

SAVED AND
SATISFIED



SAVED AND SATISFIED ;

OR

God's Glad Tidings of Salvation.

The wanderer no more will roam,
The lost one to the fold hath come ;
The prodigal is welcomed home
O Lamb of God, to Thee !

And now my famished soul is fed,
A feast of love for me is spread ;
I feed upon the children's bread,
O Lamb of God, in Thee !

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G. MORRISH, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

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“What good will that oath do you, young man?”

FROM THE DEVIL'S GRASP;

OR, “I’VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS.”

A HURRYING, restless crowd—flaring gas jets—strange co-mingling sounds of the rumble of wheels and brass bands! What a scene of confusion and disquiet! The lights from a public-house streamed across the pavement, and stand-

ing in their full glare, was a group of young men, laughing—yes, but it was the laughter of fools—that strange, hollow sound which tells of hearts ill at ease—hardened and seared.

“I’ve had enough of this; good-night,” said one of the group, and, turning on his heel, he hurried away through the dazzling streets of the city—the great, restless city, one of the largest and most prosperous in America.

Let us follow him, as he rushes along, heedless of the many who turn to gaze after him. He is quite a young man, perhaps hardly five-and-twenty, and upon his whole bearing is stamped the impress of that which constitutes a gentleman—worn out and shabby as his clothes are—yet one glance at the clearly-cut features and well-shaped head is enough. “I shall never look anything but what I am,” he was wont to boast.

On he rushed, until a turn in the street brought him to the less crowded thoroughfares. Pausing for a moment under the shadow of a railway bridge, he lifted his hat off his head to allow the cool night breezes to blow upon his fevered brow.

“What a complete and utter fool I have been,” he murmured. “Oh, is there no escape for me? Is there no God in heaven to take pity upon such a wretch—bah!” with an impatient stamp of his foot, “there is no God.” With these words on his lips, and bitter thoughts in his heart of the One who was that moment gazing down upon him with infinite pity and yearning, he strode on—until the glaring lights were left behind, and terraces and private dwelling houses came in view. He stopped for a moment to listen to the

strains of music that issued from an open window, and a sweet, girlish voice rang out the old familiar air of "Home, Sweet Home." A rush of memories swept over the young man, and with them came a blinding flood of tears to the eyes that had long since lost their power to weep. Sitting down on the cold stone doorstep, he buried his face in his hands, while great sobs shook his manly frame. "Lord, have pity upon me, and get me away from this hell upon earth," he groaned.

* * * * *

Two weeks later a vessel was ploughing her way through the waves of the Atlantic.

It was a glorious night, myriads of stars shone out from the clear expanse above, and across the decks of the steamer the soft, clear light of the moonbeams fell.

Leaning over the vessel's side, and gazing at the white, seething foam, was the young man we last saw in the streets of the great American city.

Dark thoughts crowded into his mind, and bitter remorse for the sins and failures of the past. He was returning to his home a ruined man, penniless, and with a constitution sadly shattered by a life of recklessness and dissipation. Returning, what for? To meet his mother's sad, reprobachful eyes; to meet the sneer and scorn of those who had prophesied for him a life of failure—a blot upon the name of the fine old English family he had dishonoured and disgraced. With an audible oath upon his lips, he turned upon his heel to pace the deck, in the sullen, pre-occupied

manner that had already become the subject of remark from his fellow-passengers.

A strong, firm hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a manly voice said, "What good will that oath do you, young man?"

Harry S—— turned and faced the one who had thus addressed him, and met the kind, searching look of a pair of earnest grey eyes.

"Come and take a turn with me, I have been wishing to have a talk with you."

Something in the friendly touch of this man's hand, and the tone of his voice was wonderfully soothing to the other, and soon they were pacing the deck together.

"You are unhappy"—after a few moments' silence—spoken in a quick, firm tone, but full of a hidden depth of compassion.

"You're about right—I have not known a moment's happiness, well—for *years* past," Harry answered.

Again another silence—then stopping in the full light of the moonbeams, the elder man looked searchingly into the face of the younger, and said, "There is *no* happiness apart from God, and you have found that out, haven't you?"

Harry did not answer, and the two walked on again—the former deep in thought. Something about the very influence of this other man touched a hidden chord in the young man's soul that had been lying in the innermost recesses of his being, dead and lifeless till now. "I have long given up the thought that there *is* a God," he said, slowly. "Tell me," he continued, "do you be-

lieve He would have mercy on such an ungodly wretch as myself?"

"Christ died for the ungodly," was the quiet reply. "Look here, my brother, ever since I saw you first, it has been on my heart to speak to you about your immortal soul—God wants you—His Son bore the punishment of sins on the cross—He has followed you through all these years of sinning against Himself, and now He waits with infinite love and yearning to receive you to Himself. Come to Him to-night—lay your load of sin and remorse and shame before Him, and as I am a living man, He will receive you and be gracious unto you."

It was growing late; one by one the passengers had gone below to retire for the night.

Earnestly he pleaded with the young man, till new light dawned into Harry's soul. He saw himself as one whom Jesus came to seek and to save, and from the depths of his misery he cried to God to save him. Ere another hour had passed away, a soul had passed from death unto life. On the waters of the broad Atlantic, and beneath the light of God's stars, Harry S—— gave himself away to God, and there was joy in heaven that night.

* * * * *

He landed on the shores of England, and from that time God's leadings became very manifest. It was evident that he was a "chosen vessel," and under the transforming hand of God, the transition from a life of degradation and misery, to one of earnestness and conformity to the will of

God, has enabled him to be what he now is—a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus, urging hundreds to accept the great and glorious Saviour, who is the light and life of his being.

Dear unsaved reader, do you know what it is to have so sunken into the vortex of sin, that there seems *no* escape for you? Does every step you take seem to sink you deeper? Has Satan fastened around your very soul the cruel chains of unbelief, of despair? Are the heavens as brass above you—not a ray of its light piercing the darkness of your heart? Cry you, “Can there be a God—if so, why, oh! why, has He left me?” Ah! He has never left you; but your *sins* have separated you from Him; God cannot look upon sin but he is looking upon *you*, with deep pitying eyes, saying, in tones of tenderest yearning, “Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.” You will not come to Me, the *Fountain* of life, nay—but you press your burning lips to the springs of earth, that never will, that never can, slake your thirst. As your eyes fall upon these papers the voice of Jesus whispers to your soul, “Come unto me, and I will give you rest.” Perhaps, as He listens, He catches a faint and far-away response from your heart. How eagerly He waits now. “Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” He says, coming nearer still, and listening with all the intensity of Divine love and longing.

Break loose, I beseech you, break loose even now. It is possible to do it. One look of faith at Jesus, the Redeemer of every trusting soul, will free you from the chains that have held you

fast all these long, weary years of your life. Can you do it now, dear reader? *Will* you?

The Prince of Darkness trembles, and redoubles his efforts to keep you in his power, because he sees you *so* near the point at which the whole current of your life shall be changed. Disappoint him, look away to Jesus, now—just now—get down on your knees before God, say, “Lord, here am I in all my darkness and misery, I come to Thee, Thou Prince of Love and Peace, I believe that Thou dost receive me, and hast laid all my sins on Jesus, I do not *feel* it—but because Thou hast *said*, I believe it.”

Think you that He will cast you out? Never. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word shall stand for ever, that is His word. Listen! “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matt. ix. 13); and “He will abundantly pardon” (Matt. lv. 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 as red as crimson they shall be as wool.” (i. 18.) Oh! cannot you believe that word, and trust Him to fulfil it in your case? Let the beginning of this year—1883—be the turning point of your life. May He give you the courage to do it for His name’s sake.

Z.



HAVE YOU PUT IT OFF TILL THE NEW YEAR ?

PUT what off? Why, getting the question of your soul's salvation settled. Do you ask, Why should you be talking of the new year? Because it is just one of those periods when people make arrangements to do this, or to do that; to go here and go there; and maybe you, my reader, have had some plan in your head for Christmas or the New Year, or both. What has led me to urge you—yes, *you*, as *you* read this, my friend—not to put off believing in Christ, but to turn to God, as did the Thessalonians after hearing the gospel preached for only three weeks (compare Acts xvii. 1-4, with 1 Thess. i. 9), is the calling to my mind of an instance related by a friend, and which he wished to have recorded as a warning to precious souls—as a warning to you amongst the number—for your soul is precious indeed, and scripture says—aye, it was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who said it, the One who shed His precious blood—"What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and *lose his own soul*, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?,, (Matt. xvi. 26.)

But to my story. My friend writes: "We have had some terrible things here in the way of warning. I will give one. I knew the young man as well as I know anyone in our own house. He lived next door to my wife and her mother

from infancy. My wife when a girl used to nurse him daily, and he always came to our house at least two or three times a week. He was about thirty years old, and a single man.

“When dear Miss C—— was with us, he came in one day intoxicated, and I told him to go out at once. A few days after Miss C—— left he came in to apologise for his conduct. This was on Friday, the 17th December”—only a fortnight to the new year, dear reader, eight days to Christmas. What is a fortnight? What are eight days? Ah, in less than either of those periods you may be dead, and lost—but in far less, one look of faith at Christ, that glorified Man at the Father’s right hand, and you *are* saved—saved for eternity!

“Well,” my friend continues, “I felt it was time for me to be faithful with him; and the Lord seemed to give speech, strength, and courage. My wife stood by him with her hand upon his shoulder. All the time he was sitting just in front of me, weeping and sobbing like a child, and fully owning he was on the way to death. I asked the Lord to turn him, and he joined in the request. After this he said, ‘I’ll just have the old year out, bid all my comrades farewell, and then I will come up to thee and put my name down in thy Bible, to touch no more drink from New Year’s Day; I will serve God to the end of my life.’ I urged upon him the dreadful snare into which Satan had got him; just a trap-door, the bolt of which had only to be drawn, and he would be in hell.” God’s time was “*now*,” “*to-day*.” *To-day—not* Christmas

Day, or New Year's Day, but TO-DAY. Alas! alas! nothing would do for Anthony but New Year's Day. He left the house, HIS time New Year's Day—God's time TO-DAY.

"On the morning of the 20th," concludes my friend, "we were appalled by a neighbour running in at breakfast time for my wife, exclaiming, "Poor Anthony has just been found dead in his bed. "

How awful! No New Year's Day for Anthony, No Christmas Day for Anthony. No Christmas Eve for Anthony—No. From 17th to 20th, only three days—not eight, not a fortnight; no old year out in this world for Anthony. But we must leave him.

Are there not many Anthonys? Are not you one of them, dear reader? Like Felix of old, of whom it says in Acts xxiv., as Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, he trembled and answered, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee."

When is man's "convenient season"? When was Felix's? We never read of one. When was Anthony's? New Year's Day—did he ever see it? When is yours?—will *you* see it? When is God's—"Now." I often think how unlike to his name was that great man Paul was brought before in that chapter of the Acts. Felix means "*happy*." I fear he was not happy in Christ. No; he wanted to have HIS convenient season. Would you be "Felix," "*happy*" in the best sense of the word? Well, then, be warned, and do not put off till to-morrow even that solemn

question—your soul's salvation. As a poor sinner, worse than Anthony or Felix, take God at His word—that atonement for sin has not only been made; not only has that "precious blood" been shed, but that God has been satisfied. That not only He sends down to you the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1 Tim. i. 11); just as you are, nay, is pleased, happy in doing it; for that word "blessed," in that verse, means also "happy." What a thought! God happy in sending down good news from the glory—because He has the Man—His Son—whom man spat upon, and nailed to the cross, at His right hand. And Paul thus speaks of that same Jesus: "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe ARE—not "will be on New Year's Day"—ARE justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

No doubt you have already got your almanac for 1883. I have seen them advertised and in shops ready for sale for weeks, and yet there were many weeks to pass before they would be really needed. How long will *you* need *yours*? This brings before me a dear man I used to visit, who was dying—but he believed in Jesus, and was just waiting for his summons; some kind friend had brought him a parish almanac, and stuck it up over his bed; upon which my eye often lighted. "You'll not need that long, I know," I said to myself. How long do you think, my reader, this dying saved one lived of the year for which the almanac had been prepared? Just

twenty minutes! Yes; he passed away twenty minutes past twelve, on the 1st January—through mercy *he* had not “put it off till the new year,” he had not waited for *his* “convenient season.” No; he had accepted God’s offer of mercy, having learned his need as a sinner, and the twenty-first minute of the new year found him “absent from the body, present with the Lord.” For dear K—— what a difference one minute made; twenty minutes past twelve of 1st January in a poor, suffering body—twenty-ONE minutes past twelve, “For ever with the Lord!”

Dear, *dear* reader, “Have you put it off till the new year?” Believe now, and you will learn what God’s “first month of the year to you” is. Sheltered by blood. Read Exodus xii., and rejoice in the 13th verse especially. “When I see the blood I *will* pass over you.”

“Oh, do not let the Word depart,
And close thine eyes against the light,
Poor sinner, harden not thy heart;
Thou would’st be saved—Why not to-night?

“Our God in pity lingers still,
And wilt thou thus His love requite?
Renounce at length thy stubborn will,
Thou would’st be saved—Why not to-night?”

S. V. H.



“OUT OF THE DEPTHS.”

WE stand by the flood-tide of another year—as yet its waves have barely flowed in; and the fresh sands have, we trust, but few footprints which can stain its smooth surface. God grant that our footprints for the next twelve months, over those sands (if it is His will we should live through that period), may be beautiful as those that bring glad tidings of salvation, and no rougher print indent its surface than the steel shoes and golden spurs of the good soldier of Jesus Christ, who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace—or the pilgrim foot which has cast off the shoes of earth, because the ground on which it stands is holy, as trodden in the omnipresence of JEHOVAH.

Dear reader! we cannot forecast the future; it may be gentle breezes and fair sailing into the desired haven; or perhaps stormy winds and tempest driving our little craft hither and thither, through rough waves and deep waters; but we have *one* sure word of scripture to sustain us through it all, that is, “*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*” No change in Him, it matters not what changes here, He is steadfast, unchangeable—JEHOVAH JESUS—“The Rock of Ages.”

I look back on the past years, and memory recalls many sad shipwrecks both of the body and soul; loss of the ship and of the *life*. I mourn for those whose bodies lie in the great deep, never

more to be recovered from it, until the sea gives up its dead at the final judgment of the great white throng; but I also rejoice for some whose bodies lie beneath its treacherous surface, who will rise in immortal life *at the voice of the Lord*, and the trump of the archangel of resurrection.

In the early months of a year, which has gone for ever, and with it its opportunities for the Lord's service, I became interested in a young seaman who was brought under my notice as a member of a temperance society in our town. I sent him a few little books of a serious nature to read, and he wrote me a nice simple letter in reply. I then wrote him a *long* letter, giving him an account of a sad case of a poor dying sailor whom I had visited, and sought to win for the Lord—for I hoped a true narrative from recent experience might have a word for his heart. His ship left our harbour for a northern station, and from thence I received his reply, asking me to send some more little books to his shipmates, as the cutter was on a summer cruise for a few months. With this request I complied immediately, but did not write to J. J. again, partly because I had a great many other letters to answer, and partly because I did not know exactly where the cutter was cruising. How bitterly I have regretted since that I did not write again! but I scarcely thought my letters would be valued by a young, light-hearted sailor; and, "at all events," I thought, "I can do so when the cutter returns to our station for the winter months."

Short-sighted beings that we are! not knowing what a day may bring forth, or how little

our boast can be in a to-morrow ! Still, my young mariner was not forgotten, for I wrote to a dear Christian sailor going on the same station, to seek out J. J. if they were near each other, and speak to him of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. This was done, and also the message of God's salvation, through Jesus, the Son of the Father, was pressed on his acceptance by another Christian friend, who passed a few days in the coastguard cutter, and I afterwards heard he had listened with solemnity ; but this does not console me that I still put off writing to him again, and setting the importance of a present acceptance of Christ before him. On the return of his ship I met him one afternoon hurrying from the post office with letters ; I walked to the wharf with him, and spoke a few earnest words as we sped on together to the waiting boat, and even then I delayed him and a shipmate who was resting on the oars, to tell them of a sad accident which had occurred in the guardship of our harbour a few years before. I also spoke of the “*Eurydice*,” and the sad fate of her crew, and urging the happiness of a decision for Jesus.

I saw my young listeners were anxious to return with the letters, so my time was but brief. It was my last opportunity of ever speaking or testifying for the preciousness of Jesus to poor J. J. ! How little I thought, as I looked at his bright, dark eyes and intelligent countenance, that he would soon be a pale, drowned corpse, floating away past the reach of recovery, in the deep, open sea ! The cutter went south, and as she was returning met with a fearful accident ;

a sudden collision with a large steamer, 'in the almost *dark night* of an early winter's morning, just three hours after midnight. She was cut in two, and sank rapidly, and my poor friend was amongst those who were lost. Very bitter was the sudden shock when I read of it in the newspaper, and saw his name amongst the missing.

I possessed two nice sailor-like letters of his, and how sorrowfully I read them over, mournfully bewailing that I had not written oftener to the poor young man, whose hand would now never write me another, but was stiff in death; never more to ply his busy daily task of work, nor beat the water with an oar. Alas! what added to my sorrow was that I was not *certain* whether dear J. J. had *really* accepted Christ as his Saviour, and was resting in His finished work. I knew he was amiable and steady, and a temperance man, with respect for his Bible, but beyond this, I had not been able to fathom his feelings in our brief acquaintance by letter, and *that one short interview*, for he was rather shy and reserved. A Christian gentleman who knew him said he had hopes for him. There were some amongst his shipmates who confessed the Lord Jesus. One especially, Charles A——, told a friend of mine that he "*Knew he was washed in the blood of Jesus.*" The captain of the coastguard cutter was also a decided believer. For weeks after the sad catastrophe I could not get rid of the haunting self-reproach which was ever accusing me of not having pressed the gospel of a Saviour's love more frequently and earnestly on this young man *by letter*. I had never contemplated his sudden

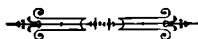
removal from this life in so awful a manner; he seemed so young, lively, and just developing in mind and body into early manhood, that something seemed to stay me with the feeling, "he does not care for your serious letters!" But I have since learned that he did prize the only one I wrote him greatly, and was disappointed that I had not written again; I can only hope that in the mercy of God, and the love of a Saviour who humbled himself to dwell with the seamen of Galilee, and shed His precious blood to wash away our sins, that dear J. J. was not taken away before he had cast himself on "*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*"

What vastness of expression, and depth of tenderness this sweet verse opens to us. *His yesterday* was when He dwelt on earth and bore our nature; healed the diseased; walked on the waters of danger to His seafaring disciples, and slept on the "*rower's cushion*" of their little boat in a storm; and, dear reader, He cannot forget that yesterday of His life of manhood! Not even *now*, in the glory of His Father's presence—that *yesterday*, which was blood sprinkled and salvation sealed by the gore of the cross. This *to-day* of His long-suffering mercy, and interceding work for His own before the throne of the Highest, has made no change in His heart of love and sympathy; He has given it to us for our day of grace; He implores us to avail ourselves of it, and come to Him, and find mercy; yes, and be immediately and eternally saved. Delay and procrastination are fatal, for we know not what shall be on the morrow; Scripture does

not speak of Him as the Jesus Christ of *to-morrow*, but the Jesus Christ of "*for ever*;" after our to-day of grace, comes the *eternal for ever*, either in His presence, where there is fulness of joy, or in the abode of awful despair.

Dear reader! it seems to me as if voices came to me "out of the depths," where the ill-fated ship went down, and implored me to warn other thoughtless souls to flee to Jesus, the true Ark and Lifeboat of the soul! I can only hope that to some who met that sudden death, the words of the Psalmist may be not inaptly applied: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord! If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning—for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." (Psalm cxxx.)

K. B. K.



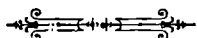
"I THOUGHT I SHOULD HAVE DIED."

DID you? Well, and suppose you had? Suppose you had passed away from the world, where would you have been *now*? Evidently you had, for the moment at least, an impression that it was possible, and even probable, you would have passed off the scene. And may I tell you, dear one, that your fears were quite consistent with the truth—that is, with God's word, which tells

us that "all flesh is as grass," passing, fading, and perishing.

"Our life is as the grass,
Or like the fading flower;
If one sharp wind pass o'er the field,
It withers in an hour."

"I thought I should have died." Was there, dear one, no other thought connected therewith? Preparation, you know, is needed for every journey. The farther the journey, and the longer the stay, the more forethought and preparation are needed, and are generally accorded. Think, then, what a journey was before your mind at that moment! Consider the stay at the bourne whither you thought you were going! Have you prepared for it? I would not for a moment suppose you are ignorant of the preparation needed. But lest you might have overlooked one passage of Holy Writ—even the words of Jesus Himself—I submit—yea, I affirm, that all that is needed for a happy departure, a glorious resurrection, and an eternity of felicity, is believing in Jesus. Hear His words—"This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 40.) No fear of death then. No starting at the possibility of the event supposed in the words, "I thought I should have died." A. M.



“I DON'T THINK I NEED TO BE
CONVERTED.”

“LET me ask you a plain question, A——. IF YOU WERE DYING NOW WOULD YOU GO TO HEAVEN?”

“If I were dropping down dead on the spot I would go to hell! I know I am not converted; and God has said in His word, ‘*Except a man be born again, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*’” (John iii. 3.)

Such was part of a conversation which took place between two young men on a Lord's Day evening, as they walked along Buchanan Street, Glasgow. Both of them had received a religious training, and were the subjects of many prayers, but as yet they had not decided for Christ. They *intended* being saved sometime, but the *present* they did not consider a convenient season. When they had more *leisure* they purposed turning their minds to the consideration of the great question —“Where shall I spend eternity?” This evening they were unusually interested in spiritual matters. The teacher of the Bible-class which they attended had been urging and entreating them to immediate acceptance of Christ, and what he had said had evidently led them to serious reflection. The impressions, however, were soon effaced, and, excepting their hearts were more hardened, no visible effects were produced. Some months after this conversation a great change had taken place in A——. At a gospel meeting,

held in a circus, he had been led to accept Christ as his Saviour, and was rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven. He now longed to tell his friend William of the joy and peace he possessed. An opportunity was soon offered, and he began to tell him of the peace and joy he had through simply believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. "You remember asking me, some time ago, 'If I were dying, would I go to heaven?' I *then* said I was certain I would not go there, as I was not 'born again.' I am glad to be able to say that I AM NOW 'CONVERTED;' I KNOW THAT ALL MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN, AND IF I WERE DYING TO-NIGHT I WOULD GO TO HEAVEN." Having explained the means God had employed to his conversion, he urged and entreated his friend to lay down his arms of rebellion and accept the pardon God had provided for him in Jesus. To all his entreaties he received the following reply: "I can easily understand that *wicked people* need to be converted. I don't think I require to undergo this change. I have been brought up religiously; my parents were Christians; and from my infancy I have been instructed in the things of God—I DON'T THINK I NEED TO BE CONVERTED."

Reader, what do *you* think of this great subject? If *you* were dying *now*, WOULD YOU GO TO HEAVEN? Do you say, "That is a very hard question"? It may be "hard" to you, but it is not so to many. Numbers in these last days can say and sing *with their hearts*:—

"I know my sins are all forgiven,
 Glory to the bleeding Lamb!
 And I am on my way to heaven,
 Glory to the bleeding Lamb!"

If they know that their souls are saved, and all their sins forgiven, what is to hinder you from enjoying the same blessed privileges? Have you been "born again"? Have you been "converted" to God? Do you think, with the young man already referred to, that YOU DON'T NEED TO BE CONVERTED? Why do you think so? "I have never done any one any harm." But you have surely sinned against God? "Certainly; we are all sinners." Never mind others just now. You admit that you have sinned, and God has declared in His holy word, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 20.) Not only is it the case that you have done a great deal of "harm," but at this very moment you are a "condemned" sinner, with the wrath of a holy and sin-hating God resting on you. (John iii. 18, 36.) Do you say, "I have been brought up religiously, I have gone to church regularly, and have read my Bible, and said my prayers, and what more can I do?" Friend, let me say to you, *Religiousness is not conversion*. You may have been watched over and carefully tended by Christian parents; early you may have been taught to lisp the infant prayer—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

Your mind may have been stored with texts of scripture, and when you asked such strange questions about God, heaven, and hell, your parents were cheered. They thought they saw the good seed taking root in your heart. As years advanced you went to the Sunday School. Your heart

was many a time melted as that earnest teacher dwelt on God's love to sinners in giving up Jesus to die for their sins. As you heard the doom of the lost depicted, you were alarmed. Your teacher, it may be, saw you endeavouring to conceal the emotion that was troubling you. He urged you to decide for Christ, but you did not wish *then* to be a Christian, you wished to enjoy a little more of the world's pleasures. By-and-by you "joined" the "church" or "chapel," and sat down at the Lord's Supper. Perhaps you have become a Sunday School teacher, or district visitor. Reader, with all these advantages and privileges you may be eternally lost. The Lord Jesus has said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.) With all your religious training and morality, your Bible reading and prayers, your "good works" and church-goings, you "cannot see the kingdom of God." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (John iii. 7.) This little word "must" speaks to all classes and creeds, to all sects and parties. Sinner, whatever thou art, young or old, rich or poor, religious or irreligious, you **MUST** be "born again."

"Ye must be born again,
Or never enter heaven;
'Tis only blood-washed ones are there,
The ransomed and forgiven.

"I have been converted," says one. Well, friend, let me ask, What have you been "converted" to? Have you been **CONVERTED TO GOD**? Do you reply, "I used to be addicted to strong

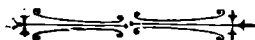
drink; my evening hours were spent in the public-house, or with boon companions; I am completely altered, and don't touch drink, and have given up my old companions"? Does another say, "I used to hate the company of religious people; no sorer task could have been imposed on me than to read the Bible, or engage in prayer; I could scarcely open my mouth without uttering an oath; I went to church as seldom as possible, and cared little for the concerns of eternity; things are now completely changed; I love the society of Christians, read my Bible, say my prayers; I am, in fact, a 'reformed' man"?

All this may be true, dear reader; but AMENDMENT OF LIFE IS NOT CONVERSION. It is to be feared that many suppose "reformation," as it is called, is "conversion." This is a fearful and fatal mistake. There are *two* kinds of "reformation;" the one begins *within*, the other from *without*. The one is the development of a *new life*; the other is the putting on of a *new dress*. "Outward reformation is but the painting of a corpse with the hue of life which is a corpse still."

"Ye must be born again,
For so hath God decreed;
No reformation will suffice,
'Tis life poor sinners need."

Reader, allow me again to press this question. HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN? Have you been "converted" to God? I wait for an answer. What do you say? Face the question honestly. Do you say, "No; I have not experienced this change." Then rest satisfied, dear friend, you

will never enter heaven until you do so. God's "CANNOT" (John iii. 3) stands between you and it. Would you not wish to be "born again"? "Certainly I would; but how can I experience this?" Let us read 1 Peter i. 23: "Being BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible BY THE WORD OF GOD." "Of His own will begat he us WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH." (James i. 18.) "Receive with meekness the ENGRAFTED WORD, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS." (James i. 21.) Though the Holy Ghost is the author of the new birth, it is through the "Word of God" that sinners are saved. Many ways and means He may employ to *awaken* men to see their danger, but it is only through the "Word" that peace is obtained. God's word reveals to us His "gospel." God's "gospel" manifests His heart of love—His unutterable compassion to poor perishing sinners. What is that "gospel" which is God's power to save everyone who believes it? (Rom. i. 16.) "That CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS, according to the scriptures; and THAT HE WAS BURIED, AND THAT HE ROSE AGAIN the third day, according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.) A. M.



A NEW YEAR'S OFFER.

"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." (Isa. i. 18.)



“My gay friend produced a pack of cards.”

A NIGHT TO BE REMEMBERED.

AMONGST the days and nights which one can never forget, standing out prominently on account of some deep impression, wrought on the heart by the Spirit, or some manifestation of the Father's love and power, or some sense of the love of Christ—among the nights in which God has brought us through experiences we never dreamt

of, and given us deliverances worthy of Himself—there is one, the incidents of which will never be effaced from my memory, and which I have never attempted to describe, because description to others carries no impression of what the actual circumstances were in their suddenness and their appalling character.

It pleased God, in His unsearchable ways, that I should be a passenger from London to Scotland on the night of one of the most dreadful railway accidents; and, although escaping by His gracious interference, I was compelled to be a spectator of the disaster, and enabled to be a helper to some of those who suffered in it.

I had just taken my seat in one of the corners of a carriage at Euston Station when I observed a gaily-dressed lady with two companions come hastily on to the platform as the train was about to start. They glanced along the various carriages and decided on coming into the one in which I sat, although they showed great disappointment when they found the corners already occupied.

Observing this, and knowing that we had a long, weary journey before us, and that it was of more importance to a lady than to me to have a comfortable seat, I expressed my willingness to give up my corner to the oldest of the comparatively young ladies whose gay dress had already attracted my notice. With many apologies she gladly availed herself of my offer, and the night express was soon flying through the darkness like a winged dragon, its gleaming lamps casting long rays of red light into the surrounding gloom.

My companions soon began to talk, and I found by the conversation that they had been at Ascot races, and were deeply interested in matters of a like description. I had often met with betting men, but here I was surrounded for the first time with what appeared to be betting ladies—gamblers, who had been staking, gaining and losing, on the various races.

The friend to whom I had given the corner felt bound to make herself agreeable, and to draw me into conversation, but I soon admitted that the theme of their conversation was altogether foreign to me, and I confessed that I had not even known of the races they spoke of, and never had been at any, nor would go if I could.

As the night wore on my gay friend produced a pack of cards, and begged me to join in a game with her friends and herself. I, however, assured her that I knew no more about cards than I did about racehorses, and that I had an abhorrence of both.

At first my lady friend seemed to pity my ignorance, but when I even objected to handling the cards her pity turned to contempt, and she said, bitterly, "I suppose you are one of those religious Scotchmen."

I owned that I was a Scotchman, and that although I feared the Scotch as a nation were no more religious than the English, and although between her and me by nature and in God's sight there was no difference, yet by God's grace I had been brought out of the power of darkness

into the light, and into the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

Finding that neither pity nor sneers would move me to take a hand at cards or to risk my money in gambling, the little company let me drop, and I became, unwillingly to myself, and more so to them, a spectator of their games; and as the wine flask was passing round they did not think it worth their while to invite me to join them.

Thus the night passed.

* * * * *

At midnight there was a fearful crash! Engine, tender, carriages, men, women, little children, and officials, made one heap of ghastly ruins. Fires were soon blazing; and I, having escaped, with others was busily engaged dragging from under the debris the dead and the dying. It would be vain to attempt a description of such a dreadful scene.

Happiest seemed to have been those who, in the moment, had been taken ere they had time to open their eyes or to realize that anything had occurred.

Perhaps the saddest sight of all was the railway officials, who in the execution of their duty had met with serious injury; one old guard had hastily tied his white handkerchief about his head to cover, but not to staunch, a deep gash which was still exhausting his strength, and at last compelled him to beg two of us to lead him to a place where he could lie down, "sick and faint and ready to die."

Side by side the dead bodies were being laid

out and identified by their fellow passengers who still lived.

“Would to God that I had died with them!” was the cry of a broken-hearted father, as he saw the last one of his family brought and laid with the others.

From that pile of debris we had soon, by the help of the officials, passengers, and others, taken thirteen dead bodies, and a number of half-dead helpless creatures, when it was announced that a train was in readiness to convey those who were able to proceed on their journey, and I took my last look of that never-to-be-forgotten scene, lighted up by bonfires which only seemed to make it appear the more ghastly.

Till now I had quite forgotten my friend of the corner. At the moment when I sprang from the carriage she begged me to take her out, and I did so—only to find that she instantly sickened and fell into my arms. Taking her flask, which was still in her hand, or near, I poured some wine or brandy into her throat, and left her, as I knew she was more afraid than hurt.

I now remembered her, and passed along until I found her—still faint. Finding that she wished to leave the scene, I got a compartment and helped her into it, seating myself beside her, but observing that her companions of the night had gone elsewhere.

My lady friend alluded to the horror of the accident, and how fortunate we had been in escaping unhurt.

I said I believed God had been very good to us in preserving us, but that had I been taken away,

I should have already been with my Lord, and *that* would have been "far better," so that I could not call it fortunate.

At first she thought I took too much upon myself to say such a thing, but I asked her if she never knew any one, who she was quite sure was with the Lord. "Yes," she immediately replied, "my mamma is there, for she was a saint of God, and I am sure she is an angel now."

I felt thankful to God that a chord had been struck, perhaps the only tender chord in that lady's heart. I saw in a moment that she was the child of a godly mother, perhaps of many prayers, and what (I thought) if this terrible accident was needed to awaken her from the sleep which would have ended in perdition!

I said to her that I was quite sure if her mother was now with the Lord it had been her desire while on earth that her daughter should be a follower of the Lord, and if we had been called away that night, I asked my friend if she had any hope of meeting her mamma in glory. She admitted she had not, and I showed her from the word of God that those who were far from God must perish, and that as far as I could judge she was like the prodigal, having turned her back on God, spending her substance in the far country, regardless of the love and grace that was waiting to be lavished on her, if she would but return to a Father's home and heart.

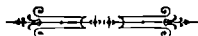
As the morning broke, our conversation continued. Seldom have I found one so ready to listen to the glad tidings of salvation and life through the crucified One.

When we arrived at her destination she seemed sorry to leave me. We had indeed made each other's acquaintance under extraordinary circumstances. God had awakened her that night to think of her soul's deep need, and she had gladly listened to the word, but whether that word would remain to save, or be powerless when she returned to her companions—who could tell? As she left the train she handed me her card and begged mine in return.

The card was lost and the name forgotten, but when the names are read in the Book of Life, God grant that hers may be found written there.

And as the cards, and the gambling, and the wine came to my recollection, I thought on the days of Lot, when in the midst of pleasure and sin, men were on the eve of a terrible destruction.

J. S.



THE OLD HERNHUTTER.

DURING one of the old wars in Germany, a captain of cavalry was ordered out on a foraging expedition. He put himself at the head of his troop, and marched to the quarter assigned him; which, on arriving at, he found to be a solitary valley, where nothing but woods could be seen in any direction. Forage there seemed little hope of: but, after riding along for some distance, he and his troop reached a lonely cottage. Dismounting, he knocked at the door, when an old Hernhutter

(or Moravian), with a beard silvered with age, came out.

"Father," said the officer, "can you show me a field where I can set my men to forage?"

"Presently," replied the old Hernhutter; "follow me," and so saying he walked on, followed by the captain and his troop. Conducting them out of the valley, he led them on until they had reached the confines of the forest. A fine field of barley lay before them, and the captain, exclaiming—

"This is just what we want," was about to order his men to dismount and set to work, when the old Hernhutter said—

"Have patience, captain, for a few minutes, and you shall be satisfied. Follow me a little further."

They went on again for about a quarter of a league, when they reached another field of barley.

"This is the place," said the old man; "we need not go any further."

The men dismounted, cut down the grain, and, having cleared the whole field and bound up the sheaves, loaded their vehicle, and prepared to return.

"Father," said the captain, "you have given yourself and us needless trouble in coming so far, the first field we saw would have done quite as well as this, or even better."

"Very true, sir," replied the Hernhutter, with a quiet smile. "BUT THAT WAS NOT MINE."

He had led them on past his neighbour's field to his own, where he stood quietly by, while the

hopes of a whole season were swept away before his eyes.

What do you, reader, suppose led him to act thus, and sacrifice probably all that he possessed, when, by simply stopping at the first field, he might have saved it? He loved the Lord, and for His sake willingly gave his little all, rather than dishonour Him by allowing his neighbour to be deprived through his instrumentality. Would that all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ had always acted thus uprightly, but if they have not, their failure in no wise excuses any who do *not* love Him whom this dear old Hernhutter thus sought to honour.

Do you love Christ? I do not ask whether you merely believe in the historical facts of His life, sufferings, death, and resurrection. "Every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life," saith the Lord Jesus Christ, "and I will raise him up at the last day." Have you, my reader, seen Him by faith? Have you trusted Him Himself (and not a mere body of doctrines forming a part of your Christian education), with the eternal destiny of your never-dying soul? If you have, you "love Him because he first loved" you; if not, remember it is written, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha"—*accursed—the Lord cometh*. It is, you see, THE HEART that is in question, not the head. How is it with yours? "THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART." Who can doubt where the heart was in this act of self-sacrifice of THE OLD HERNHUTTER?

J. L. H.

"HAVE YOU ———?"

SERVICE was over, and the congregation were dispersing from the door of the village church. Amongst them was a young man, Charles Vivyan, a man of wealth and position, and the life and soul of all fashionable society in the neighbourhood.

Into the deep shades of his own wooded demesne, through the tangled copse where the fern had grown to half his height, and down the broad waste of heather to where the sea dashes against the lofty cliffs, Charles Vivyan wanders on, hour after hour, as though some haunting spirit suffered him not to rest.

And what are the words that ring through his brain, and pursue him from scene to scene? They are those of the text which had that day formed the preacher's message:—

"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN HE CANNOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

How strange, that words so well known, so familiar, so oft-repeated, should suddenly have power to raise a tempest in the soul. But though the words were familiar, the *meaning* was new, or at least unthought of. "If the announcement is for all, then it is for *me*," was the oft-repeated thought. Never had he heard words so penetrating. Truly is there no touch so keen, so poig-

nant, as that of the sharp two-edged sword of the Spirit.

And yet it was a very quiet discourse that Vivyan had heard. There had been no bursts of eloquence to captivate the imagination; no impassioned appeals to stir the feelings. It was a scholar-like and finished composition; its argument strong and convincing; and although its theology was clear and perfectly scriptural, there were those who sighed as they saw how little the truth preached had kindled the preacher's own soul, and who felt chilled by its cold utterance, still they rejoiced that it *was* preached, and prayed that their pastor's lips might yet be touched by a live coal from off the altar that he served. Long did Vivyan pace up and down the sandy beach, wrapped in thought.

"How clearly," he said, "how convincingly Mr. Langdale proved the necessity of regeneration for a race so very far gone from its original condition, if they are ever to be made meet for a world of holiness, the inheritance of the saints in light. And if it be essential for all, it follows that it must be essential for *me*. There is no use deceiving myself; I had rather look the truth in the face, and most certainly I have never known any such wonderful transformation of soul. Whenever or however the change takes place, it must be a very *real* change. Every Sunday I go through the form of deploring my state as a 'miserable sinner,' and yet in point of fact don't care much about it. We call upon God as 'our Father,' and yet entertain no feeling towards Him but that of awe, and except in church, I fear,

are utterly indifferent to, and forgetful of, His existence ; at least, I am sure, it is my own case. That was exactly what Mr. Langdale was pointing out, as an evidence of the distinction between the carnal and the spiritual mind."

"But after all," Vivyan thought, as he left the water side, and turned homewards through more familiar scenes, "after all, who ever experienced this wonderful transition? That's what I should like to know. If I could meet with any who would honestly tell me that they knew what it was, who had actually felt the renewing grace of God in their heart, and had really passed into a state of mind very different from that of sinful nature, why, then I should believe it. Of course, being in the Bible, it must be true ; but still, somehow, a thing seems so shadowy, so speculative, when you learn it only from a book. I should like to see it carried out. I should like to see a practical example in real life ; and as far as my observation goes, I suspect it will not be easy to find one. And then, without this great change, a man '*cannot see the kingdom of God.*'"

* * * * *

The Rev. Edward Langdale was in his study, closely engaged in the preparation of an elaborate essay on Faith, when his servant entered with a note. It was from Vivyan, inviting him to dinner on the same day. Mr. Langdale hastily wrote a few lines of acceptance, and then, as the servant left the room, threw himself back, and sighed wearily. "What an evening I shall have!" he exclaimed ; "what a revulsion after a day of intense study! There will be nothing congenial,

nothing to 'refresh the weary brain.' Vivyan is a noble fellow, but his mind is all run to waste. He and his friends seem to spend their lives 'in strenuous idleness.' But what's all this?" he added, turning over the second page of the note: "I have to apologise for offering you only my own company; but I am anxious for an opportunity of talking to you alone, on a subject which greatly disturbs my mind.' Indeed! who'd have thought of Vivyan's mind being disturbed about anything beyond his horses and his dogs, and in either case I should be a miserable adviser. What can it be?"

A few hours after, and they were at the dinner-table, the pale young clergyman conversing on ordinary topics with scholarly grace, and the host cheerfully doing the honours of the hospitable board. At last, the dessert and wine were on the table, the servants withdrew, and they were alone.

"Now for it," thought Mr. Langdale, as he busied himself with his walnuts, and every moment expected that Vivyan, with his usual straightforward frankness, would enter on the important subject. But not a word was spoken, and feeling the awkwardness of the continued silence, Mr. Langdale at last said, "You mentioned in your note that there was something you wished to talk over with me."

"I am glad you have asked me about it," Vivyan said, cordially, with a sigh of relief; "I should never have been able to introduce it myself, anxious as I feel. Yes, Mr. Langdale, the subject of your sermon last Sunday has occupied

my mind ever since, and I am exceedingly anxious to discuss it further with you, if you will allow me."

"I shall be most happy," Mr. Langdale replied, with a gratified air. "Was there any point that was not clear to you, or in which you differed from my view?" he added, with much interest.

"What I want to know is this," said Vivyan, with abrupt vehemence; "is it a *real* and *practical* thing?"

"To what do you allude?"

"To regeneration, or the new birth, spoken of in your text, and which you so clearly demonstrated to be essential to salvation. I want to know whether this is a mere shadowy theory—a speculative interpretation—a theological dream,—or is it, as I said before, a *real* and *actual* change?"

"Can you doubt it?" Mr. Langdale said, in some surprise. "There are those, indeed, who speak of this figure as a bold orientalism, a hyperbolical mode of expressing the fact that reformation of the moral life is essential; but the passage itself refutes this theory. The word in the original has the force of 'born from above,' as well as 'born again,' which implies that the soul now enters upon a celestial existence; recovers, as it were, its long-lost sonship in the household of God. And it is obvious that no mere outward reformation ever endued a man with new powers of spiritual discernment, or, in the words of scripture, led him to 'see the kingdom of God.' Again, the figure is repeatedly changed, but never weakened. It always ex-

presses a complete transition from one state of spiritual existence to another and very different one. For instance, it is called a passing from 'death unto life' (John v. 24), from 'darkness to light' (Acts xxvi. 18), a 'translation' from the kingdom of Satan to that of Christ (Col. i. 13), and the figure of the resurrection is repeatedly used to illustrate the greatness of the change and its life-giving power to the soul. I cannot myself imagine how, in the face of such a mass of scripture evidence, any one can attempt to support an opposite theory."

"It is, then, a genuine transformation which the soul of man actually undergoes while in this world?"

"Unquestionably," Mr. Langdale replied, feeling strangely disconcerted under Vivyan's plain, matter-of-fact handling of a subject so refined and abstruse, and the deep, earnest gaze of his anxious eyes.

"And how does it take place?" Vivyan asked, with intense interest.

Mr. Langdale shrunk from such close dealing as this. Instantly his sensitive spirit felt keenly that it was experimental religion that was needed here; that without it the most exquisite theological skill was powerless to meet the cravings of an anxious soul.

"There is some diversity of opinion among the schoolmen," he began, thoughtfully; but Vivyan hastily interrupted him.

"Never mind the schoolmen," he exclaimed, impatiently; "books, and theories, and speculations are all humbug when a man is anxious;"

then, meeting a look of grave surprise and embarrassment, he added, in a low tone of deep feeling:—

"Excuse me, Mr. Langdale, but my soul is stirred to its depths. Eternity is at stake, and I am groping in darkness, and can see no light. Tell me, I implore you to tell me, *who* has known this wondrous change? Is it a thing that *really* takes place? In a word, have *you*——?"

The table shook with the agitation of his strong frame, and his quivering lips refused to finish the sentence. But it needed not. He was answered in the ashy paleness that overspread his listener's face—in the look of anguish with which he turned away, and buried it in his trembling hands.

Inexpressibly shocked, and deeply reproaching himself for his inconsiderate abruptness, Vivyan rose from the table, and stood leaning against the open window. Lost in thought, he knew not how the time passed, till he felt a hand upon his arm, and heard a voice whisper, "My brother, let us pray." Vivyan turned quickly. His young pastor stood before him, with so touching an expression in the bowed head—in the pale and thoughtful face—that, strong man as he was, he felt the tears rush to his eyes. He saw it all in a moment. They were to seek together for the grace that both equally needed; both had yet to be born again. He grasped Langdale's hand, and said with a choked utterance, "Let us go to the library; we shall be undisturbed there."

They have entered in, and "shut the door," and now none may know what passes between

their souls and God. Let us wait until "He who seeth in secret shall reward them openly."

Sunday after Sunday passed; and, to the surprise of the congregation, the pulpit was constantly occupied by strangers. It was not that the rector was ill, for he was always present, and took part in the service; and many, as they joined in the fervent petitions of their beautiful liturgy, felt that it came home to their hearts as it had never done before.

At length the day came when the pastor again occupied his accustomed place. But, oh, how changed was his preaching! Now his words glowed with life, and were full of unction and power. His mind was a rich reservoir of knowledge; but the fount, though full to the brim, had been valueless, as regarded the strengthening and refreshing of the soul, till a word unheard was spoken, which turned its chill waters to the "best wine." The altar had been heaped with wood for the offering; it needed but a Divine touch to kindle it to a glorious flame. Now, with what a realizing sense of the Divine presence, with what intense feeling, with what deep fervour, did he speak of Him whom His soul loved; how earnestly did he invite his hearers to come unto Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! And like those who, of old, had been thrilled with the sound of his Master's voice, his listeners "marvelled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." They felt the deep reality of the truths he preached; they "took knowledge of him, that he had been with Jesus." And when, at the close, he spoke, with deep

humility and adoring gratitude, of the change which his own soul had known; how, in past time, he had “uttered that he understood not—things too wonderful for him, which he knew not;” how unwittingly, he had served the altar of God with a sacrilegious hand, and in the ignorance of unbelief, had spoken of His holy Oracles with unclean lips—but now, through redeeming mercy, through sanctifying grace, was enabled to declare unto them those things which he had seen and heard—that in time past he had indeed told them of One whom he had heard of by the hearing of the ear, but could now tell them of One whom his eyes beheld, and, with a saint of old, exclaim—

“No tongue of mortal can express,
No letters write its blessedness;
Alone who hath thee in his heart
Knows, love of Jesus, what thou art!”

and that now he earnestly invited them to come with him to the precious Saviour he had found, and whom he knew as the “chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely”—then, indeed, were his listeners moved to the soul. Strong men bowed their heads and wept, and many a stout heart trembled, as though its chords had been swept by a seraph’s hand.

And Vivyan received, for the first time, the memorials of his dying Lord’s love—and with a thankful heart offered himself, soul and body, “a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice,” to his Redeemer’s service. It was a day much to be remembered; and many, as they left, felt that

God was, indeed, "a God at hand, and not a God afar off;" and that His word was not a hidden or distant one, but was "very nigh unto them, in their mouth, and in their heart," that they might "hear it, and do it."

Reader, do the facts of our story seem strange to you? Do you ask, with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" Then, with him, come to Jesus. Come, though it shall be "by night," and soon you will find that He is the "Light of the world." Soon you will sing, with joy and gratitude,

"'Twas midnight in my soul, till He,
Bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee."

Oh! listen to that voice which calls you from the deep degradation of your fallen nature, from your dark sepulchre of sin, and invites you to arise and enter on that heavenly course which ascends, brighter and brighter, from strength to strength, from triumph to triumph, till the victor is lost to our view in the splendours of a coronation of everlasting glory. M. T. S.



"BECAUSE GOD SAYS SO."



"WELL, sir, I'll be like the little boy, and say with him, 'Because God says so.'"

Such was the reply given by an old gipsy to one who had been inquiring as to the ground of

his peace. His questioner had been preaching the gospel that evening in a village of one of the midland counties. In the course of his address he had been endeavouring to show his hearers what was meant by FAITH, and in order to illustrate his meaning, related the following simple anecdote:—

A little book entitled, “The Cleansing Blood,” written by a godly physician, now deceased, was given to a boy of about seven years of age (or perhaps less), and when he had read the title, his father said to him—

“Whose blood is called ‘the cleansing blood’?”

“The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,” replied the boy.

“Why is it called the ‘cleansing blood’?”

“Because it cleanses us from all our sins.”

“How does it do that—or why?”

After some consideration the boy replied, “Because ‘He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.’”

“Has it cleansed you from YOUR sins?”

“Yes, it has,” was the answer, given without any hesitation.

“How do you know that?”

“Why,” said the boy in a tone of some surprise, “because God says so,” laying as much emphasis on the word “God” as he was capable of—“because God says so.” It was not simply “because the Bible says so,” or “because *I* believe it,” or “hope so,” or “because I trust I have got the change,” as some would speak, but at once, and without a moment’s questioning, “because God

says so." "He believed God;" so did Abraham, "and it was counted to him, for righteousness."

Now, the simplicity of this little sentence is as great as its all-importance is stupendous. It was but four little words; it was spoken only by a child, yet not all the theological schools of Christendom, past or present, could give you a more comprehensive or a better illustration of faith. What simple reliance, what entire dependence, what whole-hearted trust, what unlimited confidence, what certainty, does it express! And that, mark, in relation to a Person, and that Person God. It is not merely reliance upon the truth of a statement as such, dependence on a "plan," confidence in a creed, or in one's own "views," or moral certainty as to the historical facts recorded in the Bible. All this a man may have, and yet miss and come short of this child's faith in God. Do you, reader, know the difference?

The poor old gipsy learned it that night, many years ago now, when having been invited to come in and hear the gospel, he at once believed God's message of love, and got peace. On being told by someone in the room, that the man declared he was saved, the preacher questioned him as nearly as can be remembered as follows:—

"I understand you think you are saved?"

"Yes, sir, I KNOW it," said the gipsy.

"How is that?"

"Well, sir, Christ died for sinners, and I be a sinner, an old sinner."

"Then He died for you. But how do you know you are saved?"

"Well, sir, you said as how the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin."

"And you believe it?"

"Yes, sir, I do."

"Because I said so?"

"Well, sir, I'll be like the little boy, and say with him, 'Because God says so.'"

Do you, reader, know yourself to be a sinner before God, as the gipsy knew it? God's word declares, "All have sinned." Are you not one of the "all"? Assuredly you are. But are you conscious of it? Do you confess yourself a sinner, as in His sight, who knows the heart, and life? Do you own yourself lost? If so, God says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Take the full comfort of it, believe it with your whole soul, "Because God says so."

J. L. K.



A LONELY COTTAGER.

"Does anyone live here, I wonder?" So spake a Christian lady to her friend as they were returning from a long walk and many visits among the poor. This was a small structure, more like an old outhouse than a cottage, in a very lonely hollow, the narrow footpath across a field being close to it, but nearly even with the roof. With something akin to curiosity the lady stopped and looking down into the hollow, rather loudly called,

“Does anyone live here?” To her surprise the door opened and an old woman looked out with rather a surly face, and in answer to the questions, “Can you read?” “Have you a Bible?” she replied, “No, I gave both Bible and Testament away many a year since.” She, however accepted a few gospel books, and the two friends passed on.

Fully a year after that visit, the same lady called again at the lonely hovel, and this time found her way down into the hollow and to the entrance.

The aged occupant was in; the door open, and she bid her enter with a more pleasant countenance.

“I’ve been looking for you,” said she, “I thought may be, as summer had come, you’d be this way again; I’ve many a time looked up you hill to see if you was a-coming.”

“Why did you want to see me, and expect that I should come again?” said the lady.

“Dinna you give me some little books last year?”

“I believe so; and did you read them?”

“Yes, I did, many a time.”

“Were you interested in the little books, and did you get a blessing in reading them?”

“Yes, I did.”

She then got up from her chair, and fumbling on the top of a high chest of drawers, at last she found one of the little books, and opening it, pointed to one particular page, and to the words,

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

“Was that it?” said the lady. “Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“I do.”

“Did you believe on Him before you read that little book?”

With evident emotion and deep feeling she exclaimed, “I didn’t.”

After a silent pause the lady proposed that they should kneel and thank the Lord. The heart of the dear woman was quite full, and with her apron she wiped the tears which rolled down her cheeks. After that the lady had some further conversation, and found that this dear old creature was named Rosa, and that she was 76 years of age, and lived all alone; she had a few earnings stored by, which would be done by Christmas. The lady told her not to be anxious about that, as perhaps she would not need them, for the Lord might come before then and take her to Himself.

She had been longing now to have a Bible, and a kind friend gave her a New Testament with very large print; from that time it was her delight to read the word of God. Often did the same lady call to see her, and on one occasion Rosa remarked that she had often been very ill, but now if she were to die, she was *safe*. “How do you know you are saved?”

“Because He has said it.”

A very little while was poor Rosa spared after this. She went to help a neighbour in haymaking, and then was missing a day or two. Someone went to her lonely abode and knocked, she

looked out of a little upper window, and said, "she was not so well." As she was usually very reserved, and kept apart from strangers, no one could interfere with her, and the door was kept locked.

The next day a woman went to inquire if Rosa was better, but there was no answer; all was still. Someone brought a ladder to look in at the window; her lifeless body was there, but her spirit was gone to be "for ever with the Lord." Now she would realise the full blessedness of those precious words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." M. S. M.





“With a soft, sweet voice he sang.”

LITTLE JOE.

ON the Sunday before Christmas, and as the Sunday School was being dismissed, cards of invitation for the Christmas treat were handed to the scholars. Many pale little faces brightened up as they received their “tickets,” and visions of oranges and cake, and presents, and the tree,

and the happy company flitted before the imagination.

As the little ones plunged out from the brightly-lighted schoolroom into the deep and slushy snow, their hearts were lighter, and their faces beamed with a newborn joy, paying back a thousandfold their teachers or their friends, for the trifling, and even pleasant, labour which had shed rays of light and joy down many a sad and dark little life, lighting a flame which would never be extinguished, and giving a joy which would never be forgotten.

Amongst the bright, happy faces on that Sunday afternoon, there was one conspicuous. Little Joe (we called him, although he was now one of the oldest boys at our school, and belonged to the highest class) was brimful of delight, as he ran out of the school with his companions, to tell the strangers what they might expect on the coming Christmas Eve. It was only a week, indeed, scarcely a week, and the days would pass doubly fast; there would be so much to see, and so much to do, all were cherishing the brightest hopes, all seemed sure of unalloyed delight.

Joe was one of the best lads in the school, a good scholar, and was always helpful where a boy could help. He was poor, at least his parents were of the Irish poor in the town. The lane he lived in had been built long before the widths of streets or the heights of buildings had been regulated by authorities or councils, for the lane was not over twenty feet wide, and the houses were over forty feet high, and closely built up on every side.

Joe's mother kept one of the little cook-shops, for when the father had left her, or died (I could not tell which, and I never liked to ask), the mother had been left to fight her way in the world, and struggled to bring up and educate her three little children, of which Joe was the boy, and the eldest of the three.

She had succeeded now in getting Joe's education finished, and a few months ago, through the recommendation of his Sunday School teacher Joe had got a situation as message boy in a railway company's office. It was a proud and happy day for Joe when he got on the railway servants' livery and cap, and with a leather bag slung over his shoulder, bearing the brass plate of the company, which Joe kept shining like gold, with its lock and key giving him a sense of importance, and his situation an air of confidence. It was no less a joy to his mother to find in Joe a son gaining the confidence and respect of all who knew him, and all whom he served, while the little money he was earning enabled her to add a few comforts to her house, and cheered a heart that had long been under heavy pressure, with the hope that some day the little message boy might rise to be manager of the railway.

Joe had been telling his mother and sister of the treat they would all have on Christmas Eve, and they rejoiced together that Sunday evening as they sat round the fire in the room behind the shop when the children had returned from school.

The storm of snow was continuing, and the railway servants were uncommonly busy that week, for lines were blocked, and squads of men

were being sent off in various directions to dig the snow out of the cuttings. Joe felt the importance of his work, which was now more than doubled, for there was a constant hurrying hither and thither with letters to the various departments and workshops.

Joe had just been home to a hurried breakfast, and was back to the office in time to carry a most important communication on Tuesday morning. Knowing that it was immediate (perhaps told the road to take) Joe crossed the station. It was a perfect medley of lines running into and out of each other, and the work of clearing those lines for traffic had been only half done, for the snow lay in rows of hillocks, making the road Joe had chosen the more difficult and dangerous; besides, the trains were no longer keeping their time. Engines had been going hither and thither at any hour, and trains were coming just as they could.

Knowing that his business was important, he fearlessly pursued his way across the lines and the hillocks of snow and ice—leaping, bounding, sliding, and often almost falling—when a pilot engine dashed up, and in Joe's hurry to escape danger, he stumbled, and fell on the line. By a desperate effort he managed to drag his body from under the engine, but the wheel caught his leg, and in a moment it was shattered almost to pieces.

A railway servant flew at once to the place where the poor boy lay weltering in his blood, and, lifting him on to his back, he hurried with

him to the station, and from thence to the hospital.

Little time was lost, but every moment was precious, for the frost and cold were intense, and the blood was flowing from the wound, which had been but poorly bound up. When the lad was brought to the hospital, amputation was deemed necessary, but before that could be done the mother was sent for. Heavily did the tidings of Joe's injury fall on the poor mother's heart, blighting her fondest hopes, for she had lived for Joe, and now her fears were for the worst.

Answering the summons of the doctors, she threw a shawl about her, and hastened to the hospital to have her fears realised and increased as she saw her boy, only an hour ago full of life and vigour, now lying sick and bloodless, and as she heard the doctors speak of the serious character of the fractures.

Joe had to be told, and the mother broke the news to him, that the leg must be cut off close to the thigh.

"Well, mother," he said, "dinna greet, I'll be able to work for you although I have but the one leg—there are plenty of men that have only one, and they can work, and so will I."

When the operation was over, the mother begged to be allowed to stay by her boy to nurse him, and the doctor of the accident ward spoke a few whispered words to the nurse, to make it all right, so the poor heart-broken mother watched that night beside her boy, nor did she leave him day or night for the next day or two.

It was on one of the following nights that Joe

seemed very weak, and for the first time hinted to his mother that he thought he would not live—

“Mother,” he said, “I think Jesus is coming to take me home to Himself to heaven.”

The mother begged him not to speak about such a thing as that, and tried to cheer him with the hope that he would soon be well again.

“Oh, mother,” said Joe, “I would like that, for your sake, but if I’m taken away to Jesus I’m sure He will never let you want, although I won’t be with you to work for you as I hoped.”

Afraid that Joe was exhausting his now so weakened strength, his mother sought to calm him down to sleep, but she observed as the night passed away that Joe was not sleeping, and as she gave him something to quench his thirst, he spoke again. “I think I am going to Jesus, mother. I would like to go, for I know He loves me, and at the Sunday School I learnt that He died for you and me, and I believed it, mother; and I hope you’ll believe in Jesus as your Saviour, as I have done, and tell the lassies to love Jesus, too, and we’ll all be together in heaven soon.”

The poor mother could only sit and weep, as she thought that Joe was to be taken from her.

The dull grey morning light was coming into the dimly-lighted ward where the poor suffering boy lay; how much he had suffered during those days and nights no one could tell. The only indication to the surrounding patients of his deep sufferings was the half-repressed cry, or the moaning through his sleep, but the nurses and the mother saw in his pale, wasted face the tale of agony.

“He’s come for me, mother,” said Joe, “and He’s going to take me with Him.”

“Who has come?” asked his mother, thinking her boy was raving.

“Jesus, mother.”

“Tell my Sunday School teacher that I canna be at the treat, but I am going to a happier company, and thank him for all his kindness, for it was at the school I learnt to love Jesus, and it was there I gave Him my heart, and I learnt to sing a sweet hymn, mother. Just put your arm below my head, and I think I could sing it noo.”

So his mother raised his head a little, and with a soft, sweet voice he sang—

“I’m a pilgrim and a stranger,
Rough and thorny is the road,
Often in the midst of danger,
But it leads to God.

“Home in prospect still can cheer me,
Yes, and give me sweet repose,
While I feel His presence near me,
For my Father knows.

“I shall soon with joy behold Him,
Face to face my Father see,
Fall with rapture and adore Him,
For His love to me.

“Nothing more shall then distress me
In the land of sweet repose,
Jesus stands engaged to bless me,
This my Father knows.”

Joe’s strength had almost failed him as he sang the hymn. He sank exhausted on his pillow, and soon after his spirit fled to the land of sweet

repose, from a path that had indeed been thorny and rough, although very short. One joy remains to the writer of this little sketch, it is the thought that he taught that poor little fellow to sing the hymn with which he made the accident ward resound on that sad but eventful morning, when Jesus came to take him up where the song would be continued, and last for ever and ever.

J. S.



A HOPELESS DEATH-STRUGGLE.

“*I will* repent! *I will* repent! O God, I will repent if you will raise me up again!” These startling words—shouted in tones that were heard all over the house, a large London house, too—were uttered by a dying *atheist*.

Yes, reader, an atheist; a man who for years had denied the very existence of God; not merely an infidel (or deist) who denies the truth and divine authority of the scriptures, but admits there is a God, who, he alleges, is too good and (thinking He is such an one as himself) too indifferent about sin to punish the wicked, but an atheist. As the man was dangerously ill, I was asked by a relative to go and see him.

The man was in bed, and appeared to be about thirty years of age, perhaps less, having only recently married. He was a compositor, and evidently an intelligent, well-informed man. He

had been suffering from inflammation of some internal organ, gangrene had set in, and he was comparatively at ease, and evidently fancied he was going to recover. Knowing that he was an atheist, I solemnly spoke to him at one about *God*, gave him overwhelming proofs of His existence, His power, His *holiness* (which is ever the atheist's sole objection to Him) and then pointing him to Christ, the Saviour of sinners, and telling him he was in great and imminent peril, remarked, "If you will repent, perhaps God may raise you up again."

"I hope to enjoy many years of my life yet," replied the atheist (who had maintained a stubborn and contemptuous silence), speaking in a defiant tone, "and don't believe in God, nor you either." His voice was thick and husky, and he evidently spoke with difficulty; but fully believing that he was recovering, he thought he could defy God with impunity, and "repent at leisure."

Yes, to "enjoy many years of life," walking after his own lusts was his hope, and in this hope he could not only do without God, but hated the very thought of His existence. He was one of the wretched disciples of Holyoake and of one who boastfully called himself a breaker of *images*, because in his fulsome and monstrous conceit, he considered himself the competent destroyer of the blessed Objects of the Christian's faith and love. Poor creature! to what extremities will not the heart, "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," carry the man whose prominent characteristic is conceit of himself.

If you, reader, are unhappily a follower of any of these proud boasters, *do* be persuaded to be honest with yourself, and own that the whole sum and substance of all forms of unbelief find their level in the words of Him who "knew what was in man," and Who has said, "Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil." It must come out some day as to *you*; if not sooner, most certainly before the "great white throne," whose very brightness will make your deeds of darkness more hateful by contrast. But to return to the dying atheist.

I left the poor man in sorrow, and yet for *God's* sake I could not but feel indignant at the wilful, persistent, deliberate wickedness of this vile sinner. Alas, I have had to do with so many infidels and atheists, that I (though but a man) could see the poor *pretender* to "atheistical views" through and through; how much more God? How daring the impiety, how deep the hypocrisy, that at such an awful moment could deny the *known* and *felt* existence of God, in hope of being able to "enjoy" for a little longer "the lusts of the flesh."

The visit and conversation above given occurred on a Thursday morning. On the day following I went again, but although I knocked loudly at the door I was not admitted. The atheist's death-chamber was on the topmost storey of three or four floors, and possibly the man's wife did not hear me, or more probably the wretched man had forbidden any to admit me: however that may be, I saw him no more.

But on the Monday following, a Christian

friend of mine, knowing nothing of what is given above, told me the following solemn little narrative :—

“I was sent for,” said he, “last Saturday morning to see a man who was said to be dying, at No. —, in — Street. As the matter was urgent I went at once, and when I got there the door was opened by his wife, a very young-looking person, who was in tears. ‘He’s just dying, sir,’ said she, and then as she spoke I heard a man’s voice from the topmost room of the house, shouting out these strange words, ‘*I will repent! I will repent! O God, I will repent if you will raise me up again!*’ I sprang past the woman,” continued this dear young friend, “and darted up the stairs as fast as I could go, but when I rushed into the room the man was dead!”

Poor sinner! He did not repent, he only *promised* to do so, if God would stoop to *his* terms! He had deliberately denied his very existence (knowing better, you see) but two days before, and now he would condescend to acknowledge it, if He would consent to *his* conditions. How awful the judgment that awaits the *leaders* of this most unhappy class, who, well knowing the root of their own unbelief, try to drag others into it, only that they may, if possible, hide their own shame in the crowd! One feels that patience with such men would be treason against God; but if any deluded follower of such wilfully false guides should happen to read this narrative, let him remember that his own last hour *must* come some day, that his leaders cannot help him then, and that if he persists in his present course but a

very little longer, God may leave him to reap what he has sown—*corruption*, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

But if the reader is not one of these, but just a *neglecter* of God and His Christ, see, I beseech you, what a solemn thing it is to die without *Him*, the Saviour of sinners whose existence you *do* acknowledge, yet whom you have positively neglected. You have heard that “the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin,” yet you do not *care* to be cleansed! “A more convenient season” you think will come. Who knows? Only two days passed, and this atheist was a corpse! He had rejected God, you have *neglected* Christ, and it is written, “How shall we escape, if we NEGLECT so great salvation?” How indeed! The simple *neglect* is condemnation, because it declares contempt; contempt for God and His claims; contempt for Christ and all His sufferings.

It is hard to say which is the worst man, he who denies all facts (knowing them to be such) or he who, *acknowledging* them all, coolly turns his back upon them, and goes his own way! Can you tell me which is worst in His eyes, who loves His precious Son, who saw all He suffered, that sinners might be saved? Will He tolerate your contempt for ever? You are conscious that He *cannot*, for “He cannot deny himself.” Then let this little narrative impel you to be in earnest. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou SHALT be saved,” and you will thus escape what otherwise may soon come—a hopeless death-struggle.

J. L. K.

THE OUTCAST.

I MET him first upon the seashore. It was a raw and gusty day ; and the waves were dashing their white crests against the base of the long ledge of rock, on which I had climbed, to see more distinctly a distant vessel that was tossing and heaving on the waters, and vainly endeavouring to enter the harbour. While I intently viewed it through my telescope, I was startled by a deep, low voice just beside me, for I had supposed myself to be perfectly alone : “ You seem much interested in that solitary bark : is it so new to you to look at a thing labouring in troubled waters ? You may see that sight everywhere.” I instantly apologised to the stranger for blocking up his path. He bowed haughtily, and passed on ; and I could hear him say, in a tone of suppressed feeling, as he slowly paced along, “ Ay, am not *I*, too, like yon heaving vessel, the sport of the wild and frantic elements ? ” and then, changing his humour, he laughed a sarcastic laugh. I saw him again two or three times during my stay at Boulogne, but he was always alone, and treading some unfrequented path. He showed no inclination to speak, but merely greeted me with a cold and somewhat stern and dignified bow.

I afterwards learned some particulars of his history. He was of the younger branch of a noble English family, and had possessed an estate suitable to his rank. In early life he had

married an amiable lady, who bore him one fair and lovely daughter. To the world's eye he appeared happy, the object of envy or respect; but, alas! one fatal vice soon blighted the pleasant prospect. He was addicted to gambling; and after the usual fluctuations of fortune, he found himself reduced to a pittance, compared with what he had formerly enjoyed. Still the baneful passion controlled him. He carefully collected the wrecks of his property, and staked them at one desperate throw. He was unsuccessful; when, roused almost to frenzy, he offered to play for double or quits, as it is called. This, with similar ill-fortune, he twice or thrice repeated; and Mr. — left the den of iniquity that night not merely stripped of everything he had possessed, but under engagements to pay besides more than he had ever owned. His wife was acquainted with his calamity only by the wild and woeful countenance with which he returned home that miserable night; and early in the morning, with a brief adieu, he left her and his child for ever. She sank under the stroke; and the child was soon afterwards laid by her side in the quiet grave, and he is now living, an outcast from society, on a small pension, barely sufficient to cover his wants, supplied to him by a wealthy relative.

I saw him a second time in a city in the south of Europe, in which, at the hotel where I was staying, I one Sunday preached the gospel to the English residents. I perceived him glide in, and take his seat in a corner of the room, as if he wished to escape notice, for the instant the ser-

vice was concluded, with a cold and haughty look, he left the room.

Years rolled away, and I had almost forgotten the Outcast. At last, I was spending a summer on the banks of the Rhine, and one morning I sallied out to take a long ramble amid that lovely and romantic scenery. I came to a small town, where I purposed to remain for the night. Here the master of the inn informed me that a countryman of mine was there, lying at the point of death. He said he was in a lodging close by; and his desolate condition—for he appeared to have no friends—had excited some considerable notice in the place, for his illness was brought on by an accidental fall while exploring a neighbouring ruined castle. This intimation was quite enough to awaken my sympathy; and sending in a message with my name I intimated that I would pay a visit to the invalid that evening. On entering the sick room I was astonished at recognising the Outcast stretched upon the bed. I was yet more surprised to observe an animated smile light up his wan and faded features, and to see him eagerly stretch forth his hand to welcome me. “Do you then recollect me?” said he, in a faltering voice; “If you do, you will perhaps marvel to hear me say that you, of all other persons, I have most wished to see.” He added, “You cannot have forgotten the preaching some years back at ——. That service left an impression on my mind which has never been effaced, and you will easily comprehend the delight I now experience at your visit.” This was indeed a delightful assurance to me; and I could not

forbear requesting him to give me some further account of this wonderful change.

His narrative was simple and consistent. He had strolled into the hotel, on the occasion alluded to, from an undefined curiosity; he had quitted it feeling merely that he had listened to the specious argument of a religious partisan. But in his solitary moments the truths then stated returned again and again to his thoughts. The sure consolation of the gospel in a dying hour had been dwelt upon, when worldly expedients had failed; and he could not avoid reflecting that if such refuge were really to be found, it was well worth the effort of securing.

He procured a Bible, and began carefully to read it; he was struck with the majestic bearing of its contents, he was convinced that its descriptions of the deplorable corruption of the human heart were true. He admired its remedy for the moral wretchedness of man. And when he considered the character of Christ, His meekness under suffering, the elevated tone and tenor of His instructions, their marvellous adaptation to the actual condition of the world, and the fulfilment of the things predicted of Him, the inevitable conclusion of the Roman centurion forced itself on his mind, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

His conscience, once awakened, terribly condemned his past life, and for awhile he was tormented with the apprehension that he had committed the unpardonable sin. It was not until after much bondage of spirit, that he was brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But

as he contemplated the finished work of Christ upon the cross, he began gradually to perceive that it must be commensurate with the whole extent of human guilt and ruin; and he discovered, therefore, that there was no bar to *his* reconciliation with God. He perceived that an open door was before him, which no man could shut. He approached the Saviour with a simple faith in the promises of the gospel; he found acceptance and salvation — righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

And now it had become his study to live to the glory of Him whom he had formerly mistrusted and dishonoured and disowned. His health having declined, he was advised to make an excursion for change of air and scene; and it was in the course of this journey that he had met with the accident referred to. The breaking of a rib had aggravated all the symptoms of his disease, and he had been lying for a month where I found him, gradually sinking beneath the ravages of consumption.

I did not leave him to the care of strangers, but tended the few failing hours of his life. I never witnessed one more contrite; I never saw a child-like trust in the Saviour more beautifully exemplified; I never had a surer hope that the once dead soul was quickened into spiritual life.

One afternoon, as I sat by the bedside, he asked me, "Do you recollect our first interview? You were watching a solitary vessel, trying in vain to stem the opposition of a stormy sea. I know not how it was," he added, "but a thought came then powerfully across my mind, that I resembled

that wave-tossed bark. And, indeed, it was so ; for I was a lonely being, cast off equally by God and man—a living exemplification of the scripture declaration, that ‘there is no peace to the wicked ; they are like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.’ Even in the time of my worldly prosperity I was a miserable man, the prey of disquieting apprehensions. The pleasures I sought after never satisfied me ; and I constantly felt an aching void in my soul, which neither rank nor riches could fill up.” Then, half-raising himself in his bed, he cried, with unwonted energy, “Oh, carry forth the testimony of one who speaks from experience—a testimony from my grave—that to seek happiness in the world is to seek the living among the dead, to spend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not.” He paused, exhausted by his earnestness, and in a few moments continued : “But I obtained mercy. I was drifting, a desolate wreck upon the billows ; and He hath brought me into the haven, where my soul would be. How can I worthily praise Him for it?”

The closing scene was near. I watched him one afternoon, as he slept a quiet sleep. After a time he awoke, and I perceived a marked change in his features. “All is well,” he softly said : “the everlasting arms are beneath me.” Then turning to me, he uttered a few faltering words : “God repay to you your love to me. I trust, in the eternal world, to be one part of your joy and crown.” He lay silent a few moments, and then breathed forth his humble aspiration, “Lord

Jesus, receive my spirit. I come, most guilty in myself, but washed, I trust, in Thy blood, and clothed in the righteousness of God." And after one or two convulsive pangs he passed from a bed of suffering to the throne of glory.

A hillock in the burial ground of — marks the spot where the mouldering dust of the recovered Outcast reposes. He lies far from the splendid sepulchre of his noble ancestors, but I love in gratitude to God, to cherish the memory, and to recall God's dealings with the Outcast.

M. T. S.

"THERE'S ROOM FOR A LOT MORE."

"I HAVE just seen Mrs. Green."

"And how is she to-day?"

"Very low in body, but she's on the Rock."

"Thank God for that, and there's room for a lot more!"

Such was the simple remark of one who, being on the Rock herself, and anxious about the soul of a neighbour who was dying, had asked me to visit Mrs. Green.

"There's room for a lot more;" blessedly true—room for *you*, dear reader—if not yet on the Rock, if not yet trusting in Christ, and saved from the woes of coming judgment. The question is, Are *you* on THE Rock—Christ Jesus?

"There's room for a lot more!" How it carried one's mind to that parable in chapter xiv.

of Luke's gospel, where the servant of that "certain man," who made a great supper, after being commanded to go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring into the supper already prepared, the poor, and the maimed, and the lame, and the halt, returns saying, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded—and YET there is room."

And true is it now—true for you, my reader—will you accept the invitation just as you are, just as this finds you? Why not? Why remain outside when all is provided inside? "Behold all things *are now ready*" was the word then; so is it at this moment. Oh! feast upon the love of God, for Christ His Son *has* died. Those originally invited had despised the invitation and the preparation—they preferred "piece of ground," "yoke of oxen," or "wife" to those things the "certain man" had prepared; but the one who had made all ready was not to be baulked of his loving desire, "that my house may be filled" (ver. 23). No, to gratify His loving heart it is that leads him to despatch the servant in haste, for he says, "Go out quickly," and if those first invited despise his kindness he will find those who will not. That "certain man" delights to bless, He is the loving, giving God of 3rd chapter of John, under the type of him who makes a great supper; yes, everything that He has to do with is great—He is the "Great God." (Rev. xix.17.) He makes a supper there; but, oh, what a different sort of one is that—it is a "*Great salvation*" that he has provided in his Son (Heb. ii.

3), therefore is the question put, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

This parable is brought out by the Lord Jesus Christ, in reply to the man who says in verse 15, "Blessed is he that SHALL eat bread in the kingdom of God;" he spoke of blessing in the future, as many do now, who talk of HOPING to go to heaven, or of HOPING to be saved, putting off the all-important question of their soul's salvation. The Lord Jesus takes him upon this point as it were to show that "all things are now ready" (ver. 17), and there was no heart in these first of all invited to partake of His Father's bounty, making really His gifts as the very excuse to refuse His invitation to the great supper. Yes, His very gifts; it was nothing gross or immoral, anything contrary to the law—quite the reverse—things, right and proper in themselves, but if put between the heart and Christ how great the loss! Better be among the poor, maimed, halt and blind in the streets and lanes of the city, or in the highways and hedges, than to be possessed of that which, though it be from God—for "every good and perfect gift" is from Him, is used to fill the heart; till, like the inn in the 2nd chapter of Luke, there is "no room" for Christ. But this does not dry up the heart of love of that loving, giving God, for still His servant, the Holy Spirit, is working, convincing of sin—showing precious souls how poor they are—though they may have everything this world can produce and yet have not the Son, and therefore, "have not life." (1 John v. 12.) How maimed and halt, for they can-

not walk aright, their gait is uneven, their steps irregular, they cannot please God ; how blind, for they see no beauty in God's Christ (Isa. liii. 2), and still, for all that, they are the very ones He has sent out to "compel to come in, that my house may be filled."

Yes, just as you are—poor, maimed, blind—the message comes to you, "Come, for all things are NOW ready." "And yet there is room." Now! yet! and so, while there is "yet room," the glad tidings are, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6), and God commendeth His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us (Rom. v. 8), yet without strength, yet sinners, Christ died. How that word "yet" in these two verses made an old woman in the same town that Mrs. Green lived in and went to heaven from almost leap off her chair, though she had not walked for years, when she saw them as suited to her, for she was ungodly, and "yet without strength," and Christ died for such. She was a "yet sinner," and God commended His love towards her, in that Christ had died for such. May you, too, leap for joy at that same blessed truth ; truth, my dear reader, that there is "yet room," for "yet without strength" one and "yet a sinner" for whom Christ died, and for whom the certain man made a great supper, and whom the servant "has compelled to come in," the one of those of whom it is true, "There's room for a lot more." S. V. H.

THREE WONDERFUL THINGS.

THEY are spoken of in Romans v. 1-11, and may they be found in your soul, my dear reader.

First: "Being justified." "How then can a man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" So spake Bildad three thousand years ago; God gave the answer, blessed be His name, eighteen hundred years since. "By the deeds [or works] of the law, no flesh shall be justified in His sight." How then? "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, through faith in his blood." How do I get it? "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Neither is there any difference; "For the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all, and upon all them that believe." "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." This then is most clear, though most wonderful, that a guilty, ungodly man, may by God's grace, and by faith, and by blood be justified in God's sight.

But when am I justified? Now; the moment I believe. In verse 9 it is, "Being NOW justified by his blood." Observe "now" is God's time. Is it yours, dear reader? Who justifies?

God. "It is God that justifies." God is "the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

"Peace with God" is the second wonderful thing. Ah, dear reader, do you not need this peace? Have you got it? You cannot make it. Man may wish to make it, but God never. If you believe in Him, God made your peace 1,800 years ago. Hear the word of God, "Having made peace by the blood of his cross." Oh, how plain peace has been made. Have you received it? Are these blessed words true of you? "And you that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you unblameable and unreprougeable in his sight." (Col. i. 21, 22.) Oh! believe the record true, Peace with God has been made, and for you.

"Eighteen hundred years ago
All was finished—all was done;
And the Father proved it so,
In that He raised up His son;
Then in glory set Him down
High upon His own bright throne."

Now for the third thing (ver. 3), "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Observe where hope comes in. It is in its proper place here. It follows justification and peace with God. Many put hope first, and the others are to follow in some way, but when, they cannot tell. "We hope to be saved," is a common saying. Ah! that is not the hope here. Salvation is a settled thing for those who believe. Thanks be to the God of all grace! What is the hope here? "The

glory of God." What a hope! Nothing before the believer but God's uncloudless glory. It is written, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii.) Those who are justified by faith, and have peace with God, can now "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." In Revelation xxi. 11 we see the Bride, the Lamb's wife, "having the glory of God." "This hope maketh not ashamed." Why not? "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." (Ver. 5.) Then it is known and enjoyed, if it is there. Yes, and God who loves us, and has given us this hope through grace, will never fail nor deceive us. He will crown His grace with His glory; therefore we may confidently "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Reader, is this your hope? "But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost, or as a puff of breath." (Margin, Job xi. 20.) "The hypocrite's hope shall perish."
G. L.





"She fell on her knees, and in an agony cried, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

**"MY HOURS ARE NUMBERED, A FEW
DAYS AND I SHALL BE GONE."**

THE funeral was over; the remains of the once wealthy but ruined banker had been laid in the family vault, and his afflicted widow sat alone in the elegantly-furnished apartment to which she

had first come as a young bride. She was now an intruder; the furniture had been advertised for sale, and she, together with her three children, were to leave their happy home and go into lodgings. The wealthy firm of G—— and L—— had suddenly become bankrupt; their liabilities were immense; and Mr. G—— did not long survive the total annihilation of his ambitious hopes. When all was paid, a very small pittance remained for his widow and her daughters. Mrs. G——’s only son, however, was more fortunately situated; a large estate, bequeathed to him by a very distant relative, would become his when he was of age, and during his minority a suitable sum was allowed for his education and maintenance.

Mrs. G—— was naturally of a proud and ambitious character; she felt intensely the many privations of her lot, and determined to place her son at a public school, whilst herself and daughters went to the Continent. Some years passed before she revisited England. Allen, who had generally spent his holidays with some English friends, felt no little anxiety to meet his mother and sisters. He was now nearly eighteen, but so slight in person as to seem much younger, whilst his manners were so unassuming and reserved that Mrs. G—— felt greatly disappointed. She compared him with his sisters—fine, handsome girls—and sighed as she thought that poor Allen would never make a figure in the world. Allen’s great wish, from boyhood, had been to spend his life in telling to all the sweet story of redeeming love. His mother had often expressed great annoyance at this wish of her son’s.

However, she at length had fully given her consent to his entering the university for this purpose.

Months passed on, during which Allen studied diligently, and in his letters home often tried—though vainly—to lead these loved ones to a more serious contemplation of life; but so absorbed were they by the present, that eternity, with its real results, was ever banished as an unwelcome thought, despite the gentle, yet anxious, admonitions of the absent one, to which they replied in a light and jesting strain, which greatly distressed him.

Allen had been more than a year at Cambridge when he had a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs, the knowledge of which at first he kept from his mother and sisters. Becoming worse, he sent his one bosom companion and college friend, Charles B——, as gently as possible to break the sad news to them. Greatly and terribly were they alarmed, and made instant arrangements to have Allen removed to where they could tenderly nurse him. Charles at once returned with many tokens of the anxiety of mother and sisters. Eagerly did those wasted hands tear open first one and then another of the envelopes, whilst his eyes rapidly glanced along their lines. At length he threw them down and hid his face in his hands. “My poor mother!” he said, “what will she say when she knows it will soon be all over with me! She has so built upon my possessing this estate, and becoming rich, that her disappointment will be dreadful; for, my dearest friend, I have asked the doctor to tell his

real opinion. He says I may last for some time, if I get strength to visit a warm climate; but the end must come—it is told me that I shall die. Oh, my mother! my mother!"

Allen grew much worse that night. They left Cambridge the following day; but travelled slowly, and after some hours stayed to rest and pass the night. Allen had quite enjoyed his journey so far; but during the night every dangerous symptom again increased. Medical advice was immediately procured, and everything that skill and kindness could suggest was put in request, to preserve for a little space the life which seemed ebbing so rapidly away. At last the hæmorrhage of the lungs ceased, and he sank into a long and quiet repose, whilst Charles B—— (who had not been able to leave his suffering friend) sat down to write to Mrs. G——, urging her presence without the least delay. The next day Allen lay without pain, seemingly rather better; he seldom spoke but to ask the time, and when his mother and sisters would probably arrive.

Charles had again gone to the window; it was a beautiful Sunday morning. The whole landscape was covered with a deep snow, whilst the bright winter sun lighted up the pure white masses with a thousand sparkling hues. Allen's ears were morbidly sensitive to the slightest sound, and long ere the carriage containing the travellers stopped before the inn door, he knew his mother had arrived, and expressed the deepest anxiety to see her. Some time, however, elapsed before Mrs. G—— could subdue the hysterical

paroxysms of grief; she had hoped against hope, but now she suddenly gave way to the deepest despair, and even the doctor, accustomed as he was to these violent manifestations of unrestrained feeling, could not, for some time, do anything to relieve her. After a while she rose, and with a strong effort at self-control, leaning on her daughter's arm, she entered the room of her dying son, who had again sunk into a disturbed slumber. His illness having been short, he was not much changed; a slight feverish hectic burned in his cheek, and when he awoke and beckoned his mother, his dark eyes were for a moment so brilliant, so life-like, that even then she could not think him dying; even then she hoped he might be spared to them. Holding Allen's hand in hers, his mother spoke of his recovery, of an immediate change of climate, and securing other advice. As she thus spoke, Allen's face betrayed the anguish of his mind; it was, indeed, agony to the dying youth thus to see how tenaciously his mother grasped this fleeting shadow.

"Mother," he said, "listen to me. My hours are numbered; a few days and I shall be gone. Oh, if you have ever loved me, do not, I entreat you, thus disturb my last moments by these useless regrets. You know, beloved mother, that this is death; now, let me speak to you, come close to me; let me lean on you, and rest in the very position I used to occupy while I was your 'little Allen.' Listen to my dying prayers—my dying wishes. Ask yourself this one solemn question, What will *you* feel when death is near, when *you* lie on your dying bed, and know that

the world is behind you, and eternity, with all its infinite happiness, or infinite misery, is before you? Mother, sisters, do not think me harsh; I must speak; you will, ere long, come to die; ask yourselves, Will death be to you a king of terrors, or will he seem like a father's messenger, sent to bring you to a happy home? Thus is he sent to me. I am happy, quite happy; I have no fear, no doubt. My Saviour has gone before me into the dark valley, and it is to me all light, all light! We are parting in this world; but, oh, my beloved mother and sisters, can you refuse my last request? Will you not strive to meet me in the next—in heaven? God waits to be gracious; He will not refuse any who call on Him. Jesus has died to redeem *you*; He now lives in heaven to intercede for *you*. Oh, my mother, my sisters, seek this Saviour earnestly; and if you feel as the penitent sinner often does, that your prayers seem cold, and that past sins rise as a cloud between you and God, then, then think of that blessed passage, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.' Nothing can keep you from a reconciled God and Father but want of faith in Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour. However sinful we may be, however guilty we may feel, the promise still remains, He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."

Allen's voice ceased, as the faintness and prostration returned: so excessive was it that he never spoke during the night, whilst no one but the medical attendants and Charles were allowed to be with him. All its sad hours the mother

sat alone, except when Charles came with some fresh report of Allen's state. At first despair seemed to have filled her heart, and she thought her grief too hard to be borne; she longed to die, to be free from the agony of life—life which would be as nothing when her son was gone; but then the thought arose, "I am not fit to die." For the first time in her life she felt what it was to be a sinner. The selfishness of her whole life; her forgetfulness of God; her real condition as before Him, with all its bitter consequences, came before her with terribly crushing effect, when she fell on her knees, and in an agony which could not be controlled, cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." She had risen from her knees more calm than she had felt before, when she was called to Allen; he was sinking rapidly, still supported by his friend. Allen stretched out his hand to his mother, and as she grasped it he said:—

"Before we part, my own loved mother and sisters, remember what I say, I am perfectly happy; I fully rely upon that blessed promise, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Oh, learn to trust that gracious promise, and remember, he that believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. You will grieve for me, my dear ones, but Jesus will comfort you; my death will make you poor as to this world's goods, but God will provide for you. Oh, trust Him—trust Him; He is our tender, loving Father, and His love will never change—never fail you. His love sent the Saviour to die for you; and that precious Saviour was 'wounded for our transgressions;' 'He has borne our sins;' and it is that Saviour who will

save you—you, my mother; you, my beloved sisters; yes, the whole world if they will but seek Him. Nothing—nothing can ever ‘separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’”

The words died away, and all was still; Charles held his friend’s hand in his, and felt his pulse become gradually weaker as life ebbed away, until it ceased. The struggle of life was over; and he who in life had been so loved and cherished now lay in the calm repose of death. All was well with him. He had gone to his Father’s home in heaven. Charles obeyed the injunctions of his beloved friend; and no son could devote himself to a widowed mother with more affectionate tenderness than he displayed towards Mrs. G——.

The earnest entreaty of her son had indeed sunk into the heart of the mother. She sought that Saviour with her whole heart, and found Him, to the joy of her soul. She, too, could say, “My hope is in thee.” She, too, felt that it was no cunningly-devised fable; and that the comforts of godliness were solid, real, present; that they imparted peace—a peace no worldly advantage or pleasure had given to her; whilst the future was radiant with hope as she anticipated her departure; that the Saviour her beloved son had preached to her was inviting all to come to Him; and it was the joy of her heart to strive, though but in feeble accents, to say to all around. He is indeed a loving Saviour.

M. T. S.



THE SECRET OF TRUE HAPPINESS.

AN unconverted man is not happy. There is a dull load on his spirit—a dim cloud on his conscience; he scarcely knows what he would be at—but he certainly is not happy. If a considerate man, he is aware that there must be a joy in existence which he has not yet struck out—a secret of more solid bliss which he hitherto has not hit upon. He is not at peace with God. Go where he may, he cannot get out into the clear daylight of a glad conscience and a propitious heaven. And it is not till he finds his way into the Goshen of the gospel, the sun-lit region on which the beams of God's countenance still smile down, through the doorway by which an ascending Saviour entered heaven; it is not till, from the gross darkness and palpable gloom of a natural condition, a man is led into the grateful light and glorious liberty of the sons of God; it is not till then that he knows the ecstasy of undiluted joy and the perfection of that peace which passeth all understanding. It is not till the spirit of adoption makes him a child of God that he feels himself one of God's free men.

The thrill of a sudden animation sweeps through all his frame; and, encountering an unwonted joyousness all around him, he perceives an unwonted energy within him. Peace with God has brought him power from God; there is nothing which he is loth to do, and, with the Lord

upon his side, nothing which he cannot hope to do. The convict-labour and hireling tasks of the alien and bondsman are exchanged for the free-will offerings and affectionate services of a son and a disciple. Reconciled to God, he is reconciled to everything which comes from God; and full of the love of Christ, he courts everything which he can do for Christ. "Come, labour, for I rather love thee now. Come, hard work and long work, I am in a mood for you now. Come, trials and crosses, for I can carry you now. Come, death, for I am ready for thee now."

His relation to Christ has put him in a new relation to everything else; and the same fountain which has washed the stain from his conscience having washed the scales from his eyes, an inundation of light and beauty bursts in from the creation round him, which hitherto was to him as much an unknown universe as its Creator was the unknown God; and the boundless inflowing of peaceful images, and happy impressions, and strong consolations dilate his soul with an elasticity, an enterprise and courage as new as they are divine. He has found a Saviour, and his soul is happy.

J. H.



“HOW THE DEAF HEARD, AND THE DUMB SPAKE:”

THE LAST DAYS OF WILLIAM H—.

I HAVE been turning over the leaves of a Testament in the Gospel according to St. John; and, as I gaze upon its pages, the story of a life comes up before me—that life another link in the golden chain of everlasting love, another proof that the eternal goodness of our God knows neither limit nor measure.

Here and there I see verses underlined with a thin, wavering, black line, but the hand that did it is now stiff in death, and the heart that found such gladness in reading it now beats to the praises of our God in heaven.

He, too, like Nicodemus, came to the Lord by night. It was a night of sorrow and of storm that drove him to this place of shelter, but he found there the peace he needed and the rest he sought.

“Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”
(John iii. 5.)

The wavering lines traced by his dying hand are under these blessed words. He had known what it was to be outside the gates of Life. He had lived for thirty years in this world, and had worked in darkness for the prince of darkness, until he saw the “marvellous light” of his Saviour’s love.

The shadow of misfortune hovered over his infancy, and early he was called upon to carry the cross of suffering. He became deaf at the age of three years and a half, the result of scarlet fever. Few were the words he had ever learnt to speak, and the music of the human voice was soon forgotten.

On his recovery he was sent to an asylum for the deaf and dumb, and learnt to converse with his fingers.

Once, between the age of ten and eleven, he appeared anxious about his soul, questioned those he knew with his fingers, and told them he never slept without praying. At fourteen he was placed apprentice to a tailor. When out of his time, he spent three years in London; and, as he began to earn good wages, his life seemed wholly given to the god of this world. From London he went to Castlebury, still absorbed in the pleasures of sin; but God was following him, and the prayers that had been breathed over his cradle, and had followed him all through his sinful life, God was going to answer in His own way and in His own good time.

O! ye whose prayers have been unanswered for long and weary years, who have lingered, tried and tempted, outside the gates of expectation, ye have to do with One who hears and answers prayer.

Early in August, 187—, having been ill for four months, he came home. At thirty, the evening time of his life had come; and, although he was still tossed upon the waters of despair, yet is his God guiding him by a way he knows not, into the

quiet of His presence, and the secure haven of His love. He is dying of consumption now, and, as the autumn leaves begin to fall the summer of life is passing away.

In September he began first to be seriously troubled about his soul, and read attentively the tracts and books placed by loving hands beside him.

In October he read the incident of "The Two Deaths," in "God's Glad Tidings," and that seemed to break him down. Tears began to course down his cheeks, and he sought to be alone with God. In the quiet of his room they heard him weeping; for, like Nicodemus of old, he had gone to the feet of Christ, to learn of Him. O, blessed tears! O, blessed exercise of soul! O, sinner, have you ever shed a tear for sin? Have you ever thought of where you are, and what you are?

Again my eyes turn to the verse in the third of John, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The kingdom of God! He knew nothing of it as yet; the prince of darkness had wrapped chains about his soul, but now he felt the chain, and began to beat against the prison bars; he was in darkness still, but he had heard of the blessed light, and was longing and praying for it. God was leading him through deep exercise of soul.

O, blessed Saviour, Thine it is to gather jewels covered with the mire of sin, and to make them bright and beautiful by redeeming love. Thy life, Lord Jesus, tells us what Thou art to us;

Thy love, what we are to Thee ; Thy death, how sin was put away ; Thy resurrection glory makes our peace secure. O, eternity of love, without beginning, without end ! Write our God upon every heart the blessed significance of these words : " God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

But to pass on. Again I turn over the pages of the gospel, looking for the way-marks He had made. They seem to me like finger-posts pointing him to Christ. I am arrested at the 47th verse of the sixth chapter, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." " Everlasting life !" Was it his at last ? Had the captive found his way to liberty, and the prisoner shaken off his chains ? Even so, as he himself said, " he could rest upon the finished work of Christ." Can you, sinner ? This was how the blessed liberty came to him. One Sunday evening he was reading Ephesians ii., and he pointed to some verses in the chapter (the first and others) and asked with his fingers whether they did not refer to him. His father answered, " Yes." He had life then. A day or two afterwards he had a little book given to him, entitled, " Come to Jesus." He read it through, and when asked if he had come to Jesus, he said, " he knew his sins were all put away by Jesus, and he had peace," and also " that now he could rest upon the finished work of Christ." He had now that everlasting life that Christ alone can give. He had now the peace that " passeth

understanding." He who had been "dead in sins" was now quickened into life.

The old life, with its sins, was gone for ever; he understands the mystery of those words, "Ye must be born again;" he rested on that finished work, and he was saved and happy. Nothing that his poor trembling hands could do would have brought salvation to his sin-stained heart; but his ear, closed to earthly sound, had heard the accents of the Saviour's voice saying, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest."

Many other verses he underlined before he died, the last clause of the 37th verse of John vii., "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." He had satisfied his thirst now, and had within him "the well of water springing up into everlasting life." Again, he had marked the last clause of the 24th verse of John viii., "for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Those terrible words must have acted as a beacon light to warn him from the shores of hell. They must have told him what they tell you *now*, sinner—that if you die in your sins, you must spend your eternity in the lake of fire. In the fourteenth chapter he had underlined the 13th and 14th verses, and the heavenly comfort of the words lit up his wasting cheek with smiles of joy; for his eye could turn from the words themselves to the One who spake them, and he knew in whom he had believed.

We come to the Lord's prayer in the 17th chapter, and here he had singled out the third verse, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,

whom Thou hast sent.” These were the verses he had marked, but the chain of faith was complete, and every link was strong.

The power and strength of the presence of Christ was with him to the end—beautiful was the calm of his last hours—rich the glory of the sunset of his life. Christ was everything to him now. Never had his fingers found such sweet employment as at this time, when over and over again he gave expression on them to his faith in, and love for, Christ. Blessed it was to sit by his dying bed and see his face shining with the light of heaven, his fingers moving rapidly as he spoke of the peace within.

On Saturday, March 17th, a great change took place, and all that saw him knew the end was near. At eight o'clock he wished his brothers to come, and he bade them good-bye. He said, in his mute language, this was to be his last night on earth, that in the morning he should be with the Lord. His father said, bending over him, “William, is Jesus precious to you?” He held up both thumbs (meaning double good, one thumb means good), while a rapturous smile passed over his face; he talked to his father until a quarter to nine, when he stopped, and on his fingers said that Christ was speaking to him; and although he had heard no earthly sound for well-nigh thirty years, he said he could hear the voice of Christ quite plainly. He would pause and listen for a while, and then answer the Lord with his fingers; then, pointing to the corner of the room, he told them Christ was there, he could see Him. He then turned on his right side and said, speak-

ing with one hand (he could talk with one hand as well as two), "There He is, He is come for me, this is my last night." Then, forgetting everyone else in the room, he began to talk rapidly to the Lord with one hand; then pausing, with beaming face, he would stretch out both hands to grasp the Lord, and tried to kiss Him, he saw Him so distinctly.

From three to four on the Sunday morning he was in great pain. It was as though his bark were passing over the troubled waters of this world's sorrow before it found the calm of the eternal haven.

From four to six he was talking to Christ the whole time with his right hand; then he stretched out both arms to grasp the Lord; then talking again and again until the poor hand dropped with weariness, but ever the same look in the dying eyes—a look of unspeakable joy and unshaken peace. And thus it was to the very end. Just before he died he asked his mother to lay him back, then closed his eyes and slept. "He giveth his beloved sleep." He was gone; the eloquent hand was still; those closed eyes, lit up with such eager light and joy while earthly life was his, were now gazing on the Christ he loved so well. He could hear now the music thrill of Paradise, his fettered tongue was now unloosed.

O sinner, unsaved sinner, as you read this narrative I beseech you to give your heart to Christ. Remember He is able, ready, and willing to save you. Go down now upon your knees and own your sin and seek your Saviour. Never more be the dupe of the devil. Learn, like the dear

one of this narrative, the preciousness of Christ. He will save you now, for "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Take comfort from the texts that comforted him, and then with him you will be able to say, "He hath done all things well : he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." (Mark vii. 37.)

H. W.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts xvi. 31.

DEAR friend, do you want to be saved? That is, cleansed from all your sins in the precious blood of Jesus.

If you believe on the Lord Jesus you *will* be saved ; if you do not, there is nothing for you but to spend eternity in everlasting separation from all that is good and pure. They who believe escape this awful doom, because Jesus was crucified and bore all the punishment due to them, for "all have sinned." Among the Romans only the meanest and vilest of their slaves were considered to deserve such a shameful death ; but our Lord Jesus Christ, perfect man and perfect God, suffered that death. And for what? That you might be saved.

Have *you* received this salvation? Happy, beyond all human conception, are they who have.

Have you, dear reader? If not, what then? Think of standing before an all-holy God in your own righteousness, when, in his holy word we read, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) It is utterly impossible that any one can live with God when he dies by merit of his own works. All have sinned. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

There are people, however, who really appear to think they are good enough to go to heaven; they will tell you they have striven to do everything right, have harmed no one, are no worse than some and better than many. These give away money for good objects and help the poor. May God open the eyes of such people, to show them the utter impossibility of being able to enter heaven without absolute holiness. We must have "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ." (Rom. iv. 22.) We all need cleansing, and, unless cleansed from all our guilt, we can look forward to nothing but the blackness of darkness for ever!

There are two things you need. Light, and to be saved. You need the light of God's holy word. Light shows up all imperfections; many things that look very well in a dim light, in the clear light of the sun would look very old and dingy. So with us; many things we do do not seem bad to us, but when seen in God's light they are found to be very sinful.

Light, however, will not save. The knowledge of all your sins will bring you no comfort. Death is the wages of sin, but you need life; you need salvation. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,

and thou shalt be saved." How simple? Who would refuse? Do not *you*, dear reader. Make up *your* mind to accept Jesus as your Saviour now, and let your prayer be, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." To-morrow may be too late, it may be beyond your power then to take that salvation which is freely offered to you now.

If you have accepted salvation from Jesus, and hope to live with Him for ever, and have been cleansed from all your sins in His blood, then you will seek to keep yourself clean and pure. "Everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John iii. 3.) In living in this wicked world we are sure to come in contact with defilement, and therefore need daily cleansing from all evil thoughts, unkind words, and actions. Jesus lived in this world and knew all its sinfulness; knew it better than we do, for He could never sin Himself, and so He could see sin in all its vileness; on this account He sympathises with you and lives to help you. By God's word and prayer a young Christian cleanses his way. Amidst all the sin Christ saw in this world He was always doing good. Let us follow in His footsteps, and be always doing good, too.

Of course, this manner of life will be very difficult always to keep to, but God will help us if we only go to Him in prayer, and trust Him. He knows all our difficulties, and has, by His Holy Spirit, written these words for our comfort: "My God shall supply all your need." (Phil. iv. 19.)

A. E.

“STRAIGHT TO HELL!”

Who is it who is saying these solemn words? They are the words of a young girl in answer to a question put by a Christian friend, who had been long pleading with her to accept at once God's free offer of forgiveness; but though G—— was utterly miserable about her soul, and was under deep conviction of sin, yet the enemy of souls was seeking to keep her within his grasp, by persuading her to put it off a little longer, at any rate until she had enjoyed one more worldly visit to London, to which she was looking forward. Her distress of mind was so great that her friend felt led to press on her the necessity of accepting God's offer of salvation now, for the Lord says, “Behold, now is the day of salvation;” and, moreover, the Lord might come that very night and take all believers away to be for ever with Himself, and then there would be no more opportunity for her to be saved. After urging every available argument in vain, she said to G——:

“And where shall you go if you die to-night?”

“Straight to hell; I can go nowhere else, for I don't believe in Jesus,” was her immediate reply.

Yes, it was quite true, she would have gone “straight to hell” had she died that night, for she was an unbeliever, and God classes unbelief with gross wickedness. “The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters,

and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." (Rev. xxi. 8.)

Shall we follow G—— to her chamber that night? No sleep visits her eyes; she knew she was lost before, but now a great horror of darkness fills her soul, for she was going, as she expressed it, "straight to hell," and God, who is rich in mercy, kept up the distress in her mind, till she feared that all Christians would die before morning, and there would be no one left to point her to Christ; so as soon as practicable the next day she again sought her Christian friend, Satan still whispering in her ear, "Think what you will have to give up—no parties, no novels, no enjoyments!" And then G—— said to her friend, "I do want to be saved, I do, but I can't give up my pleasures;" when her friend very wisely replied, "God does not want you to give up anything, He wants to give you salvation." "God does not want you to give up anything." That was wonderful to G——. He wanted nothing from her; it was He who was going to be the giver. His love touched her heart, and almost unconsciously she said, "I do believe." Oh! what indescribable peace flowed into her soul; it was as though a heavy weight had been lifted off her heart.

"Peace like an even river flow'd,
And mercy like a flood."

What was it which effected this change in her? It was the touch of faith—contact with a living Person—the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. God says, "If thou shalt confess with

thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart . . . thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 9, 10.) She believed in her heart, and confessed with her mouth, and she went home rejoicing, knowing that she had passed from death unto life.

Shall we see how this night is passed by G——? Before going to bed she opened a Bible, and for the first time, looks up to God to teach her through its pages. There is a little mark in it at Luke viii., and her eyes fall on the account of the woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and who was healed by touching the hem of Christ's garment; how reassuring to G——, for she felt she had such a little faith, it was but a trembling touch of faith, yet she, too, was made whole by that touch. Yes, dear trembling soul, God does not say you are saved by much faith.

Could G—— sleep that night? No, for she knew she was going "straight to glory" now, and the joy of that drove all sleep from her rejoicing heart.

"I have to please but One,
Him before Whom each knee shall bow;
With Him is all my business now,
And those that are His own."

If God had saved everyone else in the world she would not have been surprised, but that He should save her—she, who was reading the Bible to try and find out its discrepancies, and had just reached Luke viii. in that search—but this completely broke her down; now He had found her, and from henceforth she found Christ in every page of that sacred volume. Truly, He is the sum and substance of the word.

Let me now ask you, dear reader, where shall you go if you die to-night? Does conscience reply in the inmost depths of your heart, “Straight to hell, for neither do I believe in Jesus.” Quite true, you will go to hell if you don’t believe in God’s Son, for He says, “He that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark xvi. 16.)

Perhaps you are really anxious to be saved, but there are many things you feel must be given up if you become a Christian. Did the Lord Jesus ask the woman of Samaria to give up her wicked life? No, He said, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have GIVEN thee living water.” He asks no sacrifice; He offers to give living water, but when she had tasted of that life-giving stream, was her heart then filled with worldly pleasures? No, she left all, and testified of Him. Her heart was taken up with a glorious Person (truly He had touched her conscience, and there must be that before there can be liberty of heart to speak of Him), but you to whom I now speak, are conscience stricken, and are wanting to be forgiven, but you think God wants you to give up something first. Is it not so, dear reader? But salvation is “without money, without price,” and if you will but come and believe in Christ He will give you a new nature which will delight in Him and in His things. You will find Him so much better than the poor empty baubles Satan is seeking to hang up before your eyes, that you

will wonder they ever had such power over
your heart, and you will feel

“No wrath God’s heart retaineth
Toward us who believe :
No dread in ours remaineth,
As we His love receive.”

R. M. W. B.



CUT IT OUT.

Two Christian men were talking about assurance of salvation, and one said “he thought it a kind of presumption for anyone to say that they were sure they were saved;” the other replied, “Brother, hand me your Bible.” He opened it at 1 John v., then taking out his penknife, said, “Brother, I am going to cut out verses 12 and 13, you don’t believe them, they are no use to you, therefore they are better out than in.” “Stop, stop,” cried the other; but before he could rise up to prevent him, his friend had them out and laid on the table. There they were:—

12. He that hath the Son
hath life; *and* he that hath
not the Son of God hath not
life.

13. These things have I
written unto you that be-
lieve on the name of the Son
of God, that ye may know
that ye have eternal life,
who believe on the name of
the Son of God.

At first the man was very angry and vexed that his Bible had been spoiled, but taking up the cut-out verses he began to read them over, and soon the light began to dawn on him. “What a fool I have been!” he exclaimed. “I say I believe God’s word; yes, it is true from first to last,

but I have not believed this, and yet it is very plain; henceforth I will not doubt what He says. Thank you, brother, for such a sharp, cutting reproof, the holes in my Bible shall stand as a witness against my unbelief; the words are in my heart now." Reader, how much of God's word ought to be cut out of *your* Bible?



"IN NO WISE CAST THEE OUT."

"In no wise cast thee out."

"In no wise cast thee out."—The words are spoken,

And, Jesus, never can Thy words be broken;
Here, then, I lay me down and take my rest,
Calm as an infant on its mother's breast.

"In no wise cast thee out."—Oh, words of power,
To shed a light upon the darkest hour;
To meet each want I can on Thee rely,
And on their truth rest my eternity.

"In no wise cast thee out."—Steadfast and sure,
This anchor of the soul shall still endure;
Through life, through death, when heart and flesh
shall fail,

Till it has brought me safe within the veil.

"In no wise cast thee out."—I need not care
To seek in this dark heart what is not there;
Alike from good or ill in self I flee,

To find my righteousness, my all, in Thee.

"In no wise cast thee out."—I live, I die,
And, fearless, pass into eternity;

Resting on this alone—Thy word is given—
That word of pardon, salvation, heaven.



“It was an arrow shot at a venture, but it was one from the Master’s quiver.”

A FATHER’S LAST WORDS.

I HAD often been invited to visit a dear friend in the north of England, but had never been able to accomplish it until one summer, when the Lord was working in an extraordinary way. I determined, if it pleased the Lord, to visit Ireland, and see for myself the revival there, and (if I could) receive, or give, some help.

It was convenient to make my friend’s house

a resting place on my way; accordingly, I wrote to her announcing my purpose, and was assured of a hearty welcome.

Amongst those with whom she was surrounded, there were several young persons in whose spiritual welfare she was deeply interested, and for whom many prayers had been offered, but who still continued hard and careless. One of these, E——, was a young lady of more than usual ability. In addition to her other accomplishments, she was gifted as a writer and poet, but to my friend's great grief, her talents were being spent on the side of the god of this world. She was a leader of the careless and thoughtless girls in the church which she attended, turning to mirth anything that might produce a serious impression.

My friend, with somewhat doubtful discretion, mentioned her expectation of my visit to E——, and expressed the hope that, as God had used me to others, He might give me a word that would be blessed to her conversion.

Lest she should be counted a coward, E—— boldly declared that she was not afraid, would rather like to see what kind of a person this preaching friend was, and would have great fun if he began to preach to her; indeed, she quite grieved and shocked my friend by her declarations of what she would say and do if any attempt was made to "convert her."

I had often heard from my friend of this young lady, had shared her anxieties and prayers for her conversion, although I had never seen her.

On my arrival I was told of the hardness and

boldness of E——, and was warned as to what I had to expect if I attempted to speak seriously to her.

During the days I spent there I had frequent opportunities of meeting with E——, and of conversing upon ordinary topics of interest to her, and while I did so I could not but think of the Lord, when the rich young ruler was before Him, and whom He loved. There were very many attractive and beautiful ways about E——, and I did not wonder that she was a leader of those who were younger, and a chosen companion of those older than herself; neither did I wonder at my friend's earnest longing that she might be saved. While I conversed with her I could not but raise a silent, earnest prayer to God that He would bring her to know the Saviour's love, and to yield herself to Him. I could have gladly preached Christ to her, but felt (doubtless from knowing her hardness) utterly unable to speak a single word. Thus the days passed, affording me opportunities of showing kindness to E——, and of drawing her out in conversation on things she had studied, and in which she delighted.

To her astonishment, no doubt, not one word had been spoken on the all-important subject, the last evening had arrived, and, indeed, had been spent. On the following morning I must pursue my journey, and possibly would never have another opportunity of seeing E——. I knew this, and she knew it; I felt it, and I believe she felt it, too.

After supper at my friend's house, E—— rose

to go to her own home, and as the evening was calm and lovely, I suggested that if she would allow me, I would accompany her, as I wished to enjoy a walk. She expressed her willingness, and accordingly we walked out together.

Perhaps half afraid that I would take this opportunity to preach to her, the time was filled up with conversation chiefly on her part, and as we had only a few short streets to pass along, we were very soon at a gate, where she stopped, and said she was now at home.

"Oh, indeed," I said, "this is your father's house, is it?"

Scarcely had I uttered the words when I saw that I had made a mistake which had shocked my young friend.

"My father died several months ago," she replied.

I immediately apologised for having hurt her feelings, but I said she must excuse me for I was not aware of her bereavement, or had forgotten if I had been told about it.

"But," I said, "tell me something about him, for I doubt not that you loved him, and that his memory will be dear to you."

"Oh, yes, indeed," she replied; "he made me his constant companion and friend during his last years. I read to him when he could not read, and nursed him and watched by his beside."

"And I feel sure that you have confidence as to where he has gone, he has left you in no doubt that he is with the Lord now?" I suggested.

"None whatever," she answered. "He was

a good man while he lived, and his end was perfect peace."

"And you want to meet him again, I daresay, and to spend eternity in his company, don't you?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, "I intend to be good some day. I promised papa that I would, but there is no use in my trying just now, I must wait until I am sober and steady; I am just full of wickedness and frivolity at present, and I can't be pious like some people; it isn't at all natural to me, and I won't be a hypocrite to please my friends."

"So you promised your papa something," I remarked. "May I ask how and when you did so?"

It was an arrow shot at a venture, but it was one from the Master's quiver, guided by His own hand. E—— would gladly have evaded my question, but we had been the best of friends, and she was beginning to feel that she could say things to me she could not have readily uttered to another—things pent up in her heart, and she was finding relief in telling them to me.

"Well," she said, "it was when he was just going away; I saw that the change had come, and he knew it, too. Mamma could not bear to look at him, for he had a hard struggle, and I was alone beside him, holding his hands in mine, when he said, 'E——, I am going home—consecrate yourself to the Lord, and meet me in heaven.'"

As she uttered the words I could see how vividly the scene was coming back to her naturally

lively imagination, and the tears that sparkled in her eyes showed that she was feeling the power of her father's words, who, although dead, was still speaking, and whose last words were living in her heart in freshness and power.

"And," I added, "you promised to do so?"

"I could do nothing else," she answered, "for he gazed up so anxiously into my face, and I knew that they were his last words to me, and I wished to make him happy, so I said, 'Yes, I will, papa, darling,' and he smiled sweetly as he passed away."

"Well, I need not ask you if you mean to consecrate yourself to God, and meet him in heaven, because you have already told me so, but, my dear E——, in the stead of that beloved father, and in Christ's stead, may I not ask '*when* are you to fulfil your promise?' You have said that it must be some time after this, not *now*. This means that you purpose consecrating your life and energies to Satan and his service while you are young and active, and then you fancy that at the close of a wasted life you will consecrate a worn out body, and perhaps a still more worn out mind, to Christ. Is this fair to the Lord, who loved you, and gave Himself for you? let me ask you; and is it the fulfilling of your promise to your father to consecrate *yourself*—did he not mean that your whole life, your best days, your energy of body and mind should be given to the Lord?"

"Yes," she owned; "I believe he meant that, and I have tried to do it, but I feel so wicked, and the Lord won't have such a wicked girl as I

am; you don't know me, for if you knew even how I spoke about you, you would not speak to me as you do. "Oh, dear," she added, "I don't think I should ever make a Methodist, I feel so unlike them all."

"There is no question," I said, "about what you are, nor as to what you may be—the question seems to be, as to your consecration to God now, immediately. It was your father's wish, and I might say it is mine; I think it is your own, too, if I can read your heart; but what really is of most importance to you, is the fact that Christ has died to have you for Himself, and, sinful though you be, He will very gladly accept you. if you will but accept Him as your Saviour and Friend. Then leave the future to Him."

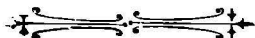
A few more words passed, and we parted never to meet again; but not many weeks after, I received a letter from E—— telling me that her obstinacy had been broken, and that she had at length found peace and joy at the feet of that Saviour whom she had long treated with neglect and scorn.

Her letter was accompanied with a hymn of praise to Jesus—the first fruits of a talent that had long been used for Satan, but was now consecrated to Christ—she could indeed say

"I'll sing of such subjects alone,
None other my tongue shall employ."

Her letter did not surprise me, for on that eventful evening when I reached her heart, through God's grace, on my return to my friend's house, as I took up my Bible to read a portion,

my eye fell on the words, "Your labour is not in vain in the Lord." So even then I bowed my knees to thank God, who had thus made me triumph, and to rejoice in hope. J. S.



ON THE WAVES.

CHAPTER I.—A FALL FROM THE MAINYARD.

It was a bright, sultry afternoon in August, when we were informed that a young sailor had fallen from the rigging of a man-of-war, and was fearfully injured. He had been on duty on the mainyard, when by the heaving of the yard he fell from this great height, some sixty feet, on one of the ship's davits, or irons on which the ship's boats are hung, thence on to the taffrail, and afterwards into the sea. The force with which he fell had broken both arms, severed one from its socket, and dreadfully mutilated his whole body. In this sad condition he was recovered from the water by a shipmate, who immediately dived and brought him on board.

Further particulars as to whether there was any hope of his recovery, or even if he was yet alive, I could not learn. I felt very much shocked by this sad accident; more so as I feared the poor fellow in such a state of suffering could not bestow a thought on his soul, or know how to cast himself on the Saviour of sinners. I was aware that there were two Christian men on board the ironclad, but the rest of the crew were strangers

to me. Troubled in soul, I could not resist offering up silent words of prayer to a gracious God for this unfortunate young seaman, and at last the feeling became so overpowering that I sat down on a low wall and pleaded with the Lord to have mercy on him. Alas ! I was not then aware that the day of life was past, and I was only breathing prayers for the dead.

I learned next morning that poor George C—— was no more. He had expired in a state of unconsciousness five hours after his fearful fall.

Two days after this sad event I was out driving when we came unexpectedly on a funeral procession returning from the local cemetery. It was composed of a very large body of seamen and marines, headed by a band, several officers, and the empty gun-carriage, draped by a flag, which had conveyed the remains of poor George C—— to his early grave. His companions and commanding officers had buried him with naval honours, and the marines had fired three rounds over his open grave ; such was the end of his brief life. On Thursday morning he had climbed the rigging of the war-ship in brave, strong, youthful health, and on Saturday afternoon he lay, covered over by cold earth, in the lonely cemetery of a land which was not his home ! Truly, our life is "even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

A short time after, an opportunity occurred for me to learn from Robert M—— himself how he happened to be the one who had rescued his poor shipmate from the water. He was one of the

Christians among that ship's crew to whom I have already alluded. He told me that George C—— was a fine young man of twenty-three years of age, engaged to be married, and talking in high spirits of his plans for the future. He was on deck when the accident occurred, and an irresistible impulse led him to jump overboard and dive twice after the injured man. So sudden was the whole affair that everyone seemed stupefied, and no one else made any effort to recover poor George; he brought him up, but all human kindness was unavailing, and his poor shipmate passed away without being able to manifest if he was even conscious of all the sad affair which had occurred. If you, my reader, were thus suddenly cut down, how would it fare with you? Where would you spend eternity?

As I frequently met Robert M—— amongst the Christians who assembled at the place where I attended, I begged him to tell me how he had been brought to know the Lord. Although still a young man, he told me he had been fourteen years in the navy, and had served in the Abyssinian expedition. He had been on board the "Vanguard," at his post, as head of the signal department, when the catastrophe occurred which sunk her; and there, as well as in other circumstances of his life, the protecting hand of a loving God was over him, for had not the men (340 in number) been promptly got off, they must inevitably have perished in the sinking ship, for she foundered twenty minutes after they had left her.

For poor unconverted souls who are battling

the wide seas of earth, strangers to God, and His free and gracious offer of salvation; as well as for those who have obeyed the Saviour's call, and like the Galilean seamen of old, risen up and followed Him, I give the account of my sailor friend's conversion as related by himself.

CHAPTER II.—“THOU AND THY HOUSE.”

“In writing of my conversion, I earnestly pray it may prove a word of encouragement to some soul needing it. I must first refer to my father; he was, and is, thank the Lord, a Christian man, and he has never ceased, morning and evening, to pray to the Lord for his family, and I believe God has answered his prayers. It fully proves how true His word is, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.’ (Acts xvi. 31.) Yes, all are included in ‘the house.’ I have three other brothers, all of whom are saved, and love the Lord. Christian fathers and mothers, cease not to pray for your sons and daughters, for the promise is to you and your house.

“And now it grieves me, when I look back on my dark, dark days. I joined the Royal Navy in 186—, being then fourteen years old, and soon found out what a profane place a man-of-war ship is. I was sent to China the following year, where I joined, I think, the most profane ship in the service; I soon found my way amidst the swearers as one of them, and I myself have often been startled at the expressions which proceeded from my mouth; still I would at times feel convicted. Could it be possible that my father's prayers were

being answered, and the Lord was causing me to feel? 'No, impossible,' I said.

"When I received a letter from him he would conclude with a prayer, which often made me feel ashamed; still, I loved the world, and that was all I wanted. But the Lord's time came at last.

"I can only look back and wonder why He allowed such a cumberer as I was to remain; why did He not cut me off and number me with the wicked. I deserved nothing else; but then His word would have been unfulfilled, 'Thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.' Well, I say the Lord's time came.

"Our ship was homeward bound in —69, and when leaving Hong Kong, an officer of the 75th regiment, Major M——, came to take the passage for Singapore. He was a faithful follower of the Lord, and sought on every occasion to testify for his Master. I, for one, was struck with his earnestness. One evening he spoke very beautifully about the pearl of great price, and of the blessed Saviour's love to poor sinners; I felt I was one, and one that never could be united with Him, as I was. I was broken down, and realising how the blessed Lord came to seek and save the lost, I was able, through God's goodness, to trust and believe Him. But I did not have peace at once. I believe if I had died then I should have gone to heaven, but doubts and fears would often come up when I reflected on the difficulties of my path down here. I tried to patch up the old man, but found it would not stand patching; the more I knew myself the more I was abashed at myself, for I found it was still the

same old man; but, thanks be to His blessed name, He graciously cleared away the mist. I was at first like the blind man, who "saw men as trees walking," but when I saw Christ, oh! what joy to know that He was made to me righteousness.

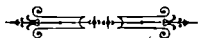
"True it is that self is as corrupt as when the man was driven out of the garden, never more to come into the presence of God in the old state. But Christ stood in the sinner's place, and now in Him the believer is gloriously complete, without a stain or anything against him. I know that Christ has for ever settled the question of sin between me and God. What wondrous love! What grace! Oh, that we may more fully realise the fulness of that grace; I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen. R. M."

Dear fellow voyager on the ocean of life, have you yet come to Christ, and found Him precious, or are you still at a distance from Him, amongst the children of disobedience, with whom we all had our conversation in times past? Oh, if so, come to the cleansing fountain, open for sin and uncleanness, the life-giving, sin-cleansing LIFE-BLOOD of the Son of God, who was Himself "God manifest in the flesh."

Put aside all efforts, all human devices to establish a righteousness which is based on the pivot of self. Cast overboard the vain ballast of self merit, and lighten that little human craft, your poor sin-tossed heart; bring it empty to Jesus, and He will enter in and fill it. Receive Him into the ship, like the storm-tossed ones of

old, and He will speak, "Peace, be still," to the troubled and dark waters of sin, doubt, and earthly hindrance, to the buffetings and adverse blasts of Satan's hate and opposition. Even now He is yearning to be your divine helmsman into that port "where the sea exists no more." Up to this moment His eye of love and pity has been over you, conning the course of your daily and hourly passage, through the great voyage of life, that our journey which, when it terminates, can never be repeated, but which will conduct you for ever, either into the haven of eternal life and peace, or launch you for timeless ages into that awful abyss between which and heaven there is "a great gulf fixed."

K. B. K.



OLD SKIDDAW'S MUSIC.

"Break forth into singing, O mountains."—Isa. xlix. 15.

MANY who have visited what is called the Lake District—that is the lovely scenery about Lakes Windermere, Derwentwater, Ullswater, &c., some years since, will remember the museum at the little town of K——k, owned by the late Miss H——, containing all sorts of curiosities—local and foreign—besides pictures in oil of various views in the neighbourhood; and will perhaps recollect, best of all, the little lady herself, who may have spoken a word to their consciences while explaining the different objects which formed her

collection ; for she was one who knew what it was to be “ instant in season and out of season.” It is always “ out of season ” with some people, perhaps her hearers thought, but some of her words stuck, and will yet bear fruit, and be a jewel in her crown in that day when she will delight to cast crown, jewels and all, at His feet who alone is worthy, even the Lamb that was slain—Jesus, Son of God, Lamb of God. Dear reader, before I proceed, have you yet bowed the knees of your heart to the name of that blessed One? Every knee shall bow, for God’s word says so ; if not now, in the day of His grace and long-suffering patience every knee shall bow to Him in the day of His all-powerful glory.

“ At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth ” (Phil. ii. 10), or “ infernal,” as it is literally. May you not be there, but bow the knee now, own Him as Saviour—Lord, now.

Well, to proceed ; amongst other objects of interest in this museum stood a frame, on which were arranged, after the manner of keys on a pianoforte, stones of various sizes, tuned correctly, which, when struck by hammers of wood covered with wash-leather, gave out tones sweeter and more musical than any other instrument known. The discovery of the power of bits of the rock from the quarries on Skiddaw to produce music is due to a family who wrought for their bread in those parts, and who arranged them according to notes and half notes, just as the black and white keys on the finger-board of the instru-

ment above named are placed. Any who have, like the writer, heard the music produced from a skilful manipulation of the hammers, guided by taste and feeling, will never forget it, or the apparent ruggedness of the bits of stone from which the sweetest tones were produced.

One day a party of four visited this well-known museum, and while standing in front of one of these large oil paintings of the Keswick mountains, and the Giant Skiddaw, around whose summit the clouds were represented to have thickly gathered, they heard a voice behind them repeating, slowly and solemnly, the following words, more by way of soliloquy than speaking to them, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." (Is. xlv. 22, 23.)

By the time these verses were finished, all four had turned round, and beheld Miss H——, the proprietress, at whom they stared in curious amazement. One of the party, turning again to the picture, said, rather jocosely, "Well, old dame, you don't mean to tell us that Old Skiddaw ever did, or ever will, sing? You surely don't believe that, do you?"

"Sir," replied the old lady, "I believe every syllable God has said to us in His word. Don't you believe God's word, sir?"

"Well, I'll tell you this much," was the answer,

"I don't believe Old Skiddaw will ever sing. Will that satisfy *you*?"

Without directly taking up this challenge, Miss H—— said, "Will you walk this way, gentlemen?" and while she led they followed her into another apartment, where stood the frame of musical stones before mentioned, and taking up the hammer, struck up the Old Hundredth Psalm tune—the words are:

"With one consent let all the earth
To God their cheerful voices raise—
Glad homage pay with awful mirth,
And sing before Him, songs of praise."

This grand old air she played with much feeling; they asked for it to be repeated, and when she again finished, were profuse in their praises, not only as to the skill of the performer, but at the powerful yet liquid strains produced from the stones; asking what they were and where and how she had got the instrument. Turning to the one who had spoken to her rather sneeringly in the other room as to the "break forth into singing, ye mountains," the "old dame" as he called her, said, "This is Old Skiddaw's music that you have been listening to." Then she explained how the workmen when at work noticed the tones which striking different sized pieces of rock produced—how they had arranged them according to scale, chipping this one and reducing that one, until they had them all in tune—and added, "Yes, gentlemen, you HAVE heard Old Skiddaw sing this afternoon."

The one who had addressed her so uncere-

moniously, stepped up and took her hand, asked her pardon, and owned his ignorance, saying he stood corrected before her.

This gave Miss H—— an opening to put before the four now attentive listeners the truth as to the finished work of Christ, and God's acceptance thereof—how He can now be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. She appealed to the word of God to carry her point, for "she believed God," and knew that the "entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." What the result was must be left till that day when everything will become known, when Miss H—— and her four visitors will again meet; for the "old dame" has gone to be with the Lord she loved, and whose Word she delighted in. Her museum has been dispersed, but the words she uttered, not to those gentlemen only, but to hundreds of others, are not lost—will not return void, for if not the savour of life unto life, they will prove the savour of death unto death.

Beloved reader, do *you* believe God's word? Does the "old dame's" question come home to *you*? Not a mere assent to the correctness of scripture, as people sometimes say, "Ah! I believe the Bible to be true;" but do you set to your seal that God is true, and therefore because God says it, you know that He has "blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins," and the blessedness of him "whose sin is covered," even according to that word, "blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.) Again, He also

says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Take care how you treat the word of God, for He "has magnified His word above all His name" (Ps. cxxxviii. 2); and the Lord Jesus said, "The words which I have spoken shall judge him in the last day." May you not kick against the pricks, my reader; or resist that two-edged sword of the Spirit—the word of God (Heb. iv. 12); but rather bare your bosom to its point, for it is the entrance of that word which gives light; it is faith in that word which gives peace, and it is the eating thereof which is the joy and rejoicing of the heart. May you at once believe every syllable of God's word, for Skiddaw and its clouds and storms, its sunshine and shadows, will pass away, but "the word of the Lord endureth for ever." S. V. H.



"TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES."

SUCH were the words of a dying man. His wife had entered to perform some loving act of service; but, deeply as her tender care was appreciated, he was at the moment so conscious of the presence of his Lord that softly and solemnly fell from his lips these strange words, "Take off your shoes." Ah! he was soon to pass into that presence where seraphim veil their faces; and in the spirit of Elijah, when, on hearing the "still small voice," he wrapped his face in his mantle (1 Kings xix., 12, 13), the dying saint feared even

the sound of his wife's footfall in that peaceful chamber of death. He had nothing to do as he laid there, but sweetly wait the summons to depart, and be with Christ. He knew in part what the redeemed enjoy who are "for ever with the Lord."

What a contrast this calm, happy state of soul to his former life, for well had I known him for years. Not more than eighteen months before, though then seventy years of age, he was living entirely without God, and in great fear of death. Well might he be afraid, for though he had sittings in a neighbouring chapel, and occasionally was present at their services, his evenings were habitually spent in playing cards and drinking. Often was he brought home in a state of drunkenness, and once, through falling into a roadside ditch, he was barely rescued from suffocation. The night of deliverance ever to be remembered came, and a message from God was delivered to his soul. I had been purchasing some article at his shop, and was leaving, when a strong feeling of the awful danger he was in led me to return to the counter, solemnly warn him as to his sins and danger, and I besought him at once to receive God's own good news, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Tenderly I entreated him now, while it is called to-day, not to harden his heart.

Oh! what a little word can God use to bring about eternal salvation. Surely all is of grace. I left, but the word remained; he told me afterwards that an instant horror seized his soul; the conviction took hold of him that if he did not

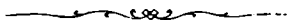
accept God's offer of salvation that very moment, he would never have another chance, and be inevitably lost. At once he resolved not to close his eyes till his soul was saved. The result of the never-to-be-forgotten struggle was that black with guilt, a notorious sinner, a shameless drunkard, just as he was he cried to God ; he owned it all before Him, and at last found rest in that precious word, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

Great peace and joy now filled his soul, and for eighteen months his ways testified how entirely he was delivered from the power of darkness. At first he crossed over to the other side of the road when his path led him near the public-house at which his evenings had been spent ; and he told me he shut his eyes as he rushed past. As he grew in grace, and became stronger, he was able to walk on his way without desiring to enter. Saved himself, he longed to speak to his neighbours of Christ, but said, "I must live the change before I speak it." And so indeed he did. Once, seeing a man at work in his garden on the Lord's Day, he affectionately invited him to hear the gospel, adding, "I will pay a man to dig your garden on Monday." This he actually did, and was delighted in this way to get a poor lost sinner under the sound of the blessed gospel. It seemed he had, in a quiet way, at a side door, himself done business on the Lord's Day, but without anyone speaking to him on the subject, he had a notice put up in his shop, "No business done here on Sunday." After some months had passed he desired to testify before the neighbours as to the

“great things the Lord had done for him,” and with streaming eyes he appealed to them, as those who had well known his past life, whether God had not wrought a wonderful deliverance for him—then he preached Christ to them very simply. So simple, so wonderful, so transforming is God’s salvation! Shortly after those touching words to his wife, “Take off your shoes,” quietly he fell asleep, and entered his eternal rest.

Beloved reader, what about your soul—has Satan still dominion over you? I entreat you to face your true state—own your condition before God. Get alone with Him and tell Him all. Open your heart—confess your sins to God—hide nothing. He searcheth the heart; then, having owned before Him your lost condition, take from Him His offered salvation. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” for “by him all who believe are justified from all things.” (Acts xiii. 39.)

S. R. R.



“OH, THAT MEN WERE WISE!”

SINNER, art thou asleep still? Art thou resolved to sleep the sleep of death? O, that I was one that was skilful in lamentation, and had but a yearning heart towards thee, how would I pity thee! How would I bemoan thee! O, that I could with Jeremiah let my eyes run down with rivers of water for thee. Poor soul, lost soul, dying soul, what a hard heart have I that I cannot mourn for thee! If thou should’st

lose but a limb, a child, or a friend, it would not be so much, but, poor man, it is thy soul; if it was to lie in hell but for a day, but for a year, nay, ten thousand years, it would (in comparison) be nothing. But, O, it is for ever! O, this cutting ever! What a soul-amazing word will that be, which saith, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." But thou may'st object,

"If I should set in, and run as you would have me, then I must run from all my friends; for none of them are running this way."

I answer, And if thou dost, thou wilt run into the bosom of Christ, and of God, and then what harm will that do thee?

"But if I run this way, then I must run from all my sins."

I answer, That is true, indeed; yet if thou dost not thou wilt run into hell-fire.

"But," thou may'st say, "if I run this way, then I shall be hated, and lose the love of my friends and relations, and of those that I expect benefit from, or have reliance on, and I shall be mocked of all my neighbours."

I answer, And if thou dost not, thou art sure to lose the love and favour of God and Christ, the benefit of heaven and glory, and be mocked of God for thy folly, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

"But surely there is time enough; I may begin this a year or two hence, may I not?"

I answer, Hast thou any lease of thy life? Did ever God tell thee thou shalt live half a year, or two months longer. Nay, it may be thou may'st not live so long. And, therefore, wilt

thou be so sottish and unwise as to venture thy soul upon a little uncertain time? Dost thou know whether the day of grace will last a week longer or no? For the day of grace is past with some before their life is ended, and if it should be so with thee, would'st thou not say, "O, that I had begun to run before the day of grace had been past, and the gates of heaven shut against me." If thou should'st see any of thy neighbours neglect the making sure of either house or land to themselves, if they had it proffered to them, saying, 'Time enough hereafter,' when the time is uncertain, would'st thou not call them fools? And, if so, then dost thou think thou art a wise man to let thy immortal soul hang over hell by a thread of uncertain time, which may soon be cut asunder by death?

BUNYAN.

JUDGMENT!

SHALL I be judged? How oft the thought
 Uprises in my soul—
 O is the fearful judgment seat
 To be my future goal?
 And must my everlasting lot
 Upon its issues wait—
 O do the scriptures leave my soul
 In such uncertain state?

Avaunt! such thoughts—O no! O no!
 No judgment is for me;

It fell upon my Substitute,
And I, by grace, am free;
'Tis settled *now*! My sin is gone.
All settled! O how blest!
And now my soul, once tempest-tossed,
Doth enter into rest.

But there is judgment! Solemn thought!
A judgment so severe
That all whose judgment is not borne
Must bear its presence there;
On whomsoever sin is found,
On him must judgment fall;
For only they in Christ are saved
Who listen to His call! A. M.





“My friend, will you mention the name of Jesus?”

THE POWER OF THE NAME OF JESUS.

It had frequently been my privilege, with others, to preach the gospel in the open air in a quiet little village in the Midland counties. Often were we cheered by the earnest attention of those simple

village people, whilst we told out the riches of that wondrous grace which sent the Son of God into this poor world, to seek and to save that which was lost. In that village was a well-known man who led a notoriously bad and profligate life. Too often, in our English villages, such a character stands out, known of all, marked as the very personification of some one desperate vice, or of many vices combined. He may be a poor dissipated drunkard, or he may be profane in his language and brutal in his talk, or such a blasphemer against all that is godly, that whether in the workshop, or the lanes, or the little village green, he so shocks even commonly decent people that he is shunned by all.

Such slaves to sin and Satan are well set forth by the man in the gospel, whose dwelling was in the tombs, possessed of an unclean spirit; none could bind him, chains and fetters he had often broken asunder; neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. Could any picture be more sorrowful and sad? Such an one was the well-known man in my story.

You may conceive our surprise and joy when, one day we saw this very man one of our little company on the village green; and yet, as if conscious of a gulf between himself and his fellows, he mingled not with the crowd. He took a stand at some distance, but it soon became evident that he was bent on hearing all that was said. Hope sprang up in our breast; could it be that such an outcast was ever to be gathered in? He seemed

to drink in every word, but, when the preaching was over, sullenly and without a word he took himself away.

Again and again, after this, he was a most attentive listener at our meetings, but invariably he stood aloof, and never once mingled with the group around us.

It became manifest that he was deeply moved, yet there was no drawing towards the preachers. There was a struggle manifestly going on in that man's soul, but as yet there was no sign of being humbled or broken down. How clearly was the god of this world blinding the mind of this unbeliever, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into him.

But God knows how to bring down the stoutest heart. Just at this time a terrible blow of a temporal kind fell with crushing effect on his head. Suddenly he found himself reduced to almost a state of penury. Still did he harden himself against this clear voice from God. Bitterness and anger, and determined rebellion against God took full possession of his soul. He seemed to surround himself with impenetrable armour-plate, but God has arrows that can pierce the thickest plates that Satan ever welded together.

"When He makes bare His arm,
Who shall His work withstand?
With wonder filled, we soon shall see
How wise, how strong His hand."

Yes, when God makes a sin-stricken soul to feel the weight and the guilt of a life of sin, there

must be submission, or complete destruction. A Judas must humble himself, or he must destroy himself. So was it with the man of my story, and Satan soon convinced him that self-destruction was the only way to end his conflict, and his misery. Unable longer to bear this misery, he went forth one morning, determined to settle all, as he vainly thought, by casting himself under the wheels of a passing train. But who shall contend with the Almighty? He is as mighty to save as He is to destroy. At the last moment this wretched man was snatched from destruction as from the gates of hell.

At this juncture I entered the village, and, of course, found it in a state of great excitement. As I passed his house the poor wife besought me to speak to her distracted husband; never can I forget that scene of misery. There sat the man, the picture of madness and despair, cursing those who had rescued him, and vehemently asserting his determination still to put an end to his existence. Like a maniac he persisted in shouting out, "It must be, it must be! yes, I am determined to die."

Solemnly, but tenderly, I put before him his terrible sin, his awful responsibility, and the fearful doom he had just escaped. It was as if one spoke to a raging tempest. Never did I so feel the utter impotency of man, never so understood I, when speaking of the power of the evil one, the words in Job, "Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook, or his tongue with a cord, canst thou put a hook into his nose, or bore his jaw through with a thorn? . . . His scales are

his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. One is so near the other that no air can come between them, they stick together that they cannot be sundered." Truly I felt myself in the presence of the power of Satan, and what was I to contend with that? I then spoke of the grace, the infinite grace, that had saved him from that self-destruction, which inevitably would have plunged him into eternal torment.

"It is no use, sir! It is now no use!" cried out the wretched man. "I am miserable, undone, lost! All things are against me, all men are against me, my wife and my children, all, all add to my torment. Once the day never seemed too long, or if trials came I was a man and could stand against them; but I am a man no longer, and the devil tells me there is but one way to end my sorrow, and I am bent upon it. Why should I live? I have not a friend in the world."

"Yes, yes," I said; "poor distracted man, there is one who will befriend you, even Jesus, the Son of God. He died to deliver just such as you; 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief.'"

"Ah! yes," replied he, "I know all that you say is written in the Bible; but," he added, with a terrible emphasis, "it is not for me."

"But do you not confess that you are a sinner?"

"Yes, oh! yes, a dreadful sinner, but I tell you, sir, it is not written for me."

"Indeed, poor troubled one, the Lord Jesus came to seek and to save the guilty, and the lost.

I solemnly testify to you that 'He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Listen, I beseech you, to His tender invitation, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Is it not rest you need for your poor weary soul?"

"True, true, all true," said he, "but it is too late! too late! too late! The devil has power over me now, and he promises to make all right in the end. I tell you it is too late, too late!"

For a time I was silent, bowed down with sorrow, and utterly powerless to help. Then remembered I the scripture, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Oh, thought I, "if I could but get this poor sin-bound and Satan-bound soul to utter the name of Jesus! So laying my hand gently on his shoulder as he sat before me, his face buried in his hands, I tenderly said, "My friend, will you mention the name of Jesus."

In a moment he started and trembled. It can only be described by that scripture, "The devil threw him down and tare him." Still more tenderly, again and again, I whispered, "Do mention that sweet name, the name of Jesus."

At last, in a trembling voice, but as if really afraid, he gasped out, "Jesus."

"Say precious Jesus," I again whispered.

"Precious, precious Jesus," was his instant response.

Never will that moment be forgotten! Never so felt I the power of that Name. The prisoned bird was set loose, the captive was freed, the

horror of darkness was gone. It was the work of a moment; it was as if God had spoken to his soul. First his sorrow found vent in a burst of tears. Then with rapturous joy he fairly shouted out thanksgiving and praise.

Together we wept tears of joy: together we praised; together we blessed God for the power of the name of Jesus. How often, with overwhelming gratitude, he exclaimed, "Oh, thank you for this, thank you for this. Now I am free, now I can leave all with Him who has saved me."

Dear reader, pardon, peace, holiness, and heaven are found in the precious name of Jesus.

"Jesus, I rest on Thee,
In Thee, myself I hide;
Laden with guilt and misery,
Where can I rest beside?
In Thy meek and lowly heart
My weary soul alone can rest."

A. R. B.

HOW GOD TEACHES.

"THE prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully."—Jer. xxiii. 28.

"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, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword. If there be a messenger with him—an interpreter—one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness,

then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit. I have found a ransom."—Job. xxxiii.

THE DREAM.

ABOUT sixty years ago I dreamed, and in my dream I found myself and several companions shut up in a strong tower, with massive stone walls, and so high that but little light could be seen. To dig through the walls, or to climb up to escape was impossible; and in the midst of the floor of this dreadful place was a large open pit, on looking down which I could see a gulf of liquid fire, glowing like molten metal in a furnace. To my great horror my companions, from time to time, fell into this dreadful pit, and were instantly swallowed up. I was filled with terror and alarm at this frightful vision, fearing that I might be the next to fall therein, and hopeless, eternal misery be my doom. But just before I awoke I was, as it were, lifted out of this horrible place and set in a place of light and liberty.

Thus God spake to me once in that night, telling me of my condition and danger, but yet telling me that there was hope. This reached my conscience only, not my heart. I had not learned *Who* had been my deliverer, nor how it had been effected, and I continued, for some years, still to follow on in my own way, as before. In this way I lived long enough to see some of my companions cut off by death, just as I had seen them in my dream fall into the pit. But God, who is rich in mercy, spake to me a second time.

After a while I married : and here I must also tell you, further, how God had spoken to my dear wife years before this. In an old book she saw an engraving representing an open Eye, "the Eye that never sleeps"—looking down from the clouds upon the deeds of men done in the darkness. God used this remarkable picture to teach her the truth taught in Psalm cxxxix.—

"O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there ; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee ; but the night shineth as the day ; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

It was the voice of God to her conscience, and she never forgot the lesson, and it, doubtless, was the means of preserving her from many an evil thing. After we had been married a little while God spake again, this time to us both together as we were returning one evening from a visit to some relations in the country. We were conversing on the fearful ravages of the cholera, which was at that time prevalent, and of the very many who had died so quickly after being stricken by this alarming pestilence. After a pause my wife said, in earnest tones,

“My dear, what would become of *us* if we were to die so suddenly?” I did not answer at once. I felt that it was a home question for me also. After another pause she asked again, in still more earnest tones:—

“My dear, do tell me—I am sure you know.” I did know, as you may suppose, after the revelation made to me in that dream, which accords perfectly with the scripture, Hebrews ix. 27, “It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.” Well, we talked a little while on these things, when suddenly she again said:—

“Well, I am determined I will not go on in this way any longer.”

I responded in spirit, and this was the turning point in our lives, it was “the turning from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.” We had then and there “come to ourselves,” like the younger son of Luke xv., when he determined to “arise and go to his father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” (Ver. 18, 19.) We spent the greater part of that night in confession, prayer, and supplication, looking only to God for deliverance.

After this God only spake to us by the written word. While we were thus in anxiety, often using the words of an old hymn, beginning,

“’Tis a point I long to know ”

our Christian friends tried to satisfy us by telling us that we were in a good way, “as he that had begun a good work would surely finish it also.” But God did not suffer such teaching to hinder

us. We required deliverance, and could not rest without it; we needed a finished work, so we continued looking up. A full gospel was very rare in those days, but God gave the required testimony by means of an old book and in its exposition of Isaiah liii. 6, "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." These words gave me the peace my heart and conscience needed, and I drank in the living water, and never thirsted more. Thus the righteousness of God toward man was revealed, showing how God was "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Further, I learned at the same time how that in the risen and ascended One I also was "made the righteousness of God in him." I had thus settled joy and peace in believing; but on telling some of my former counsellors what God had wrought, I was told that I was "quite an enthusiast." I thank God I have been, according to their thoughts, an enthusiast now fifty years. I desire to be much more of an enthusiast, as I shall surely be infinitely more so when this body of our humiliation shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body at His coming. In the meanwhile I can go on rejoicing, and can sing in the words of a poet of former days (Paul Gerhardt):—

"Christ all my praise and glory, my light most sweet and fair,

The ship wherein He saileth is scatheless everywhere;
 In Him I dare be joyful, as a hero in the war,
 The judgment of the sinner affrighteth me no more;
 There is no condemnation, there is no hell for me,
 The torment and the fire mine eyes shall never see;

For me there is no sentence, for me death has no sting,
Because the Lord, who loves me, shall shield me with His
wing."

Dear reader, if you cannot join in that song, look up; do not be satisfied with anything less. God is faithful, and will give you this joy if you abide not in unbelief, but the wrath of God abideth on all unbelievers. Beware, therefore, "lest he take thee away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job xxxvi. 18.) J. P.



DON'T MAKE GOD A LIAR ANY LONGER!

WHAT a meeting it was! Such a collection of the poor, maimed, blind, halt, and lame, congregated in that room on Easter Monday, how it reminded one of the parable in the 14th chapter of Luke's gospel, where the servant is ordered to go into the streets and lanes of the city to find guests to fill the places of those who "with one consent began to make excuse," "that," said the large-hearted host, "my house may be filled."

I had taken my seat in the train about to start, and was looking up for some word to speak to those I have alluded to above—the tickets of my fellow companions, three young females, and my own had been inspected, the signal given, and off we started.

"Will you accept these papers?" said one of my co-passengers, at the same time handing to

the young woman who sat next to her, and to myself, some printed papers, for which I thanked her, glanced at them, and then looked at the giver interrogatively, who remarked, in effect, they were relative to filling up and signing petitions to Parliament not to alter the oath each member has to take on entering the House, so as to exclude a noted Atheist. "And," said she, "what a dreadful thing it was to have the laws of this country made by an infidel."

"But you can't shut him out of heaven," I replied.

"I never heard of one who doesn't believe in God going to heaven!" said the young lady.

"No, of course not: but he may be converted, and I know he has a brother who is a Christian, who prays for his deluded relative, and God hears prayer, and may yet bring him to confess Christ as his Saviour. But allow me to ask you, Are you sure of going to heaven?" This rather pulled my friend up, who said she wasn't sure, but she hoped. "But you don't hope for those papers you hold in your hand, do you?"

"No, of course I do not, I know I have them."

I then tried to show from God's word that to one who believes what God says, it is his or her privilege to be able to say, "I know," "I am sure," because we might all be smashed before we got to the next station, and what then, if the Bible did not give the assurance of going to heaven should we all be killed? By this time the other two had become interested and attentive, especially one who had a bit of blue ribbon in the button-hole of her jacket. I hope she was under

the shelter of the scarlet blood—and to whom I had given, while together in the waiting-room, that touching narrative, “Homeward Bound; or, The Heart Won.”* I spoke of such passages as “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” (2 Tim. i. 12.) “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. v. 1), and others, and what a solemn thing it was to make God a liar. Taking my Testament from my pocket, I opened on the passage, “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.” This I handed to my friend, pointing with my finger to the quoted verses. I saw she read the passage attentively, looked at the top of the page for the chapter, and again at the verses my finger still pointing to. (1 John v. 10, 11.) On raising her eyes from the Testament she said, “I never saw it in that light before,” retired into her corner, as I did into mine—as one who was desirous of letting the word of God do its own work by the Holy Spirit. So I did not utter another word till we all reached the station at which this young person got out, as did also the one with the blue ribbon, and, I hope, the “scarlet thread” (Josh. ii. 18) also.

I have not given the whole of our conversa-

* “Homeward Bound; or, The Heart Won,”

G. Morrish, 20, Paternoster Square, London, E.C.

tion. Of course, there was the usual excuse for not taking God at His word, "Oh! it would be presumptuous to say, 'I am saved'—'I know I am going to heaven.'"

Dear reader, which is the most presumptuous, to take God at his word as a little child when He says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47), or to go on hugging one's doubts, and so making God a liar? Which? Surely the latter.

I could see the word was working, and on her getting out I quietly said, "Don't make God a liar any longer," and as I handed my companion out she offered me her hand, and grasped mine very warmly, tears came into her eyes, and she said, "I never saw things in this way before, I will think over that passage, I am a teacher of the young myself." We parted, as the train went on; perhaps never to meet in this world, but I fully believe that she will no longer make God a liar, but take Him at His word, rejoice in His salvation, and be used to others: for I remarked, how can you teach others of One you don't really believe in yourself. "The day" will declare as to all four of us; may the other dear girl know what it is to have had her heart won, and to be "homeward bound."

The third young person and myself went on to the next station; during the interval I tried to press taking God at His word at once, for He says, "Now is the accepted time." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "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. xiv. 17.)

“Come, for all things are now ready.” (Luke xiv. 17.) Arriving at B——, she got out, and there I must leave it. I went on to the meeting, and had a happy time trying to tell of the loving, giving God, and His once dead, but now risen and glorified, Son.

Dear reader, have *you* ever considered that verse in John’s epistle, which struck that young lady so? Have you ever read it? Do you know there is such a passage in the Bible? I am beginning to think there are many dear people who do not. Not that they would intentionally do such a thing as to make God a liar; but they have not taken it to heart, that to doubt His word, or that He means what He says, when Jesus said, “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.) Or if you say, “I hope” when God says HATH, is making Him a liar. I often think of an old friend when alluding to that passage—an old soldier, also, and one much used of God, and whose voice has often been heard in one of our largest garrison towns, and his sturdy figure seen under a lamp-post, getting light upon his well-worn Bible as he read out God’s word, and spoke to passers-by from it. He had a friend in whom he was much interested as to his soul’s salvation, who was not only anxious, but longing, to know the truth that he was saved, and had eternal life, but could not, or would not, get beyond, “I hope,” while dear old John L——n sought to show him from God’s word the certainty

to the simple soul who believes that he has everlasting life, is passed from death unto life, specially pressing John v. 24. One day, while talking to this friend, his little boy came in from school, with his books and slate in his hand; a happy thought, which God used, flashed across J—— L——'s mind.

"Come here, Jimmie, lend me your slate."

Jimmie handed his slate and pencil as requested, and J—— L—— wrote in large letters H-A-T-H all across the slate.

"What does that spell, Jimmie?"

"Hath, of course, Mr. L——," said the boy, wondering why he should be set to spell such an easy word.

"No, Jimmie, your father says it spells 'hope.'"

"Whv, father, never! H-A-T-H doesn't spell hope, it spells hath."

"Ah! John," says the father, "you've got me. I see it now, it is 'He that believeth hath,' not hopeth for, everlasting life." So he gave up making God a liar, and rejoiced then and there, and to the end.

Dear friend, H-A-T-H never yet, or ever will, spell hope; learn from this little incident that it does spell "hath," and God means it; there is plenty in the word about hope, but let us have it in its right place, where God puts it, as in Romans v. 1, 2: "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom, also, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "Peace with God" first; "stand

in grace" (God's favour) next; then, "rejoice in hope of God's glory."

Well, farewell, and may you bear with the exhortation, "Don't make God a liar any longer."

S. V. H.

HOPELESS DISEASE AND GOD'S DELIVERANCE;

OR, THE CONVERSION OF A YOUNG MAN IN
CONSUMPTION.

MAN is forced to admit, though against his will, that he is born to die. Sooner or later he must face this reality. The sentence of death "has passed upon all, for that all have sinned." It may come in many forms, and at any moment, but "it is appointed unto men once to die."

Consumption is one of the most general and sorrowful forms of death. It spares neither class nor age. Its marks are unmistakable; it baffles the physician's skill, and yet no form of disease so deludes its victim.

For the encouragement of the servants of Christ, often cast down, I now record an instance of this terrible malady, and of the gracious way in which God brought its victim to Himself.

My first interview was in a chemist's shop in the city of O—. A young man and his wife, after visiting a physician, drove up to procure medicine. While the wife was waiting its pre-

paration an aged servant of Christ spoke a word about her soul and the Lord Jesus, when she at once replied, "Stop a minute, sir, I should like my husband to hear that." A glance at the young man convinced him that he was past recovery; he might obtain relief, but never a cure. Kindly, but faithfully, he told him that his case was hopeless, and his time short, and earnestly entreated him, if not prepared for the solemn moment, to look to Christ, and to accept His finished work, the only means for a poor sinner's salvation. Little did this young man expect his hope to be so completely blasted! Still less that the strange, unknown tale of God's salvation should be pressed upon him as a blessed compensation, if only accepted.

At this point, feeling the need of arousing his evidently slumbering conscience as to his sins and the holiness of God, I asked him if he was aware of having another disease, far worse than consumption, and attended with infinitely greater consequences than the death of the body. He gave a vague look, showing that the subject was new to him. His wife, in all her sorrow and love, though unsaved herself, showed her anxiety, saying, "Tell him all about it, sir; I want him to go to heaven." He was told sin was the awful disease; that he, like all others, was born with a nature of sin, and the sins of his life were all upon him, while no means of man, whoever he might be, or resource of his own, could meet his case. I then added that Christ Jesus, the good and only Physician, was able and willing to do so. Whose blood, shed on Calvary for the remis-

sion of sins, cleanseth from all sin, and in Whom there is life for all who believe. It was too clear that as yet there was no real concern about sin and the remedy, inasmuch as he was more ready to return to the medicine for the body than the precious, neglected soul, despite of being told a few minutes before that life was going, time was short, and an unalterable eternity near.

O, reader, how reckless, hard-hearted, and dead is man as to his precious soul, notwithstanding all the love and pains God has taken. Though this young man was on the verge of eternity, his soul unsaved, and the Christ who came to seek and save the lost a dead letter to him, the disease of sin admitted, but no concern aroused, yet he could travel three long miles in a donkey cart, with the hopeless hope that the diseased body might find relief, if not cure. Brighter things, thank God, were in store for this young man.

Before leaving the shop I asked him if he would like to be visited. He replied that he lived too far off, evidently not thinking the worth of a soul would lead me to make a journey of love, in the hope that the Lord might use it for blessing. The poor fellow, too, was ignorant of the devoted love of the Son of God, Who walked to Sychar's well, there to refresh his weariness by communicating the water of everlasting life to a Samaritan sinner, not less of the infinite price He paid by the shedding of his precious blood to redeem a soul to God.

However, he left with the promise of a visit. On relating the case to a Christian friend, an interest at once was shown, with desire to fellowship

on the sufferer's behalf. The cottage in the village was found, and the wife gave a welcome. On seeing the young man pillowed in a chair, it was evident he was worse. His racking cough and sunken eyes created anxiety that God might bless the visit. After a little conversation, he said, with some measure of satisfaction, "he had not only been visited by the clergyman, but arrangement had been made for receiving the sacrament." This distressed those to whom he told it, knowing as they did he was unsaved, and assured that in his mind it was a means of salvation, rather than a happy privilege flowing from, and in no way competent either to procure or help to it. But this is a delusion by which, alas ! so many, even with much sincerity, are ensnared and deceived. The word of God is plain, as to the once and for ever finished work of Christ, as also that true faith (not ordinances) is the only appointed means of reaping its blessed fruit. Jesus was admitted to be the Saviour, yet there was added to it what plainly showed that in his mind it was the work of Christ, and something of his own superadded, that saved, which doctrine, blessed be God, is nowhere to be found in scripture.

To admit only a partial work, or to dare to add anything to that which the Son of God declared to be a finished work, leaves the soul dark, deceived, and unsaved, as was this young man. The readiness to avail himself of a misplaced ordinance, clearly showed his rejection of the precious blood of Christ, by which alone peace was made and for ever settled at the cross. Not only so, but

a holy and righteous ground was then laid for sinners to be reconciled to God, as is clearly stated in Colossians i. 20, 21.

Feeling enough had been said, we commended the dying unsaved man to God, praying that what had been solemnly said as to his state as a lost, guilty sinner, and the only remedy, might be made real and true in his soul! The request of the anxious wife that we should go again soon being the only encouraging feature of the visit. Some little time passed, eventually we both went again.

What God had wrought between the two visits in the soul of the young man his own testimony will best declare. On entering, the same hopeless appearance, with greater weakness was evident, consumption was doing its rapid work. But, oh! the marked change of countenance, as his sunken but beaming eyes were fixed upon those whose former visit gave him only sadness and disappointment. He stretched out his wasted hand, grasped mine, and holding it tightly, saying, "O, I am so glad, I have wanted to see you so much to tell you I am saved. I am not afraid to die now, for Jesus is my Saviour. He died for me." These are his words, as far as can be remembered. The way and reality with which they were said, overwhelmed those who heard and saw the wonderful work of God.

Yes, reader, God had made real his solemn state as a sinner, as well as the perfect and precious remedy in Jesus the Saviour. It was evident the sinner and Saviour had met. How is it with you? Perhaps you are indifferent

save a mere formal owning, that of course all are sinners. Or is it a real and personal matter, as with this changed young man, who could now say, "I am saved, Jesus died for me"?

On further inquiry as to how and when the change came about (for there was no question that he had passed from death unto life), he said, "Ah! sir, since you were here I have been made to feel all was true that was said to me in the chemist's shop, and when you last came."

On recovering his breath he added, "I did not believe I was such a sinner, or so bad as you made me out, but it is all true, and thank God I believe it. I want my wife and mother to believe it, too, and have Jesus, and be saved." The anxiety of the unsaved wife for her husband, was now, by God's grace, changed for the saved husband's anxiety for her. On being asked if we should thank God together for his salvation he was delighted, adding, "Do ask God to save my wife." When the words were repeated, "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," he burst out with tears and exclamations, to think that Jesus had not only saved him from all his sins, but had made him fit for glory. Can the reader say this? What a change had been wrought in him from when he was hoping to help his salvation by taking the sacrament. The tears of joy were so overwhelming that it seemed too much for his weak body. So with thankful hearts we left him, after promising, if the Lord permitted, to see him again soon.

Each visit afterwards only confirmed the reality

of his conversion to God. The suspicious and uneasy listener at first was now turned into a ready listener, sitting, so to speak, at the feet of Jesus to receive His words.

Eagerly did he drink in the truth as to the completeness of the work of Jesus on the cross, as well as the glories and perfections of Him who did that work. He was not without his temptations both from the flesh within and Satan without. Like many, he had not learnt that the flesh would never improve because he was converted. Though born of the Spirit, flesh never became spirit, both remained distinct, as Jesus said to Nicodemus, when insisting upon his being born again, and the means to produce it, adding, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." When shown from Romans vi. and other scriptures that the evil nature called the "old man," or the flesh (though still in him), had been as truly judged and set aside in the death of Christ, as the very sins he had committed, it was good news indeed. He was also taught that God saw every believer in Christ risen, and not in Adam at all; therefore there could be no condemnation. Nevertheless, although the position of the Christian abides unchangeable, communion is interrupted if the flesh is allowed to act, and it is then that Jesus, as the Advocate, is needed to restore.

Another time the precious chapter xiv. of St. John was read to him, where the departure and return of Jesus are spoken of, as well as the promised Comforter to dwell in and abide with believers during His absence. The words of

Jesus, "I will come again," led to speaking of the resurrection of the sleeping, and the rapture of the living saints when He comes. When told that if Jesus came that day, neither he nor any true Christian would die, but be at once transformed into His glorious image, he was amazed, wishing for the scriptures to be read to him. After hearing the verse, "Behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," it was evident that this blessed truth had laid deep hold of him. Each time this subject was spoken of his longing desire increased that his wife might receive Jesus as her Saviour, and be ready to go at His coming.

Can you, dear reader, wonder at this? But it may be you either treat the coming of the Lord as a mere theory, or as too remote to have any immediate claim upon your attention; hence your indifference. On the other hand, you may be in the condition of the foolish virgins, carrying the lamps of profession, but with "no oil." Pause and consider; only those who are ready will go in, while those without the true grace of God will be shut out for judgment.

The last time we saw the dear young man a few verses were read to him from 2 Corinthians v.: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Though almost past speaking, his eyes and countenance testified to his certainty of before long having a heavenly house, when mortality will be swallowed up of life. It was evident,

meanwhile, that he would soon be absent from the body and present with the Lord. Before the next visit he had departed to be with Christ, to await in the better place the bright morning of the first resurrection. The testimony of his wife as to his last hours was that when conscious he was full of Jesus, even with little notes of praise about the love of his Saviour. Truly, every saved soul is a miracle of grace, and God has His own way with each. God did not allow this very bright case to appear without others being blessed. A relative in the village was visited, and he, too, found peace, and passed brightly away—another link in this golden chain. The wife, with several others, walked over three miles to hear of Jesus, and some little time after her husband's departure, confessed to the writer that she now knew Jesus was her Saviour, that her sins were washed away in the same precious blood, which was the peace and song of her husband.

Who knows but that this written account may, under God, be blessed to many more? If the reader is already a believer, the narrative will cheer and strengthen him, both as to the grace of salvation and the opening out of such precious realities associated with Him, who is the hope and expectation of the heart. It may well encourage God's children to speak "a word in season," both to those that are in health, and especially to the sick and dying.

If the reader is like the young man when he entered the chemist's shop, only anxious about the body and the means to relieve it, even when beyond cure, then may he be awakened as to the

disease of sin within, and the perfect remedy without. If in health, with the heart set upon the pleasures of the world, let him remember, too, that death must come, and after death the judgment. What a solemn portion, death and judgment to every child of Adam; but, thank God, in Christ, salvation, life, and glory everlasting, open to all who believe. G. G.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

THE Lord alone knows how many such testimonies as the following we have constantly received during the last twelve years. We have thought, "we do not well" to withhold such "good tidings," and trust that our beloved fellow labourers will be encouraged by such cheering news.

DEAR MR. H——,

I have copied the following note, wishing such an interesting case of conversion to be known to the compiler of "God's Glad Tidings," for encouragement to go on, assured the work will not be in vain in the Lord.

A woman came to a mothers' meeting full of joy, last autumn, and asked if she might tell the cause of her happiness that evening. In few words she gave us the simple story, how a friend, formerly a near neighbour, had been brought out of darkness into light.

Hearing she was seriously ill, she gathered up her numbers of "God's Glad Tidings," and went

to see her. She found her anxious about her soul; she talked to her, "pointed her to Jesus in her poor way," and then left the little books with her, and soon after received the note penned by her husband, at her dictation. In a few more weeks she passed away, rejoicing in her Saviour.

The value of this little serial, eternity will alone disclose.—Yours very truly,

H. C.

May 4th, 1883.

DEAR MRS. R—,

I am much obliged to you for lending me your little books, "God's Glad Tidings." They have proved "glad tidings" to me. I read that one for May, and while reading "Answering for my Master," the light came into my heart, and I am able to say, I can trust Jesus, and am ready when the Master calls for me. If I should not see you any more on this earth, I shall meet you in heaven. I now long to go home, I wish I had known him before. But it is all right with me now. Good-bye, dear friend.—From yours truly,

C. W.



WILLIE GORDON.

FOR a number of years since my return to this country, after a lengthened stay in the Northern countries of Europe, it has been my practice and privilege to visit sailors or others in the hospital, who speak the Scandinavian languages. A few weeks ago, on a Sunday afternoon, as I was bidding adieu to a Norwegian in one of the wards

the nurse of the ward directed my attention to a young man lying on a bed in the extreme opposite corner. I had, indeed, already observed him, having been startled by his cough, and the struggle he had occasionally to get breath. I had observed, too, the hectic flush and the large liquid eyes, and said to myself, "That lad is dying of consumption."

The nurse told me that he was a stranger in the town, an orphan, without any brother or sister, or, indeed, any friend to visit or care for him, and I remarked that I had observed him, and saw that he was dangerously ill.

"He is sinking very fast," she said, "and no one can say how soon he may go; there is no hope of recovery. I think," she continued, "you might speak to him, no one cares for him."

I had always looked on the nurse of that ward as a somewhat unfeeling woman, judging, perhaps, from her manner and from what others fancied, but I was pleased to find that she cared for this lad, for whose soul and body no one else seemed to care.

I gladly availed myself of her permission, and of the information she had given me, for in the hospital wards, and especially in the consumptive ward, I have a delicacy in going unbidden to a bedside when I knew nothing of the person, or the character of the disease.

I slipped along the ward to where the lad was lying, and read the card which bore the name William Gordon, occupation, gardener, age 19, etc., etc. As his name was William I at once addressed him as Willie.

I explained to him how I came to be in the hospital, and told him about the Norwegian, who lay at the other corner of the ward: how lonely he felt, and how he longed to be back among his own people.

After a few introductory remarks, I asked how he felt. "I am getting better," he replied, "I hope I shall soon get rid of this cough and be all right."

"Well, I hope you may," I said; "but suppose the possibility that you did not, and if you were to die, what hope have you?"

Willie looked as if he did not understand what I meant, and I almost repeated my question:

"If you were to die, where do you expect to go? Do you think you would go to heaven?"

"No," he said, with a shake of his head.

"Why do you think you will not be taken in there?" I asked.

"I am not fit for heaven," he answered.

"Why do you think so?"

"I have been too bad."

"And do you think God only takes good people to heaven?" I suggested.

"Yes."

"Were you ever at a Sunday school, Willie?" I inquired.

"Yes, at P——n."

"And did you ever hear a hymn beginning—

'Jesus loves me, this I know,

For the Bible tells me so.'"

"Yes; I remember it."

"Is it true? Do you believe Jesus loves you, Willie?"

"No."

"Why not you?"

"I've been so bad."

"And you think Jesus only loves good people?"

"Yes."

"But," I asked, "where could he find good people to love? The Bible says, All are bad, not one good, all sinners; yet it tells me that the Lord Jesus came to earth from heaven to die on the cross; do you think He died for the good or the bad—for righteous or sinners?"

"For sinners," said he, somewhat slowly.

"Then, Willie," I continued, "He came from heaven to earth not out of love to good people, for God had already said in His word that there were no good ones, but it was to bear the sins of the bad that the Lord Jesus came; and He Himself said, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Besides, God says, He 'laid on him the iniquities of us all,' and that He, that is, the Lord Jesus, bare our sins in His own body on the tree. Now, Willie, it is plain that God loved us while we were yet sinners, and you must believe that hymn, 'Jesus loves me.' Do you believe that the Lord Jesus died on the cross for us?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Then, Willie, if He died for us, it was out of love for us, and it was that He might open a way for us to come to God, and to heaven."

"I can understand, Willie," I said, "how you reason about it. You think because God is good He loves the good, and must only have good ones dwelling with Him, but you forget that we are all

bad to begin with, and as we cannot make ourselves good or fit for God, He must do it Himself, and that even when we were sinners perishing He had mercy on us, and loved us, so that He sent His beloved Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Now, Willie," I continued, "when I was a lad like you, more than thirty years ago, God in His great love showed me that although I was very, very sinful, the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, could cleanse me, and that He (Jehovah) had laid on Him (Jesus) all my iniquity, and that although my sins were like scarlet He could make me whiter than snow."

"When I saw this, Willie, I just looked up to heaven and said, 'God have mercy upon me,' and do you think He heard me?" I asked, as I saw the deeply-interested look of my sick friend.

"Yes," he replied.

"Yes," I answered, "you are right. In that very moment, when I saw that I was an undone wretch, only fit for hell, and could do nothing for myself to make me good, and when I knew I could turn to no one on earth for help, and feeling that God could do everything for me, just then God gave me such a blessed, happy sense that I was accepted and forgiven, and it has continued all those years. And, my dear lad, I can assure you that although you are as bad as you have said, or even though all the sins you could think of were on you, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, can cleanse you, and make you whiter than snow. And I can assure you that God delights

to receive sinners, and that Jesus says He will in no wise cast out.

"I think I can see, as I look into your face, Willie, that God has already made you willing; and now tell me, if Jesus came to your bedside, and told you He laid down His life for you, if He showed you the marks of the nails in His hands, and of the spear in His side, and said, 'Willie, I died to save you, I shed my precious blood to purchase you, I am ready to wash you from every stain, to take you from the power of sin and death, and to make you one of the white-robed company in heaven'; and if He looked into your face and your eyes met His eyes as He asked you the question, 'Will you let me save you?' What answer would you give Him?"

"I would say 'Yes,'" was Willie's ready answer, as he looked up, his eyes suffused with tears.

"And do you think, Willie, that the Lord Jesus is worthy to be trusted, do you think you could trust Him to do it?" I had seen the tears filling Willie's eyes, and his chest, on which he could not bear the weight of the bed quilt, was heaving as I spoke home to his heart. He hesitated, and I repeated my question, thus, "God is here, Willie, He has heard you say you would let Him save you, He knows that if He does not save you you must for ever perish. He has made you willing to be saved, He has longed to save you that He might rejoice over you, His arms of love are outstretched to you, you have only to trust Him and He will do the rest. Is He not worthy of your confidence? Won't you trust Him as

your Saviour, and believe that He will surely bring you to heaven?"

There was a struggle going on in Willie's breast, but I felt that Christ would gain the victory, and there would be rest by-and-bye for the sin-burdened, troubled, dying lad.

I bade him farewell, and said, "When I come back, Willie, I hope you will be singing—

‘Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.’

“He does love you, and is even now waiting to be gracious. Only believe and thou shalt be saved.”

During the next fortnight I had opportunities of sending some little pastilles which I found he liked, to moisten his throat with.

On the second Sunday following I went again to see him. I could notice his eyes turned often towards me as I spoke to my sailor friend, who lay nearest the door. After a little I went up to Willie's bed; he had sunk in body, his cheek spots were brighter, and his eyes bigger, his thin arm was thrown over the coverlet, it was wasted almost to the bone.

“Do you still think that you will get better, Willie?” I asked.

“No, I begin to think that I am dying,” he replied.

“And if you die do you think that God will take you in?”

“Yes.”

“But how can you think so?” I continued, inquiringly. “Did you not tell me a fortnight ago

that you were a bad fellow, had been a great sinner, were only worthy to be cast out, and yet you dare to think that God will take you into His home above. How can you expect this, Willie?"

"I believe in Jesus," was his reply.

What could I say to that? Had not God said he that believeth in Jesus shall not perish, but hath eternal life. I could not doubt that in the heart there was the faith that the mouth confessed, and that Willie was, as he said, believing in Jesus.

I felt I could only add my testimony to God's word that he need not fear, for all things were his, since Christ was his; and that he might rest assured that the Good Shepherd would carry quite home his newly-found sheep.

I spoke to him of the confidence the dying malefactor had in the Lord Jesus' promise. "Thou shalt be with me in Paradise," and that each one who, like him, looked in simple faith to the Lord had the same assurance, "Thou shalt be with me."

Another Sunday afternoon, about a fortnight later, I was in the ward. My Norwegian friend had told me that he thought that lad would have been gone ere this time, that he was taking no food, only a little wine. The ward was peculiarly quiet; two men sat on a form by Willie's bed, they were distant connections who had heard of his approaching death; apparently not a word was passing between them and the poor dying lad; sometimes one of the men wiped his forehead or his mouth, while the other man I could see wiped the tears from his own eyes. The

other occupants of the ward seemed to feel that the end had come, and the friends who gathered round their beds looked solemnised in the presence of death. The old nurse sat at the foot of Willie's bed with a magazine in her hand, occasionally looking over it to see if those eyes would open again. I could see them looking over to me, and I knew Willie would be desirous to see me at his bedside, so I told the Norwegian that I must go to see him, but I asked, "Do you think, Michel, that he is ready to die, and that he is going to heaven?"

"Yes, yes, it will be better for him," he replied.

As I came near the men on the form moved down, and made a sign for me to take a place nearest the head of the bed. I sat down and stroked back the curly hair that lay over Willie's brow; his face was almost colourless, a bluish pink colour, which the nurse called "blae" was the only evidence that the blood still circulated in the wasted frame. His eyes opened and turned full on me; as I laid my hand on his forehead I could see that he was perfectly conscious, although not able to move, and scarcely able to speak, even in a whisper.

"You will soon get home now, Willie," I said, "and then no more suffering, no weary days and nights; but pleasures for evermore at God's right hand, where Jesus is. Can you still feel sure that Jesus loves you, Willie?" I asked.

"Yes," he whispered.

"Are you quite happy?"

"Yes, happy."

“Are you safe in the arms of Jesus?”

“Yes.”

Turning to the men on the form, I spoke of how foolish it would be to leave repentance and seeking salvation, to such a moment as this, and as I related to them something of our past conversation, I urged them to seek and find salvation now, assuring them that I had no doubt Willie had sought and found the Saviour several weeks before, and now was going to be for ever with the Lord.

As I left the bedside I said, “Willie, our next meeting will be with the Lord. The Good Shepherd will never set you down until He bears you into the fold above, His everlasting arms are round about, and underneath you. ‘Fear not,’ He says, ‘when thou passest through the waters I shall be with you,’ and you may boldly say, ‘I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.’”

I saw his fingers twitching, and knew he wanted me to take his hand; I did so, and once again the big beautiful eyes were turned up to mine as we bade each other a silent farewell, to meet in eternity with the Lord, to part no more for ever.

J. S.



“I KNOW IN WHOSE HANDS I AM;”

OR, SALVATION, ETERNAL SECURITY, AND
UNFAILING RESOURCE.

SOME time ago, a messenger called upon me to visit a man who was thought to be dying. His

wife was intensely anxious as to his soul's salvation. She had sufficient knowledge of God's word to know that no human effort could save him—as she said, she knew "he must be born again." Feeling how utterly powerless I was to save, and how little time there was to put the way of salvation before him, and how important it was that the words should be simple and clear, and suited to the real need of the soul, I looked up to the Lord to give the needed truth. On reaching his bedside, I found he was quite conscious, and clear in his mind. He had intervals between the fits of coughing and hemorrhage to speak distinctly. I asked him what were his prospects for eternity? He replied, "Oh, sir, I am afraid it is too late. I have put it off too long." I said, "Let us just look at God's word, and hear what His thoughts are as to its being too late." I gleaned from his answer that he was thinking salvation depended upon what he could do if he could live his time over again. I knew that if he could have lived any length of time, and depended upon any efforts of his own, it would not have made him one whit better, or more fit to meet that eternity into which he was about to be launched. It would be resting upon human righteousness, when the word of God declares so plainly, "By grace are ye saved." "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

I briefly alluded to the thief upon the cross as having no time to do anything to fit him for heaven. He simply looked to the Lord, and recognised power and grace in Him to remember him. What was the gracious reply? Much

more than he asked, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This was God's way of salvation; but the word of God abounds with instances of souls passing from death unto life, and there we can see with a glance how they were saved, that it is all of grace and not of works. God will have the honour and glory of bestowing His gifts, without any human merit, on the part of the sinner; and He is jealous that nothing should be added to the value of the atoning sacrifice of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God's providing, to take away the sin of the world. I then referred him to the parable of the prodigal son. He had only to confess that he was a sinner, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." He had not the opportunity to ask, as he purposed, to be made one of his hired servants. The father's reception prevented it. He ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, in all his sins and rags, and had him invested with the best robe, ring, and shoes. Now it is the custom in Eastern countries for the servants to serve barefooted, and the shoes were, therefore, a token of sonship. It was said to Moses, when God appeared to him, "Put thy shoes off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." He was a servant, under law, and could not stand in the relationship of a son, where sovereign grace puts the believer. Romans v., 1st and 2nd verses, give the true position of a Christian. Being justified, having peace, standing in grace, and rejoicing in hope of glory.

I read to him the third chapter of John—drawing his special attention to the Lord Jesus

being lifted up upon the cross "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." How it was the bitten Israelites, when Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness were immediately healed from the bite of the serpent. There was life in a look. So it is the look of faith, believing in Him, the crucified One, as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, gives possession of eternal life. "Should not perish, but have eternal life." The Lord Jesus, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The judgment due to sin was borne by Him—that is, the sentence of death which was passed upon all, for all had sinned. He died the death due to sin that we might be delivered from the fear and penalty of it.

After spending a short time in prayer, earnestly looking to the Lord to bless the seed sown, and to give rest of heart and conscience in the finished work of God's beloved Son, I left him in the Lord's hands. He afterwards told me his anxiety had abated, and his mind was at rest from that time. To the surprise of all, his health began to mend, but there were returns of cough at intervals. On putting the truth before him on another occasion, and especially the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," he exclaimed, "I do believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for my sins." I then explained to him that by the authority of God's word I could now tell him he was saved. He had passed from death unto life. What joy was lighted up in that bed-chamber—the wife in

tears of joy. I then said, "We will give God thanks for this expression of His love and grace through His beloved Son." I told him I did not know whether the Lord meant to raise him up again from his bed of sickness, to be here in testimony for Him, or to take him home to be present with Him. He might use him to tell out this great salvation to others. I found on visiting him afterwards what a real change had taken place. He had no desire for the society of worldly companions. He had no fear of death. On one occasion, when he had a fit of coughing coming on, and his wife becoming anxious, he said, "Don't have any fear about me, I know in whose hands I am." He could safely rely on the words, "Shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand, nor out of my Father's hand."

He soon afterwards left the neighbourhood, but I sent him from time to time books and tracts to feed, instruct, and establish him in the truth. He wrote some time afterwards that he loved the society of the Lord's people where he was living, especially those who were earnest in seeking the salvation of others; but the heading of the letter was very striking, as showing where his faith rested, and on whom he relied to keep him until the end of his earthly pilgrimage. "Still looking unto Jesus" were the words. It reminded me of Hebrews xii., "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith."

Some time afterwards the writer received a letter from the widow informing him of his last illness, and how bright his closing moments were; conscious to the end, he was desirous to depart

and be with Christ, "willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." He was, however, very patient, waiting the Lord's time. He passed away in sleep to be with Jesus, which was, indeed, gain to him, and far better.

"But more than all I long
His glories to behold,
Whose smile shall fill the radiant throng
With ecstasy untold.

"Thy love, most gracious Lord,
My joy and strength shall be ;
Till Thou shalt speak the gladdening word
That bids me rise to Thee.

"And then through endless days,
Where all Thy glories shine ;
In happier, holier strains I'll praise
The grace that made me Thine."

SALVATION, ETERNAL SECURITY, AND UNFAILING RESOURCE.

From the foregoing narrative I learn three important truths : Salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus ; confidence and eternal security, and a present unfailing resource in every emergency in that same blessed Saviour. Reader, do you possess this wealthy portion ? Faith is the key which unlocks the unsearchable riches of Christ. "Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious." There must be knowledge of Himself. Can you say of the Lord Jesus : "He loved me, and gave himself for me" ? This means

not only the forgiveness of all your sins, paying your debts, but providing every needful blessing for your journey home to God. Jesus died for us; He rose again for us; He is in the presence of God for us; and He ever lives to make intercession for us. Who, then, is he that condemneth? These four pillars of divine truth on which eternal salvation rests, are an everlasting and all sufficient answer. If God justifies none can condemn.

And, mark, all these are outside of yourself. All is of God, nothing of man, and it is on this ground that God justifies the sinner. Then whom He justifies He also glorifies, for God has linked the two together. Oh, remember, this justification is not on account of any goodness in the sinner, but on account of what God's beloved Son did on the cross. God's purpose is now to bring us to Himself, that we may enjoy His love as children. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," and finally to present us "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." If you have been brought into this blessed relationship you will surely have known something both of the affections and responsibilities of children. If I have the affection of a child I shall surely desire to know the mind of my Father—"What is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," and according to this I shall seek to walk; while, at the same time, I shall be assured of my perfect safety and my eternal security as the object of His love who spared not His only-begotten and well-beloved Son.

Then, like the one in this narrative, you will

find an unfailing resource in the Lord Jesus all your journey through. When about to leave this world He told His beloved disciples that He would not leave them comfortless, or orphans; that He would give them a constant sense of His presence, and finally come again and receive them to Himself, that where He is there they might be also. Moreover, He promised that whatsoever they should ask in His name He would do it for them, that the Father might be glorified in the Son; and on this account we are exhorted to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The believer's pathway is one of dependence; and dependence keeps faith and prayer in active exercise. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," said the apostle to the Galatians. Let us not be tempted, beloved, to trust in our own righteousness. "By the grace of God," said Paul, "I am what I am." Works can never justify. Divine righteousness—the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ—should be all our glory, the ground of all our trust. "Jesus the Lord is my righteousness," should be the language of every redeemed soul. This is your privilege; "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but faith which worketh by love." Beloved, may Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, you may know the

love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. "Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory."

Well do I remember hearing of one whose life had been apparently blameless, and on which he was building his hopes of heaven, but who, on coming to his death-bed, found he was not quite what he had thought himself to be. As he approached the presence of God he was alarmed, and became exceedingly anxious. Ah! who can describe the distress of such a soul; one who thought himself safe but found he was lost; who thought himself on the way to heaven but found himself on the brink of hell! At the eleventh hour this poor deluded soul obtained mercy, and then greatly did he rejoice to learn and own that he was not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to the mercy of God; "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." In heaven as well as on earth the song must be, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be the glory."

The believer may have his faith tried; may have painful changes in his soul's experience—be in sweet communion to-day and find himself greatly failing and distressed to-morrow, and will have to judge himself, but the question of his justification is a settled one; based on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it stands for ever. By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. The believer may have to learn, like Peter, how little dependence can be

placed in boastful self-superiority and confidence when he said, "Though all should be offended, yet will not I." Then will come in the chastening of the Lord, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." But if we judge ourselves the Lord will not judge us. When the believer is judged he is chastened of the Lord that he may not be judged with the world, and, oh, what mercy there is in this! The believer is as dependent on grace to keep him as he was dependent on the grace that saved him, and the sense of this will always keep him humble, free from spiritual pride, or self-glorying. "Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord." "For it pleased the Father that in him [Jesus our Lord] should all fulness dwell: and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Yes, this is the believer's unfailing resource in Christ: Saving Grace, Supporting Grace, Restoring Grace, and, ultimately, Triumphant Grace:

"Oh, to grace, how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be,"

will ever be the language of the believer.

"The Saviour lives, no more to die;
He lives our Head, enthroned on high,
He lives triumphant o'er the grave;
He lives eternally to save.

"He lives to still His people's fears,
He lives to wipe away their tears,
He lives their mansions to prepare,
He lives to bring them safely there."

What a blessed and secure position and portion

then, is that of the child of God ; and what a blessed provision for all the journey to his home above. He feeds on the riches of divine mercy—mercy from first to last—he is refreshed and strengthened by divine joy ; he basks in the sunshine of divine favour and love, and lives in the certain prospect of being conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus, with whom in the glory will be his portion then more fully to realise the triumphs of redeeming grace through an eternal day.

“ MISERABLE SINNERS.”

A GREAT number of people call themselves “miserable sinners” Sunday after Sunday, yet when God’s truth is personally applied that they individually are “miserable sinners” they immediately repudiate the title, little thinking that an acknowledgment of their lost, sinful condition is the only way to obtain mercy for their souls. “He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not ; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light” (Job xxxiii. 28), and again, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.” The following incident may be deemed quaint by some readers, but is so illustrative of this subject, and shows out the inherent self-righteousness which is in all hearts, that I insert it.

A little girl about ten years of age was talking

to a servant about a favourite and exceedingly intelligent domestic animal, when the servant remarked, “ Really, that animal is most as sensible as a Christian.” “ You should not say that,” said the child, “ you should say she is nearly as sensible as a ‘ miserable sinner,’ for we are all that, while very few of us are real Christians.” “ Indeed, miss! I should hope we are all Christians,” indignantly replied the servant. Here the conversation ended, for the child had no power to say more. Indeed, she knew nothing save that she was a miserable, hell-deserving sinner, for God had taught her that, and also that “ All have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and that the outward profession of Christianity did not make a person a child of God. Both servant and child were ultimately saved: the former was early brought to a knowledge of redemption through the blood of the Lamb; while the latter was, through trouble and sickness, convinced of sin, and eventually found peace by resting on the finished work of Christ.

How is it with you, dear reader? Have you found out that you yourself are a miserable, lost sinner? Or are you content with the lip confession, and general acknowledgment of sinfulness? Perhaps you think you are no worse than thousands more. That will not avail before God, for He says, “ Everyone of us shall give an account of himself to God.” Perhaps you say, I am a Christian, I never do any harm, I have never perverted that which is right. That is what you think. Hear what God says, “ There is none righteous, no, not one.” Can you put yourself

out of that none, does it include you? Have you committed one sin? Yes, you acknowledge you have committed one; but you think God will not be hard upon you for one. It is not a matter of your thoughts on the subject, but of God's statements in His word; and, remember, not one jot or one tittle of His word will come to nought, and He says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." That one sin constitutes you a poor, lost sinner, and unless you individually own yourself such before God and believe in His Son you can never see life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And, moreover, God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent. (1 John v. 12; Acts xvii. 30.)

I heard a lady once say, "I could not bear to think there was no good in us." No, her pride did not like it, and your pride does not like it; but humbling yourself and owning it is the only way to obtain mercy, for "God knoweth the proud afar off." "For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isa. xvii. 15.) Look at the self-righteous Pharisee and the poor publican; which got the blessing? The one who took the place of a sinner, and in the marginal reading of the new translation of the New Testament it says, "God be propitiated to me **THE** sinner," making it even more beautiful and individual. If you do not think yourself a sinner, you cannot appropriate

the death of Christ for yourself, as it nowhere tells us He died for good or amiable people; it says, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” and if you will not own yourself to be one you cannot say, “He died for me.”

A short time ago, when visiting a poor woman who was suffering from an incurable disease, I several times said to her, “You do know you are a poor, lost sinner, don’t you?” and the invariable reply was, “I am not any better than my neighbours.” What this expression was intended to convey it is difficult to say, for a certainty; one thing is evident, she had no sense of her personal sinfulness, and I fancy she meant as she made no profession to superior sanctity, she could not be judged as a hypocrite. Oh! what an insidious form of self-righteousness, exalting yourself because you make no profession. Will that stand before God? No, you must bow the knee to Jesus *now*, or be made to do so in hell hereafter. There is no escape, God will accept no excuse. If you flee to Jesus, and hide yourself in Him there will be no judgment for you then, “There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;” but if, standing in your own fancied righteousness, and depending on your own charitable deeds, or regular attendance at some church or chapel, may God open your eyes before it is too late, and may you be led to believe what His thoughts are about yourself and your ways. Listen not to the false friend who tells you of your kind and good heart, and of the many charitable schemes you have set going. Turn from them and listen to God; of

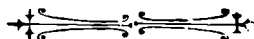
your heart He says, "It is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things." (Jer. xvii. 19.) And of your ways He says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) What you think good, God regards as filthy. Why do I write thus strongly? Because I long for you to feel your need of a Saviour; I know, until people are sick they never want a physician, and unless you know yourself a lost sinner you will not care to hear of the Saviour.

However refined, however cultivated and highly educated you may be, still in God's sight you are no better than a wayside robber. "There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." You cannot escape from that all, and oh! dear reader, do not try to escape from it, own you are a sinner to Him, and He will say, "I have found a ransom." There is nothing in the heart of God save love for the poor sinner, He has provided a way, whereby He may be just, and the justifier of him that believeth; "He willeth not the death of a sinner." His thoughts about a self-righteous one are different to what you thought; and His ways towards His enemies are not like our ways to our enemies. "The thoughts that I think towards you," saith the Lord, "are thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Now, will you not acquaint yourself with Him and be at peace? Now that you see at what a distance you are from God, through sin, will you not accept His offer of pardon and peace through the death of His beloved Son? "In whom we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins,"

and “being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1.)

One word more, in all the three cases mentioned, the servant, the lady, and the poor woman, there was the outward acknowledgment, Sunday after Sunday that they were “miserable sinners,” but in each case, when their ruined condition was personally applied, there was an evasion of the truth, showing that the confession was merely of the lip, there was no bowing of the heart before God that they were guilty, and had come short of His glory; but remember, professor, God does not look on the outward appearance, He looketh on the heart, yea, “the Lord pondereth the hearts.” (Prov. xxi. 2.)

R. M. W. B.





ONE DROP FROM THE LIVING SPRING :

A STORY OF THE INDIAN MUTINY.

“So will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted.”—
Isa. lxvi. 13.

Who does not remember the Indian Mutiny of 1857? Who is there now, who was alive at that time, but has a vivid recollection of the horror

the news of its outbreak caused when it reached this country and the colonies? How utterly impossible at first was it to realise the fact, until mail after mail arrived with shocking details of butchery and massacre of helpless women brutally slain, and prattling babes pitched into the air and caught upon the bayonets of the revolted Sepoys; and also of desperate revenge and retaliation of the maddened English troops—for every evil passion was aroused, and blood for blood poured out. Well do I remember one of the regiments which relieved Lucknow telling me how he and his comrades coming upon the body of a murdered countrywoman, cut off her tresses tenderly, weepingly divided them amongst themselves, and swore a Sepoy’s life should go for every hair, “and,” he added, “we kept our word.”

People read the news with bated breath and tearful eyes, as accounts came in of station after station attacked; people murdered by those they trusted, till the cry arose from every side, “What next?”

In the midst of these scenes God had His own, and they found the consolations of Christ abounding over their sufferings, as they knew His grace superabounds over their sin. (Rom. v. 20.)

Who that has read it has forgotten the grace given to the young ensign who, when led out to be shot along with a native missionary, was used of God to cheer and strengthen his companion, though older than he in the faith, and both died rejoicing—shot by the men of the regiment.

Sufferings and glory go together. “If so be

that ye suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 17.) Co-suffer; co-glorified; not that every saint is called upon to be a martyr-witness in this way. Not everyone who becomes a soldier gets a medal.

There are many still alive, who can testify to His grace and providential care during that fearful time, can date, too, their conversion through it. Some may have forgotten all these—or, rather, Him who preserved them—and it may be this little paper will fall into the hands of some of these, and to such I would say, "Oh! if you had been cut off then, as you have seen many, and been near it yourself, too, where would your soul now be, and that for ever? Where? With that of Ensign C—— and the, for the moment, trembling Padre Sahib (missionary), or with those who are "delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment"? (2 Peter ii. 4.) If the conscience answers, "With the latter," Oh! may you learn that the "long suffering of our Lord is salvation" (2 Peter iii. 15): and may it be that "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." (Rom. ii. 4.)

How God verifies His own word. How true it is, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," and how He delights to prove Himself to be the God who is faithful, and "who will not suffer you to be tempted [tried] above that you are able; but will with the temptation [trial] also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.)

During this terrible time at a small civil station, that is, where only some civil servants

of the then East India Company were stationed, a magistrate and a collector, and one or two more Europeans; where no soldiers, English or native, were quartered, there lived two or three officers and their wives with the little girl of one of these couples. Both families were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and knew Him as their Saviour. The wave of rebellion reached this place; a mutinous Sepoy regiment came along and carried all the European prisoners to the next station, where were more mutineers. On reaching this, the ladies were separated from their husbands, and, with the child, thrust into a dark, hot room of a native prison; they had taken a last farewell of their beloved partners, each but too well knowing what they had to expect. Nor were these wives kept long in suspense; in a short time the sharp rattle of musketry was heard, and the ladies too truly knew they were widows, and the little one fatherless; their husbands had been shot.

The tramp in the hot sun of an Indian summer had brought on a sharp attack of fever to the now fatherless child, which called for all the attention of the suddenly and recently bereaved mother and aunt; and they begged their cruel captors to get from a native doctor a little quinine, the specific in that country for fever. They implored at first in vain; but one relented, and procured from the native doctor a pinch of the precious medicine wrapped up in a dirty piece of paper, and threw it into their dungeon. Only too thankful were these sorrowing ladies for this small bit of consideration from their

guards. They mixed the quinine, and administered it to their now doubly precious charge, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the disease abate, and the child improve.

Having been hurried away from their once happy home, no time allowed to pack up anything, they had left their Bibles—the word of God—behind them, or how they would have turned to it for a word of comfort in their bereaved and forlorn condition! but “God is faithful;” aye, He is! and knew how to minister a word of comfort to His sorrowing ones, though He was allowing them to pass through the furnace of affliction.

Their attention was directed to the crumpled, dirty bit of paper in which the pinch of white powder, which had relieved their precious little one, had been wrapped; they saw printed matter upon it; they carefully smoothed it out; they soon discovered it was part of a page of the word of God; they got the scanty light of their prison house to bear upon it, and, oh! the stream of comfort that God poured into their souls, as one read and the other listened, from that mutilated page of what had once been a Bible. Whose had it been? Where was the owner, massacred or escaped? Had the possessor believed to the saving of his or her soul? “The day” alone will declare that.

Beloved reader, I don’t ask, do you possess a Bible, but I do ask, is the Saviour, the Jesus of that Bible, your Saviour? Is He? Not, do you hope He will be some day, is He now?

Oh! if those murdered officials had not be-

lieved God, which they did, what time had they to prepare, as people say? None. Taken out and ruthlessly shot; but they did know Jesus as their own Saviour, and the Sepoys' bullets were but their dismissal to be "for ever with the Lord."

Again, has that precious blood which the Bible you possess tells of, cleansed you; or are you carrying about that which will condemn you? For Jesus said of those who were rejecting His testimony as to Himself, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Well, the crumpled bit of the word of God was smoothed out, and what was on it?

It was in that very country, after the suppression of the mutiny, I heard the account from an undeniable source, and ran a mark of ink round the passage, and there it stands in the Bible before me, though now twenty-five years ago, an indelible mark to the faithfulness of my God, and thus runs the passage:—"They shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. I, even I, am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor? The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that—"

(Here began and stopped the quotation Is. li. 11-14.)

Ah ! fellow-believer, cannot you understand in some little measure, and if you have been in similar circumstances, in like measure, the comfort, the encouragement, the sustainment which followed? A scrap, but enough for God's purpose and their joy, and when they had the opportunity, and referred to the chapter itself, they would note the first part of that 11th verse, "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing to Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head." Their beloved husbands had already entered into the first part, and they were to be supported by the latter portion and following verses.

Shortly after a delivering force of troops passed that way, their captors fled, and they were released—widowed and brotherless, 'tis true, but proving that God is faithful.

Beloved reader, what cannot the word of God, the two-edged sword of the Spirit, effect when wielded by the mighty hand of the living God, though it be but one short passage of that word, as in the case of Pat C——* found on a dung heap in the north of Ireland, or it prove to be the oil and wine poured into the hearts of His mourning children by that tender hand in their dark dungeon in Bengal? May you no longer resist it, unsaved reader. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," and you, true believer, will find, as those above named found it to be, "The joy and rejoicing of thy heart." S. V. H.

* "The Captive Freed," page 274.

GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S NEED.

THE SYROPHŒNICIAN WOMAN.

Matt. xv. 21-28.

THIS woman had not the pride of human distinction in which the Jews gloried. She was neither a Jewess nor a Pharisee—quite the contrary; she belonged to a city which God had held up as a most reprobate city (Matt. xi. 21). She was a Syrophœnician—a Canaanite—of a race held in the Old Testament to be accursed (Gen. ix. 25-27), whence nothing of repentance could be expected. The Lord comes into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, peopled by the descendants of Canaan (“cursed is Canaan”). That is where grace ever comes. And she was one of these outcasts in the fullest sense of the word. She had no privileges, no claims. As far as God’s ways were revealed outwardly, the Jews were God’s people. But she was outside everything—a dog. She is looked upon as a dog, and she takes the place of a dog. What now, being a dog, could she hope for? Why not give up hope? Why, because she abandons all title and claim in herself, but the need which cast itself on pure bounty; and there was, she asserted, an overflowing abundance of grace, which could even give some supply to the dogs:—“Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table.”

There was bounty in the house of God for dogs

themselves. Be it she was a dog; she made no pretence to take the children's place, and therefore it was no answer to her to call her that, because the Master could look beyond the children, and there was an overflowing supply of grace and fulness that did not leave even the dogs without provision. (Ver. 27.) And such was the poor woman's real state. She knew the Master of the house was infinitely rich. She knew God and Jesus ten thousand times better than the disciples around. She knew that there was bounty and plenty enough in the Master's house, and from that superabounding supply of grace He could let the dogs eat. The vilest and the most hopeless could find food in the Master's house. The real understanding of God is according to our understanding of our total vileness and nothingness. Israel had never understood divine love as it was here exhibited to the dogs; fathomed by her need, fathomed by her wretchedness. She reached up to the source from whence even the children are fed—the fulness of the love of God Himself, which did not shut even dogs out from His bounty. She passed by all dispensations, even to what God Himself had done, seeing He had come down, not to hide His holiness, but to show what He really was; and when the sinner was brought to a confession of her own nothingness, He swept away everything between the sinner and Himself, as He did with the woman of Samaria.

And what is the great truth in Christianity that is brought out by all this? That the veil is rent from the top to the bottom; and that man,

as He is, in the presence of God—the man is there unveiled. What have we got in the cross? The first thing is, God dealing with man in His own presence. But how? Did He come to require anything? Nothing; how should He come and require it? In a certain sense He did require fruit from the vine, but there was none. What, then, did He come for? why did He come into a world full of sin? what did He seek there? He sought sinners! Did He come here ignorant of the extent of their sin? No: for He knew what was in man's heart full well before He came. He knew their sin well. He knew all that would come upon Himself. But what stops the sinner? Not that he is to come to God—we see the Lord Jesus Christ come down to him in his sins. Is there anything between Him and the sinner? No, my friends—nothing; not even His disciples. They might quiet and get rid of importunity, but neither show God's holiness nor reveal His love. It was the prerogative of His own love to come and touch the sinner without being defiled by the sin: just as He did to the leper. The leper exclaimed, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The Lord puts forth His hand and touches him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." And, remember, if He came to show God's love to man in his sins, so that his heart might be won, and have confidence with God, He came to take away sin from man by taking it upon Himself.

The veil of the temple being rent from top to bottom I see the holiness of God; but the very stroke which has thus unveiled the holiness of

God has put away the sin that would have hindered my standing in the presence of that holiness. I see what God in His love has done for us in the person of Christ. I see that the bruising of His Son has taken place. Here I get God Himself coming down to me, and I am enabled now to go back with Christ into the rest of His holiness. In the death of Christ I see the fearful vengeance of God against sin; and the rending of the veil, which displays God's holiness and love to man. And so the more the eye of God scrutinises and searches me, the more it brings out the blessed truth, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. If I hesitate to stand in His presence, I am putting in question the value of Christ's precious blood. You may say, "I hope to be saved." You cannot hope that Christ will die for you! It cannot be a matter of hope whether Christ is to die! The way the heart reasons is, "I am not hoping Christ will die for me, but I hope to get an interest in Him; I want a proof of His love." When you question this, you question whether Christ has become the friend of publicans and sinners; and, further, you question the power of His blood.

The very way in which I know God is through faith in His Son. I know His own love, that He thought of this, and did it for me. Why is it the soul does not get this wondrous simple peace, to be in His own presence without a cloud on His love? Because we are telling to God, and to our poor hearts, something short of this—that we are dogs. Grace is to the sinner, and to none other. If I can stand before God in my own righteous-

ness, grace is not needed. He will bring down your hearts to your real condition. There He can act in the fulness of His grace, according to the need of the heart that has discovered its need in His presence. He is manifesting that grace, according to the value of the sacrifice, now that He is at the right hand of God. Not merely now that God can come to the sinner, but the cleansed sinner stands accepted in the presence of God—accepted in the person of Jesus; and that nothing stands between us and God.

J. N. D.



SURELY, I COME QUICKLY.

THE last thing Jesus ever told His disciples was that which He told the aged apostle St. John in the Island of Patmos, that He was coming again very soon.

St. John was very pleased to know that his dear Lord, on whose bosom he used to rest, was coming again, he would remember how Jesus had said, "A little while, and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." (John xvi. 16.) "I go away, and come again unto you." (John xiv. 28.)

All true Christians long for Christ's coming, for when He comes they will go to live with Him for ever.

To understand Christ's second coming we must look a little at His first coming.

God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins, according to the scriptures, and to bear the punishment due to them. This punishment Christ suffered in our stead at Calvary, and after He had died for us, and risen again for our justification (Rom. iv. 25), and before He ascended up to heaven He told His disciples to tell people everywhere that He died for sinners, that if they will come to Him He will give them the pardon He has so dearly purchased with His own most precious blood, and that He was coming again from heaven to take them to live with Him for ever.

Let us think for a moment of how Jesus will come. He will come suddenly. "For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. xxiv. 27.) Although Christ's coming will be sudden and so unlooked for a thing by the world, yet His people, all true Christians, will greatly rejoice; they are watching and looking for Jesus, and when He comes He will take them to their real home ("For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Hebrews xiii. 14), and they will live with Him for ever. Friends long separated will meet; Christ will restore friends and relations to each other, and all will unite in praising their great Redeemer. We shall feel how little we have suffered for His sake, and how much He has done for us; we shall feel that we do not deserve His great love, but we shall love Him because He first loved us. (1 John iv. 19.)

How will those people who have never loved Jesus feel when He comes? They will be terrified, they will not know what to do, nor where to go; they will call on the rocks and hills to hide them, for they will then know (oh! with what remorse!) how they have rejected Christ.

When Christ comes, if we have served Him we shall go to Him; if we have served the devil we shall most surely go to him. Oh! how solemn is this.

How those who are not prepared to meet Christ will wish they could live their lives over again, but that will be a vain wish. Dear friend, I pray you be not unprepared to meet Jesus when He comes. If you have never loved Him think what great love He has shown to you.

If you delay to come to Jesus it may be too late, for if Jesus does not come yet, your life is very uncertain, and when the summons is given for you to appear before God it will be—

“Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now.”

Prepare to meet Jesus now, and then when you meet Him you will rejoice, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. There will be no sin in heaven, for nothing impure will ever enter there. To live with Jesus you must first be washed clean and pure in His blood.

Jesus is surely coming, and soon; how soon we know not, but it cannot be long before you and I and everyone must see Him, either to be with Him for ever in glory or to appear before the great white throne to be judged according to their works, and to be cast into the lake of fire.

A. E.

“JUST REVERSE IT.”

How wonderful are the ways of God in reaching a soul by His truth—often how strange, to our poor, finite judgment, and what insignificant means, too, He is pleased to use, that all may be of Himself, and all redound to His glory, Who has said, “And my glory will I not give to another.” (Is. xl. 8.) So be it, for in the way He has cared for His own glory, there is God’s love to the sinner brought out, for God “is love, 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.”

“Whose coat of arms is that?” said an officer of the Indian army, on his voyage to England, after many years’ service in the East Indies. “Whose coat of arms is that?” pointing to a carved, painted, and gilded ornament on a part of the noble vessel they were sailing in. This was asked of the captain of the L—— W——, one of that splendid fleet of ships trading between different ports of India, Australia, and England.

“Oh! Lord P.’s,” said the person addressed.

“He has lately died,” said Colonel ——; “and do you know he died a Christian, too?”

“Died a Christian!” was the remark. “Why, we’re all Christians, I should hope,” and just as he was turning away the previous question was followed up by another—

"Well, but Captain ——, how do you expect to get to heaven?"

"Why, praying to God and believing on Jesus Christ, I suppose."

"Just reverse it, Captain, just reverse it."

"A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of the harness." (1 Kings xxii. 24.) Now every man is a king to himself until he is knocked over by one of those shafts from a bow, "drawn at a venture," it may be by the shooter, but there is One who first makes a "joint in the harness," and then guides the arrow into it, and thus is he brought low. And so it was on the deck of the L—— W——.

"I see it," quickly replied Captain S——. "I see it. Believe in Christ first—then pray to God."

And "see it" he did—rejoice, too, and through God's grace was enabled to testify of it to many precious souls, who, in their turn, found the arrow of God's word reach their consciences, convincing of sin, and then they found the oil and wine of the good news healing their hearts.

"Just reverse it," dear reader, if you are "putting the cart before the horse," to use a homely phrase—if you are thinking that the way to obtain peace with God is by your prayers first, and then faith afterwards. No, the word in Romans v. 1 is, "Being justified by faith [belief] we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." One does not mean to make light of prayer—God forbid. After one has believed, one cannot have too much intercourse with God.

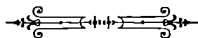
One cannot have too great a sense of dependence upon Him—indeed, the very atmosphere the newborn soul breathes is prayer and communion with that loving Father who gave His Son to die, but it is putting the cart before the horse to pray first and believe after. Satan is too well pleased if he can only just misplace things — divine things—for faith is of God; prayer is of God; but to rest for salvation on one's prayers is, indeed, building on a sandy foundation.

And yet how often one finds that a sort of fabric is being erected on this sandy foundation, specially in visiting among the sick. After a few inquiries as to bodily ailments, the question is put: "Well, how is it with you for by-and-bye?" "Oh, I fear I am not prepared, but I try; and I say my prayers," is the answer. Or if the visit of someone who has been to see the poor invalid is named, and what he said is inquired for, it is no infrequent reply, "Oh! he read to me, and made such a nice prayer to me." Not a word about the work of Christ, not an accent as to the precious blood, and God's acceptance of them. Oh! it is heart-saddening. No adequate sense of sin, no corresponding need of that which puts it away.

As I said before, nothing can be further from one's thoughts than ignoring prayer, specially when we call to mind the quotation in Romans x. 12, from the prophet Joel: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," but immediately the apostle adds, verse 13, "How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" showing the "call"

there is that of a soul who has believed—the result of faith.

Well, dear reader, how is it with you? is it simply taking God at His word—that is, believing, and thus proving that you have everlasting life—as Jesus said in that precious, well-known, oft-used 24th verse of the 5th chapter of John's gospel: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, **HATH** everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life. "Heareth," "believeth," "**hath**," "shall not," "is," that wondrous chain of five unbreakable links—or, is it resting in something of your own, a chain of sand, be it prayer, tears, religious exercises, district visiting, or Sunday School teaching? If so, "just reverse it," and that just now, and learn the threefold blessedness of being justified by faith, having peace with God, standing in grace, and rejoicing in hope of His glory. S. V. H.



TWO SATURDAY EVENINGS.

I HAD occasion to pass through the square, or market place, of a large town in which I was residing, one Saturday evening. The square was full of vendors of all kinds of merchandise, and it was with considerable difficulty that I reached the cross, which was almost in the

centre. Near it a few Christian men and women stood, to sing, and preach, and pray, amidst the hubbub. I could not help feeling that the world and its prince seemed to have the victory that night, for crowds of men and women surrounded the Cheap Jacks, and greedily listened to their lies and jests, and even a drunkard gathered a crowd round him, but comparatively few saw any attraction in the hymn singing or the gospel preaching.

I stood in the little crowd for a time, until they seemed to have exhausted their resources, and were about to dismiss, when I felt that I had a word to say, and, stepping forward, I mounted the chair. There were few to hear, and it was with great difficulty that one could make the voice be heard by any.

I had almost forgotten the incident and the subject on which I spoke a few words, if it had not been brought to my recollection about two years after.

Another Saturday evening had come, the same bustle and marketing was proceeding, but the few Christians were at their post as usual, and a young man on the chair was telling the story of the Saviour's love, brightly and hopefully, notwithstanding the attempts of some to draw away the attention of the hearers. "Young men," he said, "God can send a word to your hearts to-night that you will not be able to forget, although you may have no intention or desire to receive it. Like some of you, I was accustomed to spend my Saturday evenings in this square, seeking to pass the time in getting

amusement at the various stalls or idly talking with companions; often, too, I used to stand a few minutes to hear the preaching, or the hymn singing. For more than six years this was my custom, and I went home just as I came. But one evening, about two years ago, as I was about to turn away, a stranger from the crowd mounted the chair, and out of curiosity I waited to hear what he had to say.

“He spoke of eternity. I can remember how he pointed to the stars above our heads, and said when our time in this world was done, and that might be any moment that God chose, we should have as many years to live as there were stars in the sky, nay, more; he said, ‘Count the leaves on every tree, one by one, and add them to the stars; then measure the ocean out by drops, and add the drops of the ocean; then take the grains of sand on the sea shore, and add the numbers of the grains of sand; then take the blades of grass, and imagine, if you can, the sum of all the stars in heaven, all the leaves on the trees, all the drops in the ocean, all the grains of sand, and all the blades of grass, and count them years—long as that might seem, it would not be eternity. Count each a century, still you would not have eternity, nay, if you like, count them millenniums, and even that will not be eternity.’

“More he said, I dare say, but I had heard enough to make me feel uncomfortable, and I turned away to seek in some way to forget this unpleasant illustration of an eternity I had every reason to dread. While I remained in the square the recollection haunted me, and I went down

that street, trying hard to forget, but still that long eternity seemed to fill my mind; I was counting those stars, those leaves, those drops, those sands, those blades of grass, until I felt a cold shiver in my very soul. I could not rest that night, and the next day being Sunday, I went to church, but the thousands of years of eternity were always before me. I could find no rest from the thought. I read my Bible, but it convinced me of sin and condemnation; I felt that God would be righteous if He cut me off any moment, and condemned me to spend my eternity in the abyss, but I could not bear the thought of it. I had heard of the mercy of God, of the love of Christ, I had never believed them, but now I felt I needed mercy, I wondered if there could be mercy for me—a lost, ruined, hell-deserving sinner.

“I was passing along the street, when I saw a notice of a gospel preaching, and I turned in to hear about the love of God in giving Christ to save sinners, and I heard that God was not willing that any should perish, but that they should look to Jesus and be saved. That night I looked, and I found peace in believing in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the lost, as my Saviour. Since then I learnt that they who believe shall never come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life, and the eternity I once dreaded to look at, or think about, I hope to spend in the glory of the Father’s presence, and with the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

In words like these, this young man told the

story of God's grace to him, and brought fresh to my memory the word which God had given on that evening. I found that this young man was now actively engaged in evangelistic work, and was a useful member of the Young Men's Christian Association in the town. Perhaps the word that reached him may be God's word to you. How and where shall you spend those millenniums of centuries? To think of one night in jail would make you shudder. What of eternity in hell?

Stop, poor sinner, stop and think
Before you farther go,
And do not linger on the brink
Of everlasting woe.

J. S.

“THOU FOOL!”

“So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”—Luke xii. 21.

GATHERED riches, garnered treasures,
Luxury like eastern tale;
Life, a gaudy scene of splendour,
Feast and revel without fail:
He, who heaven and earth doth rule,
Weighs thy wealth, and cries, “Thou Fool!”

Able statesman, gallant soldier,
Ruling with far-sighted skill;

Fame, a dazzling structure rearing;
Nations sway'd by one strong will:
He, who heaven and earth doth rule,
Marks thy fame, and cries, "Thou Fool!"

Youths and maidens sport light-hearted,
Flitting gay amid earth's flowers;
Laugh, and song, and jest, and dancing,
Butterflies for sunny hours:
He, who heaven and earth doth rule,
Sees thy mirth, and cries, "Thou Fool!"

Spendthrift, hoarder, idler, worker,
Journeying down life's chequer'd road;
Oh! be wise, nor scorn the question,
Asking, "Are you rich towards God?"
Else, before that righteous rule,
Thou shalt hear His verdict—"Fool!"

Faithful love it is that says it,
Calls earth's baubles what they are;
Boundless love that would awake men
From illusions, near and far;
Love that kept not back His Son,
Yearning still above each one.

Oh! that words of mine were given
Power, some wandering soul to win;
Glad the welcome that would greet him
Speaking peace and cleansing sin;
Clothing, seated in God's school,
Never more to roam a "fool."

READER.

ARE you certain you are saved? If not saved, are you satisfied you are lost?

There is no intermediate state. Saved or lost you must be at this very moment while you are reading these lines! Now, where are you?

The present is the time to find this out. There is now a remedy, but you may be beyond the sphere of mercy the very next minute.

Many whose eyes will survey these pages do not know where they are. Of them it is hereby asked, How can you endure to live in uncertainty on the subject of your eternal destiny? Whether it be heaven or hell.

If you were an infidel one would not wonder at your indifference, but to believe in these things, or at least to say you do, and live on in this uncertainty is indeed a mystery.

But if you did really believe that there is a God, a heaven, a hell, and a Saviour, how could you rest short of being assured that that Saviour is your own Saviour? Could you live in this lamentable condition?

The path you now traverse leads to heaven or to hell, and your carelessness does not alter this.

Careless sinner, awake! awake! This was no matter of indifference to the rich man who opened his eyes for the first time only in hell, and it will be no matter of indifference to you shortly. (Isa. xxxii. 17.)

“THAT’S MY BUSINESS.”

WHAT have you put this tent up for?

To preach the gospel in.

Why, I should have thought there were plenty of churches for preaching in without a tent.

So there are, but there are plenty of people who are not saved for all that. Now, just let me ask you: Do you know that your sins are forgiven?

“Oh,” you say, “that’s my business.”

Quite true, friend, but if you are still unsaved you are only condemning yourself in declaring that it’s your business, for you have neglected the most important business that ever was entrusted to you.

Perhaps, like thousands more, you have thought that you had to go through a round of duties and religion, and so get saved at last; but Jesus says, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.)

So the gospel does not tell us what we are to do to save ourselves, but what God *has done* to save lost sinners.

“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.)



THE STAGE-COACHMAN.

ANYONE who has travelled the road from Exeter to Sidmouth must well remember a long and steep hill that has to be ascended immediately after passing through the village of Newton Poppleford; and a little while ago, almost as well known on the road as the hill itself, was A—— B——, the driver and proprietor of a well-appointed coach between those two places. He was commonly called by his friends and companions “Fred” (therefore, I will so desig-

nate him in my narrative), and had formerly been guard to many fast coaches, and was, indeed, most extensively known; for his hilarity and good nature, his liberality and generosity, had gained for him many friends. Fond of gay and merry company, able to sing a good song, and possessing a fund of good-humoured jokes, he was a general favourite, though at times his language was such as to shock the ears even of his most intimate acquaintance.

On taking almost my last journey with him along that road, and as the horses toiled up that tedious hill, I was obliged to listen to his oft-repeated curses upon them, and to witness the severe way in which he punished the poor animals, in order to quicken their speed, wearied as they were with their long pull. I could not refrain from seriously remonstrating with him upon his conduct, and especially I sought to turn his mind to what the thought and judgment of God respecting him must be, and to a day of retribution which must sooner or later come, when God will send Jesus to judge the words, thoughts, and actions of men (Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16), when the Lord Himself will suddenly descend from heaven (Matt. xxiv. 27), and surprise this careless, ungodly world unawares by His appearing; when the awful stillness of dismay will succeed all the busy activity which we now see around us; when the half-uttered curse will be turned into the wail of despair; the joyous song into the shriek of terror; the bold daring of the hardened sinner into the cowardly trembling of the guilty culprit; and when men

will be overtaken with all their sins upon them, and will be hurried just as they are before the throne of the Lord Jesus, to be judged for their evil or thoughtless course of life. I sought to direct him to that time when Revelation vi. 15-17 will be fulfilled: "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man and every free-man hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" I asked him how he would feel, if while I was then speaking, such a terrible scene should suddenly burst upon him, how would he like to stand and be judged in his then present condition. He seemed to pay but little, if any, attention to what I said, and went on much as before apparently in a kind of sullen doggedness of spirit, urging on his horses, regardless of my expostulations.

Some months after I heard that he was lying dangerously ill at Torquay; and, to my joyful surprise, I also heard that he was what is generally called a "changed character." It appears that he had gone to Torquay, had been taken dangerously ill whilst there, and grew so rapidly worse that Mrs. W——, in whose house he was then staying, felt very anxious about him, both as to his bodily health and much more because of the fearful condition of his soul. She accordingly sent for a Christian physician of that place,

who would, she well knew, not only prescribe for his disease of body, but would make a point of speaking to him respecting the far worse disease of his soul. It was at the close of his second visit that this servant of Christ left on the bed a tract written on the 51st Psalm. Poor "Fred" was (as he afterwards confessed) so angry and offended at having a tract given to him, that he gnashed his teeth in a rage, and determined to tear it to pieces directly the doctor left the room; but, almost unconsciously, his eye was attracted by the heading of the tract; he was struck by it, and a secret overruling power impelled him to read it through, and, before he had finished it, he, for the first time in his life, wept at finding himself a sinner.

Soon after a godly clergyman of the place called on him, and without being aware of his having received the tract, read to him the same 51st Psalm, and prayed before he left, entering into the very feelings of his heart. After he was gone, poor "Fred" tried himself to pray; he had never in his life tried to pray before; but he found he could not. The sins of his former life rushed with remarkable and terrible clearness back upon his remembrance; scenes of evil long forgotten seemed all revived before him in judgment; his agony of soul was great, so that all night he was unable to sleep. He truly felt he was the vilest of the vile, and the words of that 51st Psalm were in a measure realised in him, that he was indeed "shapen in iniquity."

On passing through Torquay shortly after, I made a point of trying to find him out, and hav-

ing discovered where he lodged, was ushered into his sick room. There indeed he lay on the bed, emaciated with consumption and other painful diseases, and manifestly fast hastening out of this world to another; and oh! how changed in appearance from what he was when I last saw him; the pale, hollow cheek, the quick, glistening eye, the voice almost sunk into a whisper; instead of the active, joyous coachman with whom I had so lately travelled. But if he was thus altered in appearance, how much more was he in reality changed. Yes, indeed, a vast eternal change had passed upon him since we last met. I had left him an open blasphemer, a careless, wilful profligate, by nature and in practice a child of wrath. I found him a happy, peaceful believer in Jesus, a child of God, an heir of glory.

At first seeing me, his feelings overpowered him, and he sank back on his pillow unable to speak; but he looked so calm and happy that it at once increased my hope that the tale I had been told of him was true. When he had a little revived, I said to him, "Well, dear B——, I have come to visit you now, as a very different man, I hear, from what you were when I last saw you." He answered me with such a lively expression of happiness and joy as I shall never forget, and which affected me greatly, "that he was one of the vilest sinners, but that now he was saved by the precious blood of Jesus."

Finding him so happy, and so clear in the truth, I asked him whether he would like to recover, and go back to his former occupation?

His answer was, "As for myself, sir, I should be happy to die directly; but I should like to live a few months, to go and tell some of my old companions how happy I am, and what a path they are walking in." I was obliged soon to take my leave of him, and I subsequently found that two days after I saw him he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus.

And now it is my desire to carry out the dying wish of poor "Fred;" that is, earnestly to address some of his companions, into whose hands I trust this magazine may fall.

You have often heard that tongue, which now lies silent in the grave, utter many a witty and clever remark; you have heard many a joyous song proceed from the lips of him who has now passed from you, it may be, for ever; you have been delighted frequently with his fine musical voice, or heartily laughed at his great powers of mimicry, and at the wonderfully correct way in which he was able to imitate the various voices of men and cries of animals. Where is your old companion now? And what would these scenes in his past life avail him now? Would he like to be reminded of them? Would he find comfort in their remembrance? Even when he was yet here, and stretched upon the bed of sickness, would the merry song or jest have comforted him? Would his end have been so peaceful had he been obliged to look back on his past career, and not found some way in which all might be forgiven and forgotten by God? Ah! dear friends, who of us would like to have our past lives of sin remembered? Who does

not wish that the days that are gone may never rise again, with their dark catalogue of folly and evil? And if the past is so sad and sinful, what hope can there be for the future? Daily is the number of evil thoughts, words, and deeds increased instead of diminished. Every month adds its long list of unpardoned iniquities to the score; think, oh! think, then, of how much every year that has passed has added to the fearful catalogue of your unpardoned sins, and how much nearer to the final reckoning the passing away of each year has brought you; and tremble for the future.

And what would departed, happy B—— say to you could he now address you? Would he again sing his favourite song, think you? Would he repeat his wonted joke? Would he not rather warn? Would he not entreat? Would he not implore you, as you value your lives, as you value your souls, as you value an eternity of torment or of joy—"flee, oh! flee from the wrath to come"? Would he not charge you, even as you loved him, to ponder on the grace of God shown to him? on the depths from which it raised him, and the heights of happiness and glory to which this grace had brought him? and would he not point you to God's way of working out this grace? Yes, indeed; he would point you to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who died instead of sinners. He would point you to Him who had borne his sins on the cross (1 Peter ii. 24), and in whom he found grace and security for ever. Do you say, "Ah! but I am too great a sinner for this to be shown to me?" What would

B——'s answer be? "Was not I bad enough? Are you worse than I was? And did not I find mercy, peace, and joy?" Do you make answer in return, "Well, but I cannot be religious; it is too hard and tedious a work that you propose for me to do, I must give up so much pleasure, I must so much alter my course of life, that I have not heart or resolution to do it." Look at him. Did he perform any work for his salvation; did he find difficulty; did he find it tedious? No. Though he had not yielded his life to God; though he had not "loved God with all his heart" (Luke x. 27, 28), and God might therefore have justly doomed him to eternal death; yet at once, poor sinner as he was, without trusting to good resolutions for the future, without making vows or protestations to God, without altering his life or ways, without relying on his tears or prayers, or entreaties, to appease God, he believed that God had, of His own love, given Christ to wash the guilty sinner quite clean, and to blot out with His own precious blood the sad and fearful catalogue of sins that were against the sinner; he believed that God had provided the means of salvation, because the sinner could not save or help himself; that God had sent the message of His own love to the guilty and the lost; that God had looked upon the death and blood of His own Son, and declared it was enough; that precious death and blood were indeed enough for God. "Fred" believed this testimony of God; it was enough for him; he was saved, and all was peace.

Reader, God's ways are not like our ways. (Isa.

lv. 1; xliii. 24, 25.) He even now proclaims to you, in the midst of your sin, just as you are, an immediate, eternal pardon, immediate, eternal blessings, through Christ, His Son. It is not your poor, wretched service that God requires. He needs nothing at your hands, seeing He is the only giver of everything. (Acts xvii. 24, 25.) But He desires your blessing: your salvation and your happiness would give him joy. "Without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1), without labour and without works. He now proclaims to you eternal life, eternal salvation through faith in His blessed Son. Should you believe in His proffered mercy, then you are for ever safe; and at the end of your road here, when you have driven the late stage of your earthly journey, when heart and strength fail, you will find a happy, everlasting home, "A city that hath foundations, a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. v. 1.)



"HE IS WORTHY."



"Able art Thou our love to win,
Worthy of all our trust."

Two Christians were conversing together one day, when one said, "I do feel so unhappy sometimes because I think I am not worthy to be a Christian. I don't know if you ever feel that?"

“I know I am unworthy, and always shall be unworthy, but it never makes me doubtful nor unhappy,” said the other, “because I know He is worthy, and God looks at Christ, not at me. I constantly think of the worthiness of His most precious blood, and the worthiness of His blessed person to God.”

“I do not for one minute think lightly of past sins, nor of present failures, but I know that both they and sin itself have been condemned in the person of Christ, and that God looks at the believer in and through His beloved Son, who knew no sin, who was made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We died with Christ, and now God regards, not our unworthiness, but He ever looks at His beloved Son, and sees us complete in Him.”

Dear reader, are you longing for peace? perhaps the expression of your heart is that of one who spoke to me the other day, saying, “My soul’s salvation is more to me than anything; I would give up everything to be sure that my sins were forgiven.”

Then, dear reader, listen while I tell you the good news. One has been down to this earth on purpose to procure the salvation of sin-burdened ones, and He says, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.)

Note that little word “Me;” it is a person you are to go to—a living One.

Now, who is it who speaks? Who is it who is worthy? It is the Lord Jesus Christ, God’s only-begotten Son in whom He was well pleased when

on earth, and He was daily the delight of God before the earth was, and He is God's delight at this moment, for He has given Him a name which is above every name, in token of His pleasure and satisfaction in the Son of His love. Oh! that I could give you some little thought of the worthiness of His glorious Person! but no pen, no heart can express how worthy He, the eternal Son of the living God, is.

You see who it is that speaks, offering to give rest to the heavy laden. Shall we see what He has done to procure rest of conscience for us.

He, the Lord Jesus Christ, thought of us in our lost and ruined condition, when He was in the glory, and He left that glory. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," and there it was that "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree," the judgment that the sinner deserved God put upon Him; His soul was made an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10), and now all that believe in that finished work are justified from all things.

A poor woman lay dying, when a friend went in and said, "I suppose you are resting on the mercy of God."

"No," she replied; "I am resting on His justice."

Do you wonder what she meant? You need not, for it is indeed a most blessed resting-place; God is loving and merciful, but He is also just, and so just that He could not punish the feeblest believer in His Son for their sins, because He has already turned His face away from His Son in

punishment for those very sins. Yes, dear reader, He is too just to punish twice for the same thing.

You say, "I believe all that, and still I have not peace."

You believe it in a general sort of way, but you don't believe Him. You have never trusted Him; you have never told Him you believe that He died for sinners, and so for you; and, above all, you have never thanked Him—never had living contact with that glorious Person by a touch of faith. The moment the woman (who was suffering from an issue of blood for the last twelve years) touched the hem of Christ's garment she was made whole. He also knew that healing virtue had gone out of Him; there had been contact, and there must be before a soul can get peace. Remember she touched first, and then she felt in her body that she was whole. Feeling follows faith—it never precedes it.

You say you pray and beg to be forgiven; but prayers will never bring peace, nothing of your own will; joy and peace flow from believing what another has done for you.

We have seen who that One is; of what infinite worth He is in Himself; we have seen His love was infinite, for He kept nothing back: He gave all. He gave Himself for our sins; can you really doubt Him? Can you still continue to pray for salvation, when He, by His death, has procured salvation for you? He has exceeded all earthly devotion, and He has done far more than tell us of His love; He has proved it by actions, and they ought to speak loudly to our poor hearts. "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my

sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger." Why was He afflicted? He suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Can you grieve such an One any longer, by doubting Him? Do you not see that He is indeed worthy of all our trust?

"Worthy the Lamb that's gone on high,
To be exalted thus—
Worthy the Lamb that died (we cry)
For He was slain for us."

Remember, he was worthy ere the worlds were made. (Pro. viii. 30.) He was worthy when on earth; He is worthy at this present moment; "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His delights were with the sons of men before He came to this earth. When down here, He said He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom, and we know He never turned one away who sought help or healing from Him.

He is the same to-day in the glory; He is occupied with man, and now it delights Him to be trusted, the smallest whisper of faith reaches His ear.

Do you think that such an One will decline you, that He will half do a thing?

Oh, no, when He forgives He does it in a princely way; He forgives and also forgets. "Your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more."

As another has said, "No one perfectly knows how vile we are, and no one perfectly knows the

infinite value of the death of Christ. God knows both." God is satisfied, dear anxious one, and why are not you with the work that glorious One has done for you? Think of His infinite greatness and worthiness; the very worlds were made by Christ. (John i. 3.) There is no limit to the intrinsic value and glory of His person, and there is no limit to the value of His death, thrice worthy is He of all our trust! "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. . . . Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

"Worthy of homage and of praise,
 Worthy by all to be adored;
 Exhaustless theme of heavenly lays,
 Thou, Thou art worthy, Jesus, Lord."

R. M. W. B.



PROVERBS VIII.

Wisdom! Jehovah's first delight
 Thou everlasting Son!
 Before the first of all His works,
 Creation, was begun;

Before the skies and watery clouds,
 Before the solid land;
 Before the fields, before the floods,
 Thou wast at His right hand.

When He adorn'd the arch of heaven,
And built it, Thou wast there,
To order where the sun should rise,
And marshal every star.

When ocean's bed was measured out,
And spread the hoary deep,
Thou gav'st the flood a firm decree
In its own bounds to keep.

When, hung amid the empty space,
The earth was balanced well,
With joy Thou saw'st the mansion where
The sons of men should dwell.

Jesus, from everlasting days,
Thy thoughts upon us ran ;
Ere sin was known, ere Adam's dust,
Was fashioned into man.

THE PARIS WAISTCOAT.

YEARS ago I remember reading some account of the conversion of a General Burn, of the Royal Marines, and his subsequent walk of faith until taken to be "for ever with the Lord." It was an interesting memoir, but nearly all the details have passed away. Yet one of those details vividly remains before me ; it was a strange dream the General one night had dreamed. Perhaps you don't believe in dreams, my reader—laugh at

them—pooh, pooh, too, the effects they have upon some consciences. But God *does* speak by dreams. We have only to turn to the Book of Job, and there we find “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 eyes of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.” (Job xxxiii. 14-17.)

Yes, God has and does speak to men in dreams ; and if *you* have been thus spoken to by God, take heed and resist not the warning so given.

The dream I allude to was to the following effect: The General dreamt that the judgment of which God has spoken in His word was already falling upon this poor world, and that his deliverance from it, and safety, depended upon his getting into a large building which seemed to stand before him. It had only one doorway, and through this entry he saw crowds hastening and disappearing into this only refuge ; and through it go he must, or be swallowed up in the terrible outpouring of the vials of the wrath of God Almighty (Rev. xvi. 1), which had already begun. So off he set and ran towards this said doorway, but when he came to it, though those before him had got in as easily as possible, he found that there was a sort of portcullis—a door sliding down from above, in grooves, with sharp spikes along the bottom edge, such as can now be seen in old castles—so that it could, if necessary, be dropped down instantly on an approaching enemy. This was quietly, gradually, yet surely, sliding down

the grooves in the masonry of the doorway, and so barring his entrance, unless he got low enough to pass under the sharp-barbed spikes which fringed the lower edge; and so to get under these he first stooped his head, but that was not low enough, for down, down, down slid this barrier; but in he must get somehow, or be lost. Dear reader, has a sense of impending judgment—God's judgment for thy sins—ever startled thee with a conviction that flee for refuge you must: and then has the question arisen, Whither—how? And off thou hast set, running hither and thither. first one way then another, first one supposed place of safety tried, then another; but no safety, no security. What an awful time it must have been for those whom the judgment of water in the time of Noah overtook! Hill after hill, cliff after cliff, mountain crag after crag they gained, but as fast as one coign of vantage was secured, up came the waters from beneath, down came the waters from above, till higher, and higher, and higher rose those waters, till, as the Bible tells us, in spite of what geologists seek to make us believe to the contrary, "all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits (about twenty-three feet) upward did the waters prevail: and the mountains were covered." (Gen. vii. 19, 20.) Who only were saved from that judgment? You know—those in the ark, and there was but one door to that. Have you tried God's ark for the poor sinner, His place of safety from the coming judgment of fire, His Christ? (2 Peter iii. 10 and 12.)

Well, down kept gliding this barrier, so the

General threw himself upon his hands and knees, and thus tried to creep in; but, no, lower and lower came those terrible spikes. What was he to do? In he must get or be lost. Flat upon his face he now prostrates himself; even that won't do, the space gets too narrow, the sharp spikes can't be turned aside; off is torn his upper coat, then his coat, and he comes to his waistcoat; but he is loth to part with it, it was a present from his brother, brought all the way from Paris—a silken, gold embroidered, jewelled-buttoned vest. No, he could not part with it; he unbuttoned it, and then tried to slip in. Closer and closer came the judgment. Oh! the agony of that moment! Rip open his cambric shirt, his undershirt, and with bare bosom does he seek to force himself under the still descending spikes. Part with his Paris waistcoat! No, that could not be! Again he tries till he scars his flesh by rubbing it against the gravel and grit on the stones which cover the floor of the portal, till his poor chest is cut and bleeding; but no avail. At last, in a fit of desperation, feeling he must get in or be lost, cut off by the now closely approaching judgment, he tears off his pet Paris waistcoat, when, lo! he slips in as easily as possible, and, to his delight, found himself in safety, along with many more. Let the vials be poured out ever so fiercely, he was secure! He awoke!

Oh! dear reader, what a lot of Paris waistcoats there are about. Have you got one in your wardrobe? The richer the embroidery, the brighter the buttons, the costlier the silk, the tighter we stick to them. The bosom may be bared, the

poor flesh torn and scarred, the blood may flow, but that Paris waistcoat can't go. What is it, think you? Is it not some bit of self-righteousness? Do not the prophet's words come home when he says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) Oh, yes, often and often this is the hindrance to a soul getting blessing and entering into peace.

Man does not like to take the low place. Zacchæus had to be brought down out of his coign of vantage, his platform of righteousness by the blessed Lord, who said to him, "Make haste and come down." (Luke xix. 5.) The poor palsied man had to be "let down" his first step towards blessing. (Mark ii. 4.) The Canaanitish woman, with her deep need, had to be stripped of her Paris waistcoat, for was she not so stripped when she had to say, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs [more literally, "curs"] eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." (Matt. xv. 27.) Well do I remember after one had been trying to speak to souls from that wondrous portion, a woman being asked, as she left the room, "have you learned that you are a dog to-night?" "No," was the reply, "but I have learned that I am a 'cur.'"

It was not till that woman in the gospel, a poor far-off Gentile like unto myself, beloved reader, had given up, not only overcoat and undercoat, but Paris waistcoat, too—given up approaching Him who is ever ready to bless, who is the blessed God, and claiming help on Jewish terms, that she got the word, "Oh, woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee even as thou wilt." (Matt.

xv. 28.) She had no title as a Gentile (Eph. ii. 12), and accepted her true position, a dog — a “cur;” but she had faith enough to give up all attempts to get blessing as one of “the children.” She had stripped herself of all claim and thus secured all her heart was set on.

And so must it be with you, my reader; if you have been anxious, and have been seeking for peace, and have not got it, if you are not yet in that only place of safety—Christ, see to it, that the hindrance is not in yourself. Have it out with God, and there learn what is the difficulty, what is it that prevents the enjoyment of known truths. See if it be not some Paris waistcoat to be got rid of, some perch of profession to come down from, some twig you are clinging to, and may you there learn what it is to be a “cur,” and hear those blessed words, “Whatever your soul needs ‘be it’ done unto thee, even as thou wilt.” He is only waiting till you are brought to that; the words are on His lips, so to speak, and when all yours are hushed, and you keep silence (Job xxxiii. 31-33), you will distinctly hear Him say, “Thy sins are forgiven,” “Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.” (Luke vii. 48-50.)

S. V. H.

THE TEXTS ON THE WALL.

I WAS struck with a little incident told by a friend, some weeks ago, and will give it to you, as nearly in his own words as I can.

"Some years ago," he said, "I was called upon to see a dying girl. 'The doctors gave no hope of her recovery, sir,' said the broken-hearted mother, who came to fetch me to the bedside of her daughter, 'she just lies there saying never a word, and oh! sir, I fear she is not ready to die.'

"I followed the poor woman to the little row of cottages hard by, and entered one of the rooms at the back of the house.

"A girl, scarcely more than sixteen, I should think, was sitting up in bed, her large dark eyes roving listlessly about the room. She looked at me as I entered, and turned impatiently away.

"I put one or two questions to her, but got little or no response. She appeared to be suffering terribly in body, and my heart ached as I watched her restless and impatient movements. I sat down beside her, and spoke to her of the love of Jesus, and of His deep sympathy over the sick and sorrowful; but I found she was, as yet, thoroughly unawakened as to her lost condition, and it was evident that she wished me not to prolong my visit.

"I left the house, to go home, and lift up my heart to God in prayer for this poor suffering child—and I pleaded long with Him, to open her blind eyes.

"Day after day I went to see her, not stopping more than a few minutes each time. She learnt, before long, to look forward to my visits, but as yet I could get very little response from her. One day, however, I entered the little room as usual, and found her in the deepest distress.

"'Come here,' she said, as she caught sight of

me, his eyes wild with terror. 'Don't you see those fearful texts upon the wall?'

" 'What texts, Fanny?' I asked.

" 'There, there, opposite—don't you see them? 'The wicked shall be turned into hell'—don't you see them?' seizing hold of my hand, in her intense agony of mind—'Oh! dear, they are everywhere—'He that believeth not is condemned already.'

"With intense rapidity she repeated text after text, as though they were written in living characters upon the wall.

"I thought of another scene, many hundreds of years ago, when another guilty soul, amid the din and noise around that festal board, traced those burning letters upon the wall which sealed his own condemnation; and my heart went up in prayer that the God of peace would reveal Himself to this heart into which the sorrow of conviction had entered so deeply. After a little she grew calmer, and begged me to go away and leave her alone.

"The next day her mother came hurriedly to fetch me, saying Fanny was most anxious to see me. 'I don't know what has come over her, sir,' she said, as we walked out together; 'she has never ceased singing hymns all the night, and the texts—why, sir, you'd have been astonished! They were all about God loving poor sinners, and Jesus, the tender Shepherd.'

"With deep and fervent praise to Him whose name is Faithful, I entered the little bedroom. Yes, there was Fanny, with radiant, shining eyes, lying back on her pillow, looking the picture of

happiness, shall I call it? Ah! no, something deeper than happiness. She had caught the Father's smile of forgiveness and welcome, and upon her poor little wasted face the reflection of that glorious smile was resting! I feared to break in upon that blessed interview between the Father and His child, but Fanny stretched out both hands to me. 'Oh,' she said, 'it was last night, when it was, oh! so dark. He came and spoke to me, and instead of the dreadful texts on the wall, there were beautiful ones instead, all about His love for me—they are there still,' she said, "'I have loved thee with an everlasting love.'" Please to read that one to me, sir, there it is, over against the mantelpiece.'

"So she went on with face aglow, with an intensity of joy and peace, and thus I saw her pass away, folded in the everlasting arms of love and mercy, safely gathered into the Father's fold."

Reader, how is it with thee? Is it well with thy soul? Z.



"THAT ONE WORD TROUBLES ME."



SOME time ago a lady who had been spending an afternoon at cards and the evening at a ball, came home late and found her maid sitting up for her reading a book. "Ah!" said the lady, "at your dull books again! that is what makes you mopish and sad, poring over those old books!" and away she went to her room and to bed, but not to sleep.

For hours she tossed from side to side, trying to go to sleep, but utterly in vain, till at last, being unable to bear it any longer, she rang the bell for her maid. "Madam!" she said, when she got to her mistress's room, "what ails you? I thought I left you merry and gay, what has caused this change?"

"So I was," replied the lady; "but as I passed you I looked over your shoulder at the book you were reading, and my eye caught one word, and that one word troubles me."

"Pray, what word was that, madam?" the girl inquired.

"It was the word *eternity*. Ah! maid," she exclaimed, "it is all very well for us to sport and play and waste our time and talents on worldly pleasures, and laugh at religion, but these things won't last for ever. I feel now that there is something beyond this world, and that I have got to meet eternity!" And then, lifting her hands and her eyes with a look of unutterable anguish, she almost shrieked, "Eternity, eternity, eternity! how can I face eternity?" That night was spent in weeping and in prayer, and the lady gave her heart to the Saviour of the lost.

Reader, you will have to face eternity soon; how soon you cannot tell: it may be to-day! Are you prepared to do so? Did you ever pause for one minute in your life and think of the meaning of that solemn word? It means either everlasting joy or everlasting despair; which shall it mean for you? Don't lay this paper aside and forget all about it. It is a question in which you are deeply concerned, and your never-ending wel-

fare or misery depends upon how you treat it. Do you ask : How am I to answer it? By believing the word of God. That word says that you and I have sinned, and deserve eternal wrath, but that the Lord Jesus Christ bore that wrath in His own blessed person upon the cross, in order that you and I might go free for ever, if we but trust Him. The only thing that can make a sinner fit for eternity is the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which cleanses from all sin. If you are not sheltered by that blood you will be exposed to the righteous indignation and judgment of a holy God, who will by no means clear the guilty. Beloved reader, does not your own conscience tell you that you are not fit to go into eternity and face God? But you may go to Him now, if you will go as a sinner, and simply trust in Jesus as the Saviour of sinners, “who bore our sins in his own body on the tree.” Trust Him; trust Him simply; trust Him implicitly, and then you will be able with joy and with triumph to answer the question, “How shall I face eternity?”

ANON.





“NO ONE WAS EVER LIKE ME.”

ONE evening an open-air preacher was about to close a service in Islington, in which the Lord's presence and power had been manifest, for two or three had cried out audibly to the Lord. As the preacher had continued the service longer than usual, he seemed wearied, and his voice had failed him, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a young man like himself said, "You seem tired, may I pray?"

"Certainly," was the instant response, and then the stranger's voice rose in earnest prayer for blessing on the word, and in thanksgiving to God for manifest tokens of blessing, and for the word of the gospel.

When the prayer was over, and conversation with some of the anxious, the stranger put his arm into the preacher's, and they walked down together towards Pentonville.

That evening a lasting friendship began. Although absolute strangers to one another, and as to business pursuits having nothing in common; belonging, too, to different countries, they knew and felt that they were brothers in Christ, and each had a deep and earnest desire for the conversion of sinners to Christ.

From that night they laboured together in the gospel, and the Lord opened wide the effectual door for them.

There seemed to be but one unconverted member of the household, and the not uncommon request, "Pray for my sister," told the anxiety which prevailed for the conversion of that one.

The unconverted sister was a tall, handsome young lady, who, until a few years before, had been the constant companion of her brothers, making the house ring with her merry laugh, and going with them to the ballrooms and theatres.

Since they had been converted to God she had found things sorely changed: her mirth was counted frivolity, her laugh was checked, her songs were no longer appreciated, she could get no one to go with her to the theatre or the ball-room, and her life was made unbearable by the

Bible readings and drawing-room meetings held in the house.

Every new friend was looked on by her with suspicion, and almost treated with contempt, as she observed traits of what she was accustomed to call "goody"-ness.

The new open-air preacher friend was at first treated in this way, but as he did not force religion on her became not altogether an unwelcome guest. Besides, he was often pale and wearied as he passed home, and as he was a stranger lodging in London she had even said to her brother, "You ought to have brought in your friend to get something warm to-night."

The intimacy had run on for several months without her having been plagued about her soul's interests, and she had gone so far as to promise her brother that she would accompany him once to hear his friend speak or preach.

A fitting opportunity occurred, when an address was to be given to a Sunday school in the neighbourhood, and her brother proposed that they should slip down unknown to his friend, and bring him home to tea with them. She agreed to this, and was soon an unperceived hearer in a hall where 500 or 600 young persons and their teachers were assembled. She knew that the speaker had no idea of her presence there, and could not, therefore, allude to her, or direct his words to her particularly. Yet somehow she felt that all he said was of deep interest to her, and as he spoke of the love of Christ, and the great redemption price paid "that sinners might not perish, but have everlasting life," as he told how

God in love had removed every barrier that had stood between His bosom and the lost and ruined sinners, and how He waited now, with outstretched arms, all the day, to receive to His embrace returning ones, and how He desired to reason with them, "That though their sins were like crimson, he would make them as white as snow." As God in Christ was thus pictured to her, she felt that there was a side to religion she had never looked at; for she had fancied that religion meant starch, and frowns, and lectures, and long faces, and disagreeable things, but love, pardon, and acceptance, and to be made white as snow, was desirable, and when the speaker, young like herself, spoke of the joys of peace with God, she almost wished that she knew such peace in her own soul. And as he told of some who the apostles said had given themselves "to the Lord," she could scarcely keep back the desire to give herself to the Lord if He would take such a sinful creature as she was.

The address over, the little party went together to the square, and at tea-time there was an unusual quietness on the part of the sister, which gave rise to the hope in the breasts of the young men that some incorruptible seed had found a place in her heart, and inaudible prayers to God arose, that He might carry on and perfect the work He had begun.

After tea it was proposed to sing some hymns together, and that she should play the piano accompaniment. In a little time the company fell into part singing, and with her soft, rich voice she was leading the soprano. The first few verses

of "Rock of ages, cleft for me" had been finished and as the last verse was about to be sung it occurred to her brother's friend to quietly point to it, perhaps partly with a view to its being sung softly. She began tenderly,

"While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,"

then to the surprise of all, the piano and the singing suddenly stopped, another moment, and in a burst of weeping and sobbing, she bowed her head on her hands over the piano, then, quick as lightning, she started up and flew out of the room; her mother followed, to find that she had gone into her own room and had locked the door.

The singing ceased, and the little company broke up, but there was joy in some hearts at the thought that one who had long withstood, had at length been overcome by the grace of God, and as the "Good-bye" and "God bless you" were being said, the usual "prayer for my sister" was understood rather than expressed.

Days of darkness followed; the bright, merry laugh was unheard, and the pale, sad face told a tale of secret grief, almost of despair.

The brother's friend was at length asked to visit her. She would speak with him, and most willingly, although with much prayer and trembling, he went. He was shewn into the drawing-room and found her sitting by the table, the deepest anxiety depicted on her face.

She reminded him of what he had said in addressing the school, of God's willingness to accept and save, and bless and pardon; of the peace that

he had assured them could be obtained, "and now," she said, "I have sought that peace, but there is no peace for me. I have sought pardon, but God will not pardon me. No," she continued, "I am lost, God has given me over: I shall perish, I know I shall." And then another burst of tears followed these rapid ejaculations.

Very patiently and calmly did the friend endeavour to show her that these were only the imaginings of her own heart and the suggestions of the father of lies, and, opening up the scriptures, he showed her what was the truth, what could be relied on, and put before her the free, full offer of salvation by faith in Christ. To turn her away from herself, and her own endeavours, and to get her, without feelings, quietly to believe the record that God has given of His Son: to believe that the work of Christ was perfect and complete, and that ere He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He had purged away our sins was difficult to believe in a work done 1,800 years ago instead of looking for a present work to be done in her was altogether against her ideas, but "He who at first commanded the light to shine" on a dark world shone into her heart, and made her willing in the day of His power and grace.

"But what am I to do?" she asked, in bitterness of soul; "I have sought, and prayed, and wept for days and nights, but there is no difference—no one was ever like me."

"Stop," said the friend, "do not say that there was never anyone like you, for I have trod the same path you are now treading. Once (and I

remember it well, I shall never forget it), like you I stood as it were between life and death, between heaven and hell, the eternal destiny of my soul hung as yours now seems to hang. I can almost recall the deep agony to me of that moment in my history. I had thought, and read, and prayed, and reformed, and failed, and although I could see nothing for me but the abyss of misery and woe, I could not bear the thought of spending an hour, much less an eternity, with murderers, adulterers, and devils. The dread words haunted me, 'He that believeth not shall be damned!' but what it was to believe I could not understand. 'Oh,' I thought, 'if I had only lived when Jesus was on the earth I would have gone to Him, nor would I have left Him until I had got all solved and explained.' Then came the thought. 'He is here, although unseen,' but He was as much unseen to the blind beggar of Jericho, and, like him, I cried in the deepest agony, but with a glimpse of light and hope, 'Lord Jesus, Saviour, have mercy on me.' It was, indeed, a moment of great importance to me. I realised that I had nothing to fall back on, all my past life was sin and folly and enmity to God. I felt I needed mercy—and that nothing but mercy would do for me—I knew it must come from God—and in the knowledge that I should perish if He did not save me I lay at His feet helpless. Then what a glorious sight unfolded itself to my gaze, as I saw in Jesus the Son of God who had loved me and given Himself for me, as I realised that He had said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' Confidence

grew ; indeed, I wondered that I could have ever had a single doubt that such a loving Saviour should not keep His word ; and I was amazed that I had not long before fled for mercy to the One who had said, ' If ye had asked I would have given,' ' Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life,' ' I would have gathered you as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings,' ' Who-soever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' Thus," continued the friend, " I became a believer ; I know not how, but I know now that it was the work of the Holy Spirit, for so is everyone who is born of the Spirit ; and, now, let not this moment pass in your life—a moment of deepest import to you—for if you receive Jesus now, you, too, shall become a child of God, ' born from above.' "

A few more words passed, and they knelt down to thank the Lord for His great salvation. While on her knees she was enabled to trust in the finished work of Christ, and to believe in Him as her Redeemer.

The friend was taken away by God to other spheres of usefulness, so that she saw him no more, but it was cause for rejoicing to hear of her after history as the wife of an earnest and zealous Christian, adorning the doctrine of her God and Saviour.

J. S.



“ONE SHALL BE TAKEN AND THE
OTHER LEFT.”

ABOUT four years ago my attention was called (writes one acquainted with the facts of the following) in a very marked manner to a man in the prime of life. We will call him H—— D——. He was a fine, stalwart young fellow, about six feet high, and stoutly built in proportion. He had been attending some meetings for preaching the gospel near where he lived. Not long after he and the young person he was engaged to were at a dance in a public-house in a Westmoreland country town. The music and the dance, the revelry and the excitement, were running high and wild, as the midnight, aye, the early morning hours stole softly, surely upon the party, something else as well was nigh at hand, that to which “Not at home” can never be said, as he, without knocking at the door, walks in.

What a solemn word that is written by the wisest man who had ever lived; the one of all others who had drunk deeply of every stream that earthly joy can present, and yet was forced to write, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity;” I mean that word in Ecclesiastes xi. 9: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” Aye, dear reader,

and it is not only the openly gross sins, as men call them; but consider the last words of this self-same preacher, "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be bad." (Eccles. xii. 14.)

Well, the revelry went on until a loud shriek was heard above all the music and shuffling of active feet. "Oh! one of the girls has fainted, on account of the heat; a little air, fetch a glass of water, and she'll come too soon." The pulse is felt; alas! it was no faint. **DEATH** had stalked in—she was gone! Of course the doctor can be of no use; he can't restore to life: it is of no avail to press the finger on the wrist, or on the heart; he shakes his head, drops the lifeless hand withdraws his own from the throbbless bosom—Dead! "One shall be taken and the other left." We must there leave it; but, dear reader, had you been the one thus suddenly snatched away, how would it have been with you?

Not unwarned, not ignorant of the "plan of salvation," the "scheme of redemption," as men speak, yet perhaps up to now utterly unheeded, or put off with "there's lots of time for me;" that is the serpent's argument, my friend, the devil's pet device: "To-morrow, not to-day," while God says, "To-day" — "Now." He puts it in a smaller compass than that of a day, even. He says "Now." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

The "left" one was struck with terror and remorse, but still did not decide for Christ. He was spoken to and urged to accept that which is offered "without money and without price"—

God's salvation, as wrought out by God's Christ and presented in God's word; and thus he went on for three years or so, until about six months ago there were more gospel meetings held in the same neighbourhood. These H—— D—— attended regularly with another young woman, to whom he had become engaged. She professed to be a believer. Whether she had been reminded of the "unequal yoke," and so was anxious to have her affianced husband become a Christian, too, I can't say. Perhaps she had not thought about the "unequal yoke" (2 Cor. vi. 14), as, alas! many do not, and get their affections engaged with those who have not believed God's testimony as to their own lost condition, and His remedy in Christ. Does this fall into the hands of one who is a Christian indeed? Will you look at the passage above referred to, and be warned, whether a young man or a young woman, who through grace has been converted to God. Have you allowed yourself to be entrapped by the enemy into thus disregarding a distinct, direct injunction of God. Don't say, "Oh! I have faith enough that he or she, as the case may be, will be converted." God's word does not give you a warrant to transgress His plain enjoinder on this head, and set up your faith, which is His gift, to override His word.

Oh! the days, weeks, months, years of sorrow you will be spared, my young brother or sister in Christ, by cleaving to this admonition, and thus avoiding being linked together with an "unbeliever." These young people went to the meeting as usual one Saturday night; this one

was the last to be held. H—— professed to be saved, and confessed Christ to all who spoke to him. They went home to the house of the young woman's father afterwards, and had some supper with the family; talked on till nearly midnight. At length it was time for H—— to set off to his own home; he arose to start on his two miles' walk, put on his top coat, which he had no sooner done than he fell down, and died without uttering another word.

"One shall be taken and the other left." This time H—— was the "taken" one, and his intended the "left" one, the very reverse of the "one shall be taken and the other left" of three and a half years before.

Dear, dear reader, if you are a procrastinator—one of those who put off settling the question of salvation to "a convenient season"—one with whom the Spirit of God has striven, one who has tried, or is trying, to turn the edge or blunt the point of God's "two-edged sword." His word—he warned, for these are solemn warnings alongside of the fullest gospel truth. Take that word in Acts xiii., where, after the apostle had proclaimed "That through this man [a risen and glorified Saviour, though once the dead and buried Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things," the Spirit of the living God adds through the same vessel, "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish." (Acts xiii. 38-40.)

Oh! do you "beware," and instead of "THAT

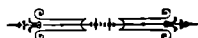
coming upon you," let it be the other truth, "Be it *known* unto you, that through this man is preached unto you" — yes, is preached this moment—"the forgiveness of sins," and, believing this testimony, may you find yourself inside what follows: "And by him all that believe are justified from all things"; but don't forget, ignore, or make light of that word "BEWARE."

The following appeared in the local papers announcing the sad event of H—— D——'s own death:—

SUDDEN DEATH.—On Saturday night, a young man named H— D— attended Mr. M—'s last meeting in the Assembly Room, at W—. When the meeting was over, he left the hall apparently in his usual health, and accompanied his young lady, who lives at T— C—, to her home. After remaining there for some time, he was on the point of taking his departure, when he fell back, and suddenly expired. Deceased, though a fine, robust young man, about six feet high, had sometimes complained of affection of the heart.

Perhaps you, too, have an affection of the heart, a more frequent occurrence than is suspected, and an insidious disease going on and progressing, which may terminate as suddenly, as fatally, as with H—— D——. Do, therefore, be persuaded to listen to the loving beseechings of a loving God, through His apostle, "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. We, then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted,

and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. v. 20-22 : vi. 1, 2.)
S. V. H.



GOD'S CHRIST, OR HUMAN RELIGION—WHICH?

"Nor a cloud, not a doubt, not a wish." So said a dear child of God on his dying bed, after spending more than half a century in the Lord's service, and in seeking to make known the glad tidings of God's love to this poor ruined world. How was it that there was such perfect rest? Because he had come to that One who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In a word, he was resting on God's Christ, and His precious blood, which cleanseth us from all sin ; and in his dying hour there was not one single doubt, he believed in God's love to him, and "perfect love casteth out fear."

Now turn with me to a humble cottage, where an aged believer is passing away. A Christian went in, and during conversation, quoted these lines :—

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Soft as downy pillows are."

"Not can," she immediately said, "but does."

“Jesus does make a dying bed
Soft as downy pillows are.”

Here was the realised presence of Christ, she had believed in the finished work of Christ, and He, according to His promise, never left and never forsook her. Dear reader, is your religion like this? is it the fruit of faith in the person and work of Christ? If so, you will find it sufficient in a dying hour. Of what worth is a religion that affords no comfort when you are about to be taken from this scene altogether? Shall we now stand by another death-bed?

Listen to Mrs. S——; she says, “This religion does very well when you are in health, but it does not do for a dying hour.” Ah! what religion was that? A religion of works, a religion in which Christ was altogether shut out. It was human religion because it took no account of the blessed Christ of God and His finished work; it ignored and despised His most precious blood, and made everything of the natural man and human works; it gave great pleasure during health, but it left an aching void in sickness; there was nothing for Mrs. S—— to rest on but her own puny efforts and charitable deeds, and they gave no peace to her soul; and what were they in the eyes of the Holy God whom she was about to meet? Hear what He says, “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” and again, “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

Listen to the testimony of one more whose time and chief concern seemed to be to attend to religious meetings or charitable efforts, but when death drew near, one closely related to her

said afterwards, "Though M—— seemed to live for the other world, yet, when about to die, she was no more ready to leave this world than I am." That religion again was human, for heart acquaintance with God's Christ not only gives peace, but enables a person to say it is better "to depart, and to be with Christ." Is your religion one that will avail in a dying hour? if not, of what possible value is it to you, nor, dear reader, will it stand before God. It is Christ God looks at, and if you come not with Him you are lost for ever, as "there is none other name under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." God will not hold you guiltless if you despise the blood of Christ, you are slighting that which He values beyond everything else. Remember, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing?" You may say, as these two did when in health. I have a right to my thoughts as to whether there was a necessity for the death of Christ or not: you may, too, refuse to acknowledge Him as Lord now, but sooner or later you must own Him as Lord, for God distinctly says in Phil. ii., that every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Yes, things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth will confess that Jesus is Lord. In hell there will be no escape from that. But, dear reader, do you

mean to be one who will be made to bow the knee? Surely you will lay aside all your own thoughts about yourself and about God, and listen to His thoughts as to yourself? What does He say of you? "From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it." That is what He says about you, and then He says to you, in the same chapter, "Come, now, 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." Would you not like to be as white as snow? In another portion of God's word it tells us of some who "had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." In the blood of the Lamb; that is the only way in which we can have our sins washed away. If God could have saved us in any other way, and at the same time have maintained His own righteousness, He would never have given up "the Son of His love," "His only begotten," His well beloved, to be mocked, scourged, and spit upon, and finally to be made sin for us, who know no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Oh! see to it that you are not slighting or despising Him, for those who despise Him shall be lightly esteemed.

Do you say, "I am very religious." So were the two last souls, they were very religious, they had plenty of religion, but no Christ; their trust was in the religion of their own minds, but God says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." It is the blood that screens a soul from wrath, it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.

Oh ! that I could give some little idea of the value
God puts on the blood.

"Blest Lord, what heavenly wonders dwell
In Thine atoning blood !
By this are sinners saved from hell,
And rebels brought to God.
For ever be the glory given
To Thee, O Lamb of God !
Our every joy on earth, in heaven,
We owe it to Thy blood."

R. M. W. B.

"NO RELIGION."

ONE of this world's great men has recently died and been buried. His funeral was of a splendid and imposing character ; and, as a certain writer has said, "the magnificence of his funeral is an emphatic testimony to the estimation in which he was held ;" but he adds, "In one sense, however, an English pauper's funeral would be preferable ; G—— was a materialist, and no religious rites were performed over his grave." His body is in the place where they laid it with great worldly honours, but naturally the question rises, "Where is he?" We know it is written that Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John xiv. 6.) God's word tolerates no other way, truth, and life, but "Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God." "Neither is there

salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

"He belonged to no religion," said another to me. From that statement one would conclude that there are more religions than one. Which is the right one? What do you say about that, reader? What religion do you belong to? Perhaps you would tell me if I were sitting by your side. True, there are many religions; and, as one said, "it is very difficult to know which is the right one." Just so; and, looking at them simply, your mind is sure to be perplexed, puzzled, and perverted; but come to the word of God, that makes everything plain. "Oh! there is nothing like the word," said one who had just heard read out of God's book what suited her case.

Now, to begin, what does God's word say about you and me? That is all-important. It tells us that we are ungodly, without strength, sinners, and enemies. Now, there is a four-fold view of ourselves. (See Rom. v.) Again, it speaks of us as darkness, under Satan, blind. (See Acts xxvi. 18.) All the world has become guilty before God, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (See Rom. iii.) Do you believe that testimony about yourself? You cannot get right before God until you do.

But we have got another testimony. What is it? God's gospel concerning His Son Jesus Christ. What do you read in John iii. 16? Is it not this: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth

in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" Here it is, you see: whosoever believeth in Him is saved. Saved, did you say? Yes, he has eternal life. I can give you another scripture, John vi. 47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." That is conclusive. That person can never be condemned, nor lost. That one is right, for Romans viii. 1 tells us that "there is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

But what about the right religion? Well, will Philippians iii. 3 do? "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Then, again, turn to Titus ii. 11-14. There you get what the grace of God brings, "Salvation." What it teaches those who simply receive salvation: "Teaching us that, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." First, renounce—give up. Second, live every day soberly. Self-control: self first, you see, then righteously before and with all men: godly, in the fear of God, as we read in Acts xi. 31, of believers "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." Then comes what they are to look for. What Christ did for them, and what they are to Him. But I see it is that word religion that occupies you. Well, James, in his epistle, gives the word (chap. i. 27). "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and

to keep himself unspotted from the world." Is that your religion? But I should like to give up the word religion, and take up another, and that the sweetest word the human ear has ever heard, "Jesus."

"Jesus how much Thy name unfolds
To every open'd ear;
The pardon'd sinner's memory holds
None other half so dear."

Now, what do you think of Him? Mere religion will never save anybody, no matter what one it is. I don't want you to mention any one of them. No one saves. Jesus only is the Saviour of sinners. Have you met Him? What is He to you? Many religious persons, alas! know nothing about Him. The word is plain, "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already," no matter what his religion may be, "because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.) Oh! what a mercy for those who are merely religious if they could give up their religiousness and take Christ Jesus, God's beloved Son, as their all. I know men have sung of religion, and have spoken the praises thereof. But for salvation it is Christ Jesus alone, not religion. How is it with you now? Does your heart cleave to God's beloved One? No! would that it did. How sad it is that Christ Jesus has no attractions for the heart of poor, fallen man, "No beauty that we should desire Him." (Isa. liii.) How true! Religions have attractions, newspapers, theatres, balls,

concerts, anything or everything but Christ. What a work of grace has been wrought in you, dear reader, if you have found your pleasure in the beloved Son of God! Praise Him: Now, what is it to be, my friend? No Christ, and religion, or no religion, and Christ? Have done with human religions and empty professions, and accept God's beloved Son: and take God's word for all you can know, and all you need to know, and you will soon learn what is right and what is wrong; then it will not be religion, but Christ.

"Cast your deadly doings down,
Down at Jesu's feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete."

G. L.

WELCOME TO JESUS.

"Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—Isaiah xliii. 25.

Who is it bids you come? Jesus, the Son of God. He who made you. (John i. 3; Ps. c. 3.) Can those who are going on in sin get rest? Yes, come to Jesus, and He will give you rest, and enable you to give up sin. The wages of sin is death. (Rom. vi. 23.) But Jesus, God's Son, stood in that place of death, and suffered the

punishment due to us, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.)

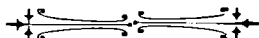
But you say, "How am I to come?" If you could see Jesus standing by you whilst you are reading this paper would you not know how to come? I think you say, "Oh, yes, I would tell Him how I long to be washed in His precious blood, and made clean from every sin." Now this is just the way to come, only as you cannot see Him, you must believe in Him. Come just as you are. Do not wait until you are better, for Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." We none of us come to Jesus as moral people, or respectable people, but only as sinners. (Rom. vi. 19-23.) There may be a great difference in the outward life before man, but God looks upon the heart, and He sees the hearts of all to be alike bad. (Jer. xvii. 9; 1 Sam. xvi. 7.)

Will you believe what God says and accept eternal life? (Rom. vi. 23.) You have nothing to do for it. The work has been done by Another. Your debt is all paid. God is satisfied. If you are satisfied, then why not come? Only trust Him who loves you, and is so willing to save you. We can have no true peace until we know that our sins are blotted out. (Isa. xliv. 22.)

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

"Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with

silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. (Ps. lxxviii. 13; John iii. 16, 36; John v. 24.)
E. L.



HEART BREATHINGS.

OH! blessed Saviour, Lamb of God,
Before Thy face I fall,
Thou art my life, my strength, my peace.
My righteousness, my all.

The burden of my many sins,
Thou baredst on the tree.
But they are all for ever gone,
And I'm for ever free.

Sweet was the love that caus'd Thee, Lord,
To pass the angels by,
To bear Jehovah's wrath for me,
And on that cross to die.

But Thou hast conquer'd death and hell,
Thy victory is won,
And Thou art seated, glorified,
Upon the Father's throne.

Thou royal Prince of life and peace,
Son of the Father, hail!
I love to sing Thy matchless worth,
And how Thou didst prevail.

The sunshine of Thy Father's face,
Lights all my path below;
Communion, too, with Thee, Oh! Lord,
'Tis heaven on earth to know.

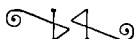
The glories that surround Thy name,
Thou Son of God, most high,
Ere long shall burst upon my view,
And fill both earth and sky.

Then countless host of ransom'd souls
Shall worship round the throne,
And ceaseless hallelujahs tell
The wonders Thou hast done.

Yet not the golden courts of heaven
Will captivate my heart,
But, knowing then as I am known,
Shall see Thee as Thou art.

One look upon those pierced hands,
When faith is changed to sight,
Will satisfy my ravish'd soul,
Where God Himself is light.

For, more than all things else, I long
Thy beauty, Lord, to see,
And, in Thine own sweet image, sing
Thy boundless love to me. S. T.





A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

I WAS passing out from an evangelistic service in connection with a large City Sunday school, when the superintendent directed my attention to two of the elder scholars, who were also about to leave, saying: "See, there is a chance for you; these have been at the school eight or ten years, and are yet unconverted."

Thus introduced, I accompanied them on their way homewards, taking the opportunity in

Christ's stead to beseech them to be reconciled to God, and pressing on them a present acceptance of salvation on God's terms, namely, without money and without price, by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of them appeared to me to be a hindrance to the other, for her heart seemed not prepared for the seed, and the work was like ploughing instead of sowing.

Leaving her at home, [which fortunately came first, I went on with the other about a mile further towards her destination, and was astonished at her readiness to hear the truths of the gospel. I could see, too, that her heart was soft, and I asked her, "Are you not anxious about your soul?"

"Yes," she replied, "I have been very anxious for more than eighteen weeks."

Struck with the exact number of weeks being mentioned, I felt curious to know what had given rise to her anxiety, and on inquiry she readily informed me.

"My mother," she said, "was very ill, she has died since, and while she lay dying, I slept in the same room with her, and when she thought I was asleep, she used to pray for me, that my soul might be saved and that I might become a child of God. I had been very careless, and thoughtless, and wicked, and a great trial to her, and when I heard her pray for me, all the time my heart was like to break."

"And," I suggested, "you wished you were a converted girl, I dare say?"

"Oh, yes!" she replied, "I wept and prayed,

though I could not tell my mother, or, indeed, anyone else; and since she died I have wished someone would tell me how I may get my sins forgiven, and become a follower of Jesus."

"You want to meet your mother at God's right hand, don't you?"

"Yes, I do," she said, with much emotion.

"You would not like to miss getting her arms round your neck, and yours round hers in glory, and to be for ever with her and the Lord who loved her, and whom she loved," I continued.

Struggling to keep down the sobs which heaved in her breast, she inquired, "What am I to do?"

"Do," I said, "my dear child, do nothing; but believe God's word about His beloved Son. You believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten and well-beloved Son, don't you?"

"Yes," she replied.

"And that Jesus, who was the Lord of all, came down to earth, and laid down His life for us, that we might not perish, but have life everlasting?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well," I said, "stop now one moment," and I took her hand, and looking full into her face, I said: "Tell me, was it possible for God to show more love to you than that, or for Christ to do more to win your confidence and gain your affections?"

"No," she replied.

"Yield yourself to Him, soul, body, and spirit, to be the Lord's, and let Him have His own way with you."

“Here you are, your heart like to break with desire to be His, and here He is longing, yearning to have you come to His outstretched arms. Get into those everlasting arms of everlasting love, let them close around you, and with your head on His bosom, you will know the throbbing of the heart that is filled with a love to you, whose height you cannot reach, and whose depth you cannot fathom, and whose length and breadth you will never fully comprehend.”

“Is He not worthy,” I asked, “of your confidence and love?”

“I know He is,” she said; “but I am so unworthy. Oh, do you think He would take such an one as I am?”

“Come, now,” I said, “you must stop looking at yourself, and thinking your own thoughts, and look at Jesus. What He has done for us, and what God says about it. He declares that Jesus gave His life for us, that our sins were all laid on Him, that His blood cleanseth us from all sin, that He is ready to pardon and bless the chief of sinners; that, in fact, Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners; not the whole, but the sick, and that He will in no wise (on no account whatever) cast out anyone who comes to Him.”

Thus conversing we had passed through the most crowded streets of the city, and were getting more into the outskirts. I could see in my young friend a real and deep desire to have the great question decided. After her eighteen weeks of groping and apparently deep anxiety, I longed to see the cloud dispelled by the light

of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. Seldom had I met one so full of anxiety and desire to be the Lord's; she had hidden the deep longing of her heart from all, but now she had expressed it, and I felt that God's hand was in it.

Lifting up my heart to God silently for some word of power from Himself ere I parted with my friend, we arrived at the gate leading to her father's house.

As she was about to say good-night to me, I asked her if she would not like to have the great question of her soul's salvation settled; the knowledge of her sins being pardoned, and of her full acceptance with God, before she went home. "Would you not," I said, "like to go in a believer, a child of God, sure of heaven, of being there, of meeting your mother there, and, better still, of seeing the Lord Jesus on the throne of God, as the One who died for you?"

"Yes," she replied; "I have prayed all these weeks for it, but I seem to be no nearer to it."

"What is your name?" I asked.

"Lizzie R——," she replied.

"And your age?"

"Twenty-three."

"Well, Lizzie," I said, "you have lived for twenty-three years without God: careless and thoughtless, you admit. All that time God has been stretching out His arms to receive you to His embrace, yet you have not come. He has been saying to you, 'Take of the water of life freely. Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price;' yet you have refused

to hear or obey. Do you not wonder at the great patience God has had with you?"

"Yes," she replied; "I was a trial to my mother, but I have been a greater trial to Him."

"Yet He was longing, yearning, beseeching you all the time to be reconciled, to be His friend, and to cease your enmity, to accept of salvation on His terms.

"The Lord has used your mother's prayers to break your heart and to take away the opposition you had, and now He has implanted, by His grace, a desire for what you formerly did not esteem. To-night He has sent me in His stead to beseech you to be reconciled, to compel you to come into His house, ere the door be shut."

"Yes," she said, "I believe He has sent you."

"Well," I continued, "it is said that whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Suppose, if you can, that the Lord Jesus stood with that book in His hand, writing names in it, the names of those who desired to escape from that terrible judgment, and to be with Himself for ever, to share His glory, and His heart, and His home; and that with the pen in one hand and the book in the other, He were to ask you: 'Lizzie R——, shall I write your name; will you be mine?' What would you say to Him?"

"Oh," she said, without a moment's hesitation. "I would say, 'Lord, write my name!'"

"And if He were to ask, 'Will you let me wash you from all your sins in my blood?' what would you say?"

"I would be only too glad to let Him do it," she replied.

"And would He do it?" I asked.

She hesitated to reply, and I continued: "You remember the woman who was a sinner, and who came to Jesus at such an awkward time; just when He was at dinner in a Pharisee's house. He might have said, 'Come at a more suitable time.' He might have spoken of her many sins as a hindrance to her coming there, but He only spoke of them to tell her that they were all forgiven; even although she had never uttered one word in His presence. She came silently, and went silently, but she came in a sinner, and went out a saint. The Lord instantly granted her request, and would He not instantly grant yours? Does He not say, 'There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth,' and does that not mean that there will be joy in heaven, yes, that there is already joy in heaven over you?"

"Remember," I said, "that Jesus is near us; that He has heard every word we have uttered. He has heard you express your willingness to be washed, and to be His own for ever. You desire to yield yourself to Him, body, soul, and spirit, I feel sure, do you not?"

"Yes, I do," she replied.

"Then will not He who has wrought this desire in you, fulfil it, and that right gladly, too, according to His own word, and rejoice over you, to comfort you, and to do you good? Lizzie, I said, "we sing a hymn that says:—

'There are angels hovering round,
To carry the tidings back,
That sinners are coming home.'

"Fancy, if this were true, and that some angel was just waiting to carry home to your mother in paradise the news of your having trusted Jesus as your Saviour. Would it not gladden your heart to send such a message to your dear old praying mother, that her prayers were answered, and her daughter on the way to glory?"

"I am sure it would," she said; "I wish I could believe Jesus."

"Remember," I said, "Lizzie, Jesus is listening to you, take care what you say. He is worthy of all honour from you, as well as from me. Now tell me in His own presence. Does He not say: 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out?'"

"Yes."

"And you, a poor sinner, want to come, and if you could see Him here beside you now you would fall at His feet and lie there till He put His hand on you and said, 'Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven.'"

"Oh, yes, I wish I could see Him, it would be easy then."

"Yes," I said, "you suppose seeing is believing, but it isn't. But," I asked, "in the face of His own promise, that He will in no wise cast out any poor sinner, do you believe He will cast you out, Lizzie?"

"No," she said, "I would not like to say that."

"You had better not," I replied, "for that

would be calling God a liar, and if He will not cast you out, tell me, will He take you in?"

A moment's hesitation, a moment's quick heaving of her breast, and, with tears, she said, "I see it. If He will in no wise cast me out, then that means that He will take me in."

"Yes, of course it does," I said. "And now suppose I were the sinner coming to Jesus, and I gave myself to Him, when would He give me everlasting life?"

"Whenever you believed, I suppose, for He says, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.'"

"Then," I added, "if I believed I should instantly have everlasting life, should I not, according to His word?"

"Yes."

"And whosoever believeth becomes possessor of this gift?"

"Yes."

"Then, Lizzie, is this everlasting life of yours by trusting Jesus?"

"It must be so," she slowly answered.

"It is also written, 'That as many as received him, to them gave he the title to become children of God, even to as many as believe in His name.' Now, if you and I trust in Jesus, what does God say we become?"

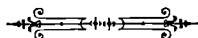
"His children."

"And if anyone met you and asked, 'Are you a child of God?' what would you answer, looking at what God's word declares?"

"He says I am."

"Then," I said, "just believe what He says, and may you be as a candle lighted by the Lord,

to give light in all the house ; now that your dear mother has been taken to glory, may your influence be like hers.” J. S.



ABSOLUTELY SINLESS.

A CHRISTIAN visitor was once speaking with a Scotchwoman about salvation. She believed “we were all sinners” that “even the best of us cannot pretend to be *quite* clear in God’s sight,” but that “God is merciful, and will not be hard upon us, for he knows what we have to contend with in this world,” and that “if we repent and do our best we haven’t much to fear.”

“Would you receive a dirty woman into your house to live with you?” asked her visitor.

“Certainly not,” replied the tidy Scot, in tones of disgust. “I’d soon show her the door.”

“You would not associate with a person of bad character either, I suppose?”

“I should hope not, indeed,” said she.

“Yet you think God can receive into heaven persons who are unclean in His sight, and whose hearts are by nature deceitful above all things and desperately wicked?”

“Well, we can’t help our hearts, you know, and as to being unclean, if we repent God has promised to forgive us.”

“What do you understand by repentance?”

“Well, a hearty sorrow for sin is repentance,

I suppose, providing we resolve not to commit it again."

"Could you keep that resolution?"

"Well, I won't pretend that I could."

"And if you could, would all that put away sin?"

"I think so, through the merits of our Saviour."

"Ah, yours is a very mixed gospel. You see, part depends on you, and part on Christ. His merits, as you speak, only avail the sinner on condition of his doing something which you admit you are unable to do."

"Well, but we must surely do our part?"

"And if we fail in the attempt?"

"God is merciful, and won't be hard upon us."

"But you would not let an unclean person reside with you, much less a vicious one?"

"No, I would not," she said, very emphatically.

"Then how can God do so? God is more than merciful, for God is love; but He is holy, and 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin,' so that unless you become as free in His sight from sin as He is Himself, you can never enter heaven."

"As free from sin as God Himself is!" exclaimed the woman, "Who, then, can be saved? If that's true, none can ever enter heaven, unless it is a few very wee ones," meaning babies.

"Does it not follow, from your own showing, and from what God is, that He could not possibly allow that which is offensive to Himself to dwell with Him for ever? Not one sin can ever

enter His presence. You must be absolutely sinless if you would enter there."

"Well, then, I don't see much chance of being saved."

"Don't you? But I will tell you more than this. If you had never committed one single sin in thought, word, or deed, you could not enter heaven as you are; for 'except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'"

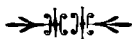
"I know that's in the Bible, but I don't understand it; and if I did, I couldn't do that for myself."

"Certainly not, and hence you see how entirely you are cast upon the grace of God to do all for you. If you had never sinned you could not enter heaven as you are; your very nature is unfit for His presence. But besides this, you have sinned, and no repentance, prayers, or tears can possibly wash away sin. If I broke your window even by accident, would my being 'heartily sorry for it and resolving never to do it again' pay for it?"

"Of course it would not."

"And 'without shedding of blood is no remission,' God hath said so; but He 'so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.' '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.' As the dying serpent-bitten Israelite looked to the brazen serpent when he heard that

God had said, 'He that looketh upon it shall live,' so the lost, perishing sinner who takes God at His word and looks to Jesus just as he is, gets all he needs. His sins are washed away by the blood of Christ, for it is written, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' He gets life, too, at once; he becomes 'a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God.' Nothing of our own; nothing of ourselves; 'all things are of God.' How wonderful is His grace! We could do nothing to fit ourselves for His holy presence; if required to 'do our part,' we could not do it, so He does all. We have only to do as the perishing Israelite did—take God at His word. That is faith, and 'being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' But you will understand that no Israelite who did not feel that he had been bitten by the fiery serpent, and was therefore in danger, would have looked to the brazen serpent; so now, only those who feel that they are sinners in God's sight will look to Christ, and only those who do so can possibly be saved. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' 'Clean every whit' and 'a partaker of the divine nature,' he is fitted for God's presence, and able to enjoy Him for ever. Heaven is his home, it is his natural sphere, and earth his pilgrimage while waiting for his Lord. And if snatched away at any moment, he is, in God's eye, absolutely sinless."



SAFE HOME AT LAST.

THE MOON was sinking to rest as the traveller stepped on to the heath from the high road. He had crossed it that morning for the first time, and a beautiful scene it was. Covered with gorse in full bloom, shining in the sun, all green and gold, and enlivened on every hand by the birds, who sat singing aloud in its shade, while overhead the merry lapwing darted hither and thither, screaming in alarm or anger at his intrusion; and the lark, soaring away till he vanished in the fleecy cloud, poured his joyous matins thence; or the saucy rook, passing leisurely by, looked down sideways at the traveller, and mocked him with his sonorous "Caw!" It was a scene to be remembered. A wide, vast solitude, wild and broken, interspersed here and there with hollows where winter's rains had settled, and formed bogs and pools; old, disused furze-hidden gravel-pits, and tangled thickets. It was no place for a night journey, and yet, as he stepped on to the heath, lighted by the moon, its very loneliness gave it a charm in the traveller's eyes. As it was much nearer than going round by the road, he thought he would attempt it, although cautioned by a friend whose house he had just left, not to do so. Moreover, being ignorant of the situation of the heath as regarded east and west, he was under the idea that the moon was rising, instead of being about to set; and thus, to begin with, "a deceived heart turned him aside" from the path of safety.

Most surely there is nothing new in that ; it is, in one brief sentence, the moral history of the world from Eden until now. "A deceived heart" has turned man aside from God, and keeps him there. He has forsaken the only place of peace and safety, yet he knows it not, but goes on contentedly, promising himself much gratification, and utterly unconscious of danger.

So did our traveller. At first it was pleasant enough, and he greatly enjoyed a scene so romantic by moonlight. No sound broke the silence that reigned around, save when some startled rabbit sprang across his path through the rustling gorse, or the owl hooted from afar, as he pursued his quarry in the open. On the one hand, old trees stood in the still shadowy light ; on the other, an interminable sea of gorse, broken here and there by a pool, whose still waters reflected the moon's pale rays, or lay in utter darkness. But the traveller had not gone half a mile ere he noticed that the light began to grow more faint, and soon the gloom around increased so fast that his path became uncertain. What strange, fantastic shapes the shadows took, as they crept across the winding, broken way he trod ! Oft did he think a bank or a bush stood full before him, or that a log lay right across his path ; it was but the shadow of some old tree that flung its arms weirdly aloft in the failing moonlight. More than once it was difficult to convince himself that a shaggy head and glimmering eyes were not peering out upon him from beside a thicket, or that some uncouth, shapeless thing was not moving on before, as if

retreating to hide in the gathering gloom. It was but the rising mist rolling onwards, moved by the evening wind, and taking strange shapes in the uncertain light. He did not wonder that the ignorant and superstitious should believe in brownies, pixies, and hobgoblins.

Let me pause and ask, are you not conscious that there are other conditions of existence beside those you see around you here, and yet, in spite of an indelible conviction, which is bound up with your very being, you go on as if this world and its concerns were all, or only use what is true to turn it to wild and superstitious notions? Oh! how truly it may be said, "A deceived heart hath turned man aside;" aside to anything, everything, but the truth of God! If the illusions which surrounded our traveller on that wild heath were many and strange, they were not more so than those that lead the worldling farther and farther astray from God. Weird, fantastic, startling they were, but not more unreal than the delusions which encircle man.

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully, and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Whose delusions were the greater or the most

serious, those of this man of the world, or of our traveller on the wild, moon-lit heath? The delusions which surrounded the rich fool involved the everlasting destiny of his never-dying soul. Occupied with them, he saw not the path he was treading and which led suddenly to the abyss eternal, to a doom irrevocable, to misery inconceivable!

Suffer me to ask you, my reader, how are you occupied? Is it with the delusions of this world, or with the realities of that other, which you are conscious await you sooner or later? And how soon? Can you count upon an hour? "This night thy soul is required of thee!" What if that sentence has gone forth against you? Are you prepared for it through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, you are in nature's darkness; and "he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

So our traveller began to find. The gloom increased rapidly, as the moon, which he had thought to be rising, sank lower and lower. The shadows of

"Every bush and tufted tree."

grew longer and more dense, until it became impossible to distinguish the shadow from the substance; and if the weird, fantastic forms that had flitted across his path were gone, it was only to leave it in darkness more and more profound. The mists from the pools and hollows below, sweeping upward and around, increased the obscurity; he lost his path at last, and, entangled in the gorse and underwood, he knew not where he was. Then suddenly the moon went down,

the last glimmer of light faded out utterly, and he was in total darkness—darkness so intense that, on holding his hand close to his face, he found he could not see it! Everything around him had become invisible; the gorse, the trees, the very earth on which he stood, all were gone; and he alone and helpless on that wild moorland!

He was lost, absolutely lost. To advance was to risk destruction, for he knew that bogs, pits, and hollows surrounded him; to stand still in the misty night, immovable, till morning, was death! What was he to do? In attempting to move gently forward, he felt he was descending some declivity, whether that of some old gravel-pit or of one of the hollows, half-filled with water, which he had noticed by daylight, when on his way outward, he knew not. Either was sufficiently dangerous, and he turned round to retrace his steps, but still, of course, in total darkness. It was then he discovered how far he had unconsciously descended, for it was only with considerable difficulty that he could ascend again the steep which he had begun to go down without knowing it. How strikingly this resembles the way of the man of this world! “A deceived heart has turned him aside,” and “darkness hath blinded his eyes;” he “knoweth not whither he goeth;” and it is only when something occurs to alarm his conscience that he discovers how far he has departed from “the right way.” The effort to return betrays to himself the downward course he has pursued, and, with it, his own helplessness. For what shall he do? To go on as he was going is destruction; to stand still in his lost condition is death everlasting! What shall

he do? It was this the jailor of old felt when, at midnight, in the very act of self-murder, he heard a voice from the inner prison, which told him God saw his act, knew his inmost thoughts, and therefore the way of iniquity he had trodden up to that moment. To go on as he had done was perdition, to stand still as he was was condemnation and everlasting death. "So he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He cast himself on God.

Reader, will you ask your own conscience, "Where am I?" It will tell you the truth, if you will honestly listen to it, for God has not left man without a conscience, and you cannot but feel, as our traveller felt, that you are treading a downward path. But perhaps you hope that, by making an effort, you can retrace your steps, and attain a higher moral standard. Try it, and you will then discover how far you have fallen. Besides, where will you go? What will you do in the moral darkness that surrounds your soul? You have but one course to take. If you remain as you are you are lost for ever; if you go on as you were going, you will sink into the fathomless abyss, where the once rich man cried for mercy in vain. Your only safety lies in doing as the jailor did, in casting yourself on God.

This is precisely what our traveller did. Happily, he knew Him, and to Him, in his peril, he cried in faith. Then, as to see was utterly impossible in that profound darkness, while the effort to do so was even painful, he closed his eyes and walked right on. "Why, you will

say, "he ran imminent risk of either breaking his neck down a gravel-pit, or plunging into one of the flooded hollows on the heath!" Ah! but he had cast himself absolutely upon the Lord, and none ever did that in vain. On and on, through the darkness and peril of that wild scene, unable to see a single step of the way; on, without hesitation, delay, or hindrance, he went; neither entangled in the gorse nor entrapped in bog, or pit, or hollow; until at last, on opening his eyes, he saw something glimmering white in the darkness, which he took for a river. He approached carefully, lest he should stumble down a bank and fall into a stream. Bending forward he felt with his walking-stick, to ascertain what it was that seemed so visible in spite of the gloom. It was the white chalk road that would lead him safely home! And it was then he knew, more fully than before, the perils he had escaped through the goodness and mercy of his God. On his right, within a few paces, ran a deep river, whose precipitous banks he had trodden without knowing it; on his left, just where he came out of the heath, lay a deep, old gravel-pit close to the road he had found, or, rather, been led into by the hand he had trusted. Had he swerved to the right or the left, he must have met destruction; a narrow ridge, not four feet wide, had proved to him the path of safety.

The traveller did not find the narrow ridge that led him safely into his homeward way; he was brought into it. And if you, my reader, desire life, life everlasting, you may have it in the same way as the traveller obtained the deliverance and

safety he sought. It is written, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" it is written again, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." You are as helpless in yourself to obtain salvation as was the traveller to extricate himself from the perils of that midnight heath, or to find his homeward way. He stood still just as he was, and where he was, and called upon the Lord. Do, then, likewise, just as you are, just where you are. Make no effort to save yourself, to improve your moral path or condition; but just cast yourself upon the Lord. Call on His name, look to Him, trust Him, take Him at His word when He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavily-laden, and I will give you rest." He gave "rest" to the traveller from his temporal and physical danger; He will give you "rest" eternal from the soul-peril you are in. "He died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," and He is risen again, and glorified at God's right hand, "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." You may have wandered long in delusion, darkness, and peril; you may have committed many and heinous sins; but "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Only believe in him; simply trust Him; cast yourself wholly, absolutely on Him, and He will assuredly bring you safe home at last.

J. L. K.

UNBELIEF.

A BELOVED physician, in good practice in London, who knew the Lord, and for His sake was in the habit of going gratis to any poor person whom the writer commended to him, once visited a young woman, at his request, who was suffering from dropsy. He attended her for a considerable time, but, in spite of all his skill, she grew worse and worse.

At last, as a forlorn hope, he advised her to go into a hospital, and kindly procured a ticket of admission for her, telling her candidly he had no hope of her recovery, and that she had better prepare for death. His reason for speaking so plainly was that she was wholly unconcerned about her soul. The writer had been to her time after time, seeking to show her need of Christ, but all in vain, and hoping that if the doctor pronounced her case hopeless she would become alarmed for her salvation, he had requested him to deal plainly with her.

After this had been done, and it had been arranged that she should go the next morning into the hospital, the writer went to see her for the last time. The "beloved physician" had been so very plain with her, for her soul's sake, that he had told her she would never come out of the hospital alive! It is seldom that medical men are so candid with their patients, but, then, they have not all the same care for souls that this dear servant of Christ (who has probably since gone home) evidently had.

On entering the house, the visitor found her

preparing for departure on the following morning, and began at once to speak with her as to her condition both of body and soul.

"I understand your case is so serious that Dr. C—— has advised you to go into the hospital?"

"Yes, sir, he has. But I don't think I'm so bad as he makes out."

"Well, he knows best; and, even if you should recover, you must die at some time or other, and you are still unsaved."

"There's time enough to think about that, sir. I believe I shall come home again in a week or two; and I have just been measured for a new pair of shoes, for my feet are swelled so that when I come out I shall want a bigger pair!"

Think of that, my reader! A dying woman, solemnly assured by an experienced physician that she would never return home alive, occupied about a pair of new shoes! Treating the doctor's verdict with deliberate contempt, and coolly informing his friend that she had done so! But worse even than this. While anticipating, in their unbelief of medical testimony, the possible want of "a bigger pair of shoes," she declares as to the salvation of her never-dying soul that there was "time enough to think about that!"

Was she a vicious person, do you ask? Not at all. So far as the writer ever knew, she seemed to be a moral, well-conducted young woman of about eight-and-twenty, living with her mother and husband, but, like too many, occupied exclusively with the things of this world, and wholly indifferent as to God and all His claims, His Son and all His sufferings for sinners, her

eternal future, and all the awful consequences of neglecting the great salvation.

Is your own condition at all like this? Is there any resemblance? Have you accepted the great salvation, or is there "time enough yet," in your opinion, "to think of that?" And, in the meanwhile, does "a new pair of shoes," or some other trifle of comparative value, engage your attention? "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The visitor, astonished at the woman's apathy and utter unbelief as to her critical state both of body and soul, spoke to her of sin and its deserved judgment; but she was "no worse than her neighbours." He spoke to her of Christ. "He was our Saviour, of course, and He died for us," said the woman. He spoke to her of faith in Him, but she "believed in Him, of course, and always had done so ever since she could remember; she wasn't a heathen, and, thank God, she had always done her duty, and hoped to do so when she came home again."

"And if you should die in the hospital?" suggested the visitor.

"I don't believe I shall, sir, or I shouldn't have ordered a new pair of shoes, of course."

"But what if you should; where do you expect to go?"

"Why, to heaven, of course, sir. Surely, you don't think me bad enough for the other place?" she asked with a kindling indignation.

"Why do you expect to go to heaven?"

"Well, that is a curious question for a gentleman of your profession to ask. We all know

Christ died for us, and that God is merciful, if we don't know so much about it as some that are no better than we."

This was a rap at the visitor, and the beloved physician, too. What more could be said? Unbelief both as to God and man was the sum of her condition. She did not believe God, who has declared that "all have sinned," "that without the shedding of blood there is no remission," "that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" than the name of Him who died for sinners, and for sinners only, that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," and that "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Nor did she believe man as to the fact that she was actually dying at that moment, and had not many days to live.

"Unthankful, unholy," the woman went to her death. She entered the hospital next morning, and in three days she was a corpse! How she died, the writer knows not. Grace may have met her in her last extremity, and the Gospel so often put before her may have been even then applied in power by the Spirit.

If not, "in hell she lifted up her eyes, being in torment," and memory, like the worm that never dies, would recall the "despite done to the Spirit of grace" in the eternal past, opportunities neglected, mercy despised, and "the kingdom of God," as shown through His servants, all set at nought. And what was the cause of it all? Let me beseech you to weigh it well as to God and your own soul; it was simply unbelief.



LOSS AND GAIN.

ON LEAVING my office one day about noon, I met one of my employers, and I at once saw in his face a sad and downcast expression, quite unusual with him, for he was naturally buoyant and pleasant. Dreading that something was wrong, I accosted him.

I remembered, too, at the same moment, that he had business which had kept him resident in

a town at a distance, and that his being in the City just then was an indication of something important having taken place.

I expressed surprise to see him, and asked if all was right, hoping that his wife and family were well.

"Did you not hear that I have just lost a dear child?" he asked.

"No," I said; "I am extremely sorry to hear of it. What was the matter, and which child?"

He explained the whole circumstances. They were extremely painful, and had occasioned the deepest grief to his beloved wife and to himself. He had hastened home only to see the little loved one lying in the coffin, and to hear from its mother the accounts of its last moments and its last touching messages to its much loved and doting father.

I intentionally pass over those harrowing details, the very mention of such a death being itself sufficient, doubtless, to call up in our memories never to be forgotten moments and scenes, through which God, in His providence and grace, has carried us.

I listened to all the sad incidents of the few days, closing with the funeral.

"Just yesterday," said the almost broken-hearted father, "I laid my little one in the grave. Her mother is in a sad way about her, and I have not left home till now, although I can do little or say little to comfort her."

"But," I said, "from what you have told me, I cannot doubt that you are both quite satisfied that your child has been taken by the Lord, to be

with Himself; you should rejoice in the midst of your grief that you have this assurance."

"The child is all right, I know," said my friend; "I am quite sure about her. I only wish I were as sure about myself."

The last words were said in a sad, serious way. They sounded as if they were more than a common-place remark, and I thought that I could detect the sting of the grief in my friend's heart.

"Are you not quite sure," I asked, "that you are the Lord's, and going to be with Him?"

"No," he said, "I am not."

Then followed a long account of efforts, and desires, and failures, church going, and prayers, etc., etc.; but through it all I could see at a glance no life, no Christ, no faith, nothing but death and dead works.

"This will never do at all, my dear fellow," I said, "you must get quite sure about your salvation. I do believe that the Lord has taken away this child that He may reach your heart and save you. It is a loud call, and a tender chord has been touched; you must bear the rod, and you shall perhaps kiss it by-and-by."

After a few more words, I asked him when he had to leave the City, and finding that he had but one night to spend in it, I asked if he could come down to my office in the evening at five o'clock, and I would then, by God's help, tell him how he could become quite sure about everything.

He thanked me, and promised to meet me then.

The interval allowed time to lay the case of this precious soul before the Lord. I felt that

it was a blessed opportunity; that the good and gracious Lord Himself was tenderly moving his heart, and that the Holy Spirit was brooding over the darkness there. I trembled lest I should spoil the work of the Lord, or prove a hindrance to God. I yearned to be a vessel meet for the use of my blessed Master, especially at such a moment.

I had scarcely risen from my knees at five o'clock, when the bell sounded, and my friend was shown in, accompanied by his wife. I welcomed both warmly, but she apologised, saying:

"When he told me that you were to speak to him about how to get saved, I thought I needed to hear it as much as he did."

I rejoiced to find in both of them a deep and earnest desire to find peace and rest to their souls, and I doubted not that the Lord would enable me to direct them to Himself, where and from whom alone that peace could be obtained, which would be lasting. I spent two hours in earnest conversation with this anxious couple. The chief difficulty with the husband was fancied goodness; with the wife it was having once professed, and then having gone back from this profession, whatever it was.

He was indeed a good fellow—one of the kindest, most tender-hearted you could meet with—and to show him that all this amiability, and all his good morality were only in God's sight as filthy rags, and that he was no better than any other undone, lost sinner in the sight of a Holy God was no easy task; but I found to my great encouragement, that his wife agreed with

me, and herself knowing the baptism of John, she occasionally made the remark, "That is just what I told you, your good heart will not do."

"We have always read the Bible together," she said, "and had prayers, and gone to church, but I know all that won't do. I had a mother who used to tell us we needed a new birth. Since we married, we have gone to the — Church, and we don't get any help there; there is nothing about how we are to get born again. They are quite satisfied if we sit in our pew and pay our fund subscriptions, and they never ask us if we are converted.

I found that in her early days she had been attending a Methodist Sunday-school, and what between having a faithful teacher, a godly mother, and hearing Methodist preachers, she knew a great deal about the ways of salvation, and in her early days had even gone so far as the Penitents' Form, and had many a wish to be right with God, and to know her sins forgiven.

I endeavoured to show them that as sinners we all stood guilty and condemned before God, and that there was really no difference; that we all deserved to be cast out from God's presence, and to be damned eternally; that we could not say anything against such a condemnation; that sin stopped our mouths; that we had really been enemies to God by wicked works, and that we were concerned in the rejection and murder of God's Beloved Son, and when God should arise to make inquisition for blood shed on earth, all who had not been pardoned would be found guilty.

I pointed out that the blood which sealed the sinner's fate was the blood which washed all sin away, and which gave us access into the presence of God, and made us suitable for the holy place, and meet to be partakers with the saints of the heavenly inheritance.

I expressed to them (and turning to God's Word I read) the unwillingness of God that a sinner should die or perish, that He had no pleasure in the death of the wicked, that He delighted in showing mercy, that He was ready to forgive, and that He rejoiced over the repenting one, that He saw afar off with joy, the beginning of desire to come to Him, and was ready to meet, embrace, clothe, and rejoice with and over those who had been dead, but were alive again, who had been lost, but now were found.

Glad, indeed, I was to find that my friends were convinced of sin, of judgment, and of unbelief, as I pointed out that God had commanded all men to repent, because He had a day fixed for the great assize, and that the Judge was already appointed; they owned that they had not obeyed the gospel, nor the command to repent. And I showed them that such were to be punished with everlasting destruction when the Lord Jesus will be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance.

As I had an engagement to preach at half-past seven o'clock, I prayed for them, and thought to part with them, but they were still anxious to hear how they might be saved, and begged to accompany me to the gospel preaching. I

gladly accepted their company, and we went to the Mission-room.

It was situated in a very poor locality, but as we pressed into a crowded and brightly-lighted room, there was a charm about it. We were late, and I had scarcely time to pray, as I turned to give out the first hymn that came up.

I did not know then, but I heard it soon after, the effects of the words of that hymn on my dear friends, especially on the husband. They were ready, I dare say, for more law, more condemnation, but God's eye had guided to, and God's Holy Spirit applied the hymn—

“Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus died and did it all,
Long, long ago.

“It is finished; yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?”

The question, “What must I do?” that had been rising in their breasts, was answered. Nothing had to be done; Christ had done it all.

The address was never referred to, although I doubt not I sought to show forth the fulness of salvation. God was pleased to use the hymn in directing their minds to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, as a completed work.

As I accompanied them homewards after the preaching, I could see that a step had been gained. Not only had they seen their lost state, and admitted condemnation just, and their own

sin in persistent unbelief, but they now could see that God had provided a Saviour, even Jesus, and that He could on the ground of His finished work save and bless, forgive and comfort them.

I pressed on them an instant acceptance of salvation through Christ. They expressed great desire to possess it, but something hindered their receiving Christ in simple faith, and I parted reluctantly from them, hoping that He who had brought to the birth would also bring forth.

On the following morning the husband had to travel by the early train, and it was a day or two before I heard of or from him.

A letter received then told me that after I left him, conviction had deepened in his soul, and consequent anxiety; they had read the Bible together and prayed, but still there was no peace. His good heart now seemed a wretchedly bad one. He could only marvel that God had allowed him to live on, in open rebellion and wilful disobedience. His wife went to bed; he could not, but continued in reading and prayer for a length of time. She awoke, and, seeing him up still, she begged him to take some rest, and to please her he lay down. He had, however, scarcely lain down, hardly knew if he was sleeping or waking, when it seemed to him as if the end of all things had come, and he and his wife were amid falling buildings and ruins; he was trying to protect and save her at the risk of his own life, and, seeing a beam just about to fall on her head, he shouted to her to look out; but it was too late, and as the beam fell he awoke to find that he had wakened her also by his screaming and starting.

His agony now for her, as well as for himself, was intensified, and when he had told her of the dream, she too felt alarmed. They rose, and, falling on their knees, he prayed Christ to save them. She followed, and ere they rose from their knees they had the sense in their souls of pardon and peace.

This was the substance of the letter I received from my friend. I had opportunities afterwards of meeting with them, and exhorting them to follow the Lord, and of rejoicing with them in His grace. J. S.



IN A MOMENT.

SOME two or three years ago, one afternoon two young men, one younger than the other, were walking and talking together. How little they thought that in a very few minutes one of them should be in eternity, yet it was to be so. They had a dog with them, and were approaching the railway line, which was rather high at this point, and in consequence a bank had to be mounted before reaching the line. Before they reached the line by some little distance the dog ran in front and mounted the bank. One of the young men seeing this, and also seeing a train coming, fearing lest the dog should be run over and killed, ran after it. But, in his anxiety for the safety of the animal, he only perceived the one train approaching, and had crossed the line on which

that ran, when no sooner had he done this than he was instantly knocked down by another train coming from the opposite direction. Of course his friend now saw the danger, but since he was unheard, his shouting was of no avail, and in one brief moment that young man was in eternity. Yes, in a moment! Reader, I know not whether that young man was prepared to die or not, but my object in writing this little account of the sudden death of a young man in the prime of youth, as we often hear, is to show you how uncertain this life is, and at the same time to ask you: If you had been in that young man's place, where would your soul have gone? Where would your eternity have begun? Would you have "gone to be with Christ, which is far better?" or would you have departed to await that day of which St. John the Divine says: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation xx. 12, 15).

Reader, death may overtake you just as soon as it did that young man, and, if it should, how would it find you? Would it find you "ready?" If not, how terribly solemn for you to meet death unprepared, unready! It may be you have heard the Gospel preached over and over again; have been to Gospel meetings, or to chapel and to church regularly; but all this will avail you

nothing. If you think this is how you are to be "prepared," you make a grand mistake. You are slighting God's Christ. His work, His finished work of the Cross is your sole passport to heaven, if ever you are to be there. Hear what God says about your doing this and doing that. He says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" and then again, "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Dear reader, as one who earnestly desires the redemption of your soul, which God declares "is precious" (Psalm xlix. 8), I would entreat of you to come to Jesus, for He Himself declares "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." Jesus is the One who came down here for you! He is the One who went to the Cross for you! He "endured the Cross, despising the shame." "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." He it was who rose again for you. He it is who, having conquered death, hell, and the grave, "for ever sat down on the right hand of God." Blessed proof that the work is "finished." He has finished the work once; He will never, no never, do it again, for now "once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). And now He is entreating of sinners to come to Him. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this

man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). He is the only one who can save you, or who ever will save you, and He is willing this very moment if you will come to Him. Believe on Him. Trust in Him. He says: "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). Oh, what wondrous grace is this to you, poor sinner! God offers you salvation freely, He offers you everything in Christ, if you will only receive Him. Will you, my reader, have Him? Surely, He is worthy. But, my reader, if you refuse this Jesus as your Saviour, you will never have another, "for there is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. Oh, then, come to Him. Believe on Him, and know that "whosoever" believeth "hath" everlasting life (John iii. 36). "Come to me," saith one, "and coming, be at rest."

A CERTAIN AND AN UNCERTAIN EVENT.

If you have Jesus as your Saviour and your Friend, you will not be unprepared to meet death, even if called upon to do so as suddenly as the young man in my narrative was. Then you, indeed, shall "depart to be with Jesus, which is far better." But, sinner, if you are still undecided, if you are determined to "put off" this salvation of your soul, I cannot but point out to

you another event which will take place in a moment. Your death may take place "in a moment," but this event will certainly take place "in a moment," since there is God's Word for it. The event I refer to is the one bright object and hope that cheers the heart of every believer in the Lord Jesus, and inspires them with a desire to "press forward," viz. : The Lord's coming for His saints. "Christian, look up," your Redeemer is nigh, your God is coming. Soon you will be taken out of this vale of tears. Soon you shall behold Him, whom, not having seen, you love. Soon you shall be in His presence, to go no more out for ever. But, undecided sinner, now I turn to thee and ask thee, canst thou still go on undecided about accepting Christ, looking His coming in the face, can you? The Lord may be here before you finish reading these lines. He may come and take all His ransomed ones home, and, mark, all this will take place "in a moment!" (1 Corinthians xv. 52.) No time for consideration then. He will come, and all His people be gone "in a moment"—nay, the apostle narrows it down to a "twinkling of an eye."

Can anything take place quicker? Oh, Christ-rejecter, I entreat of you to stop, stop, stop! You have, perhaps, decided to have Christ next year, or perhaps next month, or next week, or to-morrow, but your day of grace may end at this very moment. Oh, the danger of delay! Remember, "procrastination," it has been said, "is the recruiting officer for Hell," and "to-morrow is the devil's time." God's time is now. God gives you no to-morrow. I entreat of you to look this

“moment” in the face: “The Lord is coming.” In my Master’s name I warn you that if the Lord comes to-night, the door will be shut. The door of mercy is open now, and Jesus is willing to receive you now, but there is no averment in the whole of Scripture for His doing so “to-morrow.” Again, let me say that if you continue a Christ-rejecter, and the Lord comes for His saints to-night, it will be too late to cry for mercy then. Too late! too late!! too late!!! too late!!!! The only answer you will get then will be: “I know you not” (Matt. xxv. 12). If you live without Christ, you will die without Christ, you will be raised without Christ, you will spend eternity without Christ. Your eternal destiny may be brought on by those three little words “in a moment.” You may laugh and sneer with the sceptics, saying, “Where is the promise of His coming?” But stop! God declares He is coming. Do not say how can I come to Jesus? I have never been called. My friend, He has been calling you while you have been scanning these lines, and there is a day coming of which God declares: “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 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; for that they hated knowledge and did not choose

the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof" (Proverbs i. 24-30).

This is a solemn word of warning to you, Christless soul, but remember you are offered salvation freely now, for the Word of God declares, "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

Yes, God is long-suffering, and still "to-day" is a day of grace. Now you may receive forgiveness of sins. Now you may have everlasting life (John iii. 16, Romans x. 9, Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Let me once more entreat of you, my reader, if you have not yet accepted Jesus as your Saviour, to see to it that you have the "right thing, everlasting life," which is by simple faith in Jesus's finished work on Calvary's Cross. Then you may know the blessed, happy, and peaceful enjoyment of resting on that blessed promise, "Behold, I come quickly." Then with exceeding joy you shall look forward to that blessed event which will take place "in a moment"—the Lord's coming.

"What doth the watchman say?
Whose cry the slumberer wakes?
The night hath nearly passed away,
The morning breaks.

"The night is coming, too,
A night of speechless woe;
But there shall be no night to you
Who Jesus know."

W. H. S.

“ABOUT THE ONLY ONE I AM AFRAID OF.”

SOME years since, when going to look over an empty house that was to be let in the Brixton Road, at a time when one thought of settling near London, I found a very civil old body in charge, who showed me over the place, letting me look into every nook and corner, answering all my questions as far as she could. I said the house was empty; all the furniture had been removed; the only thing which neither the master, or mistress, or servants had thought worth taking away was an old, coverless Bible I spied, left knocking about on the stairs.

I took up this precious book, and, looking at it, said to the old lady, “And what sort of a book is this?”

“Sure,” said she, “it’s a very good book.”

“Why is it a good book?” I asked.

“Och, your honour,” was the reply, “it tells of good things—it tells of heaven, and it tells us of God.”

“Are you afraid of Him?” was my immediate question; why I cannot tell.

And suiting the action to the word, and as quickly as I put the query, the old dear put her arms akimbo by placing her opened hands on her hips, looked me straight in the face, and answered, “About the only one I am afraid of!”

I could quite believe her—at least as to her

lack of fear of aught else—a plucky sort of little body, as she seemed.

“Ah!” I said, “this is because you don’t know Him in His true character.”

But, dear reader, let us pause for a moment ere I proceed with my story. “About the only one I am afraid of,” God. Are you afraid of Him? If not reconciled to him, you ought to be; and if trying to reconcile yourself to Him, you ought to be equally so. Don’t you remember in the Garden of Eden it was a fig-leaf-clothed Adam, not a naked Adam, that had to say, “I heard Thy voice in the garden; I was afraid.” Yes, for once the common saying is true, “Conscience makes cowards of us all.” Mark, it was after he fell, and then tried to cover himself and his “help-meet” in aprons of their making; but they would not do when God came upon the scene, for we read, “And they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? and he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself” (Gen. iii. 8-10).

Poor Adam! Of no avail thy fig-leaf apron, of no avail trying to hide behind the trees of the garden. Brought out by that voice which none can refuse or decline to obey, and in spite of the covering of thine own making, forced to confess, “I was afraid, because I was naked.” Oh! then, neither fig-leaves nor trees of the garden can hide

from those eyes which "neither slumber nor sleep." Let me ask you, beloved reader: are you trying to cover up your nakedness with some efforts of your own? They may be lovely in themselves, and admirable to others. So were those aprons; they made our first parents, as they are called, comfortable and decent before one another. Would they do for God?

No; the moment He comes upon the scene, that voice now heard—what is it? "Afraid!" "Naked!" Look you, my reader, in the fig-leaf aprons, not one stitch of God's setting; all were Adam's and his wife's. But did God leave them thus? Blessed be His name, no. We pass over the intermediate verses, which read for yourself, please, and arrive at the 21st. What do we find? "Unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." Not a stitch of Adam's or Eve's now. God's "coats," instead of man's tiny "aprons." "Coats of skins, too; death had come in; atonement, in type, made, and God "clothed them." "All things are of God." Were they "afraid" now? How could they be? Stripped of their own doings; dragged out from their hiding-place; clothed by God, in that which God provided, so that God, the Holy God, must be satisfied with His own provision for His confessedly guilty, naked creature.

As the Psalmist says, "Thou art my hiding-place" (Ps. xxxii.7), so were the coats of skin their hiding-place now; not a refuge of their own seeking, but one of God's providing. Again in Psalm lvi. we read, "What time I am 'afraid,'

I will trust thee." Confidence in the very God who was but lately an object, to our old woman—according to her own showing—her only object of dread. They had anticipated the language of Isaiah, "Behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid" (Isa. xii. 2).

"Perfect love casteth out fear," we read in 1 John iv.; and also, "Herein is love with us (margin), made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world." How blessed! the believer, once a skulking sinner trying to cover his nakedness with something of his own, or even, trying to hide behind what is of God; his amiability, morality, respectability brought out into the light—stripped. Now he is clothed by God in that which He has provided, and with which He is satisfied. Now he can sing:

Reach my blest Saviour first,
Tear Him from God's esteem;
Prove Jesus bears one spot of sin,
Then tell me I'm unclean.

and further:—

Bold shall we stand in that great day,
For who aught to our charge shall lay,
While by Thy blood absolved we are
From sin's tremendous curse and fear?

This spotless robe the same appears
When ruin'd nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new.

What a difference—Adam's fig-leaf apron and God's coat of skins!

To return—“About the only one I am afraid of,” had replied my old Irish friend—“Ah! that is because you don’t know God in His true character—as He has revealed Himself in this book.”

I then tried to let her see how God, in the person of His Son, had sought to win man, had shewn Himself to be a just God, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. How He had dealt with Jesus about sin. Hid His face from that beloved One when He was bearing God’s righteous wrath, due to our sin, so that we read that bitter cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and that now God has raised Him from the dead. Shewing His satisfaction in that work, of which the Lord Jesus Himself had said, “It is finished.” And now the message is, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Turning to Romans iv. 5, I read to the now very attentive old lady, “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly; his faith (belief) is counted for righteousness.”

“Please mark that for me,” she said, and taking a pin out of the bosom of her cotton dress, handed it to me to stick into the place where I was reading, that she might find it again.

I went on a little longer, seeking to show what God’s estimate of the value of the precious blood of His Son is; how it meets His holy eye, and is thus that which atones, and how He says of that one who believes His word, “the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin,” lay-

ing particular stress on that blessed little word of only three letters "all," as the one to whom I was speaking belonged to those who are taught that there is something to be done besides what Jesus has accomplished, who believe in what is called purgatory, so I purposely turned to the 1 John i. 7, above referred to. Out came another big pin from the bosom of her dress for me to mark that passage as I had the other.

My old friend promised to take home and care for and read that torn, coverless old Bible. And I left her, commending her to Him who once said, "Let there be light, and there was light," that He might break in upon nature's darkness in her soul, and bless His own word, so that she might never more say of Him, "About the only one I am afraid of," but rejoice in Him as her salvation, and learn the blessed truth as to whose love it is which "casteth out fear." "The day" alone will declare the result of our strange interview, and so one can leave it.

But, beloved reader, how is it with you? "Afraid"? Be honest, and listen to that question, put by one who was no coward, suffering for his misdeeds as he was, to his fellow robber, "Dost not thou fear God?" Man you may not fear—nor demon—but fear God?

Well, then, go to that Bible you have, perhaps hid at the bottom of your chest—ashamed to be seen looking at it—a mother's last gift—it may be, or that gold edged, gilt clasped one full of pictures, bought most likely for the sake of the engravings, which you keep so well dusted in the front parlour, but never opened, except to

look at the illustrations, and pretty nigh tired of them, and learn there from the letterpress—not the pictures—what God's thoughts of sin are; of you, the sinner, and then in the death of His beloved Son, and read for whom it is: "Him that worketh not but believeth," Rom. iv. 5, and that "it is written," "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." May mother's gift, or your handsomely bound pictorial family Bible prove a blessing, and not rise up in judgment against you!

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