

FAITHFUL WORDS

FOR OLD & YOUNG

ILLUSTRATED.





THE TEXT ON THE WALL (see p. 146).

Faithful Words

For OLD and YOUNG.



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INTRODUCTION.

WE lay before you, dear reader, a fresh Volume of our FAITHFUL WORDS, and, as we do so, assure you that plain and simple truths of every-day life are what our pages record.

It is satisfactory to be able to state that the number of our readers, and the area over which our Magazine is circulated, have increased this year; but were Christian workers in this day more aggressive in their spiritual warfare, we are sure that where one now reads a gospel magazine or book ten would do so.

"Occupy"—trade—"till I come," the Master says; and there are but few of His servants who could not so use the talent of means or time given them as at least to circulate double the number of gospel tracts and books which they now do. The post offers great facilities to Christian work in distributing Gospel truth. May none miss the opportunity! Let us relate one little incident as an encouragement to those engaged in this branch of service. We received the other day a letter from a railway guard in a northern city, begging us to thank the sender to him of our Magazine, month by month for some years, as by its means he was at length given to know himself brought to God. We know not who the sender is—his or her eye may perhaps light upon this page—but we would say to all like-spirited Christian workers, "In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

We most heartily thank our friends who have so kindly contributed to our pages. We trust that they may be encouraged to continue their valued work; also, that others may be stirred up to assist us in our efforts, by sending records of incidents which come under their personal observation, in keeping with the object of our Magazine. We have seen on different occasions that some of the simplest stories of conversion have been those most used to help seekers after God to find peace in His presence.

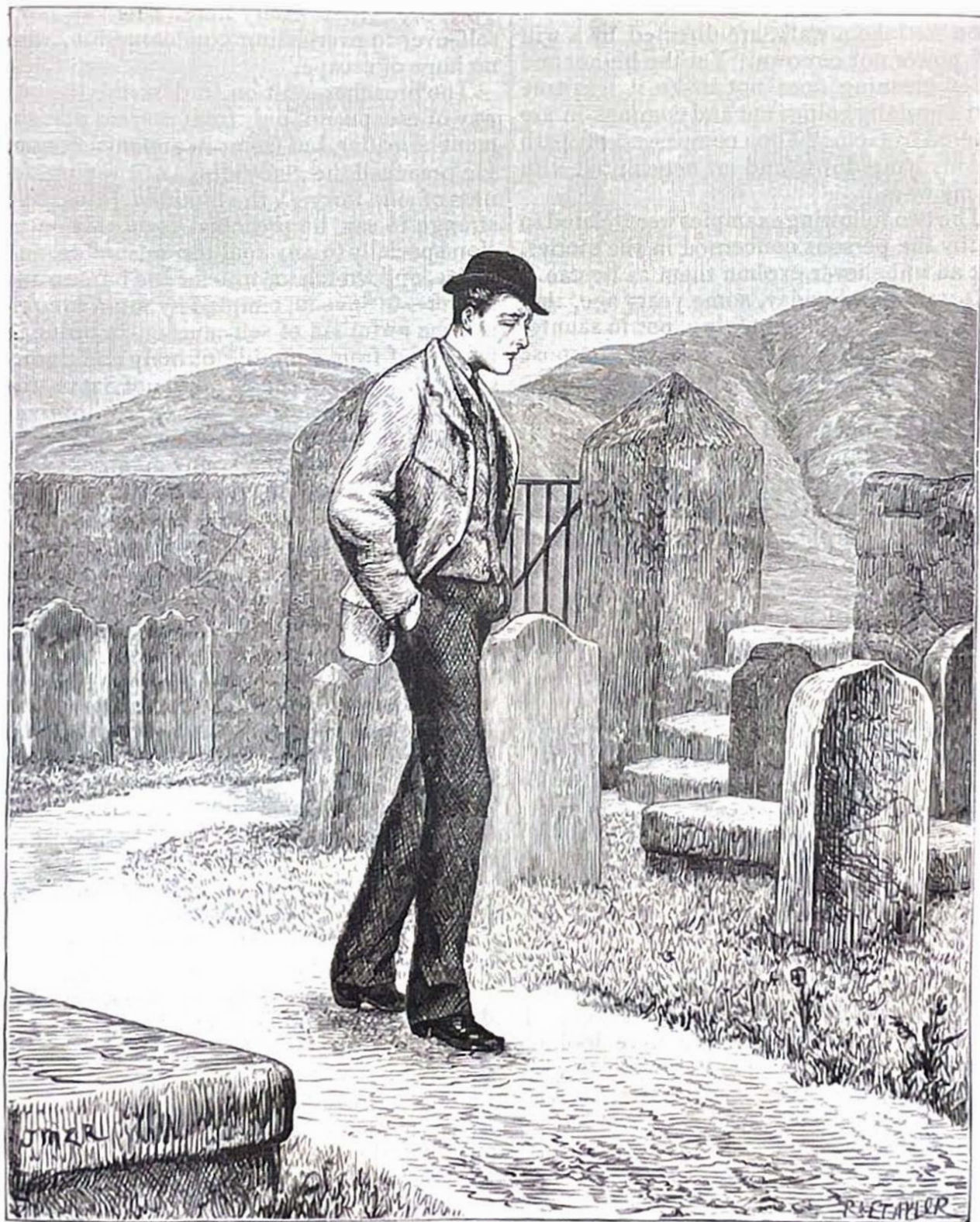
Some of our friends, who for years past have sent us papers, have been called home, but none the less do their words still utter the praises of the Lord, in whose presence they now are.

To those generous friends who, in patient kindness, have for past years freely distributed our Magazine to the poor, our warmest thanks are rendered.

Now once more may our Volume go forth, in its homely way speaking of and for the Saviour, and may God graciously deign to use it, dear reader, to speak words of comfort to you.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



TWO SUNDAY WALKS.

TWO SUNDAY WALKS.

"IT is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." No doubt these words have a wider meaning than that our actual steps, when we take a walk, are directed by a will and power not our own. Yet the higher and wider meaning does not make it less true that our daily goings out and comings in are ordered by God. "Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways."

The two following examples were related to me by the persons concerned in the stories. Let an unbeliever explain them as he can.

It was on a Sunday, some years ago, that a young man left his lodging, not to saunter about, but with a fixed determinate purpose in his mind to go to a lonely glen behind the churchyard of the village church on the hills, and there to put an end to his life. He had left his home and his christian father years before. Drink, gambling, and vice of all sorts had brought him to utter ruin. He was ashamed and afraid to go home; he was tired of his life, he had no belief in God, and he looked upon death as the end of his troubles. The only way to reach the glen was by a path which crossed the churchyard, and led to a gate in the stone wall behind the church.

The young man walked on resolutely till he reached the churchyard. He now had but a few yards more to walk, and then all would be over. He hurried on, his eyes fixed upon the narrow path. He felt that he had taken his last look of the world around, and had now to face death. After all, it was a dreadful thought! He walked on faster, when he suddenly remarked that a pavement was beneath his feet. He looked up, and found himself, not in the glen, but inside the church! He had taken the wrong turn where the path branched off to the gate. He was fairly inside the church door, and the village people were looking hard at him with wonder and curiosity, for the service was half over—the sermon, in fact, had just begun—and the young man looked wild and startled. But he looked still more startled when the first sentence from the pulpit reached his ears.

"Self-murder," cried the preacher, "is the

most daring act of unbelief and sin with which a man can pollute himself at the very moment when he has to stand face to face with God. To escape from misery here, he gives himself over to everlasting condemnation, with no hope of escape."

The preacher went on to describe the one way of escape, not only from eternal punishment hereafter, but from sin and misery now. He preached the glad tidings of the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus, but, strange to say, he preached it on this occasion specially to any soul too miserable, and guilty, and wretched, to bear his burden any longer—to any soul tempted by Satan to commit the awful sin of self-murder, in order to find relief from suffering of body and agony of mind. "Jesus, the Saviour, not Satan, the destroyer," said he, "is the One who gives rest and peace now and for ever."

After the sermon the young man went into the vestry and told his sad tale. "And now I see," he said, "that there is hope even for me."

The good minister listened to him with joy and thankfulness. He told him that he had been asked to preach on the sin of suicide. A young officer in the neighbouring barracks had threatened to shoot himself. Officers and men all alike attended this little church, and one amongst them, who was a believer, had called upon the clergyman, and entreated him to preach that Sunday specially for the young officer. He avoided everyone who could speak to him about his soul, and it was hoped that by this means he might be made to hear without being able to escape.

It was a perplexity to the clergyman to observe that, when the soldiers took their places, this young officer was absent. He had prayed much about this message, and he felt that God had given him the words he was to speak. He dared not, therefore, withhold them, though the man to whom he had meant to give the message was not there to hear it. And now he knew why the Lord had put the words into his mouth. It was in love and pity for this stranger, the son of a praying father, the lost sheep which the Shepherd had followed and had found.

The young man was truly converted. He

returned to his father, and had been, when I heard the story, living for the service of the Lord for some years. He had married happily, and had prospered in business, but here rejoiced in knowing that he was but as one alive from the dead, himself and all that he had the Lord's wholly, to be at His disposal, to be directed in all things by the Hand that had led him across the churchyard by a way that he knew not, and had brought him to the spring of living water instead of to the valley of death.

It was on another Sunday, some years later, that a man sauntered forth, his pipe in his mouth, to take a Sunday stroll in the fine summer weather. He looked just like one of those people of whom many would say and think, "He has no care for his soul." Such words are sometimes true, but are often too lightly spoken after a short acquaintance, or even a passing glance. In this case, could anyone have looked into the heart of that careless-looking man, he would have found there a deep, desperate longing after peace and rest, and yet more after the knowledge of the God of whom he had heard by the hearing of the ear, after whom he was seeking, but in almost utter hopelessness. Is it not written, "There is none that seeketh after God?" Yes. These words are the true and faithful description of every man, woman, and child, until God, in His grace, has begun to draw him to Himself. And God had already begun to draw this poor sinner to Christ. This is how it came to pass that he was now seeking God.

You may say that to saunter about on Sunday with a pipe did not look like seeking God. It certainly did not. But I must tell you his story. It may lead you to feel after and find some spark of divine life in those who appear most hard and hopeless. This man had, not many months before, been persuaded to go to a little Bible-reading, much against his will. He was not very attentive, found it dull, and never meant to go again. But, in spite of all, one sentence which he heard there sounded perpetually in his ears, and made him utterly wretched.

The words were these—"Which things the angels desire to look into." Our friend had

lived all his life in utter disregard of the things of God—he was as ignorant as he was careless and indifferent. But he had now learnt from this little Bible-reading that there was something made known by God, so great, so glorious, and so wonderful that even the angels desired to look into it. Moreover, he had gathered from some of the remarks made that there were people, common ordinary men and women down here, who knew this wonderful something.

What was it? "I, at least, know nothing about it," he said to himself; "I know about nothing but poor, wretched, common everyday things; I am only a poor grovelling creature, and so are all the rest of us. It is quite certain I don't know the shadow of a thing that would give the smallest pleasure to an angel. No, I know nothing that even a wise man would care to know about. What can it be? And how can I know it?"

Could he not go again to the Bible-reading, or ask some christian friend? No. He would not have it known that that little reading had made a revolution in his mind, which had never been made before by anything that had happened to him. He was determined to find out the mystery, but not to let anyone know that he was anxious or miserable. He, therefore, walked about, as before, with his pipe in his mouth, and kept away from all places where he was likely to hear the word of God.

The more anxious he became to know the great secret, the more anxious did he also become to hide the work that was going on in his soul. One day he observed at a book-stall a huge volume called "The Life of Christ." He bought it at once, and kept it hidden in his room. At all spare moments he devoured this book. He read it straight through, hoping, as he turned over each page, that he should find the answer to his longing. But when he had finished the book he knew no more about the mysterious secret than when he began. Moreover, he had found the book dull and dry, and he had gained nothing but a bitter disappointment. He would have liked to forget the whole matter, and, therefore, that Sunday he had sallied forth, as we have seen, to try if the green fields and the

blue sky could make him a little less miserable. Still the words sounded in his ears, and he *could* not forget them—"Which things the angels desire to look into."

In the course of his walk he observed, standing back in a field, a little iron room, which had been put up not long before by an acquaintance of his in the town. This acquaintance, Mr. Y., had sometimes said to him, "When you go that way, do have a look at the iron room."

"Now," thought our friend, "is my opportunity. I will have a look at it." He walked round it, and finished by making a survey of the door, which stood half open in that warm weather. It was easy to have a look inside without being seen by the people who sat on the benches. But, as if struck by a flash of lightning, he started back as the words reached his ears, spoken in a loud and solemn voice—"Which things the angels desire to look into."

The preacher had just gone into the raised desk opposite the door, and this was his text. God had spoken—"Is not My word, saith the Lord, as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces?"

The poor man threw down his pipe; he went in and sat down, and listened for his life. When he came away he said, "I know now that which the angels desire to look into, I know Jesus."

F. B.

HEAVENLY BRIGHTNESS.

I HAD knocked for some time at the door of a cottage in a Cornish village without meeting with any answer, when a neighbour coming out of the next house said—

"There's no one there, sir, but an old woman; she's very deaf, so she can't hear you, and almost blind, too. But walk in, sir, if you please," she continued, opening the door, and I followed her into the house.

Beside an old stool in front of the fire, her arms extended, as if in the act of receiving and speaking to some one, knelt the dear old woman.

"What is she doing?" I said, softly.

"Praying, sir," replied the neighbour.

After waiting a few moments I said—

"Does she pray long?"

"Oh, yes; she often prays for hours together, sometimes nearly all day long."

"Do you think she will be long now?" I asked, as we still waited.

"Perhaps an hour, sir,"—and the kindly neighbour went back to her own home, leaving me with the aged woman, who knelt on, unconscious of the presence of a stranger.

Presently I, too, knelt down behind her, and heard her say—

"Yes, my blessed Saviour, yes, Thou hast washed me in Thy precious blood, Thy precious, precious blood. Blessed, blessed Jesus, Thou hast washed all my sins away, and I want to see Thee, to see Thyself, my precious Saviour." She paused, then spoke again.

"I am very old, and very weak, and bad, and perhaps it will be sudden death, but then it will be sudden glory; won't it, Lord Jesus? Yes, sudden glory! And I shall be with Thee, shan't I? Yes, with Thyself, my precious Saviour.

"I have known Thee thirty-five years, and I love Thee the better the more I know Thee; but there are some in this town," and here her voice fell from its tone of rapturous expectation, and took a pleading strain—"there are some in this town who don't know Thee; and I want Thee, Lord Jesus, to save them. They don't want Thee; they are ignorant of Thee, but Thou did'st die for sinners. Send out Thy glorious gospel with power, and convert the people; fill Thy servants with Thy Spirit, and help them to speak of Thee as they ought to speak."

Then followed special prayer for her friends and neighbours, and after again pleading for blessing upon her native town, asking all in the name of Jesus, she quietly rose from her knees.

I gently touched her, and said, as she started in surprise—

"You have been speaking to the Lord Jesus, have you not?"

"Yes," she replied, "I can't do without going to Him, and very often too. But who are you? Do you love Him?"

"Yes," I said, "I do."

"Praise His blessed name," she murmured, as she fixed her dim eyes upon my face; "He

is worthy, isn't He? The more I know Him the more I love Him—don't you?"

Then, as if forgetting the presence of any but the One whom she so loved, she went on, "I shall soon see His blessed face—shan't I, Lord Jesus? Soon see Thy blessed face! Sometimes," she continued, turning again to me, "He tells me that it won't be long; I do see Him now by faith, but I want to be with Him where He is; that's where I want to be. Ah! and He tells me I *shall* soon see Him," she repeated—clasping her thin hands in ecstasy and again addressing, not me, but Him, whom having not seen, she loved, in whom even now she rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory,—"*I shall* be with Thee, Lord Jesus—shan't I? Yes, with Thyself—shan't I?"

The furniture of the little room was scanty, and the state of this aged woman was helpless. Her husband worked at breaking stones upon the road, she said, and they were very poor. Before I left she fell upon her knees, and prayed for me in the most tender and touching manner, asking the Lord to bless me, and to give me souls for my hire. And so I left her alone, yet not alone, in her little cottage, poor and mean indeed to outward seeming, but the dwelling-place of one "rich in faith, an heir of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him."

P. & J. J. H.

ON KEEPING BRIGHT.

THE young christian so frequently looks in himself for brightness that we must remind him it is only as looking to Christ he can keep bright. There is no power in self which can possibly produce a bright state of soul. Occupation with self necessarily produces dulness, for in self there is no good thing. How did you receive Christ? we ask. By works, or by faith through grace? Now, as we received Christ, so must we walk in Him. It must be Christ for salvation, and Christ for progress; Christ for life, Christ for light and brightness. Day by day life's wear and tear, worries and trials, test *where* we are. The cross of Christ has proved *what* we are. We are spiritually in prosperity and brightness so far and no farther than Christ is strengthening us.

ONE CHANCE MORE.

"MY brother George is dying and afraid to die." Such words admit of no delay with any heart that knows the value of a precious soul, and knows also the secret which turns the fear of death into joy and praise.

The speaker was a young man about twenty-two years of age; intelligent, well educated, and religiously trained, but alas! without Christ.

"Do come at once if you can," he beseechingly said; "the doctor says my brother can hardly live through the night."

I accompanied the young man to the house. At the door the sorrowing mother met me: she had been anxiously waiting for us. Her eyes filled with tears as she wailed out, "My poor, dear boy George, only seventeen years of age, and dying! I have besought him when in health, again and again, to give his heart to Jesus. Now I fear it is too late. Oh, he is dying! Come into the bedroom and see him."

I noiselessly followed her into the half-darkened chamber. Shall I ever forget the sight? There lay the youth, breathing so heavily that the bed actually shook under him. His eyes were partly closed, and he was apparently unconscious of all that was going on around him. His sister sat by his bedside moistening his parched lips. Presently he opened his large eyes and stared wildly round; his lips parted, and he murmured, "Where am I?"

"You are at home with your own mother, George dear," the mother gently said, taking him tenderly by the hand.

"Am I very ill?"

"Yes, you are very ill indeed," she replied; and looking enquiringly into his mother's face, he said—

"Mother, I'm not dying, surely? I cannot, oh, I cannot die!" His head fell on the pillow, and he fainted.

When consciousness returned, his mother said, "Mr. M. is here."

His eyes fell on me. I eagerly asked, "What shall I ask God for, George?"

In an agony of soul he said, "Oh, pray

that I may get one chance more—only one chance more!” and again he swooned away.

They bathed his burning brow, and the mother, son, and daughter joined in asking me to pray the Lord to raise him up again, and that he might have at least one chance more.

We knelt down and besought the Lord for him, and as we prayed, poor George kept murmuring, “Not dying!—I—cannot—die; one—chance—more,—only—one—chance—more!”

Days passed on. He hovered between life and death, apparently very anxious to be saved; but he did not cast himself as a helpless sinner upon Christ.

Then there came a change. He began to recover, and as his strength returned, to our grief we saw his anxiety to be saved lessen.

In a few days he was able to sit up. Mother, son, and daughter were indeed glad. The Lord had heard our cry, and had granted his request. George had one chance more.

Now all anxiety was over. He did not want Christ *now*! He was going to live! He was afraid to *die* without a Saviour, but, as he was going to *live*, he would rather live without Him. Though grateful for kindness shown, he would heed no more the warning voice. I pleaded with him again to cast himself as a poor sinner on Christ, reminded him of the solemn moment when he had cried on the brink of eternity “for one chance more”; but George turned a deaf ear, and became utterly indifferent to the welfare of his immortal soul.

In a short time he was able to walk about, and (against his mother’s wishes) made up his mind to go to sea. I saw him a day or two before he left, and, while parting, again reminded him of God’s mercy in raising him up from death, and earnestly pleaded with him to come to Christ.

“You are going to sea without God, and against your mother’s wishes. Remember, George, God is not mocked! Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!”

As his eye fell upon his weeping mother and sister, for a moment he seemed to waver,

and said, “I have not given up the thought of being a christian, but I *must* go off to sea.”

What a moment in his history! Eternal life, eternal glory with Christ, set before him in one scale, and the poor, paltry pleasures of this lying, dying world in the other. For a moment the balance quivers. Which is it to be? Christ or Satan? Heaven or hell? Which?

A smile from his lips, a shake of his hand, and we parted.

A few days later a letter reached his mother. It was not from her son, but from the captain of the vessel in which he had sailed.

A storm had raged while they crossed the Bay of Biscay, and George fell from the yard-arm, and was drowned.

The ship sailed on; George had fallen into eternity; his last chance was gone for ever. No doubt he had meant to be a christian some day.

Oh, how the devil tempts people to put off the salvation of their souls till to-morrow! Alas! to-morrow is too late, for to-morrow is death—the grave—the judgment—the lake of fire—the eternal wail of the lost in the dark, deep pit of hell! God says *now*, poor sinner, *now*, or with you it may be *never*!

The old year has run its course, but that year with its record will come up again when you stand before the great white throne. The books will be opened. God keeps a book of our individual history, He makes no mistakes; everything is recorded faithfully and with divine accuracy, and each record will condemn you as you stand there and hear its soul-damning testimony. The new year will tell its own sad tale; it may be this:—“Listened to many preachings about Christ, and never came to Him; from the first of January to the end of December, he was warned, pleaded with, exhorted to believe, but he died without Christ!”

Friend, delay no longer; this may be your very last year—your last month—your last week—your last day—yea, your last hour or moment—your last chance! Whatever your past history may have been, there is before you a most solemn event when that unwel-

come visitor, death, shall lay his cold, icy hand upon your heart and stop its throbbing. Vain will be your struggle, your ardent desire for dear life. You will be thrust across the narrow line which separates time from eternity—and then you will be—Where?

Your plans and arrangements will be gone for ever, your days of pleasure past, your nights of sin at an end. The world will forget you; it will go on as though you had never been. Your death will be but of trifling moment to the town, village, or even the street in which you pass away: but *for you*, my friend, *for you*—oh, what will it be?

You know the gospel well, for you have heard it preached and read it frequently; but you do not know Christ. There are many in hell at this moment who knew the gospel as well as you do. They, like you, read and heard it often; but every one of them heard and read it for the last time. Friend, this may be your last chance. Oh, then, come and be saved! Would you be saved? Why not, this beginning of the new year? Now is the accepted time! Now is the day of salvation!

J. MCK.

OVERFLOWING.

THE secret of true ministry is an overflowing heart. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. If Christ be filling the heart, Christ will be expressed by the believer. There is no effort in overflowing. A vessel overflows because it has been filled to the full, and because the supply is still pouring in. Whatever the gift and eloquence may be, we come round to the truth that a man is but a vessel, and, unless filled with Christ, but an empty vessel. It is not the vessel, but what the vessel contains, which satisfies.

THE LAST FIRST.

THE Lord has told us, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. What a fulfilment of these words will there be when His servants stand before His tribunal to receive their rewards! Popularity and notoriety will have no place there; the cup of cold water given for love of Him will in no wise lose its reward there!

A WORD TO EVANGELISTS.

“AND He gave—some evangelists.” “HE” gavel Who?—Himself, the Christ, the Lord, the risen Man, exalted and seated in the heavens at the right hand of God. He, Himself, the “same Jesus” who loved to tell poor sinners of His God and Father, and who welcomed the weary to Himself. Yes! the Friend of sinners, the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Crucified, the exalted Christ, gave some evangelists.

Mark you, oh! evangelists, He gave *you*, yourselves, with your brimful hearts of love to perishing souls, with your fervour, your prayers, your tears for men—He gave you, not the sermons you preach merely, not just your ability to speak, but *you*, your very selves,—you men, with your hearts of love, and lips of longing entreaty and passionate warning. Christ gave you; and the sermons you preach, if worthy of the name of words, come fresh out of your hearts to men.

How personal is this! The Lord gave *men*. Had He given the message merely, angels might have borne it; but He gave some evangelists, and only a human being could be an evangelist to human beings. He gave, in His blessed love, evangelists to tell sinners of Himself, and of His God.

And to whom did He give these men—these evangelists? To men! “For the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ—” He gave these men to men. Then let us stir up the souls of saints to care for sinners.

Consider wherein the success of an evangelist lies. It is in the soul that pours out of him—the fervour which burns within him; and this soul is what Christ has made the evangelist for the sake of men. He will accomplish His great purposes of grace and glory.

Some lines, written in no kindly spirit, give us a view of a mighty evangelist. After speaking of “his wooden palace,” and describing the man in his frenzy for souls, they run:

“ ‘Repent, repent, repent!’
The mighty Whitfield cries,
Oblique lightning in his eyes.”

Whitfield was a gift of Christ to men, to bring men to repentance. The lines give us a view of him, we say. We know he was a man. The world may ridicule him, and faint-hearted christians may do worse—criticise him. But whence the madness—the shouts of this evangelist? He sees into the souls of men—their sins stare him in the face; he feels these sins; they are an awful burden of grief to him. He sees the sinners to whom he preaches going to hell; he agonizes for them—their future is before his very eyes, if not before theirs; his Christ-given sympathy for men makes him feel as if he himself suffered hell. Hence his madness—hence his shouts.

Now-a-days, evangelists whisper, "Believe, believe, believe," but the cry, "Repent, repent, repent!" is needed. "Repent, and believe the gospel," said our Lord. Yet we will not discuss *what* should be preached: we are thinking of the preacher. Whitfield's eyes darted lightning glances up and down the masses to whom he preached—whom he made by the power of God in him to come and hear him. His eye, following his words, flashed into their souls—"Thou art the man"; and they heard, and did repent. He moved them to repentance. Yet not he, as if it was his own power, but the Spirit moving him; he moved them as given to them by Christ in heaven to accomplish this end for men. Christ in him by faith poured out of him.

One of the hardest cuts ever given to a timid preacher was this question, put by a hard-headed insidel—"Do you believe what you say?" The timid young man was afraid of telling the truth as *he* believed it. Alas! how many preach sermons, which, if they believe themselves, they fail to convince their hearers they believe. If we saw a blind man walking straight to the verge of a precipice, had we any love for human life, or rather for the life of the particular blind man we saw on his fatal road, it would be impossible to whisper in complacent tones to him, "One more step, and you perish."

Let the realities of eternity possess your soul, O evangelist, given by the ascended Son of Man to men. Let the love of Christ in giving you yourself to serve souls fill your

spirit, and you shall find, by His grace and through the Spirit's power, that His love will flow out from you—a vessel chosen by Himself for the salvation of souls. H. F. W.

WHAT IS WANTED.

POSITIVE truth is what we christians need.

It is all very well to be told for three-quarters of an hour how bad we are, how cold, how worldly, and the like, but the discourse does not mend matters, rather it tends to make bad worse. Nor is it a sign of great spiritual power to be able to testify against the state of christians; the true test of spiritual power is the ability to raise them out of a low state into a healthy one. We do not question that there must be in the minister an eye given by the Master to see the real state of His people, for to flatter them into the notion of their being only spiritual, while all the time they are carnal, would be anything but ministry from Himself; but we repeat true power *from* Christ lifts the souls of His people *to* Christ.

When true spiritual power comes in, it is like the sunlight piercing through the clouds and dispelling their darkness. The sunlight does not describe the gloom, nor does it discuss—it chases it away. When the clouds hang overhead we may be able to say, there is the Cumulus, there is the Nimbus, but knowing the names of the clouds does not bring in the sunlight.

In true ministry the light proves its own presence. The hearers feel it, confess it, judge themselves in it and by it, and rise thereby in their hearts to Christ. "What!" says the hearer, "have I been living thus long in this dead state, have I been calling good evil, and evil good? have I been all this while occupied with myself and this present age? What, has my spirituality been this outward religion, these forms, these questions? Alas! I have been a mint and rue, an anise and cummin Pharisee instead of a real, true, honest follower of the Lord." And then with humbleness and faith he comes to the Lord, who abundantly pardons. The state of self-judgment is produced by the word, through the Spirit, and Christ occupies the heart.



PHARAOH'S CHARIOTS AND THE HORSEMEN IN PURSUIT.



The Chariots and the Horsemen overthrown in the Sea.

THE Lord had said to Pharaoh, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me"; and Pharaoh had answered by stubborn refusal. The Lord had also said, "Israel is My son, even My firstborn; and I say unto thee, let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened; and at length the destroyer went forth from Jehovah, and His angels smote the firstborn of Egypt, of Pharaoh, and of all his people. And on that self-same night, as the terror-stricken Egyptians were wailing over their dead, and as their great cry arose, God brought Israel out of the land of Egypt and their hour of bondage.

The people of Israel left Egypt, a vast company of men and women and little children, with cattle and possessions. They went out in haste; but the haste of such a company must have been very slow compared with that of the flight of a few persons. Order prevailed in the host, and they brought up and encamped together on the edge of the wilderness in Etham.

How long they were in Etham we cannot tell, but we know the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them by the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light: "to go by day and night" (Ex. xiii. 21.) That "fiery, cloudy pillar" was wonderful indeed, but more marvellous the fact that the Lord was in it. He was there to protect and to lead them, hence not one single step they took when following that cloud could possibly lead them astray.

After they had left Etham the people were bidden by the Lord to turn and encamp by the Red Sea. Their encampment, it is supposed, was between hills: they were shut in the wilderness, with the sea in front of them.

While they were there, the Egyptians began to say, "Why have we let Israel go from

serving us?" The terror at the death of their firstborn sons passed from their hearts, the remembrance of the plagues which had fallen on them was forgotten, the might and anger of Jehovah no longer caused them to tremble—"the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people." "The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy (or re-possess) them." (Ch. xv. 9.)

Pharaoh made ready his chariot, and took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over everyone of them, and his horsemen—a great, swift army—and away he went to slay and to bring back Israel, to drag the people out of the hand and from under the protection of the living God.

The trial of our faith is exceeding precious, and God allows us oftentimes to be hedged in by dangers out of which we can see no way of escape, unless He pleases to make the way. At such moments confidence in God is our resource. God is faithful, and what He has promised He will perform. Do not try to measure your trials, dear young friends, by your own power, but seek to trust in God who loves to deliver.

The people of Israel did not know what the Lord had told Moses, and they were not aware how swiftly the army of their old master was sweeping on towards their camp. Nor did Israel know that Jehovah would be honoured upon that army. We read, the Lord made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel. Over and over again Moses was in the Lord's secret, and knew what would be done, while the people of Israel were in despair because of their trials and difficulties. Faith rests in God—unbelief despairs because of difficulties.

Presently, however, the dust of the approaching army became visible. The children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, filled with terror, they cried unto the Lord. They also said to Moses, "Were there no graves for us in Egypt?" Egypt was and is a land of graves. Even now its opened graves teach us its history and its wonders. The mummy-cases of the ancestors of the Egyptians and

even of animals filled the rocky sides of their river, and mummy-cases were present at their feasts. "It had been better," murmured the people, "to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But the Lord God had not brought His people out of bondage in order to let them be slain or enslaved again by their old master; and He was about to deliver.

"Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," said Moses; then at Jehovah's bidding, Moses lifted up his rod and stretched it out over the sea, which divided at his word. God knows how to protect those who trust in Him. Unbelief might have said, "How can we get across the sea before Pharaoh reaches us? He is galloping to us at terrific speed." God is not in haste, and those who trust Him can "stand still" at the moment of intense distress.

God is a wonder-working God; His resources cannot be exhausted. He would not let Pharaoh's host touch the least child of the people of Israel. And God has numbered the very hairs of our heads, and will not allow Satan to hurt one of His people. The Lord removed His cloud and stood between the Israelites and the Egyptians. He turned the darkness of the cloud towards the camp of the Egyptians, so that they could not find where the camp of Israel was; and He turned the bright light of the cloud across the sea where the people were to go and gave them light in the night.

This is God's way for those who trust Him still, not that He now gives a light to shine upon our path, which our natural eyes can see, but no less He gives a light for our souls, and preserves us from our enemies. Be still, and trust Him. When danger comes, when Satan tries and threatens, when you are tempted to try to save yourself, remember the words, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."

The pathway of Israel was a wondrous one indeed. The strong east wind drove back the sea before it, and on either side of the people of Israel were walls of water. The waters were piled up on the right hand and on the left: "the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." (Ch. xv. 8.) What a sight

it must have been that night! The dark sky overhead, the multitudes of people hastening along with their children and their cattle on the dry bed of the sea, and the crystal walls, shining in the splendour of the fiery pillar, on either side of them.

The Lord made the way for His people, and lighted up their every step; in His light on they went, till the last of them reached the further shore. Not one was left behind, not the least among the children.

As the night wore on, the army of Pharaoh found out where the camp of Israel had been, for the pillar of cloud which followed at the rear of the people, moved after them. Then on, on drove the Egyptian chariots; they thundered along over the spot where Israel's camp had been, and down to the sea in battle array—all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen—and then right into the pathway Jehovah had made.

Our picture gives a faithful representation of the rush of their chariots, as is gathered from the ancient pictures still remaining in Egypt.

The dawn was nearly breaking, the morning watch had come; the army of the enemy was in the crystal pathway; when Jehovah looked through the dark cloud upon Pharaoh and his host. Then terror seized them; they discovered where they were. They saw the Jehovah they had despised. He took off their chariot wheels, so that they went heavily, and the army of Pharaoh turned to flee with the cry, "The Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians."

The Lord's time had now come. It was morning, Israel was in safety across the waters, the army of Pharaoh in the midst of the sea. "Stretch out thine hand over the sea," said the Lord to Moses, and at his word those solid walls of crystal gave way; the mass of waters returned to their strength, and crushing down, swept into destruction Pharaoh's chosen captains and his swift army.

"THE Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea."



A PRISONER.



Twice a Prisoner—Twice set Free.

TWICE have I been a prisoner; but the imprisonment of which I shall first speak was a very brief one.

One morning I had gone with my sister to the Sunday-school, where she, having placed me among the infant scholars, went on to her own class. When lessons were over the infants left their own class-room to march two and two out of school. Being a new comer I was the last of all, and before I could get

out, one little urchin mischievously slammed the door in my face, so I was left behind, shut in alone. I stood and cried, but no one heard me, no one came to liberate me. After a time, however, I managed to open the door which led into the larger school, only to find, to my dismay, that I was still a prisoner, for the outer door was locked. Full of grief, I wandered about, upstairs and down; but every room was vacant, and, not knowing what to do, I sat down upon the staircase, where I could look out of the window into the street.

Presently a man came towards the window. He exclaimed, "However came you in there?"

"They locked me in," replied I, gloomily.

"Well, I will try and get a key, and let you out," said he; and he went away.

He, I am sure, would have been only too pleased to set me free, but he could not—he had no key.

Some considerable time afterwards, as a lady and gentleman were passing the school, they noticed the little prisoner. The lady at once produced a key, opened the door, and set me free, to my own great joy, and to the relief of my sister who had already anxiously begun to search for her lost little brother.

But I must hasten on to speak of another imprisonment, which lasted several long years.

In spite of repeated warnings, I had been foolish enough to listen to one whose word can never be trusted. I wanted to have my own way—to do as I pleased, and he knew this, and with fair promises enticed me to do as he bade me, until, before I was aware, I was caught in his toils as a bird is caught in a snare. I then found, to my cost, that I had placed confidence in one who is a liar, a deceiver, and the hardest of masters. I was a prisoner, led captive by Satan, at his will.

While I was yet in the bondage of sin and death, a gentleman came to me, to ask if I would attend a confirmation class; several of my companions were coming, would I also come?

"No," I replied; and when pressed for a reason, I said, "When I am a christian I will profess to be one, and not before. I am not going to add to my sins." Those who heard my answer did not know how my heart ached as I uttered those words, or how at that moment I realized something of what it is to be a sinner, far off from God.

With the kindest of motives this gentleman tried to persuade me to "make a profession of religion," and my continued refusals appeared to grieve him. Had he pointed me to Jesus as the sinner's only refuge—had he told me of the blood that cleanseth from all sins—it may be that the Lord would have used his words as a means of blessing to my soul—that there and then the truth would have made me free. But while he spake only of "religion," and told me not of Him who died to deliver those "who, through fear

of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage," his kind words did me no real good. Like the man who had no key, this gentleman could not help me, and he left me still beneath the power of darkness.

Some months afterwards another friend addressed himself to me, but, instead of asking me to make a profession of religion, he simply told me of Jesus, and of God's great salvation.

Then I began to entreat the Lord to bring my soul out of prison, and He heard my cry, and delivered my soul.

I am no longer Satan's prisoner: I now rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free.

Does any reader long for deliverance from the bondage of sin and death? Think not to obtain it merely by making a profession of religion, but rather "seek ye the Lord while He may be found: call ye upon Him while He is near." He can and will deliver you; and if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

A. J.

WHO IS JESUS?

A LITTLE girl, on coming from the Sunday school, found a friend of her parents. As soon as Ellen entered the room, looking at the books which she held in her hand, he said, "Pray where have you been?"

"I have been to the Sunday school," replied little Ellen, brightly; "and it is such a nice one." "To the Sunday school indeed," said the visitor; "and pray what do you go there for?"

"Do not you know?" said Ellen. "Why, to hear about Jesus."

"Do you want to hear about Jesus?" again he asked.

"Yes, indeed I do."

"Then pray tell me, who is Jesus?"

"Well," said the little girl, "I will tell you. He is from everlasting to everlasting."

The visitor did not ask anymore questions. He saw that a little child knew and understood things of which he himself was ignorant.

I trust that many of our young friends, like little Ellen, know something in their hearts

who the Lord Jesus is, and that they see beauty in His name. His name is above every name, and to Him every knee shall bow, whether in this world or when it will be too late to find in Him a Friend. Little children, come to Jesus now, for the Word of God says, "Those that seek Me early shall find Me." (Pro. viii. 17.)

B.

WYCLIFFE'S BIBLE AND THE LOLLARDS.

"I BELIEVE that in the end the truth will conquer."—Thus wrote Wycliffe, in full assurance of faith that God, who had allowed him to be the means of giving the people of England His word in their own common every-day speech, would not suffer the light He had kindled to be quenched by all the efforts of the powers of darkness to extinguish it. And God did keep this light of truth burning, to be the joy and strength of their souls to many in secret places through the long, sorrowful years which followed the death of Wycliffe, until, as we shall see, the time came when men dared openly to read His word, and to speak of salvation through Christ alone, no man making them afraid. Sad years they were indeed; times when terrible civil wars rent the country, and many a fair English field was red with English blood; when there was great dearth in the land, for the men who were left alive after the war and the pestilence were too few to till it. While sadder than all was the hard bondage in which the people were held by those who professed to be alone able to teach them the truths of God—that truth which makes free the soul which receives it.

Here and there, in the history of these times of trouble, we come upon some brief record, some story of faithfulness unto death, which shows us that though the voices of the "poor priests"—who, in Wycliffe's days had gone through the length and breadth of the land publishing the glad tidings of peace—were soon hushed, their words had already taken root, deep in the hearts of the people.

Scarcely had Wycliffe died before a cruel law had been made, forbidding anyone to possess, or even to read, one of his English Bibles. Nevertheless, numbers of the pre-

cious books were carefully hidden away, and stealthily read at midnight, though those who attended at these secret readings well knew the risk they ran.

That you may in some degree realise how great that risk was, I will tell you the story of some poor people, shoemakers by trade, living at Coventry, who desired to bring up their children in the fear of God. It would be of no use for them to attempt to instruct them out of the Latin Bible, which they did not themselves understand; the English Bible was a forbidden book to the common people. What were they to do? God gave them grace to act rightly in this matter, and delivered them from the fear of man. By degrees it became known that these simple people had access by some means to certain portions of the Scriptures in English, and that they were teaching their little children to read the word of God in their own language. The parents were first seized, and the poor, frightened little ones were then examined, that it might be known what heresies they had been taught. When they confessed that they had learned the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments in English, they were threatened with punishment, but let go. A few weeks later, all the fathers, and one of the mothers—in whose sleeve a few leaves containing part of one of the gospels in English had been found—were burned at Coventry, in sight of all men, that others might learn by their example how dangerous a thing it was to touch a book which the church had forbidden.

Again we read of a man being brought to trial for having purchased an English New Testament—the price he paid for it was equal to nearly £50 of our money—and having not only read it himself, but taught others to read it.

By these means the Holy Scripture was "becoming a vulgar thing," the great churchmen said. "This reading of the word of God by the common people must be put down, cost what it might"—and it cost the lives of many, yet it was not put down.

The law "concerning the burning of a heretic" gave the bishops power to try people who were only suspected of heresy, and, if they were

found guilty, they were given to the charge of the mayor of their town, who was obliged to have them publicly burned. Still a heretic had one chance allowed him; if he would recant, that is, give up his heresy, he might save himself. It was by this means that a tradesman, called "Doctor" Man, from his knowledge of the Scriptures, did save his life. But God did not allow Satan to have his way with His poor, weak, tempted child. Fear of the fire had wrung the recantation from him, but he knew no rest until he was sure that the Lord, who forgave the disciples when they, in the hour of peril, forsook Him and fled, and who said to Simon Peter after he had denied Him, "Lovest thou Me?" had forgiven him, and would allow him to follow Him once more.

Man, leaving Oxford, travelled through the eastern parts of England, working with his own hands, as Wycliffe's gospellers had done, while he preached to the people wherever he went. By-and-by he became bold enough to preach in lonely places in the neighbourhood of London, and many hundreds were converted by his means. He was again arrested, and permitted to die, for the sake of Christ, the death from fear of which he had once denied His name.

The followers of Wycliffe were called Lollards by those who counted them idle babblers. This name became of such wide application, that a man who could read his own native language was in danger of being suspected as a Lollard, and banished from his home. But not all the Lollards were men whose only wish was to be allowed to worship God in truth, to read His word for themselves, and to make it known to others. Many, in their warfare for the truth, mixed themselves in worldly affairs, and spent their strength in speaking and writing fiercely against the wealth and splendour of the higher clergy. By these means they became more and more hated by those in authority, and brought the truth which they fought for into disrepute. Still there is no doubt that through the Lollards, by God's grace, a faith in the authority of the Bible as His word was kept alive up to the time of the Reformation, which, you know

began in England in the days of our King Henry the Eighth.

One of the saddest things we read in the history of these times is that, about fifty years after the death of Wycliffe, the one belief of the time was sorcery and magic. So low had our countrymen fallen, and so true is it that those who will not believe God's truth, find no difficulty in receiving the devil's lie. But God was preparing the way for the better knowledge of His word, and the wider circulation of it, through the invention of printing, and what has been called the revival of the old learning.

There still exists in a library at Cambridge a copy of a curious book. It is called the Poor Man's Bible, and was probably printed in Holland. If you ever have an opportunity of seeing this, or any other copy of this rare volume, I am sure, though you may think the pictures very rough and ugly, and the Latin sentences difficult to read, you will look at it with interest when you remember that it was such a book as this which probably gave people the first notion that it was possible to print books; it was in fact a rude attempt at printing. Scenes, taken partly from the lives of the saints—foolish and often harmful stories they were—partly from the life of our Lord, and from the Old Testament histories, were cut upon wooden blocks, from which the pictures were to be engraved, and underneath the scripture pictures were sentences from the Latin Bible, cut into the wood, to be engraved in like manner.

This old picture-book probably found its way over to England at the time when Wycliffe's Bibles, wherever they could be found, were being destroyed, and even by this means no doubt the word of God reached the homes of the wealthier classes. A Poor Man's Bible, in truth! such a book never could have been, for it must have been almost as costly as a book written by hand upon parchment. It was soon seen, that if a few sentences cut at the foot of a picture, upon a wooden block, could be engraved, a whole page of writing might be engraved. This was soon done, and block pages and books were made.

C. P.

WORKS OF LOVE.

"**EVEN** a child is known by his doings." (Prov. xx. 11.) Our Lord said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. vii. 16), and there are young as well as old trees, dear young friends, in our Master's garden. And now-a-days, through His grace, there are very many young trees of His own planting to be found, and all of these Jesus would have fruitful. And He says your "fruit shall remain" (John xv. 16), and all such fruit shall be found by-and-by in heaven.

How many happy letters have we received lately from our dear young friends, telling us they are the Lord's! Now we desire not only your happiness, but also that you shall bring forth fruit for the Lord's pleasure.

The Lord will not forget even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in His name; He will not overlook any true kindness of any of His people. The loving acts of little children who love Jesus will be had in remembrance for ever.

God and angels and men watch us. Your parents and your school-fellows, or your nurse, and the servants in the house, watch you who say you love the Lord Jesus. "Even a child is known by his doings," and the small things of daily life express what you are. It is not the things a child says, but the things he does, which prove what he is. You know well enough which are apple trees in your father's garden, because of the fruit which the trees bear.

Industrious love for others is fruit of a very sweet kind. By nature we all are selfish, but the love of Christ in the heart makes the christian happy in serving others. A heart of love gives a quick eye. One child will see

what his or her parent may require, where another will only see what self wants. One child will find his happiness in making others happy, where another seeks happiness in seeking pleasure simply for himself or herself.

Our Lord has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. He says to His disciples, "Follow Me." A true christian is more or less like Christ. Selfishness is not Christ-like. Thoughtlessness and selfishness are brothers, and disagreeable companions they are.

"If William were really a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ he would not act as he does," is a sorrowful sentence about a boy we hope is a christian. But men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, and "even a child is known by his doings."

I never knew a christian boy or girl to be happy who was wilful or selfish. God would not let His child be happy so long as the child was disobedient, while He fills the hearts of His obedient children with true happiness.

You, dear young friends, who are the Lord's, wish to please Him. Well, this is just what the hard work of christian life is. You need to pray for strength, and then to have faith that He will give the strength for which we pray. The Lord will strengthen a young boy or girl to please Him, just as He strengthens older people who are His. And when a young christian goes to Him, and seeks for grace to live to His praise, the little things he does day by day, and the way he does them, will prove that Christ is strengthening him. And we may thus happily say, "Even a child is known by his doings."



WORKING FOR OTHERS.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE TAP-ROOT.

THE TAP-ROOT.

A FEW autumns since, I was staying at a friend's house, which had a fruitful garden attached to it. This plot of ground, bearing its wealthy supply of vegetables and different fruits, was the pride of the faithful servant, my friend's gardener. The man was one of the old-fashioned type of servants who loved his master and his master's work.

At the close of my visit, I went into the garden to bid the man good-bye.

"Before you leave, sir," said he, "you must come and see my master's pear-tree."

"What is there special about it?" I asked, as we stood together on the gravelled walk in front of a young pyramid tree, rich in noble pears.

"Why, sir," the gardener said, in a most interested tone, while his eye kindled with delight, "this tree has never borne before, and last autumn the master said, 'Come, B., we must have that tree down,' but I said, 'Let me have one more try with it, and then if it bears no fruit—' and now see what a fine tree it is; why, there are no pears in all the garden such as these," and he handled one of them with that appreciative fondness which is peculiar to gardeners.

As poor B. spoke, my heart was moved; I listened to each word eagerly; but it was not his interest in the tree that interested me, but himself—his soul, his undying soul, for like the pear-tree, barren in his christian master's garden, B. had borne no fruit for God.

"Well, B.," said I, "and what did you do to bring about this wonderful change?"

"Ah! wonderful change, sir, indeed it is," he went on, still handling the tree; "my master would not part with his pear-tree now."

"But what did you do?"

"The tap-root, the tap-root."

"Yes, but what did you do?"

"Why, got under the root, dug right under the tree, and cut the tap-root."

"Then I suppose all its strength had gone into the earth?"

"Yes," he said, "that is just how it was. So I lifted it right up and cut the tap-root."

"B.," said I, "I came into the garden to hear this story, not for the tree's sake, I am sure, but for yours." He looked at me very strangely, wondering what I meant. "You are like that tree when it bore no fruit; all your life goes into the earth. You are still unsaved—no fruit for God, all for this world. Your tap-root has not been cut. I have been lifted out of the earth by trial and sorrow, as you know," and when I said this B.'s kindly face betokened true sympathy. "You are still fixed in the world. If you continue as you are, God will say of you, 'Cut him down; he bears no fruit.' Must it be that you will still hold out till some dreadful sorrow comes, or will you die as you are, and perish?"

So we parted; but B. is still, I fear, unsaved. How is it with you, dear reader? If you have reached middle age, you have learned to suffer. Oh! live not for this world; come to Christ; seek His salvation. God is merciful; He will be merciful to you a sinner. Tell Him what a sinner you are. He will save you, and being saved, seek to bear fruit for God.

TO-MORROW!

"AND Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I intreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only? And he said, TO-MORROW." (Ex. viii. 9, 10.)

"Boast not thyself of TO-MORROW; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. xxvii. 1.)

"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and TO-MORROW shall be as this day, and much more abundant." (Isa. lvi. 12.)

"Let us eat and drink; for TO-MORROW we shall die." (Isa. xxii. 13.)

"Go to now, ye that say, To-day or TO-MORROW we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow." (Jas. iv. 13, 14.)

"Behold, now is the accepted time;

Behold, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION."

(2 Cor. vi. 2.)

J. H. J.—G.

GOING ON WITH GOD.

THERE are two prominent objects of the blessed ministry of the Spirit through the apostle Paul; one, the leading of the saints to the knowledge of all that is theirs in Christ, the other, the maintaining of them in that position; the latter being that which principally characterises his ministry.

Energy, and enjoyment resulting from the first reception of the truth, usually mark the young believer; but as he goes on and sees failure around, or sees that truth travestied, he is likely to become weary and discouraged. We read of those whose history is given in Hebrews xi.: "These all died in faith"—they went on to the end. Abraham, the father of the faithful, had no possession but a grave in the land of promise; but there was no discouragement in him. Let us not forget that it is also written of them, "They might have had opportunity to have returned."

It has been well said, "A stone left upon the ground, sinks into it." We cannot remain stationary; we go back if we do not go on.

We need these kindlings of love, we need to have our hearts occupied with Christ in glory, to have the hopes which are before us as realities to our souls, or we shall grow weary and sink into the earth. B—K.

LEADING AND DRIVING.

You cannot drive a child of God to holiness and heavenly-mindedness, but you can lead him.

God calls His people His flock. "Feed the flock of God," says His word. 'Now we may learn a useful lesson from Esau and Jacob. The former was a soldier, the latter a shepherd. When Esau proposed to attach his men of war to the flocks and the little ones, Jacob said, "The children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me, and *if men should overdrive them one day* all the flock will die." (Gen. xxxiii. 13.) Jacob knew the feeble strength of his flocks and his children.

Oh, ye men of war, your swords are not shepherds' crooks. Beware, lest by overdriving the flock shall die.

THE LOAD GONE.

SOME little time ago, in a small hamlet, many dear souls were, through God's blessing upon the word, brought to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour from the guilt and power of sin.

Amongst the number was a fine-looking young man, who had previously led an outwardly profane life. The word, which is "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow" (Heb. iv. 12), by the Holy Spirit's work, went right home to his heart, the deep sense of his sins weighing him down heavily.

Speaking to one of his fellow-workmen about him, the next day, I said, "Do you think Thomas has found peace in believing yet?"

"No," he replied; "but he has been wishing all day it was meeting time."

That night the subject of the address was, "Peace made (Col. i. 20); sin put away (Heb. ix. 26); true reconciliation" (2 Cor. v. 18, 19). At the close of the address, some one said to me, "Thomas wishes to see you in his own house; he would rather speak to you there." So I followed him into his house, and then said, "You have not found Christ yet, Thomas, I fear?"

"No, I have not," said he.

"Do you believe that He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself?"

"Yes, I see that, but I am no better."

It was apparent that, unless God the Holy Spirit opened his heart, my words would be of no avail; so I said, "Let us kneel before God in prayer, and ask Him to show us the hindrance, and to remove it."

We knelt in prayer, and, after rising from our knees, I asked, "What is it that keeps you from Christ, Thomas?"

"It is my sins," he said.

"Have you confessed yourself a sinner before God?" I asked.

"I have," he replied.

Then I said, "You don't believe that God has forgiven you?"

"No; I am not forgiven."

"Listen," I said; "If we confess our sins,

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John i. 9.) 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' (Rom. x. 9.) Is God faithful?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Is He just in pardoning the believing sinner?"

"Yes," he answered again.

"If we truly confessed our sins before Him and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He did not fulfil His word, would He be faithful?"

"No," said he.

"Or, if He did not pardon, would He be just?"

"No."

"God is *faithful*—God is *just*, and, if you have *truly* confessed your sins before Him, has He not pardoned you?"

"I don't feel that I am pardoned," he said.

"It is not a question of believing your feelings at all, but of believing what God says. If you believe your feelings instead of God, you are trusting in yourself, and making Him a liar. I shall mark a passage for you to read."

He gave me his Bible. I marked these words: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that . . . God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John v. 10-12.) "Will you read that carefully?" I asked.

Whilst he read, I lifted up my heart in prayer for him. He read it, and closed the book. I said, "Is that true?"

"Yes, it is."

"You believe it, do you?"

"I do," he replied, with emphasis.

"Then you are saved?"

"Thank God, I am," he replied.

The load was gone from his heart. I saw a change pass over his countenance; it was the dawn of a new life; the look of wretched-

ness fled, and a bright, but tearful smile took its place.

We knelt before the Lord to praise Him for His grace, and, as we rose, he accompanied me to the next house, where was his wife, who was also seeking salvation, to tell her and his friends he had found Christ.

Immediately his wife broke out in praising God: "Oh, Lord, I thank thee for saving my dear husband. I praise Thee." That night she also found rest in Christ.

The change in Thomas was deep and real. Sometime after his conversion he said, "I want to be an out-and-out christian." He got rid of the dog which had been his companion in his poaching expeditions, and left his old companions and former friends.

I trust my reader who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is also ambitious to be an "out-and-out christian." Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.)

Is my dear reader still unsaved? Read humbly the Scriptures which were used of the Lord to Thomas D., not trusting in the words only, but in the Christ they reveal—in the life they offer from God—in the way of salvation they make known. Then, too, you shall prove that the "gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.)

J. H. J.—a.

ON THE PINNACLE.

SATAN likes to get God's saints on a pinnacle. It is a dangerous place for a mortal man to occupy. Few stay there long. Falls frequently follow being on high elevations. If we need grace for trials, we need a double supply for prosperity. Who does not like prosperity? But how few can bear it. Yet what we all like naturally is our greatest danger spiritually. It is not every saint of God who, being on a pinnacle, straightway goes on his knees and takes the place of dependence on God. The spirit of prayer is the only security in the day of prosperity.

Satan, in the temptation, took our Lord into the holy city, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and, when there, quoted Scripture to Him, and bade Him cast Himself from off that edge, in order to see how true the Scripture was. But Jesus said unto him, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Whether our Lord, being hungry, was tempted to leave the path of dependence by the exercise of His own power to satisfy His hunger; or whether, being on the pinnacle, He was tempted—and by misapplied Scripture, too—to leave the path of dependence by casting Himself down in order to test God's power, He was perfect in dependence. In Him we see the perfect Man absolute in His obedience to the Scriptures.

Satan knows how to bring misapplied Scripture to the saint who is on a pinnacle. And it is frequently the case that God's people, when elevated spiritually, accept misapplied Scripture. We met with one not long since who was assured of salvation and enjoyed peace before God. Such was the joy of this grace that that soul got on a pinnacle, *outside* the temple, and began to say, "I live without sinning." Sometimes the very fact of God, in His sovereign grace, blessing the work of one of His servants will set that servant on a pinnacle. The truth is, the believer needs God at all times, but nevermore deeply than when he is in prosperity, and especially in spiritual prosperity.

GOD'S GLORY.

THE prime, the great purpose of God, both in creation and redemption, is the manifestation of Himself, or, in other words, the glory of His own Name. Glory is the bright *display* of the perfections of God; the making anything appear to be that which it *really is* in its own transcendent excellency. Thus Jesus *glorified* the Father, that is, He, in His own Person and work, made the glorious and blessed God to appear, or manifested God to be the Being He is. So it is said of the Son, that He was the *brightness* of God's glory.—*Extract.*

ALONE, AND NOT ALONE.

FRIENDS surrounded a dying couch; loving hearts and willing hands, anxious to anticipate every desire and minister to every need, were there. Only yesterday its occupant was in health and strength, to-day she is brought face to face with eternity—*eternity*.

Death with his hand has laid her low, and go she must. It were vain to plead that she did not invite, expect, or prepare for him. He is remorseless and relentless; the death dews gather upon the brow of his unhappy victim; a film spread over her once clear eyes, and fixedly but mutely she gazes upward.

Alarmed, her friends send for a servant of God. The hour is late, but the message is urgent—a soul passing into eternity without God and without hope. Soon he enters the chamber of death, and gazes upon the troubled countenance of one whom but a few brief hours ago he had met in the streets, but who is now rapidly passing away from this scene for ever. The word of God is read, scripture after scripture is quoted, telling of God's grace and love, but no sign nor sound indicates that death's victim hears the words of life; and silently and sadly her immortal spirit passes away into a region where nothing remains but judgment for those who, like her, had "neglected so great salvation."

Alone! no Saviour's hand to guide, no Saviour's heart to trust. What can be more sadly solemn than to leave a circle of loving earthly friends, and to pass into another circle without a single friend, a place where all are hateful and hate one another, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?

Let us leave this scene, where a soul is passing, a lonely stranger, from a loved family circle into a friendless eternity. Follow me, my reader, to a convalescent home in connection with B—— Hospital.

A poor sufferer had left the hospital, so far recovered that he could be safely transferred to the convalescent home, and at last he seemed so much better that the day was fixed for him to return home to his friends. Before leaving the home he asked, and obtained, permission to walk through the grounds once

more. A keen, cutting wind was blowing, and as he came indoors, just before starting for his home, a violent attack laid him low, and in a few brief hours he, too, stood on the borderland of eternity—*eternity*.

One of the nurses supported him during the short death struggle, till at last he fell back into her arms motionless; another nurse ran forward, and in a touching tone exclaimed—

“Poor fellow! what a sad thing, dying here all alone, without a friend near him.”

The apparently dead man opened his lips, and slowly and sweetly the words fell from them—

“Not alone; Jesus is with me!” and immediately his spirit passed away from a friendless scene into one where is the “Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”

Reader, are you living without Christ and without hope in the world? If so, remember that to live without Christ is, in most cases, to die without Him, and then an endless eternity in the lake of fire. I beseech you to consider your ways, your end, your prospects, and turn to Christ at once; there you will find that if left alone in this world, in the midst of sorrow, suffering—yea, death itself, you will find your home in the presence of one who will never leave you nor forsake you, and at all times you will be able to say, “I am not alone; Jesus is with me.” H. N.

THAT WHICH ABIDES.

IT is well to meditate on the things which will endure. We live in a world which passes away, and we ourselves are passing out of the world; moreover, much that we do daily is but for the moment, and has no enduring character. But, as christians, let us for a moment meditate on that which will last in the work that, as christians, we do on earth.

It is written, “The word of the Lord endureth for ever” (1 Pet. i. 25), and “He that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (1 John ii. 17) the word of God and obedience to God must be before us in our meditation. Only that which is connected with God will abide: much, very much, of the christian’s work will

be burned up. The humbler and unseen part of christian work will often be that which will endure. The foundation of a house is its firmest part, but the foundation is under ground.

When you, by grace, are the means through the Spirit of connecting a soul with Christ, there is enduring work which will stand for eternity. Good seed sown in the heart is sown for eternity. Christ formed in the heart is formed for eternity. The loving offices of visiting the sick and aged, caring for the poor and the widow, will not be forgotten in the day so soon to be entered on. That which is done for the Lord and with the Lord will endure; and most holy does this contemplation render the thought of true christian work.

We were passing through a ruined abbey the other day; its timbers had long since perished, and even the remains of its stone walls were decaying. The old building seemed to proclaim that the outward things on this earth connected with religion and the Name of Christ are transient. But wherever there was true work wrought through the Holy Spirit by God’s servants in that old building, that work remains.

The outward and visible things connected with us and religion are highly captivating to the feelings—our church, our community, our associations; alas! do not we almost idolize them? But all the while God is going on working in souls for eternity. Our eye may be on the growth of “our” congregation; His, on the ripening of the soul of a single sufferer almost unknown to us. What a loss it is to be estranged in sight and sympathy from the growth in which He is delighting!

We must stir up our souls to holier consideration in christian work.

Let our hearts turn from that which is temporal—that which is outward merely—and be engaged on the eternal side of christian work. A stone laid in the building which will remain for eternity should be our aim.

The word of the Lord endureth for ever, and the doer of God’s will abides for ever also. Let us seek for divine wisdom so to minister the word that it may spring up in honest and good hearts for everlasting blessing.



The Precious Blood of Christ.

"THE precious blood of Christ!"—words most sweet, most dear to the christian's soul. The apostle does not simply say "redeemed by the blood of Christ"; his heart was full of love to the Saviour; he was aglow with affection's fervour as his pen wrote down these words, "the precious blood of Christ."

So it was with the beloved John, who, speaking of the Lord as "the faithful Witness, and the First Begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth" at once utters His praises, saying, "Unto Him that loves us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

What sets the blood-bought sinner's heart on fire like contemplating the precious blood of Christ! The very repetition of the words does the soul good, lifts out of self, fills with wonder, love and praise, brings heaven near, and us nearer in spirit to its songs of praise. Come, ye who would be sweet singers on earth, "singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord," be brimful of heaven's theme of eternal praise—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

The blood of Christ is precious because of its own intrinsic worth. What angel or man can declare the glory of His person who shed it. Christ is the Sent One of God the Father; the Father's only Son; the Eternal Son of the Eternal God; but become in time a Man. When we speak of His blood, we are filled with thoughts of the excellence of His sacrifice, the might of His atonement. The work He accomplished by death on the cross is of everlasting and abiding value.

I had in my hand the other day a piece of solid gold, just as it had been found on a river's side. "That is worth so many pounds," said my friend, who showed it to me. Now, that piece of gold would be of a given value in any country because of its own precious-

ness. Whatever use it might be put to, would not affect its intrinsic worth, neither would its real value be lessened because ignorant people did not appraise it justly.

The blood of Christ is precious because of its own unutterable value. Not all the worlds the Lord's hands have made are to be compared to the worth of His own blood. If men believe on Him, or believe not—love Him, or love Him not—the preciousness of His precious blood abides for ever the same.

The blood of Christ is precious, for it is "His own blood." What a contemplation for man it is, that the Son of God became a man in order that he might die for sinners. "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me," writes the apostle Paul. Can we thus speak, "He loved me and gave Himself for me?" Personal heart dealing with the Son of God's love is what we need. And if our hearts are able, by grace, thus to think of the Lord, it is our privilege to say, He Himself, the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One, shed His blood for me. Jesus' own kind hands, ever filled with bounties, were nailed to the cross for me; His blessed feet, so ready in hastening to the needy, were fastened to the wood for me; His holy brow was gashed with the thorny crown; His side was pierced with the soldier's spear for me; from His hands, His feet, His head, His side, flowed the blood—the precious blood—to wash away my sins, to make me whiter than snow.

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

As the believer thinks of the Lord, his Friend, his Saviour; his Redeemer, as he meditates upon His sufferings, His grief, His anguish of soul and body, beholds Him lifted up from the earth, drawing all unto Himself, dying for sinners, yea, the chief of sinners, he loves to repeat "*redeemed with the precious blood of Christ!*"

The blessed Saviour, who shed His blood to save us, lives to die no more: "death hath no more dominion over Him." (Rom. vi. 9.) As a Man, He has dominion over death; He is

risen, and is triumphant over the grave; He is in heaven, all things are under His feet (Ep. i. 21, 22); He has the keys of hell and of death (Rev. i. 18); He has not only nullified death, but him that had the power of it, that is, the devil. (Heb. ii 14.) Herein His people rejoice. Jesus is their risen triumphant and exalted Saviour.

"O Jesus, Lord! 'tis joy to know
Thy path is o'er of shame and woe,
For us so meekly trod;
All finished is Thy work of toil;
Thou reapest now the fruit and spoil,
Exalted by our God.

"Thy holy head, once bound with thorns,
The crown of glory now adorns;
Thy seat, the Father's throne.
O Lord! e'en now we sing Thy praise,
Ours the eternal song to raise—
Worthy the Lamb alone."

Yet, while we know that His sufferings are passed, and His pains are over, we love to remember Him in "the suffering of death." (Heb. ii. 9.) The children of Israel in the land of Egypt ate of their lamb roasted in the fire, with bitter herbs. It was Jehovah's own ordinance that they should eat of what was their deliverance with bitter herbs. (Ex. xii. 8.) And His redeemed people now remember with adoring grief what the Lord suffered. They recall His pains and sorrows. They meditate with loving sorrow on the sufferings of Christ!

The memory of Christ's "suffering of death" chastens the soul. It fills the heart not only with adoration, but makes the things of the world as nothing. The world rejected Jesus and crucified Him, and the practical spiritual application to the soul of the Lord's death, leads to living as He lived when here: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." (2 Cor. iv. 10.)

In things natural there is a melancholy pleasure, a sorrowful delight, in recalling the sufferings of one we love, whom we know is out of suffering's reach, for ever with the Lord. We earnestly treasure the memory of those we love. The parent regards as his choicest jewels the trifles his little child had when

on earth. 'True, this is natural affection; but it may illustrate spiritual affection. Our Lord has said to His people, "Remember Me." He treasures their memory of what He suffered for them on earth. The details of the sorrows and sufferings of our Redeemer are a treasury for His people's hearts. No theme on earth, no song in heaven, is dearer to them than that of the precious blood of Christ.



A Bible Lesson long ago.

THIS little boy, whom you see standing by his mother, is reading with her out of that roll she is holding. They are upon the flat roof of their house, which is a very pleasant place for reading, if the sun is not too hot. Some beautiful palms are in the distance, and above is the bright blue sky.

People living in the East, in the country, for instance, which this picture represents, very often go up to the roofs of their houses when they do not wish to be disturbed. We read of the apostle Peter going up to the house-top to pray, and no doubt he went there in order to be alone.

Perhaps the roll seems to you a very curious lesson-book to read out of, and so it is. It is a long piece of what looks like thick, strong paper, but which is the skin of some animal, made smooth and even to write upon. This skin is called parchment. Long ago the books of the Bible were written on parchments, and good men spent a great deal of time in copying the Scriptures on parchments, that many people might have them to read.

The roll in our picture has some portion of the Scriptures written upon it, and the little boy who is reading is intended for Timothy. Timothy lived, you know, in a country called Asia Minor, far away from here, near the Holy Land, where the Lord Jesus lived when He was on the earth. I think Timothy must have been born not long after the Lord Jesus was crucified; so that he may have heard all about



A BIBLE LESSON LONG AGO.

the death of the Lord from those who had seen Him, and heard His gracious words.

The Bible tells us that Timothy's mother and grandmother loved God, and it tells us,

too, that Timothy knew the Scriptures from a child; so that we may well suppose it was his mother Eunice who first taught him to read and to love them. But you must not

suppose Timothy had all the Bible to read, as we have it now, for it was not all written when he was a child. The Old Testament Scriptures, as we call them, were what he had. He could read the beautiful stories of Noah, Abraham, and of Joseph, and of the children of Israel, David, and Sampson, and many others. But Timothy had not, as you, dear children, have now, the story of the blessed Lord Jesus coming down to this earth, becoming a little baby, and living in this world that He might die for sinners, and bear their sins on the cross, because that was the only way in which we could be saved.

Perhaps you wonder how Timothy and his mother heard about the Lord Jesus having died for sinners, since they had not the story written for them, as we have. It was probably through the preaching of the apostle Paul, for we read of his preaching the gospel in the very city where Timothy lived. You can read it for yourselves in the fourteenth chapter of the Acts, verses 6 to 21. You know that after the death of the Lord Jesus many of His disciples went everywhere, preaching and telling people that God had sent His Son to die for sinners, and that now all should be saved who believe in Jesus, even those who had killed Him.

And now I wish you to notice what is said in the Scriptures, which are God's own words, as you know, that you may see how very precious and good they are. The Lord Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me." And in another place, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." David says, "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Ps. cxix. 130.) And Paul, in writing to Timothy, says, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus."

Dear children, I trust you have found this true wisdom, and that you have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. May God give you so to love His word that you may truly say with David, "How sweet are Thy words unto

my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

A. A.

YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT.

"BE sure your sin will find you out." (Num. xxxii. 23.) These are very old words. They were spoken by Moses, the man of God, to the people of Israel very many hundreds of years ago. But they are as real, as living to-day for each of us as they were all that long time ago.

In a great city some boys were engaged in a house of business. We know God's eye was on each one of these boys, watching them from morning to night, and we know, too, that He put down in His book all they did and said.

One of the boys had his eye upon his master's money. "No one will miss a few pennies: no one will see me," thought he.

He found that there was a little drawer, where some pence were kept, which was not emptied with the others at night.

One evening when the boy was near this drawer he softly opened it, snatched out a penny, and put it in his pocket. As no one seemed to notice him, he grew bolder, till he began to take two or three pennies at a time.

Little did he think that the clerk who had to do with that drawer had been very much puzzled each morning. Surely he had counted so many pence, and put the value down in his book, and yet the number was different the next day. For you must know that even in great places of business, where, perhaps, two or three hundred clerks are busily employed; every single halfpenny that comes in and goes out of the counting-house is reckoned. So, while the boy was thinking no one saw him, and because of this was getting bolder in his evil ways, a watch was set; and it became perfectly evident that the thief could only be one out of certain boys, and some pennies were marked and placed in the drawer among the others.

The next morning early the four or five boys who worked late by turns were all called into a room by themselves to appear before the master. He told them that it was per-

fectly well known that money had been stolen out of a certain drawer, and that one of them was the thief. He then said, if the thief would confess, he would forgive him. "Now, which of you is the thief?" said he.

All were silent. Some looked very pale, and trembled.

"Now, which one of you is the culprit? Confess it, and I will pardon him," said the master. But they all said, "No."

"Put your hands behind your backs, boys—all of you," said the master. "Now, Mr. —," turning to the housekeeper, "search these boys."

There were strange odds and ends turned out of the boys' pockets, and sighs of relief as one by one was set aside as innocent. Being tolerably certain who the culprit was, the suspected boy was kept till last.

When his turn came, his defiant look contrasted with the pale faces of the others.

"I ask you again, did you take the money?" said the master.

"No, sir," said John.

"God knows all about it, and lying lips are an abomination to Him, boy."

Bits of string and various treasures, such as boys love, came out of poor John's pockets; then one penny, then another, till seven or eight pennies were produced.

"Where did you get these pennies from, John?" "My mother gave them me."

"Now, did you not steal some of them?"

"No; I did not," he said.

As the boy was speaking, the master who had the pence in his hand, had twisted them round, so that the mark along their rims was bright and clear.

"How dare you tell such lies, boy," said the master. "Look here!" John bent over, and in a moment saw the marks. He turned deadly pale, did not utter a word, and fell flat at the master's feet in a fainting fit, and for some long time the boy remained unconscious.

"You other boys can go," said the master. "You see what an awful thing is lying. John's sins have found him out. May it be a warning to you."

I tell you this tale, lads, for when I heard

it, this text of scripture sounded in my ears, "Guilty before God," and I thought of the great judgment day, when all the secrets of men's hearts shall be made manifest—when every sin, every idle word and thought, shall be brought into the light. The sins which have been hidden and denied in life will then be brought home to the heart and conscience. Then it will be too late for mercy, for it will be the Day of Judgment.

"Now," the Bible says, "is the Day of Salvation," and whoever repents of his sins and turns to God for pardon shall receive pardon. Through the blood of Jesus forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to all who desire God's mercy. You are young, but not so young as not to have committed sins, which God's eye has seen, and which are written down in His book. What is to be done? Confess your guilt to God now. Seek His pardon now—to-day.



The Sin of Korah.

GOD had made Aaron His high priest, and had appointed Aaron's sons the priests of His people Israel. He had ordered their service, and given them a peculiar place near Himself. Because of this, jealousy filled the heart of a great prince of Israel named Korah, and he and other famous princes rose up in rebellion against Moses and Aaron. They cried, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" (Numb. xvi. 3.)

Now, the Lord had lifted up Aaron to the honour of the priesthood; he had not called himself. God puts up whom He will, and jealousy is a great sin. "For envy" the great men of their time delivered Jesus to be crucified. And now that our Lord is in heaven, seated in glory, exalted there by the will of God, the High Priest for God's people on earth, woe to the mighty prince among men



THE SIN OF KORAH.

who dares to question His sole right to His exalted place on high, and to all the honours which belong to the Lord in virtue of His being the Great Priest before God.

When Moses heard the words of Korah, he fell upon his face. He told him how God had separated Korah and the Levites for the service of the tabernacle, and for standing before the congregation to minister to them. He reminded Korah of God's favour in thus giving him a place to serve Him in the holy things, and then asked, "Seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" (Numb. xvi. 10, 11.)

God gives His servants, great and small, a place and service for Him. Seek in humility to do that and to be that, which God has appointed. Be no more, be no less than what God has made you. To be more, is pride; to be less, presumption. True humility is being that which God, in grace, has appointed us to be.

While God has made His servants on earth what He has pleased, He has reserved for His Son in heaven the high priesthood. None can trench upon this honour of the Lord without sinning against God. Jesus Christ in heaven is the High Priest of His people. Let us honour Him where He is. "What is Aaron that ye murmur against him?"

Christ in heaven cares for each one of us who are His. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. All God's people are upon Christ's heart. Every care, every burden they bear is graciously considered and tenderly dealt with by Him. Are you in difficulty? Do you feel very weak and ignorant? Christ knows all your care, and gently leads you. He is before God on your behalf. He is in the presence of God for us.

Do not question this for one moment, dear young friend. You love the Lord, you know He put away your sins, and, therefore, that your sins are put away for ever. But you feel tried oftentimes. Perhaps you know not what to do, nor even what to think. Now, comfort your heart in the assurance of the present care of the Lord in heaven for you, a poor pilgrim, on earth. Christ in heaven as surely

intercedes for you before God as He died for you on the cross of Calvary. Many a hard thought about God would fly from your soul if you only considered, Christ is making intercession for me.

He succours them that are tempted, we read. He was a man on earth, and learned by suffering what obedience is. Having suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. Just as a loving nurse runs swiftly when the little lonely child cries, and hastens to succour it, so the gracious, tender Lord on high cares for His little weak ones here!

Aaron was busy continually for Israel. His day's work was to bless them. Unceasing care and toil for Israel marked the lives of Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. Yet Korah murmured against them. Perhaps when you grow older you will better understand this. You may live to see people jealous of those whose only care is to serve them for Christ's sake. But the sin of Korah was a sin against the high priest of God's appointment, and a crime against the counsels of Jehovah.

In our picture we see Korah and his company before the tabernacle. Moses is speaking with them. They have their censers in their hands, with fire in them. Ah! those censers should speak of sweet savours, and of perfume, such as Jehovah loves. Alas! the clamouring princes are full of their own thoughts. They are full of themselves and their honour, and sad, terribly sad, must be their end. They little know how angry Jehovah is with them for their wicked words and ways.

God seems at times to allow people to go on and on in a wicked, wilful course till their sin comes to a terrible head, and then it is too late, and sudden destruction comes upon them. Oh! beware of the beginnings of evil. Beware of the first step on the downward road. Every step takes the transgressor further and further from God. Korah had evil thoughts in his own heart to begin with, and he went on till he got two hundred and fifty princes to sin with him. Sin grows like a great rolling snow-ball as it hurls itself down hill to destruction.

(To be continued.)

*THE NEW LEARNING AND ERASMUS'S
GREEK TESTAMENT.*

IT was about a hundred years after the death of John de Wycliffe that William Tyndale was born. The precious manuscripts of Wycliffe's translation of the Bible were still passing from hand to hand, though they became more and more difficult to obtain, and were read in secret, and in fear. We think of Tyndale as the man through whose labours God gave to us our first printed New Testament—a Testament, too, which was not done into English from the Latin Vulgate—that, though faulty in many grave respects, being the translation from which Wycliffe was obliged to make his new one—but from the original Greek.

But before we speak of Tyndale and his translation, let us glance for a moment at what was taking place in Florence, which was perhaps the most learned city of Europe at that time. A passionate desire to study Greek, so as to be able to read the works of the olden time in the language in which they were written, had sprung up among the young Englishmen at its universities.

After the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, many exiled Greeks found refuge at Florence, and as its fine library was rich in manuscripts, that city became the favourite resort of learned men, and thither many scholars from England flocked, all anxious to learn this wonderful, unknown language. Among them was John Colet, an Oxford scholar, who went to Italy, filled with the desire to study the ancient learning, and to read the Greek poetry and philosophy. But he came back another man: he had found in the new language "the key by which he could unlock the Gospels and the New Testament," and henceforth the traditions of men were to him but as childish stories, about which scholars might dispute as they would.

By his bold speech from the pulpit of St. Paul's Church, Colet had brought upon himself the charge of heresy; but the changeable king took his part, saying, "This man is the doctor for me," and so he was unmolested. Colet continued to explain the Gospel by St.

Matthew to the crowds who came to hear him. We read that when our Lord Himself spoke to the people, "they were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one who had authority, and not as the Scribes." It was the authority and simplicity of the very words of Christ which the preacher himself so deeply felt, and which he chiefly dwelt upon in his preaching. Thus Colet from week to week broke the bread of life to the people, long accustomed to nothing but dry expositions of the texts prescribed by the Church. About the same time a friend of Dean Colet's, a learned Dutchman, came to Oxford. He was busily occupied in preparing the New Testament in Greek, with a Latin translation—and such a book had never been seen in England. "It is not from human reservoirs, fœtid with stagnant waters," he said to those who questioned him about his work, "that we should draw the doctrine of salvation, but from the pure and abundant streams that flow from the heart of God."

Perhaps Erasmus was not aware of what a bold thing he was doing in thus discarding the Latin translation, which had been approved by the Church for so long, and in substituting a more correct one of his own, as well as venturing to publish the New Testament in a language, understood, indeed, by very few, but still the language in which it was at first written.

He seems to have been surprised when the first murmurs of the rising storm reached him, and being a man who was careful of his own good name, and who loved to live in peace, he quietly left England and went to Basle, where he completed his Testament, copies of which were soon upon their way to London and the universities.

It was eagerly received and read by those of the people who could read Latin, but those who had raised an outcry at the mere thought of such a book being published now read it only to find "horrible heresies." They demanded loudly that the impious man who had dared to correct the Vulgate should be turned out of the Church, as one who had committed the unpardonable sin; and Erasmus, whose only thought had been to restore

the pure text of the word of God, knew not what to think. "I call God to witness," he said, "that I thought I was doing a work acceptable to the Lord, and necessary to the cause of Christ. . . . Were we to have seen Him with our own eyes we should not have so intimate a knowledge of Him as the gospels give us; speaking, healing; dying, rising again, as it were, in our very presence." Going further he earnestly maintained the right of the English people to have the Bible translated into their own common tongue.

In writing upon this subject he looked forward to the day—a day which, by the grace of God, came long since—when the "Holy Scriptures, translated into all languages, should be read, not only by the Scotch and Irish, but even by Turks and Saracens; when the husbandman should sing them as he held the handle of his plough, the weaver repeat them as he plies his shuttle, and the wearied traveller, halting on his journey, refresh him under some shady tree with these godly narratives."

One copy of Erasmus's Testament was the source of endless blessing to a young lawyer at Cambridge. He brought it home secretly, in fear and trembling, for the priests to whom he confessed the deep trouble of his soul had especially warned him against this heretical book. Shutting himself up in his room with the book which he had bought, moved by the hand of God, as he afterwards said, he opened it, and his eye fell upon the words, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Again, and again he read the words, for he could hardly believe them to be true, so blessed did they seem to his weary, unsatisfied spirit. "I also am like Paul," he said, "and more than Paul, the greatest of sinners. But Christ saves sinners. At last I have heard of Jesus. Yes, Jesus Christ saves. I see it all; my vigils, my fasts, my pilgrimages, my purchase of masses and indulgences, were destroying instead of saving me."

We shall hear more of Thomas Bilney, this young lawyer, by-and-bye. Let us now trace the history of William Tyndale, for to him,

and through him to us, the Greek Testament of Erasmus was a priceless boon.

We know little of his early life, save that he was born and brought up in Gloucestershire, beside the banks of the Severn. We next hear of him as a student at Oxford, where he first read the New Testament, about which all the learned world was talking. At first he looked at it only from curiosity, then he studied it as he would have studied any other learned book; but, as he read on he became subdued and solemnized. A deep need was awakened in his heart and conscience, and ere long he found in the same wonderful Book the answer to that need. Soon, gathering his fellow-students around him, Tyndale began to read the Gospels in Greek and Latin with them; but when this became known, he removed to Cambridge, where he met Bilney and a young mathematician, John Fryth, with whom he formed a lasting friendship, for they were men like-minded with himself.

Leaving Cambridge for his native county, he became tutor to the children of a knight, Sir John Walsh, at whose hospitable table, Fox tells us, abbots, deans, and other clergy often sat. The company, as was the manner of the times, discussed many points of theology, and especially spoke of the New Testament of Erasmus. By-and-bye they heard more of this New Testament than was welcome to them, for Tyndale kept it constantly near him, "and if they objected to his reasonings, would show them the book, and lay plainly before them the open and manifest places of the Scriptures, to confute their errors and confirm his sayings."

These abbots and deans brought forward the usual objection to the Scriptures being read by the people, that to permit the ignorant to read for themselves would only serve to make heretics of them. "We do not understand the word of God," they argued; "and how can the vulgar understand it?"

"Alas," replied Tyndale, "you read the Holy Scriptures without Jesus Christ; that is why they are an obscure book to you. Do you know who taught the eagles to find their prey? That same God teaches His hungry children to find their Father in His word." C.R.

CONTENTMENT.

"**B**E content with such things as ye have" (Heb. xiii. 5), say the Scriptures; and it is as sweet to see christian contentment in a child as in a grown-up person. Oh! my dear christian boys and girls, what beautiful contentment have I seen even in children! I do not mean contentment in such children as have everything they ask for, and get discontented because they get all they want, for if any one thing renders anybody more discontented than another, it is being spoiled.

A spoiled child grows up to be a tyrant. I saw a fine lady the other day, with her fingers covered with sparkling rings, and her person adorned with jewels. It was my misfortune to ride beside her in the railway-carriage. How she scolded at the railway guards and porters! How she complained of her husband! She smacked her hands together like a cross little infant, and nothing seemed to please her. Poor lady! she had been spoiled.

Now, real contentment must begin with the humblest things. In our picture, you see, it begins with the bread we eat. I think children who are contented with the little things of their every-day life will without doubt be so when great difficulties arise.

How contented with the trouble God sends them have I seen some children in pain and suffering upon their sick beds! So patient, so humble, so gentle! I knew a dear boy who was laid aside from his usual play for years, but he was the sunbeam of the family, his father told me—ah! and told me with tears, too, for his dear boy loved the Lord Jesus, and would speak to his parents and his brothers and sisters of Him.

So it is written, "Godliness with contentment is great gain." (1 Tim. vi. 6.) For, dear christian boys and girls, it is of small use speaking about our Lord and Saviour if we do not live like those He has made contented. You see, your parents cannot give you all that you might wish for. Perhaps they have not it to give; perhaps they know what you wish for would be injurious to you. God gives each of His children just what is best, and withholds from them what He knows would injure them.

If we are walking in the love of our God and Father we shall be content with such things as we have. There is no sight more sad than a grumbling child of God.

Once upon a time a young christian was walking down a street, having a very sorrowful countenance. It was not that he had anything to make him look so miserable, far from it. He knew he was washed from his sins in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and that heaven was his home, while, as regards this life, he certainly was in the enjoyment of as many mercies as most are. Well, as our young friend walked down the street, he lifted



IS SHE CONTENTED?

up his eyes, and before he could guess who it was, saw a gloomy-looking youth coming to meet him. "You are dull-looking," thought he. When suddenly he found himself before a great looking-glass exhibited in a shop window. Mr. Longface was himself! That looking-glass did him no end of good.

Now, my dear young friends, keep in view what God has done for you. You may say the Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Think of His favours to you, and of His mercies, and I am sure you will shine for Him a contented child.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE READY-MADE SEAT.

THE READY-MADE SEAT.

I WAS resting the other day on a seat facing the sea, placed for the accommodation of visitors at a watering-place, and looking to the Lord to give me a word from Himself to someone whom He might send to sit by my side. I noticed a gentleman coming my way, but he passed by. Presently two women came up, one of whom was aged and very lame; she seemed as if she could walk no farther.

Accosting me, she said, "Please, sir, may I sit down and rest me on this seat?"

"My good woman," said I, "this seat is like salvation."

Looking at me with some surprise, she said, "Indeed! Why?"

"Why? Because it is a ready-made seat, and salvation is a ready-made salvation. And more, it is a "whosoever" seat, placed here for whosoever is weary. You could not make this seat—it is made. You could not make your own salvation, or make your own peace with God; no, if you tried ever so, you could not."

The aged woman seemed greatly astonished, and said, "Say that again."

I then told her that just as that seat had been placed there—a ready-made seat—for whosoever might be weary, so the Lord Jesus had said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That He came down from heaven to die for sinners; that He had finished the work of redemption; that He had made peace by His blood on the cross, and that she was as welcome to come to Jesus as she was welcome to sit on that seat.

She seemed still more astonished, and did not clearly understand what I meant. I said, "Come, now, just sit down and rest you a bit; you are getting to be an aged woman; you are not well, and you may not live long. Now if you don't understand me, then tell me what is your way to heaven. How do you hope to get there?"

She said, "Well, really, I scarcely know, they tell us in the chapel here—I am in the convalescent home—that we must keep praying to God to have mercy upon us, and to for-

give our sins; and if we keep praying, and keep praying, we may hope at last to get saved, and go to heaven."

"I should like you to try that way of praying with something else," said I. "Now, what time do you take tea?"

"Take tea!" she said, in an astonished tone; "why, what has that to do with it?"

"Well, we will see. You might tell me."

She said, "Half-past five."

"Very good; then this evening, when the tea is on the table, and all is ready, don't taste a drop of tea, or take a bit of bread and butter, but just get up and ring the bell. When the waitress comes to see what you want, say to her, 'Oh, I am a miserable, hungry woman, please to give me a cup of tea.'

"Though it is there on the table don't even taste it, but ring the bell forty times instead. Now, what would they think of you if you treated the waitress in this way? Would you not be fit for an asylum? It is very well for a person who is weary and hungry to ask for a cup of tea, but when the tea is there, ready made, would it not be madness to keep asking for it?"

"Do you remember what all the men had to do when Jesus made them a feast on the mountain?"

She said, "No, I don't exactly remember."

"They had to be made sit down. Now, what have you to do when the tea is ready but to sit down and receive it? Thus, you see, the way you are taught to get to heaven is like what your ringing the bell for tea and then refusing to take it would be.

"You keep praying for mercy and won't have it. The work is done. Jesus has died the atoning death on the cross. God has raised Him from the dead. Salvation is spread before you, and you won't receive it. You won't have it; but will keep praying for it. God says, 'Be it known unto you, therefore, . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.' Yes, God says, 'are justified from all things.'

"*Whosoever* sits down on this seat finds rest, does he not? Now 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that

whoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

The aged woman was greatly impressed, as was also her companion, with the grace of God, as illustrated by the ready-made seat.

Soon after this I was called to visit a poor drunkard's wife; suffering great agony of body, with eight children around her, in deep poverty. I had scarcely ever seen a human being in such wretched circumstances. I found her in great anxiety of soul, not knowing what to do, or how to find rest for her guilty, troubled soul, soon to enter eternity. She knew there was no cure for her poor body.

I related to her the story of the ready-made seat, as nearly as I can remember, as it is written above. I shall never forget the calm peace of her countenance, as she lifted up her arms, and said, "What, have I nothing to do, has my precious Jesus done it all? What, done it all! and now I can come to Him and rest?"

That day she was brought to rest in the finished work of Christ. She had been deeply anxious for nearly two years; but had thought herself too great a sinner to be saved. She lived about two months after this, but never for a moment did she lose the certainty of the knowledge of her salvation. It was truly blessed to see her. She was sustained above all circumstances, longing to be with Him who had loved her and given Himself for her. As I parted with her for the last time on earth, I said, "You will soon be with the Lord." She replied, "Oh, that it may be this day!" After a few hours she departed, to be absent from the body, present with the Lord.

Beloved reader, what effect has this little story on you? That gentleman who passed by, might know that there was a seat for whosoever was weary. But he was not weary, he did not sit and rest upon it. You may have often heard of the gospel. But have you found rest in Jesus? Have you found Him to be the rest of your soul? Can you say, "What, have I nothing to do? My Jesus has done it all!" or are you deceived by the teachers who would tell you to keep praying for forgiveness, and never receiving? Jesus

says, "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 (or judgment); but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

The teacher at the hospital would tell you to keep praying for it. Jesus says if you believe God you have it. Which is true? Yea, though ten thousand teachers should tell you to keep praying, but never to know that you are saved, who would be true, God or them?

Oh, come to Jesus, come now, come whosoever will, and find rest unto your souls! All is done: it is finished. Jesus says, "Peace be unto you." You have not to do aught to obtain it: you have not to make it. Oh, come to Jesus just as you are! Sit down. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." C. S.

PARDON AND GRATITUDE:

MANY a child of God is in trouble of soul through confounding the divine pardon with his own gratitude, or the sense of gratitude he feels he should possess, for that pardon. "I do not believe I am pardoned my sins," said a friend to us not long since, "for if I were pardoned, I could but find the fruits of gratitude in my heart." "Sir," we replied, "you are like a man seeking to reap in a field that is not sown."

The seed first, the fruit next. First, faith in God's word; next, gratitude for what God has said, and its fruits. The condemned prisoner does not say to the officer who shows him the document of his pardon, signed and sealed, "I cannot be pardoned, for I do not feel grateful," but he is full of gratitude because he believes he is pardoned. God brings His pardon to the broken-hearted sinner; faith believes God, and gratitude rejoices in that pardoning mercy.

Do not put the load before the power—that is, your sense of what you are before faith in God. When the seed was sown in the honest and good heart, it sprang up and brought forth fruit. Had the heart not received the word, where could the fruit have come from? Out of nothing, nothing comes; out of a

heart dead to God, nothing comes but death; out of an unpardoned sinner's soul, gratitude for God's pardon cannot come.

It is a mistake for the awakened soul to look for evidences *in* himself of God's work *for* him. Christ's death and resurrection are our evidence of God's pardon for us. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." When was this? Long, long ago, before we had sinned. Do you believe that God gave His Son to die, and raised Him from the dead for the sinner's sake? One thing is certain; when you believe, you will be grateful. "Ah, but, then, as I am not really grateful I cannot truly believe," says unbelief. Speaking thus is faith in one's own gratitude, not faith in God for His pardoning mercy. Oh, troubled heart, do not put self in any form before the plain word of God.

FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF GOD.

THE following story was related to me by an eye-witness:—

"When I was a young man, some fifty years ago, a party of us, clerks in offices in the City of London, were having tea together in a coffee-house. Someone of the company began to speak of the power of the Almighty, when another declared he neither believed God nor His power.

" 'Don't speak so,' one said, 'for you have not even power to move your hand, save as He wills it.'

" 'Nonsense!' cried the infidel. 'I can do what I like, and I will.'

"The young man was in a daring and wicked mood. He had a pen with him, which he threw on the ground, exclaiming, 'There, I can throw that down without God.'

" 'No,' said the other, 'you could not, neither can you pick it up again, unless He permit you.'

"With a blasphemous word, the infidel said, 'Now, see, I will pick up that pen off the floor without God,' and then called the attention of all of us to his action. Our eyes were turned towards him as he stooped down. He had nearly touched the pen, when he fell. He did not rise again, so we went to pick

him up, but we found, to our amazement and our horror, that he was dead. He never picked up the pen! I saw it with my own eyes, and was close beside him. Indeed, we were well acquainted with each other."

The narrator of this solemn fact was gathered home at a ripe old age, some few years ago, and was well known to the writer. The aged man was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is in heaven; for of all whom the Father has given to the Son none is lost, and this is the will of Him who sent the Son, that all who believe in Him should have everlasting life.

Where is the blasphemer—the young man cut off in his pride? Ah, poor sinner, pride has peopled hell! By pride and rebellion angels and men find their way to the lake of fire, which is the second death.

Since this was written the following solemn incident, which took place only a few days ago, has come to our notice:—

"At the Rotherham Court-house three men—father and sons—were called upon to appear in answer to a charge of assault which it was alleged had been committed by them. The elder defendant did not appear, and the police authorities stated that on receiving the summons he expressed the hope that 'God might strike him dead' if either he or his sons were guilty. He was shortly afterwards seized with a fit, and died after an illness of a few hours."

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.)
 "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. x. 31.)

REALITY AND PEACE.

REALITY in following the Lord Jesus, always gets into trouble; a trouble which profession can go on without meeting; but it is sweet trouble. True, there is the storm, but then there is the voice of Christ Himself saying, "Peace be still." It is worth while to be tempest-tossed, if in the storm we are close to Him, if we learn to know Him so well, to listen to His own voice saying "It is I, be not afraid."

IT IS BELIEVING, NOT PRAYING.

THOUGH conforming to religious observances, Jenny was not happy. She knew she must be born again, and that outward appearances were useless, and religious observances unsatisfying, unless Jesus was her own Saviour. One evening she was listening to a preacher of the gospel speaking from these words, "Adam, where art thou?" and the answer, "I went and hid myself." Theserpent's insinuation, "Hath God said?" and the lie, "Ye shall not surely die," believed, and God set aside. His truth counted as nothing, and the result of the disobedience, that Adam could not any longer be happy in God's presence.

Jenny went home to her place and was asked by her master how she liked the sermon. "Not at all," was her reply; "it made me feel perfectly miserable. I never want to hear that man again. Why, he pictures one so black, and then to think of having to meet God!"

However, in spite of her declaration, she went again to hear the same evangelist. At the close of the service he asked her, "Are you on the road to meet the Lord Jesus when He comes?"

Perplexed and angry, Jenny made no reply, but hurried away. Again she was asked on reaching the house how she liked the sermon. "I was so afraid," she replied, "that I ran all the way home."

Weeks went on, and much prayer was made to God for Jenny's soul. God delights to hear and answer prayer; He would have all men to be saved. Mark the scripture does not say *hope* to be saved, but speaks of God "who *hath* saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace." (2 Tim. i. 9.)

After awhile, Mr. B.—the evangelist of this story—called to see Jenny. She was busy ironing. Sitting by the ironing-board he began to read a few passages of scripture, while she kept busily to her work.

"Do you know, Jenny, the word of God says, 'Through this Man (Jesus) is preached

unto you the forgiveness of sins.' Have you got that, Jenny?" "No," she said, "I have not."

"Would you like to have your sins forgiven?"

"I would."

"The Lord Jesus, the Son of God, the spotless One, went to the cross, and there paid with His own blood the mighty debt, that sinners such as you and I could never pay. Hence God, in His grace, comes out to us where we are, and offers a full and free salvation to the soul that believes in Jesus."

The iron was still going, but Jenny's heart was aching. Mr. B. said; "Jenny, do you want to be saved?"

Her answer expressed the sorrow of her soul: "Oh, Mr. B., it is no good, I cannot be saved, for I have prayed, and prayed, and prayed, and God will not answer my prayer and save me."

Seeing she was putting her prayers as a reason why God should save her, Mr. B. said, "Jenny, God cannot answer that prayer."

Surprised, she asked, "Why not?"

"Because if anyone asked you after you were saved how you got salvation, you would be able to say, 'Why, I prayed, and prayed, and prayed, then God saved me.' This would be putting God's Son out of the question as a Saviour. But your thoughts and my thoughts will not do in this matter, for it is a question of eternity. Let us hear God speak, and then we shall be sure to be right." By this time the iron had ceased, and Jenny was seated. "Now I will read a verse from Romans iv., not as God has had it written, but as you understand it. 'But to him that worketh not, but prayeth to Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.' That is how you understand it—is it not?"

"Yes," she said.

"Ah! but, thank God, this is not what God says. We should not know if we had prayed enough, and our prayers could not save our souls. These are the words of God, 'To him that worketh not but *believeth*.' It is believing, not praying. Now we will turn to chap. x. ver. 8, 'The word is nigh thee, even

in thy mouth, and in thy heart.' Jenny, you often speak of it, you often think of it. God says, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' Let God be true, and Satan a liar, for he was that from the beginning. Good-bye."

Mr. B. left, believing that God was about to finish the work in Jenny's soul. As soon as he had gone, she went to her room, and there before God, owned herself a guilty sinner. What a blessed thing it is to be alone in the presence of God, who, while the light of that holy presence makes manifest every action of darkness, reveals Himself as Love. Half an hour was spent thus alone, then she came running downstairs into the presence of the others in the house, exclaiming "I have found Him! I have found Him!"

"Found whom?" was the astonished question.

"Jesus, as my Saviour," she cried.

There was gladness in the house that day; another soul had learnt that Jesus was the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

And now, happy in His salvation, she is learning, too, that the grace of God which has saved her, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. (Titus ii. 11-12).

Will you let me ask you, Do you still believe Satan's lie, which casts a doubt upon the perfect goodness and truth of God? God has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And His word—yea, every jot and tittle of His word, shall stand for ever. But He has also said, "They that hear (the voice of the Son of God) shall live." Have you ever heard it, dear reader? If you have, not death, but eternal life is the portion He gives you.

B. & I.

THE GOSPEL

THE deep, full, swiftly-flowing river of the gospel has its source in God, and every drop of the vast stream is Christ. The gospel of God is concerning His Son. God is love, and, through Christ, His love flows to men.



Redeemed with the Precious Blood.

IT is now some two thousand years ago since the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was shed for sinners. Let us for a moment meditate upon the purpose of God in the sacrifice. "Redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." (1 Pet. i. 18-20.)

This world was formed into its present fashion of beauty some six thousand years gone by, but when the foundation of the world was laid no man can tell. No mind can conceive aright, the lapse of time since that great day when the Eternal God thought fit to lay in space, as it were, the cornerstone upon which this earth is built, and to hang the earth in its place amongst the countless orbs of heaven, there to be fixed firm till He shall remove it. But before the foundation of this world, the mind of God was occupied with the sacrifice of His Son as a Man for men; and with the value of that sacrifice. God formed the marvellous plan of our blessing and His glory.

The purpose of God existed before the foundation of the world, but the display of that purpose was made in time: He "was manifest in these last times"—or at the end of the times—"for you, who by Him do believe in God."

What are the times here spoken of, which have reached their end, or of which the last may be reckoned? God has marked off the history of this world in times or ages. Even as each day has its hours, each week its days, each year its months, so has the history of the world its times. We speak of the eleventh hour, the end of the week, the close of the year, and a peculiar significance attaches to the expressions. The day of law and prophets reached its end when Christ died, and more, the end of man's history as dealt with by God in order that man should be thoroughly

tried and tested then came; besides which the close of the times of this world's history is in view as we regard the death of Christ. The believer is not looking for any improvement of the world, he is looking for Christ's coming and the world's judgment. The end is reached. In a most solemn way we can say, therefore, "these last times."

Let us review briefly some of the times of this world's history, and reckon, as it were, some of its hours in the light of the sacrifice of Christ. When sin entered into this world, and death by sin, when, instead of paradise to live in, man had a world in which to die, God took the skins of animals and clothed disobedient man. God covered man with robes made from slain victims. In the first, blood thus shed on this earth, the first death on account of sin, can we not mark the beginning of God's ways of mercy for man? And do not we see in the garments of God's own making a figure of that fair beauty in which He robes those for whom Christ died? From the very first, where sin abounded grace did much more abound. As Adam and Eve turned their backs on paradise, they entered the world clothed in garments made from victims slain in their stead. The first hour in the time of sin chronicles the type of the eternally purposed work of God's Son for sinners.

As time began to roll on, Adam and Eve saw their own sinful natures reproduced in their children. They saw, too, God-given faith in their son Abel. Cain, the man of earth, brought of earth's fruits and cultivation to Jehovah; Abel brought death and the "fat" of the victim instead to his altar.

When righteous Abel for the first time went to his flock, and took therefrom the fairest lamb he could find, and brought it in its innocence to the altar, and then plunged the knife into the creature's breast, and the blood of the lamb crimsoned the altar of the man of faith, God from heaven accepted Abel, and Abel's offering. In the death of the sacrifice for the sinner, God and the sinner could meet. The cross of Christ is the meeting-place for God and man. We come in our sins to God, and find God's provision for our sins. God has set Him forth a mercy-seat

through faith in His blood. And in the way of Abel's approach to God in the very earliest hours of the world's history, we in these last times have holy witness to the precious blood of Christ.

As the days of the patriarchs passed by, the holy men of old brought sacrifices and blood to God. Without shedding of blood there is no remission. This truth the altars of Noah, Abraham, and the fathers proclaim. Beloved reader, living in these last days, have you, by faith, learned of God the lesson of the needs-be for Christ's death in order to the salvation of your soul?

Passing on in the world's history, God called out a nation to be His people. He redeemed them by blood. Neither silver nor gold bought Israel out of Egypt; the price of their redemption was the blood of a lamb. "Take you a lamb," said Jehovah to them, and they believed, and did as the Lord commanded. The sprinkled blood freed them. The blood sprinkled on door-posts and lintels declared the faith of the families within doors. By their obedience they owned the need of death for them, and the Lord saw the blood, and passed over, and judgment entered not their houses. How is it with the reader of these lines? The ransom price of our souls is Christ's blood; we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Can we each one say, "Christ has redeemed me?"

Again, when God established the order of sacrifices for His redeemed people, He ordained that death should be before Him daily. Morning by morning a sweet savour rose up continually to Him. (Lev. vi. 9-13.) Thus did the obedience and faith of His people Israel, as it were, daily witness to the coming sacrifice of Christ.

If we consider the individual faith of the people of God's choice, who shall count the myriads of sacrifices, or measure the rivers of blood offered to God during the four thousand years prior to the advent of the Redeemer! Burnt offerings—peace offerings—trespass offerings, sin offerings. Offerings of sweet savour to God, offerings of peace and communion of His people with God—offerings for sin when

burdens lay heavy on the conscience because of known offence and trespass against God's laws, and offerings for sin where sin could not be precisely explained by the offerer, nor its depths measured in the sight of God! Consider it, beloved reader, worshippers ever coming to God by sacrifice, sacrifices innumerable, rivers of blood, and all in the presence of Jehovah, uttering of that of which they all foretold—"the precious blood of Christ."

As we read the testimony of the Old Testament, and consider God's ways with His people for four thousand years before His Son came to the earth, from Genesis to Malachi, to individuals, to families, to the nation, one constant voice is heard, speaking to God by the will of God, of the precious blood of Christ.

And now the last times have come! The early ages have rolled by, and have gone. Jesus has been manifested; the Lamb of God has appeared. He has died and risen again. By Him we "believe in God that raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory that our faith and hope might be in God." He is the joy of His believing people. They rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and as the present joy of His presence is theirs, and the future glory of being with Him is their contemplation, the past suffering of His cross is their most treasured remembrance.

"My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear
When hanging on the accursed tree,
For all my guilt was there."

TURNING TO GOD.

WE read of the Thessalonians that they "turned to God from idols," not from idols to God. He does not begin by taking away your playthings, but by giving you Himself.

B—k.

SEEKING CHRIST'S COMING.

THE one who says most truly, "Come, Lord Jesus," is the one who will turn round to the poor thirsty sinner and invite him to the fountain; and to the sluggish saint, and invite him to say "Come."

B—k.



Little Lucy's Faith.

IT was the Lord's Day afternoon, and the children of our little hamlet were all gathered in the grey old schoolhouse. They were not divided into classes that afternoon, for an aged and devoted servant of God, who loved little children, had come from the neighbouring city to address them, and they sat in rows, all facing him.

After singing a hymn, and praying to God to give the right word, the servant of God got up into the old pulpit, which stood in the schoolroom—it was a disused chapel—and in loving and persuasive tones began to address the children.

I do not remember what his text was, or even if he gave out one at all; but he had not gone on very far in his address before he quoted those wonderful and ever fresh words of the Lord Jesus to the little ones, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." And he repeated them so lovingly, so entreatingly, just as if he felt the Lord Jesus was bidding him repeat them.

You may have noticed that in reading or repeating these exquisite words, one person will lay the emphasis on one word, and another on another. Well, this dear servant of God laid the emphasis on the word "come." "Suffer the little children to *come* unto Me." And as he uttered the gracious and blessed word "come," he unconsciously motioned with his hand, as people do when they really want a child to come to them.

As he did so, to the surprise of all, a little fair-haired child of five years of age rose from one of the back seats, with modest courage walked right up the room to the speaker, and with wistful, upturned face, stood at the open pulpit door. It was a touching and impressive sight; it touched the heart of the grey-haired man, who, making her step up into the pulpit beside him, laid his hand upon her head, and blessed the little child.

Faith was given him, and he said, "I shall



LITTLE LUCY'S FAITH.

meet you in heaven, my dear little child, I know I shall meet you there."

Then he asked her name, and turning to the wondering children, continued his address—

"It is just so, my dear children, that you must come to Jesus. You have just seen how to do it. Come in your hearts to Jesus, just as Lucy has come on her feet to me, and He will bless you, yea, and you shall be blessed, and I shall meet you, too, in heaven."

Lucy was ever after an object of interest

amongst us, often prayed for, and much watched over, for a measure of our old friend's faith concerning the child seemed given to us, and we felt sure we had only to watch to see, ere long, the work of grace manifestly begun in her heart. And when our friend came amongst us, which he did at long intervals, Lucy was brought to him that he might speak to her, and he always would say with such evident assurance of faith, "I shall meet that dear child in heaven."

But time passed by, and Lucy, although a

meek and well-behaved child—merryenough, too—never showed any concern about her soul, so far as we could tell. When she was ten years old her parents left our village to live in the large city, four miles off, and we almost lost sight of little Lucy.

A long time after, when walking out one evening, I happened to meet Lucy's mother, and of course asked eagerly after the child. Her mother assured me that Lucy was "as strict as ever to her Sunday-school and chapel," but I could not gather that the child was yet converted.

Six years had passed away since Lucy left us, and ten since the Lord's Day afternoon of the address at the Sunday-school, when, as I stood at my window, a young girl of slight figure came up the steps. She bore no resemblance to the white-haired little Lucy I remembered so well, in her lilac print frock and well-washed pinafore. Yet she it was. She said she had come to see me before going to a town two hundred miles away. As soon as our greetings were over, I asked whether she remembered the incident I have related.

"Oh, yes," she answered, brightly, "I remember it well."

"But have you come to Jesus yet, Lucy?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, I have," she instantly replied, in a subdued and earnest tone; "I have come to Him."

"Really come, Lucy?" I asked, scarce daring to believe.

"Yes, really."

"When?"

"About a fortnight ago," she said.

"And where and how did it happen? Tell me all about it."

"It was in the mission-room where I go," she replied; "the Spirit was striving with me, and I felt I must give it all up."

"Give all what up?"

"Mysinful ways; and I know I have come to Jesus, and have been happy ever since. I feel the more I love Jesus, the more I want to. My sister laughs at me, but I think, 'Ah! you won't laugh when the Lord comes.'"

This was what Lucy called coming to Jesus. And surely so it was; laying her sins and

her heart at His feet, who died to take away the one, and to win the other.

"Ever since," she added, "that day in the Sunday-school, when I came when I thought I was called, I have had such a love for the Sunday-school; and although I was not converted, but was a wicked sinner, and had a dreadful temper, it kept me from a great deal of evil. And I'm sure I'm thankful to those who prayed for me.

"Jesus called a little child unto Him." He is calling you, dear young friends; will you not come to the Lord Jesus at once, with your hearts, as Lucy came on her feet to His servant?

E. B.—R.

TWO GOOD ANSWERS.

Some time ago, when questioning our Sunday-school children, I received two answers which pleased me very much.

"*What is faith?*" was my question.

"It is believing what God says," a good many children answered, and this was a good and right answer; but presently one child said, "It is believing what God says, *because God says it.*" Ah, I thought, that is better, because faith is not only believing what God says, but believing God Himself, the One who speaks. Abraham, "*believed God,*" and not only God's promise to Him. Then, when all the others had done answering, came my other good answer:

"Faith is believing God, without asking questions."

Do you, dear children, believe what God says, because it is God who speaks through His word to you; and do you really and truly believe in Him, asking no questions? G. H.

FAITH IN CHRIST.

IF you would live a master of your own selfishness, you must find your strength in Christ. Resolves to be good will prove, in the hour of temptation, only a rope of sand. The secret of a christian's strength lies in Christ, not in himself; yet too frequently christians seek to obtain the power they desire by every means, save the only one, which avails—faith in Christ.

BIBLE TRUTHS AND BIBLE TREES.

THE trees of the Bible are more or less connected with the different ages or dispensations of this world. There were two trees connected with the first period of the world's history. What those two trees were every Bible student knows. But how long this period lasted—what length of time Adam dwelt in the fair and beauteous scene, where the refreshing rivers watered the garden of delights, wherein God placed our first parents—no one knows. This "Morning of Innocence," as it has been aptly termed, was, alas! very soon darkened by a great cloud, which has ever since hung over this scene in which we find ourselves.

One of these two trees, called the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil," which God placed in the Garden of Eden, He commanded Adam not to taste. This prohibition was given to show that God was Creator, and Adam, the creature; and that, as Creator, God had a perfect right to command, and that Adam's happiness consisted in unquestioning obedience. "Of every tree"—yes, "of every tree"—except this one, Adam could freely eat. This one only was kept from him. You well know the story. The serpent tempted, Eve listened and partook of the fruit, Adam hearkened to his now guilty wife, and also ate of the forbidden tree, and by this act of disobedience they both forfeited their innocent and happy condition, and consequently were driven from their home of delights! God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The "Tree of Life," which God had placed in the midst of the garden, was also lost to them: Adam and his wife were shut out of the earthly paradise forever. But do we not hear again of the Tree of Life? Yes, we do, but not as blooming in an earthly Eden, but in the paradise of God.

You ask, Was there no way back to the fair scene from which our first parents were expelled? No! A flaming sword of judgment turned every way, and the bright cherubim, executors of that judgment, guarded the approach to the Garden of Eden.

This has a voice for all, telling us that

happiness, in the state of innocence, having been forfeited by man's disobedience, can never be regained. But if there is no return to paradise on earth, the grace of God has superabounded, and *His own* paradise is now opened to all who turn to Him.

Do you ask, How was it that Adam and Eve were shut out of Eden, and not allowed to eat of the Tree of Life? It was mercy; for had they eaten of that tree in their fallen condition they would have had to live on earth a life of misery for ever away from God.

The next period in Bible history commences with THORNS. How aptly these set forth a period of *lawlessness* you will see by tracing the references to them through Scripture.

There are eight different Hebrew words used in the Bible for thorns, but they are all derived from one root, which signifies "to fret," "to wound," or "to tear."

Thorns came upon the earth at the fall—thorns were entwined around the head of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was about to die for us—and when He comes to reign, "The sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away." (2 Sam. xxiii. 6.)

The plant which is supposed to have furnished the thorns for the Saviour's crown is called *nabka* by the Arabs. A plant more suited for this purpose could not be found, for it is literally covered with thorns; its branches are supple and pliant, and its leaf of a deep green colour, like that of our ivy.

It is supposed that this plant was chosen in order to add insult to cruelty, for it resembles the ivy, which was used to crown emperors and warriors.

Thorns are connected with a period of time, lasting a great many years, during which man was left to his own lawless and unrestrained will, without check. And violence and corruption filled the earth.

After the two trees of the Garden of Eden, so familiar to us all, and which are associated with the time of innocence on the earth, we have the time characterized by thorns and thistles, and by violence and lawlessness. May each of our dear young friends have found in Christ the Life, and be saved from sin through Him.

H. N.



THE EARNEST WISH.

THE EARNEST WISH.

I WONDER whether any of you could explain to me what this picture is about? The title does not tell us much more than we can learn from the picture itself, for we can see plainly enough that the slave-girl, as she kneels beside her mistress, and offers her some sweetmeats, is speaking earnestly. Her mistress looks at her with attention, too—what can they be talking about?

Perhaps you will be more likely to guess aright if I tell you that the picture is about a story which is told in the Old Testament. I do not wish to tell you more, for you know that beautiful story very well, though, perhaps, you have never thought much about the little slave-girl, who lived in the time of Elisha, the prophet of God, and who is here speaking earnestly to her mistress about him.

Ah! now you know. This girl was the little captive maid who waited upon the wife of Naaman, the great Syrian general, and her story, as we read it in the Bible, is so sweet, that I am glad to see a picture about it, so that we may talk a little of her this afternoon.

And where was the little maid living when she waited upon her mistress, as you see her doing in the picture?

In the land of Syria—that country north of the land of Israel, where the sun is so hot that people are glad to lie down, and enjoy the cool evening breeze out of doors upon the housetop, as the lady in the picture does.

How did the little maid from the land of Israel come to this strange country to be a slave-girl?

Ah! that is a sad story. It was because the people of God had left off serving Him and obeying His word that God had allowed them to be beaten by their enemies. They had fled before them, and some had been taken captive; not only the fightingmen, but the women and children; this was how the little maid from the land of Israel came to be in a strange land, away from her home.

Was it not sad for her? Why did God let such a dreadful thing happen to a child?

It was indeed sad for her. You who have been away from home only just for a few months, and who look to go back to it again

when the holidays come, found it very sad and strange at first, even though you were only at school, and with people who tried to be kind to you. This child knew not that she should ever see her dear Israelitish home, or her father and mother, and brothers and sisters again, and she was a slave in a country where the language and the people were all strange.

You asked why God allowed such a sad thing to happen to a child. We do not know why a great many sad things are allowed to happen every day in this sad world, where sin and misery are on every hand, but we are quite sure it is not because the great God in heaven does not care for the sorrows even of little children. Perhaps He allowed this child to be carried away from her home that He might speak to her young heart when there was no one near to comfort her, and tell her not to fear, but to trust in Him.

But she was in a land where no one cared for the true God, and where they prayed to idols.

That is quite true, but in spite of all the wrong things which were going on around her, God kept faith in Himself alive in her heart. How do we know this?

Because of what she said to her mistress about the prophet of God, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

We do not know how long the child had been thinking, with pitiful longing, about her master, before she ventured to say this to her mistress; but at last she did take courage, and she had her reward.

What reward? Was she allowed to go back to her own home after Naaman was cured?

We are not told anything more about her except this wish, which she expressed in such a simple and beautiful way; but do you not think it must have been a glad day for even the little slave girl when word was brought that the master was coming home from his long journey, and when he at last came in with every trace of that dreadful leprosy gone, and his flesh fair and soft as the flesh of a little child?

Yes, it must have made her very happy, because she was so sorry for her master to

be a leper; some people would have been almost glad, and would have said, "It serves him right for having taken me for a slave."

That is just what all our hearts would say, if God did not teach us something better. Remember, my dear child, that it was God who put into the captive maiden's heart this earnest wish for her master, that he might go to His prophet for healing and blessing. Is it not wonderful to think that she knew a secret about God's power and His goodness which was unknown to all the great people in the land of Syria? Yet not wonderful, for it is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

And Naaman learnt about God too.

Yes, for he said to Elisha, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."

How little the captive maiden knew what blessing would come from her words; so modestly yet so earnestly spoken! L.

TYNDALE BROUGHT BEFORE THE CHANCELLOR.

THE discomfited priests came no more to the house of Sir John Walsh, but they did not forget the tutor at Sodbury Hall, who, with his Greek Testament ever at his side, had bidden them "Look and read," and judge for themselves which was worthy of being honoured and believed, the word of God, or their own tradition. By degrees it became known throughout the vale of the Severn that Sir John Tyndale was a dangerous man, one who though himself a priest was at war with some of the most cherished doctrines of the church; one who not only dared speak the truth, but who constantly appealed to the word of truth in support of what he said—and already the first mutterings of the storm which was soon to burst upon him were heard.

We are told that it was his habit at this time, when the work of the day was over, to take his way to a neighbouring hill, and seated upon the top amid the ruins of a Roman camp, think long and deeply. There was much to make him uneasy, as he looked around upon what was passing in England; but, like David, he encouraged himself in the Lord

his God, and when the time of trial came it came not as a strange or unexpected thing, but as that which he had looked in the face calmly and stedfastly, and was, by God's grace, prepared to meet in a strength and by a wisdom not his own.

He still spoke boldly and uncompromisingly as occasion offered, and on Sundays he preached in the little village church with a sweetness and simplicity which made some say, as they listened, that as Tyndale explained his gospel they seemed to be hearing the beloved apostle John himself speak to them. Some words which fell from his lips in that little church were remembered long afterwards, when news came from over the sea of how he who spoke them had died a cruel death—a witness for the truth in a foreign land, and men only treasured them more.

"According to the pope," he said—and we, who have never known what it is to be in bondage such as that in which many a child of God was held in those days, can hardly measure the boldness of such words—"according to the pope, we must first be good after his doctrine, and then compel God to be good again for our goodness. Nay, verily, *God's goodness is the root of all goodness.*" Again, alluding to the custom enjoined by the church of burning many candles in the chamber of death, as though they could light the departing spirit upon its solemn journey, he cried, "Faith is the holy candle wherewith we must bless ourselves at the last hour; without it you will go astray in the valley of the shadow of death, though you had a thousand tapers lighted around your bed."

But it was not only in the church of Sodbury that Tyndale preached; he went about from village to village, and sometimes even to Bristol, which was a very large and important city at that time. Crowds gathered around him as he stood in College Green, hard by the old cathedral, and preached to them under the pleasant shade of the beech-trees.

'It is plain that he could not long be hidden, and at last his enemies, who had long called him "heretic," and "hypocrite," not content with hard names, brought secret accusations against him, and he was summoned, along

with all the Gloucestershire priests, to appear before the chancellor of his diocese.

Of what he might be accused he did not certainly know; but as he went on his way alone, yet not alone, for surely the Lord stood by him, as He stood by the Apostle Paul when he was about to answer for himself before his enemies, Tyndale must have felt that his hour was come.

Long afterwards, when speaking of this time to a friend, he said that he "cried heartily to God in his mind, to give him strength to stand fast in the truth of His word."

He was not deceived as to the malice of his enemies, nor as to his confidence in God, who was able to deliver him from it. Many accusations had been brought against him, as false as they were injurious; the "chancellor," he says, "threatened me grievously and reviled me, and rated me as if I had been a dog, and laid to my charge whereof there could be none accuser brought forth, yet all the priests of the country were there." It must indeed have been a wonderful spectacle, and one from which we may well learn a lesson of the power of God to restrain the wrath of man. Alone, no man standing with him, Tyndale calmly looked around upon the assembly—there were the abbots and deans, and yonder stood the priests who had secretly accused him to them.

"Where are your witnesses?" he said, "let them come forward, and I will answer them."

Awe-struck and ashamed, not one stirred; the chancellor was obliged to dismiss the assembly, and Tyndale went on his way, pondering many things. He was not ignorant of the danger from which he had for the time escaped, and as he thanked God, who "delivereth and rescueth," for having thus interposed between him and his enemies, his heart was filled with compassionate longing for those who had thus sought his ruin. "Why should they so hate me?" he thought; "why should they seek to stop my mouth that I should no longer proclaim the word of God? Why should they seek to fasten upon me that of which they full well know I am not guilty? It is because they are ignorant; they know not Latin enough to read their missal; poor

souls! if they but knew what God hath made me to know, they would be even as I am." And the more he thought on these things the more anxious did he become to give to these ignorant priests, as well as to the poor people who looked to them for teaching and guidance, the New Testament in their own language. c. r.

HARRY'S LETTER TO HIS MOTHER.

"I WISH to write to tell you that, through the finished work of Jesus Christ I, a vile sinner, am saved. Dear mother, when you used to speak to me about my soul's salvation, I used to back out of it somehow; I did not want to hear anything about it. But still, mother, you and nearly everyone else kept speaking to me about my precious soul, and I used to think how much I should like to know, and be able to say that I was saved.

"Still I cannot remember that the Lord Himself was really at work with my soul until the first time I went to Mr. B.'s; he asked me whether I was saved, and oh, what an awful thing it was for me to be obliged to say I was not! After that it seemed to me as if everyone knew that Harry W. was *not saved*.

"It was last Sunday, as I was listening to Mr. C. preaching, that I began to understand this wonderful reality, that God's salvation was *waiting for me*.

"I am so certain of it. It is wonderful to think that I can really say *I am saved*. Tell my father and my brothers and sisters, and everyone I know, that I, a sinner, am saved by the grace of God.

"Oh, mother, to think that I have now a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother; a Friend who never alters; a Friend for this present time, and for the bright and glorious time to come! To think how I used to hide or go out, or do anything so that God's word might not come home to me! But it has, in spite of all that Satan could do to hinder. There is no getting away from God, who in His unspeakable mercy gave up His only begotten Son, that we might have eternal life.

"I daresay you will be surprised, dear mother, and yet not surprised; for I know you have been looking to the Lord for this.

"Your affectionate son, HARRY."

OBEDIENCE.

"OBEY them that have the rule over you" (Heb. xiii. 7), is a word well suited to home life. The first instruction of the text refers to the pastors of our souls—those holy men whom God has set over His people to watch for their spiritual growth. But who watches over the souls of children like christian parents? Who, like your father and mother, seeks forgiveness from God for your daily errors? As we think of this, we may safely take the text for our homes. You are the dearest objects of your parents' desire, and they trust they will give a joyful account of your obedience to Him when life is over.

We are addressing children who love the Lord, and who desire to please Him. Everyone who knows Christ as his Saviour, and God as his Father, desires to please God. We do not say that at times the christian is not overcome of evil; but none the less it is true that in every christian's heart, whether the little child or the grown-up man or woman, there dwells the wish to please God.

Obedience, to be of real value, must be cheerfully rendered. When my boy's mother bids him run an errand for her, and he walks very slowly, with an unwilling countenance, his obedience has lost its sweetness to her heart. You will remember the parable our Lord spake to the chief priests in the temple, who rendered God an outward but not a heart obedience. A father had two sons, whom he bade go and work in his vineyard. The elder said, "I will not," but afterwards repented, and went. The younger said, "I go, sir," but never went at all. These were surly sons, and are a pattern to be shunned.

Whatever you do, avoid eye-service. This is a warning to boys and girls in school-life. A christian child who openly says to him or

to her who has rule over him, "I will do what you bid me," and then, when the ruler's back is turned, joins with others in dishonouring the one placed over them, is a mean-spirited child, and a shame to the name of Christ. Better be the sulky son, who said, "I will not," but afterwards repented, than the deceitful son, who said, "I go, sir," but who never went.

If my boy cannot be trusted when my back is turned, I am truly ashamed of him. A faithful spirit is most careful to carry out the wishes of those he obeys when no eye is upon him. God looks into our hearts, and watches what goes on there, and in the heart the main-



spring of obedience is to be found. Therefore, if Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith, that is, if you are thinking about Him and seeking His glory, you will find sweetness in doing what He did. "Take My yoke upon you," He says, "and learn of Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." His yoke is obedience. Adam, the first man, was disobedient, and by his act of disobedience we became sinners; Christ came to this earth to do

the Father's will; He obeyed and died for us upon the cross; and now the people, old and young, who belong to Christ, are called to obey God.

Our salvation flows from the willing obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, and the cheerful, bright spirit of the christian flows from his walking as Christ walked. Seek, dear young friends, to put your will into the hand of the Lord who died for you.

Seek to say to Him, "Not my will, but Thine, Lord." Herein lies the secret of true christian happiness. There will be many a little struggle in the heart over this we know, but God will give the victory, and every victory of faith redounds to the glory of God.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD.

*SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED
SWORD.*

SOME years ago a lady had occasion to go into a shop in the north of London, the article she required not being immediately obtainable, she was requested to call on her return. She did so, and was met, not, as before, by the mistress, but by a strikingly noble-looking man, who at once attracted her attention and moved her pity by his evident feebleness, for his tall figure was bowed by illness, and his face bore the marks of suffering.

Mrs. S. was unwilling to let slip any occasion of speaking of Christ to those in sickness or sorrow, but about this sufferer there was an undefinable something that might have prevented, had he not himself opened the way. He apologised for the absence of his wife, and for his own inability to serve, by reason of his extreme weakness, as he was only just recovering from a very severe illness.

"I can see that you have been very ill," replied Mrs. S. "Pain and sickness are sad, indeed, but how greatly are our sufferings lightened when we have a bright prospect before us—the blessed certainty of soon going to a place where there will be no more pain or sorrow; all that grieves us now will have been left behind for ever."

Steadying himself into a more upright position, and fixing his large, lustrous eyes upon the lady, as though reading her through and through, he replied, after a short pause, "Do you believe that?"

"Yes," said Mrs. S., earnestly, "indeed I do; do not you?"

"No."

As that dread "No" fell slowly from his lips, the eyes of Mrs. S. filled with tears, and she could only repeat, "Oh, I am sorry—I am sorry for you."

"Are you?" he replied. "Well, I believe that you are the first person who has ever said that. You are sorry for *me*! Well, I am sure I have had pain enough here. But what do you know of trouble? You don't look as though you had seen much of it."

"Oh, how greatly you mistake," replied

Mrs. S. "My life has been one of most painful trial—of such sorrow that only one thing has helped me through it."

"And what is that?" he asked.

"Ah, it is that very thing which you tell me you do not believe," said she, sadly.

"Well, if you can look so bright because of that," replied the invalid, "I should not be sorry if I believed it too, if it would make me as happy as you seem to be." And as Mrs. S. rose to leave the shop he begged her to come and see him again.

Mrs. S. thought much of this meeting with the stranger, and at last determined to take a little New Testament with her on her next visit, and, if possible, to induce him to read it. She soon called again at the shop, and after some conversation, taking out her Testament, she offered it to him, begging him to read it for himself.

"You don't know what I am," said he, "or what I have done. If you did, you would never ask me to do that."

Upon her repeating her desire, and telling him it could matter little to her what he had been or done, he said, "I am an infidel, and have been an infidel lecturer. Do you ask me to read and believe what I have spent my life in refuting?"

Terrible as this discovery was, it only increased Mrs. S.'s desire that one who had gone so far astray should be brought to the Lord before it was too late. With intense eagerness she entreated him to read the book which she had brought him. At last he gave an unwilling consent, moved, as it seemed, by the earnestness of her manner. Then, with a simple confidence that the Lord would surely use His own word, she left. She knew that "God is His own interpreter," and that in His precious book is to be found the answer to all the infidel thoughts of the human mind, the antidote to all the poison which Satan can instil into the poor human heart, so ready to listen to his lie.

Some little time passed before Mrs. S. again saw the one in whom she took so deep an interest, but the day when she met him once more was a day never to be forgotten by her.

Speaking of it afterwards, she said, "His face, as he stood at the door and saw me come towards him, seemed to light up with unearthly brightness; it was just as though a gleam of glory irradiated every feature, and shone in the deep eyes, which sparkled with joy. He burst forth in words of welcome and thanks to me for bringing him the wonderful book of God that by His Spirit's power had led him to cast away all his evil theories and opinions, and to find in their stead a living, loving Saviour and Friend. Yes; he had found a reality now, not only a Saviour from all his sins, not only peace through the precious blood of Jesus, but a mighty arm to lean upon, a tender, pitiful heart into which to pour all his burden of cares, and abundance of mercy to forgive and cleanse, even the poor infidel."

"All you told me is true," said he. "I have been trusting in a lie all my life, but now I believe this book; I bow to Christ, and I rest in Him."

Language fails to express the joy of such a meeting. He, who all his life had been a bond slave of Satan, was now brought into the liberty of a child of God. He who had been a son of disobedience, was now a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Every time Mrs. S. met the former infidel, the love of God in Christ was the theme, and happy were the moments they thus passed together. Circumstances for a long time prevented her from seeing her friend, and at last the news reached her that he had gone home to learn still more of the blessed Lord. When she heard from his son an account of his father's last hours, she could but repeat to herself as she listened, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

"This little book was always with him," said the young man, taking from his pocket the well-worn little Testament, "and just before he passed away he gave it to me, begging me to keep it."

May that living word, by the blessed operation of the Holy Spirit of God, reach the heart and conscience of the son, as it reached his father's, and not his only, but yours, too, beloved reader.

L. T.

FAITH AND REALIZATION.

WE realize what we believe—such is the order of faith in God. There must be faith in God in order to there being realization of what we believe concerning God. Faith is belief in God and His word, not belief in our own realization of what God says. If we place realization before faith we really put our realization of a truth of God before the truth itself, and thus, by a back door have made our faith, faith in self.

It comforts the heart of a christian most exceedingly when he opens the word of God and, as he reads, says to his soul, "My God and my Father is now speaking to me." Perhaps he has been cast down by the day's difficulties or trials; maybe he has grown weary under the assaults of the enemy; possibly his soul is out of tune with heavenly things; but he opens the word of his God and reads. He hears the voice of his God speaking to him. How sweet are the words, yea sweeter than honey or the honeycomb! The word is life to his spirit. His soul had melted for heaviness, but God quickens him according to His word. He was afflicted very much, but because the word is, by grace, his delight, he perishes not in his affliction. Thus, even before he is aware, realization follows faith. Through mercy the ear was not stopped to God's word by putting realization of the truth before the truth itself.

It is the same in principle with the awakened soul, with the soul to whom God has given life in Christ, but who lacks peace and liberty. Take the word of God as it is written. Read what God says of His love to you, poor, anxious seeker after His salvation; read not the book of your own heart of unbelief. God loves sinners; God gave His Son to die for sinners; God has made you, by His Spirit, to know you are a sinner. It is God who speaks to you. Jesus died for you, your sins are all gone. Ah! you believe God. You say, "God has forgiven my sins, and has forgotten them." His grace fills your spirit with overwhelming gratitude. You now love Him because He first loved you. How sweet the realization of His love. Now you know that faith in God opens the heart to the joy of His grace.

JESUS IS MY FRIEND IN GLORY.

VERY weak and ill, and almost destitute; such was the situation in which I found the poor woman of whom I had heard as dying of consumption, and whom I was now visiting for the first time.

After a few remarks about her state of health, I said, "It may be that God has some wise purpose in thus laying you upon a sick bed; when we are ill we have much time for thinking. When you consider that perhaps God may soon call you to leave this world, how do you feel about it? Have you any hope of a brighter world beyond?"

"I am doing the best I can," she replied shortly.

"And will you tell me what that is?" I asked.

"Well, sir, I pray to God to forgive my sins, and I cannot do more."

"And do you think that those prayers of yours have satisfied God?" I asked; and as she fixed her eyes upon me with a look of anxious enquiry, I continued, "it is God whom we have to meet about this great question; He must be satisfied with regard to our sins, and our prayers will not satisfy Him; nothing but the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, can atone for sin, and open a way by which God can pardon us and give us a place with Himself in heaven."

Before I left we read together the solemn account of what we all are by nature, which God has written for us in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and I sought, by God's help, to show this poor woman the condition in which she stood before God; a guilty sinner indeed, but not too lost and undone for Him to receive, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, and of whom it was said when He was on earth, "This man receiveth sinners."

It pleased God, in His mercy, to give her, by His Holy Spirit, to see, in some measure, the darkness in which she was living, and when I next saw her she was in deep distress of soul, longing with unspeakable desire to know the blessedness of peace with God. It was then my happy task to show her from God's word how the Lord Jesus had by His

death upon the cross met all the righteous claims of God's throne, and the deep need of the lost sinner who trusts in Him.

"We can do nothing to make ourselves fit for God or acceptable to Him," I said. "What God seeks from us is that we should take sides with Him against ourselves, condemning ourselves in His presence as guilty and ruined sinners."

Then, after reading a few verses in the third chapter of St. John's gospel, which show that God, in His great love, gave His Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, I commended her to God and left her.

Two days afterwards I called, and found her face lit up with joy, and as I sat beside her she began to tell me what the Lord had done for her.

"After you were gone," she said, "I said to myself, 'It is believing on Jesus Christ that saves the soul. Then what is to hinder me from being saved? I did believe in Jesus as my Saviour with my heart, and now I am happy. Yes, if the dear Lord were to call me away at this moment I am ready to go.'"

"Then you are not afraid of death now?" I said.

"No," she replied, with a bright smile. "I am not afraid now. Blessed Lord Jesus, I do thank Him for what He has done for me, and I long to be with Him, but I must wait His time."

For many weeks my poor friend lay upon her bed, waiting, as she said, "the Lord's time" to take her to be with Himself; and very sweet it was to hear her speak of the love of Jesus.

"Think," she would say, "of such love to a sinner like me, who only deserved to go to hell!" and with her whole heart she would praise her Saviour for laying down His life for her.

As the time drew near for her to leave this world of sin and sorrow, and to enter upon eternity in the presence of the Lord, she sent for me, and as I came in she said—

"I wanted to see you once more, to thank you for coming to tell me of Jesus." Then, calling her three little children to her side,

she kissed them fondly, and bade them farewell. Presently raising herself in her bed, with hands and eyes uplifted, she began to sing—“‘Jesus is my Friend in glory,
Oh, how He loves!’”

“Won't you sing with me?” she said, as she paused for a moment. We sang together, and then she laid herself down, and soon, very soon, her happy spirit had taken its flight to her Friend in glory; she was ‘absent from the body and present with the Lord.’ R. B.

A CURE FOR LONELINESS.

My friend, Mrs. R., is an aged woman; she loves the Lord Jesus, and knows that He loves her, but she is not always calm and happy.

The other day she said to her husband, “When you are gone to town, if no one comes to see me, I feel that I *must* go out and make a call. I want to talk to some one. I get tired of being alone.”

“My dear,” said the old man, “when you are tired of being alone, and want to speak to somebody, take your Bible, and open it, and read; as you read, *God will speak to you*. When you are tired of reading, shut your book, lay it down, and then, *speak to God*. If you do what I tell you, you will not feel dull or lonely.”

What sweet and sensible advice! Surely there can be no better cure for a spirit of unrest or a feeling of loneliness. Unsatisfied christian, try it. H. L. T.

GOD'S UNWEARIED GOODNESS.

GOD is the only one, who pays you for troubling Him, the oftener you trouble Him the better. “He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” B—k.

WALKING WITH GOD.

“ENOCH walked with God.” That was his every-day life, not just having to do with God morning and evening, but a heart reference with Him all through the day. If we knew more of this, we have no idea of how He would enter into everything that concerns us; our thoughts, our feelings, our difficulties. B—k.

A SINNER SAVED.

ONE of the sights to be seen by the curious visitor to the cathedral of this ancient city of York is a chained Bible—a relic of those days of darkness in which reading the Bible was a punishable offence, and in which the light and truth of the pure word of God were forcibly withheld from the perishing multitudes. But, in God's mercy, the chains have been snapped, and the truth circulates far and wide in the language of the people. It is now a common boast that we live in a land of Bibles, and, when we hear that boast, might we not suppose that none in such a favoured land would be found unacquainted with the Holy Scriptures?

Let us, however, go to a back street, almost under the shadow of our stately cathedral. Here it is not counted shame to riot in the daytime, and drunken brawlings frequently break the stillness of the night. In this street lived Mrs. P., whose history I desire briefly to trace, in order to show the exceeding grace of our God to a poor sinner.

How thankful ought those children to be who are blessed with christian parents and homes of peace! Very little of a mother's fond love, or a father's care, was enjoyed when a child by the poor woman of whom I write, and even that little was taken away when her mother died, leaving her an orphan at eight years of age.

The influences of the surroundings on the impressible heart of childhood may be imagined by those who sometimes visit such places as the street I have spoken of. The orphan girl reached womanhood in ignorance of God—ignorance almost as dense as that of the heathen, who, in his blindness, bows down to wood and stone. While still young, she was married. Her husband was a godless, drunken man, and, though she often shared his revels, she was afar off from happiness. Her sons grew up, and followed in their father's footsteps.

Years rolled on, and the woman was very often ill-used by her husband and sons. Neglected by them, she took to hawking fish, and thus, day after day, under the broiling sun, or exposed to the pitiless storm, for twenty years

Mrs. P. trudged the streets with her fish-basket.

Constant exposure, neglect, and insufficient food at last told upon her, and the day came when the neighbours looked in vain for the familiar sight of the fishwoman and her basket.

Gradually the realities of eternity dawned upon her, and the many sins of a mis-spent life rose before her terrified gaze. Then anguish of soul laid hold upon her, far exceeding the bodily suffering which she endured. Eternity was near, and she unprepared to meet a sin-hating God.

There is no anguish like that of the sinner convicted of sin, and with only sufficient knowledge of God to inspire fear and terror. Death to the unbeliever is a terrible reality, and the judgment that follows unutterably awful. The pains and the pleasures, the poverty and the riches of this life, alike fade into insignificance when death stares the sinner in the face. Is my reader prepared for it?

To Mrs. P. there was no ray of hope. The neighbours could not help—they were equally ignorant of God and His salvation. Alone, neglected by her family, tortured with pain and mental anguish, the poor fishwoman lay dying. Not unseen, however; for the gracious eye of a Saviour God was upon her. And at the right moment a preacher was sent. He was proclaiming the gospel in an adjoining street, when a friend told him of the dying woman's wretched case, and requested him to visit her. He accordingly went, and found the poor creature in a bare, squalid room, lying face downwards upon the floor, groaning in agony. On being spoken to, she rose up, and said she had just dragged herself downstairs to cut some bread for her little boy, who was crying, and, being unable to bear the pain caused by the effort, had thrown herself upon the floor.

In answer to enquiries, she told the story of her life, not hiding how wicked she had been, and concluded with, "Now the doctor says I am dying—dying! And, oh, sir, I want to know how I can be saved."

Seeing that the poor woman was fully convinced that she was a helpless sinner, her visitor replied by repeating the beautiful

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."

Eagerly the poor creature burst out, "Is that true, sir? Is that in the Bible? In reply the visitor turned to the 16th verse of the third chapter of St. John's gospel, and read the blessed words from God's own book. Mrs. P.'s despairing heart seized the divine message, as a drowning man seizes the saving rope. At once her burden rolled away, and her face was lighted with a heavenly radiance. Bodily suffering was now forgotten in the joy of forgiveness of sins, and the wail of anguish was exchanged for the song of praise. Together the visitor and the new-born soul thanked the Lord for His grace, and the strains of rejoicing which rose from that miserable room found their echo in heaven.

From that moment until she departed to be with Christ the poor fishwoman, now made rich by God's grace, enjoyed uninterrupted peace. Many Christians saw her, and all testified to the reality of her conversion.

On one occasion a visitor wishing to show Mrs. P. that death is for the believer only a passage into the Lord's presence, and that though death was apparently so near, He might first come and take her with all saints to be for ever with Himself, began by saying, "If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ—" when she interrupted him with the almost indignant exclamation—"If I say, I *do* believe, I *am* saved, and I know that I am His."

Such was the assurance begotten in the soul of this poor woman by the grace of God through a simple reception of His word. Would that thousands might receive God's testimony in the same simplicity of faith which brought peace and joy to the dying fishwoman.

God has provided one and only one way of salvation, and it is of faith that it might be by grace. The grace that is sufficient to save the most abandoned is needed to save the very best upon earth, "for there is no difference." Has my reader submitted to the righteousness of God, and experienced the joy of this so great salvation? J. C. K.

THE FINISHED WORK AND THE RENT VEIL.

THE last words of our dying Lord and Saviour, recorded by the disciple whom He loved, are these: "It is finished." The work His Father gave Him to do—the sufferings of His cross—the bearing of sin—the conflict with Satan—the work of redemption—were all finished. All was done according to divine perfection. And, since the mighty work which brought Him from earth to heaven was absolutely completed, there can nothing be added to it, nor taken from it. It is finished; yes, blessed truth, all is done.

The claims of the throne of the holy and eternal God have all been met by the sin-bearing and the suffering for sin of our Lord. He was made sin for us; Jehovah laid upon Him the iniquities of us all. He was the sin-offering; "thou shalt make His soul"—His soul, His holy and perfect soul—"an offering for sin." (Isa. liii. 10.) He took the bitter cup of anguish from His Father's hands, and drank it to the dregs. The contents of that cup no human being could exhaust; endless ages spent in hell would not empty the cup of God's wrath and indignation against sin. Christ stood in the sinner's stead, and was forsaken of His God. And now God is satisfied, His righteous requirements are met, the work is complete: It is finished.

The powers of hell were broken through the death of our Lord Jesus. He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. (Heb. ii. 14.) Satan tempted the Lord at the commencement of His path of service, and, foiled, departed from Him for a season, but, at the close of His path, the hour came for the combined energy of Satan and of man against Him; as He said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." (Luke xxii. 53.) Man was scoffing at the Lord; Satan tempting Him. God had forsaken Him; but, by His cross and death, the Lord, as a Man, overcame the enemy of God and men.

The ransom price for His people's freedom was paid by our Lord upon the cross. That ransom was His own precious blood, and, being paid, we now have in Him redemption

through His blood. If a wealthy stranger, filled with compassion for a slave, laid down the ransom price, and redeemed him, can we imagine the slave saying to his redeemer, "I have struggled hard during my years of slavery, and have managed to get a few pence together; let me give you them towards the hundred pounds you have paid for my redemption"? But, alas! how many a slave of sin and Satan, whom the Lord has redeemed, fails to rejoice in his Redeemer's love and work, because his thoughts are upon the paltry "good" works, tears, repentance, feelings, experiences, and the like, which he thinks he can add to Christ's work for him! Oh, anxious sinner, away with these vain things; the blood of Christ is the ransom price, and it has been paid—you are free. It is finished.

Having finished the work He had come to earth to accomplish, the gracious Saviour gave up the ghost, commending His Spirit as a Man to His Father's hands, and then His lifeless body remained upon the cross. All could see that Jesus was dead. The Lord of life and glory had laid down His life of His own voluntary will. No one took His life from Him; He had power to lay it down, and He had power to take it again.

It is most sweet to meditate upon the dying love of the Lord Jesus for sinners. His love is the abiding-place of His people's hearts, and His cross teaches what divine love is. As the world hangs in the skies surrounded on all sides by the boundless expanse of space, so the centre, as it were, of the grace of Christ is His dying for us; thence let us look abroad to the immeasurable heights and depths, lengths and breadths, of infinite love. We cannot doubt our pardon or our absolute security as we remain in this blest centre.

But if we have found by grace our perfect rest in the finished work of Christ for us, let us enquire. What is God's answer to these words of His Son, "It is finished"? We have it recorded in the fifty-first verse of the twenty-seventh of Matthew, "And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." God, who for so

many long years had dwelt in the thick darkness—God, who had been hidden from His people behind the veil in unapproachable holiness—yes, God, who had wrapped the earth in darkness when the Lord was made sin for us, and who had then forsaken Him, when the work of sin-bearing was ended, rent the veil of the temple from heaven to earth. He was hidden no longer. He came forth in righteousness to the eye of faith—His nature of light became visible.

Divine righteousness is now declared. On the one hand, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness—no single spot of sin is now outside the clear shining of the divine light—no sinner in his sins is hidden from the full revelation of God's hatred against sin—the cross of Christ has witnessed what sin is according to God's righteousness. On the other hand, the way into the very holiest of all, where God is, from whom the light shines, is open to the believer. There is nothing whatever between God and His people. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has made them fit for God's holy presence. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest, . . . let us draw near." (Heb. x. 19, 22.) Holy confidence is ours, because the blood has been shed for us, and because He who shed it is in God's presence for us.

The immediate answer of God to the words of the Lord, "It is finished!" was the rending of the veil from heaven to earth. The only way in which we can know God is His own way, from heaven to earth. Reader, may we better understand this by the teaching of God the Spirit, and humbly take our place, by faith, in the Holiest, in the highest, because of what Christ has done, and because of what Christ is.

We cannot truly understand before God what sin is, until we know that our sins are put away by the blood of Christ. It is as looking back upon the cross from the light of the Holiest in heaven that we learn the true measure of sin—yes, and the depth of *our* sins. So long as the anxious soul is distressed as to whether his sins are forgiven or not, the measure of sin to him is his sense of his own

sinfulness; but when, by grace, faith takes the true place of nearness to God (oh! let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance), then the realised measure of sin is God's own standard of righteousness.



Garak, the Armenian Boy.

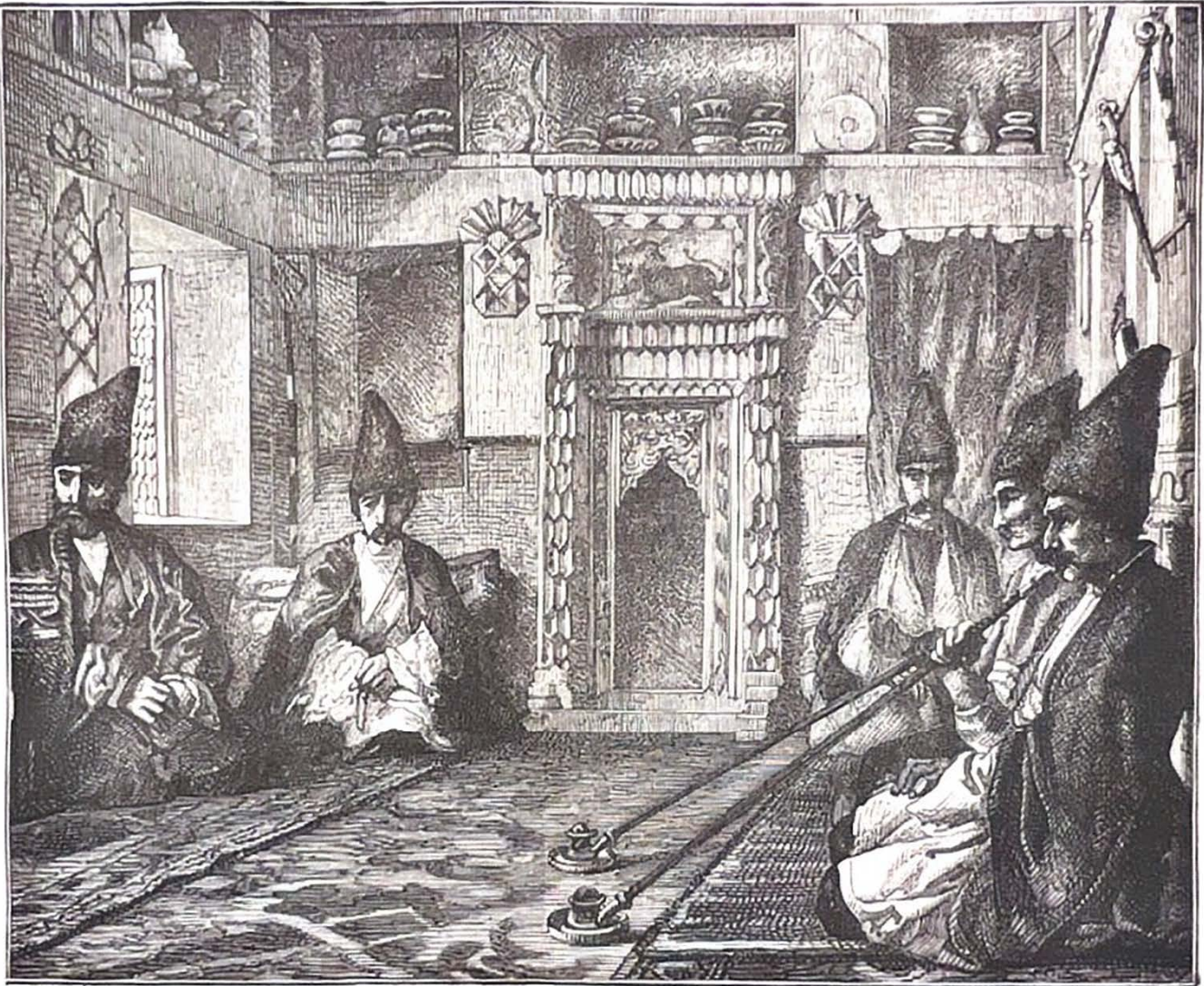
GARAK was an Armenian boy, who lived in Tokat, a town of Asiatic Turkey. His father and mother prayed to pictures, with lighted candles before them, and they taught their little boy and his younger brother to do the same. Sometimes Garak would buy a candle with his pocket money, and burn it before a picture, and then he would kneel before it, and pray for a long time, thinking that in that way he was pleasing God.

When Garak was about twelve years of age his father took a christian into his employ. This man was very poor, and, through temptation, had promised not to talk to anyone about his faith in Christ. This was very wrong, for, if we love the Saviour, we should not shrink from confessing His name before men. However, the man found he could not keep that promise, for, in a day or two, he took Garak into a corner, where he showed him a little Book of Psalms, which he lent him to read, and said, "You will find in this book the bread of life."

Garak took a long walk into the country, that he might read, without interruption, this precious book. After he had read it, he returned it to the man, who then showed him a New Testament. The boy begged for it, but the poor man said, "No, I dare not let you have it."

How could Garak get a New Testament? He began to save up his pocket money, and, in a few weeks, had enough to buy one. But how dare he go into the American missionary's shop to enquire for it? Someone would see him, and go and tell his father.

After walking backwards and forwards for some time Garak beckoned to a little boy, and sent him into the shop for it, promising him



AN ARMENIAN'S DRAWING-ROOM.

a small reward. It would be difficult to tell the joy Garak felt, with this priceless book in his hands.

It seemed to him as if he had all the world in his grasp. He now knows he had something better than the world. He hid the Testament in his bosom under his loose dress, and returning home, carefully searched all over his father's house for some place of concealment to hide his treasure. No place could be found, until he went into the stable, where, in a corner, he deposited the book, with candles and matches, meaning to rise at midnight to read it.

The first night beheld him in the stable, with no human friend near, hungering and

thirsting for the knowledge of God. Garak first noticed in this book the many names mentioned. Some were similar to those of his schoolfellows and other friends. "And is my name here?" enquired the boy. He searched, but it could not be found. Then his eye fell on Rev. xx. 15: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

"Oh," thought Garak, in deep distress, "if I cannot find my name here there is no hope for me. Oh, that I had someone near to encourage me, to help me."

But God's eye of love rested on the lonely seeker, and His hand of love pointed out, as Garak restlessly turned over the pages of the

Testament, John iii. 16—you know the words, dear reader—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What a flood of light was poured out by those precious words! The boy, kneeling upon the floor of the stable, simply asked the Lord Jesus to take him. "Lord Jesus," he said, "I am a sinner, Thou knowest, and I wish to be saved."

He came in faith to Jesus, and was not cast out. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." This call we learn from the next verse (Rom. x. 14) is not a thoughtless cry, but the call of faith. After this, Garak spent many midnight hours in the stable, with the New Testament as his companion.

He read it for a whole year without being suspected. His parents saw a change in him, but they could not think what was the cause. Many times he nearly made up his mind to go and hear the missionary, but fear and shame prevented him. At last, one Sunday, he started with a run from his father's house, so that he might not have time to listen to the tempter's suggestions, and soon found himself in the chapel.

There he sat and feasted. How pleasant it was to hear God's word from the lips of His servant! But when the time came to return, he feared to re-enter his father's house. After wandering about the streets till quite late he went in. When he returned there were his parents, and several priests waiting for him. "How came you to disgrace your family, and go and hear the deceivers?" said they.

"What man induced you to go?"

"No man," said the boy; "it was the Lord Jesus. I cannot answer all your questions"—for they asked him many other things—"but if you will talk to the missionary's people, and prove them deceivers, I will not go and hear them any more." A meeting was appointed, and the priests thought they had gained a great victory, where there was really no victory at all. "Promise," said they, to the boy, "not to go to hear these people, and not to read the New Testament."

Through fear, Garak yielded; they rejoiced, but he was very sorrowful. He sought his room to pray, but found he could not say a word. Kneeling down, he burst into a flood of bitter tears, which, like Peter's tears of old were a true confession of his sin, and peace was again restored to his soul. He obtained another New Testament, the first having been taken from him. At last his parents, urged on by the priests, determined to turn him out into the street, if he still persisted in following the Lord.

Another meeting took place; the angry priests on one side, the weeping friends on the other, the youthful disciple in the midst. "Look at the tears of your friends," said one, after urging him to give up the truth. The tempter was near, but the Lord Jesus was nearer, and by His Spirit brought to his memory these words, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." (Matt. x. 37.) Garak was then enabled to confess that the blood of Christ was more precious to him than the love of his parents. His enemies scarcely waited to hear what he had to say, but turned him into the street.

Thus cast out for Christ's sake he found the promise fulfilled in his experience: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." (Psalm xxvii. 10.) He is now a man, and a servant of Christ.

Before closing this little history, which I have had from Garak's lips, I think you will like to be reminded of Henry Martyn, a servant of the Lord, who laboured in Persia for a short time, and fell asleep in Jesus, at Tokat, in 1812. His body was buried by an Armenian priest; but after the commencement of the American missionary work in that place, his mortal remains were removed to the Protestant cemetery, and a monument erected to mark the spot.

Near this monument Garak often sat reading as a student, but at the time he little thought that in the course of God's dealings with him he should be led to England, to speak of Christ in different places, one of which was Truro, in Cornwall, where that dear servant of Christ, Henry Martyn, was born.

M. E. T.

A FEW WORDS TO SUNDAY SCHOLARS.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I think you have very little idea how anxious your teachers are that you should be really blessed, and how much it grieves them when they see you careless or inattentive.

A short time ago two boys in a class caused their teacher much sorrow. It was only a little thing that they did, but, oh! it showed that they were under the power of Satan.

The superintendent was addressing the school, and all were told to sit quietly, to listen to him, and answer his questions.

He was speaking of the love of the Lord Jesus, and His invitation to poor sinners, "Come unto Me;" when these two boys, who seemed to be sitting still, began to play—and what do you think that they had found to serve them as playthings? Two little narrow green leaves, each about an inch long! One boy put a leaf on his mouth; the other boy did the same. Then the first boy moved the leaf to his cheek, and the other was about to copy him, when the teacher saw what they were doing, and stopped them. Anything rather than the gospel; even two little leaves, which these boys would not have cared to notice at another time! How sad it is when children find it very dull, while the Scripture is being explained!

This may appear to be a very trifling incident, hardly worth writing about, but "Even a child is known by his doings." (Proverbs xx. 11.)

Your teachers, my dear boys and girls, are looking, longing, and praying for your conversion, desiring to see that you, at least, pay attention to what is said in school, and hoping that the word spoken may prove to be the "good seed" falling into ground prepared by the Spirit of God to receive it. "From a child" Timothy knew "the holy scriptures;" will you not also seek to know them? They are able to make you "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Time is hastening on, eternity is drawing nearer and nearer to you day by day. Oh! listen with all your hearts to the happy truths in which your teachers instruct you. H. L. T.

THE CHILD OF FAITH.

"BY faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, when they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." (Heb. xi. 23.) By faith! These are two short words, easily said, easily remembered. Let us ask ourselves how much of our daily lives is lived "by faith." At times great things are done by faith; at others, things which seem to be but very small. In the verse we have quoted we read of two things wrought by faith; the first would seem to be small—the parents of Moses *hid* their babe; the second seems very great—they were *not afraid* of the king's commandment. The King of Egypt had unlimited power, and he had bidden all his people to cast every son born among the poor children of Israel into the river. Thousands of eyes, therefore, would be upon the homes of the Israelites, and escape would seem impossible; but "by faith they were not afraid." One thing ever marks faith in God, namely, courage. "God hath not given us the spirit of fear" we read. (2 Tim. i. 7.)

During the three months they hid their infant, the parents of Moses must have seen and heard many a cruel casting of Hebrew babes into the Nile. But they trusted God. The little boy God had given them was a proper child, that is a fine or beautiful child, and they sought His blessing on their babe. I am sure Moses was a child of many, many prayers, because the Bible tells us he was a child of faith, for no parents have faith for their children who do not pray for them.

After three months the little babe had so grown that his mother could hide him no longer. But I do not think she had any doubt of God's caring for her babe though she was about to put him on the river into which the king's decree was he should be cast. She made a sort of cradle which would float. It was, no doubt, like one of the baskets of which we have pictures in the ancient Egyptian monuments, and very much such as is represented in our engraving. Perhaps it was amongst the papyrus flags she placed her floating cradle with its precious burden, and



THE CHILD OF FAITH.

great must have been her hope in God when she turned away and waited to see what God would do.

The lid of the cradle being laid gently down, and the cradle being left floating amongst the flags, the babe's sister stood watching at a little distance from it to learn what the end would be. Presently the great king's daughter, attended by her maidens, came by. She saw the basket, and had it drawn out of the river and opened at her bidding. There was the child of faith, the child of many prayers. This secret she knew not, but her heart was touched with compassion as the babe wept. "This is one of the Hebrew children," she said, then she said the babe should be her own, and as she had drawn him out of the river she said he should be called Moses, or drawn out.

Miriam's ready wit in asking Pharaoh's daughter if she required a nurse for the babe and then finding his mother for the service, is another happy incident in this story of faith in God. For God gives the right word at the right moment to His people.

It is very happy to think of the elder sister being one with her mother in trusting God. This makes one think of the loving care and earnest prayer of elder sisters and brothers for those who are younger in the family. There are many grown-up men and women who remember, with thankfulness to God, the simple, earnest words of an elder sister or brother to them at the time when they were very small children. And God never forgets such service of love in His name.

While the mother was occupied with the safety of her child each hour was doubtless one of deep searchings of heart. When the king's daughter took the babe for her son, the mother could say, "What hath God wrought?" As you go through the difficulty your heart will be full of prayer, but the hour of praise will certainly come. In the path of faith we can see the dangers and difficulties to be overcome, and also the victories God gives. God had arranged everything beforehand, as He always does. He had planned the visit to the Nile of Pharaoh's daughter, and He had ordered that she should

see the basket amongst the flags in the river. And this is what we find still. God arranges and disposes, and faith trusts Him and takes the step just at the right time and finds everything fitted in by God. How beautifully the parts of this story fit in together, and as it all was worked out before the longing heart of the mother we may well consider her praising God and saying, How wonderful are the ways of God!

TYNDALE GOES TO LONDON; THENCE TO GERMANY.

This attempt to drive Tyndale away from Gloucestershire by false accusations having failed, an effort of another and more subtle kind was made. A very clever and learned divine was sent to argue with him, and bring him back, as a loyal son of the church, to more faithful allegiance to her. To all arguments he replied by referring to the Greek Testament of Erasmus, and no subtleties of the scholar could drive him from his full and unshaken confidence in every word of God. Baffled and irritated at finding that he prevailed nothing, the clever doctor at last said—

"It were better to be without God's laws than the pope's."

It needed but such a bold affront to the majesty of God and of His word to rouse in Tyndale that strong spirit of indignation which slept, so long as it was only a question of himself and his reputation being set at naught.

"I defy the pope and all his laws!" he cried; "and if God spares my life I will take care that a ploughman shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost."

Now his secret was out—that cherished secret, which had been in his mind so long, the hope of translating that Greek Testament which had become so dear to him, and giving it, as bread from heaven, to his countrymen—those "hungry sheep," whom he saw all around him, who "looked up and were not fed"—to be their daily food. How long he had thought of this we cannot tell, but it is possible that even while he lived at the manor house he may have begun his work. Before long, aware that he was watched

more closely than ever, and unwilling to bring trouble or suspicion upon the family under whose friendly roof he had lived in peace and security, Tyndale bade farewell to Sir John Walsh and his lady, kissed the little boys who had been his pupils, and left his pleasant home beside the Severn, never to return to it.

"I perceive," he said, when the family at the manor house urged him to abide with them, "that I shall not be suffered to tarry long here in this country, nor will you be able to keep me out of their hands; and what displeasure you might have thereby is hard to know, for which I should be right sorry."

So, Master John Foxe tells us, "with the goodwill of his master he departed from him to London."

It was in the hope of finding in the great city some place of quietude and liberty where he, who had been in Gloucestershire "so turmoiled," might go on with the work which he believed God had given him to do, that Tyndale came to London. The great city was before him, but where should he go, or how should he live, while he gave himself to the work?

Sir John Walsh had given him a letter to a friend of his, a man of some influence, and through him Tyndale asked and obtained an interview with Tonstall, the new-made bishop of London, a man noted for his learning and for the helping hand which he ever stretched forth to poor scholars.

Tyndale remembered that Erasmus, in his notes on the New Testament, had greatly praised the scholarship and benevolence of the bishop, and he felt assured that such a man would befriend him and assist him in his undertaking, if he had but the opportunity of making it known to him. He, therefore, sent with his letter asking leave to wait upon him, a copy of a translation which he had made of one of the speeches of a celebrated Grecian orator, that the bishop might have proof of his knowledge of the Greek language. There was probably another reason which made Tyndale hope to find a safe asylum in the house of this learned bishop. He knew that although, by a law which we may remember

was made a hundred years before, it was forbidden to anyone to undertake a translation of the Scriptures into English of his own authority, yet it was in the power of the bishop to give leave, and one authorized by him would have nothing to fear.

But the man who had welcomed the Greek Testament of Erasmus had no words of encouragement or promise of help to bestow upon the poor unknown priest from the country, who desired to translate it into the tongue of the common people, and he received Tyndale coldly and suspiciously. "My lord answered me," he said, when describing the interview upon which he had rested such great hopes, "that his house was full, and advised me to seek in London, where, he said, I could not lack a service." Tyndale retired, cast down indeed, but not in despair. There was no room in the palace of the Bishop of London to translate the New Testament, but God could make a way for him to do it elsewhere. "I hunger for the word of God," he said, "and I will translate it, whatever they may say or do. He never made a mouth but He made food for it, nor a body but He made raiment also."

Tyndale had already, almost unknown to himself, found a friend in Sir Humphrey Monmouth, a rich cloth merchant, who had travelled much; for he had visited Rome and even Jerusalem, and had a good library. He was one of those who, fifteen years before, had listened to Colet, as he explained the gospel of St. Matthew at St. Paul's church, and had become known as "a scripture man," and ever ready to befriend those who were in distress. Hearing Tyndale preach in the church of St. Dunstan, he came up to him after his sermon was over, and asked the poor stranger what means of living he had. Tyndale replied that he had none, but that he hoped to enter the service of the Bishop of London.

It was to this good merchant that he now betook himself, and in an interesting letter which he afterwards wrote to Wolsey, the great cardinal, who was now rising to the height of his power, Sir Humphrey himself tells how he took the poor scholar into his house, where he abode more than half a year,

wearing poor clothes, and living upon the simplest fare, while "he studied most part of the day and of the night at his book." From the latter part of the letter it would seem that Tyndale had not told his friend what the object of his study was, for he goes on to say, "When I heard my lord of London"—for we shall hear of Tonsall by-and-by as a burner of the English New Testament—"When I heard my lord of London preach at St. Paul's Cross that Sir William Tyndale had translated the New Testament into English, and that it was naughtily translated, that was the first time that ever I suspected or knew any evil by him. I did promise him," he adds, "ten pounds sterling"—a sum worth almost ten times as much then as now—"to pray for my father and mother their souls, and for all christian souls."

How strange and sad this seems! At the very time Tyndale was speaking boldly in his sermon such words as these:—"It is the blood of Christ that opens the gates of heaven;" and yet he himself was not yet free from such a dreadful thought as that God could send the soul, washed white in that precious blood, to a place of pain and punishment and banishment from Him, and that the only hope of speedy deliverance from that place lay in the prayers offered by the faithful.

We may indeed wonder, but we must remember that Tyndale had been bred a priest of the church which taught this doctrine, so dishonouring to God, so destructive to the peace of the human soul, and that these were times when the light came, pure and unsullied indeed, as light must ever be, but slowly to the hearts of men; for the darkness which covered the people was like that which lay upon the land of Egypt, a darkness which might be felt.

Let us be thankful that we were never taught as the truth so terrible a falsehood as the doctrine of purgatory, and let us rejoice as we read the closing words of the will of the good merchant, written fifteen years later, in which he commends his soul "unto Christ Jesus, my Maker and Redeemer, in whom, and by the merits of whose blessed passion, is all my whole trust of clean remission and

forgiveness of my sins," and directs that his body be buried without any prayer for the dead being said or sung.

So Tyndale abode in the house of Sir Humphrey, and while he was there God gave him the good gift of a friend, John Fryth, whom he had known at Cambridge, who now helped him much in his work, and with whom he could hold sweet counsel upon what lay nearest his heart. "My learning is small," said Fryth, "but the little I have I am determined to give to Jesus Christ," and so he heartily threw himself into the work of turning the Scripture, as he said, "into the vulgar speech, that the poor people might also read and see the simple, plain word of God." He was much younger than Tyndale, who spoke of him as his "dear son in the faith," yet he was the first to suffer death for the truth's sake.

But the two friends did not labour long undisturbed. There were rumours abroad that some Londoners, who were wont to meet together to read portions of the Scripture in English, had been arrested by order of Bishop Tonsall, and had been in danger of their lives. If such be the case of those who read, what has he who translates to look for? thought Tyndale; and at last with a deep pang of wounded affection for his poor enslaved country, he says, "I understood not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." Helped over the sea by the good merchant, he bade a last farewell to his native land, and sailed away to Hamburg, then as now a great trading city of Germany, about the year 1524, not long after the handsome young king Henry VIII. returned from the famous show which took place on the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

"The priests," said Tyndale in the bitterness of his spirit, "when they had slain Christ, set poleaxes to keep Him in His sepulchre, that He should not rise again; even so have our priests buried the Testament of God, and all their study is to keep it down, that it rise not again. But the hour of the Lord is come, and nothing can hinder the word of God, as nothing could hinder Jesus Christ of old from issuing from the tomb." C. P.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

II. THE OLIVE AND THE VINE.

WE have spoken a little about the time of *thorns*, that followed the time of the *trees* of life and the knowledge of good and evil.

You will remember that during the time so peculiarly characterized by *thorns* violence and corruption continued on the earth till at last the wickedness became so great, that God swept all away by a flood. But in the midst of judgment God remembers mercy, and it is sweet to read that "Noah found grace in His sight."

After the deluge a new period of God's ways with man commenced; and we connect it with two trees, the OLIVE and the VINE. First let us look at the OLIVE. The dove plucked off an olive leaf and brought it to Noah in the ark, while the waters of judgment were yet on the earth. So the olive is the first tree mentioned after the flood. In Jotham's parable, the first on record (Judges ix.), it is mentioned. You will see that the tree first in-

vited to take the place of king over all the other trees is the olive. The trees said, "Come thou, and reign over us." But the olive tree said unto them, "Should I leave my fatness wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?"

There are two kinds of olive trees spoken of in the Bible; one is wild and natural, the other under cultivation. The cultivated tree is of a moderate height, its trunk knotty, its bark smooth and ash-coloured; the leaves are oblong, somewhat like those of our willow, of a green colour, dark on the upper side, and light on the under. In the month of June it puts out white flowers, which grow in bunches; each flower is one piece, widening

upwards, and dividing into four parts. The fruit is oblong and plump; it is first green, then pale; afterwards, when it is ripe, it is black. Within is enclosed a hard stone filled with an oblong seed. The wild olive is smaller in all its parts.

The cultivated olive is identified with the period or dispensation when Israel was as a people under God's continual care.

The wild olive tree represents man in a wild, lawless state. St. Paul says to the Roman believers and to professing christians, that we were of the wild olive tree, but were

grafted in the cultivated and fruitful tree. And he foretells the time when once more the broken off branches of the cultivated tree shall be grafted in once more by God. All is of grace to us Gentiles, and let none take as a matter of course the favour of God in giving us an open Bible and the words of salvation, but let us thank God for His favour.

God, since the flood, has imposed outward restraint upon man,

by means of human government, and this has continued to this day. National government was at first put by God into the hands of Israel. But when Israel forfeited their country through their sins, and through want of subjection to God, the government of the earth was committed to the Gentiles, in whose hands it still remains.

The VINE is significant of joy, as you may see by looking at Jotham's parable. "The vine said unto them, 'Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man?'" Alas! Noah abused the goodness of God in connection with this tree. A warning, that the good things of this world are to be used to God's glory, and not abused to man's shame. H.N.



OLIVES.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



PRAISE PERFECTED.

PRAISE PERFECTED.

A FEW winters ago, I had the privilege of relieving some hundreds of the poor in Bermondsey. While visiting in M—— Place, among scenes of poverty and wretchedness such as I had never dreamed of, I first met the dear child of whom I now write, trusting that God will use the simple story of her life to lead others to the Saviour, that they, too, may know the same deep joy and peace which filled the heart of little Susan Parsons.

As I knocked at the door of her room, a voice said, "Come in," and I entered. Over the dying embers of the fire sat a woman, whose scanty clothing was little more than a piece of coarse bagging. It needed but a glance to assure me that here I had indeed found the poverty and want which I was seeking. An old table stood in the middle of the room, and a four-post bedstead was in the corner nearest the fire; these, with a chair and stool, formed the only furniture.

Upon the bare sacking of the bed lay a little girl, whose feet were frost-bitten, so that she could not put them to the ground; it was thus that I first saw little Susie.

I spoke a few words to the poor woman, but did not particularly notice the child until a voice from the corner where she lay called my attention to her:

"Oh, sir," she said, earnestly, "I'm so glad you be come; I've been so wishing you would come."

I looked at the poor little child and tried to remember where I had met her, but in vain.

"I don't know you," I said; "I never saw you before; why are you glad to see me?"

"Ah," she replied, sitting up and looking at me as if I had been some well-known and long-expected friend, "but I know you; I have heard you preach at the corner of Nelson Street."

For several years it had been my custom to read the Scriptures in the open air from a Bible-carriage. The place the child mentioned was one which I knew well. I had been accustomed to stop the little carriage and read there night after night, and it was

there that little Susie had made my acquaintance, all unknown to me.

Mrs. Parsons was a widow, who earned a bare living for herself and her children by chair-caning; she had often sent her little girl to fetch the cane, and on her way Susie passed the corner where I was reading. Many and many a time, she told me, she had stopped to listen, and though it was several months since I had been at the place, she remembered what I had read, and knew me as soon as I entered the room.

"How old are you, my dear?" I said.

"Thirteen years old, sir."

"Now tell me, why are you so glad to see me?"

"Because I used to hear you talk about the Lord Jesus. You used to say what a bad man you once was, and what great things He had done for you. How you was saved in the shipwreck and in the battle, and then how He saved your soul."

Much touched at what I had seen and heard, I took leave, promising to call next day. Upon my second visit, the child was more comfortable—if indeed one can speak of comfort in so sad a case. A bed had been sent from the workhouse, and she lay softly; warmly covered, and with a happy smile upon her face, so young and childish, yet so worn and thin. Her earnestness, and desire to hear the word of God, drew me often to the poor room, and I tried, in words as simple as possible, to set before her the wonderful story of the love of God in the gift of His beloved Son, and the love of the Lord Jesus Christ in giving Himself a ransom for many. When we had known each other a fortnight and I knew Susie would not mind telling me what was in her heart, I said to her,

"Do you think the Lord Jesus died for you, my child?"

She thought a minute, and then replied, with the bright look I loved to see, "Well, I don't know, 'azactly, for I can't read nor write; but I knows I'm a sinner, and I knows I do love Jesus."

"And what do you love Him for, Susie? Why should a little girl like you love the blessed Lord Jesus?"

"Didn't you say as He died for sinners?" she said, looking up at me, wonderingly; "Am'n't I a sinner, and didn't you say He died to save sinners?"

Ah, my little Susie, God Himself had been thy Teacher, and the lesson which He read thee from His book, was a lesson of love.

"Love which no tongue can teach,
Love which no thought can reach;
No love like His.
God is its blessed source,
Death ne'er can stop its course;
Nothing can stay its force,
Matchless it is."

Yes, Susie had known and believed the love of God to her, and she never lost the joy of this blessed knowledge. Brighter days soon came to her, for friends aided her mother in her poverty, though the weary pain did not lessen as time went on, and disease seemed to take a firmer hold of her feeble little body, so weakened by want and exposure. I had mentioned at our Sunday-school that she was fond of being read to, and now she often had young visitors who sat beside her, reading from the Bible, delighted as they found how much that had grown too familiar to them, was new and wonderful to their rapt listener. Sometimes, too, they would teach her hymns, which she learned very quickly, and sang with great delight.

It was about this new pleasure of singing hymns that I once found her in trouble.

"Can't I sing, Mr. B——," she said, one morning, her eyes filling with tears.

"Yes, my child, surely you can. Sing as much as you like, and God bless you"—and the sweet face grew bright once more. I afterwards learned from her mother that she had a reason for asking the question. The day before, the parish doctor had been there. He came on a sad errand; it was necessary that she should lose one of her poor little frost-bitten feet, and he had come to take it off. It was just then that Susie began to sing, and these were the words which came sweetly from her pale lips—

"My rest is in heaven, my rest is not here;
Then why should I tremble when trials are near?
Be hushed, my sad spirit; the worst that can come
But shortens the journey and hastens me home."

"Hush, child!" said the doctor, "you mustn't sing."

It was not unkindly said, though perhaps the tones of the doctor's voice sounded roughly to the little singer, as he bade her cease her song. He was thinking, it may be, of how rugged the way of life had been to those little feet, which had never, like the feet of the happy children he knew, stood "ankle-deep in English grass," with the blue sky overhead and the fresh air breathing around. And when this child of poverty and woe began to sing of a rest to come, a home to be reached at the end of her toilsome journey, he feared lest he should be unnerved, and unable to perform his task. So Susie asked me, since the doctor had forbidden her to sing, whether it was right for her to do so.

After the operation was over, she looked up, and touchingly said, "Doctor, you have taken away my poor foot, but the Lord Jesus is going to give me two white ones, and a robe, and a crown."

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven," I often thought as I sat by the child's bedside and sought to learn the lesson of faith and patience which she so unconsciously taught. So real a Person was Christ to her that she would sometimes address Him, whom having not seen she loved, in such words as these, "Oh, you blessed Lord Jesus; oh, you precious Saviour!" entirely forgetting the presence of anyone else. Meanwhile, the poor little feeble body was indeed perishing and fading from our sight. The toes of the other foot dropped off, but even then she still sang in clear glad tones of the "better world, oh so bright," and of Him who shall fill all that holy place with the radiance of His smile.

In strange contrast to the peace and joy of the child who was so soon to reach that "happy land," of which she loved to sing, was the darkness of soul in which her poor mother and sister still remained. She could not but be aware of this, and it deeply troubled her.

"Mother," she said, one day, calling her to her side; "O mother, I shan't be your little girl much longer; I am going away to be with the Lord Jesus." Then, after a

moment, she continued, gently, but solemnly, "If you and sister don't believe in Him now, you will never be with Him in heaven, and, O mother, I shall have to say, Amen, to your condemnation."

Soon after her mother had told me of this, I was sitting beside her; her eyes were closed, and she lay so still that, as I listened to catch the sound of her breathing, I fancied for a moment that her happy spirit had taken its flight. As I watched her she opened her eyes, turned them to one corner of the room, and said, "Oh! ain't it glorious—ain't it lovely?" I tried to answer her, to ask what she saw, but my utterance was choked: I could only bow my head and adore the Lord, whose presence was filling the soul of His little lamb with "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Presently she began to sing one of her hymns:

"I'm coming, I'm coming, Lord Jesus, to Thy throne;
A few more fleeting hours, and I shall be at home.
And when I reach the pearly gates, then I'll put in
this plea,
'I am a helpless sinner, but Jesus died for me!'"

The very room seemed hallowed by the presence of the Lord—that wretched room, where even the rats felt at home, and would come at night and nibble at the rushlight as it stood in the turnip which served for a candlestick; yes, and even worry the dear child as she lay helpless upon her bed.

"Go away!" her mother heard her say one night, "go away!" and then the child added, as if to herself, "you won't trouble me much longer."

No; nothing was to trouble little Susie much longer. She had lain week after week watching and waiting for the Lord Jesus to put her to sleep and take her spirit home, and at last the hour came.

On that morning I awoke at three o'clock, and could not sleep again. I felt that I must go to Susie's house. I went early and found one of the shutters closed. In answer to my knock the child's mother came, and, as I asked for the child, she said, with tears, "Why, dear Susie's gone."

She told me that she had gone to sleep after singing her favourite hymn—

"Jesus loves me: this I know,
For the Bible tells me so."

but had soon awakened, saying, "Mother, I'm going. The Lord Jesus is coming to fold me to His bosom!"

"Then," said the poor mother, while her voice was broken by sobs, "she looked at me so earnestly, and said, 'You'll come: won't you? And you, sister, you'll come, too?'"

"I could not look at her," the mother continued, "nor answer her, so I went to the street-door just as Big Ben was striking three. Then she called me again to her. 'Mother, run and tell Mr. B. that I want him.'"

"But I don't know where he lives, dear child; I wish I did," I said.

"Ah, well," said Susie, "tell him when you see him that, if I don't see him anymore here, I shall meet him in heaven." Those were the last words she spoke, sir."

As I listened to the poor woman's story, the thought of the child thus gently falling asleep in the arms of Jesus was so sweet to me that I could not mourn, though I was never again to see her on earth.

A few days later, I carried her precious little body from her poor home, to the coach which was to bear it to its last resting-place, at Victoria Park Cemetery, for there all that remained of dear Susie was laid by those who had loved her too well to allow her to be buried "by the parish." At the grave some of her favourite hymns were sung, and then we lowered the little coffin, and left her to rest "till Jesus comes."

More than a hundred people were present, and as I spoke of the grace and faith and patience shown by the young disciple during her long and painful illness, and earnestly appealed to the hearts and consciences of those who did not yet know the "precious Saviour," whose love was such a reality to her, many were deeply touched. Even the old grave-digger, as he leaned upon his shovel, was melted as I told the story of our little one's death, and of her sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection; the tears ran down his cheeks, and he sobbed as if his heart would break.

Thus we trust that in her death, as in her

life, God was glorified. As we left the cemetery we, who loved the Lord, reminded each other of His promised speedy return, of the time when we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with all those who now, like little Susie, sleep in Christ, to meet the Lord in the air, and so be for ever with Him, and we comforted each other with these words, for the child had been very dear to us.

And now I would say to any who may read this brief story of little Susan Parsons that it is no tale of the imagination. What is here narrated actually took place. The touching words here written were the expression of the faith, and hope, and love of a weak and sickly girl, suffering no ordinary pain, and in the depths of no common poverty. Is there not a voice here for you, my reader, if you do not yet know the Saviour, whose love was so precious, whose presence was so real a thing to this sick child? Is it not a knock, as it were, at the very door of your heart? It was the love of Christ which, filling the heart of little Susan, enabled her thus to triumph over disease, poverty, and death. Do you know anything of the sweetness of that love? Let not this history of the frail little waif of a London alley condemn you. Surely you cannot doubt the power of Christ—you cannot doubt His willingness to save you, and to make you happy now and for ever.

It may be that my reader is young, like Susie. Perhaps, dear child, this seems to you a sad story. It is, indeed, if you look at one side of the picture, and only see the pain and the sorrow which were her portion, but there is a beautiful side to it, and I want you to look at that: I want you to think of all that the Lord Jesus did for this poor child. Perhaps you have felt the tears start into your eyes as you read how much she suffered, and how bravely she bore it all. My child, did you ever shed a tear over the narrative which you have so often read of the sufferings of Jesus, the blessed Lord who died to save you—died because of our sins? You are not too young to come to Him, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," who received this child, and will receive you, if you only trust Him just now.

G. D.

"IN" AND "ON."

"I DO not believe what you say. I have listened to good preachers for many a day, and I never heard any of them speak like this. I feel puzzled."

The person who uttered these words was a mild-looking elderly woman. She unmistakably had *life* in Christ, but of *liberty* in Him she knew nothing.

"I have only to repeat," said the lady to whom she spoke, "that though sin is *in* you, it no longer rests *on* you. Now remember these two little words for the rest of your life, '*in*' and '*on*.' Your own nature, the flesh, remains unchanged; in you—that is, in your flesh—dwells no good thing; but on you God's eternal favour rests without shade or cloud; 'for the Lord hath laid on Him (Christ) the iniquity of us all' (Isaiah liii. 6), and as Christ now is, so are you in this world. (1 John iv. 17.) No sin rests on you, for He has borne it all."

"It makes me happy to listen to you, but if I do wrong—say, fall into some sin—I do not think I could be a saved soul at all then. I know some people that I am sure *were* christians, but they got into what was wrong, and now they do not seem to be christians at all. And this I am afraid of for myself."

"My friend, you are making a great mistake. To walk here as Christ walked is the christian's standard and aim. But you are confusing Christ's work *for* you and the Holy Ghost's work *in* you. I gave you two little words to remember before, and now let me implore you to keep these two, *for* and *in* also in your heart and mind. The work of Christ for you is a finished work; with His dying lips He pronounced it so. But the Holy Ghost's work *in* you is progressive, going on in you day by day; and if the Holy Ghost be grieved, the sanctifying work will be greatly hindered.

"In the first you have neither hand, nor act, nor part. Christ alone was the actor in that scene; and He completely finished that work, and satisfied and glorified God by the wondrous death of the cross *for* you. But regarding the second, the Holy Ghost's work *in* you, you bear a responsible part. Your relationship, as a child, with your Father,

can no more be touched or broken than your little daughter being disobedient would make her less your child because she was disobedient. These truths are not my thoughts; they would not be worth the time taken in telling, were they. They are God's revealed mind in His word, and you have but to accept and be happy, rejoicing in all that is yours in Christ."

R. B.

DRIFTING TO DESTRUCTION.

A GALE was blowing, and the heavy roar of the sea kept many a landsman, safe in his bed at home, awake during much of the night. In the morning early, that peculiar fascination of resistless strength, wind and waves in combined energy, drew me to the beach. Men and boys were streaming along westward, and in the crowd were many fishermen in their brown clothing and long sea-boots. The sight of their serious faces, so different from the eager countenances of the landsmen, was quite sufficient reason for the movements of the crowd. So I asked one of them, what and where the vessel was.

"One of our fishing boats, about a mile to westward," was the reply.

Yes! there she was, one of the luggers so familiar to all who know the English south coast. She had dragged her anchor, and was drifting towards destruction. Now broadside on to the gale, now half smothered with the seas, she seemed as if swamped she must be, even before she could be broken to pieces on the shore.

But where was her crew? The noise of the gale, which had awaked us on shore, was an accustomed sound to them. Weary with their work, the men had cast out their anchor in what they regarded as good holding ground; they knew not their danger, they were sound asleep! Yes! sound asleep, and drifting to destruction. Thank God, poor fellows, the ready wit and calm courage of their brother fishermen saved the boat and them; but what a voice rose up from the sight of that fishing boat drifting to destruction!

Sleep on, poor sinner—sleep on, despite warnings, entreaties, tears. Sleep on, poor sinner, you know it not, but your anchor has

lost its hold, your vessel drifts to death, to doom. You are familiar with the sounds of the storm. You have heard too often the testimony of the Christless death, of the sinner cut off in his sins. You have heard, till you tremble not even in your sleep, of judgment, and wrath, and everlasting woe. Sleep on, sleep on, but for how many days longer? Who shall awaken you? Who shall reach you where you are? What voice shall penetrate right into your slumbering soul?

Oh! man, you are familiarized with the sight of death, the uncertainty of life—yea, with the sound of the words of the book of God, which tell of wrath, of the lake of fire, which is the second death, you are familiar. Awake, awake, lest, too late, you awake in hell to the realities of eternity, where sleep and rest shall be never known.

HE DOES WORRY ME SO!

"He does worry me so!" said a man, seemingly near death, who had turned from the devil and his ways late in life. "Read me the fourteenth of John; I'm sure he can't stand that," said my aged friend.

Right. "Resist the devil; and he will flee from you." (James iv. 7.) The Lord Himself overcame Satan by the word, and took His stand on "it is written."

The "young men" in 1 John ii. 14, overcame him; the word of God abode in them.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans viii. 31.) "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John iv. 4.)

A.



On the Way Home.

IT was our privilege not long since to converse with an aged believer, who is living, consciously, in the very sunshine of the love of Christ. When we entered his room he told us he had just been trying in vain to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, but that his head ached so with the effort, he had to give it up. When nearly blind,

he had learned to read with his fingers on the raised letters, and at times found great comfort in so doing, but on this particular occasion the effort had been beyond his feeble strength. Seeing that his thoughts were running on the chapter he had tried to read, we said "Most precious words for us, 'In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you'; and again, 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' What a Saviour Jesus is! Our home is ready, and till He comes He would not have us troubled about the present, or fearful about the future."

"I have not a trouble, nor a fear," broke in the aged man, "blessed be His name, and I am soon going home to be with Him for eternity." He grew full of joy and longing as he spoke for the time when those whom he loved should be with him in heaven, all at home in the Father's house.

"Not a trouble, nor a fear," our friend continued. "I have all I want for this life, for He has taken care of me, and I have nothing to fear, for He will take care of me. But it wasn't so a few years ago—it was always trying, trying then, and no hope. After forty years of trying and working in my own strength God used this text to open my eyes, 'These are they . . . who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' I saw then it was not our trying, but His dying, that saves us.

"Now, as I am so happy, I want to know the meaning of a text which I cannot understand: 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow.' (Ps. xc. 10.) Here am I between seventy and eighty, and am happy all the day long, and want for nothing, and the Lord says, 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.' What, then, can it mean—'their strength is labour and sorrow'? I do not understand it."

"The labour and the sorrow is but for your poor body," we replied. "You cannot get up and down stairs so quickly as you once did, neither can you see well enough to read. Your body is meant here, not your soul."

This quite satisfied our aged friend: "For," added he, "these are the happiest and the brightest days of my life. I was once an active man, travelling all over the country, but now I am fixed to my little room, and the Lord keeps me company all the day long. I am happier and happier every day."

Christian reader, there is a sermon for us all in the old man's thoughts: the pathway home, perfect peace—the peace that Jesus gives—for what He gives must needs be perfect. The Lord had said, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," and the answer of His happy servant was, "Not a trouble, nor a fear!" Hallowed experience—heavenly realization.

There are those amongst God's people who are in trouble, but who are not troubled—"as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi. 10.) We all have our troubles. Certainly, our aged friend had his—that is, if partial blindness, loneliness, poverty, and the weakness of old age are troubles! But he was not troubled, for he lived in the Lord's peace, and dwelt in the Lord's company. Being near Jesus, and dwelling in His peace, is heavenly christianity.

We think it is even more christian-like to be without fears for the morrow than to be troubled about the cares of the day. Fears are a sore hindrance to christian progress. The ardent disciple who walked on the waters to come to Jesus went well till he looked on the foaming billows; then he was afraid, and then he began to sink.

The future is the stumbling stone of the christian's soul—what will happen next?—but Jesus says, "Let not your heart be . . . afraid." He will take care of the morrow. Then trust Him. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." (Isa. xxvi. 3.) Alas! how many a day's usefulness is lost for eternity by profitless occupation with what the morrow may possibly be, and most frequently with what the morrow never will be!

At the commencement of the fourteenth chapter of St. John we hear the Lord say to us

individually, that He is about to prepare a HOME for us. And He says He will come again and take us there. All will be well at last. We shall, each one, be in heaven at the end of the journey, and be with Him there. This is sweet assurance ; but, dear christian, let us listen to our Lord's words recorded towards the close of the same chapter. We need their strong consolation ; we need Him with us here. We have a PATH to tread as well as a HOME prepared, and, with the path before us, Jesus says, not only "Let not your heart be troubled," but also "neither let it be afraid." Give Him to-day's troubles and to-morrow's fears, and let Him be your dwelling-place.

The well-known ninetyeth Psalm, a text from which raised a difficulty to our aged friend, is also a word for the path. Moses, the man of God, who wrote it, had seen what the wilderness was. He had borne six hundred thousand murmurers in his bosom, as it were ; he had seen God's ways in consuming backsliding Israel, and in bringing their children, whom they said He would cause to perish by the way, to the borders of Canaan ; and, looking back on the past, the man of God said, "We spend our years as a tale that is told." (Ps. xc. 9.) The experiences of the way will all come to an end. But as we read the psalm we can but feel that we christians have what even Caleb and Joshua had not on their journey, for we have Christ's peace for our portion on the way : "My peace I give unto you." Perfect peace dwelt in the heart of Christ as a man on earth, and He says, "My peace I give unto you."

True spiritual-mindedness is having Christ in our hearts by faith. Even the labour and sorrow incident to the weakness of age are lost to perception by reason of the excellence of His peace in the heart. A really heavenly man in character is surrounded with heavenly peace and brightness, and when the test of trial comes it simply proves what he is—the crushed herb sends forth its sweet savour. May we be like our aged friend, so satisfied with Christ, so content in His love and company, that we shall truly say in answer to our Lord's words concerning both the home and the journey, "Not a trouble, not a fear !"



The Magnet.

I HAD a clever little American child by my side the other day, who was very fond of asking questions, not merely for the sake of asking, but because—and you could soon see this by the sort of questions she asked—there were some things which she really very much wished to have made plain to her, that she might understand them.

I am not going to tell you all the questions which my little friend asked me, and which I tried to answer for her during our talk. But I will tell you of one thing which she said she found very difficult to understand, for perhaps you may have had the same difficulty, and perhaps the same way by which I tried to make this thing plain to her may make it plain to you.

We had been speaking of a very great and wonderful subject—the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven to fetch all—men and women, and even little children—who belong to Him, that He may have them for ever with Himself. Perhaps you have never thought much about this, but I am sure you have read how the Lord Jesus spoke to God, His Father, before He left this world, about His own people, and said, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me."

The disciples who heard these words of the Lord Jesus were some of those whom His Father had given Him, and their spirits have, long, long ago, gone to be with Him, with many more happy spirits of those who belong to the Lord Jesus.

Perhaps you have known someone very dear to you, yet dearer still to the Lord, who loved Him, and was quite willing and glad to leave this world, and go to be with Him. And when you think of this dear friend, whom your eyes no longer see, you are sure that he is safe and happy, but you do not know much more.

Yet it may be that as you stood quite near



THE NEEDLES ALL RISE.

upon the brink of the deep grave, and heard the prayers of those who gave the body of the one you loved so well into the care of the Lord, you did think of what a wonderful day it will be when that cold, still form shall put on incorruption, and arise, clad in light and beauty, to die no more. Yes, I believe you have thought, some time or other, about the Lord's coming to fetch His people—those who are in their graves, and these who are still living on the earth—to be with Him for

ever in his Father's house. Perhaps, you have said also to yourself, "But will the Lord Jesus call for *me*?" The Bible tells us who they are who shall go to meet the Lord, so that we can make no mistake;—they are "*those that are Christ's at His coming*."—But what was the little American girl's question?

"I want to know," she said, "how it is that, when the Lord Jesus comes, *only* those who love Him will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and all the rest will be left behind."

This was the question; perhaps you will be surprised when I tell you what my answer was. I wanted to give an answer which would be very plain and easy even to a child, and so I said to her, "Will you fetch me a magnet, dear, and as many needles and pins as you can find?" And away she ran in search of what I wanted.

Now, before I tell you what use I made of these things, I will explain about the magnet to any who may never have seen one. I think a good many children know what a magnet can do, if they do not know what it is; for they have often played with one; and seen it draw little toy ducks or fish after it.

Long ago in Greece, a stone was discovered which is sometimes called the magnet, from the name of the place where it was found, sometimes the loadstone, from an old word which means the stone which leads or draws to itself.

The story is that a shepherd struck his iron crook against a piece of this stone, and the crook stuck fast to it, and so this wonderful power which the stone possesses of drawing iron to itself was discovered. I cannot tell whether this is true or only a story, but that the loadstone has the power of drawing iron to itself is quite true. It was because I knew of this power that I asked for the magnet and for the needles and pins.

My little friend looked on with much interest as I put all the pins and needles in one heap in a saucer, and shook it until they were so mixed together that you could hardly see which was which. Then, taking the magnet in my hand, I began to repeat the words we had just been reading together from the letter which St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians—"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." As I repeated these words I moved my hand with the magnet in it down toward the saucer, and continued—"And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." As I repeated these last words the magnet had just reached the saucer, and up sprang

all the needles and clung to it, until it bristled all over with the shining little points of steel.

With a cry of wonder my little friend said, "Oh, see! none of the pins have got up, and they are just the same, only they have heads on them."

"There is a difference, my dear," said I, "a greater difference than any which you can see; but I will try to explain this to you. There is a difference of nature between the steel of which the needles are made, and the brass from which the pins are made. The steel needles are attracted by the magnet, so that they *must* fly towards it when it draws near; the brass pins are not attracted by it. See, if you put them close to it, they only fall down again, for they are not of a nature to be drawn to it. So those who are the Lord's people, by His grace, have a nature that loves Him, and not one of them will be left behind when He comes; all will rise to meet Him."

"I see, He will draw them all up to Himself," she said, and then added slowly, "Yes, the needles all rise, but not a pin stirs to meet the magnet, not one." W. G. H.

THE SOLEMN CHOICE.

C. WAS a more than usually attractive girl, and had much to make her loved by those who knew her. She was often spoken to of being ready should the Lord come, but C. saw no beauty in that peerless Person, and put off the solemn question, "What must I do to be saved?" Satan had blinded her eyes, and deceived her heart; she would not give up the world and its passing pleasures, which were just opening up bright and attractive before her; she turned away, and claimed the world for her own. Solemn choice!

For a few months I heard nothing of my young friend; but one morning the postman brought me a deep-black bordered letter. C. was dead! only nineteen! but not too young to die. The letter gave no particulars as to her end, but I afterwards found that her friends had supplied her with works of fiction to amuse her in her dying moments. And as far as I could learn there was no one to speak one

word of Christ, and His precious blood in her dying hours.

"Who could be fit to die if she were not?" said poor C.'s friends; "she went to church, and never did anyone any harm."

Would this serve as a robe in which to stand before the holy God? He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin. Did not He hide his face from His holy Son when His Son was made sin for us?

Dear reader, if death should come to you, as it did to poor C., would you be ready? F.

THE GIANTS AND THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL.

WHEN Israel were at Paran, on the borders of the promised land, Moses, by divine command, sent twelve men to spy out the country. They were to see what sort of land it was, and what its cities were like, and what kind of people lived in it. This done, they were to return to the camp and report what they had seen. No common men were chosen for this service, but a chief man out of each tribe of Israel, for it was a dangerous task.

So the twelve spies went their way. They were absent forty days, and during that time they visited many places; and saw many cities and mountains and valleys; and the far-off Mediterranean Sea. When they were coming back they stopped at a brook, near which a grand old vine grew; and they cut down a bunch of its grapes, and such a bunch it was that one man could not carry it, so two of them slung it on a pole, and bore it between them on their shoulders. The spies also brought with them from the land of promise specimens of pomegranates and figs.

When they came back to the camp these spies had a tale to tell of the sights they had seen, and also a sight to show, which told a tale of what the land of promise was. We can easily picture to ourselves all the people of Israel gathering round the twelve spies, and listening with the utmost eagerness to their tale, and looking, too, with wondering eyes on the great bunch of grapes and the splendid fruits laid out before them.

So the spies began to tell their story, and the bunch of grapes and the varied fruits

would be the text for their sermon as they described the land as it really was, a noble country—"Surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." (Num. xiii. 27.) But, added they, the men of it were giants, and they themselves were like grasshoppers, in the sight of these giants, and also in their own sight. The cities, too, said the spies, were strong, and walled up to heaven. And as they thus spoke, with weak hearts and want of faith in God, the people caught the spirit of their words, and began to fear, and then to murmur at the difficulties which lay before them.

So the tidings rolled round the camp that the land of promise was full of giants, and, alas! a false and wicked report went also with their unbelieving words, and it was said, The land "eateth up the inhabitants thereof"—that is, it was a hungry land, not good to live in. How strange it was to believe this false report with the grapes of Eshcol before their eyes, and while the very words of the spies about the giants rang in their ears.

In vain did Caleb seek to call back the faith of Israel to Jehovah, in vain did he and Joshua say; He could easily give them the land if He pleased, and in vain did the grapes and pomegranates tell their tale of plenty—unbelief in God and murmuring against God settled down like a thick dark cloud on the rebellious camp of Israel. And when these two men, with rent clothes and pleadings to trust in the Lord, told Israel the truth, all the congregation bade stone them with stones. (Ch. xiv. 6-10.)

Now, dear young christian readers, the story of the giants and the grapes, with its lessons, is as fresh for us to-day as it was hundreds of years ago for Israel. The land of promise has to be won by the soldiers of Christ. Giants are there, and high walls too, but what are these if God be for us. You are called to go forward where God leads you. The richest blessings God would give you to enjoy are guarded by some giant, as it were, for Satan would stop you getting the sweetness of your God's blessing to your soul, if possible, and it is God's way to test the faith of His people. Then beware of looking at the difficulty when you should be looking alone at God. The



THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL.

unfaithful spies looked first at the giants and then at themselves, and then measured themselves by the giants' view of them, and left God out of the reckoning altogether. Certainly in yourself you have no strength, but God takes delight in you and in your blessing, so be encouraged in Him. The faithful spies looked at God first and then at the giants, and said, "they are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not." A child having God for him is more than a match for the mightiest foe.

It was very happy to see the fruits of the land of promise displayed before the eyes of Israel in the camp, but remember this, if we look first at the blessings and then at the difficulties; first, as it were on the grapes and then at the giants, we shall not gain our end. We have to look to God and go forward trusting Him. If God says, this is the way, walk ye in it, it is ours to obey, and we shall before long come to a brook of Eshcol, where the grapes are growing, and then we shall find in the path of obedience such sweetness to the soul as we never knew before.

It refreshes a longing heart to get a sight, if not a taste, of heavenly blessings, and I think many of you have often been deeply stirred in your desires to live more truly for Christ, when you have heard of the holy life or death of someone about your own age. You have said it would be your deepest joy to live and to die like that. Then came the difficulties, and you know whether you are like the two faithful or the ten unfaithful spies. But do not be discouraged; remember the words of Caleb and Joshua: "the Lord is with us." He never forsakes His people.

THE CAMBRIDGE GOSPELLERS.

BEFORE we follow Tyndale into his voluntary exile, let us turn aside for a few moments and take note of some faithful and earnest men, whom God was even then training to be witnesses for His truth in England. Around Bilney, at Cambridge, a little band of students had already gathered; for, though he was a timid man, and unfit to cope with the turbulent spirit of his time, the blessing which he had himself received had changed his whole

life, and he earnestly sought "to bring to the knowledge of God all who came nigh him." He met with much opposition on all sides, but the man most active in his efforts to bring the quiet, retiring scholar and his new doctrines into contempt was a member of his university—a priest, of about thirty years of age, whose tall figure was well known to the townspeople, for it was the office of Master Hugh Latimer to carry the university cross in processions.

We all know Latimer's name, and have read the story of his martyrdom at Oxford. We remember how the old man of eighty-four, in his "poor Bristow frieze frock, much worn," walked to the ditch over against Balliol College with his fellow-martyr, Ridley; and we cannot forget how, when he was chained to the stake, and saw the lighted brand laid at Ridley's feet, he lifted up his voice in words of triumphant cheer, which still move our hearts as we read them, like the sound of a trumpet—"Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out!"

But who would have recognised in the aged martyr of Queen Mary's reign the man who, in the early days of the time which we call the Reformation, was one of the most bitter enemies of that "new doctrine," which was, indeed, the old—the faith once delivered unto the saints?

Hugh Latimer was the son of a Leicestershire farmer, and was sent away from his country home, where he had been used to feed the cows and tend the sheep, to Cambridge, when a boy of fourteen; for his parents, as Foxe tells us, seeing him to be of a ready, prompt, and sharp wit, thought they would make a scholar of him. The country boy, with his studious face and his quick answers, was noticed by his teachers as one likely to leave his mark upon his time; and, as he grew up, his earnestness increased, for ever before his mind, as a great reality, was the thought that he and his fellows—those light-hearted young students whom he met day by day in hall and at lecture—must, each one of them, give account of himself to God. If these

things were so, he thought, then life was real, life was earnest, indeed.

Becoming a priest, Latimer attended with scrupulous diligence to every ceremony prescribed by the Church, though many a time, as he performed the service of the mass, the fear that all was not right, the tormenting doubt as to whether anything had been left out—any little point omitted by which the sacrifice might be rendered of no avail, disturbed his spirit. If even in the services of the Church he found no rest, where could he hope to find it? Perhaps in waging a stern warfare with those who were, as he believed, her enemies—who could say?

Latimer doubted not that the cause of the Church was the cause of God. He became aware that there were some members of the university who were not attentive to the rites and ceremonies enjoined by her; further, the rumour reached him that a few students, and even some scholars of the university, were wont to meet together every day simply to read the Holy Scriptures, and that Master Stafford, Bilney's friend, a man of deep learning, was present, giving the sense from the Hebrew and Greek, so he determined to learn for himself how far this matter had gone.

Latimer, therefore, one day surprised the little company at their reading, and earnestly besought them to cease studying the Bible, "spitefully railing" against their teacher, and bidding the youth of Cambridge abandon him and his heretical teachings. But his hard words and his entreaties were alike of no avail; and though he publicly preached against Stafford, the students still clung to him.

At last a favourable opportunity for showing his zeal for the Church offered. Latimer was to deliver a Latin oration before the university. He chose for his subject, "Philip Melancthon and his Doctrines," and in a learned discourse arrayed all his eloquence against the friend of Luther, especially holding up to ridicule his view of the Scriptures as the touchstone by which everything should be tested.

While many applauded, there was one among Latimer's hearers that day in whose heart the tones of that eloquent voice, plead-

ing against the very truth of God and His word, awoke a brotherly pity and a deep longing that he might, by the grace of God, win this bold champion of error to the side of truth. It was Bilney who, little of stature, unperceived among the crowd, listened to Latimer, and longed after his soul.

But how should he speak to one who shunned him as a heretic, and as a corrupter of the young—one with whom a true son of the Church should have nothing to do?

As Bilney thought and prayed, a strange device came into his mind. "He will not hear me if I argue with him," he said to himself, "but he cannot refuse to hear my confession." So he went to Latimer as a penitent, and besought him in God's name, to hear his confession. And what did Bilney confess?

As he knelt low at Latimer's feet, he poured out the whole story of what God had done for a soul, once far from Him, seeking rest in the service prescribed by his religious teachers, but ever seeking it in vain, now brought nigh by the blood of Christ. He spoke of the deep anguish he had suffered, an anguish which no penance imposed by the Church could remove, from which no indulgence purchased by money could buy release. But we know the story of Bilney's conversion; we know how he once read in the Greek Testament of Erasmus the "faithful saying," which brought peace and rest unspeakable to his weary soul, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and we can in some degree imagine what this strange confession was like.

Latimer listened amazed. At first, as Bilney described his own trouble and restlessness of spirit, his words found an echo in the heart of his confessor; presently he tried to interrupt him, but Bilney went on with the tale of the grace of God to him, the chief of sinners, and before he rose from his knees Latimer had heard all. He was no longer contending against doctrines, but was brought face to face with a living witness to their truth and power; and he was, as Foxe, who tells us the story, says, "through the good Spirit of God, so touched, that whereas before he was an enemy, and almost a persecutor

of Christ, he was now a zealous seeker after Him." The confessor took the place of the penitent, and with bitter tears bewailed his former hard speeches against Bilney and others, and going to Master Stafford, entreated his forgiveness.

We soon find Latimer preaching constantly in Latin to priests and students, and in their own tongue to the people, who heard him gladly, and wondered as they saw him going abroad with Bilney, whom he had once so bitterly opposed.

We can hardly imagine places more dreadful than the dark cells in which poor maniacs were then confined, but even to such abodes of despair these servants of God found their way, if haply they might speak peace and the comfort of the Gospel to some sorely-stricken one, used only to the harsh arguments of the chain and the whip. Then passing on to the house of the lepers outside the town, they tried to alleviate their sad, hopeless condition by tenderly caring for their bodily wants, while they spoke the word of God to them. The prison doors, too, opened to the gossellers, and they preached to the captives deliverance, not from the bondage into which their evil deeds had brought them, but a greater deliverance—even from sin itself, with its bitter fruits, and from the cruel tyranny of Satan, who had so long bound them as with fetters of iron.

One sermon preached by Latimer made a great stir at the time, and has come down to us, so that we can read it in his strong, homely words. He gave as his text the message of the Pharisees to John the Baptist in the wilderness, when they sent to ask him, "*Who art thou?*" Then, passing from the actual application of the Scripture, the preacher bade every man and woman who heard him that day, "of a good and simple mind—contrary to the Pharisees' intent—ask this question, *Who art thou? What substance, what virtue, what goodness art thou of thyself? Which question,*" he went on, "*if thou rehearse oftentimes to thyself, thou shalt well perceive and understand how thou shalt answer to it; which answer must be made in this wise: I am of myself and by myself, coming from my natural*

father and mother, the child of the anger and indignation of God, the true inheritor of hell, a lump of sin, and working nothing of myself but all towards hell, except I have better help of another than I have of myself." Then the preacher spoke of the goodness of God, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; and of the love of Christ, who, at the Father's will, "being willing to deliver man out of this miserable way, was content to suffer cruel passion in shedding His blood for all mankind." And then, again asking the question, "*Who art thou?*" he showed the blessedness of the answer which he who "had taken on Christ's religion" could give—"I am a christian man, a christian woman, the child of everlasting joy, through the merits of the bitter passion of Christ." "This," he said, "is a joyful answer."

Not only did Latimer thus preach in plain language, which a child could understand, but when his sermon was over he went from house to house among the poor townspeople, and from room to room among the students of the university, seeking to bring home to the hearts of those who had heard him the great truths which he had preached; that they might not be forgetful hearers, but doers of the word; and he continued his house to house evangelizing all the more diligently when forbidden, as he soon was by the Bishop of Ely, to preach in any church in Cambridge.

Meanwhile, at the White House at Cambridge, the readings of the Greek New Testament still went on. As those who attended them were seen making their way through streets thither, they were sometimes greeted by the cry, "There are the Germans going to Germany!" for the priests of the Romish Church looked upon Luther and his country as the source of all heresy. But these readings were times of blessing such as those who mocked at them never dreamed of. "So oft as I was in the company of these brethren," said Thomas Becon, a young student who was much attached to Latimer, and has preserved notes of many of his sermons, "methought I was quietly placed in the new, glorious Jerusalem."

C. P.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

III.—THE OLIVE AND ITS ROOT.

VERY soon after the flood mankind in general became worse and worse, until at Babel, instead of remaining subject to God and the restraints of His government, men agreed together to build a city and a tower, and to act independently of God. In consequence of this, the Lord scattered mankind abroad upon the face of the earth, and compelled them to give up their wicked designs. Thus did the wild olive flourish and bear fruit, and at length man began to worship demons.

We will now ask you to think of the root of a tree, and to connect it in your mind with a new action of God with men while they were in their wild and evil state.

God called out of the world a single individual to bear witness for Him, and made him the root of a new family on earth.

Abraham was the root from which grew a fair and beautiful tree. We shall now see whom this tree represents. See Jeremiah xi. 16, "The Lord called thy name a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit." As you read the chapter through, you will find that the figure applies to Abraham's seed after the flesh, all Israel in fact.

The root, as you know, is the source from which the tree springs, and from Abraham Israel sprang. Indeed as we use the figure of a family tree and trace back our family to its root, so Abraham is the root of the family of faith, seen on this earth as a witness for God.

The oil which was produced from the olive tree was that which was used in the holy lamps which were always kept burning in the sanctuary, as a witness for God, "pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp

to burn always." (Ex. xxvii. 20.) Thus every believer, called out from this world, is to let his light "so shine before men that they may see his good works, and glorify his Father which is in heaven."

When man, like a wild olive tree, bore only evil fruit before God, God set Abraham, the man of faith, a root in the earth, from whom the people of Israel sprang. Thus Israel was the cultivated olive tree to which God looked for the witness, in a dark world, of the light of His truth.

How aptly this tree sets this forth we see as we read in Judges ix. 9, "My fatness,

wherewith by me they honour God and man." With David this tree is the emblem of holiness and blessing. He compares himself to a "green olive tree in the house of God" (Ps. lii. 8), and the children of a righteous man to the "olive plants round about his table." (Ps. cxxviii. 3.) In Solomon's temple the cherubim was "of olive tree" (1 Kings vi. 23) as also the doors and posts. By this imagery we see what Israel — Abra-



THE TREE AND ITS ROOT.

ham's seed—ought to have been, namely, a fruitful light bearer for God. Was this so?

Let us now turn to the garden of Gethsemane. The meaning of Gethsemane is "a press for olive oil"—what do we find about the Lord in this? He had come into the world "the true light," but also in love to bring in righteousness and bear the iniquity of His people Israel. Hence "a press for olive oil" is very significant, as we think of Him pressed down for Israel's sake. When the Lord came to earth, the "olive tree," cultivated for so many centuries, had cast off its flowers and its labour had failed. (Hab. iii. 17.) And now it is "cut off," as St. Paul tells us in Rom. xi.

H. N.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



NONE TOO BAD FOR JESUS.

NONE TOO BAD FOR JESUS.

WE were quietly engaged in our classes at the Sunday school, when a knock at the door was heard, and a woman, with a child in her arms, asked if anyone would come and see her sister, who she said lay dying.

School ended: we prayed the Lord to send a word of salvation to the poor sufferer; for pain and death are terrible things to be encountered by the soul that is unwashed and unsaved.

I found the house from the description given me, and, as I ascended the staircase, the woman who had called at the school welcomed me, and begged me to enter an inner apartment, where lay the object of my visit. The room was better furnished than the exterior of the house had led me to expect, and bore about it an air of homely comfort, indicating the hand of provident care. Some children were playing about, and a woman who was present acted as nurse.

On approaching the bed at the further corner of the room I recognised the face of one who had occasionally been at our gospel meetings. Her face bore the traces of former comeliness, but wore that pinched and flushed appearance which denotes intense suffering; her lips were parched, and her respiration difficult. She was fast and surely sinking.

Bending down, I spoke a few words of sympathy, and then, in tender love, asked, "Are you ready to die?" Fixing her eyes on mine, she replied, with difficulty, "No—I've—been—a—great—sinner."

I felt thankful that the Holy Spirit had wrought in her heart this conviction of sin, for He alone can impart a real sense of being unfit for the eye and presence of the Lord. The mere assent, so common to the truth, that "we are all sinners," is not enough; but the heart-learned and honest conviction which leads to the confession, "Behold, I am vile," ever accompanies true conversion to God. There was here no need for stripping the poor soul from fancied righteousness: she was seeking the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ—the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

I read from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah of the Man of Sorrows, wounded and bruised, upon whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all, and who, having "once suffered for sins," God had raised from the dead—

"The Lord, almighty now to save
From sin, from death, from endless shame."

As a thirsty traveller receives water, so did this poor, dying woman receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. With the simplicity of a child she believed God's word. Seeing her much exhausted, I left, after committing her to the Lord, with a promise to return at a later hour.

In the evening I returned. She was free from pain, and was expecting me. Her room was filled with loving friends. Her husband, a man of rough exterior, but with a soft heart, sat near her, and her aged mother silently watched beside the bed, a tear now and then trickling down her wrinkled cheek.

God was about to give a sweet testimony to His own grace and power in her who had passed all human hope, and was so soon to bid the poor world farewell.

"She has been longing for you," said her sister, "and feared you would not come."

Looking up for guidance, I opened my Bible at Luke vii., and read: "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping." While reading, I observed the sufferer's eyes intently fixed upon my face. I read to the end of the chapter, laying special stress upon the words, "Thy sins are forgiven . . . thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

I then asked her before all who were present, "Are you a sinner; like this woman?" "Yes," she answered.

"And you trust in Jesus alone for salvation?" "Yes."

"Now are you like the woman when she entered Simon's house—unforgotten, unsaved, and at enmity with God? or are you like her when she came out—forgotten, saved by faith, and told to go in peace?"

She summoned up strength, and said, with

labouring breath, decidedly and distinctly, "I am—like—her—when—she—came out."

Oh! the grace of God which gives boldness to the guilty to draw near—the perfection of that love which casts out all fear! Now she was at peace—peace, not the result of works of righteousness which she had done, but won for her by the Lord Jesus Christ, was hers. It was a blessed confession to the mercy of God, and I was not slow to use the golden opportunity to press upon each one present the necessity of accepting His gift, so freely offered to all who will come to Him.

Once again I stood beside that bed: The pallid face spoke of speedy decay, but peace; calm as a river, rested in the heart of the dying woman, for she had come to Jesus, and left her weary burden at His feet.

"He that believeth on the Son hath life: but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Unconverted reader, beware lest you trifle with the "great salvation." Now, near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart, is the word of faith which we preach, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."

Oh! sweet word of grace! Are you ashamed to confess yourself a lost, vile, hell-deserving sinner? Better do so in time than have "confusion of face" for eternity. The Lord Jesus will own you now as an object for His saving power, His cleansing blood, His infinite love. Cast yourself upon Him now, as you are, and you will find that this "Man receiveth sinners."

T. R. D.

A BAD CONSCIENCE, BUT A GOOD MEMORY.

THESE will be the possession of every lost soul in hell. What a terrible prospect! all the details of this life fresh in the memory, every opportunity remembered; but never, no never, a good conscience before God.

WHAT! ALL SIN?

IN the closing part of the year I was visiting in one of the beautiful vales which radiate from the metropolis of the lake district. I stayed the night in a small village, nestled at the foot of a high range of mountains, the deep shadow of which prevents the sun shining upon the village for three months of the year.

The next day was spent in going from cottage to cottage, and in speaking a word to the inmates about the love of God to them. In one of the cottages I found a young woman, the wife of a miner. On a previous occasion, during the summer, I had had a long conversation with both husband and wife about their souls. On the morning in question I received a kindly greeting, and we read these words: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7); and again, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John v. 9-12.)

"See," said I, "eternal life is given to all who believe on the Son of God, but those who do not believe God's witness about Christ have made God a liar."

"What!" said the woman to me, with an eager look, "is eternal life given to all who believe?"

"Yes, to *all*. God says so, therefore it must be true. Take my Bible, and read again for yourself the words I have read."

She took the proffered Bible, and read the passage. When she had done so, I said, "The words are there, are they not?"

"Yes, they are, indeed," she replied.

"Do you believe God when He says, 'He that hath the Son hath life'?"

"But," asked the seeker for Christ, "can *all* sin be forgiven? Can *all*?" and she laid

emphasis on the word *all*—"Can all sin be forgiven?"

"Yes, by virtue of the blood of Christ. We have just read that God says so. What makes you doubt His word?"

"Well," said she, "I was a little girl of about twelve years of age at my home in Devon, living with my father and an elder sister, for my mother was dead. One day a wood-waggon, under the care of two men, stopped at the public-house opposite our cottage. The men entered, and remained a long time drinking.

"When they came out they were greatly excited, and one of them uttered a fearful oath, upon which his companion said to him, 'There! you have sinned against the Holy Ghost; you will never be forgiven in this life, nor in the life to come.' Those words made a deep impression on my mind, which has remained ever since, and I fear lest I may have sinned against the Holy Ghost."

"What! Has Satan been using this to make you despair, and thus keep you from Christ all these years? Do you think you have committed the unpardonable sin?"

"Yes, I fear I have," she said.

We turned to Mark iii. 30, and read, "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

"You have never said that?" said I.

Her countenance brightened as she answered, "No," and in a moment the stumbling-stone was removed out of the way, and the load gone. She professed to rest in the finished work of Christ. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God is altogether different from sinning against Him. Every sin is a sin against the Spirit of God; but to say of the Son of God, "He hath an unclean spirit," was blasphemy.

"Let us now," I continued, "read two passages which speak of sinning against the Holy Ghost. 'Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.' (Acts vii. 51.) 'They rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit; therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them.' (Isaiah lxiii. 10.) Surely, *resisting* the Spirit is sin? Rebellion against God in the presence of light, and

love, and mercy, when the word is preached, is sin."

Ask yourself, dear reader, this question: Have I been doing all this? All sin is sin against God the Spirit. But it is He who has written for your comfort, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Yes, that blood makes the foulest clean—that blood washes "whiter than snow." Do not let Satan keep you, by his misuse of scripture, from the joy of knowing that your sins are put away from before the eye of God by the precious blood of His Son. And because God remembers no more the sins and iniquities of His people, it is our joy to bless Him for the pardoning blood of Christ.

J. H. J.—g.

EXTRACTS FROM IGNATIUS.

"It is better for a man to hold his peace, and be, than to say he is a christian, and not to be. It is good to teach, if what he says, he does likewise."

"LET us do all things as become those who have God dwelling in them, that we may be His temples, and He our God."

"FAITH and love are the beginning and end of life; for faith is the beginning, and the end is love; and these two joined together are of God; but all other things which concern holy life are the consequences of these."

IGNATIUS ON HIS WAY TO MARTYRDOM.

"ALL the ends of the world and the kingdoms of it will profit me nothing: I would rather die for Jesus Christ, than rule to the utmost ends of the earth. Him I seek who died for me. Him I desire that rose again for me. This is the gain that is laid up for me."

"Now I begin to be a disciple; nor shall anything move me, whether visible or invisible, that I may attain to Christ Jesus. Let fire and the cross; let the companies of wild beasts; let breaking of bones, and tearing of members; let the shattering in pieces of the whole body, and all the wicked torments of the devil come upon me, only let me enjoy Jesus Christ."

A WASTED LIFE.

HOW many who are apparently entering into the full enjoyment of all the worldly pleasures within their reach are tormented by a conscience which had been touched by the Spirit of God, perhaps in childhood, or, it may be, at a period more recent. The heart in such circumstances flatters itself that there will yet be time to follow the dictates of conscience, and Satan, through the delay, rules with increasing power. Sad, sad, state!

C. was the daughter of parents whose one desire was to educate her for this world, but in the providence of God she was placed with a devoted christian lady, whose character deeply impressed the heart of her young pupil.

Whilst under the care of this excellent woman, C. learned to read her Bible with pleasure; she became acquainted with the way of salvation, and it is very probable that the Spirit of God then touched her heart, as in all the varied scenes of her after life she never forgot the happiness of those early days.

But as the only inducement for placing C. with this lady was the superior mental training there to be acquired, the time arrived when what are called accomplishments were thought necessary, and she was removed to a school where comparatively valueless pursuits were made of the first importance. The result may be anticipated; her young heart was drawn from Christ, and when she finally returned to her home she was ready to enter into all the gaieties of life.

Being a girl of great personal attractions, sprightliness of mind, and graceful manners, she soon became a general favourite, and ere long she married. Her husband's position enabled her to cultivate society, which appreciated her as one of its brightest ornaments; and as years passed on she was known as an earnest votary of pleasure, an enlivener of every party she attended.

But what was the real state of her heart? She was one of the most wretched of beings. In the midst of the gayest scenes, and in moments of greatest excitement, one thought of God would strike a pang through her whole frame.

The best years of her life were thus wasted in the service of the god of this world, but the time was approaching when, no longer able to follow the ways of her own choosing, she had to be made conscious that it was in vain to strive with the true and living God.

She was absent from home, for the benefit of sea air, when one evening, whilst walking on the shore, she accidentally met a christian lady, whose character was well known to her. There had been no previous intimacy, but they entered into conversation, and the lady, who only knew C. as a fashionable lover of pleasure, embraced the opportunity of speaking on the subject of the soul's salvation.

What words can express the conflict of feeling in those moments? "You are the first person who has spoken to me about my soul since I left school, and how often have I longed that someone would thus address me," was one of her first replies; and then followed a touching confession of the misery of her life.

That was a walk never to be forgotten. The gushing forth of that pent up heart was overwhelming to both, and the scene was hallowed by a sense of God's presence.

But C. had so habitually resisted her convictions, that Satan still had power, and although plainly seeing that the christian's path must be in separation from the world, she dreaded the scorn and ridicule of her friends. Week after week she hesitated to confess Christ before men, until at length her state of health required the best medical advice, and like a thunderbolt fell the judgment of the physician that she could not live more than three months. How terrible was her remorse for lost opportunities! For several days she agonised under a sense of sin and fear of death, but the wondrous grace of God came in to speak peace to her soul by showing her that Jesus had been made sin for her, and then she began to live. She seemed as one taken up to heaven to receive thoughts about herself and everything around her.

The example and admonitions of her early instructress were now vividly recalled to mind, and even the portions of Scripture she had learned were recollected, with a freshness and

power that astonished her, for they had passed from her memory during the interval.

She delighted at first in hearing hymns read to her, and then, as she neared her departure, the word of God became most precious to her. "Let me have the blessed word of God; hymns do not satisfy me now," she would say; and often would she burst forth in praise for all that Christ had done for her.

But she never forgot to speak of herself as a solemn warning to others., "I have thrown away my life. Oh, that I had again an opportunity of taking my place before all the world with the despised followers of Jesus!" Such expressions were often heard to fall from her lips. She had been ashamed to associate with the people of God, but how often did she now express her intense desire to have the honour, if only for once, of openly taking her place amongst them. This privilege, however, was denied her.

She spoke earnestly and faithfully to her worldly friends who visited her, and surely eternity will disclose that her words were with power. She had proved that the world could give nothing worth having, and that divine realities alone could satisfy the heart; and more than this, she could tell of being united to a living Saviour for ever, and she delighted to dwell on His beauty and glory, for her spirit seemed to be constantly in heaven.

This continued until the end. She had been apparently unconscious for some hours, when the friend to whom she had poured out her heart by the sea-shore entered the room, and was allowed to be alone with her. After repeating some passages of scripture, this lady said, "If what I am saying is a comfort to you, tell me by some sign, if you can only move a finger." At once, with a last effort, she threw her dying arms around the neck of her friend, opened her languid eyes, and fixing them with a heavenly gaze that spoke to the heart at once, she attempted to speak. To anticipate her words, it was said, "You will soon be with Jesus."

"I shall, I shall," was the earnest reply; and in a moment her arms relaxed their hold, her head sank back on the pillow, and she was

gone to Him who had loved her, and washed her from her sins in His own blood.

Could that ransomed spirit address you, dear reader, what would she say? "Seek the Lord now, while He may be found." Waste not your precious moments in serving Satan, but "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

If you have had convictions, do not trifle with them. Oh, do not resist God, for, be assured, you will never know rest of heart until you find it in the Saviour! "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

D.



Intimacy with Christ.

THE tenth chapter of St. John's gospel is familiar to all God's children as one of the portions of the sacred word most highly prized. There is one short statement in it, concerning the intimacy of Christ with His own, to which we will presently direct our reader's attention, first glancing at the incidents which led to its utterance by the Lord.

The dealings of the Lord with the woman taken in her sin, His laying bare the consciences of her accusers, and His declaration of Himself as the Light of the world, led to the rebellious utterances of some and the faith of others who heard Him; but at last, when he announced Himself as the I AM (ch. viii. 58), the religious wrath of the people was roused and they took up stones to stone Him.

Thus in the very temple, where the divine worship was conducted, was definite rejection of Jesus by the people, accompanied with a tumult of religious fierceness. "But Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." As He left Jehovah's temple in the hands of the men, who in their blindness sought to slay Him, His heart—at rest in His Father's love—was set upon the sheep for whom He had come to die. And as He passed by,—mark, dear reader, the dignity of His grace

—as He passed by the fierce crowd, He saw a man who was born blind ; a fitting illustration of the spiritually blind multitude He had left, the men whose pride veiled their souls to the shining of the Light of the world ! Even while the stones were in their hands Jesus, pitying the sightless beggar, gave him eyes to see. How excellent is His grace, and how human misery and sin are but the occasions for Him to show us what He is !

Thus did the Lord effect this work. He made clay, and spread the clay over the blank orbs of the man, and having anointed his eyes, bade him go and wash in the pool, which is by interpretation *Sent*.

We watch the man in the darkness in which he was born, and had lived till of full age, groping his way to the pool, through the washing in the waters of which he was to see. Now he reaches the pool, he washes, and he sees ! How grandly simple is the gospel of God ! But let us never forget that we must be blind if we would see. Born blind we all were. Such is the fact. But, alas, Pharisees say, "We see, and therefore their sin remaineth." How terrible to be so near the Saviour and yet to perish, to be so near the light and yet to remain in darkness ! Woe to such as have heard of Jesus, and who yet repent not. Is it not of such that it is true indeed—"to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever ?"

Christ came into the world to save sinners. But who is Christ ? By nature we are blind to Him, and the mystery of His person is like clay over our eyes. How then shall we see ? Go to the pool and wash. Trust not self, obey the gospel, and God the Holy Spirit, the *Sent* One, will open the eyes. You shall come seeing.

Here, then, is conversion. All God's people have had their eyes opened. Their testimony ever is, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." All is different ; the darkness is past. No argument, no logic can drive out of the enlightened soul the conviction that conversion is conversion, that light is light. Ten thousand blind teachers could not convince one illiterate man having eyes to see, that after all he was blind like them. God has wrought in the soul a work by His Holy Spirit,

and the convert is himself the witness to conversion.

But to have the eyes opened is not all that the soul needs. This in due season every true christian feels. We want Christ Himself as well as His benefits. Now a faithful witness to the sight-giving power of Christ in the gospel will in no wise lose its reward, though it will certainly bring troubles and difficulties from the hands of men. The Pharisees cast out the man who had been blind ; he was no longer fit for their association. How could a faithful witness to Jesus as the sight-giver be fit for the company of such as were born seeing—for such as needed not Jesus but were satisfied with themselves ? (ch. ix. 39-41.) And the Lord Himself had testified that He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance—the whole need not a physician, but they who are sick ; and so it is now, yes, even to this very day. There is a christianity that has no Christ in it, and which utterly rejects the confession of His name. A man being cast out of orthodox religious associations for Christ's sake, is not peculiar to the times of the temple and of Jewish Pharisees.

Being cast out, the man, though not knowing it, was exactly where those who had taken up the stones had put the Lord. This is a most solemn reality. Christ and the man to whom He had given sight were both outside the temple and its glories, and if we consider what the temple was in those days, we can but feel what terrible isolation it must have been not to be of it—but where Jesus is there is peace as well as light.

Having heard that they had cast him out, the Lord sought and found the once blind man. We pray you observe this, dear reader. This is the second time Jesus found him. He found him at the first in his blind state, now He found him with eyes to see that to confess Christ as the sight-giver was to be despised and rejected even as Christ was. There is a deep mystery of grace in this second finding of the man, and it leads us to the subject of this paper—intimacy with Christ. We speak at times of what is like a second conversion, and in some senses not unwisely. We know that no one can have his eyes opened

twice—once saved we are saved for ever—but none the less is it true that a man may have his eyes opened before he has an object given him to engross his sight. And when the object is presented to the opened eyes it is like a second conversion.

Jesus found the man with eyes opened, and then He revealed Himself to him as the Son of God, and the once blind man gazing upon Him was absorbed with Him. "Lord, I believe," said he. "And he worshipped Him."

The Scriptures do not enlarge on such truths. They state them and leave us to meditate upon them. The fact of a man in Christ being caught up to the third heavens, and hearing there unutterable words, is given. It is for us to meditate upon the truth.

Jesus, the Shepherd, had found a sheep, and this object-giving to the man who had eyes to see, is the introduction to the lovely parables and teaching of the tenth chapter of John. Without the blind man before us the pictures presented by the parables lack the sheep.

The once blind man worshipped Jesus, we say, his whole being was rapt with Him. The Lord had revealed Himself to him as the Son of God. With what a gaze must those once sightless eyes have looked upon Him! As we consider this, what a volume of eternal joy is opened up to us in those few words, "And he worshipped Him." It is heaven on earth, and heaven forever.

No true christian is satisfied with the bare knowledge of being saved; he longs to know the Saviour. Let us then quote at length the text which has given rise to these remarks; "I am the Good Shepherd, and I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father, and I lay down My life for the sheep." (ch. x. 14, 15.) The revised version, from which the quotation is made, gives the Lord's words their true meaning, the depths of which are not seen in our beloved authorised version. Not, dear reader, that we would say their depths could ever be fully seen! What words of wonder are they! Meditate upon them: Even as the Father knows the Son and the Son knows the Father, Jesus knows His own and His own

know Him. What intimacy, heavenly, holy intimacy is here! The christian, who reads them for the first time, may well stand in reverential wonder, overwhelmed with the reality of Christ's love to him.

Say not, christian, this cannot be for me! Are you not a sheep of His flock? Are you not His own? The least in the family is as much the parent's own as the greatest. Jesus found you. He sought you, He called you, He died for you, He laid down His life for the sheep.

Do not look for your spiritual joys in the synagogue—and we have all of us "our" synagogue—but find them in communion with Christ. He is the Son of God, worship Him. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is the revelation of the Son and the Father.

It is unmistakable, that God in these days is bringing many of His people into a conscious intimacy with His Son to which they once were strangers. Shall we enquire, why is this? Is it not that yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry? Is it not that as heaven is so near, God is giving to His people a foretaste of its joy? Heart knowledge of Christ is heaven for ever, and is heaven on earth till He come. H.F.W.



The Two Cousins.

"GOD loves you, but not your naughtiness," I said one day to a dear little girl during a conversation with her about the Lord.

A year passed away, and I was again visiting at her father's house, and saw my little friend.

"Does God love you?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, with quiet confidence, and then added, gravely, "but He does not love my naughtiness."

"And who is the little girl with you, dear?" said I, as I saw a bright-eyed child of about five years of age standing by my little friend.

"This is cousin Carrie," she said, and



THE TWO COUSINS.

presently the two little children were upon my knees, and we sat and talked of God, and of heaven.

"Well, little Carrie, and what do you know of the Lord Jesus?" I inquired.

"Oh, I know all about those things," she said quickly; "I go to the Sunday school, you know."

"Then, Carrie, you must tell me all that you know about the Lord Jesus, for that is what I love to hear."

"I do not know that I can tell you just

now," she said, after a moment's pause, "but I know all about it, and I know I love Him."

"Now, Carrie, I will ask you a little question: Do you love the Lord Jesus so much that you would like to go to Him just now, or would you rather wait a long time, till you are grown up?"

The little child put her head on one side, and was very thoughtful. Presently she said, "I should like to go to be with the Lord Jesus in heaven; but I don't know——" She stopped for a moment, and then said,

"I should not like to go yet, because I don't know whether I could leave mamma and little Georgie."

"Carrie, my dear," said I, "your little answer only shows that you are like a good many grown-up persons—something is in your heart before your love to the Lord Jesus. But if you only knew how He loves you, you would not answer thus; if you only knew what pleasure He has in a little child like you, how the blessed Lord Jesus loves you, little Carrie, it would make all the difference."

Carrie became still more thoughtful. Then she suddenly exclaimed, "But I don't know that—nobody told me that—and that's the thing of it!"

So I began to

"Tell the story simply,
As to a little child,"

to this one of the Lord's little ones, of how He came from heaven and died to save sinners, of how He lives in heaven to bless His people, and of how He is coming again to take all who are His to dwell with Him for ever; and our little conversation came to an end for that day.

But the thought of the Lord so loving little Carrie filled the dear child's heart, and as she went home through the pleasant lanes and fields she talked all the way of what a wonderful thing it was that the Lord Jesus should love her, and of how she had never heard it before.

A few days afterwards the little cousins were heard praying together under a hedge, for they wanted, they said, to speak to the Lord Jesus.

Little Carrie never forgot that day when she first believed how the Lord loved her; and now that years have rolled by it is our joy to see her walking before her friends as a bright christian girl.

"We love Him because He first loved us." Remember these words of the beloved apostle John, dear children. W. G. H.

I AM ONE OF THE LORD'S LAMBS.

A HOT, dusty summer day, and a long, weary road to travel over, and the large flock of sheep and lambs, panting at every

step, made many a pitying eye look sadly after them. Many a little lamb lay down by the road-side entirely spent and worn out, while others limped along so lame, that it seemed they, too, must very soon give up the struggle. Very slowly they passed on, and last of all walked the shepherd, carrying in his arms one of the poor lambs that had fallen down, unable to walk another step.

From the windows of a house overlooking the road several bright-faced little girls were intently watching the flock, and many were the pitying exclamations of the children, as they watched one after the other of the lame sheep and lambs pass out of sight.

Soon after, one of the little girls, who had been looking out of the window on that hot July day, was writing to a friend, and if some of the little readers of FAITHFUL WORDS could have peeped over her shoulder as she wrote, they would have read the following words:—"I am so glad I am not like those poor sheep and lambs, for the Lord Jesus is my Shepherd, and I am sure that He will always take care of me. I do believe on Him now, and I am one of the Lord's lambs, and it makes me so glad. I want to see the Lord very much, and I am glad to think He may come soon."

Dear little children, can every one of you who read this paper say what this little girl could? She was not quite twelve years old, and perhaps some of you are just her age. Can you say, "The Lord is my Shepherd?" If you cannot, oh, do not put off calling to Him for mercy. You are not ready for the Lord to come, and He may be here very soon; how would you meet Him? Oh, do trust Him now at once, so that you, too, may be one of His lambs.

It is so happy to belong to the Good Shepherd! He died for His sheep and lambs, and now He lives to bless them. He thinks of each one of the flock; no little weary lamb can cry for help but Jesus hears, and not only hears, but succours the feeble wanderer. Also, Jesus is leading the flock to heaven. He goes first, and where He goes His sheep follow, while on their way He gives them what, in His love and wisdom, He sees they need. L. T.



The Little Boy who Died and Lived Again.

MANY, many years ago, a little boy, an only child, went with his father to the reapers, who were gathering in the corn. The little boy's home was in Palestine, where, as you have often heard, the sun is very hot.

It was customary in those days for the father to take his eldest son into his fields, or through his gardens, and to point out those portions of the corn-fields, or of the grapes or figs, which were to be reserved as the first-fruits for the Lord. For in the land of Judah, in those old times, the best of the corn and fruits of the earth were given to God. We cannot tell whether the little boy of whom we are about to speak was accompanying his aged father on some such errand, or whether the child was merely running by his father's side. However, while the day was still early, the boy suddenly cried to his father, "My head, my head!" Some sharp pain had seized him. As we read the story, we can but think he must have suffered from a sun-stroke. Then his father bade a lad carry the child home to his mother, to place him under her tender care!

I am sure if my little boy's head ached very badly I should say, "Carry him to his mother," or I should myself run with him in my arms to her; for who cares for little children like a mother? who can nurse as she? or whose tender voice and hand can soothe so well as hers?

When he was carried home the child sat upon his mother's knees, growing worse and worse, till the sun was at its noon-day height, and then he died.

But why does the great God tell us this story in His holy book? for many a child has cried out, "My head, my head," because of violent pain, and many a little boy has died upon his mother's knees. Why, then, is the record of this boy given to us?

The boy's mother had cared for one of

Jehovah's prophets, Elisha by name. Elisha is a beautiful name, and in our language its meaning is, "God's salvation." What a grand name for a man to have given to him! Just suppose a great preacher of Christ having such a noble name given him by God, how we should all crowd round to hear him tell us of Jesus our Saviour, and of God the Father, who sent the Saviour of the world. We should feel that such a man must know by the Holy Spirit's teaching much of the salvation of God, in order to be called by such a name. Elisha told people long ago of Jehovah and His salvation, and because the mother sought the good of His prophet, God had given her the little son who now was lying still and cold in death.

This is how the mother had cared for Jehovah's prophet: she had set apart a little room in her house for him, and in that room she had placed a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick. The prophet had often slept on that bed, and knew the little room well, for he was always welcome in that mother's house; and now with a broken heart she took up her dear little boy to Elisha's room, and laid him upon his bed.

Then she went out immediately to seek the prophet. Nothing could satisfy her but seeing him. Elisha was dwelling upon a mountain, named Carmel, not far from her home, and to the mountain the mother went as swiftly as her love could lead. Think you not, your mother would go anywhere or do anything for your good? How she would hasten for help if you were ill!

When Elisha saw the mother riding on her ass as quickly as she possibly could, he bade his servant run to meet her, and ask if it were well with her, her husband, and her child. She answered the servant, but hastened on to the prophet, and then casting herself at his feet, cried out about her little son. Then the prophet saw at once that the child was either sick or dead.

So he sent on his servant with his staff to place it upon the child's face, but the mother was not satisfied with that — nothing but Elisha himself coming to her child would do for her.



THE LITTLE BOY WHO DIED AND LIVED AGAIN.

I trust your mothers are as earnest for your souls as this Shunamite was for her boy, and that nothing can satisfy them save the salvation of God coming to you just where you are. Now that is what we all need who are not saved, for we are by nature "dead in sins," and nothing but the salvation of God coming to us where we are in our "dead" state, can give us life and blessing.

So Elisha came to the house, and, lo! the child was dead, and laid upon his bed! Where the prophet had slept, there the mother had laid her sleeping child, just as by faith the christian mother now, as it were, lays her darling boy or girl in the place Jesus took when He slept in death for His own—as we should say, "Lord Jesus, Thou didst die for sinners; my child is a sinner—by nature dead in sins—I plead Thy death for him." Your dear parents cannot save you, but they can, by faith, put you, as it were, in spirit, where Jesus died for sinners. He will then show Himself as the Life-giver. We who love you and write for you can do no more, but we do it again just now, and in happy confidence that some of you shall find life—new life, everlasting life—in Christ.

Then the great prophet of God shut the door of his little room, and prayed unto the Lord. None was in that room but "those twain"—the lifeless little boy, and the man of God. And Jehovah in heaven was looking down into that room, and listening to His servant's prayer. God is the answerer of prayer.

The prophet then took, as it were, the child's place. He laid himself upon him, "his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands." Picture it, my dear young friends, to yourselves—the dead little boy, and stretched upon him the prophet whose name signifies God's salvation.

Did you ever really think how Jesus took the sinner's place? Look at Him upon the cross. See Him nailed there, bleeding and dying for sinners. Ah! He was taking, nay, He had then taken the sinner's place of death. This is what God teaches us, and we love to think of the blessed Jesus dying for sinners, taking our very place of death in order that He might save us and give us life.

After a while the flesh of the child waxed warm; his life came back to him. Then, when a little more time had gone by, he opened his eyes. Who was the first person, do you think, that he saw? His mother! No; the prophet of God! Who is it that we first see in our hearts when Jesus our Lord gives us life, and then opens our eyes? Why, the Lord Himself! This is secret work between you and the blessed Lord alone; but I trust, nay I am sure, many of our dear young friends know the Lord Jesus Christ as their life and salvation.

Then Elisha opened the door and called his servant, and bade him fetch the mother, "and when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at His feet, and bowed herself to the ground." She first gave God the glory and the praise through His servant, and then she "took up her son, and went out."

How she must have kissed her child and looked into his eyes with love and joy. Her son, who was dead, was alive again. God had answered her faith and her earnestness, as indeed He always does. Her boy was in her bosom. Ah! dear boys and girls, you who have christian mothers, but are not yet saved, believe on the Lord Jesus who died and rose again, and who gives life everlasting to all who come to Him. What joy will it be to your parents! What untold thankfulness to God will fill their hearts, and what joy your souls.

H. F. W.

TYNDALE, IN POVERTY AND EXILE, BEGINS TO PRINT HIS NEW TESTAMENT.

WE must now follow Tyndale across the sea to that foreign land where, as he touchingly tells us, amid "poverty, exile, bitter absence from friends, hunger and thirst and cold, great dangers, and innumerable other hard and sharp fightings," he was to accomplish the work which was so near his heart.

During the year 1524 he remained at Hamburg, in welcome obscurity, quietly labouring on at his task in some poor lodging. For awhile he had hope of a helper in one whom he calls his "faithful companion," but

this friend did not remain with him, "having taken another voyage upon him to preach Christ," Tyndale writes, "where, I suppose, He never was yet preached"; and Tyndale worked on alone, while the pile of sheets ready for the printer grew day by day, until the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, with marginal notes, were finished.

In making his translation, Tyndale had not the helps in grammars and dictionaries which translators in modern times have, nor had he the same difficulties to encounter. Three hundred years ago, books which would be helpful to the study of Hebrew and Greek were very scarce and dear, and the numerous manuscript copies of the Greek text which a modern scholar must carefully compare, were then undiscovered or unknown. Tyndale's translation was made from the Greek Testament of Erasmus, which had now reached its third edition; this he no doubt compared with the Latin, and he may also have used Luther's German translation, but he could not avail himself of that of Wycliffe, which, as we have seen, was not made from the original Greek, and therefore was faulty in many respects; besides, the English of Wycliffe's day was fast becoming so old-fashioned that it could even at that time hardly be called a tongue "understood of the people."

Some writers have thought that from Hamburg Tyndale went to Wittemburg, and passed some time with Luther; while others consider it unlikely that the two translators ever met; we know nothing with certainty of Tyndale's movements until, in the following year, we find him at Cologne, a quaint old city upon the Rhine, whither he had probably gone for the sake of superintending the printing, not only of the two earliest gospels, but of the whole New Testament, the translation of which was now complete. The city was noted as containing the shrine of the "Three Kings," for the wise men from the East who, led by the star, came to worship the holy Child at Bethlehem, were said to have been buried there, and pilgrims flocked to visit their sacred relics. A city so full of superstition did not seem a likely place for the printing of the first English New Testament, but there were

printers at Cologne, whose names were well-known in London, and communication with England was easy and cheap. It was true that in that very year 1525 there had been a stir made; men said the new doctrines were spreading even there, and the archbishop had forbidden any meetings to be held except under the sanction of the Church. Still, in one of the quiet streets of the old city, the stranger who had taken refuge there might hope to work on unobserved, until his task was done.

Tyndale had lately received some money sent him by the good London merchant, so that he was able to pay for the printing of his New Testament, and the great anxiety of the English people to obtain books forbidden by the bishops was so well known that two printers, who had a large warehouse in St. Paul's Churchyard, readily undertook the work, sure that they would not lose by it, and promised to print three thousand copies, which were to be produced with the greatest possible secrecy.

The work was quietly proceeding, and eighty pages had been already printed, when suddenly the printers received orders from the Senate of Cologne to stop their work immediately. All had been discovered then, but when or how? Who had betrayed the secret? Without waiting to unravel the mystery, Tyndale and Roye—a man sent by Monmouth to help him to write and compare the texts, but one who did not work for the love of the truth as Tyndale did—gathered together the precious sheets which were already printed and sailed away up the Rhine, in the hope of finding some other place where the work might be safely finished.

It was one John Cochläus, of Nuremberg, who had written against Luther and Melancthon, who had discovered that "two English apostates" were lurking in Cologne, accomplishing, unknown to any, a design so vast and so destructive that he wrote at once to King Henry, to the great Cardinal, and to Fisher, bishop of Rochester, to warn them of it.

"Two Englishmen," so ran his letter to the king, "like the two eunuchs who desired

to lay hands on Ahasuerus, are plotting wickedly against the peace of your kingdom; but I, like the faithful Mordecai, will lay open their designs to you. They wish to send the New Testament in English to your people. Give orders at every seaport to prevent the introduction of this most baneful merchandise."

It happened that Cochlæus was having a book of his own printed at this very time by the printers who were at work upon Tyndale's translation. It was by means of some words let fall in his hearing by one of them that the secret was discovered. "Whether the king and the cardinal of York wish it or not," he said, "All England will soon be Lutheran." Suspicion once aroused, Cochlæus spared no pains to learn more, and by many artful devices at last became acquainted with the whole of the "wicked design," information of which he hastened to send to England. He it was who had gone to the senate and procured an order forbidding the printers to proceed with their work; but when, accompanied by a strong guard, he went to the printing office, prepared to seize the finished sheets, he found that he was too late—they were all gone, and the "English apostates" were already on their way to a fresh place of refuge.

This was found at Worms, the city where four years before Luther had answered for himself before the emperor and the great assembly of the states-general—where in reply to the question, "Will you or will you not retract?" he had uttered those words so full of faith and courage: "I cannot and will not retract; for it is unsafe for a christian to speak against his conscience. Here I take my stand; I cannot do otherwise; may God be my help! Amen." It was at this city, which now, in the opinion of Cochlæus was in a fair way to become wholly Lutheran, that Tyndale, undaunted and unwearied, once more set himself to the task of completing the work so often interrupted.

Probably aware that information as to the size and appearance of his New Testament would reach England before the book itself could find its way thither, he resolved to give

it a new shape. The book of which 3,000 copies were to have been printed at Cologne was of a large size—a quarto volume—and it was to have contained beside the text of scripture many glosses, as notes at the side of a book were then called, from an old word meaning an interpretation.

The Testament, which was now printed at Worms, by a grandson of one of the inventors of printing, was only half that size—an octavo volume—and contained no glosses, and no prologue or introduction. Of this volume 6,000 copies were printed. Thus were the enemies of the truth of God defeated. Thus it came to pass that the first English printed New Testament contained only the text of sacred scripture.

It was doubtless a matter of regret to Tyndale that the notes which he had so carefully prepared should not find a place in this volume, which was to be the first-fruits of his labours, for in a short epistle to the reader, with which the book closes, he bids him "count it as a thing not having his full shape, but, as it were, born before his time, even as a thing begun rather than finished." Acknowledging the "rudeness of the work," he looks forward to a time when, if God permit, he may "give it its full shape . . . and give light where it is required, and seek in certain places more proper English . . . and show how the Scripture useth many words which are otherwise understood of the common people, and help with a declaration where one tongue talketh not another." The epistle ends by bidding the reader "pray for" the unknown translator.

The smaller volume completed, Tyndale at once proceeded with the larger, and the work interrupted at Cologne was finished at Worms with such dispatch, that in the spring of the year 1526, books, crossing the sea by way of Antwerp, in spite of all that the watchfulness of king, or bishop, or cardinal could do, safely reached England, where, "as might have been expected," Dr. Westcott tells us in his "History of the English Bible," "the quarto edition first attracted attention, while, for a short time, the undescribed octavo escaped notice."

C. P.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

IV.—THE VINE.

AS it is our main object to connect the Bible trees with the dispensations of scripture, we ask you to think of a period lasting sixteen and a half centuries, during which God dealt in patient goodness with His people Israel.

It is important to bear distinctly in mind that *Israel only* was taken by God under His especial care. A person might take a *specimen* of a certain class of trees, and cultivate it, and judge of the whole class or family of trees by the result of his experiment.

Now God selected Israel out of all the nations of the earth as the vine of His choice, and set it in the most favourable circumstances. As we read, "I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed." (Jer. ii. 21.)

The vines in the land of Palestine grow to a great size; we read of one the stem of which was about a foot and a half in diameter, and the height of which was about thirty feet, which, by its branches, formed a hut upwards of thirty feet broad and long. The clusters of these vines were so large that they weighed ten or twelve pounds.

When speaking of Israel by the prophet Isaiah (see chap. v.), God compared them to "a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. He fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine." If we turn to Psalm lxxx., Israel is thus spoken of: "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it."

You will recollect in the parable of the trees in the Book of Judges that the vine was to bring "joy to God and man." Such would have been the result had Israel been able to keep the law. The law said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," and what a scene of joy would have been those "holy fields" had Israel really fulfilled this. Alas!

man has no love for God in his heart, and the long trial of sixteen and a half centuries only proved that man was irreclaimable; and Jehovah had to speak to Israel in these touching words, "How art thou turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?"

What was God's answer to the Psalmist's question. It was, "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." And again, "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty." (Hos. x. 1, 2.) Our Lord charged them with this in His parable. in Matthew xxi. 34, 35: "When the time of the fruit drew near, he" (the householder) "sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the

husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another."

You know how truly the last part was fulfilled, when, "last of all, he sent unto them his own son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance."



A WINEPRESS.

Yes, this was the sad, sad end to the story of God's faithful love and tender care for Israel, and their history ought to teach us this lesson, that we can do nothing to bring forth fruit to God apart from the grace that gives us a new nature. For, as our Lord says, make the "tree good" first, then the fruit good.

What is Israel's present condition? It is described in Ezekiel xix. 13, 14. "Now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule." Well might the prophet say, "This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation;" and the apostle, "for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." (1 Thess. ii. 16.)

H. N.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



A BROKEN ROPE.

A BROKEN ROPE.

SOME years ago a little vessel was swiftly passing on her way through a dark winter night, rapidly nearing port. One of the owners of the cutter was on deck, taking a last look before "turning in." The watch was set, and all seemed safe, when suddenly a startling sound reached the quick ear of the captain, and almost before he had time to think, he became aware that a huge vessel was bearing down upon them at full speed. The watch was, perhaps, asleep—at least it was evident that those on board the large ship were unaware of the vicinity of the cutter, and in less time than the reading of this has taken, the two vessels were within a few yards of each other.

It seemed that nothing could save the cutter from being struck amidships, and just as the ships were about to crash together, the captain, with a warning shout, made a desperate leap, thinking to gain the deck of the larger vessel. Alas! he missed his footing and fell down—down into the dark surging waves. Encumbered by his heavy sea-boots and coat, he tried to strike out and swim, but his clothes dragged him down, and his strokes were feeble and vain. As he felt himself sinking—sinking alone in the wild, pitiless waves—he thought of the brothers who so loved him, and who only a few moments before had been safe with him on their vessel: where were they? Ah! he knew not what had happened to them, or whether he should ever see them more.

As he rose once again to the surface he suddenly felt something strike his arm. Eagerly he groped about, and at last grasped a rope, and joyfully began to pull it towards him, thinking it must be hanging from one of the vessels that had come into collision, but, with an awful failing of heart, he found that it was only a lost cable, itself slowly sinking under the waves!

My reader, when bearing the tale of this brave sailor's eager hope as he first grasped the rope which seemed to offer him the assurance of safety and deliverance, and then of his agony at finding it was useless, it reminded me forcibly of others who are trusting

their all, not only for time, but for eternity, to hopes just as fallacious as this hope of being saved from drowning by a drifting rope. It may be that your case is even worse than that of him whose story you are reading. He had the cold, dark billows around and beneath him, but it may be that a heavier, a more terrible weight is upon you, for upon you, little as you may heed it, "the wrath of God" abides, if you have not fled for refuge to the only One who can shield you from eternal death.

Perhaps you are not unmindful of the great realities of death and judgment to come, yet you are trusting to hopes which, after all, may be vain as ropes of sand. If in any way you are thinking that you can help yourself in this great matter of your soul's salvation, you are certainly so trusting. No efforts, however sincere, no turning over a new leaf, will be of any avail. There is One who alone could say, "I am the Way"—one single, glorious Saviour—by whom alone we can be saved. If you have not come to God by Him—if you are not trusting in this one Saviour—you are lost, and all the broken ropes upon which you may be laying hold are utterly worthless.

As our friend let go the deceitful support, which he had so eagerly clutched, he sank again, and well he knew that unless help came very soon he was a lost man; he felt that he was again sinking, and knew nothing more until he found himself grasping something, at which probably he had caught as he rose for the last time, and then, as consciousness returned, he found himself in a most perilous position—he was clinging to the paddle-wheel of the steamer!

Half dead with exhaustion, his voice so faint that he had little chance of being able to make it heard above the roar of the waves, his one hope was in the knowledge of the love of his brothers who had been with him on board the cutter. Yes, their ears were eagerly listening for the faintest sound, and, as they at last caught the piteous moans of their brother, every nerve was strained to reach him, and to release him as tenderly as possible from his dangerous position.

Their hearts ached as they saw the blood streaming from the wounds which he had received as he struck the vessel in his wild leap, but, rejoicing that he was still alive, they bore him to a place of safety.

Long days and weeks of suffering passed away, and left him the mere shadow of what he had been before that terrible night, but he had learned a lesson of his own utter powerlessness—he had learned what it was to be saved by another. Dear reader, have you learned this with regard to your soul? Oh, I beseech you, think of it: do not lay this paper down as though it did not concern you. If you cannot say, "Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me"—if you do not know that you are saved by the blood of His cross—go to Him at once; He is always near you; put all your trust in Him, and you will be saved, and you will be able day by day to praise Him who has taught you, letting go all false hopes of safety, to cleave to Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

JESUS ONLY.

As christians, we may say that our dark history as men in the flesh has been closed at the cross of Christ. There God condemned sin in the flesh. (Rom. viii. 5.) Christ's death is the proof to us of our end as in God's sight, "because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) The more we enter practically into this, the greater will be our peace.

Each heart knows *its own* bitterness—let us not linger over the past, let us no longer occupy ourselves with the old ruin, which is ever claiming from us one other look of interest.

And what fills the present? Is it not the Lord Jesus, Him of whom the Spirit testifies to us now for our blessing? We have Him as our Friend for all the varied needs of the journey, but there are no milestones to be yet passed upon the way; for if we think of the future, if we hope, what is our hope? "*Till He come.*" This fills the scene before us. Jesus for the past, Jesus our present, and Jesus fills the future. May we be filled in Him.

WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

It was a dull, cloudy, showery day, early in the month of April. There was no ray of sunlight able to pierce its way through the heavy atmosphere that surrounded the peaceful looking village of T—y. With slow, thoughtful steps, I passed through the quiet, narrow, and old-fashioned streets which lie near the centre of that secluded hamlet. Months had passed away since I had resided in its well-known locality, and now for a short time I had returned on a visit to a friend. Many a greeting from friendly voices sounded familiarly upon my ear as I proceeded to my destination, and as I recognized one and another, and pondered upon the changes which had passed over many a countenance since last I had looked upon it, my own heart found special rest and comfort in thinking of the ever-changeless One—Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Into my mind came sweet, restful thoughts of His love—His constancy—His all-sufficiency for all times, all seasons, all places.

Occupied with such thoughts I was unaware that hasty footsteps were seeking to overtake mine, until a hand placed upon my shoulder, and a strange voice aroused me. The speaker was a good-natured looking woman of some forty years of age, the wife of a well-to-do tradesman in the village.

"I've been trying to overtake you, miss," said the good woman apologetically, as I turned towards her, half-wondering at being thus accosted by her. "I wanted to let you know at once how ill poor little Ethel J. is, and to ask if you could see her. Maybe if you could, you'd have a chance of speaking a word to her. She's not long for this world, I fear, miss."

A few more words of explanation, and I understood clearly the cause of her anxiety. Ethel J., of whom she had spoken, was the daughter of parents who had very earnestly striven to rear their child in the faith they themselves professed. At the same time they anxiously desired that their daughter should have every educational advantage that money could procure, and regretted there being no school in the neighbourhood suitable.

Ethel J. had at one time been a pupil of mine; and now, as the good woman spoke to me of her sad state, how well could I remember the bright, eager face of my former favourite, and recall her intelligent questions and answers over our morning Scripture lessons. Well I knew that, even at that time, dear Ethel loved to read the word of God, and to speak with childish delight upon the many beautiful stories it contained. On account of this she had been suddenly removed from our instruction and sent to a nunnery at some distance, in order that her studies might be pursued under other influence. There the dear child had remained for the past two years. From time to time I had heard of her during that period; but I was not aware that she had been brought home in a far-advanced stage of illness; and, as the good woman told me the sad story, and added her fears that none would speak to her of Jesus as the only Saviour of sinners, my heart yearned over the dying girl, and I longed to speak to her of Jesus, the one "Mediator between God and man."

Fully aware of the difficulties which I might have to encounter, very earnestly I cried to God for an opportunity to speak yet once more to the dying girl of the love of Jesus. And He, who is the hearer and answerer of prayer, was true as ever to His promise, "Ask and ye shall receive."

A few hours later I stood in the sick chamber to which I had scarcely dared to hope that I should gain admittance. Wan and almost as white as the pillow upon which it rested was the face of Ethel, while the thin, transparent hand resting on the coverlet told its own tale of weakness. I needed not to be told that the mortal career was indeed drawing to a close. Silently I took my seat at the bedside, while the sick girl's large, lustrous eyes turned towards me with a piteous expression that I can never forget. Then followed a longing, beseeching look at the mother, who was standing near, and I understood it all. Ethel longed to be with me alone, as in the days of old. To ask such a boon from the watchful mother might be but to hinder the present opportunity, and close the way already so unex-

pectedly opened. But He who has "the hearts of all men in His hand" gave an answer beyond all expectation.

"I will leave you alone with Ethel a little, Miss B.," said the weeping mother a few moments later, as the sick girl still lay looking towards me beseechingly. "I wouldn't leave her with anybody else, but she always so clung to you," and so saying, the mother left the room. Oh! how I thanked God for His wonderful mercy, asking, too, for right words to speak to that sin-sick soul.

With her head resting on my arm, Ethel told me of the terrible burden of sin on her soul—of the knowledge she had that she was passing away from this world unsaved, unforgiven.

Silently I gazed upon one thing after another in that bed-chamber. The crucifix, the rosary, the sculptured Madonna—all these were there, silently proving their utter inability to give onethought of peace or hope to the conscience-stricken soul.

With a full heart, I silently lifted the Missal at the sick girl's side. "There is no peace here," I said, as, after a moment's pause, I held the book before her gaze. "There is no peace here—no pardon for sin. The crucifix, the rosary, the Madonna cannot help you at this solemn moment; they cannot wash away one sin from your soul; neither can the priest forgive you; he has no power to absolve you—no sacrament that will make you white and clean, fit for the presence of a holy God. No! your soul is, indeed, black, sinful, vile. God has said, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' But listen, dear Ethel. There is One who has come down to this earth and died instead of you. God's holy claims were all met when Jesus suffered on the cross, 'the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.' So perfect was that one atonement, that all who believe in Him are 'justified from all things.' The spotless Lamb of God laid down His life and shed His precious blood that your sins might be put away by the sacrifice of Himself. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'"

It was enough. Like a wonderful light streaming into her dark soul came the joy-

ful news of that *one* atonement—that *one* sacrifice. Weary vigils, long fastings, Ave Marias, all were forgotten now, as the dying girl drank in the sweet story of a crucified but now risen Saviour. She learned that she, a sinner, must be washed “white in the blood of the Lamb.”

“*All sin—all sin,*” she repeated. “‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin.’ I believe it. I’m ready to go now, and I long to see Him and *thank Him for it.*”

As I laid the drooping head on the downy pillow, such a look of wondrous brightness passed over the young girl’s face as she returned my smile, that I could only bless God, out of a full heart, for another redeemed soul over whom the Father was now rejoicing.

Bitter was the disappointment of the parents when they learned the change that had passed over their daughter’s mind. Sorely grieved were they that she steadily refused the consolations of the “Church.”

“There is but one atonement, mother,” Ethel would say—“one sacrifice. ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin.’ *My soul is white in the blood of the Lamb.*”

Once more I stood by the sick girl’s side. Sweet flowers perfumed the chamber. Every comfort that love could devise had been provided with lavish care. But they might not long detain the happy spirit from the presence of her Saviour. Already the death-dew was on the marble brow, but the radiant eyes recognized me, and the scarcely audible words came once more in response to my whisper—

“The — blood — of — Jesus — Christ — cleanseth—from—all—sin.”

A few hours later, and all was over. The priest came and went. His useless ceremonies were not needed in that chamber of peace.

Five days later, the precious remains of Ethel J. were interred with all the pomp and ritual of a Romish funeral. But the happy spirit of dear Ethel was in the full sunlight of the presence of the Saviour who had died for her! Feathery plumes might wave above the hearse, and heavy incense be wafted through the air, but it was nothing to the ransomed spirit. She was “absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

How had she reached His blissful presence? “*Not* by works of righteousness which she had done,” but by God’s grace, for He had given dear Ethel to *believe* the wonderful message of the love of a Saviour whose “precious blood cleanseth from all sin.”

Dear reader, can you say, “I know Jesus as my Saviour! ‘His precious blood cleanseth from all sin.’ My soul is made white in the blood of the Lamb?”

M. V. B.

CONTACT WITH CHRIST.

IN the multitude of our religious exercises, in the outward approach to Christ of those who are His, how little there is of real personal contact with Him! How can we be sure that this is the case? If we touched Him, virtue would flow out of Him—and the virtue does *not* flow out. Why? Because we have been but as the multitude of whom we read that they thronged and pressed Him; we have not touched Him.

This is the secret of going to Him in prayer, and coming away unsatisfied, the secret of our meaningless groaning before the mercy-seat. Do we indeed know that our cases admit of no cure but from Christ Himself? We have spiritual maladies, diseases of the soul, of which we all must be conscious; do we look for healing to Him alone? No hand can touch us but that blessed hand, that nailed hand, the hand that was pierced for us. If we really entered into the deep necessity of the case, it would urge us to Christ. God afflicteth not willingly; these very diseases of the soul may be used to bring us into contact with Him who is the source of all virtue. May we learn what it is to use this precious Saviour; what it is to touch Him so that virtue may flow from Him!

B—k.

THE TEST.

WHEN we come to our dying hour, it will not be with us, how much of the letter of scripture we know, or how versed we may be in doctrinal knowledge; but How rich is the grace of God that has saved us, How precious is the blood that has cleansed us.

ON OBTAINING SCRIPTURAL
KNOWLEDGE.

SCRIPTURE truth is known by the christian in two ways—intelligently, and experimentally. The same person may and should possess this double character of knowledge, but it is possible that he may have the intelligence without the experience, or the experience without the intelligence.

If the experience of a truth be had without intelligence, the loss to the soul will be in the way of wisdom. As an example, a believer is sure of his own personal salvation. He has received some word of God by the Spirit's work within him, which has assured him that he is saved, and he has no more doubts or fears on the subject. Yet perhaps he cannot explain, nor indeed see clearly, the truths as unfolded in the Scriptures relative to salvation. Hence he is in enjoyment of that which he does not fully comprehend, save as far as pertains to himself, for he knows in his soul salvation is his own.

So long as he walks with God, this want of intelligent understanding will not cause him to slip, but in the hour of conflict he will be at a great disadvantage, for he will not be able to wield aright "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." There will be confusion as to what this text means and what the other means, the mind will get entangled, and possibly, at least for a time, there may be defeat and the soul may be cast into doubt.

We see dear and faithful believers, for want of intelligence of the plain meaning of the word of God, not unfrequently cast down by the enemy and often under severe spiritual pressure. We cannot, therefore, be too eager to know the meaning of what God says, and "Thus saith the Lord," is of importance to the believer beyond utterance or conception.

However, the object of these few remarks is not so much the consideration of the experience of a truth without the clear intelligence of its meaning, as that of the intelligent understanding of a truth without due experience of its reality. We say *due* experience, for we do not wish to push the

delicate consideration of christian experience beyond just limits. It is comparatively easy to speak of intelligent knowledge of a truth, for words express what is the knowledge of the truth discoursed of; but experience is what belongs to the heart, and is for the individual christian the vital energy of the words he utters. The head may test knowledge, the heart must test experience. A christian who has passed through experimental knowledge of a truth, discerns the spirit of the speaker who describes what he has not felt.

A man may be as clear as crystal yet as cold as ice; he may have ability to detail the varied parts of a divine truth, but still move no heart towards God. On the other hand, blundering words and ill-formed thoughts may go right home to the soul, and draw the affections Godwards, even at the very time the hearer is fully aware of the lack of intelligence in the words he hears uttered.

We said, if a believer be wanting in Scriptural knowledge of a truth of God, he is by this lack exposed to the enemy should he get in spirit away from God. What shall we say then of the dangers besetting him who, being intelligently acquainted with a doctrine, having his mental powers furnished with its mysteries, is not experimentally versed in the truth intellectually known? He is in danger of the very condemnation of Satan himself—that is, of being puffed up with pride. Yes, he is in danger of evil of the spiritual pride of boasting himself in his acquaintance with divine truths, relative even to the glory of God, the death and resurrection of His Son, and God's way of blessing man by and in Christ! Such is the subtlety of the human heart that the believer may—yes, frequently does—take hold of a truth of God and use it for his own elevation. "Knowledge puffeth up," and the believer, having knowledge without the experience of the truth known, becomes puffed up with pride to his eventual shame and dishonour.

Without seeking to detail the sorrows ensuing on such a state of soul, we may throw out a word or two as to what is the cause of such a state, as this may help towards avoiding

the condition. The main root, then, of the evil is moral absence of spirit from God. The Bible is read, or probably books explaining its truths are read, and doctrines are mastered by mere human strength—by brain power, or memory, or the like means. In a word, the Spirit of God, who dwells within us, is ignored, and the mind is allowed the place of mastering divine truth instead of the believer submitting himself, humbly and reverently, to the moral effect of the truth of God upon his spirit. We cannot learn divine truth effectually save as we gain our knowledge in God's presence. A process in our souls accompanies the right acquisition of knowledge.

It is far less dangerous to be stupid and not to be able to comprehend a truth doctrinally, yet to live in its power and to move in its strength, than to know its details and yet to be practically outside its force. In the one case, the very sense of ignorance may help to keep the believer humble; in the other, the sense of knowledge will puff him up. In the first, God will be sought and His protection looked for; in the second, the truth, or human ability to wield the truth, and not God, will be trusted in. Many are marvelously intelligent in the Scriptures, who for years have lived in the pride of their knowledge! Their brain acquaintance with the letter of the truth has been used simply to enable them to look down on their fellow christians, as a scientific man might use his knowledge to despise ordinary men because of their ignorance.

If it be asked, Where is the remedy? the answer lies in the moral attitude before God the individual believer takes. It is entirely a private matter between God and the christian. But the private demeanour of the soul before God is a very great consideration indeed. When we were converted we had to deal with God alone; when we received peace we dealt with God alone; in all the great spiritual crises of our lives we have dealt with God alone, and if we die we shall have to go out of this world alone with God; in a word, everything that is stable and enduring in the soul results from personal dealing

with God. Now, if we take up any truth intellectually—merely intelligently—we have left God out in our personal obtaining of Scriptural knowledge, or, shall we say, of the knowledge of God; for the doctrines of Scripture give us the knowledge of God. Let us beware, since for mortal man to take up the knowledge of God as he would a matter of science is a deadly evil to the soul's prosperity.

God has graciously revealed Himself to His people in and by His word, and every sense of that revelation which we may respectively possess will certainly produce in our souls a fresh experience of God Himself. And when this personal knowledge of God, by His Spirit, is gained, the life and thoughts of the believer will be formed and coloured by such knowledge. The believer will live out what has passed through him and become part of him. His practical life will be the language of his inner being. He will live out that which lives in him.

And this living out and, by the manner of life, speaking out of what lives within, commands men's souls who hear; it is a witness, a testimony to God. On the other hand, the merely intellectually acquired knowledge of the highest of divine mysteries, only falls upon men's souls as fall the words of instruction in science.

A PRACTICAL WORD.

A YOUNG woman, upon an offer of marriage, consulted an old friend before making her momentous decision. He asked her if her husband that was to be was a christian. To be truthful, she had to say, "no; but," she added, "he wasn't really *bad*, not worse than other young men who hadn't thought of religion; it was only that he had never given it a thought! His thoughtlessness need not be any hindrance to her." Her adviser's answer was blunt, but it told. "If he is not a child of God," said the old man, "he must be a child of the devil; there is no half and half: and if he *is* the latter, and you marry him, look out, my girl! you'll have a deal of trouble with your father-in-law." This decided the case; the engagement was broken off, and the young woman saved from the misery of an unequal yoke.

FASHIONABLE RELIGION.

IN most religious circles much of the prevailing thought of the day is attributable to fashion. This is a serious statement, and requires explanation. We mean this: Mr. — preaches such and such an experience, and his congregation feels that it ought to experience what Mr. — preaches. Hence to experience what he preaches is, for the moment, the fashion, or, what is worse, *not* to experience it is to be out of fashion.

A certain "line of truth" is regarded by a religious school to be *the* truth for the day; hence not to be "in" that line is to be out of fashion. Alas! as the fashionable world will pinch itself into the shape of the new mould, so do these would-be-followers of other men, in what God has taught them for their own souls, seek to squeeze or to distend themselves, as it were, spiritually, into the experience or the line of truth proper in other eyes.

This conduct is really contempt of the Holy Spirit, who teaches and, by the word, produces the experience God would have in His people. God works in His people to will and to do His good pleasure, and His ways with each one of us are just what we need for ourselves, and just in accordance with His will.

REJOICE WITH ME.

IT is the expectation of our hearts to find sympathy from our friend in the hour of our sorrow. Perhaps because of our natural selfishness, we do not so readily carry our joys as we do our sorrows to our friend. A little child, in its simplicity, runs with its pleasures and its pains to its parent, and will give its smiles even to a stranger; and oftentimes the smile of a child has awakened in the stubborn soul of a man memories of the past, which have saved him from deeper ruin.

In spiritual things there is surely a loss among God's people who fail to enter into the joys of the Lord in what He is doing on earth. Did we think of His joys as well as carry to Him our sorrows, we should be brighter and more Christ-like Christians.

"Rejoice with Me" are beautiful words, occurring as they do in that marvellous group

of parables (Luke xv.) which unfold to us the joy of God—the Son, the Holy Ghost, and the Father—over the lost sinner when found and brought home.

"Rejoice with me" says the shepherd to his friends and neighbours; "Rejoice with me" says the woman to her friends and neighbours; and the father, too, thus addresses the selfish elder brother, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad."

Most high privilege is it on earth to be made the receptacle of the sorrows and the joys of a fellow man, to bear the burden together with the afflicted heart, to share the pleasure with the gladdened spirit. But consider, fellow Christian, the privilege of being called to rejoice with the Lord in His joy over a sinner being brought, by His grace, to the place where His love would have the sinner be.

There is essentially in the gospel a depth of gladness in the sense of divine grace, which fills the heart that realizes the grace; and where a Christian has settled down into a gloomy state of soul, we generally find he has drawn himself into his shell and has forgotten these gracious words of the Lord, "Rejoice with Me."

I CAN SING TO-DAY.

IN a quiet corner of a large, well-known room, situated in one of the most fashionable watering-places in England, a group of young girls, not many weeks since, had gathered around their teacher. Open Bibles were in their hands, and many an eager, thoughtful countenance told of deep interest in the afternoon's lesson. "Service for the Lord" had been the subject of meditation during that happy hour in the Sunday-school. Some of those young hearts had been stirred to their deepest depths, as they were reminded of the wonderful love of a Saviour who had died for them, and redeemed them to Himself, henceforth to claim them as His servants—His friends. Doubtless some of those Christian maidens would go forth, refreshed and encouraged, with hearts more fully consecrated to the Lord who has bought them, to prove in after hours of labour and conflict that they had not that day gathered round the word



THE AFTERNOON CLASS.

of God in vain. Already the hands of the clock were pointing to a quarter to four. Ten minutes longer, and the class must be dismissed.

The sound of hasty feet coming down the aisle caused the teacher to look around. A shade of momentary annoyance at so late an interruption passed over her brow, as she recognized one of the members of her class, and one whom she had cause to fear was not as punctual in her attendance as she might have been. But the girl was not alone,

for by her side was a companion, a stranger of, apparently, eighteen years of age. With a half-hesitating air, as if unaccustomed to such a scene, she seated herself near her friend.

The teacher's eye was on the clock. Little more than five minutes remained; yet her heart was in her work, and, seeing that both girls were comfortably seated, with an earnest, but silent prayer for wisdom how to use the precious moments that were left, she once more addressed the class.

"Dear girls," said she, as her gaze rested upon one and another of that interesting circle, "we have been speaking much this afternoon of service to the Lord. It is a sweet subject, and those of us who know and love Him will, I trust, learn at His blessed feet how to serve Him acceptably. But can you each say, 'I know Him; I will serve Him; I love Him because He first loved me?' I fear there may be one in this group who has not yet 'passed from death unto life,' one who has not yet 'been turned from the power of Satan unto God.'

"Satan, the enemy of your soul, would do all in his power to keep you from accepting the blessing which God offers you. He would lead you to believe that service of any kind must please God; but, sinners as we are by nature and practice, no good deeds of ours can ever bring us into His favour. Is there not one present in this little number who would like to know Jesus as her Saviour? From the heights of glory the blessed Lord Jesus came down to 'seek and save the lost.' He by the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God. 'He bare our sins in His own body on the tree,' and put away our guilt 'by the sacrifice of Himself.' Then God raised Him from the dead, proving that His righteousness was fully satisfied. And now, to each one here, comes the gracious word—'Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow.' Accept the pardon He now offers you. Then you, too, will learn to serve Him. How sweet is His service! All His ways are ways of pleasantness—all His paths are paths of peace."

The teacher paused, for already the superintendent had risen to announce the closing hymn. Surely it was by the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit that the words were so peculiarly appropriate to what had preceded them.

Looking over the teacher's hymn-book, Sarah M., the last new comer, joined in singing the words of the first stanza; but she paused as she reached the second. God was working in her heart; not lightly might she use words of such deep meaning and importance.

"I love my precious Saviour because He died for me, And if I did not serve Him how sinful I should be. I know He makes me happy, and hears me when I

pray;

By faith I'll cling to Jesus, the Bible says I may.

And since I've found the Saviour (the first link in the chain),

I'll trust in Him for ever, till heaven at last I gain.

I love that blessed country where tears are wiped away,

I want to live with Jesus, the Bible says I may."

Quietly and reverently the scholars knelt in prayer; but Sarah M.'s emotion had visibly increased. Sobs were audible in that quiet schoolroom, while fervent prayer ascended to God for blessing on the seed sown that afternoon.

Lovingly did the teacher plead with that sin-stricken soul, when all other members of the class had retired. But Sarah M. could not believe that the good news was, indeed, for her. Like a terrible mountain of guilt she saw the sins she had committed. God, in His great love, permitted her to see the depth of her need, that she might better learn the all-sufficiency of the atoning blood.

Anxious, dejected, and at times in an almost despairing condition, Sarah remained for two whole days; but at the end of that time the light broke in upon her soul. Again she heard the gospel of Christ, the blessed news of what Christ is and what He has done for sinners. Again she heard of peace and pardon through the blood of His Cross; and like a little child she received the message for herself. Joy unspeakable filled her heart as she heard the words of Jesus—"I am come to seek and to save that which was lost."

"I can sing to-day, teacher," she said, with a beaming countenance, on the following Sunday, when the closing hymn was again announced. "The Lord has given me something to praise Him for ever and ever."

Dear young reader, have you ever learnt what it is to be at peace and rest beneath the shelter of the atoning blood? If not, delay no longer. You may be happy to-day; for Jesus still says, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

V. THE FIG.

IN our last papers we looked at Israel as connected with the vine. We will now trace for a little the history of this nation in connection with another tree, viz., the FIG.

The olive, the vine, and the fig seem to be the arboreal insignia of that favoured nation. The olive was to supply light, the vine to communicate joy, and the fig was intended to exhibit fruitfulness for God.

"I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time," is the prophet Hosea's beautiful description of Israel at the time when Jehovah first took them up as His own people. In order to fully appreciate the aptness of this figure as applied to Israel, it is necessary to know that this tree will grow and bear fruit in places where no other tree can; indeed, it flourishes most luxuriantly in barren and stony situations.

We now ask you to open your Bibles at Mark xi. 13. Jesus was on His way from Bethany to Jerusalem. He had been looking for fruit from His beloved people Israel; only the previous day He had been in the temple, and "looked round about," and noticed everything that was taking place. He saw a people possessing what was outwardly right and fair; their temple, with its service, its sacrifices, and its priesthood. Yet all was but an empty form—no reality for God. So the Lord would impress upon His disciples how abhorrent to God was all this outward show without reality; and the next day, on His way to Jerusalem, He saw "a fig tree afar off, having leaves; He came, if haply He might find anything thereon: and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves."

"Nothing but leaves"! Just think of that! A fair outside profession—a mere outward show, and nothing else.

"Ah!" you will perhaps say, "but further on it says that 'the time of figs was not yet,' so how could He expect to find any?" Well, in order that you may be able to understand this, we must tell you that figs are of two sorts—the "boccere" and the "kermorse." The black and white boccere, or early fig, is ripe in June, while the kermorse, the fig properly

so called, is rarely ripe till August. There is also a third crop, which occasionally hangs on the tree all through the winter.

Now, neither sort blossoms, nor sends out flowers like other trees; but they may be said to shoot or send out their fruit like so many little buttons, before even the leaves appear. Thus you will see that the fruit is the first thing that is formed; so that, when the Lord Jesus came to the tree and found leaves, there should have been fruit as well, "for the time of [gathering] figs was not yet."

The Lord then proceeded to express His solemn judgment upon this tree, thereby pronouncing a judicial sentence upon the nation of Israel, all efforts to produce fruitfulness having failed. Just such another awful judgment will be pronounced upon all who make a profession of Christ, unless they really bring forth fruit to God.

H. N.

THE STORY OF A BOY KING.

IT is the high-priest who is crowning this little boy; we know him by his beautiful robes. Then this young king who stands in the picture, with his sceptre in his small hand, must have been a king of God's people.

But what a little boy he does seem to wear a crown, and be called a king! One might almost think he was standing there to be crowned king in play, not in earnest. But look at the high-priest's face; you see he is quite grave as he puts the crown upon the head of little Josiah, the child of whom we read in the Bible, that he was a crowned king of the people of Judah when he was only eight years old. Think of such a child sitting upon the throne of the kings, in the city of Jerusalem!

Do you remember a verse in a psalm which speaks of the precious ointment which was poured upon Aaron's head, and ran down to the skirts of his garments? This sweet perfume was made of many fragrant spices; God had said just how it was to be made; and it was not for common use, for it was called the holy anointing oil. Before the high-priest put the golden crown upon Josiah's head, he poured some of this precious oil upon his head, and anointed him to be king. A king who reigned

over God's people was called "the Lord's anointed."

God has told us that even a child is known by his doings, whether his way be good and whether it be right. Of this boy-king God wrote a very beautiful character; something is said of him that is not said of any of the other kings.

You remember that although King David did wrong things when he was not thinking of what God wished him to do, yet he was a true servant of God, and God said he was a man after His own heart. It was in the way of King David that this young king wished to walk; he wanted to please God, and God took notice of this, and said of him these words: "He turned not aside, to the right hand nor to the left."

But how could such a child know the way to please God, or to do what was right in His sight? God could teach him, young as he was, and give him wisdom to know what was right, and courage to do it.

For both those things are wanted, are they not? Often, when a child, even much older than eight years of age, at which Josiah became king, knows quite well what is right, he does not do it because he is afraid of what other children will think or say. How strange that those who are afraid to do what is right are not afraid to do what is wrong! How strange for anyone to be afraid of a boy or a girl, but not afraid to displease God!

I do not suppose that this wish to please God and to do right was always in the heart of King Josiah. Perhaps on that day when the sweet perfume was poured upon his head he was thinking, as I daresay most little boys of eight years would have been thinking, what a fine thing it was to be a king, and to have a golden crown; but God put more right thoughts of what it was to be a king into his heart before he was much older.

Many children learn what is right from their fathers. Perhaps you think King Josiah's father had taught him as soon as he had begun to speak and to understand, and so he remembered all the lessons he had learned! Ah, no! King Josiah's father did not fear God, or serve Him, and he could not

teach his little son any right ways. He reigned two years in Jerusalem, and all that time he cared for idols—not for God; "he forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the Lord." This is what we read about King Josiah's father in God's book of truth.

The end of his life came soon, and it was as sad as could be. There came a day when this king who had not feared God was terribly afraid, for he was in great danger.

None of the false gods to whom he had prayed could warn him of the danger, or save him from it. His wicked servants killed him in his own house, and there was none to deliver him. So this is the sad story of how it came to pass that his little son became king, and sat upon the throne of his murdered father.

Perhaps his mother taught him to fear God. We cannot tell; the Bible only tells us her name, and the name of her country. There was one, however, of whom the boy-king may have learned, for the prophet Jeremiah was in Jerusalem at this time.

A prophet speaks for God; he tells the people what God has told him.

It was when the young king had reigned thirteen years that this prophet began to speak in God's name, and to give His messages to His people.

What sort of messages?

Very solemn ones; so dreadful that Jeremiah did not like to give them; he felt afraid and ashamed. The Lord told him he must speak the very words which He sent him to speak to the people, and not be afraid of their faces, and God Himself touched the prophet's mouth.

But were all the messages dreadful?

No, not all, for God is love, and He kept on caring for His people, though they had left off caring for Him a long, long time. God told Jeremiah to cry with a loud voice to the people in Jerusalem, and say that He had not forgotten them, though they had forgotten Him—that was one message.

Another message was about what God had done for His people; the prophet was to recall to their hearts how after He had brought



THE BOY-KING.

them out of the land of their slavery, He had led them "through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death," yet they had gone away, in their hearts, from Him.

Again, Jeremiah spoke the words of God to His people and told them that God had brought them into a beautiful land and had planted them there—a noble vine, but they had turned into a bad plant which gave God no fruit. Yet still God said to His people, "Return to Me."

But they did not return, and God listened from heaven, and heard, and "they spake not aright, and no man repented of his wickedness." Then Jeremiah was sent with this message: "As you have forsaken God," he said, "and served other gods, so you shall serve strangers in a land which is not yours."

Most of the messages were about this thing. This was why God could not let rain come upon the land, because the people prayed to the sun-god and the moon-god, and set up images under the trees, and decked them with silver and gold, and called them their gods, though they were only wood or stone and had not made the heaven nor the earth. God told Jeremiah to tell the people that He was angry, and would send them a sore punishment, from which these false gods should not be able to save them. But still, after they had done all this, God said if they would only say they had been wrong, He would have compassion on them; for God loved His people still.

Another time you shall hear what King Josiah did about the false gods, when he had been king for twelve years, and how a treasure was found again after having been lost for a long time. L.

THE ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLAND: HOW IT WAS RECEIVED.

IT was, probably, early in the year 1526 that Tyndale's English Testaments began to arrive in this country. They were carried over sea by some merchants of Antwerp, who had been accustomed to conceal the forbidden Lutheran books, among their merchandise,

which were now so eagerly sought for by the English people. Thus, silently and by stealth, were the first printed copies of the English New Testament conveyed to our shores from a foreign land, by stranger hands.

After reaching London, many of the books were soon on their way to country towns, carried among their other wares by pedlars, who everywhere found a ready sale for them.

But this silent circulation of a book counted so dangerous to the welfare of the people, was not long to continue. We have seen that warning had been given by Cochlaeus of the coming of the English Testaments before they crossed the sea. Not long after this King Henry received another warning from an English gentleman travelling abroad, who wrote in haste from France to tell him that he had learnt in his travels that an Englishman had translated the New Testament into English. "Within few days," so ran the letter, "he intendeth to arrive with the same imprinted in England"; and the writer concluded by earnestly entreating the king, knowing what harm such books had done in his realm in time past, and how strictly the publication of English Bibles had been forbidden by the bishops, to have a care for the integrity of the christian faith within his realm, "which cannot long endure if these books may come in."

We may not doubt that the man who wrote thus, wrote honestly and faithfully, believing that he was doing his country service in giving warning of a coming danger. But does not such a warning tell its own sad tale? The state of darkness and ignorance in which our countrymen then were may be judged from the fact that the coming of God's own message of mercy to them, in words which they could understand without need of an interpreter, should be thus spoken of as if it were some pestilence or overwhelming national calamity!

This twofold warning, however, was not lost upon the king. Henry was acquainted with the German doctrines, as they were called, for he had lately been at the pains to examine some of Luther's writings, and had written a book against him, which won for him from the

pope the title of Defender of the Faith, the initial letters of which title, in Latin, you may read upon coins of the present time. In the preface to this book—which was in English, for the king had a mind that his people should understand what he had to say to them, though they were counted unworthy to receive the words of God in their own common speech—in this preface he told his people that he had, “out of love and care for their welfare,” determined that these “untrue translations,” which would only mislead them, should be burned.

You will observe that the king condemned the new translation as “untrue”; this was, indeed, the ground taken by most of those who undertook to judge it. One of the most learned men of the time spoke of it as “ignorant, dishonest, and heretical,” and another had read it only to find two thousand errors in it. Yet students of Scripture to-day wonder at the precision and accuracy with which Tyndale, in spite of almost overwhelming difficulties and discouragements, accomplished his work. At that time there was no appeal from a sentence once pronounced by the great Churchmen, especially when their judgment was confirmed by so absolute a king as Henry VIII. Tonsall, Bishop of London, at whose house Tyndale had once hoped to make his translation, was appointed to preach at St. Paul's Cross against the books, and then they were to be thrown into the flames. Men whispered that the volumes said to be so full of errors were burned lest any should examine them and find none; but there was one person to whom the news of this wholesale destruction brought no shock of surprise. “In burning the New Testament,” wrote Tyndale, “they did none other thing than I looked for; no more shall they do if they burn me also; if it be God's will it shall so be. Nevertheless, in translating the New Testament I did my duty.”

Not long after Tonsall's sermon, in the autumn of the same year in which the books first appeared, proclamation was made that, whereas the New Testament had been craftily translated into English, and copies, some with glosses and some without, had been

widely dispersed, every man in London must deliver up any copy which he possessed, that it might be cast in the fire. A careful search was made, and numbers of Testaments were burnt in Antwerp, London, and Oxford, while those with whom the books were found were counted heretics; but still the people hungered for the words of life, and the circulation of the English Testament went on.

You may wonder, since so many copies were burned, how the supply of books was kept up. This is the story told about it:—

Tonsall, who was a kindly man, and unwilling that any should suffer, if suffering could be avoided, devised a plan for taking the troublesome books out of the way, that he might not be obliged to punish those who read them. He asked a well-known London merchant, trading to Antwerp, to procure for him as many Testaments as he could. The merchant, who was well disposed to Tyndale and his work, accepted the commission, and executed it, taking care, however, that a fair price should be paid for the books. Hundreds were, accordingly, bought up in Antwerp, brought over to London, and burned at Cheapside; but the result of this plan proved very different from what the Bishop of London expected. Some Dutch printers, seeing such an extraordinary demand for English books, took upon themselves to reprint Tyndale's Testament; and so, in a year's time, to the astonishment of Tonsall, the books which he fancied he had well-nigh destroyed to the last leaf were coming over in greater numbers than ever.

Sending for his friend the merchant, he accused him of having deceived him. “You told me you had bought up every copy—what does this mean?” he said, angrily.

“The books were bought, my lord, as you desired,” replied the merchant; “but they have printed more since, and I don't see how you can put an end to this printing, unless you buy up all the types and presses.”

Sometime afterwards Tonsall learned that Tyndale, who was then busily at work upon his translation of the early books of the Old Testament, had been enabled, by means of the money which he had been paid for these

Testaments bought only to be destroyed, to live in quiet security, and give himself wholly to his work.

Thus did God make the wrath of man to praise Him, and bring good out of evil. The Dutch printers were but instruments in His hands; for it was not from any love of the truth that they printed the fresh supply of Tyndale's books, but because they were shrewd enough to see that the English people were determined to have them, and that, either by friends or enemies, they would certainly be bought. One of these Dutchmen, being convicted of causing fifteen hundred English New Testaments to be printed at Antwerp, and bringing five hundred of them into England, was severely punished.

When we compare the price at which these first printed Testaments were sold with the prices of books at the present time, we shall think them to have been costly, as well as dangerous to the purchaser. It is true that the difference made by the invention of printing was very great. Before this wonderful discovery a written book cost at the rate of two shillings a leaf. Tyndale's Testaments, if bought in large quantities, only cost thirteen pence each, while the price of a single copy was about thirty pence. We must not forget, however, that these sums of money were then worth quite ten times as much as they are now.

By the year 1530, six editions—in all, perhaps, as many as 15,000 books—had been secretly printed; yet so careful was the search for them, that now, in England, there remains of the larger volume only one fragment, containing only thirty-one pages, which was lately discovered bound up with another book, and is carefully preserved in the British Museum, and of the smaller only two copies.

The fragment contains a list of the books of the New Testament, and a picture of St. Matthew, who is represented as writing his gospel, dipping his pen into an inkstand held by an angel. It ends with the twenty-second chapter of his gospel. Upon the inner margin there are some references, as in our Bibles, only much fewer; upon the outer the glosses or explanatory notes, some of which merely

explained words which might not be readily understood, while others were calculated to give grievous offence by the bold way in which they pointed out how ill the doctrines and customs of those high in office in both Church and State agreed with the Scripture.

The prologue, or introduction to this larger volume which, you will remember, was the first, the printing of which was interrupted at Cologne, is very interesting, as showing the singleness of the translator's aim. Here are a few words from the beginning of it, just as Tyndale wrote them, but not given in the spelling of his time, which is very old-fashioned now:—

"I have here translated, brethren and sisters most dear and tenderly beloved in Christ, the New Testament, for your spiritual edifying, consolation, and solace; exhorting instantly, and beseeching those that are better seen in the tongues than I, and that have higher gifts of grace to interpret the sense of the Scripture and the meaning of the Spirit than I, to consider and ponder my labour, and that with the spirit of meekness. And if they perceive in any places that I have not attained the very sense of the tongue, or meaning of the Scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they put to their hands to amend it, remembering that so is their duty to do.

"For we have not received the gifts of God for ourselves only, or for to hide them, but for to bestow them unto the honouring of God and Christ, and edifying of the congregation, which is the body of Christ."

SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND.

A boy or girl who is a good seeker will generally get on in this life, for such a child must have eyes and perseverance. Now I wish you might all have eyes as regards the treasures spoken of in the Bible, and perseverance to seek diligently till you found the treasure each for yourselves. There are some of my young friends, who seek for beautiful texts of scripture, and when they have found them, they store them up in their hearts. Look into the Bible for beautiful things; seek and ye shall find.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME.

NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME.

IT was a Lord's Day morning in December, one of those clear winter mornings, which are so enjoyable and exhilarating to the strong, but which, being so often preceded, as was this, by a night of sharp frost, are so often fatal to the weak. The quiet of the sacred morn pervaded my little home, and the beautiful scene—wood, meadow-land, and fallow field—which lay stretched out before it reposed in sweet resemblance of Sabbath rest. Ever and anon I paused amidst my household duties, at the window or the open door, to breathe in its spirit both of beauty and repose.

There was nothing in the winter's morning to suggest death, unless to such as sought for such suggestions; but if death were thought of at all, it was in connection with resurrection from it. It is not for long, however, that we are permitted in this world of graveyards to forget the bitter truth that death reigns. My mood of tranquil morning joy was soon disturbed by a hasty summons into his presence, who is so truly called the king of terrors.

A young woman was at the gate, and her message was—

"Will you come, please, and see my mother; she is at the point of death, and wants to see you?"

Telling her I would come immediately, I prepared to go, saying, rather bitterly, to myself, I feared it was another case of sending at the last moment for a religious friend to help make a so-called "peace with God." Still we know that "while the lamp holds on to burn, the greatest sinner may return," and as I hurried on along the road I prayed that it might be so in this case.

It was one of a row of four or five neat cottages to which I went. As soon as I stepped into the clean, sanded kitchen, I could hear the laboured breathing of the dying woman; and it was with trembling limbs I ascended the well-scrubbed stairs, thinking the while that it was probably all too late. Scrupulously clean was the bed-room through which I was led to the death-chamber, where, covered with

sheets of coarse material, but of snowy whiteness, she lay whom I had come to see—a woman of some sixty years.

She was propped up by pillows, to ease her in breathing, for she was dying, the women about her said, of heart disease and dropsy, and could breathe only in that position. To my great relief I saw she was quite sensible; so after a few enquiries, in the course of which I found that she was quite aware that she was dying, I asked her if she was prepared to enter the presence of God.

Then came a hush and a deep silence in the room. Not a sound was to be heard save the ticking of the clock, which stood upon the drawers, solemnly measuring out for her the last of life, solemnly telling that soon for her there should be time no longer. With quivering lips, in distinct though tremulous accents, she replied—

"No, I am not that. I can't say as I'm prepared; I've not been the woman as I ought to have been."

A suppressed sob from the women around her followed this avowal of unpreparedness to enter the solemn eternity just at the door. To me, the answer, though fearfully solemn, was in a sense satisfactory. I felt thankful for its directness, its truthfulness, for the conviction, the consciousness it expressed of being unfit to appear before God. If she had spoken well of herself in the least—and she might have done so, for although she said of herself that she had not been the woman she ought to have been, I knew her to be one of the nicest women of the place—I should have felt very hopeless indeed.

There was no mistaking from her looks and her tones the reality of the desire to be prepared, and her deep regret that she had not been the woman she ought to have been, so I proceeded to try to show her that although she had not been that, she might yet be made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. I was anxious, however, that she should receive the good word of grace from the Lord's very own words; so turning to John iii., I read to her of the Son of Man being lifted up on the cross—dying there for sinners, and as the Object for

the dying sinner to look unto and be saved; and also read of God's love in giving His Son, and the Lord's own words, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish," and I begged her just to take what God has given—just to believe on the only begotten Son of the Father, sent, not to condemn the world, but to save it.

She followed with deep attention and interest, responding intelligently to every remark I paused to make, receiving it all, indeed, more than I ever before saw any one, "as a little child."

"Now, do you believe on that only begotten Son?" I asked, when I had done reading and remarking.

"Yes," she said, in a bright, confident tone, "I believe that God gave Him for the world, and for me amongst them."

"Then," I replied, "you know what is said of those who believe in Him? 'Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

She repeated the words, familiar indeed to her, and after a little more conversation I left.

I went again in the evening, but could only remain a few minutes, as the doctor came in. I remember well, however, her exclaiming, "God must have loved the world to give His Son. I have sons, but I couldn't do that with them." I had not been speaking of this, nor had I in the morning insisted so much upon God's love in giving, as upon the necessity of the death of the Son given, and then of the sinner's only hope—Christ, who died to save the lost. It reminded me of that word (John v. 24): "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life;" and I could but thank Him that she had heard His word.

The next day my friend again spoke of how God must have loved the world to give His Son; and when I remarked how the Son must have loved, to be willing to be given, and that for and to those who loved Him not, she exclaimed, "It's just wonderful, it's wonderful;" and I could but join with her. And indeed His love never before appeared so wonderful: the heart felt bowed under the sense of it. "But He is called 'Wonderful,'"

she went on; "'Councillor,' 'The Mighty God.'"

On a following day, during the few hours I was with her, I contented myself with merely asking if she trusted Jesus. She replied, very slowly, "Yes, yes, I can trust Jesus, my Saviour, my friend."

Again, some days after the woman's thoughts, even in wandering, ran on things divine. Once I caught the words "passed from death unto life," and another time, "I could almost hear what Jesus was saying to me." Then she tried to explain to me that she was "light-headed," and presently asked, "Who was it blessed the insane?" I said "Jesus," and told her of the man whom He made to sit at His feet, clothed and in his right mind, which seemed to satisfy her.

After this my poor friend had to pass through a time of great distress. It was a day to her indeed of "pains and groans, and dying stripes." But I felt it was well. In her weakness, that day, she would constantly cry, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;" and "God so loved the world."

But as the day wore on she was again resting in peace on Christ. Once I caught the words "With Me in Paradise," and shortly after she said, "Is it to-morrow thou shalt be with me in Paradise?" "No, it is to-day, and I think it will be really 'to-day' with you."

Sleep then prevented reply; but on her awakening, I caught her words, "With Me."

It was touching to hear her once call out the word "Saviour" with great distinctness, extending her arms as if indeed she saw the Lord; and then she said "To-morrow."

Late in the evening I wished her "Good-night evermore," and then asked her solemnly, "What has Jesus done for you?" She said with much distinctness, "He has saved me from my sins; 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,'" and her voice faltered—she could say no more.

I was much struck on one of the days I visited her, when, late in the afternoon, her young married daughter from a distance came to see her. The mother merely whispered her daughter's name, asked for "the children," and then repeated "Now is the ac-

cepted time, now is the day of salvation." Her heart was away from the earth and filled with thoughts of eternity.

Surely those words can never be forgotten by that daughter—her mother's last words to her. Surely, so often repeated as they were, they can never be forgotten by the rest of her family, or by the women—her neighbours—who waited on her with so much true kindness. May these solemn words not be forgotten by you, dear reader, of this true unvarnished tale.

E. B.—R.

EVERLASTING SUNSHINE.

"THE sun is shining behind the clouds," said a friend to an aged christian, who was at times assailed by doubts. "It is the sun that dispels the clouds," she replied.

Yes, thank God! His love is always the same; whatever clouds may dim the vision of His brightness, He—our Sun—is always unchangeably the same—He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

At times even bodily depression causes us to occupy ourselves with the experiences of what we are here below; in self we are always the same—unchangeably bad; the natural man is "enmity" against God—not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

How can we have happy feelings when occupied with so corrupt an object as self? Occupation with what Christ is, with what His love to us is, dispels the gloom, and fills our hearts with joy, and peace, and praise.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway." (Phil. iv. 4.)

A WORD WITH PROFESSORS.

HAVING been for several years a "professor" only, and knowing the misery of that false position, since by the grace of God I have been led to relinquish it and to trust in Jesus, I feel anxious to address a few words to any who are holding a similar position. To such I would say, having been from your earliest years surrounded by a religious atmosphere; having been drawn, as you advanced in years, into religious work, religious ordinances, your religion may be merely one of association. Your outward conduct may be such that those around look upon you

as decidedly pious; but God looks at the heart, and you know your heart is not right in His sight.

How often you wish people would not take it for granted that you are a christian; you dare not express your anxiety for fear of "what they would think of you"; you could not bear to be thought a hypocrite, and yet, my friend, you are one, even as I was.

My hypocrisy kept me from Christ, and not till I was forced to unveil that sin before Him, and to declare my true self, did God grant me by His Spirit a simple faith in His Son.

It may, yea, it will cost you a fearful struggle; but "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The peace and joy that result from faith in Christ will expel all fear of man's thoughts. May you be thus enabled to believe with the heart unto salvation.

I HAD SCALDED HIS FEET.

A CHRISTIAN man had once, on a public occasion, so roughly and severely taken an erring brother to task for a fault, that, disheartened and downcast, the erring brother seemed ever to carry about with him the brand of the chastisement. The chastisement seems, however, to have had a softening influence on the chastiser, for afterwards he would urge others always to speak kindly to the erring—always to help Christ's feeble ones, and never to hinder any; and, above all things, to be *very*, *very* careful in reproof. He would say, "It would have been better for me to have left the few travel stains on my poor brother's feet, than to have taken, as I did, boiling water to wash them. I felt sick at heart to see him unable to walk, because I had scalded his feet. It isn't every one that is *fit* to wash a disciple's feet."

No, dear reader, alas, it is not; fault finding is not washing the feet; exposing one another's shame is not the ministry of Christ for one another. The devil can expose our sins even to God, but he cannot remove—nor does he wish to do so—one sin from God's people. It would be better to hold one's peace

about our fellow christians than so roughly to handle them that their feet should be turned out of the way. ————— E.

CHRIST THE ONLY RESOURCE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

THE Lord Jesus was in the wilderness, a desert place where there were no resources, and we read that when He saw the multitude who came to Him, He asked Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" He stood there, Himself the answer to His own question. In the presence of wants innumerable, there is one resource for God's people—Christ. Let us ask ourselves—we who know Him as our Saviour—do we thus look on Christ? Do we thus reckon on Him? Do we tell Him everything, small and great? for nothing is too small to bring to Him.

God would have the tendrils of our hearts clasped around Christ, not trailing on the earth; there is a place there for them; there is security there, satisfaction there, and nowhere else. Christ is not only Man, but God. He knows our sorrows, our feelings. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear; He that formed the eye, shall He not see? And He is the resource of His people as they travel through this world, more helpless than others, for they are without natural resources. A christian does not act from honour, still less from ambition, but he does what is right because Christ is before him as his motive. Christ is God's one resource for us in everything. Do we seek to use Him thus? B—K.

WORKING FOR GOD.

THE subject of this story, William B., was once a careless man and a drunkard, but God was pleased to reveal Christ to him. He and his wife heard that they were lost and ruined sinners, and that nothing but the blood of Christ could wash away their sins. They both became happy christians, and together trod the heavenly road.

William soon began to work for the Lord who loved him. As he and his wife were constantly reviled for their religion by the people with whom they lodged, they removed to the house of a widow. William spoke to her of

Jesus and His love to poor sinners. To his surprise, he found that this was no new tale to the poor widow. With many tears, she told him that in years gone by she had been led to believe in Christ, to know Him as her Saviour, and to rejoice in His salvation. But she had left her first love; the world had taken hold of her heart and drawn it away from her Lord; little by little she had backslidden, till now she seemed to have no love for Him, nor any hope of heaven.

William's earnest words fell with power on her soul, and his heartfelt pleadings at the throne of grace on her behalf were heard and answered. The Lord revealed Himself afresh to the widow, and healed her backslidings, and she was full of thankfulness to God, who had not left her to herself, but had sent His servant to bring back His wandering sheep. Truly, there was joy in that humble home, as together they blessed God for His love and grace to them.

When William was first brought to God he was unable to read, but as he desired to study God's word for *himself*, he set diligently to work, and soon was able to spell out a chapter in his Bible.

One Sunday evening he was speaking in the street of Jesus' dying love. His language was simple, but his heart was full, and out of its abundance his lips spoke. As he finished speaking a man came up to him, and told him that his words that night had saved him from *self-destruction*. "My children are in want of bread," he said; "I have no work, and I cannot bear to see them starve, and my drinking has done it all. I meant to drown myself to-night, but I dare not face the judgment you have been speaking of; I am a lost sinner; what shall I do?"

The word of God was brought home with strong power to the poor drunkard. He saw himself a great sinner, but he also saw Christ a *great Saviour*. Joy filled his heart and he, who a short time before had left his home intending never again to enter it alive, returned to tell his friends what great things God had done for his soul. He soon procured work, and as he no longer wasted his money on drink, he was able to give his

family food and clothes. No one would recognise the poor drunkard in the respectably dressed working man now raising his voice to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, on the very spot where he heard the same warning which was to him the power of God unto salvation.

For several years William and his wife lived in the widow's neat little house. They were as a son and daughter to the lonely woman, but at length she was taken ill, and it was evident she was soon to be called away. Night and day she was nursed by her christian lodgers; by them, too, the mangle was still kept at work, that the widow's wants might be supplied. When William came home from work he always went to her bedside, and her face would light up with pleasure at his approach. As the end drew near she was filled with peace and joy. "Oh," she said, on one occasion, "I bless God for sending you here; you have been the means of all my present joy." Soon after she peacefully passed away in the arms of her faithful friends.

William B. is still working for his Master. His chief desire is to bring lost sinners to Christ, and eternity alone will tell the result of his humble labours. In such a changed life is the witness of what divine power in the soul really is. M. M. B.

I HAVE HOLD OF THE CHAIN.

ONE Sunday evening a preacher had been speaking upon the subject of the dying thief, and in closing, likened the mercy of God to a golden chain, which, as it were, He holds to us from His throne on high. "If we," said he, "by simple faith lay hold of that chain, He will raise us to Christ's throne in glory."

The service over, the speaker returned home weary and discouraged. Time rolled on, and the sermon itself was almost forgotten, when one day as he was passing through the town, in which he had preached, a poorly-clad woman stood and looked very hard at him, as if she would first be certain as to the person to whom she desired to speak. Presently she came to him and eagerly inquired his name, and when she heard it, she, with a

countenance lit up with heavenly delight, and eyes filled with tears, exclaimed—

"Oh, sir, I have long wished to see you, for I have a dying message to give you. Do you remember preaching a certain sermon in which you spoke of the sinner sunken in sin taking hold of the last link in mercy's chain, and being raised to the height of glory?"

"I remember something of it," he replied.

"Well, sir, my son was present that night; he has since died, but before he passed away he called out for you. As we did not know your whereabouts, his wish to see you could not be gratified. These were his last words: 'Mother; tell the gentleman *I have hold of the chain.*'"

O the glory of the grace
Shining from the Saviour's face,
Telling sinners from above,
God is light, and God is love.

SALVATION.

SALVATION may be regarded from three different standpoints. We may speak of the salvation of the souls of the unsaved—of the salvation through the trials and dangers of this world of those whose souls are saved—and of that final salvation which awaits the believer; his being saved out of the world, and his being brought to glory. Salvation, therefore, may be regarded as past, present, and future.

The salvation of the soul of the believer is an accomplished fact—it is a solid and enduring work—it is wrought by God and unalterable, and every one who truly believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is saved. But if the soul be saved from wrath to come, there is still a constant need for the almighty hand of God in saving the believer through all the countless dangers and difficulties of daily life. Satan, the world, and the flesh are fierce foes from which every child of God stands in continual need of salvation.

The two standpoints, from which we view the past and the present salvation, are often confounded in the mind of the believer; he so deeply feels the need of daily salvation from his spiritual foes—and from himself, we may add—that thereby he frequently loses sight of what God's work in the salvation of his soul

really is. The future salvation—the coming deliverance from this earth, and this body of humiliation, into the liberty of heaven and the glorified state—is perhaps not generally confounded with the past and the present salvation which is the believer's; but, unless the past and the present has each its due place assigned to it, the enjoyment of the certainty of the future salvation will certainly be wanting.

The very term salvation implies the necessity for a Saviour. The use of such a word carries with it the acknowledgment that the person requiring salvation is, to say the least, in a position of danger. A man at ease in his armchair at home, when all is well, does not require salvation, but if his house were on fire the whole case would be altered. A sinner is in danger of hell fire—such is his position. He is also lost, inasmuch as he cannot save himself out of his position of danger. A man whose house was burning might or might not be able to save himself, just as the means of escape were or were not to hand; but there is no alternative open to the sinner; he is not only in danger of hell fire, he is also lost, and, if he is to be saved, he must be saved, not by himself, but by a Saviour.

Until we believe our lost state and our position of danger there will be little concern in our souls as to salvation. When the jailor of Philippi felt the earthquake, saw the prison doors all open, and heard the calm voices of the beloved gospel labourers—"Do thyself no harm," his conscience, awakened and appalled, drove him to the prisoners' feet with the cry, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30.)

Our first concern must be to seek to show the sinner the danger of his position. Unless a man knows that he is lost, he will not wish to be saved. And when he knows it, he will feel it. When the man seated quietly in his armchair on the top floor of his house knew that all was ablaze below, straightway he felt the misery of his lost position. Five minutes previous to his knowing that the house beneath him was in flames he felt comfortable and at ease, but the knowledge of the fact of the fire below made him feel in a moment what an

awful thing it is to be lost. So, when the word of God comes home to the heart with power, straightway the sinner leaps out of his ease and comfort, and wide awake to the realities of eternity, longs and cries for salvation.

There is no such thing as being in a state of salvation, as to the question of sins. A man may be going to the booking office to get his ticket, but he has not got his ticket till he has got it. He may be going to obtain a place in the train, but he is not in the train till he is in it. Maybe he will be too late, or perhaps he has not the money to pay for the ticket; his intentions will not secure him a seat. His intentions may be very wise, and we will recognize the admirable resolves of many a poor sinner, but of what worth are they? Too many perish, despite their wise intentions; the old saying, that the way to hell is paved with good resolutions, is terribly true. Let us look at the question in the light of our everyday behaviour. Did we ever hear of anyone who was bent upon going by train to a certain city being satisfied with merely wishing to get his ticket, and never getting a seat in the train going thither? What should we say, in this practical age, if our neighbour, who had but five minutes to catch a train, quietly seated himself by the wayside, and in answer to our warning, "You will be too late," drowsily answered, "I hope I shall be in time"? What should we say of our friend's intentions?

Yet such is the character of the answers we too often receive in response to the appeal to the lazy sinner to arouse himself and seek for mercy. Men tell us they hope they shall get to heaven some day, and remain satisfied with their baseless hopes. Whether they have any divinely given certainty for their hopes, alas, never seems to enter their minds. So long as there is an indefinite, misty kind of indifferent intention on their part to look some day or other for salvation, these souls would have us believe they have good cause for satisfaction that by-and-by they will by some hap reach heaven. Alas, alas, there are thousands of immortal souls who treat the question of eternal salvation with far less concern than their daily business of catching a train at a

railway station! What an awful memory to carry about through eternity, "I was more in earnest not to be late for my daily train than I was all my lifetime as to the salvation of my never-dying soul."

God frequently uses the earnestness of those who are saved to convince the unsaved of their lost state; on the other hand, the devil has no better recruiting officer than a worldly, half-and-half believer. A man overboard in the ocean is lost; he is in imminent danger of death; it is simply a question of time, and if not saved, sink he must. And such is the position of every unsaved soul in this life—it is simply a question of time; he is sinking down into eternal perdition.

We do not say a man feels he is lost and therefore knows it, but because he knows it he feels it. The word of God discovers to us our condition. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*." (Luke xix. 10.) The Lord speaks of the sinner under the figures of a *lost* sheep, a *lost* piece of silver, and a *lost* son. (Luke xv.) And when we believe God we feel the truth of His word.

The sheep strays away and is lost because it is its nature to wander. Here is the *senselessness* of the sinner. Now by nature "all we like sheep have gone astray" (Isa. liii. 6); we are senseless even if miserable, we are senseless even if perishing, for by nature we do not know how to return: "the way of peace have they not known." (Rom. iii. 17.)

The lost piece of silver shows to us the *insensibility* of the sinner. Silver does not feel; it is precious to the person who has lost it, but if a piece roll out of the hand of its owner and become lost, it is not in the nature of silver to feel. Man is by nature insensible to God, and to his own state in relation to God. Were it not that we are precious to God, we should remain lost for ever.

The history of the lost son opens a deeper evil still. It is not here the senselessness of the sinner in wandering from God and from blessing, or the insensibility of the sinner to his lost state, but the *determined wicked will* of the sinner to get away from God in order to find pleasure in sin. He "took his journey into a far country"; yes, thither we all have

taken our journey, and with the deep, determined will to be out of God's presence.

Neither the sheep, the piece of silver, nor the prodigal were partly lost; they were altogether lost. The Lord Jesus did not come to seek and to save that which was nearly lost, but that which was wholly lost. The drowning man does not say to his saviours in the life-boat, "I am not quite lost yet, so leave me to try my best," but gratefully accepts the salvation they bring him. The sinner who knows he is lost longs to be saved. He is the one gratefully to receive God's salvation.



How the Sailor saved Harry.

A BRIGHT summer day at the seaside! How many happy, well-cared for boys and girls know the charm there is in building sand houses and castles on the broad smooth beach with no fear that anyone will scold them for making their clothes dirty, for does not the sand shake off and leave hardly a trace behind?

What child does not know the delight of seeing the tiny crabs left behind by the tide in the little pools among the rocks, and watching them scamper away when he tries to take them up?

There were dozens of happy children on the beach at S—— one day last summer, all so busy in their games that little Harry was quite unnoticed, and so he managed to get away from the rest and go off to explore a line of rocks which ran side by side with the shore all along the coast for miles. At low tide the sands were dry right up to these rocks, and they looked like a row of sharp teeth; there were famous little hiding places and splendid treasures of shell and seaweed to be found among these rocks, but at high tide they were quite covered by the water.

I suppose Harry did not think of this, as he wandered on until he reached to the highest part, and played there so happily that he never noticed how fast the sea was



HOW THE SAILOR SAVED HARRY.

rolling in. On the great waves came, and though they did not yet reach the place where he was, yet as the tide rose the water crept round and through the jagged points of the rocks till the strip of beach between Harry and the shore was quite covered.

All at once he saw his danger, and scrambling down he tried to wade through the waves, but ah, they were already too deep for him, and were getting deeper every moment. The poor bewildered child then turned round and tried to climb the rocks and wait there till

help came from the shore, but, alas, he was so worn out by his useless struggle with the waves, and so paralyzed with fright, that he could not climb, and there he clung, helpless!

Dear little readers, do you know that you are just like Harry, unless you belong to the Lord Jesus? At any moment the waves of death may rise, and come nearer and nearer to you, and you will not be able to get away from them. You cannot get into heaven by yourselves, any more than Harry could get to the shore.

What did Harry want? Was it not someone able and willing to come and take him safely across the great waves?

Yes, that was just what he needed, and glad I am to tell you that help came just in time. A strong sailor made his way through the waves, took Harry up, and never put him down till he was high up on the shore.

Do you think Harry would not trust the sailor, or that he wanted to stay out there on the rocks? Oh no, he was too glad to feel the strong man's arms round him to think of not trusting him; too glad to get safe to land to want to stay on the rocks any longer!

Dear children, the Lord Jesus will take you up and keep you by His power till He puts you safely in the glory of heaven. The sailor came to Harry; the Lord Jesus came down into this world and died so that you might be forgiven and be able to trust Him. Would you not like to know that you belonged to Him, and were quite safe because He was taking care of you? Then just trust Him, tell Him all about it, and you will find how happy it is to be safe because the Lord is keeping you all the way.

THE WIDOW AND THE TURNIP.

SHOULD you like me to tell you a pretty story of God's loving thought for a poor widow? It will show you how much He notices every little thing about His beloved children, and how tender He is in His care over them. I think it will make you happy to hear it, as it did me; for we sometimes wonder if it is possible that the great God really does take thought for us in very little things, when we know He has such very great things to care for and think of.

On the top of a hill outside our village is a little cottage, where lives Widow K.

Early one Saturday morning she began thinking how she should manage for her Sunday's dinner: she would get a sheep's head and make some soup; but then, she thought, the soup would not be worth having without a turnip boiled down in it, and this she had not got. Well, she told her heavenly Father that she trusted Him to care for her

in all things through the day, and then, with a quiet mind, went about her work. But many times that morning the turnip kept coming into her thoughts; for she could not at all see how to get one.

The men were coming back to their work at the stone quarry hard by, after their mid-day rest, when Mrs. K. came out of her cottage to throw some bits to her fowls. Just at the low garden gate she saw one of the workmen coming towards her, and there under his arm was "as beautiful a turnip as you could wish to see."

"Do you happen to want such a thing as a turnip, missus?" said the man, balancing it on his hand.

"It is the very thing I do want," she answered.

"Then here it is for you," said the man. "Farmer B. gives me one now and again, and I thought I would wash and trim this one and bring it up to you this morning"; and, putting it into her hand, he passed on to his work.

Mrs. K. turned again into the little cottage, and laid the turnip down on the table with a very full heart. It was so plain that God had thought of her in this little trouble.

Children, do you know God as your Father, as this dear widow does? Have you the privilege of bringing Him your little troubles day by day? And when you pray do you really believe that He hears you? He may not always take you out of your difficulties as quickly as He did Mrs. K. in the matter of the turnip, but it is none the less true that He has heard your prayer. Now, as I say good-bye, I will give you a very sweet little verse to learn: "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

D. & A. C.

FAITH.

SEEK, dear young friends, to bring all your little troubles to God. Believe that when you tell Him your troubles He hears you, and do not forget to look for the answer to your prayers; and by no means forget to thank God for hearing and answering your prayer. In order to help you in this, keep a careful record of answers to prayer.

WHOSOEVER.

WHEN the children of Israel were near the end of their wilderness journey, after almost forty years of God's care and mercy in guiding them through its dangers, they committed a great sin; they spake against God and against Moses: "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?" (Numbers xxi. 5.)

There is one lesson our dear young friends who love God will surely learn as they pass on through life—that the heart of man is desperately wicked. We should almost think that Israel would have learned by experience not to speak against God, after nearly forty years of His care. But said God, "They do always err in their heart, for they have not known My ways." Now, as you are beginning life, do not forget to watch God's ways. Consider how He deals with you in *your* wilderness pathway; store up in your memory the different dealings of God with you, either as a child at home, or as a boy or girl at school. Do not err in your heart because you do not know His ways.

Well, these children of Israel said, "There is no bread, neither is there any water." As for there being no bread, they could not say "there is no manna," since each morning God spread it around their tents; but they said of it, "our soul loatheth this light bread." They had grown weary of its taste.

"Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died."

God visited their sin upon them, and Israel cried for mercy. Then it was God bade Moses make a fiery serpent of brass, and set it on a pole, so that whosoever amongst all Israel was bitten might look to the serpent of brass and live. "And it came to pass that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived."

This event, which happened so near the close of Israel's wilderness journey, was that which the Lord Jesus used in order to picture to us the way of life for sinners perishing in their sins. As we read His words, as given in the third chapter of the gospel by John, we hear what He said before He preached the words which Matthew, Mark, and Luke record.

Those evangelists teach us how our Lord proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God, and God's love for the poor, and His liberty for the oppressed. John tells us of the Lord speaking of His death, whereby we who believe on Him live.

"Whosoever," says the gracious Lord! *Whosoever!* Do you think Nicodemus understood this word? He could understand how it was that whosoever among all *Israel* looked to the serpent of brass lived, for Israel was God's chosen nation. I wonder whether he understood the Lord's great words of God's love to the *world*. It was not Israel only that God *so* loved that He gave His only begotten Son. Had that been so, we should not dare to write these words, and but very, very few of our young friends would care to read them. I do not say none would care to do so, for it was only the other day a young Jewess was telling us how the Lord Jesus had died for her, and how He had saved her from her sins. But we who are sinners of the Gentiles should have not one hope for mercy were it not for God's great word—*whosoever*.

"Whosoever" means Jew or Gentile, everybody, anybody, old or young, good or bad, either the high and noble, or the poor and the base. Yes! thank God for His word—*whosoever*. It is God's own gracious word for us all. And not only is this word God's, but it is also Jesus Christ's, His Son's word. God so loved the world that He gave His Son. Jesus came to save us, and He set Himself to accomplish the work of salvation, and whosoever believes on Him has life eternal.

Did you ever think of our Lord thus speaking to Nicodemus, explaining to him how He was to be lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness? As the days of His life on earth passed by, the Lord had His being lifted up constantly before Him. Many did not believe who He was before His cross: still the gracious Saviour died that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Many at this moment do not believe on Him; but still, for all, the fulness of this gracious word stands as He said it.

Let me turn to you, dear young friend, who have not yet believed on the Lord Jesus to



WHOSOEVER.

the saving of your soul. Unless you believe you cannot be saved. There was only one way of life and salvation from death for the Israelites who were bitten—the brazen serpent, and looking upon it. Though the serpent was lifted up, though the sun shone brightly upon it, though hundreds of others might have looked and been healed, still unless the bitten man or child looked for himself there could be neither life nor salvation.

Two things would be required in order to make people bitten by the fiery serpent look to the serpent of brass. One, the belief that they were bitten; the other belief, that what God said about looking was true. And so it

is this very day. Some do not look to Jesus crucified for sinners, because they do not believe they are lost and ready to perish; others feel they are sinners, but do not believe what God says about His Son dying for sinners.

Now, let us learn a little lesson from our picture. Some of the bitten people are looking—some are not. Some seem to prefer to die than to look. A mother is holding up her little child that it may look, and some point others to the serpent of brass, as if to persuade them to look. But do you know who must look in order to live? The person who is bitten.

So it is with you. Your friends cannot look for you. If you had to find anything by look-

ing for it, your own eyes would have to search for it. No one else could look in your stead. So it is with the look of faith. You yourself must believe on the Lord Jesus; you must believe what God tells you concerning sin—yes, your sin, and the needs be for His Son to die to put away your sins. We can only point you to Jesus; we can only entreat you to look unto Him and be saved; more than this we cannot do.

Now our Lord has died, and is risen again. He has suffered; He has been lifted up. All those sorrows of His are passed, and it is His joy to welcome every one who comes to Him, and this brings us back to the beginning of our little talk with you: He is the Manna, the Bread from heaven, for all His people. May each one find more and more joy in Him, and find Him fresh to their hearts everyday of this wilderness journey!

THE ENGLISH NEW TESTAMENT AT OXFORD.

YOU remember that just a year after the first bales of goods containing English New Testaments were put ashore in this country, an order was given by the great cardinal that London and the neighbouring country should be diligently searched for forbidden books, and all who possessed them were called upon to give them up. It must have been a pitiful sight to see the poor country folk, who had spent their hard-earned savings upon a book which, difficult though it might be to them to read it, yet contained God's message to them in their own mother tongue, coming one by one to deliver up their treasure that it might be cast into the flames. But the order was not lightly to be disobeyed, and the search was carried on so vigorously that but few hiding-places could remain undiscovered.

One of the first places visited by the officers who had charge of this business was the house of a curate, named Garratt, who lived in Honey Lane, a narrow street hard by Cheapside.

In order that you may see how real was the danger at this time, and how much faith was needed by any who desired to obey God

rather than man, we will look back a little and see what Garratt had been doing, and why his house should be one of the first to be visited.

Some months before, when the Dutch traders had been seeking a safe resting-place for a number of Testaments which they had conveyed to London, Garratt, a faithful, though timid man, had quietly come forward and offered to take them into his house. There the English books, which were soon to become so dangerous to any who harboured them, were stowed away, and the good curate kept anxious watch over the treasure entrusted to his care. Already well known to the poor by his simple sermons, preached in the old church of All Hallows, in the City, Garratt soon attracted an unwelcome amount of attention by holding meetings for reading the Scriptures. Then, becoming bolder by degrees, he sold the Testaments of which he had taken charge, to any who would buy them, and even carried them from place to place, offering them to the country folk in the neighbouring villages. It is not wonderful, then, that the officers appointed to search for forbidden books should soon have found their way to Honey Lane. All was done very suddenly and without warning. The proclamation had hardly been made before the search began, and when Garratt's house was visited the master was absent. After vainly seeking for him at the house of Monmouth, the good merchant who had befriended Tyndale on his coming to London, the officers heard that he had probably gone off to Oxford to sell his books there. To Oxford, therefore, they proceeded.

You will remember that at Cambridge there were many scholars and students who had received the word of God as good seed in their hearts, and who loved to read the Greek Testament of Erasmus together in their quiet meetings at the White House. Some of them, among the rest Tyndale's friend John Fryth, had lately removed to Oxford, for Wolsey, who loved learning and was always a friend to learned men, had founded a college there, in which he took great interest.

Little knowing what would result from his

efforts to obtain the services of ripe scholars for his new college, he removed thither some of the most noted of the Cambridge men, who brought with them to their new home at Cardinal's College a knowledge better than the human learning for which they were so famous.

In the city of Oxford, then, Garratt was selling his books to ready buyers when news was brought him that the officers of Wolsey were close upon his track. Greatly alarmed, he hastened to the house of his friend Anthony Delaber, who himself tells the story of his distress. Advised by him, Garratt, under another name, left Oxford unobserved, and set out across the country, hoping to find refuge with a brother of Delaber's in Dorsetshire, until he could get safely over sea; for in England he could no longer remain.

When Garratt had left him Delaber proceeded to collect all his forbidden books, for besides a stock of English Testaments he had several of Luther's works in his possession. Having securely concealed these within a secret recess in the walls of his chamber, he left his rooms for others, taking with him the Testament of Erasmus and a French commentary on the gospel of St. Luke.

Meanwhile Garratt, on his way to Dorsetshire, carrying a letter from Delaber to his brother, was in sore trouble and perplexity. The more he thought of the plan for his safety which had been devised by his friend Anthony, the more unworthy of a servant of Christ did it seem. He knew that his friend's brother, to whom he was going, under a feigned name, to offer himself as curate, was one who would have no sympathy with a "known man," as the friends of the gospel began to be called. If he were to enter his service, even for a time, would he not be obliged to deny his faith, and follow many practices which his conscience told him were contrary to the truth as he had learned it? Nay, would he not be obliged even to teach to others what he did not himself believe?

Verily it would be better for him to go to prison or to death than to take such a way of escape; and after long conflict (for they were

no imaginary dangers which he must face if he would be faithful) Garratt's mind was made up. Retracing his steps, he went back to Oxford, and quietly retired to rest. That same night he was taken from his bed and locked into a room in Cardinal's College, while news of his arrest was sent to Wolsey.

Garratt contrived to escape, however, and found his way to the new rooms occupied by Delaber, who was much surprised to see him, believing him to be in safety with his brother.

With surprise was mingled alarm, both for himself and his friend, for Garratt had not come alone, but was accompanied by a servant of the college who had shown him the way. "Alas, Master Garratt," Anthony said, hastily, "you have ruined us both."

The poor curate stood before him trembling, and besought him to save him. "With deep sighs and plenty of tears he prayed me," said Delaber afterwards, in describing the scene, "to help to convey him away, and so he cast off his hood and his gown wherein he came to me, and desired me to give him a coat with sleeves, if I had any; and told me that he would go into Wales, and thence convey himself to Germany if he might. Then I put on him a sleeved coat of mine, of fine cloth in grain, which my mother had given me. He would have another cap of me, but I had none but priestlike, such as his own was. Then kneeled we down together on our knees, lifting up our hearts and hands to God our heavenly Father, desiring Him with plenty of tears so to conduct and prosper him in his journey that he might well escape the danger of his enemies, to the glory of His holy Name, if His good pleasure and will so were. And then we embraced and kissed one another, and so he departed from me apparelled in my coat.

"When Master Garratt had gone down the stairs from my chamber, I straightways did shut my chamber door, and went into my study, shutting the door unto me, and took the New Testament in my hands, kneeled down on my knees, and with many a deep sigh and salt tear I did with much deliberation read over the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. And when I had so done,

with fervent prayer I did commit unto God our dearly beloved brother Garratt, earnestly beseeching Him in and for Jesus Christ's sake, His only begotten Son our Lord, that He would vouchsafe not only safely to conduct and keep our said dear brother from the hands of all his enemies, but also that He would endue His tender and lately-born little flock in Oxford with heavenly strength by His Holy Spirit; that they might be well able thereby valiantly to withstand to His glory all their fierce enemies, and also might quietly, to their own salvation, with all godly patience bear Christ's heavy cross, which I now saw was presently to be laid upon their young and weak backs, unable to bear so huge a one without the great help of His Holy Spirit. This done, I laid aside my book safe."

If you read the tenth chapter of St. Matthew, you will see that the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples of how they should be persecuted, and told them plainly that they should be hated of all men for His name's sake; for the disciple was to be as his Master. Is it not touching to think of Delaber thus in his hour of fear and danger, turning to this chapter, and reading the words in which the disciples were warned to expect persecution, even unto death; yet encouraged to have no fear of those that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul? That promise of the Lord to those who were faithful, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven," must have been very sweet to him.

Next day, while the news of Garratt's flight was received with deep thankfulness by his friends, the officers of Wolsey were filled with dismay. They knew not how to justify themselves for allowing their prisoner to escape. Delaber, fearing that the servant who had brought Garratt to his rooms would betray him, spent the time in the company of his brethren, who, when they saw him pale and trembling, could only commend him to the care of God. If it were known that he had helped his friend to escape, no doubt heavy vengeance would fall upon him. Venturing at last to return to his rooms, Delaber started back in astonishment and

dread; the door which he had carefully locked behind him was open, and all his furniture was in confusion, and his bed-clothes were scattered about the floor. While he stood wondering, a monk came to tell him that armed men had broken into his rooms during the night, and had even pierced his mattress with their swords in their endeavour to make sure that Garratt was not concealed somewhere. He went on to say that he had been sent to conduct Delaber to the prior. When brought before him, he confessed that Garratt had been with him the day before, but neither the prior nor Bishop Tonstall, before whom he was next brought, could induce him to say anything more.

After trying to move him by threats of imprisonment and torture, they gave orders that he should be placed in the stocks, and so left him.

When Delaber, now two years ago, had sought the friendship of one of the Cambridge gossellers whom Wolsey had brought to his college, beseeching that he might be with him as a son with a father, he had received faithful warning of what might await him. "Alas," said his friend, pityingly, "you know not what you ask! My teaching is pleasant to you now, but the time will come when God will lay the cross of persecution upon you; you will be dragged before bishops, your name will be covered with shame in this world, and all who love you will be heart-broken on account of you."

"Surely," thought Anthony, "the time whereof he spoke has come now;" and, with many a groan, he prayed to God to grant him to be faithful, and to give him courage to die rather than betray his brethren, for he believed that by his means Wolsey would seek to discover how far the contagion of heresy had spread among the scholars of Cardinal's College, and from them throughout Oxford.

YOU are not called to be martyrs for Christ's name, but none the less are you called to be faithful to Him. As we are faithful in little things, so shall we be in great things. Do you think the noble men who *died* to Christ could have done so had they not *lived* Christ?

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

VI.—THE PLANT OF RENOWN.

IN our previous papers we looked at Israel as having failed in every way to meet the mind of God. Let us go back in our thoughts some 1800 years. Four thousand long years of this world's sad history have rolled away, and now God is about to test man in a new and different way—in other words, He is about to commence a new dispensation. With this new dispensation we will connect a symbolic tree, "the plant of renown," and whom this plant represents we shall presently see.

God in His fresh dealings with man was not looking for fruit from man, as under the law. Instead of looking to man as such for fruit, He planted, as it were, His own tree, "whose fruit was in itself," and this was none other than His only begotten and well-beloved Son.

If you will find the reference to the texts printed in this skeleton tree, you will see that the allusions to the Saviour as a tree are full of meaning.

The first part of a tree is its *root*. Of the Lord it is said He was a "root out of a dry ground," also "the root of David."

Second, its *stem*. Jesus is said to be "the stem of Jesse."

Thirdly, the *bough* shooting out from the stem. He is said to be "a fruitful bough."

From the bough there spring the tender *branches*. So we read of "the man whose name is the Branch."

The next thing we look for in a tree is *fruit*. And, oh! what a contrast is Jesus to Israel! Instead of looking for fruit and finding none, we read: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

Then the tree requires to be clothed with *ver-dure*: so of Jesus, the "godly man" of Psalm i., it is said "His leaf also shall not wither."

Then, what a suitable place for *rest* is a shady tree! Jesus said, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest"; and the one who has come to Him can say, in Old Testament language, "I sat under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."

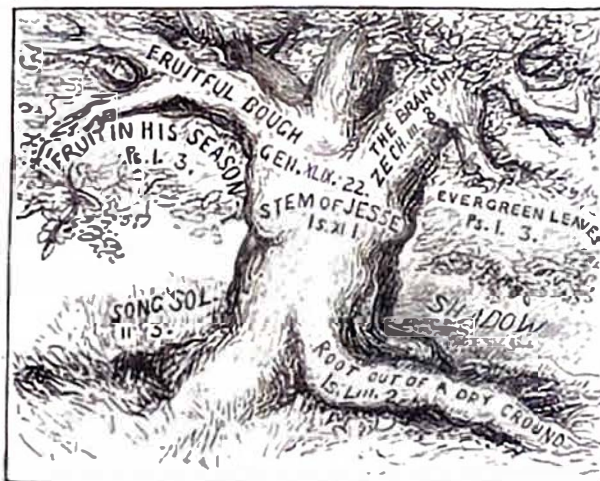
Thus we find the seven things—root, stem, bough, branch, fruit, leaf, and shade—are all in Jesus.

Since Christ came to the earth God has not been looking to man in his nature state for fruit. Israel was God's sample tree. The olive failed to give light, the vine to give joy, and the fig to produce sweetness. You remember how John, the forerunner of Jesus, said to the people of Israel, "The axe is laid unto the root of the tree: therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

Jesus, on the contrary, had during the years of His ministry on earth always afforded infinite delight to His Father. He could truly say, "I always do the things that

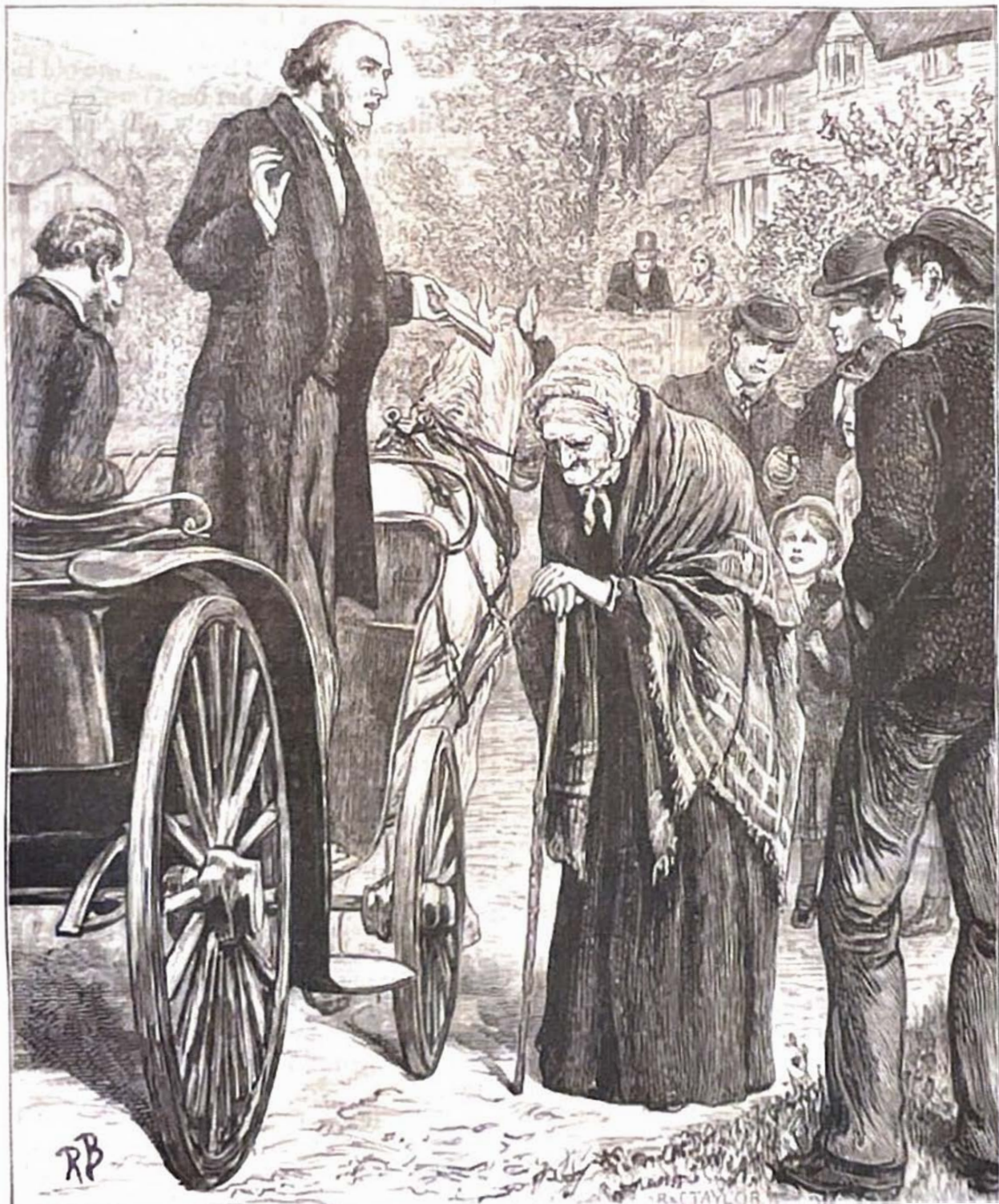
please Him." He had brought "forth fruit in His season." How good is fruit in its season! So with Jesus, everything was perfect. At the end of His wonderful life and ministry, He, of His own perfect will, "offered Himself without spot to God." His life was taken from the earth, and the next time we read of Him, under the figure of a tree, we find Him as blooming in the paradise of God.

Thus ended this fresh dealing of God with man—God, full of love, had given His Son, who perfectly revealed the Father, and showed unmistakably that man was lost indeed, and full of bitter enmity and hatred against perfect and infinite goodness. Such conduct on the part of man was enough to change the love of one less than God into hatred; but God "cannot deny Himself."



FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



ON FOR NINETY, SIR.

ON FOR NINETY, SIR.

ONE Sunday, the writer was engaged with some other christian workers in Oxfordshire, going from place to place distributing tracts and proclaiming the gospel. In driving into a tolerably large village they found a group of men assembled near the green, whose curiosity was excited by seeing a white pony and chaise stop in their midst. This curiosity increased as one of the strange visitors rose and said, "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." (2 Cor. v. 20.) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 38.)

That voice rang clearly through the stillness, and many were the hearers who stood at their garden gates listening to the message of pardon for "all manner of sin" (Matt. xii. 31), through faith in the blood of the Lamb.

An aged woman, wrapping her shawl around her, came slowly down the lane, and taking up her position close to the step of the chaise, stood all but motionless, listening to the words of eternal life. She had planted her stick firmly upon the ground, and leaning forward, until bent nearly double, was supporting her whole weight upon the staff.

As soon as the speaker had finished, he was curious to know something of this interested hearer; so quietly stepping to the old dame's side, said, as he took her hand, "I see you are leaning upon your stick, mother; are you leaning upon Christ, I wonder?"

The aged eyes brightened; the face which had been turned to the earth was lifted to the beautiful sunshine, as she answered with quaint emphasis, "That be just what I'm doing. Leaning on Jesus."

"So it is 'Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me,' with you?"

"Ay, it just be, sir; it's comfort, it is."

"Then you have a strong staff to lean

upon; lean hard; for you are getting weak, I see."

"Smartish on for ninety, sir."

So, just to test her, the following question was put—"Well, I suppose after so long you do not want to give up your Saviour?"

If the reader could have seen the old lady, as she straightened her bent frame to its full height, and gave her reply, all doubt as to the value of genuine piety would have fled. "Part with my Jesus? Not for the world! The world?—Not for ten thousand worlds!"

We never find a real christian discovering in old age his faith in Christ to have been in vain. Here was a poor, simple-minded creature, "smartish on for ninety," who had proved the truth of God's promises during a long life, and who reckoned her Jesus to be better than "ten thousand worlds."

"So you have given your heart to Him?" continued the preacher.

"Ay! my heart, my soul, my body—He's got it all."

What a happy instance of full and complete trust—all given into the hands of the Lord Jesus.

L.

I AM FEARFUL TO DIE.

SOME years ago, if a stranger had passed through the pleasant village of G—, he could scarcely have failed to notice a house, standing in its own beautiful grounds, surrounded by clumps of evergreens, while the flower-beds upon the lawn were bright with lovely flowers, and he might have thought the owner of such a home one to be envied. Ah! how little we know the real state of those whom we pass heedlessly by in this journey of life!

Come with me to one of the rooms of this beautiful house. Stand at the door a minute and listen. Hark! what are those agonised words repeated over and over again?

"I am dying, I am dying, and I am fearful to die."

Is there no ray of hope to lighten that fearful gloom? No, not one! Long hours has the owner of the house lain there, tossing restlessly on his pillow, repeating those terrible words, and none can comfort him.

A strong, fearless man he has been, with the indomitable energy of the North from whence he came, tinging all his life of over seventy years, during more than thirty of which he has been a most regular attendant at church. Strictly honourable in all his dealings, priding himself upon a blameless character, and keeping, as he fancied, the ten commandments as his rule of life.

Well, does not all this avail him now? Cannot he find comfort in the hour of need from this same blameless life of so many long years? Let his own words answer:—

"I am dying"—it was true; none dared contradict him—"I must meet a holy, holy God, and I am fearful to die."

It was even so; all those years of self-righteousness were seen to be valueless now that the light of eternity was poured upon them; all those fortresses of good-doings were broken down by one stroke from the hand of the One who doeth wonders, and he saw himself at last as a lost sinner.

For days his distress of soul had been so great that his attendants knew not what to do; at last it was suggested that they should send for a christian neighbour. He came at once, and was soon seated by the side of the poor sufferer, whose haggard face, surrounded by masses of iron-grey hair, showed the anguish of his soul. His eyes gleamed with almost wild intensity as he turned them upon his visitor, and said—

"What must I do? I am dying, and I am fearful to die."

"*You* can do nothing," was the reply; "but Christ has done for you all that you need, all that God requires from you. He died upon the cross as the One who was able and willing to bear the punishment of your sins. He is alive in the glory now; He will receive and pardon you now."

"But that is not all—it cannot be all; have I nothing to do? God is the holy, holy, holy One; oh, I cannot meet Him so!" This was the poor man's cry.

For nearly two hours the visitor stayed, and then left, having placed a large text with the words, "By Him all that believe are justified from all things," where the eyes of the

sick man might rest upon it. Hastening home in deep anxiety, he wrote at once to a friend, who had been greatly used of the Lord in bringing peace to souls, asking him to visit Mr. W. He did so, and the result will best be learned by again taking our stand at the door of the sick room. As the first visitor once more enters he is welcomed with the words—

"I am glad to see you," and the former agonised tones are changed for those of happy assurance as the sufferer continues, "I am not afraid to die now I see that Christ died for me, and has made me fit to meet God. No, I am not afraid now," and truly the change in his face told of the change within. "To think," he said, "that I have been a religious man for thirty years, and yet never knew before God's way of salvation!"

Reader, are *you* at peace as you remember that you also have to meet a holy God? L. T.

A TRUE GLASS.

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."

QUEEN ELIZABETH one day called for a true glass, saying that she had not seen one for years. She was surrounded by everything that earth's glory could give, and courtiers daily vied with each other in paying flattering compliments to her, speaking of her youthful beauty and gracefulness. All who were present trembled as they heard the call for a true glass, anticipating the consequences, but her command must be obeyed. It was brought, and she took it in her royal hand; she gazed upon the truthful reflection of her own features, but, instead of finding the youthful beauty which her flatterers spoke of, she saw the wrinkles of old age and the unmistakable signs of her passionate nature. She only gazed a moment upon it, then dashed the mirror to shivers upon the ground. She could not bear the naked truth.

I have met an old man (pattern of many others), whose hair is gray and whose steps are faltering; he is evidently near the grave. The devil, who deceives the whole world, whispers in his ear that he is so respectable and even religious that he needs no Saviour. He has never done anybody any harm, he

attends church, he is very familiar with his prayer-book, and if he has committed a few little sins in his long lifetime they will pass unnoticed ; on the whole, he is one of the best men he knows.

There is an old book, called "The Word of Truth," which describes him as accurately and precisely as a man's natural face is reflected in a true glass. Does this book coincide in its description with the flattery of the devil ? No : far from it. Amongst many terms applied to him there, we find the following : "sinner," "ungodly," "without strength" (Rom. v. 6, 8), "lost" (Luke xix. 10), and a "child of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3). Has he never read this ? Yes, he has ; but he loves the devil's lies, and cannot bear the naked truth, therefore he finds fault with the book which condemns him, and seeks, so far as it is in his power, to dash it to pieces.

Reader, hear God's word !

"They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie : that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 10-12.)

The world is full of the devil's lying flatteries—thousands of souls are beguiled by him ; they turn their ears from the truth, their minds are filled with fables, they are deaf to all God's tender, earnest entreaties of grace and love ; they are blinded by Satan, who is leading them on to the fearful moment when God shall leave men to the lies they have loved, and to everlasting perdition. Grieved for their misery, God's heart yearns over men with tender love and compassion ; so great is His love, that "He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now, reader, He speaks to you, and warns you by His word : in it, and there alone, you have **THE TRUTH**—*the truth* as to your state and condition by nature, a godless, helpless, hopeless sinner, and *the truth* as to the perfect eternal salvation which God has provided for those who are such in

and through Christ Jesus, His blessed Son. Through "*belief of the truth*" we are saved ; but those who refuse to receive the love of the truth that they may be saved will be left to the lie they have loved, with its fearful consequence—eternal damnation. Shut out for ever from the presence of the Lord and all that scene of eternal glory and blessedness, where believers in Jesus shall have their place with Him, there will be found together the maker of the lie (the devil) and those who have loved it, spite of God's warnings and entreaties. (Rev. xxii. 15.)

"O sinner, to the Saviour bow :

The truth believe !"

J. R.

LOVE IN THE LORD.

TWO young christians lived for some time in the same family, the one as governess to the children, the other as companion to the aged grandmother, and were, in consequence, much thrown together. The young governess, who was, in every sense of the word, alone in the world, conceived a most ardent affection for the companion, who, while she loved her friend, yet did so with far less apparent ardour. But time passed. The governess at length possessed a home of her own, in which her early friend was ever a most welcome guest. During one of her visits, the companion, whose health had given way, suffered almost unceasingly the most acute pain. One day she proposed that they should pray together. They did so, and for the first time alone. The effect was wonderful, and not ever to be forgotten by either. Kneeling thus together, close to God, His love was in an especial way shed abroad in their hearts, and they loved as they had never loved before.

That friendship, however true, is not perfect which is unconsecrated by prayer ; and the friends who have not introduced God into their love, have yet the only satisfying as well as the sweetest joy to taste. When once the feeling of restraint, which often prevents even christian friends from treating God as a Friend—one to be spoken to not *only* in secret—is removed, there is also removed all let or hindrance to true christian love itself.

That love between David and Jonathan, which was wonderful, passing even the love of women, was it not because of "the Lord between me and thee," as Jonathan touchingly expressed it? Did not Jonathan "strengthen David's hand in God"? Was it not "the kindness of the Lord" which he asked from David for himself and his house? and was it not "the kindness of God" which David gave? No youthful love, if merely human, would ever have attained such strength.

Scarcely less sweet than meeting the Lord alone is meeting Him in the sweet society of one beloved of Him. It was sweet to be Mary, who saw Him all alone and first on that day of His resurrection; but sweet as well was it, for those two disciples whose hearts He made to burn within them, on the evening of that day. Man's unity is two, but that of God is three; and "a three-fold cord is not quickly broken." Love in the Lord is not only the sweetest and intensest love, but it is eternal.

E. B.—R.

NEARNESS TO CHRIST.

BELOVED christian reader, seek above all else to know Christ as your personal Friend. Do not consider this an exhortation to unholy familiarity, since from this your spirit of reverence may well shrink. True, the Lord is high and lofty, and inhabits eternity, and His people are His solely by sovereign grace. But Jesus stoops, yes, He has stooped to earth, He has been humbled here, and while here has called His own His friends. And now that He, as a Man, is exalted above the heavens, He is the "same Jesus," and seeks of His people, loved everlastingly and purchased by His blood for Himself, the affection of their hearts. He seeks your heart's affection to be devoted to Himself, and you cannot give this to Him unless you know Him as He is.

The apostle Paul says, "that I may know Him!" He did know Him as his Saviour; he did know the virtues of the cleansing blood, and knew, too, what his future would be, even glory with Christ in heaven; but, as a man on earth on the way to Christ's glory, the apostle says, "that I may know Him."

He does not say, that I may know about Jesus; no, he sought to know Him Himself. What hallowed companionship does this desire indicate! What like-mindedness with the Lord in his thoughts and ways. We feel that when a man can thus speak, the Lord has let His servant into His secrets, and opened to him His counsels.

Now, as we cannot know an earthly personagesave by being in his company, so must we be in the company of our Lord, if we would know Him. Those hours of our lives, which are spent in meditation and communion are our golden seasons. Seek for times for meditation, if you would not live a life of exterior christianity. There is such a vanity under the sun, as the whirl of religious excitement, and a christian may lose heart-touch of Christ by reason of rounds of services and religious work. In the olden days when our Lord was here on earth, He bade His disciples enter into their inner chamber, shut their doors and pray to their Father in secret. Oh! what need is there in this day of speed for us to do likewise.

"Christ seems to me to dwell upstairs while I live downstairs," a christian once said to us. It was not to that believer, at that moment, as if Christ and the christian were in the same room. That christian knew Him personally as the Saviour, and His personal care and love; but the heart-touch was somehow lacking.

The christian will not be the less practical in his daily duties, nor will he be an unnatural person in his relationships in life, if he be really in the friendship of his Lord. The Lord's life on earth witnesses to what His people should be. Wherever He went He shed His heavenly light. His light made manifest the surrounding darkness, but in its shining the disciples walked.

We were observing a little glowworm the other evening. The creature was like a star of heaven shining on the dark bank whereon it crept, and as we considered its silvery star-like way, we thought of the christian shining with heavenly brightness while slowly pacing this dark earth. Ours should be a heavenly light in a dark world, and as Christ is dwelling in our hearts by faith so will the true light shine.

IT IS NO DELUSION.

J. D., a gay, careless young man, possessed rare mental powers, but he was an infidel. At the age of twenty-four a fatal sickness laid its relentless grasp upon him, and it was but too evident that his days were numbered.

Christian friends tried to bring to bear upon his mind the great realities of eternity, but he only turned a deaf ear, or by his subtle arguments gained a seeming victory. But God's ways are not as our ways, and He who gave up His only Son to die for sinners was about to draw this young man to Himself in a most marvellous way.

After a day of severe suffering he fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed that he was standing on the top of a mountain which he had often climbed when a boy. All around, the well-known scene presented itself to his view, but he seemed to be hemmed in on every side; what the barrier was he could not tell, he only knew that there seemed no way of escape. Instinctively glancing upwards, he saw the form of One wearing a crown of thorns on His brow, and carrying in His hand a scroll, on which was written in letters of red, "Escape for thy life."

"Where, Lord, where?" the young man asked, in eager haste.

"Yonder," He answered, pointing to a cross—and the dreamer awoke.

Sitting upright in his bed, he cried, "Where is He?"

"Who?" said the nurse.

"The Saviour; I have seen Him—give me a Bible."

The exertion brought on a violent paroxysm of coughing, and he lay for some time exhausted. The nurse advised him to try and sleep again.

"I cannot," he said; "I may awake in hell."

Big drops of perspiration stood upon his brow, and the expression of his face told of the agony within, as he requested the nurse to read about the death of Christ. The nurse read from the Gospel by St. John, and, as she came to those wondrous words, "It is finished," the listener stopped her. "Read that again, please," he said, and, as the words were

repeated, he whispered, slowly and distinctly, "Yes, it is finished; I am a guilty sinner, but Jesus has done it all for me."

The light shone like a lightning flash into his soul, and enabled him to venture his all, for time and for eternity, at once upon Christ, who had finished the work of salvation for sinners upon the cross. He desired that his mother, who had long prayed for him, should be called, and, as she knelt by the bedside, mother and son mingled their tears of joy.

James D. rallied a little after this, and lived for some weeks, bearing a bright testimony to the grace of God. He gathered all his old companions around him, and declared what the Lord had done for his soul.

"Nonsense," said one, "I thought as you do once, but I have found it was all a delusion!"

"It is no delusion, but a reality," replied James; "like me, you must meet God, and nothing but Christ will avail you then."

James entreated them to come, and prayed earnestly for them. That prayer was answered for two of his friends, and but a short time ago they also departed to be with the Lord.

In the few short weeks during which J. D. lingered, his growth in the knowledge of divine things was rapid. His one theme was Jesus. He never tired of speaking of the Lord who had done so much for him.

The day before his death he said to a friend, "I have now my greatest joy and deepest sorrow; my joy is that Christ has done so much for me, and my sorrow that I have nothing but a wasted life to give Him."

But nothing was suffered to cloud his bright spirit; as one who was permitted to see the end said, "death was not the name for it; it was a triumphant victory."

Reader, the living Saviour addresses you to His cross and death. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John xii. 32), were His words before He suffered, and now He lives in the glory, and whoever believes on Him who died and rose again shall, like J. D., go where Christ is. K. R.

"This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. x. 12.)

MAN CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF.

ALAS, alas, how hard it is to lead the proud heart of man to believe that which God says about him! "Lost" is one of the hardest words that an unsaved sinner can spell. By common consent sinners declare it does not mean what it describes. If people really believed they were lost, they would not find it so difficult to believe what it is to be saved; for when a man knows what *lost* means, he soon learns the meaning of *saved*. Most people think they are half or at most three-parts lost, not altogether lost; that they will not believe. They fancy they have an oar to cling to, or a life-belt on, or something that belongs to the old ship self, to support them; hence, when God's salvation is presented to them, they do not regard it as the absolute and perfect thing which it is.

Partly owing to this latent self-trust, which is the very bone and blood of man, we find God letting the sinner feel what sinking is. Hence what soul-agony some pass through, what groanings, what despair! The heavens seem brass above them, and God one who will not hear. They cry and agonize, but remain struggling and sinking, as they believe, into hell itself. If the sinner would give it all up and accept God's sentence, he would soon know that the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

A friend of ours, who is a remarkably good swimmer, and who had rescued the lives of many, saw one day, as he was passing over a bridge, a man in the river beneath him. Many were looking on at the struggles of the hapless man and listening to his cries. People may argue about what the lost state of a sinner is, but no one who was drowning in a swift river would be in the mood to discuss whether he was or was not lost. The realization of his position would effectually dispose of arguments! Our friend threw aside his coat, leaped off the bridge, and swam up to the drowning man. He snatched at the easy swimmer, who bade him be still. Our friend's command to the man to be still was of no avail. He would not unreservedly submit himself to be rescued, and it was impossible to save the man so long as he would

seek to help himself by snatching at the swimmer. What was to be done? Much to the indignation of the crowd on the bridge and river-banks, our friend left the drowning man as it were to his fate, and then turning towards him, struck him with his fist a heavy blow and so rendered him insensible.

"Shamel shame!" cried the people, but only to exchange their judgment for admiration as, a moment later, they saw the strong swimmer put his hand under the now subject man and bring him to shore.

"I could not have saved him in any other way," was our friend's answer to the many inquiries for his motive.

It is not according to God that a man should know that he is saved, all the while he is struggling to save himself, and God does at times allow most severe blows to fall upon the struggling sinner in order to make him submit to the righteousness of God. But the severity springs from love to the sinner. On the other hand, where there is obedience to the word, the sinner learns quickly what God's salvation is. The first difficulty with the soul is to lead it to believe the danger of being lost, and the next to believe that salvation is wholly of the Lord; not partly of the Lord, partly of self. First we have to seek to awaken the sinner to the sense of his danger, to awaken him from the sleep which must end in everlasting death; and next to prove to him from the word of God that Christ, and Christ only, can save him.

There are some who are foolish enough to suppose that they can save themselves. Such sinners do not believe they are lost. They disbelieve the plain language of the word of God about their condition in His sight. Such people will never get to heaven, where the song is sung, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Their heaven would be like their earth; their earth has for its song, "We are not so bad as others, we are moral, religious, pious, we are worthy." Alas, alas! the end of this self-righteousness will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Why did Jesus die? why was He slain? why did He shed His blood? was it that we might save ourselves by our own works?

It was "not by works of righteousness which we have done" (Tit. iii. 5), says the Scripture; "Not of works" (Eph. ii. 9), but according to God's mercy, and by His grace we are saved.

We were speaking the other day to a man about the salvation of his soul. "Are you saved?" we said.

"Well," he replied, "I go to church regularly, and live right as near as I can; what more can I do?" "Have you ever thought of these words," we said, "'the blood of Christ?' What do they mean?" Reader, seek earnestly to know what these solemn, yet precious words, "the blood of Christ," mean. When you are taught the meaning of them by God the Holy Spirit, you will never wish to speak again of saving yourself, or of your own righteousness, but you will love to extol the name of Jesus the Saviour. When the apostle Paul had cast aside his own righteousness, his grateful heart delighted in saying, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. i. 15.) Bright and blessed words, "worthy of all acceptation!" Have you accepted them? Have you humbly and with deep gratitude received them? Can you say, Yes, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; I am a sinner, and I was a lost sinner, a perishing sinner, but He has saved me.

LIGHT.

"BRING it into the light," we say, when we have to decide on the real character of that which is under our eye, "this place is too dark for us to judge as to its actual nature and worth." So may we say of our work for God, or of our ways one with another, "Bring it into the light." No right estimate of what we are, or of what we do, can be formed in a dark place. As christians, we are called to shun the dark place, as well as dark deeds, dark words, and dark thoughts: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all; and if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The only place to

judge rightly of what we are and what we do is the light.

SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

IN the first book of Chronicles we read of David's mighty men. David was the Lord's anointed, the king Jehovah had set up—a type to us of our Lord. These mighty captains of the king have some of their choice deeds recorded in the eleventh chapter, and among their great victories is told that of Eliezer, who stood with David when "the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley." This barley field was worth fighting for, for it was the people's food. "And the people fled from before the Philistines," even as timid saints of God to this day flee from the foe. They live by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, but they flee from before the foe who would deprive them of their food.

Now the mighty man who is near David will fight for the "parcel of ground full of barley." It is a fruitful piece, it must not be lost. "And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel and delivered it." This was grand. They delivered the food of God's people from the foe; "and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance." Hear this, christian soldiers; up, fight for the food of the people—the truth of God. Deliver you the truth of God from their hands; do not think of your ease and comfort, or of your danger, and the Lord will save you by a great deliverance.



The Young King and the Lost Book.

WHEN King Josiah had reigned twelve years in Jerusalem he began the great work of his life. When he began, he did not leave off, he "turned not aside to the right hand or to the left," and did the work which God had given him to do for Him.

You remember how much God had to say to His people about their sin in making gods for themselves. They had set up images to the sun-god and the moon-god in groves of



THE YOUNG KING AND THE LOST BOOK.

beautiful trees, and there they went to praise these false gods and to pray to them.

King Josiah might have done as his father did, and have praised these gods of wood and of stone, and bowed himself down before them, but God had put a different spirit into him. Listen to what is written in the Bible about him. "In the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images."

So this was the work which the king began in the twelfth year of his reign. He had learned to know the true God, and he would have no images to false gods set up in his land; but broke them all to pieces, and cut down the groves of trees where they used to stand.

But how did King Josiah know the true God? You know the Lord has said, "Those who seek Me early shall find Me." How old was Josiah when he began to seek after God?

He was about sixteen years old, and he was about twenty—quite a grown man—when he began to throw down the images and break them in pieces.

You are quite right. But do not forget that long before this king had any thought of seeking after God, God had been seeking him, knocking at the door of his childish heart, and speaking to him in words of love and pity.

How do we know this? Does it say so in the Bible?

Not exactly in this place, but in many other parts of the Bible, we learn that the heart, even of a child, by nature turns away from God, not to Him.

How long did Josiah the king take to destroy all the idols? And what did he do next, to serve God?

He took six years to destroy the idols, for all that time he was going round the country to distant cities, so that no idols should be left anywhere. When he had destroyed them all; he returned to Jerusalem, and he thought a great deal about the house of God there, that beautiful temple which King Solomon had built.

Why did he think about the temple?

Because it was broken down in many places. While the people had been making beautiful groves and altars for the false gods, they had allowed God's house to fall into decay. Just as King David had desired to build a house for the Lord, so now this king, who walked in his ways, wished to restore His house, and make it beautiful again.

So that was the next work which he did, after he had taken away the idols from the land?

Yes, King Josiah could not do this work with his own hands, but he spoke to some of his chief men, and told them to use the money which the people had given for the house of God, to pay the workmen, and to buy stone and wood to mend the broken places. Some of the workmen only carried loads, and helped those who were building; but a beautiful thing is written in God's Book about the men who did this work about the house of the Lord. "They did the work *faithfully*."

What does that mean? And why does God tell us about it?

It means that there was no need for anyone to mind the men at their work: they knew that the eye of God was upon them, and they did all they were doing in the very best way they could, not leaving any bad places where they thought it might not show. And no one was idle or half-hearted about his work.

It was just then that the treasure of which we were speaking was found. It was the high-priest who found it. He said, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord," and he gave it to Shaphan, the scribe, and he read it before the king.

Oh, that is what the picture is about. Is that roll of paper the book of the law?

Yes; all books looked much like rolls of paper at that time. The book of the law was the same to the people of Judah as the Bible is to us, for it was all that God had given them of His word. You know He has given us a great deal more; but, whether much or little, every word of God is precious.

But the king looks rather frightened, and not at all glad.

Ah, that is because he was thinking of how displeased God must be with His people for having forgotten Him so long. When the king heard the words of the book of the law he rent his clothes.

Why was that ?

To show his grief. Then he sent a message, and said, "Goye, enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found : for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us."

This was the message. The word which God sent back in answer was very solemn and dreadful in the first part, like those messages which He was sending by His prophet to the people. God said He was very, very angry with His people because they had forsaken Him and gone after other gods, and He said He was going to bring trouble and sorrow upon them.

But was that all the message ?

No; the last part was for King Josiah, and these were the words which God sent to him : "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, . . . and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before Me ; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace ; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place."

When you are older you will be able to read in the second book of Kings and the second book of Chronicles much more about the reign of the boy-king Josiah, of whom it is written, "Like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses (you know that was the Bible then); neither after him arose there any like him." Many kings have received praise of men : this king received praise of God, in His word, which lasts for ever.

L.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

VII.—THE MUSTARD TREE.

IN our last paper we saw that the death of Jesus, the "Plant of Renown," terminated the period during which God sought to win back to Himself the confidence of His rebellious creatures. Man having proved fruitless even when the Son of God was on earth, God has henceforth concluded all men everywhere as both dead and lost.

A new and fresh action of His grace commenced nearly two thousand years ago—just a short time after Jesus had gone out of the world. This new period is one of pure, rich sovereign grace. That is, it is a period when God is freely and fully bestowing infinite blessings on all who believe on His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This period commenced in a wonderful way. A small company of despised followers of the lowly Jesus were assembled together in an upper room in the city of Jerusalem. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." This was the descent of the Holy Ghost, who baptises all who believe into one Body, of which the risen and glorified Christ is the Head. All who believe are henceforth united one to the other and to Christ.

After a time, many others, besides the true believers, pretended to belong to this company of christians, as they were soon called. The Lord Jesus had foretold, as we read in Matthew xiii., that this little beginning would be like a tiny "mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds," but that, ultimately, it would grow to such proportion, that the fowls of the air would come and "lodge in the branches thereof."

At first christians were hated and despised on every hand; they were, in fact, as the apostle Paul says, "the offscouring of all things." After not many years, however, they sought and obtained the patronage of the world, which had formerly persecuted them even unto death. Then unbelievers found their way into the company of true believers.

The mustard seed was growing into a large tree, and the fowls of the air were finding an abiding place in its branches.

This tree must be destroyed as those in connection with Israel were cut down. Let us refer to the Epistle to the Romans, where we Gentiles are compared to a wild olive tree grafted into a good one; and we are expressly warned that, if we do not continue in the goodness of God, we, too, shall be cut off. As we look through the length and breadth of christendom, can we say that, as a mass of people, we have continued in the goodness of God? Surely not! Hence judgment on christendom is coming, and will fall unsparingly on all who name the name of Christ with the lips, but who possess Him not in the heart.

This remarkable period, during which our lot is cast, is now hastening to a close. What will transpire afterwards we hope to see in our next paper.

H. N.



How little Joe was made Happy.

DEAR young Friends,—Perhaps you have read a story such as this before. I am going to tell you of a little boy whom the Lord Jesus made happy, and then took home to be with Himself. I wonder whether you know that your sins are forgiven, and if the Lord Jesus has made you happy? The dear little boy of whom I now write knew the forgiveness of his sins; and if you have never thought about this before, I hope you will do so as you read this paper.

One bright summer evening, two friends and I were walking leisurely across the fields on our way home, when we came to a little gate, and as we did so Joe B. sprang forward to open it for us, touching his hat respectfully as we passed. So bright and happy did he look as he stood there! we little thought we were going to speak to him for the last time; yet so it was. "How is grandfather to-day?" one of us asked before we passed

on. "Very poorly, thank you, sir," answered the boy; "he seems worse to-night."

Now I must tell you something about Joe's home; and perhaps, too, you will like to hear his age. He was eleven years old, and rather tall; he had a nice, bright face, and was a sharp, clever lad. Joe lived with his grandparents and aunt in a pretty little cottage in a hollow. He was very happy, for he dearly loved those with whom he lived.

Joe's grandfather was old and bed-ridden, and he had long expected that the Lord Jesus would take him home; he was anxious to go, too, poor old man, for he longed to be with the Saviour he had loved for many years, and sometimes found the "waiting-time" rather long. No one thought that the bright, happy boy of eleven would be the first to go. Yet such was the case.

Well, as I said, that little talk with Joe was the last we had. Soon after this we went away to Scotland, and whilst there received a letter which contained this news: "Poor Joe B. is very ill. The doctor doubts if he will recover." We were very sorry to hear this; but were still more sorry when, a day or two later, another letter came, which said: "Joe B. died this morning at three o'clock." But there was comfort in this letter, for the writer added, "He had been a christian about three months, and had confessed Christ to some of his schoolfellows." Oh, my dear young friends, could others say the same of you were you to be called to die?

We did not return home till many weeks after this; but the first Sunday after our arrival in our own village I went down to the cottage where Joe had lived, to see his aunt and to hear something about him. "Was he happy when he died?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, miss," she answered. And then, with many tears, she told me about his conversion, and the illness which came on soon after, ending in his death.

She said the first thing that made Joe think about his soul was the sudden and solemn death of a woman in the place. The aunt noticed that for two or three days after this event he went about the house very silently and quietly, and at last, one night,



LITTLE JOE AT THE GATE.

after he had gone up stairs, and she had thought him in bed, she heard him call her. "Auntie," said Joe, "won't you come up to me, I want to speak to you."

"What is it?" she asked.

"Oh, I can't tell you like that," he replied; "do come up, auntie."

So, when she was free to do so, the aunt went up, and then she found poor Joe very unhappy. It was no wonder that he was so, for he had found out that he was a sinner,

and he knew that God could not have sin in His presence, and so he was very sad: he said he longed for rest, but did not know how to get it.

So Joe's aunt told the little boy how he might find rest in Jesus, even by believing on Him, and she prayed with him, and then left him.

When little Joe rose in the morning a new object and a new desire seemed to be before him. This those about him could not fail to

notice. Surely, the object was Christ, and the desire was to live for Him. He went about the cottage singing so loudly and cheerfully that at last his aunt asked, "Why do you go on singing like that, Joe?" "Oh, auntie, I can't help it," said Joe, "I am so happy."

Then the aunt went on to tell me about the little boy's illness. His aunt did not think him so very ill, but one evening when she was busy down below she heard him call from his little bed upstairs, and ran quickly to him. He was very restless and begged her to come and hold his hand; he "could not keep it still," he said. So she came and sat down beside him, and stroked the weary little hand till he grew quieter, and then they talked together about the Lord Jesus.

The aunt did not know it would be the last talk, but it comforted her afterwards to think over it, and to remember what they had said, and I think the Lord Jesus Himself must have led her to repeat the verse which she did to Joe, and to ask him one little question.

Still stroking his hand, she said, "Joe, do you remember those words, 'Absent from the body to be present with the Lord?' Would you rather be 'present with the Lord'?"

"Oh yes, auntie," he said, "it would be far better." And so they talked a little longer together, and then Joe's eyes closed wearily, and at last he quietly slept.

His aunt bent over him, and hearing that he was breathing regularly, she put the restless little hand down again, and covered him over tenderly, and left him. Then having made her arrangements for the night, she, too, lay down and slept.

But about three o'clock in the morning once more little Joe called her. She quickly ran to him again. He was sitting up in bed, "So cold!" he said. She wrapped a blanket carefully round him, and laid him down again, but as she did so, one little sobbing sigh came from his lips, and dear Joe was gone.

The old grandfather slept peacefully down below, but Jesus had "called a little child unto Him." Yes, little Joe's spirit had gone to be with the Lord Jesus. It was "far better" to be with Him, he had said but a

short time before, and now he was to prove it so.

Little Joe's body sleeps in the churchyard, awaiting "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," when he with all who love the Lord Jesus shall rise quickly and joyfully to meet Him. R.

*IMPRISONED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE,
AND
BURNING BIBLES.*

DELABER and Garratt soon met again, for although, as you may remember, Delaber had started on his journey, intending to find a hiding-place in Wales, he was overtaken by the cardinal's messengers when he had gone only a little way from Oxford, brought back, and imprisoned along with the friend who had so resolutely refused to betray him. And now in the quiet university a reign of terror began; the search for English Testaments continued, and all with whom they were found were counted guilty of heresy.

It was very grievous to the proud cardinal to think that his college, which he had intended to be the glory of England and to carry his name down to distant times as its founder, should thus become the home of those who read and sought to distribute books condemned alike by the voice of the Church and by the law of the land. He was determined to root out heresy from Oxford, even though in so doing he might have to sacrifice some of the choicest of those scholars, whom he had brought thither that they might adorn the noble university by their learning.

Beneath Cardinal's College was a deep cave, where stores of salt fish were kept. This den became the prison of many of Tyndale's Cambridge friends, among them John Clarke, who had warned Delaber of the persecution which was coming, and Fryth, afterwards Tyndale's companion and helper abroad. There they remained in the damp, unhealthy air, and in darkness, through the bright days of spring, when all things were rejoicing in the sunshine, and fed only upon salt fish. The only change that came to the poor captives as the days went by was when, one by one, they were taken into the light of day that

they might be tried for their offence. At last one morning they were all, some twenty young men, led out, each carrying a faggot to show that he counted himself worthy of the fire, to a place outside the town, where a great fire was kindled. Into this fire they were made to cast the books which had been found in their rooms, and then the little company were led back again to their miserable dungeon.

We may well imagine how gloomy their prison looked to them after having been permitted once more to see the sweet light and the fair face of nature. And how sadly the prisoners would remember that in publicly burning the books, which had been the means of such blessing to them, and in doing penance for having harboured and distributed them, though they had yet escaped death themselves, they had not "witnessed a good confession." Garratt and Delaber, as well as Fryth and Clarke, and many others who truly loved the Lord and honoured His word, took part in this act of penance, and the cardinal trusted that he had broken the spirit of the Oxford scholars, and that all men would now set them at nought, and count the doctrines they had taught and the books they had burned alike unworthy of belief.

Of Delaber we hear no more. Garratt seems by some means to have obtained his liberty for a season. But the time came when he was again arrested, sent to the Tower, and taken thence to die at Smithfield, the place where so many martyrs were to yield up their lives. The Lord had strengthened the timid heart, and confirmed the wavering faith of His disciple, so that he no longer shrank from the terror of the suffering of such a death, but heartily embraced it, in all things more than conqueror through Him that loved him.

Perhaps, as the time dragged on, and no deliverance came, the poor prisoners in the cave under Cardinal's College thought it would be easier to die than to live. Spring had given way to summer, but no light came to them, and, oppressed by the bad air, consumed with thirst, seemingly forgotten, like dead men in their graves, their spirits sank, and their bodies were so worn and wasted that they almost shrank from meeting each other as

they wandered up and down their narrow cellar. In the early days of their captivity they had been accustomed to talk together, for this boon was not denied them; but now, if one met another, in their sad pacing to and fro, they passed in silence. At last Clarke, the one to whom so many had looked up as their teacher and friend, fell down, and remained in a fainting condition, unable to move. The rest believed him dead, and gathered round him as he lay upon the damp floor; they felt his cold hands, and tried to warm them in their own, and, kneeling beside him, repeated in his ear cherished words of hope and cheer from the Bible for love of which they were all suffering this long anguish of imprisonment.

As they prayed and wept over him, the sufferer revived, to linger through a few more days of darkness and weariness. Then three others sank down; and it was whispered that four of the Cardinal's College prisoners were at the point of death, and their friends earnestly besought Wolsey to have compassion upon their miserable state and release them, ere it was too late, from their frightful dungeon.

He gave permission that the sick men should be carried to their own chambers, and they were taken home to the rooms which they had left six months before, in all the vigour of youth—only to die. Wolsey, doubtless, touched at receiving the news of their death, gave orders that all the other prisoners should be set at liberty, upon condition that they remained at Oxford, not going ten miles from the town. When they came forth, so altered were they, and such sad marks had their captivity set upon them, that the friends who came to meet them almost failed to recognize them.

It is well that we should take such a story as this to heart, dear children; it is well that we, who have never known any trouble for the sake of God's word—unless, perhaps, the trouble of that indifference of heart that leads us to value it so little and to read it so carelessly—should never forget how dearly the love of it, and the desire to make it known to their neighbours, once cost these young Englishmen.

THE INDIAN CHIEF AND HIS SON.

A FRIEND of ours who labours in the gospel was telling us, some little while ago, about the Red Indians who dwell in parts of Canada. "I was working," said he, "near an Indian settlement, when I was asked by a chief to visit his son, who was dying of consumption. This chief was a christian man, and his earnest desire for his son was that he might be saved.

"For some time I endeavoured to set before the young man the glad tidings of salvation, but apparently met with no response. On leaving, I felt it right to tell his father so. With much emotion the chief replied, 'I no scholar—me can do nothing—but me sure Jesus; He do something.'

"The young man was a scholar; he had come home from college; for many of the younger Indians in certain districts are educated. Indeed, I could take you to some of their poor huts, where, if you were to speak about the truths of Scripture, the Red Indian would take down his Greek Testament, and discuss the force of the words with you from the Greek! But, though this young man was well educated, he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ. But his father had faith in the Lord for his son's salvation—'but me sure,' said he, 'Jesus, He do something.'

"Now the Lord delights to answer the faith of His people: the chief could not be sure that Jesus would do something for him and be disappointed.

"Some time after I paid the young man another visit, and it was to rejoice over the sheep that had been lost, but was now found.

The young man had received the word of life, and he loved to gather all his relatives and friends around his bed and to speak to them about the Saviour he had found.

"His mother was one day weeping by his bed, and only those who have been much in the company of the Indians can enter into the meaning of such a remark. 'A mother weeping!' Yes; the Red Indians are taught not to weep. They are taught never to betray a sign of what they feel. But she was weeping, and a tear dropped upon her son's brow.

Looking up, he said, "Mother, why do you weep? Because I shall be so happy? I'm going to be with Jesus. I am afraid you are not sure you are saved. But if you are saved you will soon come too—to heaven, where I am going."

"One of his dying requests was that his body should be borne by four christian men to its last resting-place, and that a hymn should be sung at the side of the grave.

"Need I say this request was carried out?

"The young Indian

now rests a little while, his spirit absent from the body, present with the Lord; for soon 'the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,' and all who belong to Christ shall leave this earth for the Father's house on high. Many a Red Indian will be found amongst the number of God's people in that day, for many of these people have learned to know the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and God the Father as the true God. They have turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. Where will you, dear young reader, be found on that day?



INDIANS AND TENTS.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE TEXT ON THE WALL.

THE TEXT ON THE WALL

THE following incident is recorded as a proof of the way in which God honours His own word, and also with the hope that it may encourage christian workers to labour on patiently.

In a country village some fifty miles from London lived H., a man whose openly profane, drunken life made him the terror of his neighbours. He was a labourer, and his wife went out to the villages around as a charwoman. A christian lady, for whom Mrs. H. was in the habit of working, soon learned her pitiful story of privation and misery, and cruel usage from her husband. She sought to comfort and help her, and at last the poor woman began to feel that there might be hope even for her husband, and often entreated the lady to go to their humble home, and speak to him as she had spoken to her. For some time the lady was unable to go, until one day, when Mrs. H. went as usual to her work, she told the lady that her husband was so ill he was obliged to keep his bed, and "What I shall do now I don't know," said the poor woman, sobbing, "for his temper is dreadful," and again she entreated that one visit might be paid to the sick man.

The promise to call and see him was given, though reluctantly, for H.'s violence was so well known that the lady did not feel at all safe in going alone to his house. Having promised to visit him, however, she one morning made her way to the cottage, knocked several times, and, receiving no answer, at last opened the door. The one room, which formed the ground-floor of the cottage, was empty, so the visitor guessed at once that Mrs. H. was away at work, and the sick man alone. Not knowing what to do, she stood some minutes waiting; then, going to the foot of the stairs, knocked again, but no answer came; then she spoke, but still no answer. What was she to do—go upstairs and perhaps face a furious man, or go home and wait for a better opportunity? No; she would not go away; so, lifting up her heart to the Lord, she slowly mounted the staircase, and entered the bed-room only to find it empty. A feeling of terror came over her,

and her first impulse was to turn, and rush downstairs, and out of the house: for what would H. say if he returned and found her there? For an instant fear prevailed; then, remembering that she had brought with her a large gospel text, with trembling fingers she fastened it up on the wall just opposite the foot of the bed—fastened it securely, spite of the terrified feeling that made her heart beat painfully; and then, having finished her task, she fled down the dark staircase and out of the house as quickly as possible.

A few days afterwards Mrs. H. came up to see her, and her first words were, "Oh, ma'am, *did* you put up that text?" Then she told how that, on the morning after Mrs. H.'s visit, she had been awakened by her husband shaking her, and asking, as he pointed to the wall, where *that* came from. She looked, and, when she saw the blessed words of God's love to sinners, in her surprise she said, "The Lord must have put it there; I didn't; and there's been nobody here!"

There the text remained for three years or more. The lady left the neighbourhood, and the event was almost forgotten by her, when one day she received a letter from Mrs. H., telling her that at last the text had done its work.

"One day," she wrote, "my husband said to me, 'Betty, read me that text. What does it say?'"

"'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

"'Does it say that? Read it again.'"

Mrs. H. read the verse again; a pause; and her husband said, "Read it once more."

Once more the words of love fell upon his ear, and then he said, quietly, "*That will do*"; and, in a very different tone to that which he generally used, he added, "Now, you go down and sit by the fire, Betty; it's cold up here, and I am all right now."

That day was the beginning of a new life for poor H. "Her husband was so kind after that," his wife said; "no more cursing or swearing, no more cruel words, but peace

and happiness as the result of hearing and believing the message of God's love."

The letter went on to say that the husband was rejoicing in Christ, and that the writer felt she must find out where the lady lived who had so long before put up the text which God had used to save her husband. The reader may imagine the praise which the glad news called forth, and what an encouragement it was to the lady to go on seeking to do what little she could for the One who loved her and gave Himself for her. L.T.

I GOT HIGH-MINDED—THAT WAS IT.

R. W. had to rough it in his youth. When but a child he was actually bought and sold twice. No loving mother gave him a good-night kiss, no kind father told him of Jesus. Young R. had to feel blows instead of kisses, and to hear cursings instead of loving words.

Having had such a training, the "tares" which had been sown so plentifully in his young heartsprang up and brought forth all too soon their sorrowful fruit. Early in life R. trod in sinful paths, and he was for many years a sad specimen of one led captive by Satan at his will.

Such was R. before "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" shone into his dark heart. He came to the Light, and, oh, what a change it wrought in his life and walk! He enjoyed peace with God—old things had passed away, and all things were become new.

While he continued to pursue with diligence his humble occupation, he now began to testify openly of the grace that had sought and found him—yea, of that Blood that cleanseth from all sin. Gently and simply did R. speak, as he could find occasion, and the Lord owned and blessed his labours. At a time when cholera was raging, he was especially active, fearlessly at the bedside of the sick and dying, preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

Of many things R. knew but little, yet he could happily say, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," and his very imperfect education was more than compensated by the fervour of his spirit, so that

believers found his company refreshing and profitable.

As years rolled on, however, a time of trial came, when the enemy of souls, ever active, sought to ensnare this devoted child of God. A most subtle trap was laid, and, sad to say, the unsuspecting R. was soon caught in the enemy's coils. Yielding to temptation, old tastes and habits revived, and he rapidly slid backwards into a path of sin and shame.

His christian friends noticed that R. was not with them so frequently as before; then sad rumours reached their ears. One and another of them visited him, but he answered their plain questions with false excuses, and began to avoid the company of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, at one time there was reason to hope that he had repented, for he again sought the company of his fellow christians, and seemed brighter in spirit and happier in mind. These hopes, however, were soon dashed to the ground. R. again declined. His sorrowing friends prayed for him and visited him, but, as he refused to listen to them, they could only leave him to walk in the path he had chosen, while they continued to grieve over his fall and to entreat the Lord for him.

Truly, this sheep wandered very far astray, but the Good Shepherd went unweariedly after him until He had found him.

One morning a friend told me that R. was very ill, and asked me to visit him, saying, "You will find a very great difference in him." I went, and found him lying upon his bed, pale and emaciated. Knowing what had happened, how could I address him? My thoughts were directed to the fifty-first Psalm, which I read aloud.

This scripture seemed just suitable to R.'s case, and it gave us both liberty to speak freely. To my great joy, I found that the Lord had already wrought a work of grace in his heart, surpassing all my expectations. He sorrowfully but candidly owned to what an awful extent he had gone in sin, to the great dishonour of his Lord; while, out of a softened but thankful heart, he acknowledged the loving hand that had so mercifully snatched him out of the dreadful vortex, into which he

had been sinking deeper and deeper. He saw it all now. Speaking of his own sad and prolonged departure from the Lord, he said, "It did not begin with——" mentioning the particular sin which had so easily beset him; "it was not that; no, it was not that. I was asked to visit the sick and the dying. I went where the cholera raged, for I was not a bit afraid; I knew that the Lord was using me, and I got high-minded. Yes, I got high-minded—that was it—that was it."

Beloved fellow-labourer in the gospel, especially do you and I need to observe the solemn exhortation, "Be not high-minded, but fear." We may be very diligent in the Lord's vineyard, we may with joy discover that the Lord has been pleased to own and bless our labours; yet if our hearts are centred upon service, instead of being fixed upon Christ, we are treading on dangerous ground. "Abide in Me, and I in you," said our Lord and Master. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."

To witness a restoration such as R.'s proved to be, was enough to fill one's heart with praise and thanksgiving. When I parted from him I could only praise the Lord as I thought of the grace that had brought this straying sheep home—of the mercy that had restored to him the joy of God's salvation—and of the peace of God which had once more taken possession of his heart.

"The Lord has restored R.'s soul. Is it His will that he should also be restored to the confidence of those whom he had left, to follow the crooked paths of his own wilful heart's devising?" This question pressed heavily upon my spirit, so that I felt I must visit R. a second time. Receiving from him the assurance that he would gladly hear what I had to say, I told him of the sorrow, of the grief and pain his friends had endured concerning him, for I felt that I must be faithful and withhold nothing from him. His reply was a bitter lamentation:—

"I've dishonoured the Lord and grieved my brethren; I've dishonoured the Lord and grieved my brethren."

Does this meet the eye of one who has gone

astray?—How long will you dishonour the Lord? Return, beloved one, return! Oh, why do you linger in a path of sin and sorrow? Delay not, but return at once to the loving arms of Jesus—to the Lord, who alone can restore the soul. He will frankly forgive you all; it may be that He will restore you with joy to your brethren—that He will open your lips, and your mouth shall show forth His praise.

R.'s grief was certainly not lessened by the thought that probably he never would be restored to health and strength—never be able again to honour the Lord by a consistent walk before men. He desired me to become his messenger to several christian friends, whom he mentioned by name—to entreat them to come to him, in order that he might acknowledge before them his sorrow for what had passed—to tell them how the Lord had restored his soul, and to meekly ask their forgiveness for the wrong he had done them.

Surely I need not speak of the joy with which this message was received. The same Lord who in mercy had restored R.'s soul, restored to him also the confidence and affection of his christian friends. Soon after this he fell asleep in Christ. J.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

IN the gospel of St. Luke the Lord is represented several times as engaged in prayer, a circumstance in exquisite keeping, surely, with the intention of the gospel—which is to present Him to the gaze of adoring hearts as the Son of Man, perfect in His dependence upon God—and one fraught with deep significance to us. In this, as in all things else, He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps.

In the perfect dependence of the Lord we do not see that lifeless, impassive spirit which some affect, who profess to be so dependent as to be independent of times and seasons for prayer. Oh, no! And if it was His practice to withdraw for prayer, should it not also be ours?

In the midst of His work, and the height of His fame, Jesus retired to pray. There went

"a fame abroad of Him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness and prayed." (Luke v. 15, 16.)

There must be this withdrawing of ourselves frequently into the sole company of God, if we are to do His work, and if we are to know Him at all as friend knows friend. Yet how disinclined the heart often is to it. How seldom are we really face to face, as it were, alone with God, unless forced into His presence to obtain some mercy, some needed boon! But for Jesus to withdraw Himself into the wilderness to pray, was for love to delight in the sole companionship of its object. "I am not alone, for the Father is with Me." If serving man was sweet to Him, the service was rendered in communion with His Father, and His God? And this holy dwelling of His soul in the Father's love was His refuge as the perfect Man. H.

REST.

THE following lines are from the pen of a young christian, one who has but recently found Jesus for her own Saviour. Dear young friends, may you be stirred also to live for Christ, to speak of Christ, and to spend and be spent for Him. Give to Him your youth and fervour; devote to His service the brightest days of life. Remember that you will soon behold Him in heaven. What will be His word of welcome to you then?

Oh! how I longed to go to Him—to Him Who died for me! I had no fear of death, But only longed to go to Him and rest—To rest far, far away with those I'd loved Awhile on earth: no toil, no care, no fear, No labour, only rest, and rest with Him, In whose fair presence His beloved ones Find peace, and joy, and life for evermore! "Oh! take me, God, unto Thyself," I cried; "Oh! take me soon"—and even as I spoke A weariness fell on me, and I slept. And as I slept, I dreamed; and lo! I sailed In a lone bark, across a golden sea, Towards the bright shores of an unknown land. No sun, no moon was there, and yet was all Light—lighter far than day. And as I looked Methought I saw a city, crystal clear,

Like unto purest gold, with jasper walls, And gates of pearl. Soon I had landed there, And stood rejoicing on the peaceful shore. I knew that this was heaven, God's own throne, And gratefully I fell upon my knees, And thanked my God that I had seen this sight—That He at last had brought me safely home Into His promised rest. I raised my eyes That I might look again, and, lo! One stood And gazed on me with love unspeakable. It was the Lord, the "altogether lovely," "The chiefest" and the best "among ten thousand."

He spoke to me—He spoke so tenderly, I held my breath to listen, as He said That all I saw before me, all was mine, And here at last I might remain and rest For evermore. But, then, He turned and looked Into my bark—my empty bark, and sighed. I grieved that He should sigh, and wondered much. "Though thou hast loved Me well, dear child," He said,

"Thou hast not loved to tell thy fellow men Of Me, that they might know what I for them Have suffered. Thus full might have been thy bark With a rich freight of living souls so brought To Me." Then I wept, and could not answer. I knew I had been selfish—had not cared To tell my joy to others. I had longed To go to Him myself and be at rest; I cared not for, nor thought of other souls. He looked at me, and once again He spoke In accents tender: "Child, thou lovest Me? Then wilt thou for My sake renounce this rest For a short space of time, and go to earth Once more, and there relate to weary souls, Tossing, as thou hast done, on life's rough waves, What a safe haven thou hast found? Bid them To share thy bark and also come to Me. My hand shall guide thy course, My word shall hold

In check the surging billows, and My light Shall gleam across the waters unto thee. Thou hast no cause for fear, so wilt thou go And work for Me?"

"Yea, Lord, I'll go for Thee Whither Thou wilt, for Thou wilt strengthen me With might, to speak and work for Thee, and help To bring a few more wand'ers to their home, A few more heavy-laden ones to rest." I stepped with joy into my little bark, Thankful that I might do some little thing For Him who loved me so and died for me. The heavenly city faded from my sight: I could no longer see His form, but felt That He would ever care for me, and guide

Me safely home, at length when He should see
That rest was needful. I could trust His love.
I woke, and found that it was but a dream,
Only a dream; but still I knew that He,
My Lord, had sent it me, and I resolved
That through His grace and strength I'd fight
for Him—

Fight with His foes, and capture from their grasp
Those bound in fetters—chains of sin—and help
To set them free in the sunshine of His love,
To lead them to His feet.

TELEGRAMS TO HEAVEN.

OLD Mary's active days are over, and very quietly she sits now in a low chair, by the cheerful blaze of a large fire, in a long ward of the great workhouse.

Her friends would hardly recognize in the calm, placid, old woman the once bustling person they had known; she who used to be here, there, and everywhere, so busy in her work about her house, now paralysed, too infirm to move, seated from morning till night just where they place her. It was a great change, her neighbours thought a very trying one; but Mary, like her namesake of old, had "chosen the good part," and, as she sat at the feet of Jesus, and heard His word, she did not find her confinement so irksome as her pitying friends imagined.

"Indeed I am very snug and very happy," she answered to their sympathising words, "and I have plenty to do too, though I do just sit here where they put me in the morning till night comes round again. Shall I tell you what I do? Just pray for every one all day long. I say that my prayers go like telegrams to heaven: only they are a deal more wonderful than any telegrams the telegraph office sends out; for, at most, these can only go round this world, but my prayers go right up into the ear of the great God in heaven. And He does send such answers to my telegrams, *that* He does, and never gets tired of them; so then I make bold to send up a few more."

No wonder that old Mary is happier now than ever she was, for in her helplessness she is doing a work far greater than many an one who, Martha-like, seems more busy in the Master's service.

Many a rain-cloud, that has emptied itself on the dry, thirsty land, has found its birth-place in some hidden lake, far off among the mountains; rising there, as a faint mist into the heavens, and coming down from thence in refreshing showers to water the parched earth, or to cool the sultry air of some distant city. Who knows what rich blessing Mary's earnest prayers may have brought to souls who have never heard of the poor old saint in her quiet corner. Surely Epaphras was such another, "labouring fervently" in prayers for the saints, that they might "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

Dear reader, do you sometimes grieve that you can do so little for the Lord Jesus, and for those whom He loves? Remember old Mary's "telegrams," and think if, at least, you could not send up a few such to our God, who hears and answers prayer. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you." D. & A. C.



Grace shown and Power given.

WHEN God lays hold of a sinner and brings him to Himself, His ways with such a soul can only be like Himself. God is great, and does great things; and because God is what He is, His salvation is wonderful. We have to tell of this great salvation, from sin and from wrath, through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, for sinners; and also, we have to record God's ways of dealing with each soul of His saved people individually. On the one hand, there is the mighty work of the Saviour on behalf of myriads of souls; on the other, the gracious, tender care of God over each saved soul, working in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.

A very beautiful illustration of this way of God with His people is opened out to us in the history of the patriarch Jacob. We know that Jacob was not altogether a fine natural character. His brother Esau's testimony of

him, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times" (Gen. xxvii. 36), points to a want of openness in Jacob, and unfolds a view of his taking advantage of his brother, which is painful even in natural character. But God in His sovereign grace had set His heart on Jacob, even as now He takes up the sinner, not because He finds that which is lovely in the sinner's character, but because He Himself loves to bless.

After a time, according to the government of God, Jacob had to reap what he had sown: his ungenerous ways met their reward; and he fled from his home because of Esau's anger. Jacob thus became a homeless wanderer. When he was some way on his journey the night closed around him, and Jacob was in darkness. So the solitary man took of the stones of the place where he was, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. (Gen. xxviii. 11.)

When a sinner realizes what a position he has brought himself into by sin, when he is conscious of the desolation of this world, and when darkness closes around him, what is more natural than that he should seek a little ease, go to sleep, and forget his sorrow? Man would fain hide from his soul the gloom of his surroundings: he cannot bear to meditate as in the presence of God. To sleep to the realities of where a man's own sins have brought him, seems to be the chief aim of the unsaved soul. How many of us, now awakened by God in grace, must own to this fact! Our sins brought us into circumstances of misery and darkness, and then we sought our comfort in forgetfulness of the reality of our position.

When Jacob was asleep, unconscious as to where he was, God, in His sovereignty and mercy, spoke to him! How gracious is God! When we were afar off, when we were insensible to Him, His eye was upon us, and just as we were, He spoke to us. When God speaks to a sinner, it is according to His own sovereign grace. God's ways are the expression of what He is. Would that each one of us might truly believe what a God is our God. It is not only that He

speaks to us, but He speaks out what is in His own heart about us. When a soul, aroused to hear God's voice in His word, has a listening ear granted him, he will presently learn that God blesses His people according to His own standard, according to what He is in Himself, and not by any means according to what men think they need or feel they are.

A glory opened over the sleeper in the desert! He lay in the darkness, utterly unconscious of God's thoughts about him, when God sent him a vision. He beheld the Lord God standing in heaven looking at him lying upon the earth, and the angels of God ascending and descending the ladder, which, set up on earth, reached even to where the Lord God stood. Why were those angels going up and down that ladder? The activity of those heavenly messengers was being exercised on behalf of the man God purposed to bless. What sights might our eyes not see were they but opened? even as it was with the servant of the prophet when he beheld the horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (2 Kings vi. 17.) Are not the angels all "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14.)

But it is God Himself, not His angels sent to minister to poor feeble man, who shall fill our thoughts. God Himself stood at the top of this beautiful ladder, and He spoke to Jacob. Now mark how God speaks to the sinner. He does so in a way absolutely different from our natural expectations. God did not find fault with Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13); God first declared who He was, then His purposes respecting Jacob (13, 14), and then His gracious will to keep Jacob safe till all His declared purposes should be accomplished (15). Now it is thus that God speaks to us still. He reveals Himself, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and His purposes to bring His people into glory, holy and without blame before Him in love; and then God assures each soul to whom He has so spoken, of His gracious mercy, and that He will never leave, never, no, never forsake him.

Jacob did not enter then and there into the

meaning of God's words. It is a mistake to suppose a sinner all at once receives into his soul the full measure of what the gospel of God is. It was many a year before Jacob entered into the counsels of God concerning him. The first effect on his soul upon awaking out of his sleep was fear. He said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! Now this utterance seems very remarkable. God had spoken in matchless kindness to Jacob, but the result on Jacob's soul was fear. Such, however, is the result which is produced in the heart and conscience of the sinner, when he hears in his soul for the first time what God in His love and grace is to sinners. Fear fills the breast. "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Can we not indeed say, when a sinner is awakened to hear God's voice, his convictions of sin, and the sense of what he is, witness that he has been at Bethel?

May each reader know, in the inmost recesses of his soul, such a Bethel—such a house of God as this. On the one hand, the revelation by God to him of what God is for His people; on the other, the deep sense in the soul, of the utter unworthiness of man in the presence of God.

Jacob's natural character displayed itself, even in his vow to God made upon the marvellous revelation and the promises just given to him, "I am with thee, and will keep thee." "If God will be with me, and will keep me," said he. Alas! for our hearts, and our "If God will be with me." What a comfort it is to know that God has purposed, and that God has promised, and that He will perform!

Jacob's natural character also displayed itself in his saying, "Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." We must remember that he had nothing save his staff when God promised him his wealth. All that he eventually possessed came to him by the sovereign goodness of God.

Is it not written to us, for whom God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all—to us, to whom, with His Son, God will also freely give all things—"I beseech

you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" ? (Rom. xii. 1.)

We would yet linger a little over Bethel. God does not forget the day when He first spoke to us. Can we forget it? It is a question the christian who has been converted for, may be half his lifetime, does well to ask himself.

"Oh! happy day when first we felt
Our souls with true contrition melt,
And saw our sins of crimson guilt
All cleansed by blood on Calvary spilt."

On that day did we not in spirit consecrate ourselves to our God? Perhaps we were very ignorant of Him in that day, but His grace to us moved our hearts towards Him. We knew our sins were washed away in the blood of His Son, that God was our God, and heaven our home, and we yielded ourselves then and there in spirit to our God who loved us.

Do we suppose God forgets those yieldings to Himself? "Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." (Jer. ii. 2.) Years had rolled over Jacob's head when God said to him, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me." (Gen. xxxi. 13.) Such a voice may perhaps startle some in the middle life of their christian course on earth, and raise in their hearts the inquiry, What! have the very mercies of God in life made my soul forgetful of the love of its espousals; of the kindness of my youth?



Religious Egypt.

LONG before the exodus of Israel, and before the judgment of Jehovah fell upon Egypt, that land was in what would be now called a high state of civilization. When a nation has a firm system of government, an army, judges, and polite society, it is called civilized—that is, the skill of its people has enabled the whole nation to work together for



AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PROCESSION.

the common good. The greatest wonders of ancient Egyptian civilization were connected with religion. The ruler was priest as well as king—indeed, he was a kind of god in the eyes of his people. This is not surprising, since Egypt was a land of idols; the sun in its cloudless sky, the Nile, watering its rainless earth, and the very beasts of the field being objects of adoration. To their gods the mightiest buildings were erected and the greatest statues fashioned, which the world has ever seen. Civilization and religion went hand in hand in ancient Egypt; but theirs was a religion of lies, and a worship of gods which are no gods. The true God was unknown, and His power was despised.

For some hundreds of years the people of Israel were settled in this land of idols. The Israelites knew of the true God, and some of them knew Him as their own God. It is the same to-day. In the midst of people who really do not know who God is, people who profess His name are to be found, but His children alone know Him as their God and their Father.

Such of you as have seen—perhaps on the Continent—a religious procession in honour of some “saint” will be interested in our picture, which gives a general idea of an Egyptian religious procession. We could not give a picture of one of the very grand processions, for thousands of people took part in them. But you can see a boat or ark, in which is an idol carried under its canopy, and following it some great person, having in his left hand a censer, and in his right a vase. Priests bear the ark on poles, while a chief priest walks by their side, clad in leopard’s skin. Players on instruments of music precede the idol, and the whole array glides into a temple on the bank of the river. As we think of these heathen processions of hundreds and hundreds of years ago, and consider the religious processions of our day, the outward show of the old idolatry seems strangely like that which has crept into Christian countries.

It may have been when engaged in some religious ceremonial that Pharaoh went out to the river, as we read in Exodus vii. 15 and viii. 20. At the river’s brink Moses met him,

declared to him Jehovah’s word, commanding the liberty of the Israelites, and then Aaron with the rod of judgment smote the waters in the sight of the king and all his servants, and before their astonished eyes the sacred Nile became blood.

The last days of Israel’s bondage in Egypt had come, for Jehovah had begun to work for their deliverance. Had He so willed it, Israel might have gone out free at once, but He had His own purposes both in respect to them and their oppressors, and His purposes took some months in their accomplishment. But when God begins to work He goes on to the end, even though it may seem at times that He has stayed His hand. The Lord had promised Israel liberty and a land flowing with milk and honey, and He is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness. Now, how true is this of our times! With Him a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. (2 Pet. iii. 8.) He has said that judgment is coming on this world, and therefore come it will. He has said, His people shall be delivered from the coming judgment, and therefore delivered they will be. No one, no thing, can stay the word of God.

How strangely must the tidings have fallen on the ears of the little children of Egypt when their parents first told them of the Hebrew prophet Moses, who had dared bid their great king Pharaoh to let the Israelites go! No doubt many a smile went round the elegant rooms and palaces of those long bygone days. What would the priests of the great temples think of the Hebrew prophet’s word? But the day of judgment for Egypt came, and the firstborn of those beautiful houses died, and the priests of those great temples lived to see Jehovah’s judgments executed against their gods.

What occurred in those days—the voice of warning against the world and the promise of freedom for God’s people—is occurring now: only now the promise for God’s people is deliverance from the world before the judgments are executed on it. The day is near at hand. “Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”

The Lord will soon call His people to their home.

Religion and civilization will continue for a season after the Lord's people are gone, but the judgments that are declared against the world will fall upon it, and all the boast of this day and all its greatness will perish.



A Little Child's Happiness.

"OH, Mother dear," cried a little girl, as she ran to her mother's arms and kissed her, "how happy it is to be good!" There had been many a little scene of strife in that home among the children. Not, dear boys and girls, what generally is thought much of, but little quarrels, little sharp words, and little angry looks. But the power of the name and love of Jesus had entered that home. The mother felt it, her little ones felt it, and when the father came home in the evening he felt it too. And the happiness of His gentle rule caused our little friend to exclaim as she did.

You need to be ruled by the Lord Jesus as well as to be saved by Him, and He will not only save you from sin, but make you happy in His love.

LITTLE EDNA AND THE BISCUIT LETTERS.

WOULD you like, dear children, to hear about a dear little girl with whom I travelled awhile ago in the train?

As she was going alone on her journey, she had been given into the care of the guard, and he kept her ticket for her. Someone had given her a few of those letter biscuits with which one can spell words, to amuse her, and we had not long left London before I noticed that she had put an E, a D, an N, and an A together, and I daresay if you had been there you would have guessed, as I did, that Edna was my little companion's name.

After some time we were left alone to-

gether in the carriage, and then I asked her if she could spell me a very beautiful name beginning with a J. She spelt "Julia," but that was not the name I meant; so I asked her if she could spell a very wonderful and beautiful name, a name which was only borne by one, who once lived on this earth. Ah, then she knew what name I wanted, and with a bright look and ready fingers she spelt "Jesus" for me.

After a little while I asked for another name. What do you think it was? I said, "Can you spell the name of any one whom Jesus loved?" I watched her little fingers, as they put the letters together, until I saw that she had spelt—what name do you think? why "Edna," to be sure. So then I knew that this little girl had learned something of the love of the Lord Jesus, and the thought made me glad.

When I asked her how she knew that He loved us, she spelt her answer in these words, "He died for us."

This was a right answer, was it not, dear children? But it was a solemn answer too. That the holy Jesus, the Son of God should die for us shows indeed how He loved us; but it also shows how terrible our sins are, that He should need thus to suffer.

We reached our destination soon afterwards, and the guard came to find his little charge.

I trust, by and by, I shall meet dear little Edna in the presence of the Lord, in that place which He has gone to prepare for His own. Will you also be there, dear children?

Remember, only those "who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" can be fit for that holy place.

MY HOME IS THERE.

MARIE and Anne were the children of English parents, but they had lived in Spain from their early childhood. When Marie was nearly seventeen, and Anne fourteen, their mother brought them over to England to be instructed in the language, and they were placed under the care of a christian lady, who lost no time in teaching them

to read ; and as they were very anxious to get on with their studies, and were withal very persevering, they made rapid progress, and were soon rewarded by being able to read easy English books.

But there were more important things for them to learn than reading English. They knew scarcely anything about "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Their friend often told them beautiful stories from the Bible, to which they listened very attentively, but they seldom asked any questions, and were very silent as to their soul's condition. Yet in after days Marie told her teacher how wretched she used to feel at that very time, for a deep longing to know the pardon of all her sins, and to have the certainty of going to heaven, had taken possession of her.

One evening Marie was walking along a public road, when the sound of singing attracted her attention. Being extremely fond of music, she stood still to listen. The sound came from a hall at the road-side, where a company of people were assembled to hear the gospel preached. "How sweet it sounds!" she said, and scarcely knowing what she was doing, she stepped inside the doorway. The congregation was singing—

"Above the waves of earthly strife,
Above the ills and cares of life,
Where all is peaceful, bright, and fair,
My home is there, my home is there!"

"Ah!" thought Marie, "that home is heaven, but it isn't my home. How I wish I knew I was on my way to heaven!" But the last verse of the hymn was being sung, and the young girl's ear was bent close to the door that she might not lose one word.

"Beyond the bright and pearly gates,
Where Jesus, loving Saviour, waits,
Where all is peaceful, bright, and fair,
My home is there, my home is there!
My beautiful home, my beautiful home!
In the land where the glorified ever shall roam,
Where saints so bright wear crowns of light,
My home is there, my home is there!"

The singing was over; the listener had not lost a word, and as she listened, a deeper and more earnest longing to go to that beautiful home, to be with the Lord Jesus, filled her heart.

While Marie stood against the door, it

suddenly opened, and the door-keeper invited her in, so she went in and sat down.

"That night," said she, afterwards, "will ever be remembered by me as a night of nights, for 'twas then that the Lord Jesus spoke peace to my soul. I saw for the first time in my life the meaning of His name of Saviour—wondrous name to me a sinner! I knew my need, and felt His power to save. What I could not do for myself, He did for me, and in such a way as to glorify His God and Father. Before I left that hall, I, too, could say, 'My home is there!'"

Marie's heart was filled with praise to God for His goodness to her.

"He watched over me," she would say, "all the while I was in Spain, where my mind was so dark about Himself; and then He brought me to England for the very purpose, I believe, of opening my blind eyes, and turning me from darkness to light—from the power of Satan to God."

Anne was not long in discovering a very great change in her sister, and the Lord opened her heart, too, giving her a desire to know the same precious Saviour. Neither was she long left in doubt as to His willingness to bless her. Her tears of joy, and her earnest manner when questioned as to her trust in the Lord Jesus, told as plainly as her words that her soul was saved.

"I believe I'm saved," she said, "because God's word says, 'Whosoever believeth on Him, hath everlasting life,' and God does mean what He says."

"True, true," said we, "and no one can ever be lost who simply believes God."

Our dear young friends became very anxious that their parents should know the Lord Jesus, too, and much prayer was offered to God on their behalf. Long letters were written to their father, and often did they entreat their mother to harken to the gospel, which had been such good news to them.

Our young readers will be interested in hearing that Marie and Anne had never seen snow, though they had seen groves of orange trees, bearing leaf, flower, and fruit at the same time, and many strange and lovely sights in sunny Spain.



WHITER THAN SNOW.

One winter day the snow fell in great abundance. Anne clapped her hands with delight, and exclaimed, "Oh, how white, how lovely!"

Marie was more thoughtful; she said—

"I like to look at it; it is so very beautiful; but I love to think that a sinner washed in the blood of Jesus is whiter than snow. We saw no snow in Spain, and we did not know our Saviour there; now, how different! We can say now, 'Unto Him that loves us, and has washed us from our sins in His own blood,

and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.'"

When I last heard of Marie and Anne, they were bright and happy, waiting, like the Thessalonian saints, for the Son of God from heaven, and while awaiting His return to take them to His beautiful home, still praying for their parents' conversion, and seeking in many ways to please Him who has done such great things for them.

R. B. S.

MY BEST TEXT.

"MOTHER," said a little girl on coming home from the Sunday school, "I want to ask you something."

"Well, dear, what is it?"

"Do you know which is my best text?"

"Tell me, my dear," replied the mother.

"Well, mother, you know that I'm just seven years old, and my little text has just seven words in it, and this is it:—

"'It is time to seek the Lord.' " n.

THE STORY OF DR. BARNES.

ABOUT the time when the Oxford students were arrested, hands were suddenly laid upon Dr. Barnes, one of the most learned men at Cambridge, and orders were given that diligent search should be made throughout the colleges for forbidden books. Thirty members of the university—probably many of them those who had been known as frequenters of the White House, where the Greek Testament readings took place—were pointed out to Wolsey as likely to be tainted with the contagion of the German doctrines, and their rooms were the first to be searched. No books were found, however, for those who possessed them had received timely warning, and had conveyed them away before the officers came. Dr. Barnes, who was carried off to the cardinal's palace at Westminster, to answer before him the grave charge of heresy, had really given offence by a sermon preached at the university, which had been reported to Wolsey. In explaining his text, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," the preacher had, in a very marked manner, alluded to the pompous and showy processions in which Wolsey was accustomed to move from place to place, and had asked whether scarlet and gold raiment and pearls befitted the servants of Him who lay in the lowly manger at Bethlehem. It were better, he said, that the great ones of the church should quit their magnificent palaces, sell their costly robes, and give to the poor, that they might be more like their Master.

There could be no doubt that, in speaking thus, Dr. Barnes aimed a blow at the greatest

dignitary of the Church then in England, and when Wolsey saw the man, whose sermon had been reported to him, kneeling at his feet, he did not spare him.

He asked him, not without reason, whether he had not scope enough in the Scriptures to teach the people without setting him up as a laughing-stock before them. This question might well fill the heart of the preacher with uneasiness, for the man whom he had thus held up to ridicule was the most powerful man in England. Perhaps, too, Barnes felt the truth of the words in a deeper sense than that which Wolsey attached to them; for surely it was no part of the mission of one who stood before his fellow-men as an ambassador of Christ to talk to those who were perishing for lack of the bread of life of the golden shoes of the proud cardinal, of his crimson gloves, and of the silver pillar which was borne before him in token of his being a pillar of the Church.

While Barnes was trying to justify himself, Wolsey abruptly closed the interview by telling him that, if he could not find six doctors of the Church who would swear that he was not guilty of heresy, he must be burnt.

Dr. Barnes had been bold in preaching against error. Even before he had met Bilney, and had those conversations with him which were the means, by God's blessing, of leading him to Christ as the only confidence of his soul, in his sermons on St. Paul's Epistles, he had struck many a blow at the follies and superstitions of the religious teaching of his day. But to be occupied only with what is false, even though it be to denounce and cast it down, does not give strength to the soul when brought face to face with a terrible death to be borne for the truth's sake.

The threat of Wolsey did its work. During the long night in the Tower, which followed his interview with the cardinal, those dreadful last words came again and again to his mind, ever bringing fresh images of horror, as he dictated to three of his students who, for love of their master, had followed him to prison, a long statement in defence of his doctrines.

Next day a paper was brought for him to read. It was written by his judges, and he was told that he might save his life, if he would, by putting his name at the bottom of it to signify that it expressed his own opinions, and then reading it aloud in public without omitting or altering a word.

To do this would be acting a lie; it would be denying the truth, which he had learnt from the unchanging word of God, and Barnes recoiled from the thought.

"I would rather die than sign that paper," he said, resolutely.

"Alas," cried those who had been sent, if possible, to shake his purpose, "is there then no help for it? Verily you must die, if you take not this only way of escape; you must die, and then"—the words were craftily spoken—"and then, when better times have come, times when you might defend what you count truth, no man making you afraid, your voice will be silent, and there will be none to be her champion."

Then, pressing nearer and dropping his voice, one of his friends whispered, "Think, oh, think what it must be to be burnt alive!"

Barnes *did* think—had he not been dwelling all night upon the terror and the anguish of such a death until heart and flesh failed? And, sore beset, he took the pen they offered him, and signed the paper.

It seemed but a little thing; those words, *Robert Barnes*, were soon written, but even before the ink was dry, the thought of how much they meant rose before him in its tremendous reality, and all the arguments which had seemed so fair showed themselves the vain and unworthy excuses which they were.

He who was a deceiver from the beginning had deceived this servant of Christ for a time, but the Lord graciously gave Barnes another opportunity of being His faithful witness, even unto death. He lived to learn that God had no need of him to defend His truth by his life, and by-and-by we find him uttering such words as these: "The sun and moon, fire and water, the stars and the elements, yea, and also stones shall defend this cause, rather than the truth should perish."

The following Sunday was fixed for Dr. Barnes, the Augustine prior, to perform a public act of penance at St. Paul's. The great cathedral was full, and upon the steps the cardinal sat enthroned in all his pomp, as Barnes entered, accompanied by five Dutch merchants, who had been convicted of bringing the English New Testaments over the sea. One of the six held a large candle, and each of them carried a faggot. They knelt in silence while they listened to a sermon preached to them by Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. Then, being led to a fire which was burning before the great cross at the gate, they walked three times round it, throwing in their faggots, which helped to consume the books which were also thrown into the burning; and then, having received from the bishop absolution for their sin of heresy, and the assurance that the Church had graciously received these erring sons back to her bosom, they were again led to prison.

This act of penance at St. Paul's happened about the time when the like scene was enacted at Oxford.

In the autumn of the same year, just when Fryth and his companions were released from their loathsome dungeon, Barnes too was set free, and sent back to his Augustine monastery. In less than a month he was again in danger, a charge being brought against him concerning a conversation which had been overheard between him and two countrymen who possessed the gospel in English. Escaping from the officers who were in search of him, he contrived secretly to get on board ship, and take refuge in Germany, where he is said to have spent some time with Luther. It was fourteen years after the time when he had loved his life in this world too well that Dr. Barnes, with Garratt and a faithful martyr named Jerome, suffered at Smithfield. Each in turn made confession of his faith in Christ as his only Saviour, disclaiming all other ground of confidence, and so, hand in hand, they passed through the fire into the presence of the Lord, who had counted them worthy, and had, by His mighty grace, made them willing to suffer for His name.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.
A FORSAKEN BOUGH.

"IN that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough . . . Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips : in the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish : but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." (Isa. xvii. 9-11.) This is one of the many passages which describe a time of sorrow and trouble such as this world has never seen.

You will recollect that in our last paper we looked at the Mustard Tree, as well as the Wild Olive Graft, and from them learned lessons referring to the present period of God's dealings with men : that is, the period beginning with the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and ending—how soon we know not—when all believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and to be for ever with Him.

This period is a time of pure grace. God is now making known His kindness and love in saving the lost and undone. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." It is the day when He makes good the tree, and then looks for good fruit.

Nevertheless, God warns that, if His goodness is not continued in, judgment must fall. Alas ! we have only to look around us to see that the world still refuses to receive the testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. This period of grace will not always last : Jesus, who now sits on His Father's throne, will rise up and shut to the door, and there will be found inside all His saved ones—outside, all neglectors, refusers, despisers !

But will that be the end of the world ? Oh no ; another period, which we have termed that of "THE FORSAKEN BOUGH," will then commence. For when all true christians have been taken away from the world, and the Holy Spirit of God no longer works as He does now ; the "Man of Sin" will arise, and the period of "Thorns" will be reproduced, but in a far worse way than formerly.

Israel will then be indeed a forsaken bough.

No one can rightly imagine what an awful time that will be. The exact length of its duration we cannot say with absolute certainty, but we gather from certain passages in the Book of Revelation that the severest part of it will probably last about seven years.

That harvest will indeed be "in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." The united voice of all the Scriptures is—WRATH IS COMING UPON THE EARTH. Flee from the wrath to come is God's warning word. The true believer, however, can now say, "I am delivered from the wrath to come." Can you ?

Joseph, a type of Jesus, is called a "fruitful bough," and you may now pluck the fair fruits which hang within the reach of all. Soon it will be in vain to look for pardon, peace, forgiveness, joy, heaven.

Do you ask, Will there afterwards be no hope ? None whatever for those who, having heard the gospel, believed it not in the day of grace. They will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. The end of the period will be the manifest appearing of the Lord Jesus, accompanied with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all that are ungodly and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then shall the men of Belial be, all of them, as thorns thrust under the pot. Full, sweeping, unsparing judgment will end that period. This will be a day of thick darkness, but even in the midst of it God will begin to work again, for we are told that He will set His hand a second time to recover the outcasts of Israel. He will remember His promises to them, and the good Olive Tree will again be brought under cultivation, for St. Paul tells us that God is able to graft them in again.

God will then send the Jews as His missionaries to the far-off nations who have not heard His name, and the result of their mission is briefly summed up in the end of Matthew xxviii. Those who have believed God's servants will inherit an eternal blessing, and then will commence the period known as the millennium, or a thousand years' blessedness with Christ.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



I'M GLAD TO ACCEPT IT.

I'M GLAD TO ACCEPT IT.

"WILL you go and see my husband?" said a poor woman, who had recently been converted. "He is ill, and I think he may soon die, and I am very anxious about his soul."

"Is he awakened as to his condition?" I enquired. "Can he say what you said a short time ago—'I'm lost, and on the road to hell?'"

"Ah! my poor husband has not got to that yet, I fear; but you see, ma'am, I am very ignorant about such things, having only just come to Jesus myself. He is a much better scholar than I am, and he reads the Bible a great deal, and talks about the wonderful stories in it, but then he does think himself so good. He has been a teetotaller, too, for many a year, and is a very industrious man: as good a husband, and kind a father as ever was, has he been, and he seems to have a sort of pride in his goodness. He does not like me to say much to him, for he says he knows so much more than I do."

The wife and I agreed to pray for the husband, and on the following evening, accompanied by a friend, I went to Mr. C.'s home. He was sitting by the fire with his wife and youngest son. He appeared glad to see us, and asked us to speak loudly, as he was hard of hearing. I took the proffered seat next to him, and waited to hear what he had to say. He told me of his complaints, his work, how long he had been employed by one master, of his club, and his teetotalism. At last I asked, "Do you read much?"

"Yes," he said, "I always keep the Bible here, ma'am," and he turned round and took a large-print Bible off a table; then putting on his spectacles, he turned over the leaves admiringly, saying, "Some pretty stories there are in it, too. Now what could be prettier than the tale of Joseph and his brethren, or of Daniel in the lions' den?"

"Let us leave both Joseph and Daniel," I said, "and hear what God has to say about ourselves. In the third chapter of Romans it is written, 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Each of us in this

room is included in that word 'all,' but there is a difference, for some of us can say we are going to be in the glory with the Lord Jesus Christ; your wife will be there; what about you?"

Great beads of perspiration stood on his brow, but not a word did he speak. I opened the Bible, and read from Matt. vii. 13, 14. 'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' Now, C.—there are two ways spoken of in the verses which I have read; can you tell which way you are in?"

"I am in the broad way," said he, slowly.

"And where does that way lead?"

A solemn silence followed my question. In that little room God, by His Spirit, was working, opening the blind eyes. The answer came—

"It leads to hell!"

"My poor husband," cried the wife, "God grant that you may never go there!"

My companion and I could only thank God for giving another sinner to see his lost condition. "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." (Eph. v. 13.) "God is love as well as light," I continued, "and 'God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' (Rom. v. 8.) Now will you rest your soul upon the word of God, and accept His offer of rich, boundless mercy?"

But James C. had been asleep for nearly sixty years, and was now only just aroused to the fact that his life had been a terrible mistake, and that his righteousnesses were as filthy rags. Well, then, might he be afraid, and reiterate, "I'm going to hell!"

We repeated in his ear the good news of accomplished redemption; of peace made through the blood of the cross; of God's satisfaction in the work of His Son, and of a risen and glorified Saviour at God's right hand. But he sat stolidly silent, seemingly only alive to the truth that he was in the broad way that leads to destruction.

Committing him in prayer to God, we left him, my friend whispering in his ear, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

Various causes prevented me from seeing him again for about three weeks, though his wife told me that he was so ill as to be confined to his bed, and his agony of soul appeared to increase.

"Surely," said she, "the Lord will have mercy upon him. He prays sometimes all night, calling upon God to save him from going down into the pit. Can't you go and see him again?"

"Let us wait upon God, to use His own word, whether by one of us or by any other channel," I replied. But soon an opportunity opened itself for again seeing him, and I was favoured by being alone with C. The wife had gone for his medicine, and a neighbour, who was sitting by the fire, arose and left the room, saying she knew we should like to be alone. I turned to the sick man, who looked very ill and very sad, and said.

"My poor friend, I know your body is suffering, but is it well with your soul?"

"Oh that it were!" he replied.

"You know that you are a sinner?"

"Indeed I do; a very vile one too."

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' It is also written that 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' It is worthy of your acceptance to believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

A bright look came over his face, as he said "I'm glad to accept it."

"And do you really believe on the Son of God?"

He looked at me then, nor did I question the words he uttered: "I believe from the very depths of my soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, and I have everlasting life."

"And what has the blood of Christ done for you?"

While the tears rolled down his cheeks, he fairly smiled, and said, "Cleansed me.. from all.. sin."

"And what have we to do?"

"To thank Him for what He has done. Let us thank Him now."

While the praises of this new-born soul went upward, the wife came in; she saw the change, and a joyful "Praise the Lord," came from her lips.

James C. remained for some time a feeble invalid, but it was good to see how God used him among his poor relatives and neighbours, many of whom were sick and dying; some to whom he declared the way of salvation have gone to be with Christ, and others are ready to follow.

It has been observed that he had read the word of God, and knew much of the letter of the Scriptures; when he became converted the Holy Ghost used this knowledge and gave him to understand the things of Christ and show them unto him.

We may truly say of him, the Lord saved his soul, satisfied his heart, and then put him to sleep.

Reader, have you learned that you are in the broad way? If so, will you accept God's salvation?

E. E. S.

*WHAT WE SEE NOT YET, AND
WHAT WE DO SEE.*

"WE see not yet all things put under Him." (Heb. ii. 8.) We do not yet see the beautiful order of God's government on the earth with man on God's behalf in his place as the head of God's creatures.

The words of the eighth Psalm concerning the excellency of Jehovah's name, acknowledged in all the earth, with His glory set above the heavens, and strength brought by Him out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, and the enemy stilled by Him, is not yet fulfilled. That day is yet to dawn. It will come. When the sons of God enter into the liberty of the glory (Rom. viii.), then shall the groans of creation be hushed, and man shall rule for God in subjection to God on this earth. "But now we see not yet all things put under Him." No, on this earth is disorder and suffering; neither is it in man or for man to put the crooked straight, nor is it for the christian to dwell with a broken heart on the power and misery of sin, as if he should remedy this world's condition.

God has other purposes in view for His people, and that we may enter into His purposes we need gaze upon the beautiful sight to which the sentence following that which speaks of the disorder on earth, re-addresses our hearts, "But"—as if turning for the moment the eye away from the present unruly scene of earth—"but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." (v. 9.) Order and honour prevail in the glory on high.

'There sits the "same Jesus," who became a man on man's behalf, who was made a little lower than the angels—yea, for the *suffering* of death. What words in which to speak of Him—the suffering of death! Not death simply, but its suffering also: for such was His precious will and love for us.

We do not see on earth what the people of God would behold. The Father's kingdom is not yet come, His will is not yet done as in heaven, so on earth—"but we see" the comforting, the invigorating sight, Jesus in heaven, crowned with glory and honour. Occupation with the sin and misery of earth distresses and burdens the heart; looking to Jesus where He is occasions freshness and joy to the soul, calms the spirit, and restores its heavenly balance.'

We cannot rectify the world—we are not even called to the effort—but we are called to care for the sorrowful and the tried who are about us. But in order to effectively do this—that is, to do it in the power of the Spirit of God—we need truly to be able to say from our hearts, "But we see" Jesus where He is!

THE FINE PAID.

A SHORT time ago there might have been seen, in a third-class carriage on one of our Scotch railways, a policeman sitting with a handcuffed prisoner by his side. The man had broken the law of the land, and was going, as fast as steam could take him, to the place where he was to suffer the punishment for his evil deed.

But stop! The passengers seem greatly interested in this man's case, every one more

or less feeling for him. Question after question is put to the policeman as to the cause of his conviction, and the severity of his sentence.

It seemed that he had been poaching in the River Tweed, close to the town where he lived; and having been caught and found guilty, he had been sentenced to pay fifty shillings or to suffer thirty days' imprisonment.

"Could he not pay the fine?" the passengers asked.

No; and so he must go to prison. Presently a gentleman, an entire stranger to the prisoner, and to all in the compartment, asked whether, if the fine were now paid, the prisoner could go free.

"Certainly," was the answer.

The gentleman then very kindly agreed to pay the fine. When the train stopped, the policeman with his prisoner and the gentleman left the train, the money was handed over to the authorities, the discharge was made out, the prisoner's handcuffs were taken off, and he was free. Another had done for him what he could not do for himself.

He was now free to return to his home and family; one would hope with a deep sense of the fruits of sin, and of gratitude to the one who had met the demands of the law for him.

You will say, doubtless, that this was a very kind action on the part of the gentleman. It was, but let us use it to lead us to consider the matchless love of God in sending His only Son to meet us on our journey to punishment, for Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost.

However, any illustration falls far short of the reality of this love of God to man.

This poor prisoner had no claim upon the kindness of the gentleman who had thus befriended him. But the Scripture tells us that in our case it was "when we were enemies" to God that He gave His Son to die for us. (Rom. v. 10.) There was nothing in us to prompt God to love us, yet He *has* loved us with this infinite love.

Dear reader, do you believe this love of God?

Do you believe that God loves the sinner?

What would you have thought if this poor man had refused to allow the gentleman to pay his fine?

Surely he would have deserved to go to prison twice over if he had refused such kindness. But how are you treating God? His grace brings salvation to you. Have you accepted His mercy?

You have sinned, you have broken His law, and, do what you will, you cannot pay the debt. As fast as time can take you, you are being hurried along to suffer the terrible, endless punishment of your sin. Is it nothing to you that the blessed Son of God has died for sinners? What news is this for you that you may be saved? May you feel *your* need and own that you are a lost sinner, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as our ransom.

F. McL.

TWO SPRINGTIMES IN ONE YEAR.

ONE who has watched Nature for some years, and has sought to catch the meaning of her parables, remarks that he knows none more suggestive or cheering than that parable which she gave us this summer.

One spring day a violent gale blew from the south. It was just at that time when the elms were adorned in their delicate first green leaves, when the young pink-tinted sycamore leaves were beginning to unfold, and when the early oaks were opening their mellow buds. The result of that gale was such a sight as is seldom to be witnessed. Elms and sycamores were scorched as with fire, their tender leaves were shrivelled up, and black and burnt they rustled upon the branches, while the oaks looked as if it were winter.

Many said the trees must die, and as the month of May wore on, and they remained barren and unfruitful, it seemed as if the gloomy prediction would be realized. But lo! June came, and with it to these stricken trees a second spring. By degrees the elms were clad again, and the sycamores shook out their pendent flowers, and at last the oaks, which seemed so hopeless and lifeless, were robed again in the mellow garb of spring. Fears were entertained on account of some of the oaks, for till June was well advanced, they

stood in the hedgerows and on the hill-sides facing the south looking as bare as winter. But slowly, slowly their vigour of life asserted itself, and so it is, this year these trees have had a second spring.

Is there not herein a parable to us, and a voice to cheer?

It is not every christian who stands facing the storm; some are situated in more secluded spots than others, and so escape the bitterest of the death-laden blasts of trial and distress which others experience. But to such as have been stripped of their leaves, and who, though it be their midsummer, yet seem as lifeless as winter, may we not say, Take courage, and learn of life and strength from the trees.

A mighty strength for recovery lay in the trees, and it asserted itself by beginning the laborious work of spring all over again. There was no new freshness instilled into brown and withered leaves, no restoration of the lifeless parts to living freshness; but from within there commenced an unseen work, which resulted in a slow and gentle putting forth of the tender shoots one by one and little by little. So it came to pass that where more favoured trees were in full large leaf—such as the ash, which, being so late in its verdure, escaped the effects of the blast—the unusual sight was seen of the oak, out of its order, just beginning its year-life over again.

Now are there not resources in God's kingdom of grace excelling those of His in the kingdom of nature? Shall any christian doubt that He, at whose command the life of the trees clothes the forest with verdure, that He, our God, has power to clothe the most backward or soul-stricken of His people with more than their early freshness? This is impossible to doubt.

The believer has Christ as his life, and in the believer the Spirit of God dwells, and though the blasts of temptation may have withered his life's early promise, still where there is honest confession of this truth, and also patient waiting on God, little by little the graces of Christ within and the beauty of holiness shall surely express themselves.

The beginning of the recovery will be unseen, it will be a process going on in the soul, known perhaps to God alone, but the end will be a witness to men. Such work will necessarily be gradual.

It was observed, too, that the black, withered-up leaves remained in their places. No restoration of these took place; but they became gradually hidden by the beauty of the fresh life. We cannot alter the past. We cannot mend the broken and ruined work of bygone days; but if we look only to Christ, we shall not be wanting in freshness or in fruit.

Let the stricken believer hope in God, and expect from Him. Look for an arising of such freshness and vigour, that what now seems a lifeless life shall yet be graced with the beauty of a second spring.

THE WAITING ROOM.

A FEW years ago a gentleman had occasion to visit a little town in Kent. He missed the train by which he intended to return, and, finding that he had two hours to wait before another train for London should arrive, to pass the time he bought a novel, and, comfortably seating himself in the waiting room, was soon lost in his story.

Shortly after, two young men entered, and seated themselves not far from him. The elder of the two had sometime before been brought to the knowledge of the Lord, while his companion had only the day before found Christ as his Saviour, and, in glowing language, he was telling of his newly-found joy.

Quite unintentionally, the subject of our story overheard their conversation. He listened at first with the quiet smile of one who hears the ravings of an enthusiast; but the joyful earnestness of the speaker made him feel the reality of the words which he uttered, and they took a firm hold upon him.

He rose hastily and left the waiting room, but still he seemed to hear that young voice repeating its bright testimony. His heart craved rest—happiness—something certain to cling to in this world of shadows and unreality. If Christ, he thought, could give such a joy and happiness as these two lads

possessed, how willingly would he surrender his fortune, his all, to be the possessor of such a treasure.

The train came up, and he left the station; but the impression which he had received remained, and for some time he was in a state of deep anguish of soul—an anguish bordering on despair. He was as one walking in a labyrinth, who cannot find the clue to the way home. How blessed it is to know that every desire of the soul, aimless and wandering as it may seem, is marked by the gracious eye of Him who never for one moment ceases in His care for the poor weary heart, which it is His purpose to fill with His own peace!

Oftendid that gentleman pray that he might see those young men again, whose testimony had awakened him to a sense of His distance from God and need of His grace. He had no idea who or where they were; but one afternoon, about three months after the memorable conversation which he had overheard, the thought struck him that they might belong to the place where he had seen them, and he determined to try and find them out. Taking a ticket for C——, he was soon speeding on his way, with many a misgiving lest his journey should be in vain. The train stopped at the first station, a passenger entered, and the gentleman of whom we write, glancing at him, immediately asked himself where he had seen the face before. Yes, surely he could not be mistaken; he had already found the one he was in quest of, for his fellow-traveller was none other than the elder of the two young companions who had spoken together in the waiting room three months before.

He introduced himself, and told his tale to a willing listener, who pointed him to Jesus for pardon and peace, and told him that he was dishonouring God by trying to save himself, while he had only to believe what God said and trust in the finished work of Christ.

The train again stopped. The seeker after Christ and his companion stepped upon the platform, and there in that waiting room, where the Lord had first spoken to his soul, He spoke again, but this time the words were words of peace.

Having found Christ and rest in Him, the

subject of this story became at once a bright and active worker for Him. The name of Jesus was ever on his lips and in his heart, and he longed to make that saving name, that name of power, known far and wide.

Beloved reader, are you resting your soul on the finished work of Christ? Nothing else will do. Every other prop will slip from under you, but resting on Jesus, the sure foundation, you are secure. Be not deceived; do not put off the great question of your soul's salvation. God places peace and pardon before you to-day, but not to-morrow. Oh, come, and, in coming, find rest to your soul. K. R.



Power Given.

We will now turn to another great crisis in Jacob's history. Will our reader study the thirty-second chapter of Genesis, giving special attention to the exercises of Jacob's soul there recorded. God would bring Jacob back to Bethel. The house of God and the gate of heaven should have been his dwelling-place, even as to-day our spiritual dwelling-place should be the heavenly places where Christ is. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above." (Col. iii. 1, 2.) True, Jacob, as the record of this chapter is given, does not return so far as to Bethel, but we know he is on the journey there.

Now God has His wonderful ways, which He carries out with each one of His people. God was about to give Jacob power with Himself and with men. The believer needs power to overcome for God. But this power is never vested in a believer as of right: he is but a vessel to contain it, and does so according to his daily dependence on God. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. iv. 7); and when we are weak, then are we strong.

If God opens the heavens to us, we know that what is our portion there is also that of "all saints." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. i. 3.) The greatest, the highest, the most marvellous blessings, are as much for the weakest of all saints as for even Paul the apostle. But when we come to such a question as power, we have that which is distinctly personal and individual. God deals with the individual believer, working in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. Each and all of God's people will have the same heavenly home, but there is a vast difference between saint and saint on earth. Some are the prey of every passer-by; others are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Now when Jacob, as we read in our chapter, had planned and arranged, according to the subtle wisdom of his soul, he still had, even as have all saints in the great crises of their lives, to deal with God alone. "And Jacob was left alone." (Gen. xxxii. 24.) At what we may call the hour of his conversion Jacob was alone: then God spoke to him. Now, in the hour of this great crisis of his life, God allowed Jacob so to arrange his plans that when all his skill had exhausted itself, Jacob was again found alone, and once more it was night.

It is well to revive in our souls the memory of God's dealings with us. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." (Ps. cvii. 43.) To go through this life without deeply pondering over the ways of God with us individually, shows a want of wisdom which tends toward spiritual insensibility. Nay, we would venture to say, in the light of such a psalm as that from which we have just quoted, that God expects His children to observe His dealings with them in their path on this earth.

Alone and in the darkness, then, was Jacob. "And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Do we not see in this that God had a controversy with Jacob? The heaven-sent messenger was wrestling

with the pilgrim on earth! Solemn consideration for our hearts.

He was in great straits of soul as to his circumstances, in deep exercise concerning his possessions and his family, yea, as to his own life's security, for Esau and his four hundred men were marching to meet him. "For I fear him" (Gen. xxxii. 11), he had prayed to the Lord. But, notwithstanding his trial, no comfort was as yet poured into his spirit, but instead "there wrestled a man with him." Perhaps our reader knows experimentally, in degree at least, what this means.

God was dealing with Jacob directly and personally. God was not going to allow His servant to cross the river in his own strength and wisdom: He had a deep purpose of blessing for Jacob, which He was working out by passing him through an exercise of heart so that he should be prepared for God to work in him. Jacob did not, at the moment, apprehend God's ways with him. We know well what this is by studying our own histories. Hence Jacob went on wrestling till the breaking of the day. He struggled on. He would not give up. He put all his strength and vigour into the conflict. Yield he would not. But go forward on his own way and in his own strength he could not.

Then, "when he saw that he prevailed not against him," that is, when the heavenly messenger saw, He put Jacob into the place of power—"he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him." Then the "man," was, as it were, for leaving. "Let me go, for the day breaketh," but that touching of Jacob's thigh had given Jacob the secret of prevailing power; for, clinging to the mighty One for support, he cried, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."

This is what would be called now-a-days the second conversion, or the entering of the christian into the secret of power. Behold that wrestler, now clinging to him with whom he had struggled through the night! A lame man cannot wrestle, but he can clasp and pray. And thus it was that power entered for Jacob. So, when in this clinging posture,

while in faith saying, "'I will not let thee go except thou bless me,' He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob." Supplanter—the old name indicative of the natural, unlovely character. The truth about ourselves does not come out anywhere so clearly as when, in our helplessness, we are clinging to Christ for strength, for then we dare tell the truth about ourselves.

Now, that natural strength is relied on no longer, and the truth about self is told, the visitor says, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Jacob, yet no longer Jacob, but Israel, the prince with God, is strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, "and He blessed him there."

May we not say that the way by which God brings His people individually to dwell in Bethel—the house of God and the gate of heaven—is by the deep exercises of some Peniel, where they see God face to face, and where He deals with them in such a way as to take away hope in self strength, teaching them Himself as their All?

A COMMON EXPERIENCE.

A PERSON not fully established in Christ was recently giving us a little of her experience. "I used to expect christians," said she, "to be perfect, and would say to my friend, who professed to be saved, 'You are only a deceiver, for you do things and say things you should not.'"

"You held the looking-glass up to your friend?" we said.

"Yes," was the ready reply, "and then I held it up to myself, and began to look at myself, and say, 'You are not a christian: how can you be one, inconsistent as you are?'"

Now, this is an experience common to many. What we have to do, as to our fellow christians, is, in love, to look for Christ in them; and what we have to do, as to ourselves, is, by faith, to see that we are in Christ. We have not to look at the faults of others, neither have we to look in ourselves for goodness.



LITTLE CHARLIE AND HIS KNICKERBOCKERS.



Come, my Little Lamb.

THE following story of a little child was told me by the mother herself, though, alas, she did not know the blessed Saviour who had won the heart of her little boy. She was a hard working-woman—helping to support

her family by letting lodgings. She had many children; and this little one, the youngest, three and a half years old, was sent for the whole of each day to an infant school, the mother being too busy to attend to him. There he heard of Jesus, and of His love for little children.

The mother told me that it had been her practice to give to each child, as soon as it was able to understand anything, a book with Scripture pictures. She had never felt her own

need as a sinner, and could not therefore teach them about the Saviour—the One who died for sinners. But, as she expressed it, she did not wish them to grow up without “religion.”

The book of which her dear Charlie became possessed was a well-known one for children—“Peep of Day”—in which a picture of Jesus blessing little children greatly attracted him; and so often had it been turned to by his little hands, that it was torn from its place.

Charlie's mother loved her little son, and entered with tender care into his childish interests. His one great wish was for the time to come when he should lay aside his frocks for knickerbockers; a great event to a small boy. His mother promised that when she had made him two pairs, he should begin them; and he begged that his frocks might then all be given to a little girl at the school, of whom he was very fond.

At length the new garments were ready, and on the morrow he was to put them on. So eager was the child about this, to him, great event, that he asked to have them on the same evening, so as to feel what it would be to wear them; and when he was attired in them, such was his delight that he could hardly be made to put them off and go to bed.

In the morning, when his mother went to call him, he said, “Mother, I'm not going to get up to-day.”

Surprised, she said, “But, Charlie, remember your knickerbockers!”

“Yes, mother,” he replied, “I know. But they don't wear knickerbockers in heaven, and I'm going to heaven. I've seen Jesus, and He said so”—beckoning with his hand—“‘Come, My little lamb; come, My little lamb’; and I'm going to Him.”

The mother could not understand it; the child appeared well; but she let him have his way, and he had his breakfast in bed. All the forenoon he lay in her lap, and there dozed heavily; waking only to repeat a verse or try to say a hymn, and then he dozed again.

He had but one thought in his mind, and that related to his favourite picture, and all that he asked for was this picture. The book was found, but the page was gone;

where it could be, the mother could not say. However, Charlie had “seen Jesus,” and his heart was satisfied.

Very softly little Charlie slept away. At three in the afternoon he was with the Saviour who had called His little lamb; with Him who came “to save that which was lost.” (Matt. xviii. 11.)

When his frocks were collected for his little friend, the treasured picture was found carefully folded in a piece of thick paper in one of the pockets! What a sweet voice of Charlie's love to the Lord.

That little lamb was one of those that had been given to the Lord by the Father. He had died to save him. To that dear child, unknown as one belonging to Him, and in that house, where not another soul had tasted His love, Jesus had revealed Himself; and had made him content and glad to leave everything that had held his little heart to earth, to be with Him in heaven.

And so it ever is. When we have “seen Jesus,” when the heart is satisfied with Him, the things of earth are not worth looking at.

“He that cometh to Me,” the Lord Jesus says; not “he who once came,” but “he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.” (John vi. 35.)

S C.

NOT A CHRISTIAN.

“I KNOW I am not a christian; I don't profess to be one,” was the light and careless answer, given by a young girl not long since, after a few earnest words had been spoken to her for her soul's good.

She seemed to think, poor girl, that really some small credit was due to her for not pretending to be what in reality she was not; as if, when brought face to face with her Maker and her Judge, she could by her bold answer, “I have never professed to be a christian,” escape the reward of her indifference.

Yet this very girl could calmly look back and remember the death-bed of a dearly-loved sister, and say, “Oh, she was a christian if ever there was one, and often did she speak to me about being saved and of going to heaven.”

Love of admiration, of dress, and of worldly companions seemed quite to "choke" any serious thoughts, which her sister's conversation and happy end might have caused, and an occasional attendance at Bible class or the preaching of the word was thought by this young girl interest enough for her to take in "all that sort of thing," as she called religion.

Dear young readers, I hope these words, so lightly spoken, "I know I am not a christian," will strike you as solemnly as they do me. What an awful thing is this to "know!" How strange that anyone can go on eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, taking pleasure in all the trifling things of this poor, perishing world, and not troubling about what is to follow after this earthly life is over. Then, perhaps suddenly, death comes, and the giddy, thoughtless one is snatched away to hear the Lord utter His terrible "I know"—"Verily I say unto you, *I know* you not." (Matt. xxv. 12.)

I want you now, dear young friends, to think for a few moments. You know of some, whom you love, who are waiting for the Lord Jesus to come from heaven and take them to Himself. They are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they can each say, "I know that I am a christian."

I should like you to write down the truth about yourself. Would you have to put down I know I am, or I know I am not, a christian? That little word "not"—that word makes all the solemn difference.

Should the Lord Jesus come to-day, do you think that by saying, "I know I am not a christian, but then I have never pretended to be one," you would be allowed to go up into the glory with His people? No, indeed! And, oh, dreadful thought! it will be of no use saying then, "Oh, if only I had thought about this, and had cared about being saved before, I might have gone up too, but now it is too late."

Now is the time God gives you to be saved. Oh! be ready. I will relate to you a simple incident of the danger of delay.

A little girl was once told by her kind aunt that she would call for her, at a certain time in the day, to take her with her cousins in a carriage to some beautiful gardens. This was

a great treat for Florrie, and she was most anxious to go. But her aunt attached one strict condition to her promise, which was this, that Florrie should be ready when called for, otherwise she would be left behind.

Florrie, of course, meant to be ready, but her spirit of delaying overcame her, for as the time drew near, she would put off preparing for her journey. In vain her cousins entreated her; she only laughed at them, telling them "there was plenty of time yet." A faithful servant warned the foolish girl several times of the risk she ran of being left behind, but only received from Florrie an angry and rude reply.

At last she was suddenly called for when in the very act of trying to make up for lost time. She was not ready, and the door was shut upon her. So she was left behind. Great was her sorrow, and bitter her disappointment, but no one could be blamed for it but herself.

Alas, when the Lord comes to take His people home, I fear that many an one will not be ready. Oh! what will it be to be "left behind" at the great, solemn day of which I have been speaking?

Those words of the Lord Jesus are spoken to you, dear children, as well as to grown-up people, "I therefore be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh." (Matt. xxiv. 44.)

E. G.

THE MAN WHO WANTED TO SEE JESUS.

WHEN the Lord Jesus was here on earth, He was going along a road one day, surrounded by ever so many people, when a man ran out of the crowd and climbed up into a tree. What was it this man wanted? He wanted to see Jesus, and as he was a little man, he could not look over the peoples' heads, and so he got up into the tree, because he heard that Jesus was going to pass that way.

Presently the Lord came to the tree in which the man was; it was a sycamore, which has long branches and large leaves which grow very thickly together. Jesus stopped, and looked up. Hark, He speaks to the man. What does He say? You recollect that the man wanted to see Jesus.

"Zacchæus, make haste and come down ; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

How pleased the man must have been to have such a visitor ! He received Jesus joyfully.

It is very happy for us to be sure that Jesus knows when anyone wants to see Him. He read the heart of Zacchæus, and thought of him among the hundreds of people who crowded around Him, but many of whom, alas, did not care to see Him in their hearts.

Do any of you want to see Jesus ? He is in heaven now, yet we can come to Him, though we cannot see Him with our eyes. We have to believe what He says, just as a little girl once believed her father, though she could not see him. He was in a dark cellar, and she wanted to go to him, and he told her to jump and he would catch her. She said, "But it is so dark, father, I cannot see you." But at her father's word she jumped, and he caught her in his strong arms.

Dear little ones, trust the words of the Lord Jesus, though you cannot see Him, as the little girl trusted her father's word. He died on the cross, that by His precious blood He might wash away all the sins of every one who comes to Him. All who believe on the Lord will soon be with Him, not only for a little while, like the man was who wanted to get a look at Jesus, for presently Jesus will fetch them to be with Him for ever. S. E.

A LITTLE WORD OF COUNSEL.

LITTLE children need the loving care and the strength of the Lord for them quite as much as grown-up persons do in their trials. You have your little worries as much as old people have theirs, and there is only one way for you to overcome, and that is by going to the Lord for strength.

When a trial of your temper or patience comes you cannot fight it in your own strength, but if you look off from the trial to Jesus, even if it be but a very little look, strength will come from Him to help you. The more often you go in this way to the Lord, the more you will find Him as your strength, and thus the things which once made you very cross and disagreeable, will only make you go to the Lord for strength.

Do not keep thinking how unkind so-and-so is, or how selfish someone else is, but think of the Lord Jesus. This will be a cure for your vexation about your troubles, indeed it will. And the Lord has not only died for you and made you His for heaven, He also lives for you, and would have you know Him as your friend and your strength for earth.

THE SHEPHERD WHO DIED.

"I do not think I can be one of Jesus' lambs," a little boy sobbed out, as he lay in his father's arms. "And why so ?" enquired his father. "Because I do not feel I am," the child replied.

After trying in various ways to comfort the heart of his little boy, and yet being very anxious not to say one word which should lead his child to think lightly of what it is to be a sinner, the father repeated this text, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." These words satisfied the child directly. Do you, dear young friend, know their sweetness ?



More about Master Bilney.

ONE more name must be added to the number of those who — like the tradesman in earlier times whom the country people loved to call "doctor" Man, and like Dr. Barnes in the times of which we are now reading — were allowed to glorify God in the fires from which, in the hour of weakness and, perhaps, of self confidence, they had once turned away — that of Thomas Bilney.

If, in these little sketches of some of those who suffered to win for us the treasure which we now enjoy, the treasure of an open Bible, the story of their weakness is told without any disguise, it is not that we would dwell upon the failure of servants of Christ who truly loved Him, but rather that the grace of the Lord towards them may be seen, and that



WYNDLEY LED TO THE STAKE.

we may remember, too, how bitter a thing they found it to have listened to their own cowardly hearts, and to the pleadings of those who would have them pity themselves, rather

than to Him who said "My grace is sufficient for thee. For My strength is made perfect through weakness." (The words are quoted as Tyndale wrote them.) And, again,

"Feare none of thoo thynges which thou shalt soffre. Be saythfull vnto the deeth, and I will geve the a croune of lyfe."

Perhaps the most touching instance of this sorrow of heart for unfaithfulness is found in the repentance of Bilney, of whom we have read as the means used by God for the conversion of Latimer, Barnes, and many others. It was in this same year 1527, the year in which the young men charged with having distributed heretical books were pining in their underground prison at Oxford, the same year in which Dr. Barnes was arrested and brought before Wolsey on the grave count of heresy, that Bilney was accused of having taught Lutheran doctrines at Cambridge. A friar gave evidence that, during a conversation which he had had with him, Bilney had said that the Scripture of God ought to be in English, that all men might know what was for their soul's health; that he had, moreover, counted the indulgences granted by the pope of no avail, and had spoken blasphemy against the blessed saints, denying that they do always intercede for sinful men, knocking at the door of heaven.

The friar said that Bilney had affirmed, in the words of Scripture, that "ther is one God, and one Mediatur betwene God and man, which is the Man Christ Jesus." Whereupon the friar had answered that there were no saints when Paul wrote that, but that the Church had now taught the faithful to offer up their petitions to God through the blessed Virgin and other holy saints. Again Bilney had replied in the words of Scripture: "Truly our Lord Christ said, 'Verely, verely, I saye vnto you, whatsoever ye shall axe the Father, in My name, He will geve it you.' Let us, then," he said, "ask help in the name of Him, who is able to obtain for us from God His Father whatsoever we ask, lest at the day of judgment we should hear Him say, 'Hitherto have ye axed nothings in My name.'" It was upon the information given by this friar that the accusation against him was formed. Tonsall, before whom Bilney was taken, that he might answer for himself, was gentle in his treatment of him, using every persuasion he could think of to induce him to give way and

retract what he had said. At last he succeeded: he could not, thank God, take away from Bilney's heart the good seed which had taken root there, but he did shake his constancy in maintaining what he knew to be true. Bilney recalled his words, and, after carrying a saggot in a procession, and standing before the preacher at Paul's Cross as a penitent, he was released.

The Bishop of London had read the letter from Bilney, which told, in simple, earnest language, the story of his conversion, and how the faithful saying that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners" had brought him a peace which fastings and prayers and indulgences could never bring. Bilney had also told him, in all simplicity, that he had sought to cause even children to understand that they "should not so trust in these ceremonies that, being satisfied therewith, they should loathe and depart from the Saviour." Perhaps this letter may have touched him; it is certain that, having wrung the act of penance from him, he suffered him to go back to Cambridge unmolested.

From Latimer we learn with what feelings Bilney returned to the little flock, who had so long hung upon his words, and sought his counsel in every difficulty. "For a whole year," he says, when writing, long after (when this time of persecution for the word of Christ was passed, and that other trial which was to try him had not yet come), "Bilney was in such anguish and agony that nothing did him good, not even the communication of God's word; for he thought that all the scriptures were against him and sounded to his condemnation. Yet, for all that, God afterwards endued him with such strength and perfectness of faith, that he not only confessed his faith in the gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but also suffered his body to be burned for that same gospel's sake which we now preach in England."

The first ray of hope which came to Bilney while at Cambridge came with the thought that God would yet permit him to witness for Him by making a public confession of the false way into which his fears had betrayed him. For two years he diligently studied the

scriptures in secret, and then, with many prayers to God for guidance, strong in a strength not his own, he left the university and went to his native county of Norfolk, where, passing from village to village, he openly confessed his sin in denying what he knew to be true, and preached the gospel to the people.

"I go up to Jerusalem," he had said to his Cambridge friends, alluding to the words of the Lord Jesus when He was about to suffer, and there is no doubt that Bilney was resolved, if God permitted him to do so, to lay down his life; for he told everywhere the same story, saying that the doctrines he had abjured were indeed the very truth of God, and bidding others take warning by his example of unfaithfulness. It was for giving away Tyndale's New Testaments, and a book of his called "The Obedience of a Christian Man," that Bilney was at last arrested and imprisoned. Orders came from London that no mercy should be shown him; he must be burned in his own city of Norwich, as a relapsed heretic—that is, one who having seen and confessed the error of his ways, had again fallen back into his old courses—that those who had drunk in the gospel from his lips, as he preached to them in the fields and by the wayside, might see whither such doctrines as his tended, and might take the stern lesson to heart.

The day before that fixed for his death some friends who came to see him, thinking to cheer the martyr, said that the fire would indeed be of great heat to his body, yet that the comfort of the Holy Spirit would cool it to his everlasting refreshing.

"I feel by experience," said Bilney calmly, as he put his finger into the flame of a candle which was burning on the table, "and I have long known by philosophy that, by God's ordinance, fire is naturally hot, but it is but a pain for a time, followed by unspeakable joy." Then he compared the fire which should consume him on the morrow to that chariot by which Elijah was taken to heaven, for to him, as to God's prophet of old, the end was sure, though the way to that end might be such as might well make heart and flesh fail, Bilney

then repeated those words from Isaiah, which may still be read, deeply marked by his pen, in his Latin Bible—"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Then, saying with touching emphasis that he was like a storm-tossed mariner, ready to endure the buffeting of many an angry wave, in the hope of more speedily arriving at the desired haven, he bade his friends farewell. And so, on the morrow, calmly and with steadfast faith, he "fell asleep"—for in such words we may speak even of death in its most terrible form, when we know that it is for the happy soul redeemed by the wondrous death of Christ only the entrance to the presence of its Saviour.

"In the dungeons and in the deserts,
Have Thy saints, by the world despised,
With joy untold, and unmeasured,
Looked on the face of Christ,
In the torture and in the fire,
'Midst the scorn and the hate of men,
They have seen but the light of His presence
Around them then."

To the country folk who saw him die, and who remembered his words, that cruel death, so willingly embraced, came as a solemn confirmation of the truth of what he had told them, a seal set upon his ministry; for had he not proved to them that the truth for which he died was worth dying for? and should not that truth, by God's grace, henceforth be to them worth living for? C. P.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

SEVEN TREES—THE CEDAR, SHITTAH, MYRTLE,
OIL, FIR, PINE, AND BOX.

THESE seven trees denote a time of earthly blessing, such as the world has not seen since man sinned and was cast out of Eden. These trees are all grouped together in one verse in the Old Testament, and they are planted that men may see, and know, and consider that the hand of the Lord hath done this.

Let us now see what they mean. You will bear in mind that a very sad time of awful judgment is yet to sweep over this guilty earth, and it will be, as the word of God says, when His "judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah xxvi. 9.) Judgment is the frequent prelude to blessing.

God will gather the remnant of His ancient people Israel back to their own land, and make Jerusalem the joy and centre of the whole earth. Christ Jesus, once rejected and despised by them, they will then own, and exclaim, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

It will then be seen, for the first time, what the government of God in full display is on the earth. "A King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Rebellion will not be borne with as now, it will be instantly punished. Then will be the reign of righteousness. We have this prefigured in the early part of Solomon's reign. David, a type of Christ as rejected, allowed his enemies to live. Solomon as a type of Christ in His glory, by one of the first acts of his reign cleared out of his kingdom all that offended and did iniquity.

In the days represented by these seven trees, not only will sin be unsparingly put down, but all sicknesses will have their suited remedies in that wonderful tree we read of in the Book of Revelation, "whose leaves are for the healing of the nations."

Then will be a time of unparalleled blessing. The wilderness shall blossom as the rose; and the lion shall lie down with the lamb,

and a little child shall lead them. Israel will sit, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, none daring to make him afraid. Satan, the world's great foe, will be bound in the pit.

Blessings will abound on every hand. The fruits of the earth will be multiplied, and the increase of the ground; the land that was desolate shall become like the Garden of Eden. "All the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it." (Ezek. xvii. 24.)

This is a description of what will yet take place on the earth. What a contrast to the present time! But, like all earthly scenes, it will have an end. Satan will be loosed out of his prison at the end of the thousand years, and then man will yield to his temptation.

Persons may say if they were placed in circumstances similar to those in

which Adam and Eve were found—in the midst of all the happiness and freshness of the morning of creation—they would not disobey God. God is going to give man a similar opportunity. What will be the result?

Turn to the end of Revelation, chapter xx. There we read that Satan, after being loosed from his prison, will succeed in deceiving the nations. This will bring in the end, and then all the dealings of God with the world will be over. One tree more remains for us to speak about. What it is we shall see in our next paper.

H. N.



THE CEDAR.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



YOUR OWN SAVIOUR.

ONLY a trifling act of courtesy, but it had the effect of unsealing the lips and winning the confidence of an elderly lady, who was, on the evening of which I am writing, my only fellow passenger in an omnibus.

Fixing a long, earnest look on my face, she said, with considerable energy of manner,—

“Tell me, have you ever tried to do good to any one and got no thanks for it?”

A strange question, and still more strangely put! I was silent for a moment—a very short space of time, yet long enough for me to cast myself on the Lord for grace to give a right answer.

“Perhaps I may have done so sometimes, but if so it was only a test as to whether I wanted to do the seeming good to please myself, or to serve the One to whom I owe everything—the Lord Jesus.”

“Doing it for the Lord Jesus! I really don’t understand you,” said the lady, in surprise. “But then I never did anything for Him in all my life; I don’t even know how to begin to serve Him.”

“You cannot serve Him until you know Him as your own Saviour; until by faith you know that your sins were once and for ever put away by Him on the cross. Have you trusted Christ?” I asked.

“I cannot say I have, in the way you mean,” she replied, “but I know a great deal about Him; I have read the New Testament over and over again. I assure you I admire the character of Christ; I like to think of how He went about doing good—and His was such a death, too; such wonderful patience, such noble forgiveness of enemies—praying for His very murderers, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’”

My companion spoke earnestly, and I replied,—

“All that you have said about our blessed Lord is true, quite true, but you must know more than the moral beauty of His path as a Man among men, or you do not trust Him as your Redeemer. Before anyone can experience rest of soul, he must know Christ as the eternal Son of the eternal God.”

“But there are so many different opinions,”

she objected; “even good men do not always think alike.”

“Yes, many opinions, but only one standard by which to try them all—the word of God,” I said, and repeated the well-known lines.—

“None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.”

“Say those words again; oh, let me hear them once more!” and the thin hand of my companion caught my arm eagerly. Again I repeated the simple words, and she said, with deep feeling,—

“It’s just fifteen years since I heard those words before; I can never forget the time; my youngest son was in such a strange, low way, his brothers said religion had turned his brain, and that he was going mad. Sometimes he would walk up and down his room for hours, wringing his hands and crying, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’ But he came to himself suddenly, saying the words you repeated just now. I never saw such a change in anyone; he seemed so full of joy, though he talked very strangely. He said it was not his prayers or his tears that were the ground of his hope, it was only the precious blood of Jesus. He went abroad soon after, but he writes us such beautiful letters, and what you said reminded me of them.”

Our omnibus journey was at an end, and we parted with a hasty good-bye.

Beloved reader, are *you* resting in mere admiration of the character of the Lord Jesus? If so, you are still unsaved—still unsheltered by His blood—still a stranger to God’s thoughts about His beloved Son. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” ————— L.

AN EARNEST CRY.

LATE one evening, a christian neighbour asked me if I would go with her to the next house, to see a poor woman who was prostrate on the floor, crying to God for mercy. I at once accompanied her, and found a woman kneeling on the floor, and locked in her daughter’s arms, the mother crying—

“Lord, have mercy upon me! Lord, save me! Lord, wash me from my sins! Lord, give me power to believe Thee! Lord, I thank Thee for having spared me for this hour!

Lord, wash me now! Lord, give me the blessing now!"

I do not ever remember having seen a soul in such heart-rending sorrow, and so earnestly desiring to be saved at once. I sat down by her side, and asked her to listen for a moment, and then quoted, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

She said, "I believe it."

I asked, "Then have you come to Him?"

She answered, "Yes, I have come, but He has not removed the load of my sin yet."

Again she cried for mercy, and repeatedly exclaimed, "Wash me now, save me now, my Saviour!"

I reminded her how the Lord had said to a poor woman—a sinner—at His feet, "Thy sins are forgiven," and assured her that these words are addressed by Him at this very hour, to every poor sinner who really cometh to Him. The woman still cried for power to lay hold of His word, imploring the Lord to relieve her now. As I knelt and prayed to the ever-ready Saviour to give relief to this poor soul, she wrung her hands, repeating over and over again, "Yes, Lord, now." I quoted several times, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," and, "Thy sins are forgiven."

About an hour was thus spent, alternately praying for her, and quoting those precious words of the Lord Jesus, but she seemed unable to lay hold of Him. At length I told her only to believe, for the Lord was waiting for her to accept the very peace and rest she was so desirous to obtain. How intensely I felt that at that moment there was "joy in heaven" over a repentant sinner! I then left her, and returned home.

In some twenty minutes I again went to see her, and she was now on her knees with her head on her husband's lap, entreating him to come and get the blessing too. She knew she was forgiven, and all her anxiety was for her husband and their young son, a lad of about fourteen years of age. She was full of gratitude to the Lord, and to us who had prayed for her, and sought to bring her to Christ. I proposed praise for the Lord's goodness to her, and prayer for the husband

and son. We knelt down, and the exclamations of praise and gratitude from the newly-saved one almost drowned my voice as I gave thanks to the Lord. Her fervent "Oh do, Lord," and "Save my Georgy," as I asked for the conversion of those still unsaved, might have been heard in the street.

When I left, the husband, deeply affected, said, "Do pray for me," and I promised, by God's help, to do so daily, until he had his load of sin removed, for he, too, longed to be saved.

I retired to rest that night thankful for the fresh proof that God hears and answers prayer, and could not fail to see His hand in keeping me at home on that evening, in readiness for the little service which He had so graciously permitted me to render.

The next morning I called, and found the new-born soul quietly enjoying the relief from her "great burden of sin." I should mention that her married son had found "peace in believing" a little more than a fortnight before, and the young man's wife only three days previously. She told me that when she heard that these relatives were saved, she felt so keenly her lost condition that she had scarcely slept since; but that on that Wednesday evening she had felt so utterly wretched that she had been obliged to cry aloud for mercy. That cry reached the ears of the God who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and an answer of peace was conveyed to the poor suppliant.

What marvellous grace shown to that family in such a brief space of time! and it surely becomes us to hope that the husband and younger son will soon be saved.

Now I would ask you, dear reader, have you ever felt sin to be an unbearable load? Have you ever cried for mercy? Do you know that sin, if unforgiven, will land you in the lake of fire? or are you, like thousands of others, indifferent as to eternity? I would urge you now to come to Him who says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," that you may hear for yourself those peace-giving words, "Thy sins are forgiven." r.

REJOICE IN THE LORD.

"REJOICE in the Lord *always*," says the Scripture—not merely when it is fair sailing, but in stormy weather also. The apostle was in a dungeon when he said, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice." His surroundings did not conduce to joy, but his joy was in the Lord. We remember how he, with Silas, sang praises to God when in the inner prison at Philippi; and, when the beloved saints of that city were going through their trials for Christ's sake, the apostle sent to them, from his chains in Rome, the cheering exhortation, "Rejoice in the Lord always."

Christians, generally, might be a little more joyful in the Lord than they usually are. There is some room for it, surely! Then says the apostle, "The Lord is at hand"—that is, close by, to care for, to protect His people. It is a great thing, in the presence of enemies, to be under the guardianship of the mighty One. There would be deeper repose of heart if we did more truly believe in His presence for us.

Now, rejoicing in the Lord always, and knowing Him at our right hand, what shall be our demeanour towards others? Moderation—gentleness—yieldingness. Let your moderation be known unto all men—most practical result and one due to the Lord filling our hearts with joy, and covering us with His protection.

HE IS OUR PEACE.

WE who sometimes were as far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for He is our peace. (Eph. ii. 13, 14.)

Mark, troubled heart, the word does not say that anything in you is your peace, but that He, Christ Jesus, who shed His blood for you upon the cross, and who lives for you in heaven is. However the state of the soul may change, still Christ is our peace; whatever Satan may say, still Christ is our peace. He changes not; His work is perfect; what He has done abides for ever, and God is glorified by that work. Shall not your heart respond with praise to these great words, "He is our peace"?

A CHILD'S DREAM.

"I'LL tell you what it was that first brought me peace," said a young friend to me the other day. "When I was a child you often told me that it was for the chief of sinners—those who hated Him—that the Lord Jesus died, and I felt that I was not bad enough to hate Him; I thought I could never have been wicked enough to spit in His face. I knew I did not love Him, but thought I could not have a heart as hard and as wicked as the hearts of those who mocked Him when He was dying upon the cross—that surely there was some good thing in me that kept me from feeling inclined to treat Him as they did."

"But then I remembered that it was for sinners, and not for good people, that Jesus died, and this thought kept haunting me, so that I could not rest. At last, in an agony, I prayed to God to teach me how wicked I was—to show me, if it was even by a dream, that my heart was just as bad as the hearts of those who crucified and mocked His blessed Son."

"Days and weeks went by, and still I had no rest; but one night God, who had heard my prayer, sent me the answer. I dreamt that I was passing near an open space, and seeing, by the crowds who were collected there, that something unusual was taking place, I looked, and saw three crosses, and I knew that the One who was nailed to the centre cross was the Lord Jesus Christ. I noticed that there were two separate crowds of people standing by; those who formed the one group were mocking Him, while those who formed the other were weeping."

"One, and then another came out from the mocking crowd, and spat in the face of the sufferer, and, as I looked upon Him, the same hatred arose in my heart; I, too, advanced and spat in His face."

"He spoke not a word, but turned upon me such a look of agonized love that it broke my heart. It showed me my vileness and the horribleness of what I had done, and I could no longer choose but turn and join the weeping little crowd of those who loved Him and sorrowed for His sufferings."

"That night I learned something of what my heart was, and of the love of Him who had died for me. I awoke, believing at last that God loved me, and that Jesus had died for me, even when my heart was enmity against Him."

Yes, beloved reader, God loved my young friend, even when there was not one thought of love in her heart for Him. And He loves us also, for "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) It matters not whether you think yourself good or bad—a big sinner or a little sinner—we are commissioned, as in Christ's stead, to beseech you to be reconciled to God. The blood of God's only begotten Son could alone fit you for God's presence. Nothing less could have done it—nothing more is required. It was God who laid our sins upon the head of His spotless Son; the price that God's justice demanded has been paid to the utmost.

Nothing that you can do will make the least difference as to your acceptance with God. Think you that God could accept your poor doings, as if the work of His beloved Son were not enough to secure eternal salvation? Away with the insulting thought! Jesus, the blessed Son of God, was a perfect sacrifice to satisfy forever the claims of a holy God. Nothing you can ever do, or think of, can make the shadow of a claim for you to God's salvation. It was God's majesty that was outraged by the sinner's sins; it was God who loved the sinner; it was God's hand that provided the remedy, and, with the sacrifice He Himself provided, His justice is for ever satisfied. Jesus said, "It is finished"; the work He came to do is done; and if that is enough for God, poor sinner, is it not enough for you also?

OUR SUN AND SHIELD.

YES, both!—all the brightness and warmth of the sun, and all the protection of the shield. The Lord is both for His people. Let us turn our faces toward our Sun, and rejoice in God, and let us hide from our enemies under His protection, and be at peace.

JESUS THE MANNA.

JESUS is the Bread of God; He is also the Manna for His people. The manna fell morning by morning around the camp of Israel in the wilderness, and those who rose up early gathered thereof. The manna was the staple food of Israel in the wilderness; it was their bread, their staff of life. So is the Lord the food of His people in the wilderness of this world. He is our Bread—not only our Life, but the support of our spiritual existence, and thus our Staff of Life. As we need our daily bread, so is Jesus the Manna for the daily wants of our souls. When He is indifferently sought after, when there is but a poor appetite for Him, the spiritual state of the child of God is sickly.

We each eat our daily bread for ourselves, according to our strength and appetite, and what we eat becomes part of ourselves. Hence the figure that brings to us Jesus as the Manna is most practical in its teaching. No one can feed on Christ for another; each child of God does this solely for himself. What is thus received in the heart is private and personal. It is a secret between Christ and His own who feed on Him. The world cannot see or gather the food upon which the soul of the christian feeds. Moreover, none but the individual who finds the preciousness of Christ in his daily trials and difficulties, in his pains and sorrows, knows the special grace of the Lord to him, himself, in his peculiar circumstances.

We all are aware that Christ is the Manna, but the individual child of God who feeds on Christ, knows Him according to his own experiences of Christ. Experiences of what Christ is are secret, though believers may tell others of His grace and goodness.

Thus in those who truly feed on Christ there arises what we may term a holy secret between the Lord Himself and them. We have our earthly confidant; there are certain intimacies which are never shared by more than two hearts. And we may say, there is a private sweetness to the soul of the child of God, a secret between Christ in heaven and him on earth, which it is the Lord's pleasure that none other shall share.

Christians have joys in common and griefs in common, but never can one receive for another the special ministry of the Lord to the heart wherewith He soothes and solaces in life's trials.

Searching for Him as the Manna, and finding Him prepared for us before we rose to search for Him; and taking Him, as it were, to our tents and feeding upon Him, forms in the believer on earth true christian character. The christian becomes Christ-like by feeding on Christ.

Now our Lord tells us that in heaven He will give to him who has been the overcomer, in a day when the masses mingle with the world and are in spirit united with it (Rev. ii. 14.), to eat of the hidden manna (17). What will be this manna in heaven? There will be no rising up early in the morning there—no retiring alone into the tent there! For there no noonday heat shall be known, and there earth's pilgrimage and tents will have been for ever left behind.

True, but God has His delights in Christ. In heaven, in glory, the manna of God's people is at God's right hand, even as the manna that fell in the wilderness was placed in the golden pot within the ark in the Holiest of All, and laid up before the Lord. That golden pot was located in the sanctuary; it was not there to supply the needs of the pilgrims in the wilderness, but to utter its voice, as it were, in the ark of God to God.

The Lord has promised His people on earth the hidden Manna when they reach glory. Not simply Himself, as we feel our need of Him, but Himself to feed our affections according to the thoughts of God about Him. There will be an unceasing, unvarying delight in Christ there, according to God's thoughts of Him in glory, for all who have found Him here suited to them in their need on earth.

Thus Christ will be for all eternity the Manna for His people. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and His people will eternally delight in Him. Moreover, He says, "I will give" to the overcomer "to eat of the hidden manna," for it ever is and ever will be His joy to satisfy the hearts of His own.

THE LORD'S LOVE TO THE SINNER.

THE Lord was weary, and He sat on Jacob's Well in the noon-day heat. The well was deep, cut in the solid rock, and its cool waters were far down beneath His feet. Presently there came to the well to draw its water a woman from the city of Samaria hard by, hushed in the heat of its noon-day stillness.

Behold the Lord of glory, a weary Man, and the woman, a sinner of Samaria, by the well-side! Thirst had drawn her to Jacob's Well—thirst for the water of which we drink but to thirst again; thirst had drawn Him from glory on high to this weary world—thirst for our salvation, our eternal good.

Then, as Jesus sat by the well-side, He discovered to the sinner her sinfulness, and Himself the Christ, the Saviour of the world. She believed, and filled with the joy of salvation, left her water-pot, and went to the city and proclaimed to the men the coming One. Right blessed mission, resulting in many of that city believing in Him.

When the disciples, who had gone to the city to buy meat, returned to Jesus, they found Him rejoicing in refreshment of which He had partaken. Our gracious Lord had given of the living water to a sinner. By His gift to the sinner, He received joy for Himself. Wondrous grace! showing to us His love toward us. And so it is still, even to-day. There is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth. In heaven He is the same Jesus He was on earth.

Will you not receive Him, thirsting, unsatisfied heart? Whatever the earthly fountain from which you would draw your refreshment, remember that you will thirst again. But the water Jesus gives shall everlastingly satisfy you. Yet it is not so much for your own blessing that we would with our last words for this year entreat you to receive Him, but because such is His love for the sons of men that your salvation shall be a fresh occasion of rejoicing to Him.

He bled and died to save the lost; His untold sufferings are the price at which He bought His people; He lives to bless, and in blessing is His joy. Come now, fall at His feet, and own Him Lord.



If He comes.

IT was a lovely evening in the pleasant month of May. Already the golden sunset was tinting the clouds with a marvellous beauty, and the strange, wonderful light came stealing along over the soft, green lawn, then across the wide carriage-drive, and finally in at the staircase windows of an old-fashioned house in the county of Gloucestershire. Very beautiful was the stream of red and golden sunlight, as it rested at last upon the massive brass rails which formed the balustrade of the wide oaken staircase of the house in which sweet little Mabel was at that time a guest.

Mabel was a tiny child of little more than four years of age. So fair, so delicate was she, that she looked too fragile for earth; yet so sweet and gentle also in all her ways and words, that from the moment she became our guest she also became an object of universal love and attraction. Not a servant in that busy establishment was there who would not have done anything in her power to give little Mabel pleasure.

Sweet little Mabel had come to our town on a visit to a very dear aunt, but the fond relative had been suddenly called away from home. Not liking to leave her little niece solely to the charge of her servants, Mabel had been entrusted to our care. And a very precious charge we found it to be during the short time she remained with us.

Some dear little boys and girls will want to know if little Mabel loved the dear Lord Jesus. I am so glad to be able to tell you she did. Very often she would speak in her simple, childish way of His goodness and love in leaving the bright heavens on high to come down and die on the cross for her sins. Often, too, her little face would beam with pleasure, as one and another told her of some wonderful story of the love of Jesus to poor suffering sinners. But there was one thought that filled Mabel's little mind more frequently than any other, and that was the sure, certain knowledge

that Jesus was coming again. Then she knew she should be able to tell Him how much she loved Him for all His goodness to such a little child as herself.

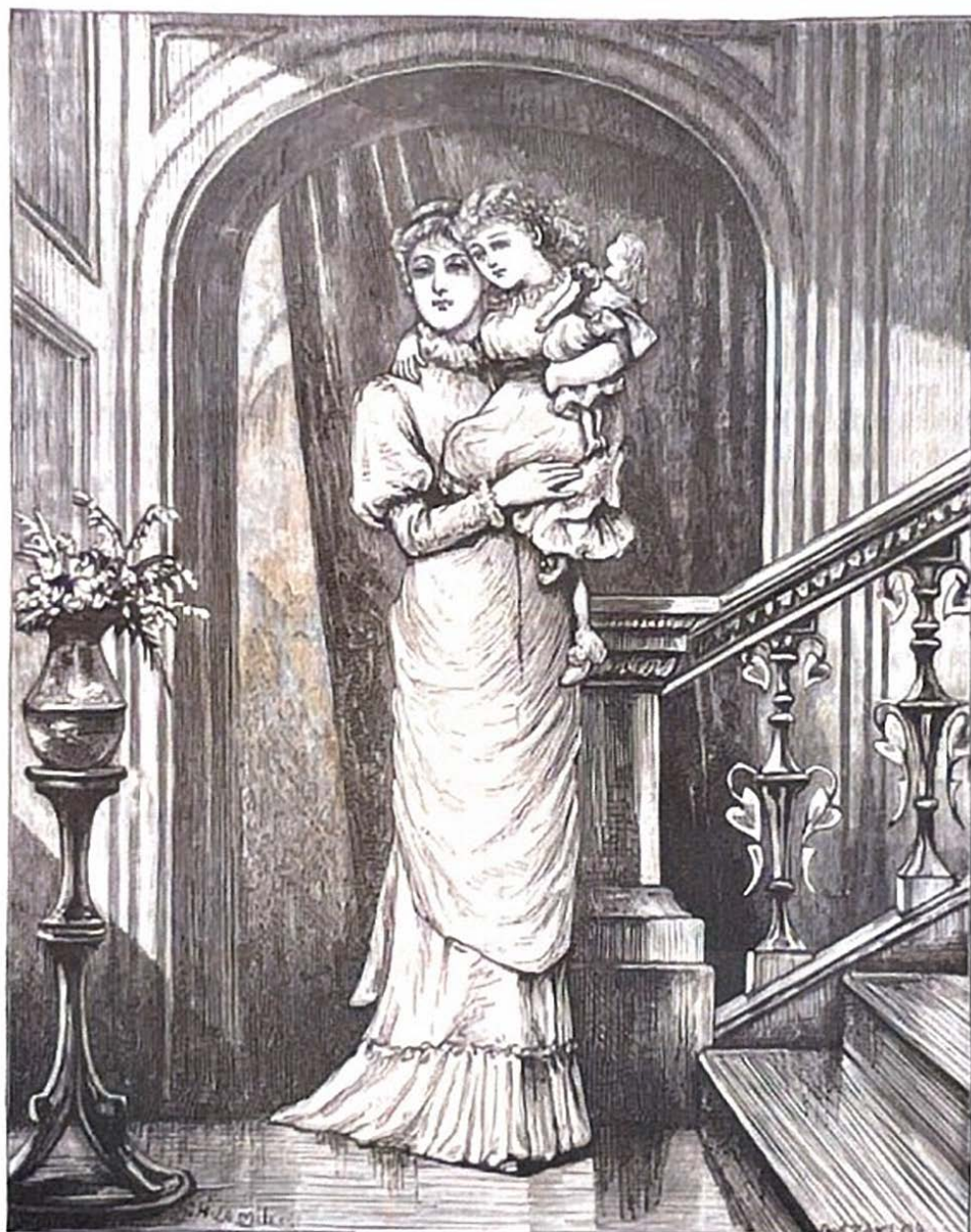
Now I must go back to that part of my story when the beautiful golden light was shining on the brazen balustrade, and lighting up the fine old oaken staircase with a flood of brightness. It was a pretty sight, one that needed to be seen to be realized. Mabel had observed it on the first evening of her arrival, and had often spoken since of the "light on the banners." Her little eyes sparkled with pleasure again that night as I carried her upstairs on our way to my bed-chamber. Merrily she prattled at first of the "light on the banners," and then in a softer, more reverential tone spoke of the good God who had made the wonderful light and told it to come in at the staircase window, that she might see it. Just for a few moments I paused on the first landing, and pointed out to the child some beautiful spring blossoms standing in a vase near the window.

"Do the flowers love the light on the banners too?" she asked in her childish way.

I told her in simple words of God's goodness to the flowers, and how He had made the light as needful to them as to us. But in her eagerness to look at the delicate tints inside one of the leaves, Mabel almost forgot that her pretty wax doll was in her arms. Happily I caught it as it fell, so that it received no damage. With one arm closely twined round the doll, and the other clinging round my neck, Mabel and I mounted the remainder of the staircase and entered my room.

Thinking of the child's simple faith and confidence in the heavenly Father's care, I thoughtfully attended to her various little wants, and prepared her for repose. With a beating heart I listened to Mabel's simple prayer. Like a child in converse with a father was the short petition that fell from the childish lips. After thanking the Lord for keeping her so safely all day, she concluded in these simple but trustful words—

"Please, Lord Jesus, bring dear auntie back safe, like you done uncle."



MADEL AND THE SUNSHINE ON THE BALUSTRADE.

I laid the little head on the soft, downy pillow; then, with an earnest kiss on the little upturned face, prepared to depart. A hasty glance round the bed-chamber to see that all was as it should be, and I must say "Good-night!" All was in perfect order; even the child's doll, comfortably tucked up in a small vacant bed in the corner of the room. Another touch to the arrangement of the snowy curtains, and I opened the door to descend. But if I was satisfied, Mabel was not. Her

quick eye had detected something that had made her uneasy. Springing out of bed, with an alacrity that for the moment quite astonished me, she reached the bed in which, according to her directions, I had placed her doll.

"What is it, Mabel darling?" I asked, as I stood by the little white-robed child, and marked her eager and yet satisfied expression of countenance.

"You put the sheet too much over Dolly's

face," was the ready reply. "It's all right now; I've put it so she can see Jesus if He comes."

Once more I laid her on the snowy pillow, and mused thoughtfully over her wish for the Lord to come, and her strange childish fancy about her doll. Silently I sat by her side till the little eyes had closed in slumber, and things of earth were all forgotten. It was with a full heart that I joined the family circle, and told of the simple words of that little child, with their precious lesson to my own heart.

And now, dear little boys and girls, do you love Jesus as Mabel did? Do you love to hear the sweet stories of His love to poor, sinful man? Have you ever thought that He came down from the bright heaven to wash away your sins? Do you see His work in the beautiful flowers and golden sunlight that surround you? Perhaps you will think these are a great many questions for little boys and girls to answer. But I am just going to ask one more. When you lie down in your soft, cosy, snug little beds, do you think to yourself, "I should like to see Jesus when He comes; perhaps He may come to-night"?

M. V. B.

MORE ABOUT TYNDALE AND HIS TRANSLATIONS.

IN 1529, one year after the public burning of his English New Testaments at Paul's Cross, Tyndale sailed from Antwerp for Hamburg, where he arrived in safety, though he had a perilous voyage, and was shipwrecked off the coast of Holland. At Hamburg he met Myles Coverdale, a scholarly man, driven from his home in Cambridge by the harsh laws against those who held the new opinions; we shall hear more of him by and by. It must have been a cheer and comfort to the other friendless exile to meet him, though the news which Coverdale had to bring from home was sad enough to daunt even a stouter heart than that of Tyndale.

It was when all things were against him that we read of David that he "encouraged himself in the Lord, his God." Tyndale had long known God as his "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"; he listened

to the evil tidings, and then, bating not one jot of heart or hope, turned again to the task to which God had called him, and in which at this time he had a fellow labourer. "Master Coverdale tarried for him," writes Foxe, "and helped him in the translation of the whole five books of Moses, from Easter till December, in the house of a worshipful widow, Mistress Margaret Van Emmerson, a great sweating sickness being the same time in the town." It is possible that Fryth, who was at Hamburg about this time, and who had a good knowledge of Hebrew, also helped in this translation. Only the Book of Genesis was printed in Tyndale's lifetime, but the whole work was preserved, and is very interesting, as being the first attempt to translate any portion of the Old Testament into English from the language in which it was written.

That this work was in progress soon became known in England. Perhaps the translation of the first Book of the Bible may have already been seen there as early as the following year, for we find among the list of books forbidden by the bishops, at a council called by special authority of the king, "the translation also of Scripture corrupted by William Tyndale as well in the Old Testament as in the New," is mentioned. The king, in his proclamation concerning these forbidden books, says that he, as Defender of the faith, which title, you may remember, he had lately received from the pope, was "full loth to suffer such evil seed to be thrown among his people, so to take root that it might overgrow the Catholic faith" in their souls. All such English books were to be "utterly expelled, rejected, and put away out of the hands of his people, and not suffered to go abroad among his subjects."

In this great assembly, much was said on both sides concerning the question whether it might not be the king's duty himself to authorise and appoint certain men "to cause the Scripture of God to be translated into the English tongue, and to be communicated to the people";—for you must not forget that Tyndale's translations were forbidden, not only because they contained errors, but more particularly on the ground of their having been

done without leave from those in authority. After long discussion, it was decided that the time had not yet come for such a work.

The document is still in existence which deliberately asserts that "the having the whole Scripture in English is not necessary to christian men; but that, without having any such Scripture, endeavouring themselves to do well, and to apply their minds to take and follow such lessons as the preacher teacheth them, and so learn by his mouth, they may as well edify spiritually in their souls, as if they had the same Scripture in English."

This proclamation further states that the king, having considered the matter, "thinketh in his conscience that the divulging of the Scripture at this time in the English tongue to be committed to the people should rather be to their farther confusion and destruction than to the edification of their souls." At the same time Henry promised to have a faithful translation made, that when his people by their "sober, quiet, meek, and temperate conduct" had so approved themselves in the matter of detesting pernicious books and abhorring heresies and new opinions, "that all fear of misusing the gift of Scripture should be taken away," he might have it in readiness to bestow upon them.

As it is mentioned in this paper that all who were present at the assembly agreed to the condemnation of the forbidden books, and also to the withholding of the Scriptures from the people until a convenient time were come, it is with strange feelings that we see the name of Latimer among them. A letter to the king, written by him at the end of the same year, makes it clear that he, at least, did not give his voice in favour of the decision of the council. In this letter he pleads for Tyndale's translation, saying that it had been "meekly offered to every man, who could and would amend it if there were any fault," and, alluding to the proclamation, assures the king that three or four who were present at the assembly would have had the Scriptures go forth in English, but were overborne by the rest. Then, laying aside all fear, he earnestly entreats the king to see to it that he "may be found a faithful minister of God's gifts,

and not a defender of His faith—for He will not have it defended by man or man's power, but by His word only; by the which He hath evermore defended it, and that by a way far above man's power or reason, as all the stories of the Bible make mention." Thus, faithfully and fearlessly, did one man in England dare to write to the most absolute and unscrupulous monarch our country has ever known.

It is a matter of regret, and also a fact which may serve in some degree to explain the determination of the great churchmen to root out, if possible, every remembrance of Tyndale's works from the hearts of the people, that not only does the "Obedience of a Christian Man," the most noteworthy among them, contain unsparing, even violent, attacks upon many things taught and practised by them, which he showed to be corrupt and contrary to the word of God, but his translations of the Old Testament, as well as the New, were disfigured by glosses, which were often not simple explanatory notes, but contained stinging words of satire.

One or two examples will serve to show how deeply he offended the priests. Over against the words "They blessed Rebekah" (Gen. xxiv. 60) he writes, "To bless a man's neighbour is to pray for him, and to wish him good—not to wag two fingers over him." Again, when Baalam asks, "How can I curse whom God hath not cursed?" Tyndale, in his gloss, assures his readers that "The Pope can tell how!"

"The servant of the Lord must not strive." Surely Tyndale had forgotten this word of Scripture when he used his marginal notes thus, as weapons to pierce those who opposed him, instead of meekly seeking to instruct them!

It is pleasant to turn from this side of Tyndale's character, and look at him in his every-day life at Antwerp. An interesting little sketch of this is given us by Foxe, who, after speaking of his "diligent travail" over his work, tells us that, "when the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber or other, whither came many other merchants; unto them would he read some one parcel of Scripture, the which proceeded

so fruitfully, and sweetly, and gently from him, much like to the writing of John the evangelist, that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the Scripture." Thus we see how that love for the very word of God, which was the passion of his life, showed itself even in his voice and manner, as he read it aloud in the land of his exile.

C. P.

BIBLE TREES AND BIBLE TRUTHS.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

IN our previous papers we have briefly traced the various dealings of God with this earth. We have seen the Morning of Innocence lasting for a brief period, and characterized by (1) The Tree of Life and the Tree of Responsibility.

Next the period of (2) Thorns, a time of unrestrained wickedness, when lawless man gratified his sinful lusts.

Then (3) The Wild Olive, beginning from the time when God swept the earth in judgment by a flood.

After that the (4) Root of the Olive, or God's call of Abraham.

Then the (5) Cultivated Olive, Fig and Vine, or God's dealings with the Jewish nation, under various aspects, to prove whether it was possible to obtain any good from man.

Afterwards (6) The True Vine, or the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, which terminated by His being nailed to the cursed tree.

This we saw was followed by (7) The Mustard Tree, or God's dealings during this day of grace.

Then came (8) The Forsaken Bough, or the awful state of those who are left behind when the Lord comes.

After that, again, the (9) Seven Trees, setting forth the perfection of blessing for the earth during the personal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ during the millennium.

We have now one more tree to look at—a tree, however, in no way connected with this poor, sad earth of ours. It is "THE TREE OF LIFE, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

No enemy can ever enter that lovely scene, or mar the beauty and usefulness of that fair and ever-blooming tree. Satan and his angels and his poor deluded followers will be in the lake of fire; Christ and His loved ones will be in a scene far surpassing in loveliness man's earthly paradise. It will then be seen how grace has triumphed—gloriously and blessedly triumphed!—in bringing lost sinners into a state of blessedness far higher than Adam could ever have known.

You will notice that there is only one tree in that lovely place above. In the earthly paradise there was another—the Tree of Responsibility. What has become of this? You will recollect that the Lord Jesus when on earth was compared to a tree, and as such took upon Himself all the broken responsibilities of His people, and believers can say, "He Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree." The question of sin and its consequences is for ever settled for those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. They shall never come into judgment. Christ has borne all judgment due to them. He took their place on the cross, and now opens to them the paradise of God, where they will be for ever with Himself.

There He will ever be the sustainer of the life He has already imparted to those that believe. They live because He lives. His people will ever be dependent on Him. He will ever be their food.

Most blessed to hear Him say, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Blooming thero for all eternity! My reader, will you be there? Have you turned to Him?

Remember He has said, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." If you are still unsaved, and will be honest with yourself, you cannot but own that your life has borne no good fruit for God. Oh! turn then, I pray you, to the only One, Christ Jesus, who can make the tree good, and may it become true of you that you are "a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."

H. N.

SOUL, THIS NIGHT.

ELLEN was a very lively little girl, and a favourite in our Sunday-school. She was full of fun; rather too much so, her teacher sometimes said. But he was one of those patient, persevering Sunday-school teachers, who had taken for his motto, "My class for Jesus." He toiled on, Sunday after Sunday, month after month, and many of his little scholars were brought to know that they were sinners, and to believe that Jesus was their great Saviour.

But Ellen was not converted. She was very regular, and said her text perfectly, but she was without Christ. She would often come and give us to understand that she was not going to pay any real attention to what was said. Often, at the close of the meeting, I heard her teacher pray that Ellen and others like her might have no rest until they had given their hearts to Jesus.

Well, Ellen had taken her library book home as usual, and intended having a good read, as she called it. While she was reading her book she came to a text of the word of God: "*Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*"

Ellen put the book away, and began to occupy herself with other things. But it was of no use; the words, "*Soul, this night,*" kept ringing in her ears, until at last she went to her own room in secret. There the reality of heaven and hell filled her young heart. What could she do? How happy for her to have learned of Jesus and His love as she had done, in the Sunday-school. She went to the loving Saviour just as she was, and told Him all about herself.

Do you think He received her? Oh yes, He did; and there was rejoicing in heaven over this little repentant child, who had so many times turned a deaf ear to the words of love. Ellen was truly in earnest, she really believed in her heart, and all her sins were taken away, and she passed from death unto life.



ELLEN READING.

Ellen and I have often spent happy hours together, talking over old times, when she was a little girl, and I remember her saying, "If any one had no rest until she came to Jesus it was I."

And now, dear little children, it is my earnest prayer to-day that you may not rest until you can say from your heart, "Jesus is my Saviour."

"Oh, come, for time is fleeting fast,
The day of grace is hasting past,
And Jesus He will come at last,—Come away." B.

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