you, beseeching you to open the door of your heart, that He may find His joy in you. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if *any* man hear

my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." His heart yearns to get satisfaction in you, and for you an eternity of bliss is open in His own and His father's presence.

"That rest, secure from ill,
No cloud of grief e'er stains:
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,
And love eternal reigns.

There on the hidden bread
Of Christ, once humbled here,
God's treasured store, for ever fed,
His love my soul shall cheer.

There, in effulgence bright,
Saviour and Guide, with Thee
I'll walk, and in Thy heavenly light
Whiter my robe shall be.

There, in th' unsullied way,
Which His own hand hath dressed,
My feet press on when brightest day
Shines forth on all the rest.

But who that glorious blaze
Of living light shall tell?
When all His brightness God displays,
And the Lamb's glories dwell.

(There only to adore,
My soul its strength may find,
Its life, its joy for evermore,
By sight nor sense defined.)

God and the Lamb shall there
The light and temple be,
And radiant hosts for ever share
The unveiled mystery."

R.

THE SYMPATHY OF JESUS.

Oh! the joy of calmly resting
On the Saviour's changeless love;
Oh! the sweetness thus of tasting
Mercy flowing from above.

When the heart from care is sinking,
When the bosom deeply sighs,
On His words of comfort thinking,
Every load of trouble flies.

"Casting all thy care upon Him"
Is the Spirit's earnest call:
"On the Lord cast all thy burden,"
Every weight of trial roll.

Though the path thy foot now presses
Straight across the desert lie,
Once that path was trod by Jesus,
Every step of sorrow bye.

Now bedeck'd with crowns of glory,
Resting on the Father's Throne,
Is the man once marred and gory,
Who our guilt had made His own.

Brief the period of thy sorrow,
Strong His sympathy of love,
Endless is thy bright to-morrow,
With Him in His Courts above.

Nought thy soul from Him can sever,
Nought His love from thee can part,
Thine His rest, His home for ever,
Thine His smile, His joy, His heart.

J. W. S.

"I'D LIKE TO BE SURE ABOUT IT."

Some little time ago I was called to see a poor girl who was dying of consumption. Her home was the miserable garret of a house inhabited by several different families, where she was often disturbed by the voices of the swearer and the drunkard, which could be plainly heard through the thin walls. As I glanced round the bare room, so plainly stamped with the marks of poverty and want, I felt that nothing but the love of Jesus could brighten such a place, and longed to speak of Him, who alone can give peace in the midst of every circumstance.

Her end was evidently very near, and, sitting down by the side of the bed, I asked how long she had been ill. "About two years," was her reply, "though I have only been in bed about ten weeks."

"You must have suffered a great deal," I said, after waiting till a distressing fit of coughing was over, which almost exhausted her.

"Ay, that I have," she answered.

"And have you the comfort of knowing that the Lord Jesus is *your* Saviour? Does it give you real joy to know that your time here is so short?" I asked, anxious to discover if she knew anything of that "peace, which passeth all understanding."

She looked at me with an expression of great interest as she said, "I can only trust in the Lord, I know I have no hope but in Him, for I have been such a sinner; sometimes I feel afraid, for I never thought about Him till I took ill, and

sometimes I think he will be merciful, for it says He died for sinners, and, oh, I'm such a sinner. People like you don't know what sin is."

"We may not have the same temptations that you have, but we all have the same sinful nature, and God says in His word that we are all alike. I don't mean to say that we all do the same things, but we have a nature in us that cannot love God, and cannot please Him, the same nature that crucified His Son. In the Bible we read that 'There is none righteous, no, *not one*;' '*All* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' I might be the best, the kindest, the most religious person you ever saw, but unless I see that I have a sinful nature, and can take my place as one of the *lost*, for whom the Saviour died, I am just as far from God as the most hardened sinner on earth. But the same Word that tells us that 'All have sinned' tells us also that 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'" (1 Tim. i. 15).

"I do believe that He died to save sinners, and I know I am a sinner," she said, "only, I'd like to be sure about it; it would make me so happy."

I took out my Testament, and, turning to John iii., said, "We will see what the Lord Himself says about it; I don't want you to take *my* word, but to take His." I then read, "And 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."

"But I do believe," she said.

"Then, have you everlasting life?"

"I don't know," was her answer.

"But how is that?" I asked; "don't you believe God's word? the Lord Himself says, '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,' do you think He could say a thing which is not true?"

"Oh, no, and that seems simple enough, but I don't *feel* like it," she answered.

"But God says nothing at all about your feelings, all He wants is that you should see yourself a sinner, having no hope but Christ; then if you really believe that He died to *save sinners*, and therefore to save *you*, *God says* you have 'everlasting life.' Remember it is not *my* word but *God's*. He wants nothing from us but child-like faith in His Son."

"I do believe," she repeated, "can it be true that I am really saved?"

"What makes you think you are saved?" I asked.

"Because it says 'whosoever believeth,' and I *do* believe, so it must mean me."

"Yes, it does," I answered, "it means every poor sinner who sees himself lost and ruined by nature, and believes on the Lord Jesus as his Saviour. God is so holy that he cannot tolerate sin, and His divine character demanded the death of the sinner. But, though he hates sin, He loved us so much that He could sacrifice His only Son, the most precious object of His love, to save us from eternal misery. How pre-

cious you must be to Him! Christ bore the punishment of your sins in His own body, the debt has been paid, and now you are free. Do you understand it?"

"Oh, yes" she replied, "it is quite clear now, and so simple; it always seemed so hard that I was afraid to think about it. But suppose I sin now!"

"The Lord has provided for that; in John's Epistle we find these words, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous,' and then again, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' We ought not to sin, but if we *do* it must be confessed at once, we must go to God, and tell Him all about it, as to a loving Father."

She then begged me to speak to the other members of the family who were still unconverted, and asked me to come in again, whenever I had time. After this, our first interview, I was with her every day until she died. On my last visit I said, "You are very near home now, I don't think you have many hours to live, have you any doubts or fears?"

"No, not one," she answered, "He bore all my sins, all the judgment that I deserved, He paid all the debt, and I am wearying to be with Him."

This was in the afternoon, and about five o'clock the next morning a change took place. She called for all about her, telling them of her own happiness, and bidding them come to Him who died to save them; soon after this her

spirit departed to be with her Saviour, her last words being, "Glory, glory, come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Dear reader, could you welcome death, could you rejoice to know that you have only a few hours to live? If not, what is the reason? It must be either that you do not see your lost condition as a child of Adam, or that you have not yet taken God at His word. The world has its pleasures and its joys, but there is no joy like that which springs from a *heart-knowledge* of the "love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Perhaps you have your doubts about the truth of God's word, you may not think man is so bad as God makes him out to be, and imagine that, if a man does his duty, it will come all right in the end. Ah, don't be deceived, the Lord says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by *me*." Nothing can save you but simple faith in the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, who came "to seek and to save that which was lost," and who "came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

If you have not accepted God's verdict that you are *lost*, how can Christ save you? Sooner or later you must bow to Him, sooner or later you must own what He is, and what you are. We read, "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things *under* the earth" (Phil. ii. 9.) Such may not be your opinion, but your opinion cannot alter the word of God. It must be fulfilled.

You must either bow to Him now, while salvation is free, and for "whosoever will," or you *will have* to bow to Him when there is no mercy to be had, when the day of grace is past, and when you will be compelled to own that He is *righteous* and *just* in *condemning* you to everlasting punishment, for having despised and rejected such a Saviour.

T. T. O.

PROFIT OR LOSS.

"And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."—MARK viii. 34-38.

About this time of the year, dear reader, many people are in the habit of rather closely scrutinising their affairs, with a view of seeing exactly how they stand. This is very good. It is a grand thing to know your exact whereabouts. The business man learns the state of his affairs by the record of his books, which, if properly kept, declare manifestly whether PROFIT or LOSS is the result of the year's overturn.

Let me ask you, what is the state of your affairs just as this year is drawing to a close? Do I hear you reply?—Oh, I have got on well this

year, I have gained much, and made great progress, and now I have just estimated my profits, which are very satisfactory.

Is Christ among them?

Oh, that's another matter entirely, and has nothing at all to say to the former question.

There you are wrong, my friend. Will you again read the few printed verses at the head of this paper? See how the Lord sums up your case, scans the true state of matters and then propounds this intensely solemn question, "WHAT shall it PROFIT a man, if he shall GAIN *the whole world*, and LOSE his own soul?"

Beloved friend, with all your gain, are you still without Christ? Is this so? Speak not of *gain* then, I pray thee. *Loss* is the right word.

Your so-called gain may be multiform riches, knowledge, pleasure, position, glory, or some other long coveted prize now made your own, but what will all avail if your own soul be LOST, through Christ not being among your gains?

Dear unsaved one, I beseech thee, earnestly to ponder this query. Is it real profit to have acquired even "the whole world" at the cost of your own soul? Nay. It is loss, loss indeed.

But are you willing to have Jesus as your Saviour? If till this moment you have been opposed to Him, henceforth be numbered amongst His friends.

Let not this year roll by and find you still among His enemies. O, turn to Him now! Full of grace, He yet lingers on the Father's throne, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The day of His

long-suffering *will terminate*, and when His closes yours *must begin*. *Once* He SUFFERED for sins and sinners; now His long-suffering of carelessness and indifference is the freshest proof of His undying love, but this day is near run out, and then the day of wrath, ETERNAL WRATH, must begin. O, sinner, what will avail all your gains then, when you yourself are LOST through your own folly, indifference, and unbelief?

Most lovingly do I warn you of your fearful future. Be entreated. Come to Jesus. Come now. Come as you are. Do not drop this paper, save at His blessed feet. He will save you. He will save you just now, just as you are. Only believe Him. Fancy the awfulness of being eternally lost in the depths of hell. Picture the indescribable blessedness of eternal life with Christ in a scene of endless rest and hallowed joy. Make your choice now. One or the other must be your abode for ever. With Christ all is gain, without Him all is loss. God grant you to believe and live.

W. T. P. W.