

“WORDS
OF
LIFE” .



FOR . . .
NEEDY .
HEARTS.



Edited by
A. J. POLLOCK
and
H. P. BARKER.



“WORDS
OF
LIFE” .

FOR . . .
NEEDY .
HEARTS.

Edited by
A. J. POLLOCK
and
H. P. BARKER.

LONDON:
R. BESLEY, 12, Paternoster Row, E.C.

Newcastle-on-Tyne:
M. HARBOTTLE, 62, Blakett Street.

The Faded Flag.

IT was very mysterious. The matter was discussed and debated, but no satisfactory solution could be arrived at. The signalman's statement, corroborated as it was by others, was positively contradicted by the engine-driver's. Who was speaking the truth? And who was shielding himself behind a falsehood?

A terrible accident had just happened upon an American railroad. An excursion train coming up from Kingston, North Carolina, had run on to the great drawbridge which crosses the Elizabeth River. According to the driver's account the signal which directed him to proceed along the bridge hung from the signal box. But one of the sections of the bridge was open, and before the brakes could be applied, and the train brought to a standstill, the engine and two front coaches had plunged into the river. Many lives were lost. A farm labourer upon the bank helped to save thirty-five of the unfortunate passengers, but many were beyond the reach of help.

In due time the inquiry was held as to how the accident was caused. Why had the train been allowed to proceed upon the bridge while a section was still open?

The signalman, being questioned, emphatically asserted that he had displayed his *red* flag in time for the engine-driver to stop the train before reaching the bridge. Others of the railway employés confirmed this.

The engine-driver (who was severely hurt in the accident), on the contrary, was equally positive that it was a *white* flag that was shown, and he had taken it as a signal that the road was clear.

It was then demanded that the flag that was used should be produced. At once the mystery was solved. The flag had been in use so long that most of the red colour had faded out of it, and it might now very easily be mistaken for a white one.

Why do I lay these details of a bygone occurrence before you, reader?

Because, you, like the train in my story, are *hurrying on*. The wheels of time are revolving, relentlessly and without ceasing, Eternity lies ahead, and each minute carries you nearer to it.

If unsaved, eternity means a fearful awakening for you, followed by unending wretchedness, with no companions but your sins. It means a leap in the dark into the great river of God's judgment and wrath.

There are those who see you making straight for the open chasm in the bridge, as it were. They know the certain disaster towards which you hasten, and they wave their warning flags from the signal box.

Some flags, alas, have become almost colourless. Like that which caused the catastrophe in America, the *red* has almost died out of them.

What do I mean? To what do I refer? I refer to sermons from which the blood of Christ is left out. I refer to the twentieth century preaching of morals and ethics out of which well nigh all the original colour of the gospel has faded.

Such flags may be held by well-meaning hands. They may be meant as signals to guide the travellers to eternity. *But flags such as these are the ruin of all who heed them.* Take no notice of them, reader. The gospel of God does not cry "peace and safety" to those who are going the downward way. And those who hold out colourless flags, and preach colourless sermons, and give colourless testimony, are deceivers of souls.

Let me, by means of this printed page, hold out the right flag to you. See, it is a *red* one. It bids you halt. It warns you that if you proceed it is at your own eternal peril. Look now :

"Without *shedding of blood* is no remission."
(*Heb. ix. 22.*)

"*The blood* of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (*I John i. 7.*)

"Redemption . . . is in Christ Jesus . . . through faith *in His blood.*" (*Rom. iii. 24, 25.*)

“It is *the blood* that maketh an atonement for the soul.” (*Lev. xvii. 11.*)

Pay no attention, then, to flags out of which the colour has faded. Let God's precious gospel, full of its testimony to the power and value of Christ's precious blood, be your guide.

The false flags of to-day are many. Disregard them all. They will only lure you to destruction. But do not disregard *God's* signal. Trust in Christ; base your confidence upon the merits of His atoning blood, and all will be well.

H. P. B.

An Aged Emperor's Tears.

NOT long ago the death sentence on a criminal was placed before the aged Austrian Emperor to sign. Twice he read it carefully through, and then took up his pen, but before he had written more than the first letters of his name he stopped. Two tears rolled down the aged monarch's face, and blotted out what he had written.

He turned to his secretary and said: “*Tears remove every fault. I cannot sign. See for yourself. My signature is blotted out. I give the man his life.*”

Doubtless Francis Joseph felt that soon he must die and stand before the Judge of all the earth, and that mercy alone would suit him, and, if he hoped for it, he must show it.

God is no respecter of persons, and emperor though he be he is a sinner before God.

We can all admire the tenderness of his heart, and the scene recorded above does him honour, but he will have to learn, as all of us, that *tears* will not remove every fault before the eye of God. The Saviour *wept* over Jerusalem, but even *His* tears could not atone for that city's guilt. If ever tears could have removed every fault surely they would have been the Saviour's.

May God teach us all the awful seriousness of sin, His unbending righteousness and holiness. God *must* punish sin. It is a necessity of His being.

So we read: "Without shedding of *blood* is no remission." (*Heb. ix. 22.*) "The *blood* of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (*I John i. 7.*) Not the shedding of *tears*, but the shedding of *blood*, will do for God.

What is infinitely more touching than the aged monarch's tears is the death of Jesus, God's Son. He shed His blood at Calvary's cross and made full atonement for sin, and now God is "just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (*Rom. iii. 26.*) Not only the Justifier, but *just*. Mark that! God can righteously forgive the sinner on the ground of the work done on Calvary's cross. Oh! sinner, turn to Christ. Trust Him. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (*Acts xvi. 31.*)

A. J. P.

The King and the Cabinet Minister.

CHERE appeared in the newspapers a few months ago the statement that a certain Cabinet Minister had an audience of the King to ask if His Majesty could not dispense with his wearing the gold-lace suit, which Cabinet Ministers have to wear on State occasions. The King, however, declined to alter the regulation.

If after this the Cabinet Minister had dared to appear without the proper dress the consequences might have been serious.

And yet how many there are to-day, hoping to pass muster before the King of kings, who are not wearing the right dress. Of the doom of such we are not left in suspense. "*Cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,*" was the direction of the king to his servants, concerning the man who had dared to come to the feast without the wedding garment.

No matter how good the suit the Cabinet Minister provided for himself, no matter if the best tailor in London made it, it would not do for the King. No matter what garment you may provide for yourself it will not do for God. The garment of reformation, of prayer, of religion, will no more do than Adam and Eve's fig-leaf aprons. Nothing will do but the

garment of God's own providing. It must be Christ and His finished work, His precious blood that will make you meet for God's holy presence. The best robe of the Father's own providing covered the prodigal son—fit emblem of Christ in all His worth and work.

Reader, will you pass muster before God? Are you rightly clothed for Him? Or are you seeking to cloak up your sins by some garment of your own weaving?

H. W. T.

Billy Brooks and His Thirty Thousand Sins.

BILLY BROOKS lived in a village a few miles from the home of my boyhood. It was a secluded country spot, many miles away from a railway, or a large town. He possessed two qualifications not common in those days, which he never failed to impress on his fellow-villagers. One was he could read; the other, he had actually been to London. Not that he ever called it London; that was much too ordinary; he always spoke of it as the *Met-row-pole-iss*. The newspaper was his Bible. This he read to his unlettered audience. If he came to a hard word he would pass it over with the remark, "It dunno sinify." So far as I remember in those days he never entered church, chapel, or meeting

room. He lived very much like the cows and horses he tended, without a thought of God, heaven, hell, or eternity. As men speak, there was nothing very bad about him. Perhaps if you had asked his neighbours they would have told you, beyond being proud of knowing a bit more than they, he was neither worse nor better than other people, not very bad and not very good, only middling.

Now there are a great many of the middling sort of people about, but if you were to tender them a sovereign, and tell them it was a middling one, not very good and not very bad, do you think they would accept it in payment of a debt? Would you?

Perhaps *you* consider *yourself* a middling sort of man, and no worse, no better than your fellows. Let me illustrate the folly of your position. Three men are lying under sentence of death. Each one has taken the life of a fellow-being. You enter a cell and speak to one of them. You seek to point out his sin, but he replies, "I am no worse than my fellow-prisoners, and no better. We each murdered only one person."

"Quite true; but don't you know that you are condemned to be hanged by the neck at eight o'clock to-morrow morning? Your fellow-prisoners are also to be hanged at the same time; it will avail you nothing that you are no worse than they. The only thing which can possibly avert the awful prospect before you is

to accept this free pardon, signed with the Royal Seal, which I now present to you."

Could you imagine that man refusing it on the ground that he was no worse than his fellows? So God's free pardon, expressed in those lovely words in *Acts xiii. 38*, is addressed to you: "*Through this man is preached UNTO YOU the forgiveness of sins.*"

"Ah, yes," you say, "I can understand a murderer being glad to get a free pardon from both his earthly and his heavenly sovereigns, but I am not so bad as that."

I quite believe you are not. There is a great difference in murderers, and a great difference in sinners. In one point they are all alike. One sin makes a sinner. One murder, a murderer. The law of England says, If you commit one murder, whether you are the son of a duke or the son of a beggar, death is your portion.

The Word of God says, "The soul that *sinneth* it shall die," and "after this the judgment." That judgment is the lake of fire for ever and ever, and there is no difference. The little sinner is there, the great sinner is there, and the middling sinner too. All are condemned. Blackness of darkness for ever is their portion. I often wonder what that middling sinner will think when he finds himself in the company of the murderers, adulterers, drunkards, thieves and the like. This is no fancy picture. If you doubt it get

your Bible and read the description of the happiness of the saved in Revelation xxi. and xxii.; then look at the fifteenth verse of the last chapter. It speaks of those who are *without*. The heathen idolater is without; the sorcerer is without. Who else? "*Whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*" *That's you.*

"Me, why do you say *me*?"

Because when you say you are only a *middling* sinner—to speak the plain truth—you both love and make a lie. Shall I explain?

Some forty years after leaving the parts where Billy Brooks lived I re-visited his village. I saw the old man standing outside his cottage. I said to him, "Is your name 'Brooks'?"

"Yes, sir, my name is 'Brooks,' but I don't know you."

"Perhaps not, but I know you, and I want to ask how you stand for eternity? Are you going to heaven? Are your sins forgiven?"

Billy looked at me and said, "I am no worse than anybody else, I have never done anybody any harm, and done the best I can, and have as good a chance as anybody else."

"Yes, very likely, but everybody else has got a *very bad chance on those lines*. How old are you?"

"Turned eighty, sir, some time."

"Now, do you think it possible that you might have told a lie?"

"Oh, yes."

“ And either in thought or deed committed a sin ? ”

“ Oh, yes.”

“ Do you think, now, you have committed *one sin, only one sin, each day ?* ”

“ Oh! yes, sir, I feel sure that I have committed *one a day.*”

“ Now listen. You say you are over eighty. One sin a day in ten years would mount up to *three thousand six hundred and fifty sins.* Now multiply that by eight, and God’s book has recorded twenty nine thousand two hundred sins against you in eighty years.”

Billy’s face dropped, his countenance showed alarm, and instead of regarding himself as a “middling sinner” he now discovered that those infallible records in heaven were black with his sins.

How old are you, my reader ? Remember every ten years you will have entered against your name over three thousand sins ! There is a careful record kept of your life, every secret thought, every hidden purpose, every act, word, and deed is down against your name.

“ Ah,” but you say, “ I am nothing like so bad as Billy Brooks. I am quite sure I have not committed even one sin a day.”

Wait a moment ; turn with me to God’s description of those who are cast into hell. They are divided into two classes. One is the *wicked*. You tell me you are not among them. Now look at the other class : “ The

wicked shall be turned into hell." *With whom?*
 "All the nations that forget God." (*Psa ix. 17.*)

That is one sin which has been daily recorded against you. You have left God out. *Forgotten Him.* And yet you tell me you are not such a sinner as Billy Brooks. Is it truthful to say so? Do you not both love and make a lie when you say, "I have not committed one sin a day. I am not so bad as Billy Brooks." Oh! may God open your eyes to see what He thinks of one who forgets God.

After a few years I was again near the village where Billy Brooks lived. I inquired what had become of him, and found he had died a few months after I had the above-recorded conversation with him. All that I could learn about him was that after I had spoken to him he never failed to go to a little country preaching-place every Sunday night the whole winter through, a thing most unusual with him. Whether he truly turned to the Saviour or not, and received the forgiveness of all his sins, I know not, but what about you, my reader?

Is the recording angel writing after your name, "Another day of sin. *Jesus left out. Eternity neglected*"? Are you still among those who *forget God*? Remember the sum total of your sins increases daily, and you must meet God about them.

H. N.

The Gipsy's Message.

B—— was a gipsy by birth and a hawker by tradè. Late in life he was converted, and was a bright and happy Christian to the end of his days.

While selling his wares he would generally speak of Christ to his customers and would lose no opportunity of bearing testimony to the grace that had saved him.

Lady Hope, who was the instrument used of God in his conversion, gives the following deeply interesting account of a visit that he paid to a certain house, and of its consequences :

“ Having sold some of his wares at the back door, he said, ‘ My Master seemed to say to me, B——, go to the front door. So I went.’ There, as it happened, a lady passing in from the garden saw him, and was astonished by a most courteous salute from the old man. Coming up to her, he said :

“ ‘ Please, ma’am, what is that I see on your finger?’

“ ‘ On my finger!’ she exclaimed, much surprised at being thus accosted, ‘ do you mean my ring?’

“ ‘ Yes, ma’am,’ was the reply. ‘ It is made of gold, very precious, and it has been tried in the fire. It is *round*, too, and has neither

beginning nor end. It is like the love of Christ, very precious. He passed through the furnace for us, and His great love reaches from eternity to eternity! It has no beginning and no end. O ma'am, is *your heart* in this circle, the love of Christ? If so, you are safe for ever and ever.'

"The lady, more surprised than she could tell, wished to detain him, that she might ask him questions; but her pressing invitations were of no avail. 'No, ma'am, I thank you,' he said. 'My Master wished me to give that message. I cannot stay. But there is a young lady who has a room in the town where she has classes; she is the one who told *me* about Jesus, my Saviour, and she will tell *you* if you ask her.' And he gave her my name and address.

"Accordingly I received the next day a note worded thus :

'Dear Madam,—I shall be much obliged if you will do me the kindness to call on me at the earliest opportunity. I shall be at home to-morrow morning.'

"A few words of apology for troubling me followed, and then her name was signed.

"I knew the house perfectly, for I had often passed it in my drives. But as I knew nothing of what had occurred, her first words when we met came to me as a surprise. Ushered into a drawing-room radiant with sunshine and flowers, I was received by a lady who looked the picture of health and comeliness.

“‘I must begin by telling you,’ she said, ‘that yesterday I had a very strange interview with a man who was selling pictures.’ Her simple narrative followed, much as I have related it here. But she added, in a tone and with a look that I shall never forget, ‘God must have sent him to me as a messenger at *that very hour*, for I had just been told by the doctor that I have the disease of cancer!’

“After a few moments of silence she continued: ‘And so I know I must die! My home will be broken up; I must leave my husband and my children. And—and—*I am not ready!* When I heard this news it was like a dreadful blow to me. I went out into the garden in despair. As I turned towards the house I met this man, whom I looked upon as a tramp, and then heard him say these words, which I can never forget.’

“Clasping her hands together, she added: ‘Oh, is it true? Is it true that God loves me—*me?* And that Christ Jesus *cares* to save my soul? Tell me! Tell me anything you know that can help me and comfort me. You teach the poor; try to teach *me*. Will you begin at the very beginning? Is the love of Christ for *me?*’

“I asked for ‘a Bible. She rang the bell, and one was brought.

“Together we looked at one passage after another, which told us of the free salvation provided for sinners by means of the perfect

atonement made upon Calvary. The very invitations of mercy seemed sweet to her ear. The tidings of the *finished* work of Christ seemed absolute news to her; 'too wonderful,' as she said again and again.

"These are two of the verses which arrested her attention so deeply: '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.*)

"'Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.' (*John vi. 35.*)

"We finished our conversation as the gong sounded for her luncheon, but only with the promise that we were to meet again the next day. After three or four close conversations over our open Bibles, the full light of atonement and pardon dawned upon her soul, and the most intense peace and joy became her definite portion, replacing the indifference of past years and the anxious fear of the previous week.

"'Now,' she said one day, in her animated way, 'we must tell this good news to everybody. I have never known this before, though I have often gone to church and thought I was very good; and I am quite sure my neighbours do not know it.'

"'Why do you think so?' I asked.

"'Because I have never heard them speak of it! They have never said a word on the

subject. And I am certain that their lives would be quite different if they felt quite sure that Christ had died instead of them. No, they don't know it! And the poor people in the village, too; *they* must hear this good news. Will you help me to make it known?'

"She then proposed that she should open a charming room one evening in the week, and invite all her neighbours, rich and poor. For two years this meeting has been carried on, the results being a wonderful revival in the neighbourhood, and very much blessing to many souls.

"The lady herself was never once absent from it. As she grew weaker and weaker she was carried in, and laid on the sofa. But her loving zeal grew still warmer as the end drew near; and her face quite glowed with the light of heaven. The earnestness of the faces in that crowded room, and the sobs that were often heard, made an impression on me that I shall never forget. Nor shall I forget the kind, tender way she would speak to the hearers as they left the room, holding their hands and looking into their faces so earnestly, as she besought them to make their choice *now*, for Christ and eternity."

* * *

This narrative is presented to you, dear reader, with the earnest hope that you too may be led to feel your need of the Saviour, and that you may trust Him as simply and as fully

as this lady did. And do not forget that He who made His message so effective through a poor gipsy hawker, can speak through the humblest and feeblest instrument. H. P. B.

A Friend in Need.

A POOR, old woman was singing in the streets of the gay French capital in the hope of receiving money. Every house seemed tenantless, and she sung in vain until, when just on the point of collapsing from exhaustion, a bright, young girl sprang forward, and after bringing the old woman round, took her arm and began to sing.

Trained in a famous school, and possessing a clear and beautiful voice of great compass and power, she sang with all the fervour of compassion. The people gathered into a crowd. Even the windows were now thrown open by an eager, enraptured audience, and when the closing cadence of the melody ceased there fell into the narrow ring such a shower of silver as brought tears of gratitude to the eyes of the old woman. With seventy francs in her hand, she went on her way wondering and rejoicing, while her kind-hearted benefactress slipped quietly away.

What a noble act! we exclaim. How few would have taken the trouble with a poor, old beggar in rags. But the beggar's friend never

thought of the rags, but she did think of her urgent need, of her evident distress.

This is just another illustration of the kindness and love of God to the sinner. Jesus has stepped down from the glory of God with His hands full of blessing, for His heart was full of love, and having died and risen, has satisfied all the claims of God and is proclaimed the Saviour for man. What love! What compassion!

No matter how prodigal your life has been, nor how sinful, God does not look at your sinfulness, for the moment you claim Christ as your Saviour, the sinfulness—the unfitness—the rags—are gone. Your guilt as a sinner is gone, and God says, “your sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” The link of everlasting relationship is formed, and you are no longer looked at as belonging to a sinful race.

It is a solemn thing to think that, if unsaved, you are using your power of mind all for your own selfish ends, and have left God and Christ outside your reckonings entirely. You may possess the physical development of a Sandow, the keen penetration of a Spencer, the inventive genius of an Edison, yet lacking forgiveness of sins you are found wanting indeed. Money cannot buy it, it is beyond the price of rubies, and yet, having been obtained by the shedding of the blood of Christ, it is now offered you free.

Too cheap, you say! Nay—no mortal mind could ever sum up the Saviour's sufferings in death. Never! It is a serious thing to call God's salvation cheap; forgiveness is offered you in virtue of the *precious* blood of Christ.

W. O.

Without a Guide.

“**G**ENEVA, *October 1st.*—The greatest Alpine disaster since the famous Matterhorn accident happened yesterday, on the precipitous slope, Dent de Morcles, in the Valais Mountains. . . . On Saturday afternoon four young Alpinists, arrived at a mountain resort above Bex, with the intention of climbing the Morcles.

“Three guides presented themselves, but their services were laughingly refused. ‘We are not old women,’ said one. ‘I have climbed the Alps alone for several years,’ said another.

“As they were leaving, a guide said to them, ‘Gentlemen, personally I have known these mountains all my life. Be very careful. It is very dangerous just now. Again I advise you to take a guide.’

“They only laughed, however, and before daybreak on Sunday the gay Alpinists left the hotel. . . . On Monday their mutilated bodies were found by some peasants on a glacier near Bex.”

Are you, my unknown reader, trying to go through life *without a guide*?

If so, your danger is far greater than the young men's on the Swiss mountains, described in the paragraph above, and your end, if persisted in, must be certain destruction.

I fancy I hear again the laugh of the young men as they refused the offer of the guides—"We are not old women."

Have you never used the same words when someone has asked you to attend a gospel service, or perhaps has spoken to you of their dear Saviour and Guide?

Has your mother not pleaded with you to accept the only Guide who can safely conduct you through life?

Can you refuse God's request when He says, "My son, give Methine heart"? (*Prov. xxiii. 26.*)

One of the Alpinists said, "I have climbed alone for several years."

You may have done the same, but "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (*Romans xiv. 12.*) How, then, will you explain your reason for refusing God's Son, Him who would be the Guide of your life?

Three guides offered their services to the Alpine climbers, and perhaps if you begin to seek the way to everlasting life *many* guides will present themselves to you. Remember, therefore, that there is but *one* Guide, even Him, who said, "*I am THE Way*," and who is "able to keep you from falling." We are

warned to beware of blind guides. (See *Matt. xxiii. 16.*)

Remember you are on your way to eternity. Where shall it be spent ?

Will you not be warned by the folly of the four Alpinists, who perished so needlessly? Accept the Lord Jesus as your Guide, for He waits to be gracious unto you. (See *Isaiah xxx. 18.*)

“God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” (*Acts xvii. 30.*)

“I tell you . . . except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (*Luke xiii. 3.*)

C. V.

The Prisoners.

FOR some political offence, three Italian brothers were thrown into prison, heavily chained. Days, months, and years rolled by without their being brought to trial, till at last hope failed within their breasts. Health and strength broke down, and first one and then another died in his chains and bondage.

The survivor, poor fellow, still lingered on, but his hardships and sufferings had made him a hopeless lunatic. Of little use to him was the long-delayed pardon. No joy kindled in his breast or shone upon his face when his fetters were unloosed, and he was bidden to go out free. To his diseased mind the clanking of his chains was music, to his benighted intellect the

gloom of his prison was congenial. Oh! the sadness of it, to cling to the chains that had sapped his life, when liberty and freedom were his!

Sad though this is, I have heard and seen many a sadder case. I see men and women all around me still in the bondage and slavery of Satan and under the awful power of sin. Yet when the door of liberty is thrown open to them they prefer their bondage. Their jailor is the great enemy of souls, Satan. Their chains are the sins of a lifetime.

Some, I know, are groaning (it may be in secret) under the captivity of their relentless jailor, and are feeling the weight and strength of their sins well nigh intolerable. Such are longing for a deliverer, and to such I would say, The strong man has been bound; the prison gates are open to you; Jesus, the mighty Son of God, has stooped down from His throne on high to "set the lawful captive free," to "loose those that are appointed to death." He has been right into the stronghold of Satan. He has destroyed him that had the power of death that He might "deliver them who . . . were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Groaning, struggling soul, the chains are snapped, the prison gates are open, you may go out FREE. Not your own strength, but the work of Another, the mighty, triumphant Saviour, has brought this to pass. Those piled-up debts of yours *He* can cancel by His

precious blood. Your polluted, sin-stained soul His precious blood can cleanse from every sin, and the strength you need as you emerge from your chains to liberty He can abundantly supply.

But, alas! how many are like the poor lunatic prisoner, content with their bondage. These lines perchance may be read by someone to whom the story of the Saviour's triumph has no charms. Like the prisoner in the story you may have seen many pass down to a sinner's hopeless grave, without, alas! any effect upon your soul. They have died in their chains, and never have known, and never will know, liberty. As the tree falls, so it lies. In the chains of Satan during life, and now in the chains of blackness and darkness through a never-ending night.

And you—are you madly bent on following them there, with a Saviour, pardon, liberty, and glory offered to you? Consider—

“There are no pardons in the tomb,
And brief is mercy's day.”

W. J. L. O.



An Old-Time Parable.

IMAGINE a man who has fallen down a deep well. In falling, he has alighted on a little platform, halfway down. A lion at the top stands ready to devour him if he should succeed in climbing out again. A dragon at the bottom watches him with glittering eyes and open jaws, waiting to destroy him if he should fall. And all the while two mice (a black one and a white one) are gnawing away at the support on which he rests.

Such is the striking imagery used by an old preacher to set forth the sinner's position of danger. The deep well is sin; into it the sinner has fallen. The lion at the top is Satan; the dragon at the bottom is the eternity of woe that assuredly awaits every one who dies in his sins. The black and white mice are night and day, which are unceasingly making inroads into the sinner's life, and bringing nearer and nearer the moment when he must finally fall into the jaws of eternal destruction.

You smile, perhaps, at the quaint imagery. But can you afford to dismiss the matter with a smile and a shrug of the shoulders? Does not the old preacher's parable set forth the *truth* as to your position, if you are still unsaved? It does indeed, and you cannot slight it with impunity.

Even now, while you read these words, the white mouse is gnawing away. Soon your eyes will be closed in sleep, but all the while the black mouse will be at work, and you will wake in the morning with so much less of life left to you to live. Each day carries you further, and each night a little further still, towards eternity.

The need of the moment for you is the strong hand of a *Saviour*, to snatch you from your danger. It is of such that we have to tell you. One who is mightier than Satan stands ready to save you. JESUS, who shed His life's blood as an atonement for sin, sits now upon the throne of heaven, and is proclaimed by God as a Saviour. You have but to *apply to Him*. He is accessible to the worst of sinners. His blood suffices to wash away their guilt. His love can fill their hearts with unending gladness.

Will you not turn the eye of faith to Him? "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."
(*Acts x. 43.*)

H. P. B.

An Aged Artist's Testimony.

THOMAS SIDNEY COOPER, R.A., the famous painter, was born in 1803, and died on February 7th, 1902. After a long career as an artist, he was converted when eighty-six years old.

To the editor of a magazine, who requested the opinion of a number of prominent men on the Bible, he wrote the following simple yet beautiful confession of what the Bible had done for him :

To the Editor of "The Monthly Reporter."

"DEAR SIR,—You ask me what I think of the Bible. It brought me to see I was lost in sin, and had no power to save myself. It showed me how I must get God's forgiveness for all my iniquity.

"It told me the door of mercy was open, and salvation was to be freely had.

"It showed me the wonderful sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and through His precious blood all my sins are washed away. 'For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.' (II. Cor. v. 21.)

"I am thankful to say I read the Bible daily, at 9, at 1, and at 10 p.m., and would recommend your readers to do the same.—Yours faithfully,

"THOS. SIDNEY COOPER."

The following was written by his wife, relative to an illness he had some little time before his death.

"On one occasion the doctor said, 'Everyone is asking how you are, Mr. Cooper.' He replied, 'It is very kind, but I am less anxious they should hear about my health, than that they should hear that God has rescued me, by

the blood of His beloved Son, for 'an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven' for me. I want everyone to know that I am going to enjoy that inheritance *with Christ.*'

"I was writing to a friend, who wished to hear of him, and said, 'What message have you?' 'Tell her that I have full confidence in the mercy of God, both for soul and body, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ,'

"One day he was speaking of the certainty of salvation, and said, 'If anyone asks me how I know that I am saved, I should say I know it better than if I had heard an angel out of heaven say so, for I might make a mistake about that, but I cannot make a mistake about the WORD OF GOD. The Lord Jesus said, 'All that the Father giveth ME, shall come to ME [and I *have* come to Him], and him that cometh to ME, I will in no wise cast out.' The Father has made my soul a present to His Son, and I know that He will not take me away from Him.'

"A friend said to him, 'We must prepare for death.' He replied, '*The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has done that for me.*'

"A few days before he passed away I repeated the two lines to him—

'Jesus, Lover of my soul,
LET ME to THY bosom fly.'

With tender earnestness he said, 'I am always there.' "

The following lines are from his pen—

*“ No tongue can tell, nor human heart conceive
Thy woe, O Lord, as Thou didst tread the path
For man’s redemption, yet despised. Those
deeds*

*Of love divine broadcast were sown ; by man
Rejected ; yet in that bright realm above
Thou wilt reveal the secrets of Thy path
To all who loved Thee here ; to all Thy grace
Hath won, Thou wilt bestow heaven’s wealth.*

Who but

*Thyself, Lord, couldst have borne our sins, and
saved*

*Us from eternal wrath, to know Thy joy,
And see Thee in the glory as Thou art ? ”*

M. S. C.

The Three Blots.

LYING right before me is a cartoon, published recently in a colonial paper, with the above title. Let me describe it.

In the centre is depicted an open book. The pages are headed with the name of the colony and the year 1907. Upon the pages are three ugly blots. Over the largest is written, “ Immorality ” ; over the next, “ Larceny ” ; and over the smallest, “ Superstition.” In front of the book lies a penknife called “ Law,” a piece of india-rubber named “ Education,” while behind stands a bottle of fluid labelled “ Essence of Religion.”

Beneath the whole picture are the following lines:

“ *On the fair page of——
 Year by year these blots we see,
 Lust and Theft and Superstition ;
 How can we remove the three ?
 Take the rubber, EDUCATION ;
 Use the LAW, a penknife keen ;
 With the ESSENCE OF RELIGION,
 Work until the page is clean.*”

Suppose now that the open page had your name at the top, what should we see beneath? There would certainly be *some* blots on the page. It must be left to your conscience, before God, to answer as to whether you have been guilty of immorality or theft, or as to whether you are a victim of superstition in any of its many forms. Possibly you are fairly clear as to these matters. The blots on your page are not so large, so distressingly staring as these we have described; having been decently brought up your sins have been such as temper, untruth, and the like. Yet *there* they are. Neither are they confined to *three*, nor even *thirty*. They stain the page in hundreds and in thousands.

What is to be done? That is a question which is often asked. Evidently the easiest thing to do is to “turn over a new leaf.” It takes but a moment, and lo! all is white and sweet as before! *But this is so for a few*

moments only, and then one by one the blots reappear and soon all is as bad as before.

This turning over of new leaves is a very slipshod proceeding. It really does not satisfy any truly honest conscience. It never will satisfy God. You tried it likely enough when December 31st, 1906, was merging into January 1st, 1907, and it has not been a success, has it?

No! my friend, some more powerful and drastic remedy than that must be found if ever you are to be right with God.

Suppose we adopt the processes indicated in the cartoon. We must then endeavour to educate ourselves into a better condition with holier feelings, and to sternly repress our sinful impulses by legal effort, and finally to cleanse away our stains by a more diligent use of the services of religion. Will this do?

Undoubtedly a nation or colony may considerably elevate itself in the scale of civilization by a judicious use of the "rubber," the "penknife," and the "essence." That is not for one moment disputed; but the point is, Will *your* sinful stains really be removed by these things? Removed, I mean, not from your neighbour's vision, but from the all-seeing eye of God?

Take the india-rubber, and use it on your page. Does it remove or help to remove the stain? No, it does not even prevent more being added. There never was a day in which

education more abounded than to-day, and yet sin abounds also. Great scientists are great sinners, as often as clumsy ploughboys are.

It is a sad fact that in South Africa a far larger percentage of the educated and Christianized (not *Christian*) natives fill the prisons than of the uneducated portion of the race. No; the india-rubber does not clean, it often smudges.

Now use the penknife.

“Lord have mercy on us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.”

Our hearts *need* inclining too, for naturally they do not bend in that direction. But supposing we really try. Cannot we scratch out at least some of these ugly marks? Let those answer who have honestly attempted to do so. One and all must admit to failure.

David the Psalmist loved God's law. Over and over again he tells us so in his lovely poems. He used it too upon himself, and at last he says to God, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” (*Ps. cxliiii. 2.*)

“*No man living*”—and that is as true in A.D. 1907 as in B.C. 1050. The New Testament amply confirms it. “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” (*Rom. iii. 20.*)

And what about the “Essence of Religion”? Will that not help, especially used in conjunction with the other two?

True religion is a good thing. Its real "essence" is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. If it was to Him that the cartoonist desired to point, it was well, only then it was a pity that with *Him* he should couple the law and education. It is to be feared, however, that he used "Religion" in its popular sense. As generally understood, it covers a great variety of things. Praying, reading daily portions of Scripture, attending services, being confirmed, taking Holy Communion, teaching in the Sunday school, penance, entering a monastery or nunnery, Christian endeavour, all fall under that head. How many there are who are trusting to one or more of these forms of religion for the blotting out of their many sins. Are you?

Notice all these things set *you* to work. Well did the little rhyme run:

*"With the essence of religion
WORK until the page is clean."*

Alas! alas! friend, at this rate you will be left *working* for ever, and the blots will still be there.

Let us leave the cartoon, and turn to one glorious verse of Holy Scripture:

"But to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on *Him that justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." (*Rom. iv. 5.*)

The fact is, the "worker" is in grave danger of missing everything. He gets so engrossed with his efforts that he overlooks God's way of

salvation. Cease your efforts, and from this moment join the company of "him that worketh not."

Now we can point you to One by whom the great work has been, once and for ever, *done*. Jesus died; His death was the payment of sin's penalty, the reaping of sin's wages. *His resurrection, the seal and proof that all was done*. And all that He did is for *you*. I know it, because the Bible says: "*Christ died for the ungodly.*" (*Rom. v. 6.*) You are ungodly. Therefore He died for you.

One step more. You just need the value of all that He has done applied to your soul personally. God, as we have read, "justifies the ungodly"—since Christ died for them, but it is the one who *believes* "on Him that justifieth the ungodly" who is counted a righteous man.

As your eye rests on these words, lift the eyes of your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the God at whose right hand He sits, and there let your soul repose.

Trust Him and trust Him wholly. Then you will in a moment reach the goal, which a lifetime of struggling and working would only enable you to *miss*.

Rubber, and penknife, and bottle may fail and inevitably do, but the grand old verse stands: "The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (*I John i. 7.*)

“Who Will Show Us Any Good?”

IMAGINE a poor traveller dying of thirst.

A friend meets him and directs him to a spring of running water, fresh and pure.

He refuses it, and hurries off in another direction looking for pieces of broken pottery in the hope of finding water, at best putrid, wherewith to satisfy his parched throat and tongue. Should we not be justified in regarding such a poor creature as being bereft of all reason? And yet this is the course that men follow in reference to their soul's salvation. The Lord Jesus said, “If any man thirst [that is, if he desires salvation, true happiness] let him come unto Me and drink” &c. (*John vii. 37*), but the majority turn from Him, and seek for pleasure in the things of time, and joys of sense, and thereby proclaim themselves as having less reason than poor demented creatures.

“*Who will show us any good?*” Vast multitudes utter this distressing cry as they hurry along their daily course, but few appear either to want to hear, or wait to hear, the only true and satisfying answer. Any quack who comes forward with his unjustifiable promises can gain attention, but **THE LOVING FRIEND** is pushed aside. The universal experience of life proves that the quack's advice leads to disaster. There is no short cut from sickness to health, from poverty

to riches, from death to life. This lesson may seem to be learned, but it is quickly forgotten, for the evil counsellor is ever at hand to promise "something good" to those who will but follow his delusive baits. Men gamble with their souls and their happiness. When the One Good and "Needful Thing" is offered to men they turn sorrowfully, if not scornfully, away because they love the things of this world. (*See Matt. xix. 22.*)

There are some few who do crave a treasure and a blessing beyond the passing things of this life, and to such God speaks in His Word, and says, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." (*Psalm lxxxiv. 11.*) That is from those who walk by faith in the Lord Jesus. (*See Gal. ii. 20, 21.*) Again He says, "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (*Psalm xxxiv. 10.*), for those that truly seek Him shall find Him (*See Jerem. xxix. 13.*), and those that find the Lord Jesus have this promise made to them, "He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" (*Rom. viii. 32.*) No true, lasting good is found outside of Christ. Take him, then, as your Saviour and Friend, and all will be well for time and eternity.

P. J. B.

Dr. X's Conversion.

DR. X— was exceedingly popular in his denomination; in fact he made a name for eloquent preaching that travelled far beyond the bounds of the circle in which he moved, but—*he was unconverted*. Honours had been thrust upon him, the highest position his denomination could give him was his at a younger age than had hitherto been known, but—*he was unsaved, unforgiven, and, with all his preaching and religion, on the road to everlasting ruin*.

The worldling is too keen-sighted not to know a *true* Christian when he sees one. He knows it is no lack of charity that impels us to speak the truth. Multitudes embrace the Christian ministry who are not converted. Has not the late Revd. W. Haslam written the story of how, after years of earnest endeavour, he was converted through his own sermon? Did not Wesley and Berridge, both clergymen, tell the story of how they were converted after having assumed the sacred office? And we might multiply the list indefinitely, if necessary, to prove our point.

Can anyone, who knows what it is to be truly converted, recognise that the Revd. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, is a converted man? Teaching, which denies the fall, refuses the atonement in reality, though it clings to it in name, which descants on the humanity of God and the deity of man (one shrinks from penning such words). is not the teaching of a *true* Christian.

Dr. X's conversion will illustrate what I mean, and may God deliver you, dear reader, if you are in danger of being led eternally astray by such preaching as his, before he was converted. To his large and fashionable audience he would talk fluently of the higher life, and urge his hearers to strive after nobler ideals. In this effort for him lay his own salvation and that of his hearers. Christ was held up before his hearers, as the great moral example to be followed, whilst His place as Redeemer and Saviour was ignored, and the thought of being washed by His blood treated as a barbarous Hebrew thought grafted on to New Testament teaching.

But God's eye was on Dr. X, and his conversion came about in a sudden and unexpected way. He received an urgent message, asking him to call at once to see one of his congregation, a woman in humble life, who was dying. He suggested that another minister should see her, but he was away from home. "Oh! then," said Dr. X, "go to

Mr. —.” “Alas!” replied the messenger, “he is ill, you must come.”

And so reluctantly Dr. X went. He found the poor woman in an agony of soul. All his ethical teaching had given her no comfort for a dying hour. He said, “My good woman, you have been a respectable member of society and a regular church attender, you are all right.” But this, and much more to the same effect, failed to comfort the poor woman.

Her anguish was dreadful to witness, and at last, in despair, kind-hearted Dr. X, really anxious to say anything that would comfort her, repeated the precious verse, “*The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” (I John i. 7.) He was astonished to see the effect of God’s word.

Like that scene of old, the lake lashed to tempest, the disciples crying, “Master, Master, we perish,” the divine word going forth, “Peace, be still,” the threatening waves sinking and giving place to a great calm, so the storm within the poor woman’s heart was hushed to a great content, as she embraced the meaning of that wonderful text, and she died rejoicing in the light and power of it.

As Dr. X saw the *power* of the text, a text speaking of the sacrificial, sin-cleansing character of the blood of Jesus, he was impressed. The more he thought over it the more it laid hold of him, until like a little child, this eloquent preacher of lofty ethics,

came as a poor sin-stained penitent to the Lord, embraced Him as Saviour and received cleansing from all sin through His precious blood.

His preaching now was altered. No longer was he ashamed of the gospel of Christ. He preached Him, His atoning work, His glorious resurrection. Spiritual life was stirred in his hearers. Souls were converted to God.

This went on for three short, happy years, when one Sunday evening he was just about to commence his sermon, when he was seen to fall in the pulpit. Some went forward to render aid, but all was of no avail. He was dead, gone to be for ever with the Lord, who had died for him and saved him!

Now, dear reader, I ask you the pointed question, Do you believe in the sacrificial, sin-cleansing character of the blood of Jesus? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Without the shedding of blood is no remission." Scripture is plain on the point.

And further, Have you trusted the Lord, have you believed on Him to the saving of your soul? May God give you no rest till you can answer with a hearty and emphatic Yes.

A. J. P.

Dark Times Coming: Have You a Shelter?

THE most attentive students of the history of mankind declare that the horizon of the future is by no means as clear from overhanging clouds as the prophets of peace would have us believe.

Some speak of the "Yellow Peril" as the danger most to be dreaded. By this they mean the threatened domination of the white races of Europe by swarming millions of yellow-skinned men from the far East.

Others prophesy, in the near future, a European war on such a gigantic scale that the whole world will be convulsed, and the fabric of civilisation, as at present constituted, be swept away as the filmy threads of a spider's web before a March hurricane.

Yet once more the growing power of the labouring classes, as evidenced by the increasing number of trades' unions and similar organisations is pointed to, and we are told that we are on the verge of a tremendous social upheaval that will mean the overturning of ancient landmarks and the uprooting of long-cherished customs and ideas.

Whether these various surmises prove to be correct or not, one thing is certain to all who

believe the Bible, namely, that *a time of unparalleled suffering, accompanied by direct judgments from the hand of God, is coming upon the world.*

I do not now refer to the final scene before the Great White Throne, when the wicked dead of all ages shall be called to account for their misdeeds. Before that dread event comes to pass, earth and heaven will have "fled away." (*Rev. xx. 11.*) The earth, too, will have had her millenium of blessing, and will have "blossomed like a rose" under the beneficent rule of Christ and His saints.

But the student of Scripture knows very well that first of all a time of fearful trouble "shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (*Rev. iii. 10.*) The early chapters of the Book of Revelation, from the sixth onwards, predict in a symbolic way the awful happenings of those days. Wars, famines, pestilences, will follow, one after another, in quick succession, and the circumstances that attend them will prove them to be the direct outpourings of God's wrath.

Into the details of coming events, as given upon the pages of divine revelation, we cannot now go. Space forbids. But this one thing we would earnestly impress upon the reader: In view of the dark times that are coming, and of the fearful judgment that awaits every unrepentant sinner, YOU NEED A SHELTER.

It must be a *real* shelter. Bitterly will they

who have fled for safety to false and untrustworthy refuges rue their folly in that day.

Not many weeks ago five stretchers, carried upon the shoulders of stalwart bearers, might have been seen passing through the crowded streets of New York. Upon them lay the maimed and shattered frames of five men, who an hour previously had been hale and hearty. They were workmen, engaged in preparing the foundation for a new building by the river-side. Suddenly the sky grew black, big drops of rain began to fall. Lightning flashed and thunders pealed. The question of the moment was, where to run for shelter. Close at hand was a small platform that had been roofed in. Thither the five men ran, until the storm should have abated. But the rainfall was so great, that the soil was soon washed away from under the supports of the platform. Very soon the whole structure collapsed, and, with the men that were sheltering within, was precipitated into the excavation below, to the serious injury of all the five.

Equally insecure are the shelters to which the souls of many have recourse in order to find safety from the coming storm of judgment. "*Moral living*" is a very insecure shelter. So is "*Doing one's best.*" So also is, "*Joining a church, and regularly observing its ordinances.*" False refuges, too, are "*Paying one's way,*" and "*Doing to others as you would that they should do to you.*"

All these things may be very good, but as *shelters from the storm* they are worse than worthless. To resort to them for that purpose would be to court a fate infinitely more terrible than that which overtook the New York workmen.

There is but one real and trustworthy shelter. Beside it, everything that claims to be a means of escape is a delusion and a snare. *Christ* is the only refuge. Under the shelter of His blood is the only place of shelter. Reader, ARE YOU THERE?

"Other refuge have I none," is the language of one who understands the truth of the matter. In Christ there is absolute safety. Sheltered by His blood, no stroke of judgment can reach you, for the simple reason that His blood is the witness of the judgment due to you having been already borne by Him. Here lies the secret of peace. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ is accepted by God as full atonement for the sins of all who trust in Him. Put *your* trust in Him, and you are from that moment entitled to regard His death as *your* death. He was bound that *you* might be loosed. He suffered that *you* might be saved. His was the judgment that *you* might never be judged.

Upon this foundation you may build with absolute assurance. In Christ and His atoning work, and nowhere else, you may find perfect safety, and be able to say, "Thou hast been a Shelter for me, and a strong Tower." (*Ps. lxi. 3.*)

A Rare Revenge.

“ I WANT to see my mother,” sobbed the child, as the undertaker screwed down the coffin lid. “ You cannot ; get away with you ! ” “ Only let me see dear mother once, only once,” sobbed the little orphan.

Quickly the cruel man struck the boy away, so that he reeled with the blow. The boy turned, and raising his little hand defiantly, cried through his tears, “ When I’m a man I’ll kill you for that ! ”

* * *

The court was crowded. “ Does anyone appear as counsel for the prisoner ? ” A young man stepped firmly forward to plead for the erring and friendless. He was a stranger, but from his first sentence there was silence. The splendour and power of his language entranced and convinced, and the man who could not find a friend was acquitted. “ May God reward you, sir ; I cannot,” murmured the man.

“ I want no thanks,” replied the stranger, “ but I do want to refresh your memory ! Twenty years ago you struck a broken-hearted boy away from his mother’s coffin. I was that boy.” “ Have you saved me, then, to take my life ? ” “ No ! Go, and remember the tears of a friendless child.”

That was a noble revenge. The young man did not inflict injury to gratify the deep sense

of wrong which had been painfully present in his mind for twenty years. On the contrary, he returned good for evil in no usual way. Such incidents are rare, because human nature takes a peculiar pleasure in revenge, and the foregoing exception only proves the rule.

* * *

Man hates his enemies, but God loves them that hate Him. Man has proved himself an enemy to God by refusing the blessings of heaven, and by putting to death the One who brought them. Four thousand years of sin were not enough to show man's hatred to God, although prophets were slain, and faithful ones slaughtered. Man went actually to the length of crucifying Jesus, God's beloved Son. Yes; God has been insulted, wronged, and dishonoured, and what is He doing in return?

It is a wonderful thing to know that all the cruel wrongs and dishonourings have but afforded a fit opportunity for the display of God's loving heart. It could not be otherwise, for "God is love." "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 *John iv.* 9, 10.) It is truly a blessed thing to see

Love Manifested

in the giving of His Son, so that we who have

hated Him, sinned against Him, and deserve to die, might by His dying for us be acquitted. You may be acquitted now for He has given Himself for you. Eloquence—far surpassing mere human words—the eloquence of deeds has reached the very heart of God, for Jesus died on the cross. He proved His love.

What mighty pleading! "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour," and that for you. "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.*) Thus we have

Love Proclaimed.

Not a word is said about your enmity or my hatred, but everlasting life is offered to whosoever that believes. "Whosoever" means YOU, it shuts out nobody, but welcomes everybody, and above all it means YOU. Believe, and set to your seal that God is true, and you will prove His love for yourself by enjoying it, for "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts [believers] by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (*Rom. v. 5.*)

Love Enjoyed

is a blessed present reality, it makes the heart happy and causes it to sing with joy. Take Jesus then as God presents Him, a present Saviour for you, and say with us, "We love Him, because He first loved us." (*I John iv. 19.*)

What if It Had Been You?

THE quiet, peaceful villagers of S—— T—— were very much amazed at the decease, in rapid succession, of three of its inhabitants.

The first, a young man of about twenty-eight years of age, apparently in the bloom of health, when *death* swooped down upon him and carried him off. Upon returning from this young man's funeral, another member of the family was taken seriously ill, and before long he also died. Then, to the surprise and consternation of the villagers, the clergyman, who interrèd both, was taken ill, and in a few days passed away.

Reader, how is it with *you*? What if it had been *you*? You may treat *death* as if it were but a name, and be inclined to look upon *Sin* and *Eternity* as if they were trifles.

“Oh!” I think I hear you say, “those Gospel preachers are always telling us of some tragic occurrence like this. Remember, reader, “*He, that being often reprovèd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*” (*Prov. xxix. 1.*) And, again, “*Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*” (*Prov. xxvii. 1.*)

Abandon your procrastinating course, and come to an instant decision for Christ, and your soul's eternal welfare shall be secured.

What Shall It Profit?

A PROSPEROUS City merchant is sitting in his private office with his secretary.

He is not yet fifty years old. Success has smiled upon him until, at last, intoxicated by it, he set his heart upon being a millionaire. He knew he was rapidly approaching the completion of his ambition, and upon the particular occasion of which I write—with his secretary's help—he is counting up his possessions.

The task is completed, and the clerk looks up quietly and says, "*It is seven figures this time, sir.*"

"*Seven figures,*" he answers, *are you sure?*" Has he really obtained his ambition? Is it really true that he is at last among the world's millionaires? The secretary checks carefully the final figures. He looks up again, "It is all correct, sir. It is *seven figures this time.*"

The merchant gives the secretary a strange look. It seems as if the excitement of the moment is too much for him, and as if something gives way or snaps, like a spring, long held in tension, released will snap. From that day the merchant was a stricken man. From that hour he was marked for death. Brain trouble ensued. He never lived to enjoy his triumph. Well may we ask, What shall it profit? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" This man had lived for this world and found the coveted reward was only an empty bubble, only ashes

in his hand. This man had forgotten God and eternity, his soul, and the reckoning day. And you? What of you? Answer God. A. J. P.

Why did He Die ?

VARIOUS theories were afloat as to how Yard-master T. J. Wood came to lose his life. He was picked up on the railway at Clopton Junction, Virginia, in a terribly mangled condition.

Was it suicide? Or was it an accident caused by his own carelessness or foolhardiness?

People had their own opinions on the subject. Some thought one thing and some another.

In due time, however, the true facts of the case were brought to light. The Yard-master had deliberately sacrificed his life in order to save the lives of others, and had died a hero.

It happened like this. The "Cannon Ball Express," the limited passenger train of the Norfolk and Western Railroad was approaching the junction when Wood discovered that a switch leading to a string of empty cars was open. Unless something was done, in a few seconds the train would be a wreck, and the ground would be strewn with dead and dying men. So he jumped from his caboose and threw himself upon the switch. The train was saved, but the brave, self-sacrificing hero was struck by the engine and killed at once.

*

*

*

Various theories are afloat as to the manner and cause of the death of One infinitely greater than the bravest of earth's heroes. How and for what reason did *Jesus* die ?

Unholy speculations have not been wanting as to *how* he died. Some have traced his death to mere physical causes. Others, more daring, have asked : Did He really die upon the cross after all ? Or was it only a pretended death, followed by a reviving which His followers have palmed off upon the world as a genuine resurrection ?

Others, again, agreeing that He really died, nevertheless argue that His death was that of a mere martyr, and that He was but one amongst many more who sealed their testimony to the truth with their life's blood.

From all such unholy theories and speculations we turn away. The holy Scriptures shed a full and sufficient light upon the subject. They assure us that *Christ died*, and that His death was infinitely more than the death of a martyr. He died as a Substitute. His sufferings were those of a Sin-bearer. His blood has atoning value. In a word, He died *for us*, for the ungodly, for sinners.

"Christ died for our sins," we read (1 *Cor.* xv. 3). "Christ died for the ungodly" (*Rom.* v. 6). "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 *Peter ii.* 24). Surely these Scriptures are enough to show us that in dying upon the cross the Lord Jesus

Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin. Those who believe in Him can say, "He died for *me*; He bore my sins; His blood has cleansed me, and made me whiter than snow."

Can you say this? What is the death of Christ to *you*? Have you staked your soul's eternal welfare upon the merits of His blood? What other foundation can you find to rest upon? How else can your sins be atoned for?

But when we announce the fact of Christ having died for the ungodly we have not told the whole story.

For He who died at Calvary is alive again. He has ascended to heaven, and sits upon the throne as Lord of all. He is there to administer the wonderful results of His death. All that Christ secured for guilty sinners by His work upon the cross is now to be obtained in Him. Forgiveness, righteousness, peace, salvation: all these would have been impossible for us if Jesus had not died. But they are all now to be found in the risen Christ.

Turn to Him in faith. He will make all these blessings yours, and will give you His Holy Spirit, by whose means you will enjoy them.

H. P. B.

The King's Clocks.

DURING the summer season, when the King and Queen are away from Sandringham, and the park and grounds are occasionally open to visitors, the railway

platform of Wolferton, the station for Sandringham, is now and again occupied by groups of people, who complain that they are half an hour too soon for their train. They have not discovered that the clocks at Sandringham are kept half an hour fast.

This idea is shared by other gentlemen of note in the country, but at no place is the scheme carried out more thoroughly than at Sandringham, where *all* the clocks in the house, stables, and kennels, and even the church clock, are kept exactly half an hour fast.

But is this merely an idle fancy? Not by any means. The King is noted as a punctual man. In the affairs of this life he is well acquainted with the value of time. Evidently he is also well acquainted with the incurable tendency to procrastination and consequent lateness which marks the majority of mankind.

The value of time! How few of us are awake to it, especially when concerning the affairs of eternity. Half an hour seems of but small account one way or the other, and yet swiftly the half hours have glided into a day, and a day into a week, the weeks roll into years, the years into a lifetime. "*We spend our years as a tale that is told.*" (Psa. xc. 9.)

And when life's day is over and death closes the scene, untold thousands have been horrified to discover that, with all their "hopes" of going to heaven, their good intentions of being saved "some day," they are NOT saved and

heaven is NOT their destiny. The train of OPPORTUNITY has left the station of TIME and they are left behind, because TOO LATE.

Shall it be so with you? You hope not! Of course you do. But have you not eyes to see that *that* will not help you? If hopes took people to heaven, all with very few exceptions would be easily saved. Good intentions, and the most pious resolutions never yet kept one sinner out of hell.

Decision is needed. *Decision* for Christ. He *alone* can save. His blood *alone* can cleanse from guilt. To trust Him is the *only* way of safety.

You need Him. I do not say you *will* need Him when you come to die. That is true, but you need Him *now*. Now He is just willing and waiting to save you from your sins. (*See Matt. i. 21.*) And if you will not trust Him to save you from your sins now, it only proves that you love them, and if you cling to your sins now because you love them, why should you expect to be saved from the hell that your sins deserve by and by?

The visitors to Sandringham may often stand about on Wolferton platform and grumble, but at any rate they catch their trains! It would be well if, just as you close this gospel magazine, you set your clock a little fast, and turning to the Lord Jesus Christ as a poor, guilty sinner, received Him NOW as your Saviour and Lord. You will then not

miss heaven when the time comes for your departure, neither will you find it a cause for grumbling or melancholy while you live here upon earth.

F. B. H.

Terror or Triumph.

THE last words uttered by those whose loss we mourn are greatly treasured, and in many cases leave very lasting impressions on us. In a certain town in Suffolk two men lay on what proved to be their death-beds. They were both grandparents of the writer and well advanced in years. Let us, in thought, enter their rooms, and together we will listen to words which are amongst the last that fell from their lips.

The occupant of the first room is one whose life of some sixty years has been spent in the service of Satan, the very worst of masters. He has had his fling of pleasure and sin, and very shortly must stand in the presence of God to give an account of a life of utter God-forgetfulness. How does he view such a prospect? Is it with the same flippancy and indifference with which he was accustomed to speak of death when in possession of health and strength, and when that king of terrors *seemed* a long way off? NO; he cannot rest. He struggles to get out of bed, and is greatly distressed and alarmed as thoughts of the past and the future

crowd in upon his mind. His friends seek to ease him, thinking bodily pain is the cause of the unrest ; but the real secret of it is revealed when he sinks back exhausted, and gasps with his last breath three solemn words :

“Don't neglect Him.”

Solemn words of warning to those who heard them, and to all who read them, for “how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ?” (*Heb. ii. 3.*)

Let us pass on to the occupant of the other room. What a contrast is presented here. The sufferer has long been a true believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as we enter he speaks, not of his pain, soon to be ended, nor of his circumstances, soon to be changed, but of his Saviour, whom he has proved through many a weary day and sleepless night to be “a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” (*Prov. xviii. 24.*) The words which come from his lips are those of triumph and joy,

“He only is my Rock and my Salvation,”

and the expression on his face is one of certain joyful hope of soon seeing the One who loved him and died for him.

But how would it be with you, dear reader, if called upon to leave this world to-day ? Would the *terror* or the *triumph* be yours ? If you cannot truthfully say, “Oh ! death, where is thy sting ?” let us listen to the last words uttered by the Son of God upon the cross :

"It is finished."

These are words of deepest importance coming from such a Person and at such a time. They refer to the mighty work of redemption, which had been entrusted to Him by God, in which God has been infinitely glorified, and all the thrice-holy claims of His justice have been met, so that now He is waiting to put to your account all the blessed eternal results of that finished work. God can now say in perfect righteousness of the vilest sinner who puts his trust in Christ, "Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a Ransom." That Ransom is found in His holy, spotless Son, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin. May you find in Him a Saviour ere death and its terrible consequences overtake you. The only way to ensure this is to decide for Him *now*.

*"The moments are flying, then haste, nor delay,
Secure God's salvation while still 'tis to-day.
Eternity's ages thy soul has to face,
In blackness of darkness, or riches of grace."*

B.

The Peril of Indecision.

A POOR man, who lived near a wild, rocky coast of Scotland, earned a scanty living by gathering sea-fowls' eggs. On one occasion, looking down a terrific steep, he saw

midway a ledge abutting from the rock, covered with a cluster of sea-fowls' nests. He fastened his rope to a tree above the cliff, and lowered himself cautiously till he stood upon the ledge. In his eagerness to grasp the spoil he unwittingly dropped the noose of the rope by which he had descended, and it swung, as it appeared, far beyond his reach.

There he stood on the narrow ledge; above him a fearful height he had no hope to scale, below him a terrific precipice, with the sea dashing at its base. It was a moment of unutterable anguish. In intensity of despair, by a desperate effort he sprang forward. It pleased God he should grasp the rope. He drew himself up to the top, trembling with transport and terror.

Every one of us can realise the peril of that man. But how akin to this, but intensely more awful, the condition of every waverer as to the gospel! He stands upon the narrow ledge of life; above him is the terrific mountain of his guilt, that he has no power in himself to scale; below him is the fearful abyss of death, with the death that never dies.

And after all, what is it you are wavering between? Dust and ashes, for that is all that the glory and pleasures of this world come to, and "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." On one hand is Christ, heaven and eternal blessedness; on the other is disobedience, discontent, despair, remorse and eternal woe.

Between *these* you are halting. While you halt the "gulf" is forming that will soon be "fixed"; the character is deepening that will soon be stereotyped for ever. Indecision becomes decision. *You decide for hell while you waver about heaven.* It is now, or it is never; it is here, or it is nowhere. The door will soon be shut that can never be opened, and the dark abyss set that never can be crossed.

Oh! decide now. God pleads with you. "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?"

H. S.

A Serious Decision.

"**A**H, well! We generally think of these things when it is too late!"

The speaker, my companion in a short railway journey, had in his younger days an opportunity of going to Australia, where bright prospects had been held out to him. For certain reasons he had refused the invitation, and now that old age and poverty were staring him in the face he could not help thinking of the serious decision of his earlier life.

His loss and disappointment may have been great, but after all it was only for *time*.

To be "too late" even in circumstances like these may be very serious; but how unspeakably awful to be "too late" in connection with *eternity*.

I handed my fellow-traveller a booklet, entitled, "*Your sins will meet you one day*," and at the same time urged upon him the importance of getting God's forgiveness before it was too late.

Reader, are YOU forgiven? Can you say, "*All my sins are washed away?*" Many think the dying pillow is the place to turn to Christ and seek forgiveness; but often the poor body is so racked with pain that thoughts of this kind are then impossible. Again, thousands pass out of the world without a long illness; many are cut off suddenly, only to wake up in a lost eternity, and for the first time they prove the awful truth of those words "too late."

Be wise and take a kindly warning from one who has had his eyes opened. Do not treat with indifference the question of your sins. They must be faced, and faced alone with God. Thank God, He is to be known to-day as a Saviour-God. At infinite cost He has provided salvation for *you*. JESUS has been down beneath the holy judgment of God, and now having been raised by His mighty power, and exalted a Prince and a Saviour, He can meet your soul's deep need. Receive Him as God's gift of love to you, and salvation is yours.

H. S—h.

A Few Lessons from the Jamaican Earthquake.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

THE Bible very plainly declares that salvation rests not upon man's work **God's Work** but upon God's. For in-
or Man's? stance, it says: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (*Eph. ii. 8, 9.*) You may not exactly relish this, and yet it is good for you that it is so.

Sooner or later man's works come down; God's remain. Within an hour after the earthquake struck Kingston, I started round the place. Immediately below the house were flights of well-made steps; they were cracked in all directions. Then a bridge; it had collapsed; but the trees were just as they ever were, not a twig was broken. I passed houses innumerable, broken in every conceivable way; fine churches utterly wrecked and in some cases nearly razed to the ground; yet the home of the little bird in yonder branch swayed in the breezes as securely as ever. Water spouted in great jets from fissures in the roads, for the mains were broken; the flowers by the roadside bloomed as sweetly as ever. Everything artificial—man's work—was destroyed;

everything natural—God's work—remained. This change was wrought in thirty seconds. I am devoutly glad that salvation is "of the Lord" and not by me or any man.

Do you not agree?

It is to be feared that a great many persons look upon conversion as a

What is Conversion? mere outward alteration of life and habits, forgetting that it stands for a change both deep-seated and divinely wrought.

For instance, just after the fearful earthquake that destroyed Kingston, Jamaica, a correspondent from the country parts writes: "Yesterday there was a severe shock, preceded by a fearful hollow rumbling sound. There were two slight shocks last evening. A considerable number of the more loose characters *have decided to change their mode of life.*" Now while conversion truly changes one's whole mode of life it is very possible to considerably improve one's outward behaviour, to become more moral, more sober, and less profane without ever having to do with God at all. The writer adds: "Whether it is the result of fright or from more earnest desire, time alone will tell." Time does tell and nothing but real repentance toward God and heartfelt faith in the Lord Jesus Christ stands. Have you been converted? and if so, is your conversion of this order?

LARGE numbers of people who went through the Kingston earthquake agree **Absence of Fear, No Proof of Security.** in saying that during those fateful thirty seconds, and, indeed, for some time afterwards, they experienced not the least sensation of fear. I found it so myself. I remember thinking that if the house collapsed we should all be killed, and yet felt perfectly calm.

Again, one meets with many who boast of facing death with perfect calmness and meeting the dread record of their sins with an unruffled air. *They* think this ample evidence of their safety. Since such is the case they *must* be right, and they have no ear for alarmists who would persuade them otherwise and rouse them from their delusion. But is it really so?

NO! for the other day I sat by the bedside of a man, and he told me that so calm was he that he hardly rose from his desk at the earthquake's roar. Was he safe? By no means. True he was saved, as by a miracle. They pulled him out, battered, bleeding, and with a broken leg from the huge pile of bricks that had covered him, leaving only his right hand visible. He was *not safe*. For absence of fear is no proof of safety either for body or soul, Safety for the soul is found IN CHRIST and nowhere else whatever the state of your feelings may be.

AFTER the earthquake at Kingston it was astonishing to note how the **Where is your name of God was upon every-Atheist now?** body's lips, and that in a most reverential way.

"*God* have mercy upon us," was heard everywhere. Women wrung their hands and cried it openly, men knitted their brows and muttered it between half-closed lips. But all the same, there it was.

"Saved! thank *God*," was also freely heard as one and another referred to their personal deliverance, or the safety of friends and property. Said by people who had not often thanked Him for anything else.

The Atheist alone was silent; Dr. C—— is reported to be one. A surgeon, called in by him to consult as to an injured person, said in my hearing and his, "Where is your atheist now?" Ah! he was there, but he had not one word to say.

But something more is needed than the acknowledgment of God. He has revealed Himself in Jesus. It was said, "He hath declared Him" (*John i. 18*). To be saved and a child of God you must personally *receive Christ*. (*John i. 12.*)

JUST outside Kingston (Jamaica) harbour, within a few hundred yards of **Two Ways of Plumb Point Lighthouse** lie **being Lost.** two hopeless wrecks. Within two months of each other both steamers have gone ashore. The first because though the light *was* brightly burning it was misinterpreted and misused. The second because there was *no light at all* to guide in the darkness, the lighthouse having been temporarily put out of use by the great earthquake which destroyed the town.

Souls are lost as well as ships, and when lost they are lost for ever. Multitudes get wrecked in the dark. Wrapped in the gloom of heathendom or superstition, they drift on through life to eternity, and have no notion where they are going. Cross Central Africa and you will find them. Oh, for gospel light to shed its beams upon them!

Others have the light and abuse it. In English-speaking countries they may be found in crowds. They are familiar with the terms of the gospel, but they trifle with it. God's mercy they mistake for weakness; His righteousness for vindictiveness; piety for melancholy. It is bad to be one of the former class, worse to be one of the latter.

Reader, *for you the light shines.* If you are wrecked it would be better for you that you had not been born.

SERGEANT W.—, having a touch of fever, lay on his back in bed in a ward of the Military Hospital when the earthquake struck and ruined Kingston. He had just finished reading the story of how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were delivered from the burning, fiery furnace in Daniel iii., and closing the book and shutting his eyes he prepared to sleep.

A roar, a fearful series of rockings, a mighty crash, and the hospital was a mass of ruins, transformed a few minutes later into a veritable fiery furnace, since the large stock of drugs and chemicals set the place alight at once. Of about sixty patients less than twenty were saved. Sergeant W— was amongst them.

He tells me he had absolutely nothing to do with his own salvation. Providentially thrown clear of the falling wreckage, other hands picked him up and hurried him into a place of safety.

Thus it is with every brand plucked out of the fire. They owe it not to their wit or wisdom or works. They who are delivered from eternal burnings are saved altogether through another, our Lord Jesus Christ. (*See Acts iv. 10-12.*)

F. B. H.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

(A Word to the Indifferent.)

MEN in India will march on foot from the source of the river Ganges to its mouth, cross, and walk up the other side to get rid of the terrible burden of sin. The journey takes them about six years.

Yet in England, the land of Bibles, the land of preachers, you will find thousands who will not walk across the street to hear the good news of forgiving love.

Is the reader one such? This book may have been put into your hands, and you may have read thus far. Can it be true that you are careless as to this matter? Will you for once give earnest heed to a few words on the subject?

Sin is a terrible reality. In the aggregate one is appalled when one thinks of it. Take away all the news that has reference to sin and its effects, and the editor of the newspaper would find it hard to fill his sheets.

Take sin out of this world and the Hague Peace Conference would not be wanted. Armies and navies would not even be solemn farces, they would melt away as useless encumbrances. But for sin there would be no asylums, prisons, reformatories; no use for doctors, for no one would need their services; little or no use for lawyers, for no one would want to cheat his neighbour.

You reply, "A world without sin, without thorns, or curse, or death is a glorious conception, but it will never be, and we must make the best of things as they are. It is true we must die, but that is true of all, and we must make the best of it."

Hold hard! A day is coming when there will be a world without sin, but it will never come through the dream of politicians or the will of man. John the Baptist pointed to One whom you have despised, and exclaimed of Him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Listen to the wonderful story. By that death on the cross of shame a mighty victory has been wrought for God. On the ground of it He is offering forgiveness to men. All who accept the offer will have a place in that sinless world, where there will be no death, tears, or pain, for the former things, like a hideous nightmare, shall have passed away.

You admit things are not right here, and, what comes nearer home, you are not right with yourself. There are things that you would alter if you could. You are a sinner. You do not enjoy perfect health—no one does in this world. One day you will be old. Old age is a very real disease, and a mortal one at the best. And when—and you know not how soon—you are called upon to go unwillingly through the mystery of dying, where will your soul be?

God is *infinitely* holy. Heaven is holy. That sinless world, that is coming, is holy. And you are unholy. You are unfit for God, Heaven and that sinless world. If you die in your present state you will never reach there.

Jesus died for you. He died for all. He died as much for you as for anybody in the wide world. He died for you because you are in deep need. That need is forgiveness. His precious blood will either cleanse you from sin and make you fit for heaven and that world without sin and sorrow, or else it will call for vengeance from the ground. Which shall it be? "*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*" The solemn answer is, THERE IS NONE. And that will be true through a long, hopeless eternity.

Oh! it is high time that you awoke from the lethargy of sin. It is high time that you ceased from your soul-destroying indifference.

May God, by this printed page, arouse you to a sense of your need and danger, and give you to accept Christ as your personal Saviour. He may be your Saviour just now. A. J. P.

Lost.

"WHAT is the matter?"

"Matter enough, I am a *lost* sinner. About midday I was at my work, when a text of scripture was deeply impressed upon my mind, and I cannot get rid of it. I am sure I am *lost!*"

These words were uttered by an ungodly man to his Christian wife, whom he had often turned out of doors on cold, wintry nights, to cure her, as he said, "of her Methodistical ways."

She had patiently borne all his harsh treatment. None of the neighbours knew of his cruelty. The worse he became the more intensely anxious she was for his soul's salvation. She could not change his heart, but she knew from practical experience that God could. Had not He promised to hear prayer?

She set apart one hour every day for twelve months to agonise for his conversion. Very often this hour was spent in the fields, where she earnestly and persistently pleaded for mercy for one who had no mercy on her. Every day or a whole year she prayed. Her husband was more hardened and cruel. No answer came. Did she give up? Faith said, Try it for six months longer. So she continued in strong crying and tears for her husband's soul. The last day of the six months came. The poor woman's heart was almost broken. Midday was her usual time for prayer, and now for the last time the agonising cry went up, "Lord, save my husband."

Presently her husband came home to dinner. Instead of swearing at her as usual, with slow and heavy footsteps he went upstairs, entered his bedroom, and closed the door. She became anxious about him, but after a short time he

came downstairs again, left his dinner untouched, and returned to his work.

His wife's heart beat with anxiety. Was this the answer to eighteen months' prayer?

Evening came, and work being finished, he returned home in the same gloomy state. His wife could keep silence no longer. She took his hand, and said, "What is the matter?" It then came out that the very time she had been pleading with and speaking to God *about him*, God had been speaking *to him*. He discovered he was lost. Have you?

Now what this man meant by saying that he was *lost*, was his utterly hopeless case. If you have never felt as he did, may God open your eyes to your true condition. A lost traveller crept into a cave to rest the night. When daylight broke he found the crevices filled with poisonous reptiles. How quickly he crept out of that deadly hole you can imagine.

If God opens your eyes to the soul-destroying path in which your feet have wandered, you will say, like our friend, "I am lost." Now the deep anxiety of a lost soul is to find a deliverer. This was the case with our friend. His wife urged him to cast himself on the mercy of God for forgiveness. His only reply was, "It's no use: there is no forgiveness for me." All at once he turned to his wife and said, "Will *you* forgive me?" Her tears were falling so fast she could scarcely utter her heartfelt "Yes."

“ Will you pray for me ? ”

“ Yes, that I will.”

“ Will you pray for me *now* ? ”

Down they went together on their knees. How the Christian wife pleaded. Mingled with her cries were those of her persecuting husband. Heaven could say of him as of Saul of old, “ Behold, he prayeth ! ”

Now, prayer will not save us, but He to whom those prayers are addressed can. “ The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” That was His mission to this world. He is the one and only Saviour of the lost. Prayer is like the cry of a man who has strayed into the Australian bush. At the top of his voice he cries, “ Lost! lost!” This cry does not put him on the track from which he has strayed ; but he calls, perchance there is one who is able to extricate him.

No poor sinner ever called to God in vain. This poor —— found. That great salvation became his. The blessed Son of God delivered him, and set his feet in that same heavenward way his wife had been treading. I need not tell you what a different home that became. The cruel husband became considerate. Curses were exchanged for blessings, and oaths for songs of praise to that Good Shepherd who had found the wanderer.

H. N.

Why the Bible is an Unpopular Book.

IT is a remarkable and significant fact that men of corrupt lives are often warm advocates of the "Higher Criticism" theories. If only they could persuade themselves, as they try to persuade others, that the Bible is a discredited book, that its pages are mere human compilations, that its histories are old wives' fables, that its teachings are not binding, how they would shout in unhallowed triumph!

No doubt the principal reason for the dislike which such men, and their critical allies, bear to God's holy word is that the picture it draws of them is too striking a likeness.

The following description from the inspired pen of Jeremiah portrays a good many recruits in the army of critics and Bible-haters with wonderful accuracy: "An assembly of treacherous men! And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and *they know not Me*, saith the Lord." (*Jer. ix. 3.*)

No wonder the "Higher Critics" have voted Jeremiah out of court! Such language is unrefined, uncharitable, and antiquated! It does not tally with the humanitarian notions of the twentieth century!

Nor did it tally with the notions of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah. When Baruch had written "from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which He had spoken unto him," and when the roll was read before the king, he snatched it from the hand of the reader, contemptuously cut it with his penknife, and flung it into the fire!

Jehoiakim was the leading "Higher Critic" of the seventh century B.C. His bold and defiant attitude, as well as its hardening effect upon his courtiers, is shown in the immediate result of his impious act, or rather in the absence of any result: "Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants." (*Jer. xxxvi. 24.*) A lack of conscience and proper feeling that is, alas, only too discernible in the modern successors of the Scripture-despising monarch!

But the use of the penknife of criticism is a convincing proof that the hated words are felt to be true!

At a meeting of a Society of Artists a singular fact was mentioned about a well-known painter. It was this: that he paints beyond the skin-deep beauty and expression of his subjects, and where the character has warranted it he has brought out all the latent traits, and portrayed almost the very soul of the person. For this reason he has sometimes made enemies of the sitters.

Amongst these was a lady in Boston, U.S.A.

When she received her portrait from this artist she studied it for awhile, and recognised the fact that the artist had laid bare her true character on the canvas. Furiously she seized a knife and cut the face from the painting and destroyed it.

Why was she so furious at beholding the picture? and why did she destroy it? SHE KNEW THE REASON WHY! IT SPOKE THE TRUTH.

And why do men wax furious at the mention of God's Word? Why do they seek to destroy and undermine its influence? THEY KNOW THE REASON WHY! It presents to them a portrait of themselves too true and too faithful for their liking.

But, reader, it is a God of *infinite love*, who draws *your* picture with all its ugly and disagreeable features upon the canvas of His Word. And alongside it He draws another picture—a picture of One who is “altogether lovely,” “full of grace and truth.” His object is to attract you to that One. He would have you flee from the person whose portrait shows him to be vile and loathsome (that is, yourself) to Him whose portrait shows Him to be worthy of fullest confidence. His precious blood has power to wash away the stains of sin that disfigure your life, and to present you faultless before God. By the regenerating and renewing grace of His Holy Spirit you may be made utterly different from what you are by

nature. Through faith in Him you may be saved and made whole.

The Scriptures that speak to you so livingly of yourself and your sinful state, have also much to say of Him. Read them continually, study them diligently, reverence them profoundly, believe them implicitly, obey them whole-heartedly, and may God grant that through the teaching of His Written Word you may learn of Christ, the Living Word !

H. P. B.

Do You Love the Lord Jesus Christ ?

“If any man LOVE not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be ACCURSED when Jesus comes.”

DID you know there was a verse like that in the Bible? There is. You will find it in *I Cor. xvi. 22*. It does not say, “If any man knows not there is such a person as Jesus Christ,” but if any man “love not.”

Now, do you love Him? You hope so. I hope you do. But if you love a person very much, do you not like to hear him spoken well of? How is it then that the introduction of His name is distasteful?

A young Sandwich Islander was converted, and during a visit to the United States was one evening introduced to a numerous company.

A gentleman present tried to amuse the company by putting questions to the young man about his religion, &c. During a pause in the conversation the young Sandwich Islander thus addressed his questioner: "There will soon be a much larger assembly than this. The question then will be, '*Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?*' Now I think I can say 'Yes.' *What can you say?*"

The gentleman was silent. The company soon began to disperse, but the question remained. "What will *you* say," haunted him day and night. His peace was disturbed, he became deeply, intensely anxious. He learned that though there was no love in his heart to the Lord Jesus, there was enough love in the heart of Jesus to bring Him from the heights of glory down to Calvary's depths of woe to die for him. The Saviour's love to him reached his heart. He put his trust in Him, and rejoiced that he could now say, "I love Him, because He *first* loved me."

Can you say that? If so, you shall be "blessed" when Jesus comes, for He will change this vile body and fashion it like unto His glorious body, and take you to be with Him in heavenly glory.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." You must let God's love into your heart first, or you will never truly be able to say, "I love Him." H. N.

Here or Hereafter!

ONE night, at the close of our tent service, a woman came up to speak to me. We had had a solemn time, for the place was crowded with refugees from the great Kingston earthquake. She was distressed because she could not decide whether Saturday or Sunday should be kept holy. Ardent advocates of the Jewish sabbath had been pressing their theories upon her. She propounded the question to me. To be asked such a question at such a moment fairly roused me.

“Woman!” I exclaimed, “tell me, where are you going to spend eternity’s ages? In HEAVEN or in HELL?”

She hung her head. I continued: “To fritter away golden moments over the question, ‘Saturday or Sunday?’ when the far greater question, ‘Heaven or Hell?’ is undecided, is to grievously play the fool.”

Rather strong language you say. Perhaps, but is it not true? and does not Scripture say, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (*Mark viii. 36.*)

You may not be troubled about the Saturday or Sunday question, but there are hosts of others over which you may be tempted to

waste time. None of them compare in importance with the great question, "Where shall I spend eternity?" *Get that settled.*

My questioner in the gospel tent saw the point of what was said, and is now, thank God, a believer in the Lord Jesus and bound for *heaven*.

May it be even thus with you.

AFTER a meeting in the gospel tent a young man came up and wished me

"C. M." every success in my mission.

I thanked him and inquired whether *his* sins were yet forgiven. "Well," said he, "I hope so; at all events I am a *confirmed member*, you know."

"A confirmed member. Then we can put 'C. M.' after your name; but tell me," said I, "could we as truthfully place it there if it stood for something else? Are you a *converted man*?"

There is no dearth of confirmed members, at all events, in Jamaica. The other class is rarer, it is to be feared. Never confound them. To have one's name on the membership roll on earth is one thing. To have it written in heaven (*Luke x. 20*) is quite another.

For the latter conversion is a stern necessity. "Except ye be converted . . . ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (*Matt. xviii. 3.*)

Are *you* a converted man?

SOLOMON was not very far wrong after all !

It is still true that every sweet
 “All is Vanity.” has its bitter, and that at the
 bottom of the most intoxicat-
 ing cup of this world’s pleasure are the dregs
 of sorrow.

Jan Kubelik, the young Hungarian violinist, has scored the most splendid triumphs in the world of music. Though his father was a small market gardener, he lunches as an honoured guest with the crowned heads of Europe.

Would you like to hear what *he* says ?

“Our home is Bycher Castle in Bohemia, and when I recall it I ponder on Fate’s vagaries. Within the pleasure grounds are gardens ten times as large as the little vegetable patch at Michle, from which my father won the maintenance for his wife and family. My flower and vegetable beds to-day yield me no revenue, but for their maintenance demand a yearly sum which my dead father would have deemed a satisfying income. *How very sad the world is !*”

Yes, it is. Happy they who through faith in Christ have found a world where sorrow, disappointment and death can never come !

A POOR young fellow—a first offender—got a stiff sentence at the Guildhall

Christianity the other day. Commenting
is—What ? on this a London paper says :

“One gets sick of the everlasting cant about justice. The best of us

does not want 'justice.' *The best of us could not look in the face of 'justice' and bid it judge us.* What is wanted in this world is a little less justice and a little more mercy. . . . Justice is not Christianity. Christianity is mercy."

Some of these statements are true. Read again the one we have emphasized by italics. Is not that right enough? A truer thing was never written. It just agrees with scripture, "*Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*" (*Psa. cxliii. 2.*) But is Christianity mercy and not justice? Is it a scheme by which God arranges to hand out benefits with His eyes shut? Does He show mercy at the expense of justice? No! Christ died that the claims of justice might be met, and mercy be *righteously* administered. Now God is "JUST and THE JUSTIFIER of him which believeth in Jesus" (*Rom. iii. 26*), and "*mercy and truth are met together*" (*Psa. lxxxv. 10*). They are not irreconcilable antagonists as many think. Christianity is mercy AND justice. F. B. H.

Two Conditions for Salvation.

ON the great day of atonement there were two necessary conditions on the part of the Israelites before they could receive the benefit of it.

In like manner there are two necessary

conditions to be observed before the sinner can receive the benefit of the death of Christ.

What are these two conditions ?

FIRST, *the Israelite was to afflict his soul.*

SECOND, *He was to do no manner of work.*

If he failed to do the first it was death.

If he tried to do the second it was death.

So these two conditions were most important, indeed vital.

These same two conditions must be true of the sinner to-day before he can be saved.

Therefore they are as important to you as they were to the Israelite.

First—what does it mean by afflicting the soul? It means sorrow as to sin. In one word it means repentance. That this condition is vital is borne out by the Saviour's words, "*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,*" twice emphasized, as recorded in *Matt. xiii.*

Suppose an Israelite waiting for the liberty of the year of Jubilee, which *began* and was consequent on the day of atonement, had rejoiced and made merry over his happy prospects, what would that mean ?

It would mean that he had no sense of the deep need of atonement, no true idea that his liberty was bought by the sufferings and death of a Substitute. For an Israelite not to afflict his soul was to pour contempt on the meaning of the day of atonement.

It is a mark of a sinner understanding the

deep need of the Saviour's sufferings and death that he should repent. If it were necessary for Him to die before the sinner could be forgiven, it shows how terrible sin is.

Reader, have you fulfilled that first condition as yet? Have you repented? "*Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.*"

Second, What is meant by doing no manner of work? It meant an acknowledgment that what was prefigured by the day of atonement was sufficient to satisfy God. To do any manner of work on that day was to pour contempt on *the great work of atonement*, as prefigured on that day. To attempt to do any manner of work was death.

How often has the writer heard the unsaved saying they were doing the best they could for salvation. How fatal! It is an insult to the finished work of Christ—that great work of atonement that once and for all satisfied God, and ought surely to satisfy us.

"Doing the best you can" is a straight road to hell, and is fatal if persevered in.

*"Cast your deadly doing down,
Down at Jesus' feet,
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete."*

The very ease of salvation makes it very difficult to the human heart. To take God's way of salvation bespeaks a soul who has learned what sin is, its vileness and enormity;

what self is, its helplessness and deceitfulness ; what Christ's atoning work is, its perfection and completeness ; what God's word is, its stability and trustworthiness.

When once you trust the Lord as your Saviour you can "do your best" to please Him, and that will be well pleasing to Him ; but to "do your best" for salvation is fatal and to mistake altogether the simple plan of salvation, and to repeat Cain's mistake, of whom it was said that "unto Cain and to his offering God had not respect."

"What must I do to be saved?"

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

That is simple and sufficient.

A. J. P.



Peace, True or False.

WALKING across Kingston racecourse with a friend the other day, we noticed one hut, built by a refugee from the great earthquake disaster, was singled out from the many scores of its fellows in a peculiar way. Many a flag, most of them faded, fluttered in the breeze. This one boasted a flag of unusual size and many colours. It was nothing else than the owner's patchwork quilt. He sat complacently beneath it, though many smiled. It was just his whim, and it mattered little.

Under the Patchwork Flag.

Voyager to eternity, under what flag do you sail? It matters greatly; therefore let whim and fancy have no place. All too many have adopted a patchwork one. Ask them upon what they base their hopes of heaven and see. What do they say? They will tell you that (1) they have conscientiously striven to do their best; (2) they have always paid their way; (3) they have never intentionally injured anyone; (4) they have not neglected the "means of grace"; (5) they have read the Bible; (6) they have said their prayers; (7) they have given money to good causes; (8) they have resolved to do better in the future than they have in the past; (9) they hope that, since they have no pretensions to be sinless or

perfect, God will mercifully make up all deficiencies by imputing to them the necessary amount of Christ's merits to adjust matters. This is patchwork indeed.

Fatal mistake! Is it not written: "*Neither is there salvation in any other*: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved"? (*Acts iv. 12.*) The hymn says truly,

"Jesus ALONE; Jesus ALONE;
Jesus ALONE can save."

Haul down the patchwork flag, and, embracing free grace, set out for heaven under the flag of *the precious blood of Christ*.

NOT long ago, it is said, the Austrian Emperor had a death warrant placed before him to sign. He read it carefully twice, took his pen, but having only written two letters of his name, stopped. Tears rolled down his cheeks on to the paper and blotted out what he had written. His Majesty turned to his secretary and said: "Tears remove every fault. I cannot sign. See for yourself. My signature is blotted out. I give the man his life."

Is it after this pattern that God forgives? No, indeed. His compassions are boundless, His mercy as wide as the ocean, yet it needed more than tears, even divine tears—those that welled from the eyes of Jesus when upon earth

—to cancel guilt. *Blood*, symbol of death, the payment of sin's penalty, was needed. We are redeemed "*with the precious blood of Christ.*" (1 Peter i. 19.) This being so, do not think that your tears will avail, though they be most sincere and expressive of bitterest anguish. Crime may upon earth be mercifully pardoned through a sovereign's tears. Sin is not cancelled by *divine* tears, let alone a *sinner's* tears, but by *blood*.

SOME years ago a Christian woman entered a large church in Kingston, **Candidate or Convert.** Jamaica, to attend a confirmation service. Canon K——, the rector, stood at the door. As she passed in she said :

"You have a goodly number of converts to-day, sir?"

"Converts!" said the rector.

"Candidates I mean," she said, correcting herself.

"Yes, candidates," was the reply; "I very much doubt if there is a convert among them."

To hear such a statement as that from so reliable a source is startling. At any rate it was an honest confession.

Does the seriousness of it strike you? It is bad to be unconverted. Worse, infinitely worse to solemnly present oneself before God and make religious profession without the one

essential thing. It is written, "Except ye be *converted*, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (*Matt. xviii. 3.*) You may be a candidate for baptism or confirmation or church membership, but—are you converted? If not, in spite of all you are on the road to eternal judgment.

F. B. H.

Victory.

WHEN a victorious conqueror of old returned to his native land, attached to his triumphal car were the chief prisoners of war. The greatest conqueror the world has ever seen is soon to make a triumphal march and claim His kingdom. His prisoners of war will march in triumphal state. Many of them have had their bodies burned, and their ashes scattered to the winds. Others lie in the depths of the sea, and yet others in the city cemetery or village graveyard. From thence they will emerge to utter their song of triumph, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Whether they have died peacefully at home, or been brutally murdered will make little difference then. Not one of those who have put their trust in Christ will be missing. They will come from every quarter of the globe.

During the Indian Mutiny all the officers of a certain regiment were murdered except a young ensign of sixteen. He managed to escape in the darkness, and for several days hid in a ravine. A stream of water sustained him in life. Though desperately wounded he was compelled to climb a tree during the night to escape the ravenous beasts of prey. What comfort his victorious Saviour afforded him during that time may best be gathered by what followed.

On the fifth day he was dragged from his hiding-place, and imprisoned with a young Christian, who had just renounced Mahometanism. The torments he was subjected to nearly drove him to recant. Seeing this the young ensign called out, "*Oh! my friend, come what may, do not deny the Lord Jesus.*"

These words had just fallen from his lips when a company of Madras Fusiliers led by Colonel Neile burst on the scene. The murderous fanatics fled. The Christians were saved. The young Christian turned to thank the youth whose faith had strengthened his faltering spirit, but his life had ebbed away. He had gone into the presence of the Saviour, who had gained the victory for him. He will be among those raised when Jesus comes. Shall you?

We will leave the blood-stained Indian shores. About the same time a youth was dying in an old log cabin in Ireland. He had

been ill for some time, and constantly talked of some "*victory*" his father could not understand. Nothing would satisfy him but his father going six miles to ask a preacher to come and see him. Reaching the preacher's door the father said, "I am really ashamed to ask you to come so far, but a boy of mine is ill, and he talks about things I do not understand, and specially wants to see you." Away they went over the six rugged miles, and inside the miserable hovel, lying on a little straw, lay the dying boy. As they entered he raised himself up, stretched forth his arms, and triumphantly said, "*His right hand . . . hath gotten him the victory,*" and instantly expired.

Months before that boy had trudged Sunday after Sunday that long six miles to listen to the preacher. Once his text was from Psalm xcvi. 1, "His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory." This had evidently become the stay of his soul in his hour of need. He entered Paradise with a new song unto that Lord who had done marvellous things. The Lord "had made known His salvation."

That same Lord desires to make known to you His salvation. He will have all men to be saved, you among them. The ensign of the 6th Regiment and the Irish cabin boy both will grace the triumphal car of the Saviour, of whom we can sing :

*“ Through weakness and defeat
 He won the meed and crown ;
 Trod all our foes beneath His feet
 By being trodden down.”*

Throw down your arms. Cry, “ I yield, I yield,” and you, too, shall be led about in triumph as one of the spoils of the great Conqueror. His name is Jesus, the Prince of peace, King of kings, Lord of lords. Will you trust Him ?

H. N.

Summoned Suddenly.

IN the midst of the Scottish Highlands, where the mountains are pine-clad, where there are rugged rocks known only to the wild deer and mountain goat, and hidden lakes which seldom mirror a human form, but in whose dark depths are ever reflected the jagged peaks and galleries of moss-covered granite, lies the lovely and fashionable village of C——.

Among the visitors this season was a young man of scholarly distinction, master of many languages. Before grappling with the long and tedious work of the prospective winter, he had come to this fascinating spot for rest and restoration.

One fine morning he went out as usual,

buoyant and bright in the exuberance of youth. Feeling hot during the day, he ventured by himself a plunge in the river. The chosen spot was cool, secluded, inviting, but treacherous.

No one saw his careless plunge; no one saw his death struggles, but his body was found in the evening, lifeless and cold.

A pall of sadness was thrown over the place, for many had seen him go forth in the full strength and beauty of young manhood, and many heard the warning voice of wisdom, but again stifled it into stillness, lest pleasure be robbed of its charm.

When the funeral chimes had just died away in the calm mid-summer evening, we knelt down in our room together. The moon had just risen over the Grampians, flooding with silver light the fair but sad scene, and we thanked God that above the darkness of this world where sin and death sat enthroned, above the dark horizon of a doomed scene would rise the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings, bringing hope and gladness to the prisoners of despair.

I do not know if that young man was ready. God knows. Too late now to wish or pray in the matter.

Do you know, reader, that it is possible to be prepared to enter eternity and pass exultingly into the presence of God, who is Love, at any moment? From any place you may be

called next, and the person who thinks himself too small for God's particular notice, or hidden from Him in the motley crowd which throngs the world to-day, has entirely mistaken God's character and power.

Every unit must pass before Him in the vast world of living souls, and none is allowed to pass unchallenged. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (*Jer. xxiii. 23, 24.*)

You may be trying to evade God. Let me tell you, you can neither elude God nor can you escape from yourself. The poor pessimist vainly seeks a refuge in opium or suicide, hoping to escape from a conflict, with which he is willing, but entirely unable to cope. There is no real difference between opium and suicide, the delusion of darkness is in both cases the work of Satan.

Why seek to run away from God? He loves you. "Me?" you exclaim. Yes, you! and He says, "Come now, and let us reason together, . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (*Isa. i. 18.*) If you only knew "the blessedness of the man . . . whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (*Rom. iv. 6, 7*), how happy you would be.

Go to God now, and ask His forgiveness, His cleansing, His pardon. "Humble yourself

under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time."

In this day when the summons comes so suddenly, and when least expected, it becomes every man, woman, and child, to turn to God's beloved Son and claim Him as Saviour and Lord in this day of salvation and grace.

I entreat you, shut out everything from your life for the moment—friends, money, home, pleasure—and in the quiet of His presence confess and forsake your sins and God will have mercy. God says "Come." Heaven says "Come." Jesus says "Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest." w.o.

"I Don't Believe It."

SUCH was the expression that fell from the lips of a man who stood listening to some open-air preaching in the city of C——.

It may be the expression has fallen from *your* lips, so I would take the opportunity of asking you one or two questions.

What is it you don't believe? The best of news. The message of pardon and peace. The message of God's love through the Lord Jesus Christ. He died on Calvary's cross and finished the work of redemption. God has now raised Him and seated Him in glory—a victorious Saviour. It is through Him you may receive God's forgiveness, and it is this you don't believe. And yet you are on the

road to death and judgment, and you need this message, and without it you will assuredly be lost to all eternity.

Let me illustrate it. I once heard of a very rich landowner. He was an earnest Christian too, and he naturally took a deep interest in the cottagers on his estate.

One day he had posted a notice on his park gates that any of his cottagers who came to him on a certain day before noon would have their debts paid.

The day arrived. A few gathered round the park gates, but none entered. Their language was like yours, but the difference between them and you is this. They disbelieved the word of a *man*. You disbelieve the message of *God*. They lost the chance of the remission of their *debts*. You will lose the chance of the forgiveness of your *sins*. They would regret an opportunity for *time*. You will regret the opportunity for *eternity*.

However, just in time an old cottager, hard pressed with debt, plucked up his courage, passed in, and had his debts paid. When he came away all eagerly wanted to know how he had fared. When he told them there was a rush for the gates, but alas! the hour of opportunity had passed. When they might have had it they frittered it away in unbelief.

How foolish! you say. Not a thousandth part as foolish as you, if you do not avail yourself of the blessings of the gospel.

Why do you not believe it? Have you tried it? You answer, No. Well, if you had tried it and found it false I could understand your saying, "I don't believe it." It is the testimony not of one but of untold thousands that the gospel is true, that it brings rest of conscience and joy of heart and peace of soul. Have you tried it?

The day of opportunity is still yours. Still the message holds good:

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

"Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

"Be it known unto you . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." (Acts xiii. 38.)

"By Him all that believe are justified from all things." (verse 39.)

"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.)

Why not believe on the Lord Jesus? Why not be among "the whosoever's"?

Then you will know, in the word of the living God as set forth in the Scriptures, that your sins are forgiven, that you are justified from all things, that you have everlasting life.

We can only say, What a Saviour! What a God! What a message!

May you no longer say, "I don't believe it," but "I do believe it," for Christ's sake. T. H.

An Incident of the Indian Mutiny.

BY A SURVIVOR.

CO be brought face to face with death, to be sure that either oneself or some of one's comrades will be in eternity before a few hours have elapsed, is a pretty severe test.

It is pretty severe, even when one knows that sudden death would be sudden glory, and that, through the Saviour's death and bloodshedding, all is divinely well for time and eternity. But what must the test be for one who knows that he is unprepared, who knows that for him judgment comes after death?

During the Indian Mutiny the writer was brought face to face with death. His regiment was unexpectedly ordered to march against the enemy some eight miles distant. However, although the regiment eventually went, when on parade it was bidden to wait till further orders. It was then dismissed to the barracks, and had to wait there.

A rush was made by most of the men for the canteen and different messes for drink, but the writer and another man retired to a private room for prayer and to commend themselves to God.

When they rose from their knees one said to the other: "Now, if this fight comes off, it is going to be a pretty sharp affair. If I am killed and you are spared I want you to promise

that you will write to my friends and tell them all about it. Tell them that about a year ago I came to Jesus as a poor lost sinner and He saved me just as I was, and that I died trusting in the atoning death of the Lord Jesus."

The promise was made, the other asking his companion for a similar promise. He, in his turn, asked what he should say, if he were spared, and his companion killed. "Tell them," was the answer, "all about this prayer-meeting this morning, and that I was converted soon after you, and that I died trusting in the blood which cleanseth from all sin."

It was a very real affair I can tell you, and we meant all we said. However, the Lord spared us both, and we both came home to tell the story for ourselves.

Now only one of us is left. My comrade was taken home to be forever with the Lord about four years ago, whilst the writer is spared to ask you the question, If you were called to pass through a similar experience, how would you meet it? Are you converted? Do you know Jesus as your Saviour? Remember, a mere religious life will not do. When death is in view eternity is a reality, and where it is to be spent forces itself on one's attention with overwhelming power.

Thank God, these questions can be answered. Christ has died, and been raised again from the dead, and repentance and forgiveness is preached through His Name. "*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, 39.) And the Lord Jesus said, “He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.)

JNO. C.

“Why won't God give Me Peace?”

SUCH was the exclamation of a lady as we sat talking in the music saloon of an ocean liner. She had been telling me a little of her history, recounting her difficulties, how she had lost a much-loved son in the Kingston earthquake, and how all her prayers and efforts seemed fruitless. She closed with the words quoted above.

Since it is more than likely that some readers of this paper have the same question unanswered in their minds, let me give the gist of my answer, addressing now to you what I said to her.

If that is your question, you are making at least two great mistakes. First of all *God desires* that you should be a possessor of peace. “Why won't God give me peace?” That was how the lady emphasised it. She evidently assumed that though *she desired* it, God withheld it—almost unreasonably so; and the

reason for it she could not understand. This is totally wrong. According to Scripture, matters really stand thus:

(1) God Himself is the author of peace in the person of Christ.

"It PLEASED the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having MADE PEACE through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself." (Col. i., 19, 20.)

(2) God Himself is the publisher of peace in the person of Christ.

"He . . . came and PREACHED PEACE to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." (Eph. ii., 17.)

So that, far from withholding it from you, He is actually pressing it upon you; and if you have not received it, it must be either that you do not want it, or that, wanting it, you are not ready to fall in with God's terms.

The second mistake is that you look upon peace as a sudden calm or rest which God grants to certain people, His favoured ones, but not to you—a desirable something deposited in some without any particular rhyme or reason.

But this is not so. Peace is a *result*, and not a mere happy coincidence. It is so even in the affairs of this life. Two friends fall out over a debt. At last it is settled. Peace is the result, and once more friendship is resumed. Nations quarrel, war ensues. The weaker is worsted and concedes the point at issue. The

crux of the matter being reached, the root of bitterness is removed. Peace is the result, and the clash of arms is heard no more.

And so for you. There is a matter at issue between your soul and God—SIN is the root of that matter. It must be reached. Thanks be to God, the gospel tells us how it has been reached as between the Saviour and God. How Jesus took the guilty sinner's place, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, and being made sin for us. As the “ Propitiation for our sins,” He fully took up the question and settled it. He bore sin's judgment, and dying paid sin's penalty. His work is a finished work. The seal of His resurrection is placed upon it. Peace is made.

You want it, however. That is, it is not enough to know that, in the abstract, peace is there, well and truly established. You want to experience it for yourself, deep and abiding in your heart; and thus to bid farewell to all your fears and your doubts.

Then *you* must get to the root of the matter, *you* must face and confess your sins. Now, no extenuation, please. No trifling, no excuses. No comparison of yourself with your neighbours—very much to your own advantage. No avoiding the plain issue by dragging in your troubles or your trying circumstances. Get down on your knees, my friend, and right there before God, with whom you have to do, uncover your guilt, judge yourself, confess

your sins. Then as a sinner, *self*-condemned, fling yourself on the grace of God revealed in the all-atoning death of Jesus. Receive Him as your personal Saviour.

In thus doing you will have accepted God's terms. What are they? These—in the words of Scripture—"*REPENTANCE toward God and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (*Acts xx. 21.*)

But one thing remains. Believe the gospel, and you shall have peace. It is one thing, remember, to personally trust in Christ, another to simply believe the gospel. What, then, is the gospel? Just a message, but—A MESSAGE FROM GOD! It is concerning Christ, His work, and its results. It declares the warmth of God's heart towards you, and the sufficiency of Christ's work for you. It really is the testimony of the Holy Spirit to you. To believe it is to open the window of the soul, and let the warm sunlight of "peace" stream in.

Peace then is a result. It is the result of just simply believing the tidings of accomplished redemption, and forgiveness through the once-crucified and now risen Christ.

Believe that message and it shall be *yours*.

F. B. H.

A Body Ruined and a Soul Saved.

YES, he was dying. Only a few brief years had run their course since he had left his native village full of health and vigour. He had played the fool, and now he had returned to die.

There are various "fools" spoken of in Scripture; chief among them is the man who says in his heart, "There is no God." What he means is, "I don't want to have anything to do with God." That is at the bottom of all the so-called infidelity of the day. Shall I tell you why? It is because they do not know the matchless love of God. We earnestly desire you to take the advice of Eliphaz: "*Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace.*" (*Job. xxii. 21.*) Ah, if you only knew Him you would long to know Him better. Do you say, "I once thought I knew Him, but I have given it all up"?

So had this young fellow who was dying. I will tell you how it was. He got tired of a quiet country life, and thought he would like to see a little of London. He was a professing Christian and Sunday-school teacher. One day he told a fellow-teacher he had decided to go and live with his brother in London.

"Live with your brother! Why, I understood he was an infidel?"

“So he is, but I can take care of myself.”

“Beware of running into temptation; how can you pray to be delivered from it and run straight into it?”

He was, however, determined to go, and accordingly he went, spite of the earnest warnings of his friend.

His brother's house was frequented by men who sought to undermine the grand truths of the Bible. It was not very long before young A—— was carried away by their specious arguments and joined their ranks. Having avowed disbelief in God and the Bible, the next step was to run into the *sins the Bible prohibited*. One step led to another, and in the course of a short time he had ruined his health, brought on an incurable disease, and found himself obliged to return to his native village—to die.

Time after time he refused the overtures of Christian friends, and remained hardened and impenitent, though miserable and unhappy. The worst of infidelity is that it robs its followers of every real stay and comfort in the hour of their deepest need.

Poor A—— found no solace, but he was too proud to own he was mistaken. God—that God whom he had renounced—was following him. A younger brother was a Christian. He could speak *to God* about his dying brother, if he could not speak *of God* to him. One day he was alone in his room pleading for mercy

when poor dying A—— heard him. His brother's fervent desires for his welfare awakened his conscience and plunged him into deep soul-anxiety. He judged himself, confessed his sin, cast himself upon the mercy of God, and met with a response which meets every sinner who does the same. Like a murderer of old he could say: "*I confessed*" "*Thou forgavest.*" Yes, the blessed God had put His hand upon him day and night, but it was to do him good in his latter end. He blotted out as a thick cloud all his iniquities. He became another witness to the great love and rich mercy of that blessed God, who gave His only Son to express the fulness of grace to sinners and bear the judgment due to them.

Poor A—— lingered on some weeks, another witness to the matchless grace of God as to his soul, also a witness to the blasting effect of infidel principles and unbridled lust in his body.

Now don't throw this book down. The God who pardoned A—— wants to pardon you. His heart yearns over you! "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Yes, even you. Confess your need. Forgiveness awaits you.

H. N.

Suddenly.

DURING this summer a tent was pitched for the purpose of holding gospel meetings in a Buckinghamshire village. One night in the midst of the meeting suddenly an old man died. The summons was sudden and there was no time given for preparation. Thank God, none was needed.

I saw the dead body carried out, but learned to my joy that it was that of an aged believer on the Lord Jesus, to whom sudden death meant sudden glory.

Oh! the wonderful grace of God. It might have been an unbeliever cut off in his sin and unbelief. Scripture warns us that this is no uncommon event. "*He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall SUDDENLY be destroyed, and that without remedy.*" (Prov. xxix. 1.)

By this solemn event God spoke loudly to every unconverted man, woman, and child in that tent. Aye, and He solemnly warns you as you read this printed page. God speaks in many ways. Sometimes by death, sometimes by sickness, sometimes by the earnest voice of the preacher or by the printed tract, and yet multitudes go on careless and indifferent as to their soul's immortal welfare. And yet God says, "*Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation.*" How precious the opportunity, for it *might* be your

last. God does not say to-morrow or next year, or on your death-bed, but NOW. "*Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*"

For remember, your soul MUST exist for ever in hell if you refuse the way of salvation. There the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. God does not desire the death of the wicked. He desires your blessing. His attitude towards you is love. He offers you full and free salvation through the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin.

Accept, then, God's gracious invitation. "Come, for all things are now ready."

"Jesus lingers still, 'tis for you He waits.

And He's waited for you long.

He waits, that heaven, with its fadeless joy,

May yet to you belong."

God grant He may not wait in vain. A. B.

That One Word.

"I NEVER can forget that word which was once whispered in my ear at an enquiry meeting by a young Christian friend of mine. He was yearning for my salvation, and as I sat in my seat he whispered in my ear with great solemnity and tenderness that one word—ETERNITY!

"That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the Lord."

That one word was enough to make him think—and you? Have you ever given it five minutes serious consideration?

A friend of mine gave a tract to a business man. He contemptuously exclaimed, "I have no *time* to think about such things." The answer came, "God will give you *eternity* to think about them."

Eternity! ETERNITY!! for ever and for ever! It is beyond the creature's comprehension. Yet it is so soon to be entered upon. You never were so near it as now, and how near you cannot tell. David rightly and wisely estimated the possibility of how near it might be when he said, "There is but *a step* between me and death."

Said a student to his professor, "How long before death must I prepare for it?"

The professor replied, "Five minutes."

"Then I'll have my fling of pleasure," replied the careless youth.

"But," solemnly added the professor, "when can you decide which will be your last five minutes?"

Ah! when? Observation, experience, conscience, the Bible, the advice of Christians, all urge upon you the immediate consideration of these things.

"Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation."

A. J. P.

“Whosoever.”

JOHN THOMPSON, the Cockenzie fisherman, was one day preaching in the slums of Edinburgh. At the close of his address a lady invited him to preach in her drawing-room on the following Wednesday. To this he agreed readily, but on looking at the lady's card he found to his surprise and discomfort her house was in the West End of the city, amongst the aristocratic residents.

He wondered how he could address this lady's friends, and thought of how he could polish up one of his homely addresses for this special occasion. David tried on Saul's armour, but had to throw it aside and go with the simple sling and stones to meet the giant. So John Thompson felt he must set aside any attempts at polish and just be himself. He came to the conclusion that if John iii. 16 was suitable for the sinful poor, it would be as suitable for the sinful rich.

So he went at the time appointed, gave his homely address, vowing it would be his first and last *drawing-room* service.

Some three weeks later the same lady came up to him, and began, “Mr. Thompson.” Thinking she was about to renew her invitation for a drawing-room meeting, he was about to give her a decided refusal, as not being in his line. But a tremor in the lady's voice led him to listen. “Mr. Thompson, I want you

to visit a maid of mine, dying in the infirmary, and who specially asks to see you."

It was not long before he was by the dying bed. The girl said to him, "Mr. Thompson, I have something special to tell you. I was a servant in the house where you preached three weeks ago. I had been ill for many months, and I felt I was going to die, and I knew I was not ready. How I longed to know that my sins were forgiven and that I was right for eternity! When I heard of the drawing-room meeting I was very glad, for I hoped I should hear the gospel from the Cockenzie fisherman. I saw you come; you entered the drawing-room and the door was closed, and I felt, then, there was no hope for a poor servant girl getting saved.

"However, burdened and miserable, I could bear it no longer, so about the middle of the meeting I crept up to the door and put my ear to the keyhole. You were exhorting the grand ladies and gentlemen to put their name into God's great *whosoever* and He would save and satisfy them for ever.

"That was just what I wanted, so I just said in my heart, 'Well, if none of those fine ladies and gentlemen put their names in, here goes, Maggie Shields puts in her name.' There and then I trusted the Lord as my own Saviour, the burden rolled away from my heart, and praise and joy filled my soul. Now, Mr. Thompson, my time on earth is short, but

I wanted to tell you that though I am only a poor servant girl I can die happy, for that *whosoever* took me in."

But perhaps the reader does not know *John iii. 16*. It is perhaps the best known verse in the Bible:

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Now, "whosoever" opens the door for you to believe. You may be a murderer but one step from the gallows, or a grand lady, or a dweller in the slums, the message is for you. You can put your name in that verse, if you will only believe. Trust the Lord Jesus. Read that grandly simple verse again and again, dear anxious soul. You need not perish. You may have everlasting life. There is God's way for you. Take it. Only believe.

The blessed Saviour has done all that is necessary for your salvation on the cross of shame. Atonement is made, and now simple faith in the Lord Jesus ensures all the blessings of the gospel.

A. J. P.

Merit or Mercy: which?

THE thought that pardon can be obtained or merited is present, naturally, in every man's mind; so it is no wonder that men cling to it with tenacity, and readily lend

themselves to the seductions of the enemy, as the following incident will show.

Many years ago, one who had been convicted of sin by the Holy Ghost went to a preacher of his acquaintance.

“ I am in great distress about my soul,” he said ; “ I fear that all is not right between me and God. My conscience tells me all is wrong. What am I to do ? ”

“ My friend,” was the reply, “ it is obvious that you are suffering from morbid depression. What you want is religious occupation. Have you ever undertaken any work for Christ ? ”

The reply was, “ No, I do not consider myself in a fit condition to work for Christ, because *my own soul* is not right with Him.”

“ But,” said the preacher, “ you have always been a very religious, well-conducted man ; and what you want is *religious occupation*. This will have the effect of diverting your mind from these morbid misgivings, and you will obtain what you want. Take a class in the Sunday school ; work it well, throw your whole heart into it, and then see if these feelings of doubt and fear are not ultimately dispelled.” Fearful delusion !

The man obeyed. He took his class, and for four long dreary years laboriously enough he toiled in that Sunday school.

He was punctual, he was careful, he was methodical, but during all that time the burden

of his sins grew heavier, and he was well-nigh on the verge of despair.

At the end of that period, it happened that a well-known evangelist was invited to preach in his town. Our friend was present, and as soon as the sermon concluded he sought an interview with the preacher.

“Do you really mean what you affirmed just now, that if we seek in the right way we may *at once* obtain *God's pardon*, and the consciousness of our acceptance with God?”

“Certainly,” said the evangelist, “that is exactly what I did mean.”

“Well,” he said, “I have been seeking for four years, and have not found it yet.”

“*How* have you been seeking?” asked the preacher.

“I have been teaching a class in the Sunday school,” was the rejoinder.

The preacher lost no time in showing him the hollowness and instability of such a foundation; and pointed him in the simplest terms to the *finished work* of Christ, and a *glorified Saviour*, even Jesus Himself!

That very hour the burden of four long years and a lifetime of sins rolled off that man's heart, and he went away rejoicing in a full and present salvation.

* * *

And now, reader, what about *you*? Upon what are you resting for salvation? Is it your good deeds, or Sunday school teaching,

or tract-distributing and the like? Which is it, *merit or mercy*? We warn you not to rest until you can sing,

*“On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.”*

F. T.

The Great Event of Life.

CHERE is a people living in the heart of Africa, in the darkness of heathendom, whose whole time is lived in view of what they consider the great event of life, namely, DEATH.

No coins are used in this part of the country, so its equivalent, cloth, is saved up in some secret place, so that when death comes their corpse may be wrapped in the best thing they know.

A man is often buried in more cloth than he has worn during the whole of his life. He lives and works that death may be a success so far as he knows how to make it so.

What ignorance! what folly! perhaps you say, to live always considering the end. Yet in their way these poor barbarians are wiser than thousands of civilised and thinking people, who live in utter indifference of that irresistible power whose approach no human hand can stay.

Doctors, hospitals, health - resorts ever increase in number in our land, so do our churchyards and burial grounds. What does

it all mean? Only this, that death is the penalty of sin. "The wages of sin is death," but listen to the voice of the Deliverer, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (*Rom. vi. 23.*) In Him alone is blessing to be found, for we read, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (*Acts iv. 12.*)

Death is sure, for "all have sinned," and "without shedding of blood is no remission." (*Heb. ix. 22.*) But once more the voice of the Redeemer is heard: "This is my blood . . . which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (*Matt. xxvi. 28.*)

*"Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Shed on Calvary,
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,
Shed for—ME."*

Have you been able to put your name in here? If not, why not?

"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (*Deut. xxxii. 29.*)

God has considered your end, and has devised a righteous way by which the power of death is defeated, and you may receive the gift of eternal life. That way is through the death and blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus upon the cross. *Faith* can say, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (*I Peter ii. 24.*)

The natives in Central Africa recognise that death comes to all, and for this, the entrance to them of the unknown, they prepare. Have you ?

Methinks the poor dark heathen will rise up in testimony against you in the day of judgment. What opportunities are yours ! What gospel light is shed abroad in this land ! And yet you are unsaved ! Let me beseech you to prepare for the great event of life—DEATH. It is only by faith in Christ, the Destroyer of death, that you will be able to do so. "He that hath the Son hath life." c. v.

The Old Shoemaker's Message.

GEORGE PHILLIPS the sailor, in Blundell's Buildings, had been ill for some time, and the hope at first entertained that he would recover had now been abandoned. The fell disease, consumption, had laid hold of him, and had made rapid strides. Two months ago he was at sea. Now he lay in daily expectation of death. Death had always appeared an enemy to George Phillips. Ministers and friends had visited him constantly, but though his conscience had been aroused and he knew himself indeed to be a sinner, and Christ as the Saviour he needed, he had not yet found the peace which comes from appropriating faith. He could say and believe, "Christ Jesus came into the world to

save sinners," but he could not yet say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save *me*." So he tossed on his dying bed, restless in mind and body.

"Sometimes he seems to have got it," his wife observed somewhat vaguely, with but a dim idea of what she really meant, "and then it goes again. I shouldn't mind him going so much if I was certain he was all right."

She spoke to an old shoemaker who lived next door, and who often managed to spare half-an-hour from his work or leisure to sit with his sick neighbour, and thus release the young wife to attend to her three small children.

"It's the best way to make sure of the end of the journey, when you're in health, depend upon it," was the old man's reply. "I don't suppose my words will help him any. But I can read a bit more out of God's word, and that's better than mine or any man's. I'll go up."

He hobbled up the narrow stairs, for he was lame; one of the many victims of the railway, having been a platelayer in his youth. Phillips lay gasping for breath on a bed which, like the rest of the poor home, exhibited a spotless cleanliness. He nodded slightly to his friend, then broke into a distressing fit of coughing.

Moseley, the shoemaker, busied himself in silent ministrations, which proclaimed the born nurse. Then, as the patient revived, he

took up the Bible from the table beside the bed, and began to turn the pages. "Mate," he said, as he paused with a finger in a certain place, "you've heard a many good words from one and another, and them that you have received into your heart have done you good, but the rest have been wasted, and you are in want of what no one but God can give you. Now, while I read what He says, I want you to listen with both your ears—and *receive it into your heart.*" Then the old shoemaker turned to the Book and read very slowly as follows:

"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

He turned the page. "Now listen again: '*He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar.*' I'll just read that again," said the old man, "it makes it plainer: 'HE—THAT—BELIEVETH—NOT—GOD—HATH—MADE—HIM—A—LIAR.'" "

He paused, removed his spectacles and cleared his throat. The dying man's bright eyes were fixed upon him with painful eagerness.

"Seems to me, mate, that's plain enough," said the old shoemaker. "It don't want many words from me nor from nobody. God says here He is 'faithful and just' to forgive you your sins because the Lord Jesus

Christ shed His blood to obtain that forgiveness. He couldn't be 'faithful and just' if He did not forgive sin, seeing that His Son has made satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. He says, too, that the same precious blood cleanses away *all* sin. Not one speck can remain for even angels to point at.

"And then He goes on to say that if you don't believe that when He says it, you make Him out to be a liar! Just think of it! If you don't believe the record that God gives of His Son, that He died for all—and 'all' includes George Phillips as well as Ted Moseley—if you don't believe that, you make Him a liar!"

Phillips' hollow cheeks were flushed a vivid scarlet, and his dark eyes glowed like living coals as he sat up eagerly listening to every word. Gradually a new light crept into his eyes, a light which chased the feverish unrest out of them.

"Why, then," he gasped earnestly, "if that is so He must have forgiven me! And I've been praying and pleading for what I've got! Why—I can say now—God—so loved—George Phillips—that He gave His—only begotten—Son." He sank back exhausted, and Moseley, hastily offering a cordial, said gently:

"Aye, that's it, mate. Just as you take this stuff into your lips and swallow it down, and it puts new life into you, so you have to

receive into your heart God's healing medicine—His pardoning love in Christ—and it gives new life to your soul. He came to save George Phillips."

"God bless you!" whispered the dying man as Moseley left the room, giving place to the wife. "It is just taking Him at His word."

It seemed for a time as if the message had begun a healing work in the body as well as in the soul, for the invalid rallied in a manner which astonished everyone who saw him. To each, however, he testified in turn that it was soul-healing only, and he lay cheerfully—nay eagerly—awaiting the summons into the presence of his Saviour, accounting death no longer an enemy but a friend. Just one week after he had received the old shoemaker's message he passed on the wings of the night into the presence of the King of kings. With the sudden upleaping of the fast waning life he opened his eyes upon his faithful wife watching sleeplessly beside him, and exclaimed breathlessly, "Who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*!" and turning his head upon the pillow he sighed out his spirit into his Redeemer's arms. Reader, can you say, "Who loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*"? Can you too fill in your name to that familiar message from God and say:

"God so loved . . . that He gave His only begotten Son, that *I* should not perish but have everlasting life"?

God Made ME, and God Loved ME.

SOME philosopher (?), describing how he thought this world with all its order and beauty came into existence, invented the following phrase:—"Fortuitous concourse of atoms." It sounds clever and big, but it is the language of a fool. "The fool hath said in his *heart*, There is no God." (*Psalms xiv. 1.*) He never could well say it in his *head*. In his *heart*, his desire is to get rid of God. But the fact that the *heart* moves the *head* to utter some puerile folly is the proof that the will is more powerful than the intellect.

Indeed, the will is amazingly more powerful than the intellect, when it can force a thinker to pen such utter nonsense. Fancy tiny atoms coming together by chance and resolving themselves into mighty mountains and blades of grass, into flowing rivers and flowery palms, into the mighty lion and the little midge. And even if one granted such folly, where did the wonderful atoms come from, and how did they get their motion? The philosopher with his "fortuitous concourse of atoms" has only set the problem one step back. He has not solved it. It is there. GOD IS—uncreated, self-existent, and, as His creatures, we are responsible to Him.

But not all philosophers have been so

unphilosophical as the inventor of the phrase — “Fortuitous concourse of atoms.” Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Kelvin, and a host of others could be named as believers in God and creation by Him. Kirchner, the great astronomer, was one such.

A friend of his, a believer in the folly that this world of wonders came by chance, visited him one day. Not wishing to be disturbed for a short time, he left his visitor to interest himself in the various scientific instruments scattered about the room.

A small celestial globe of rare beauty and workmanship caught his attention. He asked whose it was and who made it. Kirchner replied, “It is not mine, and I don’t think anybody made it. It must have come by chance, or of its own accord.”

“Ridiculous!” answered his friend, quite annoyed by the banter, which exposed his folly.

“Why,” replied the great astronomer, “if you cannot believe that this little imperfect piece of workmanship sprang into existence of itself, how can you imagine that the glorious heavens which this represents could have sprung into being of their own accord?”

The young man saw his folly, turned to God’s Word, hitherto despised and neglected, and found there three great facts.

1. God *made* the world.
2. God *loved* the world.
3. God will *judge* the world.

God made the *world* resolves itself into God made *me*, therefore I am responsible to Him. And if He made me, and sustains me, He is powerful enough to call me to account. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (*Rom. xiv. 12.*) Are you ready for that?

So Kirchner's friend could take up the majestic language of Scripture, the only language that truly satisfies heart and head and conscience. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things that do appear." (*Heb. xi. 3.*)

The next great wonder that he learned was that God loved the *world*, and learning that fact he could say, "God loved *me*." The world God loved was not the physical world of creation around us, but the world of men and women and children in it. "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.*) Kirchner's friend learned to individualize and appropriate the marvellous blessing of that verse. He trusted the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour, and was saved. Can you do as much? You may.

Then he learned that God will judge *the world*. Thank God, by believing on the Lord Jesus he needed not to say, God will judge *me*. He could say that the Lord Jesus had

borne the judgment for him. He could take up the words of Scripture as applying to him, "He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life.*" (*John v. 24.*) Can you not do as much? You may, if you truly and simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. J. P.

"Mind Your Own Business!"

SOMETIMES when endeavouring to call the attention of others to things of eternal importance the Christian is abruptly told to "mind his own business."

Possibly the thought has been in *your* heart with regard to the person who asked you to read this paper, and you have said to yourself, "I wish he would mind his own business."

That is just what the writer seeks to do. My business with you, reader, is to warn you of the danger of living and dying without Christ; to tell you of the grace of God whereby you may be saved; and to urge you without further delay to avail yourself of His proffered mercy.

In the city of Boston, U.S.A., a preacher of the gospel once addressed a worldly lady, whom he had never seen before, and began to speak to her about her soul.

When her husband rejoined her and she

mentioned the circumstance to him, he said: “If I had been there I should have told him to go about his own business.”

“My dear ——,” the lady replied, “if you had been there you would have thought that *he was about his own business.*”

Yes, it is the Christian’s business to remind others that eternity is coming, and to bid them flee for refuge to the only Saviour of sinners.

Allow me, then, to execute my bit of business with *you*, reader.

Let me bespeak your attention while I lay before you some truths which you cannot afford to ignore.

1. You are a sinner; you have committed *sins* again and again.

2. God is infinitely holy, and sin is utterly obnoxious to Him.

3. You are personally responsible to God, and must one day give account of yourself to Him.

4. Nothing that you can do can expiate your guilt. No reformation on your part can atone for past sins or secure your acceptance before God.

5. In spite of all that you have done, God has thought of you with love and compassion. He is your best Friend, and desires your eternal blessing.

6. He could not pass over your sins, but He could, AND DID, give Jesus, His beloved Son, to bear the penalty of them.

7. Jesus died upon the cross for sinners. His precious blood has atoning value.

8. God has raised Him from the dead, thus showing His acceptance of the sacrifice He offered on behalf of sinners.

9. Forgiveness, present, free and everlasting, is proclaimed to all through that crucified, risen and glorified Saviour.

10. *You* are invited to come to Him, to believe in Him, to put your heart's confidence in Him.

11. You are assured that salvation shall thus be yours. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

12. You are solemnly warned that if you do not come to Christ you will perish in your sins.

Do you challenge me as to my authority for making these statements? I come to you, reader, in these pages on "the King's business," and I bring His own sure word as my authority.

Have you a Bible? Then turn up the following passages, and you will find my authority for making these twelve statements:

(1) *Rom. iii. 23*; (2) *Isa. vi. 3.*; (3) *Rom. xiv. 12*; (4) *Eph. ii. 9*; (5) *Rom. v. 8*; (6) *John iii. 16*; (7) *Rom. v. 6*; (8) *Rom. iv. 25*; (9) *Acts xiii. 38*; (10) *Acts x. 43*; (11) *Acts xvi. 31*; (12) *John viii. 24.*

H. P. B.

The Mirage.

WE were travelling on the Cape Government Railway between De Aar Junction and Beaufort West. The night had been very cool, but as midday approached and the sun got high in the heavens it grew really warm. I casually lifted my eyes from a book, and glancing out of the window I became aware that we were running towards a large lake. Calling my companion's attention to it, we together watched it, and in the course of a few minutes everything stood out more distinctly. Islands covered with trees or vegetation of some kind rose from out its glassy-surfaced waters.

It was a regular puzzle! I had seen a map of the district we were traversing and felt certain no lake was marked there; moreover, the season had been dry, a regular drought in fact. We discussed it, and just as we were wondering if it could possibly be a mirage, our questionings were answered.

Lo! the waters of the lake began to quiver. Their agitation increased. Then the islands began to move in an extraordinary way. They became very elongated, parts broke off and disappeared. The lovely lake became a chaotic muddle.

Like a dream the vision passed and ugly realities were in its place. Of course! It was

as plain as possible now. Those "islands" were but the tops of the flat-topped hills or kopjes which were dotted about the plain! The "water" was the heat-waves which shimmered over the surface of the earth!

We are, most of us, thirsty creatures. Here and there a man may be found who, like the camel with its hump, carries within himself a certain fund of employment, amusement, or pleasure which keeps him going for awhile. The majority have no such resources; they thirst, and drinking of this world's pleasures they thirst again, unconsciously fulfilling the very words of Jesus—"whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." (*John iv. 13.*)

And then, especially when we are young, a mirage appears before our eyes.

A young man, for instance, stands at the threshold of a busy life, and a charming prospect opens out before him. He will display plenty of push and go, and be thoroughly up-to-date. Business will hum, and prosper, and extend in every direction. Presently he will become a man of importance, a city magnate, and live in ease, honour, and affluence. A business mirage has been conjured up before his eyes.

Others look in quite another direction, yet the prospect is none the less pleasing. Worldly pleasure is before them, and they mean to have it by hook or by crook. If they have plenty of money, well and good. If not, they

will work after a fashion, but only that they may obtain the wherewithal to enjoy their pleasures. Long days of outdoor recreation, long evenings at the theatre, long nights in the ballroom, stretch out before them, and most alluring they seem. It is the mirage of pleasure.

Or it may be a young lady. As she sits in her room and anticipates the future, she sees herself coming out into society, and becoming a great centre of attraction; being admired and courted, and finally wedded—an excellent match too—probably with a title before her name. The great worldly mirage again, but from another point of view.

Again, think of that hard-working couple with the large family living in the dingy city street. They discuss ways and means together, and as they do so, they catch a glimpse of the future, when the children are grown, when they will help to ease things, and their savings, together with the hoped-for superannuation allowance, will give them the dear little rose-covered cottage in the village of their birth, a calm and peaceful sunset, and a decent funeral. Funeral, did I say? then they've got to die, which rather spoils things. It's only the mirage after all!

To make up one's mind to this, and to have one's desires shattered, and one's hopes dispelled, is hard and disappointing work; yet come it must for each one of us.

Have you never read the last business utterance of a certain wealthy manufacturer in the north of England? His partner, a much younger man, leant over him to catch it. He said, "Poor, wretched, miserable." That was all.

Or those words of Byron's?

*"The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone."*

In both these cases the mirage had faded, and only ugly facts remained.

Ugly facts they are. YOU must face them. Let me name three.

The fact of SIN.

Let men deny it if they will, a fact it still remains. Everything within and around, and the hard experiences of everyday life eloquently declare its truth. Its ghastly effects are everywhere visible. Its poison has entered and permeated your own heart and life, *and you know it*. Scripture declares:

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

And again:

"Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?" (2 Chron. xxviii 10.)

The fact of DEATH.

This nobody can deny. It stares us too plainly in the face. It is the direct sequel to, and result of, sin.

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." (Rom. v. 12.)

"The wages of sin is death." (Rom vi. 23.)

Therefore we read :

"It is appointed unto men ONCE TO DIE."
(Heb. ix. 27.)

The fact of JUDGMENT.

Unpleasant—wherefore many seek to get rid of it by every means in their power—but inevitable. So surely as two and two make four, sin and death mean judgment to come.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

Do not, we beseech you, refuse to consider these things. Neither shut your eyes to them, nor allow them to be obscured by the mirage-like haze of the pleasures of this life.

Look at them honestly. Then you will speedily appreciate the charms of that sweet "old, old story of Jesus and His love."

The passage above quoted reads in full thus :
"And AS it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

To understand this you must turn in two directions.

Take a look backward to the Cross at His first coming. What means this great sight? A thorn-crowned Man upon a cross, rejected by men, shrouded in midnight gloom at mid-day, "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

Sin, death, and judgment supply the answer.

Sin, for He was "offered to bear the *sins* of many," *i.e.*, of all who believe on Him.

Death, for in so doing He had to accept sin's bitter wages.

Judgment, for *all* the consequences of sin were met by Him. He was "offered to *exhaust* the sins of many." So the Douay version puts it.

Now take a look onward to His second coming. What do we see? Just this, that these ugly facts having been triumphantly met at His first coming, He will again appear "to them that look for Him," *i.e.*, to believers—and it shall be "without sin," or "apart from sin," as the revised version puts it—no need to touch *that* question this time!—"unto salvation."

How complete the clearance, how great the salvation belonging to those who believe on Him! Do you believe? Can you say, "My sins are forgiven"; and can you truthfully sing,

*"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before"?*

Such is the position of the believer. A bright and blessed prospect, truly. Is it yours? And if not, is it not well worth going in for and possessing? Especially so, since in contrast with the fairest things of the world, there is nothing of the mirage about it.

F. B. H.

A Mother's Tear.

THAT a mother's tear has often more power to break down the stubborn, self-willed heart than a thousand sermons the following incident will show.

J—— was the son of Christian parents, who by precept and piety sought to win his heart for the Saviour; but apparently without the slightest success.

The world was the idol of his heart, and amongst other things football was his great delight.

But God was not unmindful of the prayers of his pious parents, and what seemed to them to be quickening his footsteps down the broad road was used of God to bring about his speedy deliverance.

He says: "Being a member of a football club, I was one day elected to play in a cup-tie. After the game was over we adjourned to the public house, and spent the night drinking.

"I well remember setting out to walk the four miles to my home at midnight. Reaching my destination at about three o'clock in the morning, I crept as quietly as I could to my room, and throwing myself into bed tried to sleep. Presently the door of my room opened, and mother, with candle in hand, came in; this she set down on the washstand and came over to my bed.

"I pretended to be asleep, feeling what a

wretch I was. As I lay I heard a sob, and then a hot, burning tear fell on my cheek, which seemed to burn into my very soul. She left the room, and I sprang up thoroughly sobered, and went out and walked the fields in the darkness. The shaft of conviction had been driven hard home in my soul. At last, there, in the open field, I threw myself down upon my knees and cried to God for mercy and pardon ; and when I rose from my knees it was with the consciousness that *my sins, which were many, were forgiven.*

“ Returning home, I went to mother’s room. She had not been in bed all night. I found her praying for her prodigal lad. And oh ! the joy when she knew all.

“ Since then she has gone home to glory, but that tear did its work.”

Dear reader, the above has been penned to illustrate for you in a very feeble way the yearnings of God’s great heart of love.

To express that love Jesus went to Calvary and there bore and exhausted the judgment of God against sin. Is He *your* Saviour ? Not by dropping a tear, but by shedding His life’s blood, does He seek to win your soul. F. T.

Do You Feel any Better ?

AT the close of a gospel service a poor girl, anxious about her soul, was being spoken to by a lady who endeavoured, with the best of intentions, to help her. After

a few sentences she laid her hand upon the girl's arm and enquired, in a kindly tone, "Do you feel any better ?"

"No, ma'am," sobbed the girl.

"Then get down on your knees with me," she said.

Both having done so, the lady added, "Now I want you to say this after me. Are you ready ?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Our Father which art in heaven."

"Our Father which art in heaven," murmured the girl as best she could between her sobs. And so they went through to the end of the Lord's prayer.

Rising from her knees at the end, and the girl following suit, the lady cheerfully said :

"Now you feel better, don't you ?"

Her idea must have been that if only the girl *felt better* she would be *all right*.

This is plainly putting the cart before the horse. The truth is she needed to get "all right" with God, as a result of which she would certainly have felt much happier.

Clearly, then, the burning question is not what you *feel*, but what you *are*. Feelings are often deceptive, facts are stubborn things. To start tinkering with your feelings and occupying yourself with them is to commence daubing the wall with untempered mortar, and crying "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

Take a good look first at how you stand with God, and say, "Feelings or no feelings, how do I stand with Him?"

Years ago I went with a friend to visit a family in a Lancashire cotton-spinning town, where he was preaching in a tent.

A daughter was seated, just returned from the mill. Addressing her, he said:

"Well, and how have you got on at the meetings?"

"Oh!" she readily replied, "I've enjoyed them. Ever since coming I've felt a lot better."

"Do you know," said he, "I asked just that question of a young man not long since, and he said, 'Ever since coming I've felt wretched. I'm a lost sinner.' And I must say that reply pleased me a good deal better than yours."

There are many people to whom it should be said in all charity, Time enough to speak of feeling better when you have felt a great deal worse.

When your eyes are properly opened, and you have repented toward God, then you will cry, not, What must I do to *feel* better? but "What must I do to be *saved*?" (See Acts xvi. 30.)

Perhaps you would like to interrupt me here, and say that, like the first-mentioned girl, you are anxious and wish truly to be right with God, but that in spite of repenting, praying, and asking to be forgiven, you are no better.

Did you ever read those words of Jesus, "*Repent ye, and believe the gospel*"? (*Mark i. 15.*)

The words italicised are the part you need. Now the great theme of the Gospel is JESUS—the risen *Lord* and *Christ*.

But the gospel also testifies of His work, the great work of atonement.

"Christ *died for our sins*, according to the scriptures." (*I Cor. xv. 3.*)

"Who was *delivered for our offences*, and was *raised again for our justification*." (*Rom iv. 25.*)

Further, it declares the infinite value and effect of that work in relation to the one who believes in Jesus.

"Through His name whosoever believeth in Him *shall receive remission of sins*." (*Acts x. 43.*)

It declares the complete clearance before God of the poor sinner—be he ever so ungodly—who believes in Jesus.

"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, 39.*)

Do you catch the point? Let me put it thus in a nutshell:

To be right with God. *Believe in Jesus, i.e.*, as a repentant sinner receive Him as your Saviour and Lord.

To be at peace and happy, *Believe the gospel, i.e.*, the message concerning Himself, His work, and the complete clearance of *all* who believe in Him.

Even then, remember, you will not say, "Now I feel better," meaning "I feel more good and holy and better pleased with myself."

No. If you say it you will mean, sinner though I am in myself, and weak and helpless too, I rejoice in the knowledge that the blood of Jesus has cleansed me from all sin, and that I am cleared for ever in the sight of God.

F. B. H.

Free Thought.

"**I** DON'T care what you say, I shall think as I like." Who has not heard the above remark made? And who is there who has not said practically the same thing?

The remark is a natural one, for we live in a land where for a long period there has been outward liberty and freedom of speech, and men have been encouraged to think for themselves. Anyone and everyone is at liberty to have his or her say upon the various questions of the day. Every conceivable subject is open to public discussion, on the platform, in the press, and wherever men meet one another. One result is that every man considers his opinions as good as another's. So long as this habit was confined to merely secular subjects it is possible no great harm was done. Our object now is to utter a note of warning against the intrusion of this so-called "free thought" into matters of faith. And here let

us at once make it plain that faith deals with *facts*. Faith is not credulity. God, who cannot lie, sets before men real facts, and He calls upon men to believe Him. The whole world may be divided into two classes—those who believe, and those who do not. When God has spoken there should be an end of controversy. The scriptures afford evidence of the fatal consequence of indulgence in “free thought” in matters appertaining to God. Abel believed God, and sealed his testimony with his blood. Cain considered that he knew better than God, and translated his “free thought” into action, with terrible results to himself. Such “free thought” is rebellion against God. In matters of faith man’s opinion is of little worth. What we want to know is, “What saith the scripture?” And when once we have ascertained this, our wisdom is to abide by it.

In natural things men are ready enough to use their common-sense; but in higher matters how little regard is paid to it. Common-sense tells us that if a man were to exercise “free thought” in regard to the meaning of the red and green lights used on the railway his services would quickly be dispensed with. A sailor who held “free thought” notions as to the use of the rudder would hardly be thought a safe navigator, even by an infidel. One who denied that a live coal was hot would surely not be put in

charge of a fire brigade. If it is so important for the signalman, the sailor, and the fireman to have definite knowledge, how much more important must it be for us to have true knowledge concerning the way of Salvation ?

To put the matter briefly, God declares that we all have sinned, and the consequence of sin is death. Sin and death are undeniable facts. God says He is "*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*" (2 Peter iii., 9.) This, too, is a fact. But though God is willing that men should come to repentance, how are they to be delivered from death ? God Himself provides the answer. He says : "*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.) But how ? "*Christ died for the ungodly.*" (Romans v. 6.) "*He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.*" (Isaiah liii. 5.) And all this the Saviour did voluntarily. "*I lay down My life for the sheep.*" (See John x. 15, 17, 18.) "*Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the JUST for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.*" (1 Peter iii. 18.)

These are facts, and if any man really believes them so to be, and therefore with all his heart believes in Him, who is thus set forth as the Saviour of sinners, he shall be delivered

from condemnation and shall have everlasting life. (See *John v. 24.*)

Dear reader, don't boast in having "free thoughts" about God, but believe in His free mercy, free grace, and free offers of salvation.

P. J. B.

The Phonograph, and how they treated it.

TWO or three men were standing near a phonograph, laughing and talking. I heard a voice shout out a record number, and then immediately the phonograph reproduced a voice, singing in a wonderfully clear tone that grand old hymn of Toplady's.

*"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.*

*"Not the labour of my hands,
Could fulfil Thy laws' demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow—
All for sin could not atone.
Thou must save, and Thou alone.*

*"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, look to Thee for dress;*

*Helpless, look to Thee for grace.
Vile, I to the Fountain fly—
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.*

“*While I draw this fleeting breath,
If mine eyelids close in ———*”

Someone shouted out, “*Stop it! that’s enough,*” and the little machine stopped just before it got to the word—“DEATH.”

A giddy laugh went round, and in a moment or two the phonograph was reproducing the words and lively air of a dance, as if to drown in every possible way the words of the grand old hymn, and more especially the thought of *death*.

Ah! they might turn away the *thought* of death, but they could not turn away the *reality* of it.

Reader, why not face it? There is nothing gained by running away from facts. Why does man fear death? The brute creation knows nothing of its fear.

The answer is simple. With the beast death is the end of all. But with man, “*After this the judgment.*” It is the thought of *after* death that makes men fear death.

Remember our Lord’s own words: “I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment.” (*Matt. xii. 36.*) What would a person living one hundred years ago have said if anyone had told them that in the twentieth century there would be an instrument, capable of reproducing the exact words and tone and

voice spoken into it? He might well be excused for refusing to believe such a wonder, yet it is a fact. If the creature can do such wonderful things, what can the Creator—the almighty God—not do? Yes, it is true, “We must all appear at the judgment seat of Christ.” (2 Cor. v. 10.)

Yet the apostle Paul could say, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” How could he triumph over death and its fear, for the way he triumphed is the way you may do so? Ah! he could add, “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. xv. 57.)

Yes; the triumph is through Jesus. Have you trusted Him? Has He become your Saviour? He says, “*Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” Come to Him, believe on Him, and He will save you. Thus, and thus only, can you triumph over death and its fear. He died that you might live.

W. J. W.

The Fatal Flower.

TRAVELLERS, who visit the falls of Niagara, are directed to a spot on the margin of the precipice over the boiling current below where a gay young lady a few years ago lost her life.

She was delighted with the wonders of the unrivalled scene and ambitious to pluck a flower from the cliff where no human hand had before ventured, as a memorial of the

cataract and her own daring. She leaned over the verge and caught a glimpse of the surging waters far down the battlement of rocks, while fear for a moment darkened her excited mind. But there hung the lovely blossom upon which her heart was fixed; and she leaned, in a delirium of intense desire and anticipation, over the brink. Her arm was outstretched to grasp the beautiful form which charmed her fancy; the turf yielded to the pressure of her light feet, and, with a shriek, she descended to the rocky shore and was borne away gasping in death.

How impressively does this tragic event illustrate the way in which a majority of impenitent sinners perish for ever! It is not a deliberate purpose to neglect salvation; but, in pursuit of imaginary good, fascinated with pleasing objects just in the future, they lightly, ambitiously and insanely venture *too far*.

They sometimes fear the desired wealth or pleasure; they seem to hear the thunder of eternity's deep, and recoil a moment from the allurements of sin; but the solemn pause is brief, the onward step is taken, the fancied treasure is within the grasp, when a despairing cry comes from death's dark wave, and the soul sinks into the arms of the *second death*.

Oh! every hour life's sands are sliding from beneath incautious feet, and with sin's fatal flower in the careless hand, the trifler goes to his doom.

D.M.