

GOD'S
GLAD TIDINGS.

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE,

PURELY GOSPEL.

FOR FREE AND GENERAL CIRCULATION.

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INDEX.

	PAGE
A Brand Plucked out of the Fire	135
“A Debtor to Christ”	85
A Dream, with the Interpretation.	124
A Rent Veil, A Risen Saviour, A Redeemed Sinner ...	68
A Word to the Aged	42
Barabbas, or Jesus?... ..	91
Can you say you are Saved?	184
Christ Accepted, and the Consequences... ..	19
Christ’s Work, and our Place	159
Could you “Die very Happy”?	263
Do you Hope, or Know, that you have Eternal Life?	213
Four Looks, or Only One	49
Fragment	168
Frankly Forgiven	225
God’s Lamb for Me	267
“God Says—Everlasting Life”	242
“Going—Going—Gone!”	207
Good News in a Far Country	108
Light at Eventide	309
Look! Look at the Cross!	278
Man’s Best, or God’s Best	235
“Mountains of Sin!” or, “Going to Christ”? ...	323
“Not of Works”	55
Poetry—A Little Word from Thee	167
„ “Behold the Man!”	206
„ Faith’s Confidence	83
„ Good News from a Far Country	108
„ Jordan	273
„ Love’s Triumph	280
„ “Master, where Dwellest Thou?”	57

	PAGE
Poetry—My Blessed Home... .. .	54
„ Salvation is of the Lord	196
„ The Saviour's Call... .. .	183
„ The Three Hearts	112
Probation; or, Tried and Found Guilty	301
Ready for Salvation, or Ready for Judgment—which?... .. .	329
Remember Lot's Wife;	169
Resting in Jesus	40
Resurrection Life... .. .	219
Satan's Juggernath	243
So Great Salvation	151
The Fatal Choice	57
The Great Pot	281
The Loose Rope	275
The Necessity of Love	253
The Nurse's Conversion	29
The Saviour and the Shepherds... .. .	113
The Sceptic G.M.; or, "I See it all now, and 'God is Love!'"	141
The Two Rests—Salvation, Communion	295
The Two Roads	128
The Young Doctor; or, "Comfort my Mother"	1
White as Snow	197
Whosoever... .. .	47
"You can only Die Once." "That's not True"... .. .	25
Your Future	187

THE YOUNG DOCTOR;
OR,
"COMFORT MY MOTHER."

A SHORT SKETCH OF J. L. H. M'F.

CHAP. I.—A PARTING COMMISSION.

THE year 1873 was drawing towards its close when a number of mutual friends gathered on the platform of one of our railway stations. We had come to say "Farewell" and bid "God speed" to some of the Lord's children who were just leaving Edinburgh for abroad. The foreign-bound travellers consisted of a lady, her youngest daughter, and an attendant, proceeding now to join three other members of the family in a lovely part of the West Indies. Just ere the train departed, my friend called me to the carriage window, and with all the tearful earnestness of a mother's love, said, "You will keep your eye on Johnny, won't you? Promise me you will." To this I most readily assented, adding, "But, you know, young men do not much care to be looked after by those like me." The next moment the train moved off, leaving the subject of this last request in our midst.

His position as House-physician in the Infirmary prevented his going with the party to the port of embarkation to see the last of his mother and sister. While they sailed, he was to remain in Edinburgh for a few months, and

then, having added to his professional acquirements by a visit to the London and Continental seats of medicine, was to rejoin his mother in the before-named far-off isles, where already a bright vista of success and honour lay open before him.

Johnny was the youngest son of his mother—she a widow—and but a few months previously had graduated in medicine at the University of Edinburgh, shortly after attaining his majority.

Tall, slender, singularly muscular and agile, his well-developed physique would have drawn the attention of a stranger, apart from the handsome face and head which his broad shoulders supported. His face was very attractive, for the natural grace of the regular and finely-chiselled features, and aquiline nose, was enhanced by a sparkling pair of eyes, brimful of merriment; while constantly the expression varied, and a pleasant smile sat ever on the countenance. His light brown hair, crisp, curly, and short cut, gave him the appearance of being what he was—a thorough-going man in every sense of the word.

Possessed of mental powers far beyond the average, which enabled him quickly to acquire, and easily to retain, whatever he set himself to master, he carried likewise within a tender and affectionate heart, only more powerful than the iron will which knew no controlling force, save

when those affections were appealed to. Firmness and tenderness were each in full force, while his bright buoyant disposition, affability, and easy, graceful manners, coupled with a readiness to do anyone a good turn, made him at once, whether at home, at school, at college, or in society, by universal suffrage, that which he deservedly was—a general favourite.

It was with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain that the Christian mother parted from the handsome young Doctor, for while there was so much over which nature could rejoice, there was in his case, she well knew, and he also, the one thing lacking which most her heart desired for her son—the knowledge of Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and the yielding of the heart, yea, of himself, to Him. This I knew also, for I had been well acquainted with dear J——all through his student career, and many a time he had heard me preach the Gospel. On several occasions we had spoken freely and closely on the matter of the soul's salvation; but, though sometimes interested, it always ended in his relegating the necessity of deciding for Christ to a future day. Enjoyment of the world shut out the claims of Christ; a poor choice surely, as the sequel will show.

CHAP. II.—A FOOTBALL MATCH, AND ITS
FRUIT.

THE parting wish of my friend did not escape my memory, and I was pleased, soon after his mother left, to see the young Doctor appear at the Gospel meeting on the Lord's day evening; but plenty of work filled up his time within the Hospital, and mine without, so we rarely met, till the month of February, 1874, when an accident which befel him drew us together.

Johnny was a great athlete. It mattered not what line he went in for, he was sure to be head and chief. One of the best all-round cricketers in Scotland, scarcely finding an equal in flat racing, and long and high jumping, his favourite game was foot-ball, at which he was such an adept, that a team was counted almost sure of a victory that had him in its ranks; proof of all which stood, on every hand, in his rooms, in the shape of numerous prizes of every description. His fearless play cost him dear. During the progress of a foot-ball match, late in January, he came into collision with an opponent, and was flung violently to the ground, receiving a severe and painful injury to one of his knee-joints. Undaunted by the sickening pain he rose, and endeavoured to continue play, an attempt which was followed by a dead faint, in which he was carried off the field, and thence conveyed to his rooms in the Infirmary.

Of this circumstance I did not hear till the middle of February, when, one Saturday evening, a note, pencilled by a strange hand, at his request, summoned me to his bedside.

Hastening to the Infirmary, I found the once stalwart man more helpless than an infant. The injury to the knee-joint, though at first seeming of but trivial importance, had paved the way for one of the most acute attacks of rheumatic fever I ever witnessed. The injured limb was cradled in a Salter's swing; every other joint was pained and powerless, the only motion possible being that of rolling the head from side to side. Severe pain at the heart told the tale of mischief working in, and round that often-before overstrained organ, while the acid moisture that literally gushed from every pore of the skin, kept one nurse constantly employed in vain endeavours to dry the face and brow.

He thanked me for coming, and after getting the details I have just given, and expressing my sorrow at finding him in such a case, I inquired if in any way I could serve him, and why he had sent for me.

"Monday, the 16th, will be the mail day, and I want you to write to my mother," was his reply.

To this I most gladly assented, noted what he wished said, and then added, "And may I tell her that you have found the Lord? She will be sure to want to know that."

He quickly turned his face to the wall, while involuntary tears rolled down his cheeks as he answered, "I wish I could say that; I would give all the world, if I had it, to find Him; but I fear it's too late now."

"Not at all," I replied, "it is never too late while you are in life. He is willing to have and to save you, and His word says, '*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *Now* is the day of salvation.' Do you, my dear Johnny, really want to have Christ? This is the only open question."

His answer was very like himself. "I have been praying to God all day. I am now anxious to find Christ, and to be saved, but I fear it's no use. Besides, it's a cowardly thing to turn now. I know it's only the fear of death that makes me turn."

Much more conversation ensued, during which he opened his mind fully to me, and I sought to open to him, as simply as I could, God's way of salvation, viz. the atoning work and bloodshedding of the Lord Jesus on the one hand, and the sinner's simple acceptance by faith of God's offered mercy—apart from all his own works or feelings—on the other.

Having read the Word, and prayed with him, I then left, with instructions to say to his mother that now at length he was "really anxious to be saved."

Dear reader, I wonder whether these last five words express your state. If so, read on.

CHAP. III.—"IS THERE NOTHING TO DO BUT BELIEVE?"

FOR many days dear Johnny's life hung in the balance, as the fever ran its painful and wearisome course; at length the corner seemed to have been turned, and those who were in constant attendance on him looked confidently for ultimate recovery.

During the space of a month from the first night I saw him in his sickness, I visited him constantly, to speak of Jesus, and press on him the urgent necessity of at once receiving Christ. Other servants of Christ also had access to him, and I doubt not were used of God in deepening the convictions, which it was evident to any soul-winner, he was passing through.

A favourite nurse who had charge of the wards under his care, by his own request, late in his illness, was deputed to attend him. Soon after this, noticing that he was reading a collection of Gospel narratives and papers, entitled, "Crumbs for the Hungry," she said to him, "Do you know, Doctor, that it has been reported all through the house that you are converted?"

"Yes," he replied, "I wish it were true; I wish I were converted." That wish was soon to be gratified, to his joy and ours.

By the mail of 2nd March, he had sufficiently rallied to be able to pen a few lines to his mother, telling her of his hope of full and rapid recovery.

Perhaps the exertion of this may have been too much for his exhausted frame ; but, be it as it may, within a few days bad symptoms again set in, and hopes gave place to the gravest apprehension on the part of those who watched him, when on Friday, the 13th, vomiting of the most intractable character set in, and lasted persistently day and night till the end.

This day I saw him, still unsaved ; but his physical condition was such that I could say but a few words, pointing him again to the Lord Jesus as the friend of sinners. Pressure of work quite prevented an intended visit on the Saturday ; but on Lord's Day afternoon an uncontrollable impulse led me, spite of much hindrance, to his bedside. A glance told me that Death had marked him as an early victim. To me it seemed now, or never. By his request we were left alone.

Daylight was fading, but just enough remained to permit me to read from my little pocket Testament the lovely tale of the return of the wanderer, and the welcome he received (Luke xv. 11-32.) Dear J— listened as he had never done before ; he owned his sin, his misspent life, his often stifled convictions when in health, his ill-treatment of Christ, and of the grace of God. He had "come to himself," on the verge of the grave. "Repentance toward God," was manifest in the way he judged himself, and the whole past, in view of God and Eternity. "Faith

toward our Lord Jesus Christ" was, as yet, however, wanting.

Turning to Paul's 1st Epistle to Timothy, I read once and again to him that blessed 15th verse—resting-place of countless weary, self-judged hearts and empty sinners: "THIS IS A FAITHFUL SAYING, AND WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION, THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS, OF WHOM I AM CHIEF." Its sweetness and fulness the Holy Ghost applied in power to his soul, and he saw that Christ had come for such as he—sinners. One difficulty remained: he had done nothing good in God's sight—plenty of that which he now, and truly, judged bad. Satan, fearful to lose a victim, suggested the necessity of his doing something. To this I cited the case of the dying thief, saved in the very jaws of death, unable to do aught but fear God, judge himself, confess Christ, and cast himself unreservedly on Him (Luke xxiii. 39-43), and reminded him of the dying words of the blessed Lord, "It is finished."

There was a moment's pause, and then the final query fell from his lips, "But, Doctor, is there nothing to do but believe?"

"BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED," was my only reply.

The setting sun gave me just light enough to see that with clasped hands, and eyes closed to all earthly scenes, his lips were moving in prayer.

"Behold, he prayeth," is a great word for God to say of a sinner on earth (Acts ix. 11). It is the moment of deliverance.

A minute or two after he turned his head to me, as tears filled his eyes, and softly said, "I believe Him now. I can trust Him now. I see it all."

Peace filled his heart, and praise filled mine, while deeper and fuller than either was the joy in heaven over this younger son, about whom the Father could say, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." (Luke xv. 24.)

He begged me kneel and thank God for His abundant mercy to him in thus saving him. This done, I left him, with a restful look on his wasted, yet still handsome countenance, that had never been seen there before.

CHAPTER IV.—"WILL HE LET ME SLIP AT THE LAST?"

A LATE visit on Lord's Day evening, and one early on Monday morning, gave me glad confirmation as to dear Johnny's simple and real faith in the Lord. He now begged I would be with him as much as possible, and a promise of an evening visit was a comfort to him. In the afternoon his strength rapidly gave way, and now, for the first time, I think, he himself laid

aside all hopes of recovery. This evidently led to a touching scene between him and the nurse I have already mentioned, which she narrated to me two days afterwards.

Some time before I saw him at night he had sent for her, and on her entering the room at once said, "Helen, go down on your knees, and give me both your hands." This she did, when he went on: "Promise me, Helen, that if I die, you will never cease seeking salvation till you find it."

Bursting into tears at this appeal, she sobbed, "I'm too great a sinner."

"No," he rejoined; "remember, no one is too great a sinner to find salvation. I thought so too till yesterday, when Dr. W—— led me to know and believe, that I was not too great a sinner for Jesus to save."

Noticing her tears, he added: "Don't cry for me; I'm going to heaven. Promise to meet me there. Don't believe in works, Helen; believe simply in Jesus." * Thus, immediately, did the new-born one seek the blessing of others: finest proof of grace really tasted.

A little respite in his sickness now ensuing, she endeavoured to cheer him, saying: "You

* The fruit which this earnest entreaty bore will appear, if the Lord will, in our next number, as an abridgement of a little book entitled "The Dying Appeal," by R., published by R. M. Cameron, 22, St. Giles-street, Edinburgh.

are a little better, Doctor; try and bear up. Perhaps you will get better yet. Many a prize you have won, and many an honour gained—”

Putting out his wasted hand he interrupted her, motioned her to silence, and then said: “Now I have gained the crown of glory. I am dying, and I am not afraid to die. I am dying happy.”

When I reached him between ten and eleven p.m., I saw a very great change since the morning. He welcomed me with a sweet smile, and “I’m so glad you have come.”

The nurses leaving us alone, I got by his side, and then softly said, “Going home, Johnny?”

“They think I’m dying,” he replied. “What do you think?”

“It looks very like it, dear.”

“Yes, I think so, too,” he quietly rejoined.

“And you are going to Jesus?”

He turned his lustrous eyes on me, and inquired, “Do you think He will let me slip at the last?”

“Not He,” I said, “it is not like Him.”

“But I have known Him such a short while.”

“Never mind that; you do know Him?”

“Yes.”

“And trust Him simply?”

“Yes.”

There was a slight pause, and then, the enemy again making a final assault on this babe

in Christ, he took my hand in both his own emaciated ones, and with a wistful gaze right into my eyes that I can never forget, added: "But, Doctor, are you sure He won't let me slip, just at the very last?"

"Listen to His own words," I rejoined. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE; and they SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY (*man or devil*) PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND. My Father, which gave them me, is GREATER THAN ALL; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand' (John x. 27—29). There, will that do?"

The cloud was dispelled, the enemy routed by "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" and as the sweetest smile of contented joy broke over his wasted countenance, he pressed my hand firmly, and said: "Yes, His will be done; but oh, *comfort my Mother!*"

Much more passed that I need not relate, save to add that now, in the full light of eternity so near at hand, he again reviewed his life, only to judge it, while extolling the mercy of God which had met and saved him at the last moment of his earthly history. On my asking him now if he was dying happily, he replied: "Yes, quite happily; nevertheless, I should have liked to have lived a little while, to serve and please the Lord."

A parting message to his mother, and an assurance, with his love, that he would meet her in heaven, though never more on earth, exhausted his strength; and at his request, I again thanked the Lord for his salvation, and then, being called away, left him, promising to return at midnight.

CHAP. V.—“THE LORD HATH NEED OF HIM.”

THESE were the words on which A——’s eye fell on the morning of Tuesday, 17th March, 1874, as she referred to the Scripture Almanack for the verse for the day. Turning to her elder sister, she exclaimed, “Johnny is dead!” The sisters, with their mother, had received the first tidings of his illness a week previous to this date, and naturally were most anxious for each fortnightly mail. The Lord, in His tender mercy, took this wondrous way of breaking the news of joy and sorrow. Never were words more prophetic, and more precious.

Midnight had passed, and Tuesday, 17th, had begun its course with us when I got back to the Infirmary. My young friend was rapidly sinking. Though racked with pain, he listened gratefully through the night to the verses of Scripture I whispered in his ear, and would oft reply, “Tell me more; tell me more.” His last words to me, spoken about 7 a.m., soon after which he became unconscious, were, “If I die, all is well.”

With his head resting in my hands, he gently breathed his last at 7.25 a.m., and his spirit leaving the now much-altered tenement, passed to be "for ever" with that Lord whose grace he had tasted on earth but for six-and-thirty hours.

Round his bed stood his grandmother, two friends, three nurses, and a kind fellow-resident Physician, who had most tenderly and assiduously watched him day and night through his long illness; and as we thanked God for the eternal salvation, at the twelfth hour, of him who had just left our midst, not an eye was dry, nor a heart that was not touched to its depths.

The dying request, "Comfort my mother," suggested the wording of the message which the telegraph wires in due course carried abroad: "*Seventeenth. Johnny departed peacefully to Christ*"—tidings which at once would break and bind again the mother's heart, telling, as it did, of her loss, his gain, and God's mighty, faithful grace, and answer to those countless prayers which, until now, had apparently lain unanswered on His table. Christian mothers, go on praying for your unconverted sons!

As long as memory endures will the scene of the beloved young graduate's interment abide. The tidings of his death produced universal regret through the University, not to speak of the sorrow, and expressed sympathy for his family, of numberless friends by whom he was loved both

in town and country. His compeers and fellow-students resolved on a public funeral. Four abreast, some six or seven hundred young men preceded the hearse, while on foot behind came the Resident Physicians and Surgeons of the Infirmary, and then a long string of carriages.

Perhaps, never again will the quiet and picturesque Dean Cemetery witness such a concourse round an open grave, as stood there that lovely Friday afternoon.

Funeral services are uncommon in Scotland, but just before the coffin was lowered, as the sun in warmth and brilliancy flung its rays full on the scene, nature the while restraining song of bird and sound of wind, so that a vast silence reigned over the mute assembly, the voice of prayer and thanksgiving was heard ascending. Thanks were rendered on account of him who was gone, sustaining grace and ministry of Divine sympathy besought for the sorrowing mother and family, and present and eternal blessing for the many young men who knew him in life, and now witnessed the last of him on earth, invoked.

Then was read, "And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now, when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she

was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." (Luke vii. 11—15.)

The parallel and contrast between that day and this was shortly pointed out. *Then*, the blessed Lord comforted the widow by giving life to her son, but only for time. *This day*, how much deeper and fuller was the comfort He was ministering to the widowed mother, in first giving eternal life to the young man, and then, with a full consciousness of where he was going, taking him home, to be for ever with Himself. Each heart responded to this, so then turning to the many who had known him well, I said: "You know how he lived, let me tell you how he died. The qualities which caused him to be loved by all, and envied by none, give no ground for acceptance with God: that alone is found, where he found it, in the blood of Jesus."

The details I have already given were mainly presented, followed by an earnest appeal to all who were yet undecided for Christ, to at once turn to Him, receive forgiveness of sins, and eternal life through faith in His name, and then live for Him who died for us.

Never saw I more young men with bowed heads, moved hearts, and melted feelings. What the result may be, the day of the Lord alone can declare.

The remains were then laid in their last earthly resting-place; precious seed, sown in faith, soon to spring up in resurrection bloom and unfading beauty, when He comes for whom we wait; for truly saith the Scripture, "Sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;" and "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

And now, dear reader, permit me to ask, how stands it between thee and the Lord? Art thou still on the world's side? Art thou still a wanderer from God? Let me beseech thee no longer to do thyself harm. Young man—and it is for thee mainly that I have written these pages—wilt thou not now turn to the Lord? Venture not on delay, I pray thee. Because God's sovereign grace gave the one of whom I have written space to repent, and time to believe on a death-bed, is that an argument why thou shouldst delay? Nay. Beware! lest, cut down suddenly, the same mercy be not extended to thee.

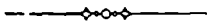
Hast thou a lease of life? No. Then is there the more urgent reason why, as thou readest this, thou shouldst bow to the Lord Jesus, and believe Him simply. God loves thee. Christ has died for sinners such as thee. The Holy

Spirit waits to seal the new-born soul that trusts in Jesus. Come to Him now, then. Surely the years now past may suffice to have wrought thine own will; begin this new one with God. Let 1876 be the year to which in eternity thou canst point back, and say with heart-felt joy, Then, I came to the Lord. Fear not to cast thyself simply on Him. None are too bad for Jesus to save. Let the faithful saying, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," since it is "worthy of all acceptation," have thy acceptation on the very spot where now thou readest this tale of God's grace to one like thyself.

The Lord, in His abundant goodness, grant a present blessing to every young man who may read the foregoing narrative of His mercy.

W. T. P. W.

Edinburgh, 1st January, 1876.



CHRIST ACCEPTED, AND THE CONSEQUENCES.

READER, have you accepted the Lord Jesus as your all-sufficient Saviour? I ask not whether you are religious, attend a place of worship, and so on; no, for well I know that there may be all this without a particle of affection for the glorified Saviour at God's right hand. Again, I repeat my question, have you accepted—fully

and simply—Christ Jesus as your Saviour? If so, if you can say from your inmost heart, “I have taken Him in all His preciousness as my very own Saviour as presented to me by God, and my conscience enjoys perfect rest through His finished work,” then you have a prize, as well as being yourself the prize of Him who stooped in infinite love—“gave Himself,” as the Scripture says—to die for wretched rebels.

Well, then, I desire to show a little of what belongs to you as a saved one, a believer on the Son of God.

1. It is certain from the Scripture that the Lord Jesus took *all* your sins upon Him on the Cross, and received at the hands of a Holy God all the punishment they justly deserved. God, as it were, with His searching eye saw all your sins—not those committed previous to conversion merely, but the sins of your whole lifetime—and laid them upon His well-beloved Son, who put Himself willingly under the consequences of them, and who in bearing them away for ever, infinitely glorified God, and as a consequence is now in the Glory of God. What a joy, then, to know that God *cannot* impute a single sin to one of His own, and the result of that precious work is to give a cleansed conscience to every simple believer. Once purged he has no more conscience of sins, but is for ever perfected by the one offering of Jesus Christ. (Read Heb. x.)

2. Through faith in the Son of God you have eternal life—the life of the Glorified One on the Throne above—Himself your life. (Col. iii. 4.) This life is to be seen here below in the Christian. It cannot mingle with the world, for it belongs to another scene. Christ gives it (John x. 28), is it (Col. iii. 4), feeds it (John vi. 57), and is the object of it (Gal. ii. 20). “To me, to live is Christ,” says Paul.

3. At the Cross of Christ, where your sins were put away, God condemned that evil nature, “sin in the flesh” (Rom. viii. 3), that you still feel within you rising up betimes, and seeking again to get possession of the reins and drive you about at its pleasure, having the government of your body as in times past. But having the new man you now love that which is good, and hate that which is evil. But perhaps you have been sadly troubled on account of experiencing so much evil still within. Let me say that conversion has not improved the flesh, or the presence of a new nature set aside the old. “But am I never to lose the sense of sin?” you say. Never while in the body. Try as much as you please, faith and experience never will run together here; but when the Lord comes, and we get our new bodies, then there will be perfect harmony between them. Yet, nevertheless, it is not at all necessary that you should be under the dominion of sin, but to be free from it (when I

say free from it I do not not mean free from *feeling* it) you must simply reckon yourself to have died at the Cross of Christ, that Christ's death there was death to *sin*, so in *His death* you have likewise died to *sin*. (Read Rom. vi. vii.). God says that our old man *has been crucified with* Christ, and as He sees us dead to sin, so He desires that we should reckon ourselves to be as He sees us. This gives liberty and settled peace before God. Our history, then, as children of Adam has been closed at the Cross.

Further, that same Cross which is the end of our sins and of ourselves, is likewise the ground of our separation from this evil world, for by it "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) May we then keep ourselves apart from the follies, fashions, and ways of this present world.

4. But the believer is also risen and seated in Christ in heavenly places. (See Eph. ii. 6.) These are *present* blessings, and to be enjoyed now, as true of the babe in Christ as of the father in Christ. Our blessings are *heavenly*, not earthly; bear this in mind, for ignorance or forgetfulness of this leads many who belong to the Lord to seek the earth and its good things, and thus practically to deny that they belong to heaven. (See Phil. iii. 19, 20.)

5. Union to Christ, the Man in glory, is a blessing all believers have now, though known

but little and enjoyed by few, but when known makes us conversant with the things of heaven, and draws our heart and affections from things here to Himself above. (See 1 Cor. vi. 17.)

6. This union is effected by the Holy Ghost, who also makes the body of each believer His temple (see 1 Cor. vi. 19); and being in us, is the power of our worship, service, and testimony; sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom. v. 5), being also the power by which the flesh is kept under, and Christ manifested. How important, then, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But He is very sensitive, and can easily be grieved, even by a thought, a word, or a look (see Eph. iv. 30), and, as a consequence, we lose our joy and communion with God; but for our comfort let us remember that He can *never* leave us, for though David could and did pray, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me," it was at a time when He had not come to take up His abode upon the earth (see John vii. 39), but merely came and went again; so David's prayer was quite consistent with that time, but entirely inconsistent *now*, for the Son of God has said (John xiv. 16), "He shall abide with you for *ever*."

But, further, the same Spirit has baptized all in whom He dwells into one body; so we are not now individual believers merely, as in other dispensations, but members one of another, and of

that body of which Christ in glory is the Head (see Acts ix. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13). May we walk in the practical recognition of this blessed truth.

7. Our hope is the Lord's coming for His saints, to perfect their salvation and introduce them into His Father's house on high (see John xiv. 2, 3).

This event is drawing near: evil is making rapid progress, but for us our Lord is coming first before He deals with the evil; and He is now patiently waiting at the right hand of God for that moment of deepest joy and interest both to Himself and us, when He shall descend into the air, and with a shout awaken His saints now sleeping in their graves (and whose spirits have waited on high with Him, see Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 8), and that same voice which will vitalise the dust of His sleeping ones, every particle of which has been watched over by Him through successive ages, will also change the vile bodies of His living ones, transforming them in a moment into glorious conformity with Himself (see Phil. iii. 20, 21), for God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son (see Rom. viii. 29), who became a man that He might by death and resurrection have the joy of having us *with and like Himself* throughout eternity's ages. (See Heb. ii. 10—15; John xvii. 24; 1 John iii. 2.)

Oh, the riches of the grace and glory of our

God! May it be our aim to glorify Christ here below, getting more acquainted with His mind and will, walking in His steps, and awaiting patiently His coming which draweth nigh.

Unsaved reader, one word with you ere I close. You are missing joys and blessings incomparably superior to any of earth.—What have you? This passing world, a grave, a judgment, and then an eternity of woe unutterable. Terrible prospect! Stop, then, and consider; own thyself lost—wholly lost—and accept the Saviour provided by God for *sinner*s, and you will then have what time, nor death, nor the grave can ever rob you of. Grace will be thy portion now, and glory thine in the future, for “He giveth grace and glory.”

“O Blessed Saviour, Son of God!
Who hast redeem'd us with Thy blood
From guilt, and death, and shame;
With joy and praise, Thy people see
The crown of glory worn by Thee,
And worthy Thee proclaim.”

T. T. E.

“YOU CAN ONLY DIE ONCE.” “THAT’S
NOT TRUE.”

WE were travelling by express from C—y to B—m, when suddenly one of my fellow-passengers, a woman of middle age, startled by a noise, probably the shaking of the lamp above our heads, exclaimed—

"Oh, dear! do you think it's safe?"

A smart young man, sitting opposite to her, dressed in railway uniform, amused at her fright, replied jocosely—

"Never mind, Missus, you can only die once."

Sitting near him, I answered, "Excuse me, that's not true." He seemed a little surprised by my remark, when I added, "You have been wrongly informed on that subject; pray where did you get your information from, that people can only die once? I know, on an authority that makes no mistake, that there is such a thing as dying twice." Taking my Bible from my pocket, I read the passage, "This is the second death." Rev. xx. 14.

"I trust, my friend," I added, "that none of us in this carriage may ever know what it is to die twice.

"Thank God, there is a way of escape! and it is quite clear, from God's word, who they are that the second death cannot touch, as verse 6 of this chapter shows, but unless your name is in the 'book of life,' you cannot escape dying twice."

Evidently the young man was somewhat taken aback by this (to him) new doctrine, though he replied a little confusedly, "Oh yes, that is true," but it was plain, up to that moment, it had been a matter of little concern to him, whether the eternal blessedness of a life that

death cannot touch was to be his, or whether he was to spend his eternity in the lake of fire, "which is the second death."

Our journey ended, we separated, on our part desiring that God might awaken him and our fellow-travellers to a sense of the solemnity of the subject which had thus occupied us during our ride together.

R. A.

"MASTER, WHERE DWELLEST THOU ?"

"He saith unto them, *Come and see.* They came and saw where He dwelt, and *abode with Him.*"—JOHN i. 39.

"Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water; and He said, *Come!*"—MATTHEW xiv. 28, 29.

Lord! 'twas Thy voice of love first bade me
"Come!"

And find redemption at Thy wondrous Cross:
A weary, wandering child, Thou brought'st me
home—

Rescued from sin, from sorrow, and from
loss!

And now once more that word of love I hear,
Sounding across life's dark and stormy sea;
O, may the deep attraction of Thy voice
Draw me from all around, to follow Thee!

From earthly scenes, and ties, however sweet,
From all that here would backward hold my
heart,

I would go forth, with footsteps firm and fleet,
To be with Thee, dear Lord! where'er Thou
art.

And as again I hear that wondrous "Come!"
The vague, dark tumult of life's inner sea—
The restless waves of thought which wildly run—
Grow calm; as, risen Lord! I walk with
Thee!

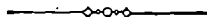
For since I've seen Thee seated up above,
At God's right hand, in yonder glorious
sphere,
The light, which led me to that place of love,
Revealed the wreck of everything down here.

And now, whilst gazing on Thine unveiled face,
My heart would find with Thee its quiet
home;

And o'er the waves, upheld by Thy free grace,
I'd walk with Thee, responsive to Thy
"Come!"

The long night-watch of life will soon be o'er:
'Tis sweet to pass it, blessed Lord, with Thee,
Our hands in Thine, until on yonder shore,
Fair Land of Peace! we rest eternally!

A. S. O.



THE NURSE'S CONVERSION.

(For the circumstances which led to the following narrative, the reader is referred to our previous Number, page 11: "The Young Doctor: or, Comfort my Mother."—Ed.)

I WAS asked to visit the nurse; and did so the Wednesday after his precious remains had been laid in their quiet resting-place.

I found the nurse in a little room in the hospital preparing to leave for another engagement, where her sphere of usefulness would be greatly extended, and for which the Lord was about to fit her in a remarkable way. The words of the dying young doctor had deeply impressed her, and when I named him the tears streamed over her cheeks. She could only speak of him in broken sentences. Then it was she told me the words of his dying appeal, and it gave me an opportunity to press upon her the danger of delay in the matter of her soul's salvation. I pled with her to yield her heart at once to Christ, and asked if she had entered the path of blessing the young doctor sought her for, but she said, "Oh no, madam, I can't say I am saved; I am still a poor unforgiven sinner."

"But," I inquired, "what was it Dr. M. asked you to do? Did he not say you must come to the Saviour of the lost, as he had done?"

"Yes," was her reply.

"Well, then," I said, "do you believe yourself to be lost? God is holy, and tell me, can He see anything good in you? Let us take our

Bibles and look into the sixth chapter of Isaiah, and learn what the Prophet said of himself when he saw the seraphims covering their faces with their wings, in the presence of the glory of God, and heard them crying one to another, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts:' he could only say, 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips.' Now, if the Prophet got such a sense of his vileness, will not God require that you and I should lie in the dust before Him, and own our utter worthlessness?"

"It's no trouble to me," she replied, "to own that. Many a day I have felt what a poor vile thing I am, but I never thought of having to meet God till that night when the dear young doctor, at such a cost to himself, pled with me. Ah, madam, it required all the strength he had to say what he did, and he seemed so afraid I should go to hell! Since that night I have felt I can't meet God, and that I *am* going to hell. *All* the unsaved will go there. I am unsaved, on the broad road, and worst of all, I can't get out of it. *I am lost!*"

"Yes, Nurse," I said, "the unsaved are on the broad road, and it does end in hell. They are far from God—'banished ones!' But you must not think you cannot get out of the path that ends in destruction, for Scripture says, 'Yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.' God and the Lord

Jesus Christ, in the counsels of eternity, planned the way by which man could be again in the presence of God, and happy there. God willed the blessing, and Jesus met the desire of His Father, and said, 'Lo, I come to do thy will.' The Son carried out the purpose of God. He, who ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father, came to earth in humiliation, was born of a woman, lived a lonely stranger on earth, revealed to man the heart of the God of Love, and at length died the cursed death of the Cross.

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

On the Cross of Calvary peace was made, and every sinner who now believes the value God sets on that blood-shedding of His Son, is saved and brought to God. He is 'made nigh by the blood of Christ : ' Eph. ii. 13.

"But, Nurse, how thankful Dr. M. would be if he could hear the last word you uttered, that word 'lost.' You *have* owned you are lost! It was when he took that place that Jesus met him and let him know he was saved. You *are* now on ground where God can cleanse and save you from every sin. Look with me for a little at Lev. xiii., where we get the priest dealing with the leper. In the Word of God leprosy is the type of sin. Let us read the 12th verse : 'If a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the

leprosy cover *all* the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh; then the priest shall consider: and behold, if the leprosy have covered *all* his flesh, he shall pronounce him *clean* that hath the plague.' Had the leper at that moment looked at his own body, he would have seen it was all diseased, and he must have raised the cry, 'Unclean, unclean,' and taken his place outside the camp,'—that spot figurative of the place of distance in which man is by nature from God; but then it was the priest pronounced him *clean*, and the leper had to believe *the word* of the priest, and not what he saw or felt himself to be.

"The priest also saw the leper was diseased from head to foot, just what God sees the unsaved soul to be, full of sin, and guilty before Him; but he can say to the one who agrees with Him as to his utter worthlessness, 'Clean every whit,' or 'Thy sins are forgiven,' because His eye rests on 'the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, which cleanseth us from all sin.' 'When I see the blood,' said Jehovah to Israel, 'I will pass over you.' God's declaration must be rested in, and fully accepted, though the soul may, and does, abhor itself in the sense of its own vileness. Man's nature does not improve, and all effort to improve it is vain. 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh,' but God gives the sinner who be-

believes His word a new nature. With this nature, led and strengthened by the Holy Ghost, the saint worships, serves, and enjoys God, and his every-day life yields the fruit of the Light. The old nature which he still has, must, with its desires, be denied, so that the deeds of the flesh may not appear. He is no longer a captive to sin; and, having become a servant to God, to do His will, the beauty of holiness should shine in all his ways, and the peace of God, which passeth understanding, will keep his heart and mind."

The attention of the nurse was rapt in what I said. I felt it a solemn thing to be in the presence of a soul passing from death to life. God evidently was working, for His Word was desired, but Satan was watching ready to catch away the seed, which was sown in her heart. I looked to the Lord to send the suited word, His own message, for that soul, for He knew as I could not, what her state was. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." He heard, and as she gave vent to her thoughts the word was supplied, which fully satisfied her. "Every spark of light the soul receives," as one has said, "is a ray direct from the glory of God." Let us think of this, and in labouring for souls, seek to hold ourselves, emptied of all thoughts of our own, sanctified vessels to do God's work, counting on

the promise, "It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall say."

At length the nurse remarked, "I know I am lost, and I believe that Jesus died for the lost."

Here, I interrupted her by saying, "Then you *are* saved, for it is written, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.' You *have* passed from death unto life!"

"Oh no," she burst forth, "I am not saved yet."

"But," I asked, "how can that be, for God says you are saved, and you believe His word, do you not?"

She thought a little, and then answered, "I will tell you why I do not believe I am forgiven. I love the memory of the dear young doctor far more than I love Christ; and how could God save me with a heart like that?"

"Then," I said, "if you had a heart full of love to Christ you would be sure you are saved, would you not?"

"Yes," she said, "I would have better reason then to say so."

"Well," I added, "you will never have the assurance *you* seek. I have been saved for some years, and the more I know of Christ the less I think of myself, or of any love in me to my blessed Lord; but supposing you could have the feelings you desire, then they would be your Saviour, and chapter xiii. of the Acts of the Apostles,

the 38th and 39th verses, cannot stand as the truth of God. Hear His word: 'Be it known unto you, that through *this man* is preached unto you forgiveness of sins, and by him' (not your love to Him) 'all that believe are justified from all things.' Ah, Nurse, you must let *Christ* be your Saviour, and not any measure of love in you to Him."

"I know very well," she rejoined, "it is only His work that can put away my sins, but I must love Him, surely?"

"Oh yes," I replied, "but God will beget the love in your heart, when you have taken your place as His child, and believe your sins *are* forgiven. Then the Holy Ghost will dwell in you, and it is the Spirit's constant work to take of Christ and show Him to the believer. It is occupation with Christ that begets love in the heart to Him; but that is God's work, not yours. We read (Phil. ii. 13): 'It is God which worketh in you.' What He now wants of you is to surrender yourself wholly to Him, and keep steadfastly looking on Christ. God will watch the springing up and growth of the seed He has sown in your heart, and desires you to run the race set before you, looking off unto Jesus."

Still I saw she was not satisfied. She was not fully committed to the *grace* of God. I repeated the Scripture, "Herein is love, *not* that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave

his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" and added: "God knows the heart, sees we have by nature no love to Him, but He loved us notwithstanding, and did all that was necessary for our salvation. You must accept *His* love, and continue to think of it. Own to God you have none! Jesus said to His disciples, 'Continue ye in my love (or, in thoughts of my love to you).'

No more was needed; that word of Scripture, "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us," had set her free. "I see it all," she said. "How simple, and how very wonderful! All grace! Then I cannot be too bad. God knows all about me, and yet He loves me, and *has* saved me."

"Yes," I replied, "and 'there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ,' or, as the hymn beautifully puts it—

"'No condemnation!' Oh, my soul,
'Tis God that speaks the word;
Perfect in comeliness art thou
Through Christ the risen Lord.

'No condemnation!' Precious word!
Consider it, my soul!
Thy sins were *all* on Jesus laid,
His stripes have made thee whole."

"God is now for you, and will ever be so. Who then can be against you? Keep trusting in Him moment by moment. 'As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him' (Col. ii.) It was simple trust in the Word

of God that delivered your soul, and gave you quiet joy before Him, and you must continue to trust God, else your soul will not keep full of joy. The Lord Jesus is to be the object of all your joy, and He never changes. 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever' (Heb. xiii. 8). Precious words! Whatever your path may be, He will prove all-sufficient for you. The Apostle Paul was filled with joy, though his circumstances were most dire. He was shut up in a prison, and its walls resounded with his praises at midnight. This shows us there is no place or time in which the believer may not be full of joy. In myself,

"I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

This is the secret of comfort for the soul."

We knelt together to praise the Lord for His gracious dealings: grace that had met and blessed the youth, now "safe in the arms of Jesus," and grace that had caused his dying appeal to awaken her, who now gave thanks to the God of her salvation—her Father.

Several of the Lord's people saw her before she left the city, and to all she made a good confession of Christ. She asked us to pray that she might be used in blessing to others. I have since heard of and seen her. She labours, in the hospital over which she is matron, to point the sick and

dying to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Young believer, is not your heart stirred to seek the salvation of the lost by the blessed results which flowed from "the dying appeal" of this babe in Christ? Well might he have pleaded the weakness of his frame as an excuse for silence, but his heart was filled with the sense of the blessing he had received, and in the quiet of his sick-chamber, on the very night after his conversion, he sought to unfold to a perishing soul the glad tidings of salvation. He abounded in the work of the Lord, and this narrative shows his labour was not in vain. He simply told what God had done for his soul; and he warned of coming judgment. This may be done by the youngest, the feeblest saint, and if the heart is full, words will not lack wherewith to make known the way of life. God owns the simple testimony that comes from the heart.

But before I close I would say a word to the unsaved. Heed the warnings God may send you. As a child of Adam you are under judgment. At any moment you may be beyond the sound of mercy. The Lord may come, or you may be cut off from the land of the living, the place of hope. Your soul will never die, and you must give an account for every deed done in the body. Can you face the judgment? Think of it before the door of mercy is closed for ever.

To-day Jesus says to you, a banished one, "I am the door; by me, if any-man enter in he shall be saved."

"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him!" To the unsaved how terrible will that sight be! To *you*, if you die as you are. In that day you will call on the mountains and rocks to fall on you and hide you from the wrath of the Lamb, but in vain. Then will you seek a shelter. No nook of safety will be found, no place on which to pillow your weary head; and weary you will be, for "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." *To-day* Jesus offers rest to the weary soul, and shelter to every banished, wandering one. Come unto *me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" these are His own words, and the sacred volume closes by telling of His coming again, and sends a last appeal to you, who cannot yet join with the redeemed in their cry, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

"Surely I come quickly," is His word of cheer to His waiting ones. "I am the bright and morning star." As such He will appear when the night of this world is gone, and the dawn of the day of glory come. Now "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

“Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
 The Father calls for thee ;
 No longer now an exile roam
 In guilt and misery.
 Return ! Return !

Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
 'Tis Jesus calls for thee ;
 The Spirit and the Bride say, Come --
 Oh then for refuge flee !
 Return ! Return !

Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
 'Tis madness to delay ;
 There are no pardons in the tomb,
 And brief is mercy's day.
 Return ! Return !”

R.

RESTING IN JESUS.

It is man's *need* that brings him to God, and Jesus is One given of God on purpose to meet the case of each needy heart;—on purpose to meet *your* case, if *you* are in need.

God wants the needy heart just to turn to Him, and get its need met; and not only does it get its *need* met, but the moment when the heart meets Jesus is the moment fraught with deepest, richest blessing to that heart for time and for eternity.

It is a real thing to meet Christ, to *know* Christ. Have you met Him, dear reader? Do you know Him? Can you say, “Oh yes, I have met Him; and there is no one I know, no one I trust like Him, no one I am on such intimate

terms with as Jesus?" Each heart that knows Him would say that. The heart that has not met Jesus has no rest. No doubt, you have tried to find rest—tried to find it in works, in pleasure, in many things. But it is all of no use; there is no rest for the human heart till it gets to Jesus, and His rest is perfect, and lasts for *ever*. When He takes up your case it is an *entire cure*. If He has picked me up and saved me, it is for time and for eternity. If He has pardoned me (and He has), it is once and for ever. His pardon can never be cancelled: "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

If the blood of Christ is on you, it will never be rolled off from you again. It remains the irrevocable pledge of God's faithfulness (to Christ), and of your eternal security. That blood speaks to the eye, the heart of God; it *even affects the memory of God*, for because of it He can say, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Does that blood rest on *you*? Have *you* trusted Jesus? If not, trust Him now, touch Him by faith now. He will not shake you off. He will know your touch, if it be ever so feeble. He reads the heart, He recognises the least touch of faith, and wherever there is *faith* there is *forgiveness*. The two things go together, and there is more still—there is eternal life imparted. The touch of faith links me with Jesus, and in Him

there is everything that God can give. There is everything precious in Jesus, and the heart that knows Him has an unfailing source of joy and peace. It goes on enjoying more and more what He is, and what He has done, and His are joys that never fade away, and never pall upon the taste.

“The draught that lulls our thirsting,
But wakes our thirst anew.”

The Lord give you to know the sweetness of resting in Jesus!

W. T. P. W.

A WORD FOR THE AGED.

ONE Lord's day afternoon, in the latter part of the summer of 1871, I was preaching by the roadside, in the small village of G——. Notwithstanding the intense heat, a large company had been drawn together by the opening hymn, and remained, as they had frequently done before, until the close of the address.

About half an hour had elapsed when my attention was drawn to a respectable-looking old man, neatly attired in a white smock frock, who appeared to have walked some distance, and was glad to avail himself of the rest offered by an upturned cart under the opposite hedge.

He seemed greatly interested, and I determined to have some conversation with him, but a crowd pressed round me for tracts directly the

preaching was over, and when I sought for the old man he was nowhere to be found. However, I commended him to Him whose eye of love rests on poor sinners, for I felt persuaded the word had entered.

The last week in October had arrived, when one evening a message reached me from a poor woman in the little town in which I then lived, begging that I would visit her aged father, who had expressed a wish to see me. The woman, who had kept a low public-house, was personally unknown to me, and on my calling at her cottage the next morning she explained that her father, who was nearly eighty years of age, while engaged in thatching a barn the day previously, had missed his footing and been precipitated on to a heap of stones, severely injuring his spine. He had been brought to her home to be nursed, and, it was feared, to die; and immediately on his arrival had asked if she knew the gentleman who during the summer months had preached at G———. Upon her suggesting that it was I, he begged that she would send for me.

On entering the sick man's room, I at once recognised the frank, open face; but it now wore an expression of unrest, which told of a heart to which the peace of God was unknown.

Seating myself beside his bed, I listened to his account of the impression the preaching had

made upon him, but was distressed also to hear a detailed defence of his fourscore years of sin and distance from God. He urged his morality, his love of truth and honesty, and the like, until I at length interrupted him by reading those solemn words in Rom. iii. 10—20.

He seemed hurt by my refusal to accept all he had urged on his own behalf, but I reminded him that it was not I, but God, who had made these strong statements as to man's condition by nature, and urged him to bow to the word of the living God, and own himself a lost, ruined sinner. My time was now expired, so after prayer I left him, promising to call the next day.

Though he was eagerly watching for me, I was disappointed, on seeing him again, to find he had completely forgotten the truth of the verses read to him; but feeling convinced the Lord had blessing in store for this poor sinner, I took courage, and sought His guidance.

As the poor man was unable to read, it occurred to me to teach him a single passage of Scripture daily; so, beginning with the following, "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," I made him repeat the words slowly after me several times, until he could say them without assistance; and again asking God to cause His own precious Word to enter and give light, I bade my old friend good-bye.

On my third visit he repeated the verses correctly; but the uppermost feeling in his mind seemed to be gratification at having so well remembered his lesson. This time I sought to impress him with the solemn reality of being a sinner before God, and to divest his mind of his fondly-cherished notion of measuring himself by his neighbours. As he appeared equal to the effort, I taught him the twenty-fourth, and part of the twenty-fifth verses: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare *his righteousness.*" At these words I stopped, and dwelt a few moments on the wondrous fact that the blessed, eternal God, who had created man for His own glory, and had seen him fall short of it, and who had testified to man's utter unrighteousness, now proved His own righteousness in freely forgiving the sins of every believer in Jesus, who bare them all in His own body on the tree, and who was made *sin* for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him.*

A ray of light seemed to break in that day, and I had the joy of seeing during the following week that the Divine work had indeed begun.

The injuries to the spine proved incurable, and paralysis quickly seized the aged sufferer. I was now anxious that he should give testimony

that he was firmly resting on Christ before the power of speech was taken from him, and the Lord graciously permitted this. For some time he had been thoroughly aroused, and his face wore an expression of deepest anxiety, occasionally relieved by a gleam of hope as the ground of peace was presented to him.

It was, I think, during my fifteenth visit that he learned to repeat those precious words in Titus iii., "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the *Holy Ghost*; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace we shall be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

The next morning when I called I saw at a glance that at last God's peace had chased all trouble away. His perfect love had cast out fear.

The old man's countenance was radiant with joy as he exclaimed, "According to His mercy He has saved ME," and together we poured out our hearts in grateful thanks to Him who had wrought so wondrously.

He now became rapidly worse, and when I saw him again he was unable to speak, but with his finger he pointed upwards, his face all the

while beaming with heavenly peace and joy, especially when I repeated slowly the verses which had been so blessed to him. This was the last time I was allowed to see my new-found brother in Christ, for during the following night the Lord called him up to the joys of His own presence.

No other case of conversion was known to follow that summer's campaign; but as I thought on the one hand of the long weary trudges in the intense heat, and preaching to people who returned to their homes apparently unimpressed, and on the other of the dear old man who listened to the Gospel for the first time in his life, and was now with the Lord, I could deeply sympathise with those sweet lines in Rutherford's last words:—

“Oh, if one soul from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My heaven will be two heavens,
In Immanuel's land.”

E. J.

WHOSOEVER.

A YOUNG man was greatly troubled about his soul. He knew that he was a sinner in God's sight; and so deeply did he feel this, that he was often ready to lie down in despair, saying, “Is it possible that God can save such a miserable sinner?” In the daytime he thought of

hell as his justly deserved punishment, and at night he would sometimes imagine himself shut up in the pit of outer darkness. He tried to reform, and live proudly on his good works; but, alas! he got nothing better, but rather grew worse. One evening, however, he was passing a large building, where a servant of the Lord was preaching. He went in. Soon after he entered he heard the preacher call attention to the words of our blessed Lord, "*Whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) "Mark," said he, "this word, **WHOSOEVER!**" For the first time this troubled hearer began to perceive the freeness of God's grace in the Gospel, and to think there was some hope, after all, even for such a sinner as he was; because "whosoever" included him, and everyone else who accepted Christ for his Saviour. I need not say, that by the power of the Spirit of God, his heart was thus led to look wholly to Jesus for salvation, and finding joy and peace in believing, he has delighted in the service of the Gospel for many years.

Dear reader, have you thus simply accepted Christ? Are you trusting in Him who died on the cross to save sinners? Is the precious blood of Christ the sole ground of your peace with God? With many others, this saved young man can say:—

Until I saw the blood, 'twas hell my soul was fearing ;
 And dark and dreary in my eyes the future was appearing ;
 While conscience told its tale of sin,
 And caused a weight of woe within.

But when I saw the blood, and looked at Him who shed it,
 My right to peace was seen at once, and I with transport read it ;
 I found myself to God brought nigh,
 And "Victory" became my cry.

But there is another "WHOSOEVER," equally general in its scope, and free in its application. Yet, oh, how wide the contrast! "*Whosoever* was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 15.) Mark, it is "whosoever;" for God is no respecter of persons. How solemn! If a man has not Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the Giver of everlasting life, for his Saviour, how can his name be written in the book of life? Dear reader, solemnly ponder these words, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire," and ask yourself the solemn question, "Shall I be there?"

H. H. S.

FOUR LOOKS, OR ONLY ONE.

"AND the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he *looketh* upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten

any man, when he *beheld* the serpent of brass, he lived." (Numbers xxi. 8, 9.) "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.)

In this beautiful figure of the Old Testament, and the divine application of it, in the New, by the blessed Lord Himself, we have unfolded to us the glorious result of a look of faith at the One who said, "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up;" a look which is recognised by God Himself, in the same way as He deigned to recognise the faith of His people of old—"He *beheld*"—"He lived." It is always thus; the God with whom we have to do is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and as He has honoured in the past, unquestioning faith in His word, so *now* He does the same for all who believe in Him. The result, then, of this *look* of faith at this lifted up Son of man on the Cross, is—God is believed—Christ is honoured—and the sinner saved!

But it is not only the one *look* that the believer has, precious as is the result of this; it is not that we have one bright glimpse of Christ, and then all dark again while down here; but what the apostle John saw with his actual eyes, is now the believer's privilege to see by faith: "I *beheld*, and, lo, in the midst of the

throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain." (Rev. v. 6.)

What assurance this *second look* gives! for the One spoken of there, "in the midst of the throne," is the very same who was lifted up on the Cross, the Lamb as it had been slain.

One *third look*, we may call the look beyond death; and we have an example of it in Acts vii. 55, 56, where Stephen's vision is thus recorded: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and said, *Behold*, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

In these two last looks we have brought before us, that which gives peace and assurance both in life and death, the presence in the glory of the Lord who died on the Cross.

We have now traced from God's word,—(1) the look of faith, at the very outset of the Christian's course; (2) the look which brings confidence and trust through our life down here; (3) the look which gives triumph in the hour of death: but precious though these three looks are, they all pale in the light of the wondrous glory of the *last look* of the believer, for they are only *looks of faith*: the first—saving faith; the second—confiding faith; and the third—triumphant faith: but the *last look* is the one when

“Faith and hope shall cease,
And love abide alone.”

For “we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall *see* him as he is.” (1 John iii. 2.)

And now, having traced the *four looks*, which the believer is privileged to enjoy (and the last one is eternal!),—*four looks* at the “Chiefest among ten thousand!”—*three*, here on earth, *one* throughout eternity in His own presence,—sad indeed is the contrast presented by the *one only look* the unsaved soul can ever have at the Prince of life.

For example, let us look at the terrible case of Balaam. He was no infidel, but one who had to acknowledge having heard God’s word, and having heard about Him; listen to his own words: “I shall *see* him, but not now; I shall *behold* him, but not nigh.” (Numb. xxiv. 16, 17.) A sad, sad *look*, from afar off, at the Light they have refused, and the Love they have slighted, and then!—“blackness and darkness for ever!” Oh, dear friend! if you cannot speak of the *four looks* being your happy portion, this last terrible *only look* is what must be yours, if you die unsaved, or if the Lord should come and you should be left behind. Can you bear the thought that, instead of three pleasant *looks of faith*, and one future *eternal look* of bright, unclouded joy in His blessed presence, your one *solitary look*

should be but for an instant, and afar off? This must be so unless you come to the One who now lovingly invites you, saying "*Look unto me and be ye saved.*" (Isaiah xlv. 22.)

But He is still lingering in grace, still beseeching sinners to take Him at His word and prove His truth by turning the looks of faith at Him who was "*lifted up.*" Oh, dear reader, do remember this—that those who will not look now *must* look by and by, for, whether they will or not, they shall *see* Him, *but not nigh*. But if you look *now*, with the eye of *faith*, at the "*lifted up*" Son of Man, you will have Him for your stay and guide in life or death, and, to crown it all, you will "*appear with Him in glory.*" (Col. iii. 4.)

Look then *now*—at *once*: *to-morrow* may never be. Do not turn a deaf ear to the gracious entreaty of a God of love, who gave His Son that you might never die, but turn *to-day* to the "*lifted up*" Son of man, and prove the truth of the text "*that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*"

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
I am this dark world's light ;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright.
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun ;
And in that light of life I'll walk,
Till travelling days are done."

J. K. B.

MY BLESSED HOME.

*(Lines written by a Young Believer shortly before
her Death.)*

AND can it be, that I, a sinner, vile, undone,
Am now made meet for Him, the Righteous One;
That cleans'd by blood, through His most wondrous
grace,

God's holy eye in me no stain of sin can trace!
"Clean every whit," is Jesu's faithful word;
Here I can rest, and worship Him, my Lord.

Now reconciled and cleans'd, my wondrous place,
My blessed home for evermore, through grace,
Is where He now is seated, there above,
Amid the cloudless sunshine of His Father's love:
That love which beams on Him, beams too on me,
For in that Son I'm brought as near as He.

While dwelling thus above, in glory bright,
I lodge beneath His shade, with great delight,
In the lone wilderness, where He has trod,
And left His footprints to mark out my road.
His pathway here was suffering and shame;
May I rejoice, that I am called to tread the same.

And as I pass in haste along the desert way,
Leaning on Him alone, my Guide, my Strength,
my Stay,
My soul looks onward to that morning bright,
That coming blissful moment of untold delight,

When at His welcome shout, that resurrection
word,

We rise at once to meet our long-expected Lord.

M. I. M.

"NOT OF WORKS."

"I do the best I can;" or, "I hope to do better," are expressions which we often hear when speaking to persons about their souls. It is the natural thought of a proud heart to *do* something for salvation. Many are so very ignorant, that they think that though some of their works are bad, yet that others are good, and that God will put the bad works into one scale and the good ones into the other, and that if the good works preponderate, they will be saved; but if the bad works preponderate, they will be lost. Of course, such always flatter themselves that their good works will outweigh the bad, and are thus deceived. Others compare themselves with their neighbours, and think that they stand as good a chance as most, and a better chance than some; therefore they find no cause for fear. Again, there are not a few to be found who have addicted themselves to religious exercises, so diligently attended to various forms, and so regularly observed certain ordinances, as to trust to their Christianity as being of sufficiently good

quality to ensure them heaven. But all such false refuges are levelled by one sentence of the Scriptures, that salvation is "not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 9.)

It is clear that if a person could be saved by his own doings, those who think that they have attained to the required amount might reasonably boast over those who have not. But the Apostle asks, "Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 27, 28.) It is a delusion, then, to trust to works of any kind for salvation, and, as we have seen, utterly condemned by the Word of God. Besides, it is clear, that if man could have done one thing that God could accept at his hands, he could do more, and Christ need not have come into the world to save. Therefore we find the Apostle saying, that "if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. ii. 21.)

Alas! what a fatal mistake some are making. How often we are met by those who appear to be living proudly on their works! It was well said by an old Christian, that "men's good works are only splendid sins." The fact is, that "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." A man must be born again before he can render to God acceptable service.

H. H. S.

THE FATAL CHOICE.

THE last rays of a summer's sun were lingering still over the busy town of —, when one, who knew the Lord in that place, received an urgent message to attend the bedside of a dying woman.

“She is dying, and afraid to die,” were words that admitted of no delay to any heart who knew the priceless value of one precious soul; who knew, too, that it possessed a secret which could change the fear of death into a song of triumph, even the knowledge of Jesus, who by His death and resurrection has robbed death of its sting, the grave of its victory, and made its dreary portals only the gateway into joy unspeakable for each soul who knows Him.

With a longing heart to speak of Jesus to a needy sinner, His servant's footsteps turned hastily, yet prayerfully, towards the part of the town indicated, taking the messenger, a young woman, as guide.

After winding through many a narrow street, the guide stopped before a dingy dwelling, one of a long row of similar-looking ones, and said: “You will find Mrs. — in the right hand room of the third story. You can knock, and go right in, for she will be expecting you.”

The house was one let out in single rooms, and crowded with inmates—a house where poverty, and wretchedness, and sin, and haggard forms, and faces with deep lines of care in them,

abounded—a house into which you longed to bring Christ for comfort now, as well as for eternal salvation. Your heart ached at the sights and sounds around you, as you murmured in His ear, “And for such, for such, Thou didst die.”

In the room pointed out—the right-hand room of the third story—a young woman was lying on a poor low bed, apparently dying, apparently also in great concern as to her soul, and as to the hereafter about which she had only very dim, misty ideas, to enter which seemed to her like “taking a leap in the dark,” and this leap she feared to take.

On entering the dying woman’s room, the deplorableness of it struck you. There were but few things in it, and these of the poorest description. Two little children were playing on the floor with the lid of an old box, and a tiny baby, a sickly, weakly-looking infant, was lying on the bed by the side of its mother, uttering those piteous wailing sounds that move the very heart of the listener, however hardened, when it seems as though the poor little suffering one had not health or strength enough even to cry, only power to suffer.

In the mother, however, even deeper interest was centred; for the message, though brief, had conveyed this clearly enough, that she was dying without Christ. Sitting by her bedside,

the visitor, whom she welcomed eagerly, read to her from God's own Word how Jesus came, and bled, and died, to save just such as she. She listened, she asked for prayer, and earnest prayer went up for her that she might learn to trust Jesus.

Jesus and His love, however, seemed to have no power over her heart. She was afraid to die, terribly afraid to die. She wanted to be assured she would not go to hell, that was all. About this she was anxious. One or two neighbours were in the room, her husband being away at his work, and these gathered round the bed to listen, as once more God's offer of salvation that moment, through Christ and His finished work, was presented to her. His willingness to save, His desire to have her, were pressed upon her. She was moved, almost she was persuaded.

Again she was besought not to put off accepting Jesus and His offered mercy, but to give Him the joy and herself the blessing of letting Him save her that night; but beyond the "almost persuaded" she did not get. She wept, she seemed in earnest, she did everything but accept Christ; and, promising to return the following morning, her friend at last left her, asking the Lord on the homeward way to show what it was that hindered that soul, apparently anxious, apparently so near eternity, from closing with the offer of the Saviour.

Again the next morning and the next evening was God's Word read to her, with the same results; almost persuaded, never quite decided. Jesus was a Saviour to her, but not her Saviour. Sometimes the deciding point came so near, there seemed but a hair's-breadth between her and eternal life. Still she lingered on the shores of death, and deep anxiety and sorrow filled the heart of the one visiting her, which sorrow was only to be deepened.

Days passed on, and she hovered between death and life, naturally and spiritually. Her interest in the Word of God, her desire for prayer, continued unabated, yet it seemed as though she would put off till the last moment her decision for Christ. Her anxiety for safety seemed great, and the City of Refuge was just before her; still she loitered on the road, within reach of safety, but not safe.

Presently there came a change. She rallied, as to her bodily health; and as her strength increased, her interest in the things of the Lord decreased.

A day or two more, and hopes were entertained of her recovery, and then the evening visits—once so eagerly looked for—were evidently no longer welcome; for she was up in the evening for a short time, and neighbours came in.

With the thought of a prolonged earthly life,

desire to possess eternal life seemed to disappear. It was only for death she wanted Christ. She was afraid to die without Him; but if she were to live, she would rather live without Him. She had only been half-persuaded to become a Christian.

Oh, how the devil laughs at "almost persuaded" souls! He likes to see them almost persuaded, it kills their consciences, they rest there so often, and never take the half-step farther, that lands them at the feet of Jesus. "Almost persuaded" suits his purposes exactly. They have not got Christ, and he does not care what else they get.

Satan knows well their folly, though they do not; for he has tasted heaven once himself—he knows its blessedness, its joys—he knows, too, what it is to lose it, to be an outcast from God, though he never knew our supreme joy, who believe, of being there, because Jesus Himself so loved us, that He died to have us by His side for ever.

About a fortnight after the first visit to Mrs. —, there seemed every prospect of her speedy recovery; and then, though grateful to the one who visited her for kindness shown to her, it was quite apparent there was no longer real concern about her soul. The subject once so welcomed by her was now almost irksome.

One bright summer's morning, unwilling to

give her up, longing with intense desire for her soul, and yet with a deep feeling of solemnity, her friend entered her room. She was up that morning, for the first time so early, and full of the joy of recovering health again, but with no note of praise to the Lord.

Several neighbours were in the room, young women like herself, and there was evidently some subject of great interest being discussed. It soon came out what the subject was. A fair was to be held, at a short distance, in a week's time, and Mrs. — was full of the thought of going, her friends persuading her she would be quite well enough by then.

Greatly distressed, her visitor listened, and then solemnly, earnestly put this question to her :

“ Would you give up Christ for a fair ? ”

“ But I am getting well now. I am not dying now,” she answered, “ and I do mean to be a Christian some day.”

It was the world had shut out Christ. You would not have thought her world was much, could you have seen that poor, dark room, those little half-clothed children, the poverty and wretchedness of everything. But it was a big enough world, even that, to close her heart against the Saviour, to shut Him out. And you, who wonder at her, weigh for one moment your world in the scales of eternity, and say, are you making a wiser choice ? Are you taking any-

thing, everything this world can give, instead of Jesus, and life eternal in Him? Then your choice is like hers—a fatal one.

She chose to give up Christ for “the fair next week,” and Satan cheated her even of the poor, paltry joy he promised her.

Solemnly, as though on the very verge of eternity, with this as her last opportunity, was she warned not to risk her eternal salvation for so poor a thing—for this had plainly been the whole reason of her indecision. She had hoped to get well, and go to the fair, and so she wanted to wait, and put off being a Christian.

It was no new wife of Satan’s; he has tried the same with thousands, saying, “Be a Christian, of course, some day, but not to-day—do this first.”

With a sad heart her friend was leaving, but turned back to leave these two Scriptures with her: “Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation,” and “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” For a moment once more she wavered; but a neighbour’s laugh prevailed. Her decision was fixed.

“I will think of these things another time, but not to-day.”

Turning to the women standing round, her friend said: “God grant you may never have to feel you helped a soul on to everlasting ruin!”

A laugh rang out as the door closed; it sounded like the mocking laugh of Satan.

It was about eleven in the morning when this visit was paid. Between three and four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day the visitor was returning home, still thinking of Mrs. —, feeling even no power to pray for her, and yet quite unable to think of almost anything else, when a voice said, suddenly, "Have you seen Mrs. — to-day?"

It was the doctor who had been attending her who spoke, and his manner was very grave.

"Yes, Doctor," was the answer. "I suppose she is getting quite well again now!"

"She is dying," was his reply.

"Dying! Oh, surely that is not possible, she seemed so well this morning."

The doctor was a man of few words. His only explanation was: "Inflammation, acute. She may not last an hour."

And he was hurrying on, but turned back to say: "Probably she will not be conscious; but if you can be of any good to her, you had better go at once."

It needed no second bidding. Hurriedly, tremblingly, that well-known door was reached, "the right-hand door of the third story." On entering, what a sight met the eye! Mrs. — was lying on the same bed on which she had so often listened to the Word of God, but how changed now! Her eyes looked painfully strained, her hands were tearing at her chest as

though she would tear something out; and the only words she uttered were: "On fire already. 'God is not mocked.' *Too late! too late!*"

It was an awful scene! The same young women who were there in the morning stood by now as though paralysed.

Her friend knelt to pray that even now, at the eleventh hour, she might look to Jesus, and be saved. The words of prayer were interrupted by a half-struggle, half-shriek, so unearthly as to be appalling. Her face was the picture of despair, and agony, and wild affright. And with the terrible words, "*Too late! too late!*" once more on her lips, and one last awful struggle, she passed away.

The silence of death fell on that little company. The women cowered together, awe-stricken and trembling, and for a time no one even went forward to close the eyes of the dead. That last "*Too late*" from those dying lips had seemed like a voice from another world.

Only a few short hours before, those lips, now cold and motionless on earth for ever, had said she "would think of these things *another* day, *not to-day*," and he, who "had the power of death, that is, the devil," had taken care that, for her, that other day should never come.

It was a moment of never-to-be-forgotten solemnity. For a time the silence was unbroken even by a movement; and then in the

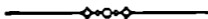
presence of the dead—terrible witness of the danger, the awful folly, of delay—once more Jesus and His *present* salvation were pressed on those who had witnessed that dying scene, and that *this* moment, this only, belonged to them.

She, like they, had intended to be a Christian *some* day, had never meant to *die* unsaved, only to live a little longer without Christ. She had even seemed to start on her road to Him.

The women were deeply impressed; and as once more words of prayer went up for them, deep sobs came from many. I believe that death-bed bore fruit of life, which the coming day will make manifest.

Dear reader, if you are unconverted still—that is, if you do not know what it is to belong to Jesus—may this sad story live in your memory as each sorrowful detail lives in mine, and give you no rest till your choice for eternity be made! And may that choice be like the choice of one of old, of whom the Lord could say, she “hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her!” For what was *that* choice? To be close to Jesus for time, listening to Him, worshipping Him, and by His side for all eternity.

L. M.



A LITTLE WORD FROM THEE.

O LORD, to Thee I often speak,
 Now speak in love to me,
 And let my heart rejoice to have
 A little word from Thee.

A word of comfort, word of cheer
 From care to set me free,
 Ah, yes! dear Lord, do speak a word,
 A little word to me.

For oft, when weary and depressed,
 Upon the bended knee,
 Thou hast removed all sorrow, by
 A little word from Thee.

Renew Thy favour, precious Lord,
 And gracious to me be;
 And now, in sweet communion, speak
 A little word to me.

Thy servants speak, their voice I love,
 But now I turn to Thee,
 And now, in secret, wait a word,—
 A little word, from Thee.

A. M.



A RENT VEIL, A RISEN SAVIOUR, A
REDEEMED SINNER.

(Matt. xxvii. 35-55 ; xxviii. 1-11.)

WHAT the Gospel does for a soul that receives it, is to bring it to God, not merely to bring a man to heaven when he dies, but to bring him to God *now*, to enjoy God now, before he gets to heaven. "Christ suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us *to God*." Now that is the very last place where you who are unconverted would like to be brought. You do not want to be brought to God, and I will tell you why; because you are *afraid* of God. The unconverted man is always afraid of God; he does not want to get into His presence; and why? Because he knows very well that there are some questions God will raise with him, and he is not prepared to answer them. God must raise the question of sin with every soul. It is a question that has to be answered between every soul and God, and the man that does not know Christ cannot happily answer it in God's presence.

Now, there are three things that mark Christianity—a *rent veil*, a *risen Saviour*, and a *redeemed sinner*. In Hebrews x. 19, 20, we read: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for

us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Here the Spirit of God gives us what the veil was a type of. If we turn to the Old Testament we shall get what this veil was, and what it was used for. It had a two-fold use, it shut *man out*, and it shut *God in*—man could not go in to God, and God could not come out to man.

If we look at the description of the tabernacle, we shall see it was an oblong tent divided into two parts, the holy place, and the most holy. The whole mass of the people might come no further than the brazen altar in the court of the tabernacle, on which the sacrifices were offered—type of the death of Christ in atonement for sin. Beyond this the people dared not go. The priests, the sons of Aaron, might go further, having first washed at the laver which stood betwixt the altar and the door of the tent. They went inside the first covering into the holy place, to perform the service of the tabernacle, but the veil shut them out from the most holy place. Within that veil they might never go; what was there, their eyes might never look upon.

Inside that veil was the ark of the covenant, containing the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; each cherubim looking *towards* the mercy-seat. But besides this, what else was there? The presence of

God! God dwelt there between the cherubims, and into that presence they could not go, and if He came out it could only be in judgment. Oh, the solitariness of those long years wherein God dwelt alone! One only day, once in a year, might man approach to God. Once in the year the high priest might go inside that veil, shrouded by the incense, and with the blood of atonement in his hand, and every other man was shut out.

“But,” you urge, “I thought you said the veil was the type of Christ.” So it is! And what shuts man out from God most entirely? Christ does! A living Christ; Christ in life bars the way between man and God, for He was what no other man ever has been, or ever could be—holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and therefore now God has made Him higher than the heavens.

He, as man, walked this wilderness path *without sin*, and that is what no other man ever did. In *life* then, the *life* of Christ, there is no approach of a sinner to God. By His death only can you approach God.

Let us look for a moment, at what that wondrous veil was made of. If you turn to Exodus xxvi. 31, you have it: “And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work; with cherubims shall it be made.”

Now what is the blue? The blue is the well-known symbol of what is *heavenly*. And was not Christ heavenly? Where did He come from? From heaven! He could say while walking this earth, "The Son of Man which is in heaven." He is "the second man, the Lord from heaven." He came from heaven, down to this earth, and everything about Him was heavenly. There you get the *blue*, the heavenly character of Christ, as the God-man, God manifest in the flesh.

What is the purple, then? Well, purple is the *imperial* colour, and what is He? King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He whose right it is to reign shall yet be displayed in this character to the whole universe of God. In bitter mockery they clothed Him in purple in the day of His shame and agony, but He *is* King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and the wide universe of God will yet own His sway. There never has been an earthly king or potentate whose kingdom has not been taken away from him; death has come in and robbed him of all his glory, but this king after a long and glorious reign over the wide earth during a thousand years, at the end of that thousand years *gives up* His kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all. Death comes and takes it from every other. This One goes through death first—wears no crown in life down here, but the crown of thorns they gave

Him in cruel mockery—rises up out of earth, and thereby acquires the right to be set as Son of Man, God's King, over all creation.

Then there comes the scarlet. "Oh," you say, "scarlet means suffering." Not always. Scarlet is the *Jewish royal* colour, for not only is He to be king over the whole earth, but in a very especial manner He is "king of the Jews," and as purple was the Gentile colour, so scarlet was the Jewish emblem of royalty. They put over His cross, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," and they wrote it in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, that all peoples and tongues might read the inscription. It really *did* describe who He was, and what their guilt was, for He was king of the Jews, and they had crucified, in scorn and hatred and unbelief, their king.

Next, you have the fine twined linen of cunning work, figurative, I believe, of His holy nature as man; that which all could see and recognise, and underneath the veiled Godhead. Perfectly righteous, perfectly holy, perfectly pure, as man, and with all the glory of the Godhead shining through. The cunning work is emblematic of the way God devised by which He was *legally* Joseph's son, and thus heir to the throne—the Jewish law esteeming Mary as Joseph's wife after espousal—*really* the son of Mary, as it is written, "a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son," while *actually*

as to His nature the Son of God,—yea God Himself became a man. Amazing mystery of divine wisdom and love!

“With cherubims shall it be made.” Cherubims symbolise the governmental dealings of God; and is not “the government upon His shoulder”? Has not God committed all judgment to Him?

We first read of the cherubims in Gen. iii. 24: “So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned *every way*, to keep the way of the tree of life.” Here, as *the executive of God in judgment*, they appear looking *outward* towards man in his sin. Secondly, in Exodus xxv. 18-20, we get: “And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat . . . of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims . . . and their faces shall look one to another; *towards* the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.”

Here, in type, they gaze *inward* on to the blood-stained mercy-seat, which we knew from Rom. iii. 25 means Christ—having finished a work which enables God righteously to save guilty man. Thirdly, we have seen them *in the veil*, *i.e.* connected with Christ personally. What does John v. 22 mean? “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

Again (v. 27), "And hath given him authority to *execute judgment* also, because he is the Son of man." And again, God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will *judge* the world in righteousness, *by that man* whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31). And, "who shall *judge* the quick (or living) and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom," but our Lord Jesus Christ? (2 Tim. iv. 1.)

It is then clear that Christ both judges and executes judgment on the ungodly. How then, sinner, can you escape it? The rent veil is the silent, the eloquent answer. He who is the Judge, after your sin, but before the day of His judgment thereof, steps in and Himself sustains the judgment that He may deliver you from it. What amazing love!

The veil was to be hung upon four pillars of shittim wood. "What is the shittim wood?" you say. Well, I believe the shittim wood speaks of His humanity, He took a human form that he might be able to die. But the shittim wood was overlaid with gold. Gold, in Scripture, represents divine righteousness. The hooks, likewise, were of *gold*, and the sockets were of *silver*. Now silver is typical of *redemption*. You will notice the sockets of the tabernacle were made of the half shekels of

silver that were paid by the people as redemption money. "Every man a ransom for his soul" (see Exod. xxx. 12 ; xxxviii. 25-28). Everything is based on redemption.

Since the fall man cannot meet God save on the ground of redemption. But how is this redemption accomplished? Jesus dies, and by His death opens the way of life for you, for me. Read carefully the tale the 27th of Matthew records. Look at it; look at the scorn, the enmity, the mockery, the hatred He passed through. "Oh," you say, "but did not God comfort Him in that terrible hour, did not God sustain His soul?" I believe from the third hour to the sixth hour, that is from nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified Him, until twelve o'clock, that God *did* stand by Him, *did* sustain His soul, *did* manifest to Him His perfect, infinite delight in Him. I believe that never was He so the delight of the Father's heart as in that hour, when scorned by the world, and forsaken by His own, He hung there between heaven and earth.

But see what happens! At the sixth hour—that is, twelve o'clock, noon—darkness, like a pall, falls over the whole land. What is it? What is this strange eclipse at noonday? Is it God in judgment coming forth to execute vengeance on men—on sinners for their treatment of this Holy One, His beloved Son? Is God about to pour forth His judgment on their guilty

heads? Well might they think so. No doubt they did. Well might they believe it was swift and just retribution coming for their murder of Him, of Whom even the thief dying by His side could say, "This man hath done nothing amiss;" Whom Pilate declared to be a "just person," in whom he could find no fault; Who even their own guilty hearts and consciences must have known was unworthy thus to die.

But was it God's judgment on a guilty world? No! It was something greater far, deeper far. It was not God dealing with sinful man, but God dealing with His own Son; God dealing with Christ, because of man's sin, that He had taken upon Him. In that terrible hour, when darkness veiled the land, there was another far greater eclipse, a perfect eclipse between God and that One who hung there, even His own beloved Son, bearing sin. God hid His face from Him then. When all had forsaken Him, as He says, "lover and friend hast thou put far from me," then, at that very time, God forsook Him too!

And those three hours of darkness, those three hours of total eclipse between God and the Son of His love, rolled on, and then at the ninth hour, three o'clock in the afternoon, comes that great, that terrible cry from Him, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Ah, He forsook Jesus in that hour that He might never

forsake you and me. There was *darkness* for Him that there might be only *light* for us. He bore the judgment that we might go free!

Once more, He cries with a loud voice, "It is finished," and gives up His spirit. "No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of *myself*."

And at that same moment God rends the veil, cherubims and all. He who should execute judgment on man, has in grace sustained and borne it for man; the price has been paid, redemption has been accomplished, and God is able now to come out in grace to man, in spite of his guilt, because of what Christ has done, and man may go in to God through a "new and living way." Beautiful word, a *living way*! I like that word! How a living way? Because it is not a dead Saviour that I am presenting to you now, but a risen, a living Saviour. He "ever *liveth* to make intercession for us." He has gone into the grave and come up out of it, having abolished death and destroyed him who had the power thereof. The third day the tomb was empty, the Saviour had risen. That open grave, that risen Saviour, are the proof that the sins for which He suffered are for ever gone.

And what about the redeemed sinner? Well, I need not say much about him—Christ has everything to do with his redemption, He has brought him *to God*, as I said at the beginning, and the sinner, or rather he is the *believer* now,

thus brought to God, has nothing to do but to "joy in God," and to wait quietly for the return of the Lord to take him to be with Himself, delighting in the meantime in every little bit of sweet service he can render Him while he stays here.

As a redeemed sinner I have nothing to do, but to rejoice in the One who has redeemed me. "But what about your sins?" you ask. Well, I will tell you: God has talked to *Christ* about *my sins*, that He might talk to me about Christ.

During those three hours of darkness God dealt with the Lord Jesus about my sins, that He might be able to speak to me only of Jesus.

"But what about the judgment-seat, are you not afraid of that?" No! If I were to stand there and heard every one of my sins brought up, I should only say, "*Lord, remember—Lord, remember.*" Remember what? "Not me, but Christ. Remember He died for me. I am unworthy, but *He died for me.* His blood was shed for me."

Have you ever noticed one thing lacking in the vessels of the tabernacle? There is no seat there found. And why, think you? I will tell you. Because the priest's work was *never done*. "Offering *oftentimes* the same sacrifices which can never take away sins, but this man after he had offered one sacrifice *for sins*, for ever *sat down* on the right hand of God." There is no repetition of His offering, there can be none.

Whatever your sins are, His offering, *once* offered, is a full discharge for all. "Offered one sacrifice for sins." For *whose* sins? For *sins*! But for *whose*? For *sins*. It does not say for *whose*, nor for *how many*, and if I had the whole of the sins of a nation on my shoulders this moment I should not care, with my eye on this word of the living God, for the next moment I might know that I am without a single one, free to go in boldly into God's presence because He died for *sins*, and therefore He died for *my* sins. That veil was rent; rent, too, from the top to the bottom. Why from the top to the bottom? Because man had no hand in it. If man had rent that veil, it would only have been to bring out swift destruction on himself. God Himself opened the way of access thus for the very vilest sinner into the holiest of all.

God will never enter into judgment with one who simply trusts in Christ. Those who believe on Him will be with Him, and like Him, before that judgment-seat is set. John v. 28 says: "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of *judgment*."

"And does not all that take place at once?" No; more than a thousand years roll between the first part of that verse and the second. The

Lord takes two days to empty the graves and to raise the dead. Could He not do it all at once? No; impossible! He comes first to fetch His own. He, Himself, descends into the air, and there is the sound of the trumpet and the voice of words, His own voice, and part of the graves are emptied, the tombs are opened, and their occupants come forth. Where do they go? They go up with their Lord, to be for ever in His own bright presence. "They that have done good unto the resurrection of *life*," that is, of that eternal life which they possessed, because He gave it to them when they were still down here. That light that He lit in their hearts never went out, that life He gave never was extinguished, for there is a second thing there was not among the vessels of the sanctuary, there was no extinguisher; snuffers there were, to keep the light bright, but no extinguisher, because, once lighted, God never intended that that light should go out. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

"They that have done good," then, *i.e.* all who have Christ, go up to be with Him, and the rest of the dead remain in their graves, and more than a thousand years roll by, and then there comes another opening of the graves, another resurrection of the dead, and they stand, small and great, before the great white throne, to

be judged out of those things written in the books, according to their works. "They that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment." They stand there clothed in their sins, to be judged! Which of these two resurrections are *you*, my friend, going to have part in? Are you going to stand before Him in your sins then, or do you know what it is now to have boldness to enter into the holiest, through that new and *living* way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh?

Do you know what it is to "draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith"? And let me tell you "full assurance of faith" does not mean a very great amount of faith, but that which simply clings to Christ, and trusts in His atoning blood as its only ground of access there to worship within the veil.

"Where do you worship?" one asked me, some weeks since. "Oh," I answered, "I am very High Church, I worship inside the veil, in the holiest, and that is in heaven itself. I know of nowhere else where I can worship. If I worship the Lord Jesus, I must worship Him where He is." If you look on to Heb. xiii. you will find something else combined with being "inside the veil," and that is "outside the camp." Now, people oftentimes do not like this, they do not like the reproach outside the camp; but depend upon it, the two go very much together, and if I am not

prepared for the reproach of being outside the camp with a rejected Christ, I shall not know much of the joy of being inside the veil. These two truths are like the two blades of a pair of scissors—one is very little use without the other—to have one blade alone is no good at all, but when you have both joined together, how good and how useful. There is nothing so cutting as these two blades together—“inside the veil” and “outside the camp.” People like to get inside the veil, but depend upon it, they do not remain there long unless they know something of what is to be outside the camp too. That is why one hears so often of loss of joy; loss of peace, too, oftentimes. People want to mix up being inside the veil with God, and being in the world too, and they cannot; they want one blade of the scissors without the other.

The Lord give us to hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering, provoking unto love and good works, that is, being so true to the Lord ourselves that we may be helpers of each other, till the day of His coming again.

“‘It is finished!’ ‘He is risen.’

Ye who these blest words receive,

Peace in Him is now your portion,

Peace eternal He will give,

‘Peace unto you!’

All who on His name believe.”

W. T. P. W.

FAITH'S CONFIDENCE.

We will never give thee up, O thou sadly erring one,
Though faster in the downward path thy wayward footsteps
 roam;

Though harder than an adamant thy steadfast brow be set
In proud rebellion 'gainst thy God, thou'lt come to Jesus yet!

We will never give thee up, though each passing day and
 hour

Find thee a still more willing slave to Satan's deadly power;
Though tighter, closer round thy life be thrown Sin's iron
 chain,

Though darker grow thy deeds and words, thee, lost one, will
 we gain.

We will never give thee up! Though thou hast no heart, nor
 eye,

Nor ear, but for the reckless mirth of godless revelry—
Though deeper in each vice thou plunge—though thine the
 scoffer's part,

The drunkard's, swearer's, profligate's—Christ yet shall have
 thine heart.

We will never give thee up! Though from thee thou shalt
 cast

All good—though nature's graces all from thy heart have
 passed—

Though men shall look with pitying scorn, shall tell us of
 despair,

Call thee a hopeless wreck—e'en then, for thee our God shall
 care.

We will never give thee up! Though the heavens above like
 brass

Seem stretched, we know that e'en through them our feeble
 prayer must pass—

Though earthborn clouds throng dark between, we know the
 Sun is there,
 That it will pierce through them anon: our God will answer
 prayer.

We will never give thee up! Though our eyes grow dim with
 tears,
 And our hearts are sick with hope deferred in a waste of weary
 years,
 Each ending darker than the last, we will not look at thee,
 But whisper still unto our God, Our eyes are unto Thee.

We will never give thee up! Though we faint and weary be,
 With throbbing hearts we'll ask our God in confidence for thee;
 Yet we know no prayers of ours could stand the blaze of God's
 white throne,
 But Jesus loves to intercede, He'll claim thee as His own.

We will never give thee up! We know the day must come
 When thou, a lonely prodigal, shalt seek thy Father's home.
 We know not when that day shall be; but as our God is true,
 Whate'er we ask, in Jesu's name, that will our Father do.

We will never give thee up! God's sure word is our stay;
 Though heaven and earth shall be removed, it cannot pass
 away.
 Hath He not said, "Ask what thou wilt, the answer will I
 give,"
 And think'st thou that He bids us ask, and will not let thee
 live?

We will never give thee up, O thou sadly erring one!
 Morn, noon, and night will intercede, until the prize be won.
 Dear wanderer! sadly yearn our hearts; but there's a Heart
 above
 That yearns with deeper tenderness: thou' yet shalt know its
 love

'A DEBTOR TO CHRIST.'

ON a bright, sweet day in June, when the air was sparkling with sunshine, and the odour of the first summer roses was wafted by the cool breeze in at the casement, which stood open, giving a fair view of sea-coast and ocean—just such a lovely time and scene as was calculated to soften the feelings, and bring the heart into obedience to its influences—I remember (for it is now some years past) a circumstance occurred, which though it produced a train of serious thoughts at the time, I could not then have imagined to have been a prophetic voice (as it was) of the wondrous mercy and love a gracious God was about to manifest towards me, a careless, unregenerate being, whose whole life and thoughts were at enmity against Him.

I was like very many other young people, fond of those worldly amusements which are regarded by many older persons, and even religious professors, as innocent and harmless, viz. dances, operas, public shows, &c.; and it was of these pastimes I was then thinking, and longing to become a participator in. The Prince of Wales was paying a visit to our metropolis, and a large public ball was to be given in honour of the event, at which he and some other royal personages were to be present.

Gay friends had asked me if I were going, and represented to me what a loss I should have, if

not there. Though much against the wishes of my nearest friends and advisers, who reasoned with me that such public scenes were of no advantage to young persons, I was determined to go to this ball.

A lady of fashion had promised to allow me to accompany her; and nothing now remained but to procure a card for the entertainment.

I opened my writing-book, and sat down to beg of a friend to procure me one. It was Sunday afternoon; for so anxious was I for this gratification, that to wait until Monday to write seemed waste of a day, and I feared the tickets might be all disposed of. I had attended church that morning, and was nominally a Christian, though certainly not a religious professor. If anyone had spoken to me of acquaintance with the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour, or pressed on me that "now was the day of salvation," it would have been to me an unwelcome theme, apparently too visionary for *me* to grasp, suited to preachers, Sunday-school teachers, or saints of by-past days.

I turned over the blotting-leaves to find some note-paper, and as I did so, something fluttered from the sheets, and fell into my lap. I took it up: it was a leaflet, which had been sent to me in a letter, doubtless months, or perhaps even a year, before; for I never could recollect how it came into my book. The heading caught my eye—"A Debtor to Christ." I read the verses all

through, and as I did so, a feeling of awe, mingled with bitterness, arose in my heart. Those lines of Robert M'Cheyne's—

“When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glorious sun,
When I stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story—
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.

When I hear the wicked call
On the rocks and hills to fall ;
When I see them start and shrink,
On the fiery deluge brink—
Then, Lord ! shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe”—

wrung from me the mournful feeling, *In that hour, I shall owe nothing*; there will be for me but a fearful looking for of judgment. I paused, and a wail seemed to rise in my heart, Oh ! why cannot I be “A DEBTOR TO CHRIST,” as well as others ? why not have the sweet assurance—amidst this world's uncertain and often, as I had even then found them, unsatisfying pleasures—that when all will be over, and one's senses hushed to its enticements for ever,

“Then, Lord ! shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe” ?

I sat for some time irresolute, dissatisfied with myself and my thoughts, and finally closed my writing-book. I will not at least add to my other sins, I thought, by writing this worldly

letter on Sunday ; for in spite of my carelessness I always knew and felt the hours of that day ought to be regarded as sacred ; I then believed it to be *the Sabbath*, I had yet to learn that it is, in a higher and holier sense, the *Lord's-day*. So I put off my letter-writing, and wandered out into the garden, to soothe my ruffled mind and still the voice of conscience.

Well, dear reader, in spite of this message from God to my soul, I went to that ball ; and what a scene of unsatisfying pageantry it was : brilliantly illuminated and decorated, and graced with the presence of royalty and rank ; yet so overcrowded and overheated, that dancing or pleasant conversation was almost out of the question ; and when the hour came to return home, it was with soiled and torn dresses and wearied limbs that the poor guests departed.

I did not recover the over-fatigue of that night for some time, besides catching cold while passing through the draughty passages from its gas-heated saloons. So much for the world and its joys !

One night, a short time after, I had the following strange dream :—

I was again decked in the dress and rose-wreath I had worn on that evening, again I mixed in the mazes and heard the music of the dance : a friend, full of gay life, advanced and solicited me to join with him in a waltz. He offered

his hand to lead me on, and I gave mine, willing to participate, when suddenly my lively friend became metamorphosed into a Black Spectral Shadow! The hand so full of eager, buoyant life which had met mine, became a cold skeleton, and tightened with a frightful and iron clasp round mine. Every thing faded round me, and I felt myself drawn irresistibly from the scene by this awful figure, while my very being seemed frozen with terror and despair at finding myself in what appeared to me the grasp of the Spectre of Death. In vain I endeavoured to break from its hold, and cried aloud for aid; it drew me on, until, in an outer passage of one of the halls of the palace, it pointed to a deep, dark staircase, which it told me I must descend. I gazed down its perpendicular descent, and saw the steps apparently unending, while a fearful black chasm lay beneath. Terror gave me new strength, and again I struggled to free myself. Just as the phantom drew me on to the first step of the descent, I succeeded in breaking from its power, but, in so doing, fell with frightful noise and rapidity down the staircase, dashing against every step as I fell until I reached the blackness below. With the fear and shock of this dream I awoke. It filled me with superstitious dread and awe at the time, and I believed it to be a presage of death or some great calamity.

I have never been at a large public ball since.

Two months after a severe illness laid me on a sick couch, which might have seen the fulfilment of that dream, and proved a bed of death to me, but from which I was raised up by the One who had loved me with an everlasting love, and Who, through a course of after discipline, bearing on the gracious work of awakening commenced during that illness, was teaching me the meaning of those lines—

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

When I look back on that period of my life, my love of the world, and my utter distance from and rebellion against a tender Saviour God, I am filled with wonder and gratitude at the way in which He led me into His fold, and taught my cold heart to bow in adoring homage, and utter the joyful acknowledgment, "HOW MUCH I OWE!" He has indeed shown me, ere too late, that this world's pleasure is, at best, a deluding phantom, leading its votaries with remorseless and skeleton grasp down a rapid declivity, into an abyss of darkness and destruction! How many loving messages are slighted, and solemn warnings put aside or misinterpreted, and the poor soul goes on, its outer form decked with the rose-wreaths and

flimsy trappings of a hollow mirth, playing its short part in the exciting drama, until suddenly, and amidst circumstances the least expected, the dark shadow of death enters and snatches its victim from health, friends, and pleasures, casting it into *outer darkness*, an exile for ever from the presence of the Prince of Peace.

Dear thoughtless one! do not think I am writing romance: it is *strict truth*. When I read in God's Word of "the worm that dieth not," and "the fire that never shall be quenched" (Mark ix. 49), I long to be the means of bringing some troubled, or perhaps even careless soul, to know the blessed *privilege* and *liberty* (if I may use a paradox) of being "a debtor to Christ."

Is your heart cold and careless? So was the Samaritan's at the well of Sychar; and yet He taught her what it was to be a *debtor* for the living water, and all unsolicited too, for we do not even hear that she brought repentance before that gift; of course it followed.

Is your heart bowed with sorrow and shame for sin, open or hidden? Take the case of the sinner of the city, and our Redeemer's beautiful parable, called forth on her behalf: "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had *nothing to pay*, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore,

which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he *forgave most*. And HE said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." And then its comforting, heart-assuring application: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; for to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (Luke vii. 47).

But perhaps your heart may suggest the thought, "She loved much, and I feel hard and unsoftened, no melting or tenderness towards this pardoning God." Hear the gracious words of God the Holy Spirit, speaking through the beloved disciple: "Herein is love, *not that we loved God, BUT THAT HE LOVED US, and sent HIS SON to be the PROPITIATION for our SINS. . . . We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. GOD IS LOVE*" (1 John iv. 10, 16). And again by His servant Paul it is written, "God commendeth HIS LOVE TOWARDS US, in that while wē were YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US" (Romans v. 8).

Unsaved one! nothing will soften the hard heart so much as to realise that we can positively bring no good thing out of ourselves. We must take the place of debtors to Christ, and accept all as a free unmerited gift. Well has it been said, "True repentance is a penitence of love," not of fear or duty or self-merit; nor, as many poor souls seem to think, a pre-payment by instal-

ments of human feelings and tears, to be rendered during our sojourn on earth as an anticipated meritorious return for His final acceptance.

Have you never yet realised what it is to be a debtor to Christ? Oh, come without delay! He is now seeking you as the shepherd did the lost sheep on the mountains; ninety-and-nine faithful ones are at home in the fold, but He must have the feeble wanderer.

The aggregate number cannot satisfy His tender heart if even one weakly one be outside. The pierced feet go out to seek it, the pierced hand is stretched out to lay it on His shoulders rejoicing. *That heart*, which even now—oh mystery of love!—beats beneath His pierced side, glows with divine joy at the first feeble prayer which tells him, like the faint bleating of the stray lamb, that His sheep, long sought, at last recognises His voice. Dear reader, if still outside the fold, hear His own words: "I AM THE DOOR: by me, if any man enter in, HE SHALL BE SAVED, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Again, a debtor: BE SAVED, *find pasture!* Blessed liberty, yet true security, and full promise of food for all spiritual need. Poor soul! not until you have had your sins washed away in the precious blood of the Lamb of God and entered in by THE DOOR into the Father's house, will you know what it is to have sure peace and happiness amidst the unsatisfying and death-shadowed

vanities of this earthly scene of change and transition. Then will you with heart-flowing gratitude be able to take up the joyful strain of *the ransomed debtor*—

“When the praise of Heaven I hear,
Loud as thunders to the ear,
Loud as many waters’ noise,
Sweet as harp’s melodious voice—
Then, Lord! shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.”

K. K.

BARABBAS OR JESUS?

Luke xxiii.

THE Spirit of God has said elsewhere that “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. i. 18). “But,” you ask, “how am I to be saved?” By believing on the Son of God. Salvation is yours through what He has done; through nothing that you could ever do. What could man do? What did man do? Listen to God’s tale of what he did. Scripture faithfully tells what man is—man’s state—what man had become when he can treat the Son of God thus:

“The whole multitude of them arose, and led him (Jesus) to Pilate.” They accuse Him, they set Him at nought, they mock Him, they array Him in a gorgeous robe, they rail on Him, they

crucify Him. Pilate could find no fault in Jesus, but they cry "Crucify him! crucify him!" and they take Him to Calvary, the place of a skull, and Scripture says, "There they crucified him." Whom? Him, the Son of God. The world thought the only treatment Jesus was worthy of was to be crucified in a grave-yard between two malefactors! That tells what man is; and it tells what God is also. Could He have delivered Himself? Certainly. Would He deliver Himself? No. What did He do? Did He accuse them? No; no upbraiding, no accusing word is heard. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

That cross which tells the bitter hatred and enmity of man to God, is the only means whereby God can save man. Yes, it needed that slain Lamb, it needed that spotless Victim on the cross, ere God in righteousness could save man.

But let us turn to Scripture, and see there what man did to the One who had "done nothing amiss." I say it solemnly, the world lies before God this day charged with the murder, the cruel murder, of His Son. I grant there was love in His heart, but that does not excuse man. Scripture brings out plainly what man does, what man is. His thoughts and his treatment

of the blessed Son of God show what he is. You cannot deny it, you cannot get out of it, you cannot escape it; man would burn the Bible if he could, because it is the record of what he has done. You say, "Oh! that is not us, we did not live in those days, we did not cry, 'Crucify him.'" You blush for your forefathers? Nay, rather blush for yourselves, ye who are not Christ's; for they who are not for Him are against Him. If you are not Christ's, you side with those who cried, "Crucify him!" Oh! what a blot on the world's history!—they slew the Son of God.

What think you is the moral and spiritual state of that world which can refuse the three-fold testimony then given to Jesus, the Man of Sorrows? Pilate says, "I find no fault in him;" the thief says, "This man has done nothing amiss;" the centurion says, "Certainly this was a righteous man." But He is crucified!!

What is the effect of reading this? Is it not thoroughly to persuade you that the world treated Christ shamefully? But I ask you the question, Have you sided with the world or not? Are you still in the world and of it? or are you among those who are His? There are only the two classes—those who have fled to Jesus, and those who have not. Are you for Him or against Him? Do you side with Him, or are you of those who cry "Crucify him!" I ask

you again, are you His? Does the world take cognizance of you that you are a Christian? Have you confessed Christ? Does your class-mate or your fellow-worker know you are Christ's?

"But," you ask, "what is it to be a Christian?" A Christian is one who knows and loves Christ; who follows Him and owns Him as Lord. You say, "I profess to be a Christian." Ah! that won't do, there is nothing so despicable as mere profession. Beloved reader! eternity will bring everything into full light, and if there is a thing that will ensure eternal damnation, it is the empty lip profession without the possession of Christ now.

I appeal to you—Have you been converted? By conversion I mean converted to something and from something: converted to Christ and from the world. He who is converted changes ground, changes states; he is off the ground and state of condemnation. Are you a Christian? The day of the Lord will bring out who are on the Lord's side and who are not; the veil will be drawn down, and you will be discovered, you who are mere empty professors. I beseech of you shun unreality; let there be real, genuine work; go down before God and own your sin, your unworthiness, your weakness, and He will save you—save you this very moment.

You are either for or against Christ. Are you

for Him? One thing is certain, if you are for Him, you must take your stand for the despised, the rejected, the world-hated, the thong-bound Saviour. Are you for Him? or do you side with the world? Where are *you*? Can you say, Christ for *me*. Thank God I can say it, Christ for me. Can you say, I have seen Him in all His beauty, His perfection, His lowly grace, His gentleness and love? Can you say that to you Bethlehem, Calvary, and Bethany are sacred spots? Bethlehem, where He was born; Calvary, where He suffered for me and in my stead; and Bethany, whence He ascended, are dear, but dearer far than they is Christ Himself. What think you of Christ? Do you love Him? Is He your Saviour? Is He the object of your heart's desire and love?

They crucified Him! You weep as you hear of His sufferings and His sorrow; but I would have you rather weep for the sins that caused His suffering; I like when the ploughshare of conviction goes deep down in a soul, and when it gets broken down and is in tears for its sin. Whitfield used to put this question to awakened souls, "If God cast you into hell for ever, would He be right in so doing?" If they answered *Yes*, he was satisfied they had a right sense of sin, and God's judgment thereof.

The perfection of Christ is brought out in His sufferings; as the sugar-cane has to be bruised

before we can have its sweetness, and the fragrant plant rudely shaken ere it yields its perfume, so the more we see Christ subjected to, all the more strongly His perfection is manifest; the more He passes through, the more is His intrinsic worth fully known. He was bound, blindfolded, set at nought, and mocked. He is asked, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" He answers, "Thou sayest it." Pilate finds no fault in Him, but "they were the more fierce." Pilate wishes to be quit of Him, he has heard of all He has done, how He had healed the sick, raised the dead, made the blind to see, the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and he does not wish to be responsible for this man's death, so he sends Him to Herod.

This strange person is brought to Herod, and the cry is, "He is a King." Herod was glad to see Jesus: "He was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him." He wished to see the One who could raise the dead, cleanse the leper, and give sight to the blind; but there was no sense of need in Herod's soul, he knew not that it was better far to see the Saviour Himself, than to see any miracle performed by Him. He sees Jesus, he questions Him, but mark the dignity of the Lord: He answers the usurper nothing. Jesus answered Pilate because in him He recognised the deputed

power of God, even though that power was misused.

And now mark what follows: "Herod, with his men of war, set him at nought." Have you? Tell me, have you not? Herod made light of Christ, and, dear soul, have you not made light of Him, too? If you have never come to Him and believed in Him, you and Herod are the same, you have both equally "set him at nought." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Did Herod believe on the Son of God? No. Do you? If you do not, you are on the same ground as Herod.

In verse 12 we read: "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together." That day they were made friends over the determined slaughter of the Son of God! Dreadful thought! Pilate is glad to make friends with the King; but, oh! what an unholy compact. Those two newly-made friends will find themselves side by side through a long, endless eternity. And where? Oh, soul! spend not your eternity with those who murdered the Son of God. You will if you do not believe on Him: if you are not brought to Him you will surely spend your eternity with His foes. A long, dark eternity without the Lord!—is that your choice?

"I find no fault in him." Oh, why did Pilate

not act on this ? We are told he tries to release Him, but the cry of the multitude is *No!* Pilate wishes to set Him free, but he does not wish to lose the world's favour. And you, are you not afraid of this, too ? Afraid of losing the world's favour ! Beware, rather, that you lose not your own soul. Pilate, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them, but they cried, "Crucify him ! crucify him !"

Barabbas or Jesus ? becomes now the question. They cried out all at once, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas !" Pilate is defeated ; they choose Barabbas. In a moment "they were instant with loud voices requiring He might be crucified." And mark what follows : "And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed."

Jesus or Barabbas ? This was the question which divided them. Surely, some will be found for Jesus. *Not one!* I fancy I hear you say, "I would, had I been there." Well, show yourself on His side now. Side with Jesus, and let the world know, too, that you have done so.

The cross that should have been for Barabbas was used for Jesus ! There was plenty of wood to have made Jesus a cross, but He who had done nothing amiss was crucified on that cross which should have been for Barabbas, the murderer ! Plenty of wood to make a cross ! Ah, yes ; the fear of that made poor Peter deny his Lord. And does not the fear of the cross, the

ridicule, and the taunt of the world make you deny Jesus too ?

Barabbas' friends must side with him, and Jesus' friends must side with Jesus ; but there was *not one* for Jesus. Yes, it was really so ; not one for Jesus, the Son of God. In a moment they cry, "Crucify him ! Release Barabbas !" They have indeed divided—divided to a man, and all, all are for Barabbas, the murderer, and not one for the Man in whom they could find no fault. Do you assent to this ? No ! Then let there be this day from you the confession that you are Christ's, that you are on the Lord's side.

The world may do what it likes with Jesus, He is "delivered to their will;" man does what he will with the Son of God ; Christ allows man to do his worst to Him : they scourge Him and crown Him with thorns. He says, "Do your utmost, do your worst, I shall not complain ; and when you have done your worst to me, *then* I shall do my best for you." When they had nailed Him to the cross, He dies for them. He died in their stead, He dies as a victim to meet the claims of a righteous God. He bears the judgment that ought to have been theirs, He drinks the bitter cup of wrath, that they might not have to drink it. He says, "Father, forgive them." Oh, what love ! No love like His. I would that you knew Jesus, my Jesus. Oh ! confide in Him, trust Him, love Him.

“Unmoved by Satan’s subtle wiles,
Or suffering shame and loss,
His path, uncheer’d by earthly smiles,
Led only to the cross.”

In verses 27 to 31 we are told that “there followed him a great company of people, and of women which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children ; for, behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us ; and to the hills, Cover us ; for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ”

Do tears fall from your eyes for Him ? Weep for yourselves. What does He mean ? He means there will come a day when there will be *the world’s prayer-meeting* ! “Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us !” They are in sore need, but what is it they want ? It is a place of refuge, of security, a shelter. “The great day of His wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?” (Rev. vi. 15-17.) The world is frightened, and betakes itself to prayer, but it is too late. Oh, beloved one, you can find a shelter from that wrath now in the bosom of Jesus ; not in the mountains and

the hills, but in Jesus—Jesus who died on Calvary.

The last the world saw of Jesus was with a crown of thorns upon His head ; the next it shall see of Him will be when He is crowned in glory with many crowns.

But, “ if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ” Christ was the green tree ; the unsaved soul is the lifeless, leafless, fruitless, dry tree. I saw a man the other day with an axe in his hand laid at the root of a tree. It was winter-time, and the tree looked much like the others around : they were all leafless, and there was nothing outwardly to denote any difference, nor to make the passer-by doubt that when spring time came it would, like the others, burst forth into leaf ; but it had been tapped, and found hollow ; a cumberer of the ground it was *cut down* ready for the burning ! Are you this tree ?

Christ was the green tree in all His dependence on God, in all His beauty and perfection. He was a green tree going to judgment, going to be cut down in the midst of beauty and verdure. What, then, will overtake you, you unsaved soul, you who are a dry tree ? “ If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? ” Cannot you see your own case ? You have not forgiveness, you have not pardon. Oh, what shall be done in the dry ? See it cast into the fire. Look at the rich man of whom we

read in Luke xvi. In a moment cut down, and being in a torment, he lifts up his eyes and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and He cries, "Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." A dry tree ready for the burning! But, thanks be to God, because the green tree suffered, many a dry one will escape.

If man has done these things to the Son of God, if He gets this treatment from man's hand, what, think you, will the treatment be that man will receive from God's hand in a day of righteous retribution? If you are among the doomed, you will remember that you once heard of a way of escape, but you would not receive it. Oh, unsaved soul, come to Jesus, come *now*.

We go to the cross, and see Jesus forsaken and in darkness, but the darkness is only from the sixth hour to the ninth; it passes away from Him; but, oh, unsaved, lost soul, there will be no ninth hour for you; no passing away of the darkness for you, it will be for ever.

"Away with him!" was the world's prayer—His was, "Father, forgive them." They revile Him and say, "Come down from the cross; if thou be King of the Jews, save thyself." He says, *No*; I will not come down, I will not save Myself, I will die for you. Oh, what love! Is not this love indeed? He dies, but He does

more than that : when He is risen He tells His disciples to begin at Jerusalem, the place where He had been put to death, and to the very people who had cried, "Crucify him! crucify him!" He bids them preach the forgiveness of sins through Him—Jesus. And now I write as an ambassador from Him to proclaim to you the forgiveness of your sins, and salvation through the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Will you believe in Him? Will you accept salvation?

As you drop this paper, are you on the world's side or Christ's? Barabbas or Jesus?

W. T. P. W.

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

"I do earnestly remember him still."—JER. xxxi. 20.

"When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."
—LUKE xv. 20.

WANDERING far in sin's dark country,
Hurrying onward to the grave;
Jesus saw thee, and from glory
Came to seek, and died to save!

He has seen, and He has followed,
All the paths of sin thou'st trod;
But He's waiting *now* to save thee,
And to bring thee *home to God!*

He would have thee know the brightness
Of the Father's house on high;
In that inner circle dwelling
As a son, for ever nigh.

This the end for which He suffered,
 This the end for which He died ;
 Far above to have thee with Him
 In His glory, glorified !

This what brought Him down from heaven,
 Down in love the lost to save ;
 But the world—it scorned and slew Him—
 Meted Him a cross and grave !

But God raised to His bright glory
 (When Redemption's work was done),
 Earth's rejected "Man of Sorrows,"
 Heaven's Beloved and Peerless One !

And in that unclouded radiance,
 Now by angel hosts adored ;
 In the heighest heights of glory
 See Him seated—Christ the Lord !

Still His heart with yearning pity
 Follows where thy footsteps roam ;
 Oh ! that from sin's distant country
Now thy steps would turn towards home !

What a wondrous shout of gladness
 Would ascend the realms of bliss !
 What a deep—a speechless—"Welcome"
 Would be in the Father's kiss !

Ah ! that Father's heart is yearning,
 Fain would tell thee out its love ;
 Longs to see thee home returning,
 Waits to welcome thee above !

Wretched, ruined, hopeless, dying,
 Come to God, and Heaven, and Home !
 JESUS waits to save and bless thee,
 From the Glory bids thee—"COME !"

GOOD NEWS IN A FAR COUNTRY.

At the ends of the earth, I chanced upon a spectacle of misery. Crime and want and disease, like so many vultures of evil, had seized upon him as their prey. Haunted by an evil conscience, and a memory cruel as death, he had come there to die.

I happened to know him; also his father and his home, and his history, at first promising, afterward so miserable. I felt I could deal with him respecting his condition, touching here and there springs of memory and feeling known to no one, as he imagined, but to himself. What I wanted in touching those springs, was to bring him to some sense of himself and of his father, and of that distant home, which, I knew, would be happier and brighter than ever if he, poor prodigal, were there.

I said to him, "How long have you been here?" "A long time."

"Do you know the place?" "Yes."

"Have you any friends here?"

"No; none."

"Not a happy position."

"No; a miserable one."

"You seem in want?" "In great want."

"But you had means?" "I had, but I——"

"But what?" "I wasted them."

"How did you waste them?"

“ Evil habits, bad companions.”

“ They robbed you ? ”

“ Yes ; as long as they could.”

“ And then left you ? ” “ Yes.”

“ The old truth, is it not ?—that where the carcass is, there are the vultures ; but, if no carcass, no vultures. When they could get nothing more, they left you ? ”

“ And hated me.”

“ Poor wages ! reminding of another old truth, ‘ The wages of sin is death.’ ”

“ I often heard it.”

“ But did not mind it ? ” “ No.”

“ And how do you now live ? ”

“ Live ! the damps of death are on me ; no home, no food, no friends, I am ready to *die*.”

“ Miserable end ! ”

“ Yes ; but death would be welcome.”

“ Do you ever think of home ? ”

“ *Home* ! Not often—not——”

“ Not what ? ” “ Not if I can help it.”

“ And why ? ” “ I would rather not *think*.”

“ But they think of you.”

“ *Who* thinks of me ? ”

“ Your father thinks of you.”

“ My father thinks of me ? Do *you* know my father ? ”

“ I do. I know the house and the farm, and the hill-side, and the tinkling of the sheep-bells, and the bark of the shepherd’s dog as the shep-

herd leads the sheep home at evening to the fold ; and I know the change which has come over the scene since you left it. I know it all. It is the same, and yet not the same. It wants but *one* thing ; and the last that I ever saw of your father was, that he was sitting on the slope of that hill, on one of the field-gates, still looking out ; for he said he *yet* had hope that some day he should see his poor prodigal come back."

" You cannot mean *me* ? "

" I do mean *you*."

" Would he receive me ? "

" ' *Would he ?* ' He longs to receive you. He has never ceased to long for it. In his constant longing for you, he has almost forgotten, at times, those who are still at home. He has never changed. He loved you before you left ; he loves you still ; yes, seemingly more now than then. Often *then*, it is said, he did not manifest any remarkable regard ; but now it seems as if you were his *one thought*."

Said my poor outcast, " You take me by surprise. Do I understand you ? I thought my father hated me, that he could think of me only to condemn me. He surely does not love me ! "

" He surely does ; and good news it is for you in this far country. And think what a welcome he has for you, where the joy, the music, and dancing of the father's house, await you."

" Not for *me* ? " " Yes, for *you*."

“But I have sinned.” “He knows it.”

“And dishonoured him.” “He knows it.”

“And am in rags.” “Yes.”

“And filth.” “Yes.”

“And ready to perish.”

“Yes; he knows all, and wants you as you are.”

“In my rags and misery?”

“Yes, just as you are—ragged, guilty, and miserable.”

“Then I will go.” But, still thinking of himself, he adds, “He may take me as a *servant*.”

Dear friends, he goes. It is all true; for there in the distance is the father. The father sees him; he has compassion on him; he runs to meet him. The son sees the father. The poor lost one is bowed, broken down, sunk—yea, deep sunk, on the breast, and closely enfolded in the arms of his father. And what he resolved to say, and was about to say, that he would be a servant, was all prevented. But how? Oh, scene of touching wonder and of tender love! for without one sentence of rebuke, after falling on his son's neck, after the embrace of him in his arms and the kiss, so deep of meaning, so assuring of compassion and pardon and reconciliation, he commands his servants, “Bring forth the *best robe*” (now the *best robe* is not for a servant, but for a son), “and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring

hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry ; for this my son was dead, and is alive again : he was lost, and is found." (See Luke xv. 11-32.)



THE THREE HEARTS.

JESUS IN SIMON'S HOUSE.—LUKE VII.

Jesu's—

BEHOLD the heart of Jesus ! how it throbs
 To bless that sinner, penitent and low ;
 To heal her wounds and silence all her sobs,
 And give her all He can in love bestow.

Simon's—

O, barren heart ! so barren of all good,
 Suspicious, envious, hard, and callous still !
 The GUEST neglected, and misunderstood,
 What moves *her* heart, *his* seems alone to chill.

Woman's—

Ah ! here's a heart wide open to receive
 The good it finds not in its own domain ;
 Drawn by a love which only waits to give,
 She weeps and loves, nor weeps and loves in vain.

Reader !

Which heart, dear reader, is akin to thine—
 The barren heart, or that which open is
 To take the blessing from Christ's heart divine,
 And through His blood to know that thou art His ?

A. M.

THE SAVIOUR AND THE SHEPHERDS.

(Read Luke ii. 1—22; Matt. xxvii. 45—66; xxviii. 1—10.)

THESE three Scriptures, taken together, give us the birth, the death, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Three wondrous facts for any sinner to think of. Ponder it one moment—the birth of the Son of God, the death of the Son of God, the resurrection of the Son of God.

Why this birth, this death, this resurrection? Because nothing could save you or me but this. Nothing! There was no possibility of man being redeemed, and brought to God—saved, and delivered from eternal judgment—but by the wondrous means which these Scriptures unfold.

I do not wonder that Heaven goes into a perfect ecstasy the moment it is promulgated that man can be saved. And how can he be saved? Only by the coming down of the Saviour! And surely, dear reader, if God has been loving enough to provide a Saviour, what does He expect from the sinner? That the sinner shall have wisdom enough to avail himself of the Saviour God has provided.

Have you availed yourself of the Saviour, and the present salvation God presents to you in the Gospel of His Son? It is the grandest news that ever fell on mortal ears—a *Saviour* for ruined *sinners*!

Let the Shepherds of Bethlehem show you the way to the Saviour. I want you to be like these

Shepherds; they are the best illustration of good Gospel listeners that I know. They are men who hear the Gospel, receive it, embrace it, enjoy it, act upon it, tell their neighbours all about it, and then go home with hearts brimming over with praise and worship to God because of it!

Luke ii. opens with the birth of the Saviour.

Did you ever notice that God only tells the story of creation once, and in few words, but *twice* He tells, with every particular, the wondrous tale of the *birth* of His Son, and *four* times over the Holy Ghost records the *death* of the Saviour, and His resurrection.

Why is this so? Because it is of very little matter if you know about creation or not; but it is of great matter if you know about Him who is the *Creator*.

Four times over the Holy Ghost tells the story of the death and resurrection of the Son of God, because that death is what alone avails to bring the sinner to God. On the actual knowledge of Him who was born, and Him who died, hangs the *eternal salvation of your precious soul and mine*.

It is important to see what comes out in the commencement of the chapter, for we live in infidel times.

Has it ever struck you, then, how careful God is to have the birth of His Son recorded?

The Roman Emperor, in his pride and folly,

wants to know how many subjects he reigns over, and not only so, but their nationality, and also their city; and so Joseph and his espoused wife Mary go up to Bethlehem, their native city, to be enrolled, and I should not wonder if that register of the birth of the Son of God exists still.

The pride of the Roman Emperor was the means God used for the fulfilment of the Scripture, that the King of Israel, God's Messiah, should be born in Bethlehem. See the manner of his birth: Joseph and Mary come up, and there is no room for them in the inn. "Oh," you say, "that was a coincidence." Ah, do you think so? Supposing Joseph had been a great man, with a large cavalcade, and he had sent ahead to order apartments, do you think there would have been room for him? I think so! But the world never did like the poor, and the Lord loved them intensely.

They generally make room for the rich in the inns, though the poor are put out. The Lord comes as the poor man, though He comes into the world His own hands had made, content to be reputed the Son of a Carpenter.

He comes in this lowly way; shall I tell you why? Because, then, there never could be a poor person who could say, "I never could go to Him, for He could not understand my case."

He took His place down here at the outset as

a poor man; God came into the world in this gracious way to win man's heart. In grace He came, content to be cradled in one man's manger, and buried in another man's tomb.

Do you still say it was a coincidence that there was no room in the inn? Then I ask you—Is it a coincidence that there is no room in your heart for Christ? There has been room for your friends; room for folly, for vanity; room for pleasure, but no room for Him!

Is that true of you? Well, let me tell you this: though there has been no room for *Him* in *your* heart, there is *room* for *you* in *His* heart.

Though there was no room for *Christ* in *man's* world, He sends out the message that there is room for *man* in *His* world, *i.e.* heaven!

The sinner's heart is like the iceberg often; but beneath the rays of the sun, the very iceberg melts, and beneath the beams of Jesu's love the very hardest heart must melt too. Let Him make room for Himself in your heart, and let Him get a *whole* heart, too; for I believe, if He does not get the first place, and the chief place, He gets a very little place.

If God tells you of His dear Son, do not you refuse Him. Look at these Shepherds, they are at their business, and the Lord sends an angel to preach the Gospel to them. Here is a message from Heaven for sinners on earth; God visits them with a message for Eternity, and what do

you think is the effect? They are sore afraid! The first effect of the Gospel is to make people *sorrowful*—it makes them glad afterwards. There are two lovely points in the way the message comes; not only it comes right down to the men where they were, God, as it were, interrupting them in their business to show them, there is something better than their business, even the salvation of their souls, but there is more than this: they are sensible of the presence of God with the message—"the glory of the Lord shone round about them." I covet that! The holy, the solemn, searching sense of the presence of God Himself with the Gospel message. God is there, God is dealing with those Shepherds, and they are *sore afraid*, and rightly so; they are properly solemnised before God, and I maintain this is the first effect of the Gospel, the sinner begins to feel he is in the presence of God, and that he is unfit for that presence.

But you will find, the moment the right kind of fear is produced in the soul, God comes in to remove the fear. "Oh," you say, "I have never feared." Then, my friend, I am sorry for you, for the days of your fear are coming—the days of your terrible dismay are coming in which no voice will bid you "Fear not." The mark of the unregenerate man is this, "no fear of God before his eyes." Sporting with God's grace, risking His terrible judgment. O man,

O woman, wake up! The day of your terror is coming. The first thing a soul knows when God is dealing with him is fear and trembling. A man sees the glory of God, and his own unfitness for it. Rom. iii. gives us the *unconverted* man *unfit* for the glory of God. Rom. v. gives us the *believer* rejoicing in view of that glory, because he knows he is fit for it. The jailor of Philippi wakes up when the glory of the Lord comes in, and he cries out, "What must I do to be saved?"—he sees his own unfitness for that glory.

When the glory comes in on the prophet's soul, in Isaiah vi., what does he say? The seraphim cry "Holy," but he cries "Unclean, unclean, woe is me!" Oh, have you ever learned that you are undone, unclean? "I am a man of unclean lips," the prophet says. Why unclean lips? Because, deeper still, deeper than the lips, there is an unclean heart, which produces unclean lips. Then the right fear being produced in the prophet's soul, the seraphim *flies* with a live coal from off the altar. God loves to dispel the fear which He Himself has produced.

Have you ever felt this fear? I am very much afraid of you if you have not! Have you seen yourself in the presence of God? Have you felt what a sinner you are, owned what a sinner you are before God, convicted by God's presence?

What is conscience? It is the eye of God on the soul, the knowledge of good and evil in God's

presence; knowing I am full of *evil*, and there is no *good* in me.

Repentance is the soul judging itself before God—owning it is, what God says it is, a *totally lost sinner*. If you are not a *lost sinner*, I have no Gospel for you, for it was to save *the lost* Jesus came. When once I discover I am *lost*, I am glad to look outside myself for a *deliverer*, a *Saviour*. It is a beautiful thing to see a soul going down, and owning itself lost, and really anxious. Are *you* anxious, my friend? If so, I have two distinct words from the Lord for you, "*Fear not.*" Are you troubled and cast-down? "*Fear not*" is God's assuring word to you. Do you feel the weight of sin? then you are the very one Jesus came for. He came to save sinners, to seek the lost.

"*Fear not,*" says the angel, "I have for you to-night the very news you need. I bring you to-night tidings which will produce great joy." The first effect is fear in the presence of God, and then, when the tidings God has to tell fall on the heart, what comes next? Great joy; and now, if you are anxious—if you are burdened by the weight of sin—I stand, an ambassador to you from the courts of glory, with this Divine message, "*Fear not!*" And oh, I have better tidings for you than the angel had for the Shepherds. He could tell of a Saviour born; I can tell you of the death and resurrection of that

Saviour, of the work that has been done whereby the sinner's redemption is completed, Satan's power destroyed, death and hell vanquished, and lost man saved!

“To you is born a *Saviour*.” Now, a *Saviour* is for the *lost*! not those who are *going* to be *lost*, but who are lost already. God never would have sent a *Saviour* if man had not been lost, for He is not a *helper*, but a *Saviour*. There is one thing Christ absolutely refuses to do—to *help* a sinner; His saints He helps. The Lord will *save* a sinner, He will not *help* him. *Help* is for a man who can do something. Christ comes down to the sinner when he is dead in his sins, utterly helpless, dies Himself for the sinner's sins, and saves him. Are you saved or lost, I ask *you*, my friend? “I am not lost,” you reply. Are you saved, then? “No.” Then you must be lost. “Oh,” you say, “I do not think that.” Well, then, would you like to die just now where you are? If you did die this moment, would you be saved or lost? If I should be lost if I died this moment, I stand in the position of a lost man now. But the Lord comes to seek and to save the lost. There is a lovely alternative and a dread alternative. What is the lovely alternative? I am saved the moment I come to Christ. What is the dread alternative? If I am not *now* in Christ, I am *now* lost.

You are either *Christ's*, *saved*, and on your road

to glory, or you are lost, and on your road to hell.

This company of Shepherds hear the joyful news that for lost man there is a Saviour; and as they hear it, the hosts of Heaven seem to come trooping together to hear the joyful news too, that there is a Saviour for man. Heaven seems to go into an ecstasy over the very thought of a sinner being saved, and the heavenly hosts come down to give praise for it. It is like the picture in Luke xv., where we hear of "joy in Heaven."

A *Saviour* for man—and how does He save? By Himself undergoing the judgment due to man's sin. He saves by bearing the punishment instead of me, by dying in my place. In bitter derision they cry, as He hangs upon that cross, "*Himself* He cannot save." Is it "*cannot*"? No! no! no! Himself He *will* not save, that He may save you and me; because if he save *Himself*, he cannot save man, and He chooses to save man.

On the cross He takes on Himself the judgment due from God to wicked man: He takes the wages of sin, He meets the claims of God, He does that which can eternally redeem you, and then He expires. He dies as no other man ever died. Not in weakness, but in *strength*; He cries with a *loud* voice, and gives up His Spirit to God. And then the grave receives Him, but does it hold Him? No, it cannot! He comes forth again

Conqueror over it, risen from the dead, and by His resurrection proving that the sinner's substitute is free.

An angel comes down again at His resurrection, as at His birth. He rolls away the stone. To let Jesus out? Far be the thought! It is to let us look in and see an empty tomb—to see that He who died is dead no longer, that He is risen.

Why is it there is such profound silence here? Angels praise at His birth, but at His resurrection there is no song. The angels seem to stand back now and say, "It is for you to sing; He did not die for us, He died for you."

He died, He rose, and now He is on the throne of God. What are *you* going to do, now you *have* heard of Him? Mark what the Shepherds did, "And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." The moment they heard the tidings they said, "Let us go and see!" What will *you* do?

Where can *you* see the Saviour now? In Bethlehem? No! Upon the cross? No! In the grave? No! In Galilee? No! Where, then? Up in the glory at the right hand of God.

"And they came with haste." They lose no time; they are not even exhorted to come: they are

so earnest to come, they need no exhortation. They are splendid Gospel listeners. They came and *found*. It is what always happens. They who seek find! Oh, cannot you picture that scene! Bowed down before Jesus, the babe in the manger!

They have heard, believed, sought, found, accepted, praised and worshipped God, and now they make known abroad the good news, We have sought and found the Saviour, *a babe in Bethlehem, but our Saviour!*

“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”

They *were* anxious sinners; are calmed by the words “Fear not;” they hear about the Saviour, they seek Him, they find Him, they worship Him, and they return, praising God for all they have *heard* and *seen*.

The Holy Ghost makes Christ so real and precious to the soul that believes Him, that He is seen and known better than the nearest friend.

The tale has come out that God has sent the Saviour, and what have you to do? Accept Him simply; you cannot *buy* salvation, it must be God's *gift* to you. The sinner comes to God oftentimes for salvation and *brings* something, “No!” says God, “I cannot sell it, I will *give* it to you.”

May the Lord print upon your heart the

blessed news that He has sent you a Saviour; and if he has sent you a Saviour, will you not accept Him—and more, *confess Him*? These Shepherds make known abroad the Saviour they have found; and let me tell you there is nothing that so impresses another as to be able to say, *I know Him myself*—this is the One I have found—He has saved me. May this be your language henceforth for His Name's sake.

W. T. P. W.

A DREAM, WITH THE INTERPRETATION.

I LAY on a bed of restless pain, weary and worn with continued illness, longing for rest and sleep, which had been denied me. Presently I felt soothed, and a soft sleep fell o'er me, and I dreamed a dream. Methought I was a child again, and with a young companion, my own age (whose name was Ethel), was travelling a long, dusty, lonely road to the City of the King. We had left home, friends, and kindred of every tie, and toiled on, hatless, cloakless, and with ragged shoes. Still, we had no fear; but child-like joy and overflowing glee filled our hearts, and merry laughter sounded through the air as we journeyed on, and talked wonderingly of how we should earn our livelihood, what kind of work we should have to do, &c.

* * * * *

A dark space followed, and next I found my-

self and Ethel standing *inside* the city, talking to One whose aspect and bearing (though indescribable) filled our hearts with perfect love, although He stood on higher ground while talking to us. We did not ask to be admitted, we *knew we were* inside (nor do I know how we entered). Our first question was for *work*. What were we to do? The gracious One then told us we were to work in the mines for precious stones; and vividly do I remember how almost fondly I clasped a small pickaxe given us to aid us in our search.

* * * * * *

A dark space again followed, when I next found myself in a large—oh! so large—light space of greyish hue. Ethel was at a little distance from me, while I seemed in a farther corner. I had my pickaxe in my hand working, when suddenly I felt my feet sinking in a bog. At the *same* instant I saw a precious stone of fiery hue, like the dazzling rays of a glorious sunset, gleam forth. I stretched forth my hand to grasp it, and my feet stood on solid rock. “Oh, Ethel, look!” I exclaimed joyously. “Oh, what a beauty! This is my first.” She came gazing wonderingly. “Oh, what a lovely colour! What is its name?” “Why, Ethel,” I exclaimed, “not know its name! Why, ’tis a *well-known, precious* one—‘Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will *deliver thee*, and thou shalt

glorify ME.'” I resumed my work, with the dazzling beauty of its gleams falling on me, when my companion suddenly called to me: “Oh, look what I have found! Oh, is not mine a beauty? Oh, its colour!” I looked, and saw gleaming out in all its brilliant beauty, a stone, clear, semi-transparent, the *palest* green. Oh, the beauty of its starlike rays! I gazed in wonder and admiration. “Yes,” I answered, “oh, who would not work here? and this one, ‘This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.’” Again I plied my pickaxe, again a stone gleamed forth of sparkling blue. Oh, how happy and joyous we felt as we talked of its beauty! “You know this one, Ethel?” I asked. “Yes,” she answered joyously; “yes, ’tis ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’” Again Ethel called my name triumphantly as a stone of spotless white met our gaze, so pure, so lovely in its dazzling purity. Our hearts glowed, and we loved the stone as we together pronounced its name: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.”

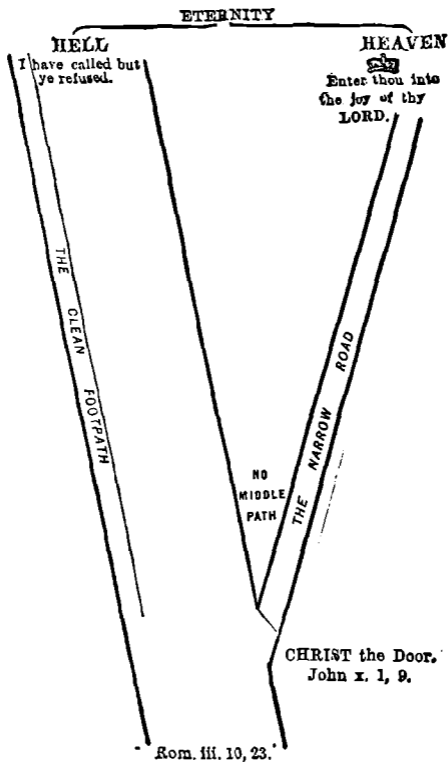
I awoke. What a strange dream, I thought. What *can* it mean? Surely, it has a meaning. I *wish* I knew. Again I fell asleep. Methought I stood alone, and a voice (for I saw no one) said,

“The dream has a meaning. The *mine* is the WORD OF GOD; the labour and pickaxes imply diligence. Search the Word with all diligence. The precious stones are the glorious promises of God; the kingdom of heaven is the city of the King, entered in conversion even as a ‘little child’ (Matt. xviii. 3); the Holy Ghost leads into all truth. Each colour, too, is suggestive: the fiery red, the fiery trial (1 Pet. iv. 12); the green, the soft, starlike promise, shedding its peaceful rays on weary, sin-sick, groaning sinners; the brilliant blue—the heavenly colour—‘God gave’ the man Christ Jesus, walking this sin-stained earth, *because* of the FATHER’S LOVE; the pure white, the spotless Lamb of God, whose blood can make the vilest whiter than snow (Isa. i. 18; Psalm li. 7). Such is the love of God.”

I send forth my dream with the prayer that God may use it, and make it as powerful to other hearts as He has to my own. Verily, prophecy is being fast fulfilled, many are “denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude, 4; 2 Tim. iii. 13); and we would feebly sound the note of warning while hovering on the threshold of *eternity*, waiting for the voice, “Come up hither.” Hold fast to God’s own revealed Word (2 Tim. iii. 15–17); search diligently for its hidden, exhaustless stores.

THE TWO ROADS.

Matt. vii. 13, 14.



“WHAT does this mean?” It is a diagram of the two roads—the narrow and the broad—on one of which each one of us is most surely

travelling; and let me at once ask you to turn to Matt. vii. 13 and 14, and read it carefully, as in the presence of God. We all know what it is to walk along a road to some place we wish to reach, and how important it is to take the right turn. Imagine a man wishing to reach some town, and yet not caring to know whether he has taken the proper road to it. We meet him, and in answer to some inquiry: "Whither away, friend?" he will perhaps name the town he wishes to gain. "But I am not quite sure that you are on the right road for it." "Ah, well," he replies, "I hope for the best; I daresay I shall reach it at last." What should we think of a man speaking in this way? Yet many seem to be quite as careless as to whether they have Scriptural evidence that they are on the right road for Heaven. Surely it is time to look into these matters.

Kindly feel the sheet of paper on which this is printed. You will find that it has two sides, and obviously only two. In like manner there are exactly two classes of people in this world—those on the broad road, and those on the narrow road. "But is there no third road for those who are not openly wicked, and who really seem rather better than their neighbours?" I assure you that in the Bible, which is the travellers' authentic guide-book, I can find no trace of any such third distinct road. Yes, a man

must be serving either Christ or the devil. How important then clearly to find out, Bible in hand, on which road you are travelling. I charge you to look this matter in the face now, before it is too late.

Suppose a tradesman thinks his affairs are not quite straight. If he is an honest, straightforward man, his ledgers will be brought down, and he will spend a long evening in looking well into the matter, feeling that it is best to know the worst at once. I call this only common sense. But how are you acting as to Eternity—Eternity, that four-syllabled word, meaning so much? When I was a boy I used to be set profit and loss sums to work out. Have you ever seriously thought of that great profit and loss question: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (See Mark viii. 34 to end.) May the Lord God, then, by His Holy Spirit, search your heart, and show you plainly on which road you are travelling.

Take another look at the diagram. I remember taking a chart of the two roads to the house of a man in whom I was much interested. He seemed, up to that time, not to have been awakened to a sense of danger for his immortal soul, but was living in comparative carelessness. On the evening in question he was to be alone for more than an hour, in the absence of his wife. Spreading the chart out on the table, I

begged him to study it carefully, and then left him to himself and to God. The Holy Spirit brought the subject home to him; and he afterwards confessed that for several days he could hardly think of anything but the two roads, even at his daily work. The more he thought of it, the more settled he was that he was himself still on the broad road. I am glad to be able to add that within a week or ten days he was rejoicing in Christ as his Saviour, and has since brought forth fruits meet for repentance.

The gate at the entrance to the narrow road is a strait one, but, thanks be to God, it stands open, and admittance is free. One fact, however, must be allowed: it is humbling to our natural hearts to go in at this strait gate, or even to acknowledge our need of entering in by it. Hence the scandal of the Cross (*Gal. v. 11*). We would rather choose a gateway and road of our own, one which would not compromise our pride. The great captain, Naaman, considered the prescribed remedy far too simple and humbling; and the hearts of many are like his. If men were bidden to do some great thing in order to obtain Salvation, most would set about their task at once. But in His great love God offers Eternal Life as a free gift through Christ Jesus; for Christ is Himself the door by which we may freely enter the narrow road. He invites us to enter, and, with our sins forgiven us for His

Name's sake (1 John ii. 12), to walk on in fellowship with Him, enjoying that peace which the world cannot give.

This peace shall be enjoyed by true-hearted pilgrims, even though

"Reproach, contempt, or loss,
They suffer for His Name."

Their course is very briefly sketched out in Rom. v. 1 and 2. At the very entrance they get peace about the past; all along their journey grace for the present; and by faith they see at the end of their journey, perhaps not far off, glory for the future. True happiness can only be found in this narrow road. How sad, then, the thought that there is a notice in our authentic guide-book, "Few there be that find it." Are you one of these happy few?

A word or two as to the broad road, though it is a sorrowful theme. The road seems an attractive one. I say "seems," for the world's pleasures are very fleeting and disappointing, as many find out. Besides, some who travel on it know the misery of being bound by some secret besetting sin, which makes their very life wretched. Possibly you who read this paper are inwardly convicted of this. At any rate, if you have not yet entered by the strait gate, I feel sure you are not at rest unless enjoying some false peace. How many are secretly restless when the church bell is tolling, or a sudden

death has occurred in the street in which they live. Why is this? Answer: Because their conscience is uneasy.

There are many travellers on the broad road. In fact, it is the popular one, if we are to believe our guide-book. The number, however, is no proof of safety. If a railway train is hurled over an embankment, the more passengers it contains the worse the accident; but during the journey the engine-driver is clearly no safer because many others are in the same position as himself.

Be sure, then, not to trust to the popularity that the broad road has always acquired, but remember that some of the most eminent of travellers on the narrow road have been everywhere spoken against, as those that have turned the world upside down. They were often treated as vain babblers, and deemed beside themselves.

Now, what can I mean by "the clean footpath" on the left? Follow me in thought out on to the road leading to some large town. Owing to heavy rains yesterday the road is very muddy. The people are splashed and dirty that are walking along it. But I see some at the side there who seem to walk on very comfortably. They do not seem splashed and dirty. How can this be? Because they are on a clean footpath: but still I notice they are travelling in the same direction as those toiling along in the mud. Forgive the homeliness of my illustration. I verily

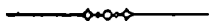
believe many are walking along what Bunyan calls the clean footpath to hell. At a distance this footpath might be mistaken for the narrow road. But no, it is only a part of the broad road, and leads in the same direction. Who travel along it? Those who have only their own righteousness to trust to, and who rely upon their own morality for Salvation, instead of on Christ alone. The guide-book speaks of some who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, and again of others who have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. In all affectionate earnestness be it said: "Beware of mere morality without Christ." Though we all value morality, yet it cannot of itself save a man, but is the sign of the clean footpath. Salvation is not of works, lest any man should boast; but when we have entered the narrow road, then indeed we are called upon to "do all such good works as God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Confer Titus iii. 8.) See, then, that you are not found walking along this clean footpath, for after all it is but part of the broad road.

If you are not already happy "in Christ," I would once more entreat you to "enter in at the strait gate," lest a terrible day come to you "when once the Master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to say, Lord, Lord, open unto

us." But it will then be too late. To-day it is not too late. To-day, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Ask yourself solemnly again, before putting down this paper, "Which road am I on?" always remembering that there is

NO MIDDLE PATH.

P. R.



A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.

Not long ago I was asked to visit a poor dying man named C——, residing in the little watering-place of W——.

I started the same day, and was not long in finding the object of my search at a public-house in a rather low neighbourhood.

Upon my inquiring after C——'s health, and expressing my wish to see him, his wife sent me upstairs, directing me to go into the first room I came to. Accordingly I entered a large comfortable-looking room, with three beds, on one of which lay a man of middle age. There was just light enough from a street lamp to discern his features, upon which the stamp of death was evident.

To my inquiries as to his health, C—— answered that he had been ill several months and had no hope of recovery, intimating at the same time that he had brought it all upon himself,

and was but reaping the bitter fruits of a dissolute life. I spoke of Christ Jesus having come into the world to save *sinner*s; and taking up a large-print Testament that lay near him, could just see that the leaves were turned down, and several Gospel passages marked, no doubt by the Christians who had visited him.

Some of these I repeated, but he only responded with groans; then taking a bottle of liquor from under his pillow he drank, and seemed to gather up his remaining strength to utter the despairing cry, "Its no use: there's no mercy forme!" Looking to the Lord for the right word, I again repeated slowly, "God *so loved* the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

With a look of anguish I can never forget, he said again, "It's no use! you can't tell, Ma'am, what a sinner I've been—it's impossible for *you* to imagine the sins I have been guilty of;" then, raising himself up in his bed, and pointing to the wall at its foot, "There it is, a *long black* list!" and with a shudder he sank back on his pillow. Seeing me about to speak he said again, "It's no use—every sin but murder—you *cannot* know what a sinner I am." I replied, "I do not want to know—God knows, and you know, that is enough, and God says, 'The blood

of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin." Again he groaned out, "Oh, that *long black list!*" "Black and long as it is," I replied, "it cannot go beyond ALL sin; and it is God Himself against whom you have sinned, who tells you that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin.'"

Seeing he was exhausted, I knelt down and prayed for him, and turning to take leave of the dying man, he thanked me warmly, and asked me to come again.

I called the following day, and his wife said he was too far gone to see anybody else, as several had already seen him. I expressed my regret, as her husband had asked me to come, and I had promised. "Oh!" she said, "are you the lady who came yesterday evening as it was getting dark?" "Yes." "Then you must go up; I was to be sure not to let you go without seeing him." I went upstairs. There he lay, dozing heavily, and looking as though he would never wake again.

I waited about a quarter of an hour, asking the Lord that He would arouse the poor dying one, if He had any word for him by me. By and by he opened his eyes and asked, "Who is it?" I replied, "I came to see you last night, and I spoke to you of the precious blood that cleanseth from all sin." In a moment he seized my hand in both his, exclaiming, with an energy

that startled me, "God bless you! God bless you!"

"What is it?" I said; "have you believed God's message of love?" "Oh yes!"

"Has the precious blood of Jesus Christ cleansed you?"

"Yes! bless God that ever you came here—while you prayed it was."

"Is the black list blotted out?" "Yes!"

"And you know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin?" "Oh yes! bless God!"

"Well," I said, "we will bless God together, for it is His work, is it not?"

"Yes; bless God!" he fervently responded.

I felt so overwhelmed with this display of God's wondrous grace in saving at the eleventh hour this poor sinner, and making me, unworthy one, the messenger of His grace, that it was difficult to find words; but the Lord heard and understood the thanksgivings and praise, and there was "joy in heaven"—"joy in the presence of the angels of God," over one more returning prodigal—one more lost one found—one more dead one made alive again. Rising from my knees, we spoke a little more of God's wonderful love in providing such a remedy for man's desperate case, and the grace of the blessed Lord Jesus in dying to save sinners; and when I gave him my hand to say good-bye, he again took it in both

his, fervently thanked God, and invoked His blessing upon me; adding a request to come again, to which I replied, "If the Lord will." "Oh! don't say 'if'—promise you'll come again." I said, "I will come if the Lord give me strength. He has saved you, and you can leave all to Him now, can't you?" "Yes, bless God! God bless you; good-bye!"

The following morning I was too ill to rise from my bed, and my husband went instead, at ten o'clock, and found that this happy, saved soul had departed five hours before to be with the Lord, whose matchless grace had snatched him as "a brand out of the fire."

I do not know that I can add anything except to entreat you, dear reader, if still unreconciled to God, not to go on in the hope that at the *last* you may find mercy, and, therefore, need not *now* concern yourself. The wife of poor C——, I dare say, thought the same. She appeared strong and well; and though civil in her manner, and quite willing I should speak to her dying husband, turned away when I addressed myself to her, as though she needed no word of warning.

About a week after the funeral, feeling anxious about her soul, I called at the house, and found the place all in disorder, the fire gone out in the grate, and poor Mrs. C—— sitting before it, with dishevelled hair; and judge, dear reader, how I was shocked to find, that she had lost her reason,

and could understand nothing of "God's glad tidings."

The children were running in the street; the eldest boy, an intelligent-looking lad of about thirteen, came in, and, upon my inquiring, told me he did not know what was the matter with his mother: she would do nothing, and would eat nothing; but his uncle was coming to-morrow to see to her. He, too, was unwilling to listen to the message of salvation, and abruptly left the house.

The next time I went the place was shut up, and all I could learn from a neighbour was, that some friends had taken the poor woman and her family away.

Dear reader! I beseech you not to lay down this paper without considering where *you* are. Are you *saved*? Are you cleansed from your sins by the precious blood of Christ? Do not put off the question of your soul's salvation till a "more convenient season." 'Tis the *enemy* of your soul that says, "Not now!—To-morrow!—When you lie on a sick-bed." But you may never lie on a sick-bed. To-morrow's sun may rise upon you a lifeless corpse! How many as young, as healthy as you, have been suddenly cut off!

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked!"

"Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation!"

THE SCEPTIC G. M.;

OR,

“I SEE IT ALL NOW, AND ‘GOD IS LOVE.’”

“IF any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,’ and everything is changed to me,” said one who had lately come to know Jesus, the Son of God, the centre of that new creation, where “all things are of God.” “My thoughts go after other objects altogether from what they did before my soul was saved. The things of this world have very little interest for me now, but the things of heaven are becoming most precious to me. My heart is cold to what I would like it to be. I wish I loved Jesus more. I have tasted enough of heavenly joy to make me long to enter into it more fully. I should like to know better what that bright inheritance of the saints above is, for which God, in rich grace, has made me meet through the blood of His Son.”

As I listened to these longings of the new man, this child of grace, after the native air of heaven—those breathings of the life which is hid with Christ in God, seeking its objects of desire in the things which are above, where Christ is—I sighed for enlargement of heart, increased spiritual energy, to see afar off into the things of God, to feed by faith upon Him who is the “Bread of our God,” and to rejoice more fully in that prospect

of glory which is in reserve for those who are bought with the blood of God's dear Son. These lines came to my mind, and I repeated them to the sick man, whose words I have quoted. He reclined, in much weakness of body, on a sofa by the fire. I drew my chair closer to him, and his young wife sat on my other side:—

“ Who shall to me that joy
Of saint-thronged courts declare,
Tell of that constant sweet employ
My spirit longs to share ?

There, in effulgence bright,
Saviour and Guide, with Thee
I'll walk, and in Thy heavenly light
Whiter my robe shall be.

But who that glorious blaze
Of living light shall tell ?
Where all His brightness God displays,
And the Lamb's glories dwell.

God and the Lamb shall there
The light and temple be,
And radiant hosts for ever share
The unveiled mystery.”

“ Faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” For a moment the thoughts contained in these verses filled our souls, and the reality of that glory to which grace leads called forth united praise. Then the sick man said—

“ None of us think of these things, or speak of them, as we wish we could, but God gives the

soul a glimpse of the glory that is before us sometimes."

"He does; and if our minds were more spiritual, the soul's vision of glory, and entrance into the reality of things unseen as yet, would be brighter and more constant; for it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit' (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10). Thus, even here, whilst waiting to enter the inheritance of the saints above, and to see Him who is the blessed centre there, we have seasons of joy unspeakable and full of glory. Yours," I added, "will soon be unhindered enjoyment, for I think, dear friend, you will shortly lay aside your 'earthly house of this tabernacle,' so that you may go to be with Christ."

"Yes, I feel it will not be long," answered he, "till I leave all here."

His wife began to shed tears, not able quite to forget her loss, when the one she loved should have received the better portion. He knew her heart, and that she would seek to rejoice in his joy, so he added, "It will be better with me then, for I shall be with Jesus. How well it is we both know Him! We will only have to be parted for a little while! I am going to no strange place. When the change comes, it will be well with me;

but how very different are poor G. M.'s prospects. A friend was here last night who came from his bed-side, and though he is an unconverted man, he said, 'What I have heard to-day from the lips of G. M. makes me shudder. He does not believe there is a God—at least, he says so—and he spoke such daring things about the Almighty, and what the Bible said about heaven, eternity, and hell, I could not bear to listen to him.'

"Do you think," added the sick man, looking to me, "you could pay a visit to this poor scoffer? At first it might be trying, though I don't think he would break out before you. God can make him hear what He would give you to say, and cause it to be a blessing to his soul. At one time I used to think G. M. a kindly fellow—we worked together in the same shop—but when he took up these profane notions, he grew very sullen, and rough in his ways."

I promised I would try to see this one whom Satan held in the darkness of unbelief, and I asked my friend to pray that God would make His Word enter as a sharp sword into his heart and conscience, so that he might learn it is "*The fool (who) hath said in his heart there is no God*" (Ps. liii. 1); and that "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*" (Prov. ix. 10).

From that day the Lord's people prayed that God would turn this infidel from his folly, and

make him one of Wisdom's children. In the sovereignty of His grace He had marked out the sceptic for blessing, and by the Spirit the hearts of the saints were led into fellowship with His mind, and prayer abounded, till we were able to praise God who had glorified His grace in the salvation of this soul.

Did the children of God remember that the Holy Ghost lays as a burden on our spirits that which it is on the heart of God to do, we should have more simple faith in Him when we pray, and the words of our Lord would keep us in calm confidence as to the result of our prayers. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, *believe that ye receive them*, and ye shall have them" (Mark xi. 24). We pray in His name, who said, "Father, I thank Thee, that thou *hast* heard me, and I know that Thou hearest me always" (John xi. 41, 42).

Late one afternoon, in the end of December, 18—, I started in search of the dwelling of this poor man. I had been directed to a low part of the city, far from my own home. A wrong number was given to me, and having gone to the top of several long stairs without finding the house I wished, I thought I must give it up. The dusk was deepening, and these stairs were very dark; yet I was loathe to leave work undone to which I felt God had that day sent me. On trying another door, I was told a man

of the name I gave had died in that stair some months since, and they did not know of another. The one who had died was not the one I sought, for he lived four days previous to this. I was not diverted from my purpose by this information. They advised me to inquire at the neighbouring dairy, and if the person I sought lay in any of the buildings near, I should hear of him. This was my clue to G. M.'s door, and in five minutes more I had knocked there. I almost feared to see it open, and yet felt I must go to the man, and speak with him. Never before did I so painfully feel my weakness to do that which I was persuaded God had given me to do. This was the way the Lord took to teach me and make manifest to all that God alone was the worker. "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. iv. 6).

The door was opened by G. M.'s wife, a young woman, to whom I was a stranger. I told her of the friend who desired to hear of her sick husband, and then asked if I might see him. "He is very ill to-day," was her reply. "He has had a sad time with the cough, but he is quiet at present. You will not ask him to speak much? He is so weak, ma'am."

I assured her I would be very careful, and then passed into her tidy little kitchen. Her husband lay on a small iron bed behind the door. I had gone quietly into the room, so he did not

see me till I stood over him. His features were much wasted, for consumption had done its work extensively. When I spoke he raised his eyes, and I observed the clear glare so often present in this disease. In his case the love of God in the heart did not throw into this feature of the complaint that lustrous beauty which I have seen in others: here it was only the cold but sure mark of the wasting malady, and his face wore a dark, hopeless expression. The rather long black hair fell untidily over his forehead, whilst a bright hectic spot on his cheeks, and the bones of the face very prominent, told at once how ill he was.

I spoke of his sickness, and sought to sympathise. He said little, but seemed to wonder at my interest in him. As a sick man, I told him he claimed any kindness I could render, but what had brought me to him was to deliver a message from another. He looked inquiringly, and I met the cold, earnest gaze he fixed upon me, and said, "Yes, I am come from the God of Heaven, whom through grace I know, to tell you He loves *you*. He wants you to hear of His love—love so great that He gave His only Son to die, that the way might be open for you to become a child of God and an heir of glory."

At once his face was turned from me towards the wall, but I could see the expressions that played upon it whilst I continued for a few

moments to speak of God, of His love, and the crowning proof of it, the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, where God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

I observed he began to shed tears, and I hoped the Word of God had entered his soul, and the love of which I spoke had melted his heart; but to the questions I put he would give no answer. I had to leave, wondering how God's message had been received. His wife saw me to the door, and on leaving her I said, "I will bring your husband some wine and jelly, and hope soon to see him again."

She thanked me, but did not say "Come!" From the poor man's symptoms I did not think he would linger long, so I felt time was precious. I desired he would soon bow to Jesus, so that God might have some days or weeks of praise from the object of His grace before he should go hence. From the first I was persuaded this infidel would be saved.

SECOND VISIT.

A few days after the first I paid my second visit. G. M. was very ill: his breathing very laborious, and the cough most troublesome. I had to wait some time before he could give me his attention. The jelly I had taken him drew forth an expression of thankfulness, and he

answered some questions as to his body, but with regard to God or his soul not a word. I felt if he would only speak I should know with what Scriptures to meet him, but he was silent; and as far as he was concerned I had to go on in the dark. God saw the workings of his mind, and my strength was to lean on Him. Love, and only love, could reach that heart. Death and judgment, in his folly, he might nerve himself to dare, but the love of God might, I thought, find an entrance into his soul. Filled with this thought, I took out my Bible, and read a few verses from 1 John iv. :—"He that loveth not knoweth not God; 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. . . . The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Then I made a last appeal, and it drew forth words which encouraged me, and showed God had begun to work in his soul.

I said, "My friend, I would give much that you could say what is written in the sixteenth verse of this chapter. Let me read the words to you, 'We have known, and believed the love that God hath for us.' Tell me, have you realised you must meet God?"

“Yes,” he answered, “I see that now—there is no mistake, I must front Him; you tell me about God’s love—I have seen none of it, I assure you.”

“In your foolishness,” I replied, “you once said, ‘There is no God.’ Now you believe you were wrong in that, and you will yet see your present thoughts of God are wrong also. In your heart you are now *an enemy* of God, but Christ died for those who were the enemies of God. Let me read what Scripture says about that: ‘Having made peace through the blood of his cross And you that were alienated and *enemies* in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight’ (Col. i. 21). That is unlike what you or I would have thought to do for an enemy! That is what God has done, for He gave Christ, His only Son, to die for His enemies. Does not that show what a loving God He is?” I then pleaded with him to trust the God of love, to hear His message and to believe, that God might love him with the same deep love with which He loved His only Son. I left G. M.’s bed-side feeling I had given him Scripture, with which God would have him occupied.

Shortly after this I went to see the sick man, who asked me to call upon the sceptic, and learned that the tears I saw him shed on my first

interview, which so encouraged me, were tears of anger. He felt too ill to resent my speaking to him of things from which his whole soul revolted, and consequently had to hear what I said. My first visit greatly displeased him, and he said to his wife, "I hope that lady will never again come here; I have no wish to hear of such things."

"The Lord pondereth the heart." He is over all. He carried on His purpose of grace, and heard the prayers of His people. After my second visit G. M. was greatly softened, and avowed to his wife he was glad I had come. "I felt inclined to listen to her to-day," he said; "I think I would be better off if I were a Christian, but it's not the easy thing that lady says it is."

THIRD VISIT.

In less than a week I called again, and as I drew near the side of the bed, G. M. held out his wasted hand. It was the first welcome I had received since going there. He was very ill, and it was painful to sit by him. I saw my visit must be very short, so I at once asked if he had yet trusted in Jesus as his Saviour? "No," was the answer he quickly gave me. I was about to speak, when he added, "I cannot believe God loves me. He would not make me toss about on this bed of pain if He did. I am so weak now."

I read to him these verses from Job xxxiii: "Why

dost thou strive against him? God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." God speaks that man may be aroused to the fact that he is going to eternal woe; but how does God speak? The Scriptures tell us, "He is chastened with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pains; his flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen." By dealings like these man is awakened to the fact that he is drawing near to the grave: then he is willing to hear God's message, and cries to be delivered. The cry reaches the ear of the Saviour God. He is gracious unto him, and saith, "Deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." Jesus is that ransom. God tells the awakened soul of Him who "His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). God saves the one who believes that word and receives Christ as *his* Saviour: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12). The sufferer's interest was fully gained, and when I rose to go he said, "Pray to God to make me a firm believer in His word, that my soul may be saved from hell."

Slowly the good seed was then sown. His desires were God-ward now. He prayed unto Him, but did not yet know God was favourable unto him," nor had he seen "His face with joy."

He had said, "I will arise and go to my Father." That blessed word, "Come," had entered his soul, and He who began the good work perfected it to the praise of His own name.

FOURTH VISIT.

A few days later I made my fourth visit, expecting to hear praise rising to God for grace received. When I was seated G. M., said, "I believe what you have told me, and this sick bed has been God's way of breaking me down. Without this illness I should still have been a poor ignorant wicked man, on my way to the pit."

"Then you can say you are on another road, now?" "I am not going to hell," he answered.

"You must be on your way to glory then—you are saved, are you not?"

He did not speak; it seemed too much for him to say. I thought he might be occupied with his *believing*, or his feelings, rather than with the Saviour and His finished work for him. I read some Scriptures leading his soul more directly into contact with the person of Christ, where He now is, in the glory of God, as the blessed finisher of faith. I told him, also, of the witness He has sent from that glory to those who believe on Him, telling them by the Holy Ghost that their sins and iniquities God remembers no more. He seemed to get rest of

soul through these, and said, "I see it all now, and 'God is love,' and this bed shows that, too: I could not say so the last day you were here."

The Scriptures I quoted to him were, "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. x. 10); "The Holy Ghost is a witness to us . . . their sins and iniquities I will remember no more" (Heb. x. 15); "The worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins" (Heb. x. 2). Then I sought to show G. M. God now looked upon him as "accepted *in* the beloved" (Eph. i. 6); that Christ's place in God's presence is the believer's standing, "As he is so are we in this world," (1 John iv. 17), "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus;" and that all we need to make us fit for the presence of God we have in Christ Himself, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30). "Being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Such is the rest into which this poor man entered. He knew his sins were gone, he rejoiced in the favour of God, and he wanted to be called into the presence of his Lord.

The work in his soul had been gradual, and there was no outburst of joy when the darkness passed away and light arose upon him. A quiet calm of spirit characterised him, and thankfulness to God for the rich grace that had picked

up one who dared to say, "There is no God." He seemed ever to remember the hole of the pit from which he had been taken.

About this time I had to leave town for a fortnight, and when saying good-bye at the end of my fourth visit, I thought it was till in bodies of glory we should meet around the Lamb, singing the song of the redeemed: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood;" but G. M. lingered on, and I was permitted once again to stand by his bed-side.

Now he was on the edge of the border-land—very near home. The open Bible lay on the coverlet of the bed, and a roll of hymns I had sent him from England hung at the end of his bed on the wall.

I asked if he had enjoyed the hymns, and in a very feeble voice he said, "I like best when Maggie" (speaking of his wife) "reads to me a verse out of the Word of God—I lie here and think it over."

I lifted the Bible. It was open at the Epistle of John; so I again read to him those verses by which at first I had sought entrance to his soul. As I did so, tears dropped on the pillow—other tears from those I had seen before—not tears of anger now, but such as a deep sense of grace received drew forth. He repeated after me, "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us," and added, "I can now say, what you wished I could

say when I was a poor, hardened sinner, 'We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.'" It was with effort he had spoken so much, and, as he finished, a minister of Christ entered the room. It was time for me to go, and in parting with G. M. I could only give thanks to God who had glorified the name of Jesus in the salvation of this poor man. As I passed from the kitchen the clergyman gave testimony to the grace of God and the blessed change wrought on that sick-bed.

He had known the dark-looking, sullen, and withal rough G. M., as one who had dared to question the existence of God. Now he beheld in him one of Wisdom's children, a man who had condemned himself and justified God, a meek and lowly soul, in whose heart the love of God was shed abroad, and who waited the summons to go to be "for ever with the Lord."

Well may saints of God make their boast in His goodness. "He maketh rich, he bringeth low, and lifteth up: he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." G. M. was brought so low that he looked into the pit to which his steps were hastening. He had said, "Pray that my soul may be saved from hell." His cry was heard. The good news of the love of God reached him; sovereign grace gave him

the hearing ear ; the despiser wondered, but not to perish. He thought on God's ways with him ; light broke in on his soul, and he bowed to the Man in the glory of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. He believed to the saving of his soul.

-Contrary to expectation, G. M. lingered another week, and then passed hence, just one day before the sick man who sent me to him.

Together these two had served in daily labour ; on their death-beds each came to know Jesus, and both for a little season were witnesses of the grace that had reached them, and quickly following one another they entered the good land, for which they had title through the precious blood of Christ.

“ Lord, I can see by faith in Thee
 A prospect bright, unfailling,
 When God shall shine in light divine,
 In glory never fading.

A home above, of peace and love,
 Close to Thy holy person ;
 Thy saints shall there see glory fair,
 And shine as Thy reflection.”

Dear reader, is your soul saved? Have you been “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?”

You may blush at the plainness of my question, as one did lately, when I sought to make sure she was safe from those waters of judgment ready to engulf the *neglector* of salvation. Make

sure of your ground, for you must bear the judgment, if you do not know the Blessed One, who, in the bitterness of His soul, let the waves of God's wrath close over Him. Jesus went into death and paid the ransom due for sin—

“ Stricken, smitten, and afflicted,
See Him dying on the tree :
'Tis the Christ by man rejected—
Yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He.

Lamb of God, for sinners wounded !
Sacrifice to cancel guilt,
None shall ever be confounded,
Who on Thee their hope have built.”

God now heralds forth the word of salvation. Unto *you* it is sent. Do you believe the report? Have you received Christ? Can you now say of Him as the remnant of Jehovah's people will, when they have received their Messiah, this same Jesus, and looked on Him whom they pierced,—“ He was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities : the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ? ”

Beloved reader, before you close this book, bow to Jesus. Come to Him as a sinner. Own

your vileness. See His worthiness. Condemn yourself, and justify God. Be a child of wisdom. Then Christ will see in you of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. He will grace you with His own beauty, rejoice over you with singing, and as "the beloved of the Lord" you shall "dwell in safety by Him."

"Who shall separate us from the love of God . . . which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"? (Rom. viii. 35, 39.)

R.

CHRIST'S WORK, AND OUR PLACE.

"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."—HEB. ix. 27, 28.

"Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 JOHN iv. 17.

THE verse in 1 John iv. brings out most distinctly and clearly what the new place is that the believer has before God. It is this: *Christ's place*. "As he is, so are we in this world." In the most marvellous way does the Holy Ghost condense the present position of the believer, to the joy of our hearts—we who are Christ's. But some may say, "Impossible! Does the gospel unfold to a poor guilty sinner on earth a standing before God in the perfection of Christ?"

Yes. "How can this be?" The passage in Heb. ix. tells you how; you have there the grand foundation on which this blessed truth is built—"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." The effect of the once-offered sacrifice of Himself to put away sin—the fruit of the corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, so that it might not abide alone, is, that of the children of God it can be truly said: "As he is, so are we." And mark, it is not "So we *shall be*," but "so *are* we in this world." How wonderful is this word of the Holy Spirit! truly man could never have penned it of himself.

Look at Christ in all His love and grace while here on earth. Look at Him in all His perfection now in glory, and then consider for a moment this most wonderful passage: "Herein is love with us (God's love, not ours) made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." But let us look for a little at what was first required in order to bring about this grand result. In Heb. ix. it is all beautifully unfolded. "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the

world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 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."

There are three periods in the history of Christ brought before us in these verses. In verse 24, He does appear; verse 26, "He has appeared;" and in verse 28, "He shall appear." I will take them up briefly in their chronological order; and may the Holy Spirit lead you, my beloved reader, to search more fully into these wondrous truths, the outlines of which I now present to you.

I.—HIS PAST APPEARING.

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Why was this needed? The following verse tells us: "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.*" As it belonged to man to die and be judged, so Christ was offered up in death; and bore God's wrath and judgment in man's stead.

I can understand the "*as*" and "*so*" in John

iv. 17 when I have grasped the mercy of the "as" and "so" of Hebrews ix. 27, 28. As I was a ruined, guilty sinner, only fit to be judged and condemned to death, so He went down unto death for me; He suffered that I might never suffer; He bore my judgment and the wrath of an offended God, which was my due! He completed the work of my salvation; has done all that is needed to bring me to Himself in glory; and now the Holy Spirit can give out this grand truth to the believer, to say with joyful boldness, that in the sight of God "As he (God's Son) is, so are we in this world."

Oh, beloved fellow-believer, what is this? What is the force of these words, "As He is, so are we?" It is not merely substitution, grand as that work is, but it is transmutation—the taking of us into Himself.

"He has appeared" to do a work we never could have done. In all the councils of God one thing alone was found that could save ruined man; and in His great love to us, the Lord Himself came down to perform the work. As we deserved, so He received; He bore the judgment of God upon sin, so that there is now no condemnation to them who believe. Now "we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Well may the Holy Spirit preface this wondrous truth with these words: "Herein is love with us made perfect." Yes, this indeed was love,

perfect love on His part ; love sufficiently perfect to cast out all our fear. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear."

"No man of greater love can boast
Than for his friend to die.
Thou for Thine enemies wast slain !
What love with Thine can vie ?"

This is the friend the believer has—the friend and Saviour, God wishes you to have. Will you not have Him ? See what He has done for you. "He was once offered to bear the sins of many." You may be one of the *many* whom Christ died to save. God is now beseeching you to be one of the blessed number. Oh ! refuse Him not ; for if you will not have this Christ now, while He is willing and waiting to receive you, it will be this same Christ and Lord, to whom all judgment is given, who, when this long day of grace is over, will say unto you : "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." And you shall then be one of the *many*—ah ! how many—to whom the words will apply : "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." With which will you have to do—God in grace, or God in judgment ?

He wants you to know Him in grace, to know Him *now*. He is seeking you, yearning for you, waiting to receive you with outstretched arms of welcome. Oh, come to His loving embrace. You must either come to those outstretched

arms of love and mercy, or sink for ever beneath His uplifted arm of judgment. Can you for a moment delay in your decision? Which shall it be, God or Mammon? Is there aught on earth that can lure you from His arms?—aught that can blindly lure you on to death? Jesus is calling you to come to Him. "Come unto Me" are His words to you. Oh, come and taste the blessedness of belonging to Him, of being loved by Him, of having Him as the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

If you have not already decided for the Lord, let this now be the expression of your heart—

"My heart is fixed, eternal God,
 Fixed on Thee;
 And my immortal choice is made,
 Christ for me.
 He is my Prophet, Priest, and King,
 Who did for me salvation bring;
 And while I live I mean to sing,
 Christ for me."

II.—HIS PRESENT APPEARING.

In verse 24 we have, "Now to appear in the presence of God for us."

While telling you of the first blessed truth, "He has appeared," I made no restriction. I tell it to you, my reader; I would it were told to ALL. But now I have to confine myself to the BELIEVER when I say, "in the presence of God for us." But my prayer is, that He may stand

as the Representative of all who may read these pages, and of thousands more.

Believers in the Lord, Christ represents you in the presence of God, and soon there will be the lovely sequel which verse 28 gives: "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." But again, I would turn to *all*, and say, Look at Jesus there in the glory of Heaven itself; gaze on Him by faith at God's right hand, and remember that place may be yours. Earnestly I would entreat you not to let haunting memory have the task of echoing in your ear, through an endless eternity, "That place *might* have been yours."

Who is the One who stands in the presence of God for us? It is Christ, the same Christ who was here on earth, and who died on Calvary's Cross. He is the only one who can represent us there, and He does it. Michael the Archangel would fail to do it. Angels know not the extent of our need; but Christ is there. Dwell on the thought, REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS PEOPLE. Oh, how much it includes! Christ is there in the presence of His Father-God, not only to represent you, but also as your Advocate and High Priest. As Aaron the high priest bore the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on his shoulder and breast, so that they might be presented to the Lord Jehovah; so Christ bears our names on His bosom before His Father's

throne—your name and mine graven on His heart! Amazing thought! Yes, our names indelibly carved there with the graving-tool of love. The love and power of Christ combined bear us before God continually.

What a place of security the believer in Jesus has! How could he have a doubt or fear as long as he looks at Christ in glory? and knows from God's word that "As He is, so are we." Look at Christ and His finished work, and believe on Him, and the question of salvation and security is settled. I see in Him the one who has espoused my cause—the one who has so merged me in Himself, that God, while looking upon me, sees me in Jesus—He sees me in "*Jesus only.*"

III.—HIS FUTURE APPEARING.

"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The first time He appeared, it was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He bared His bosom to Jehovah's wrath, and the uplifted sword of justice fell on Him. The storm-cloud of wrath burst upon His head; but the second time He shall appear, it shall be without sin unto salvation.

The question of sin was all settled the first time; and now He has to do with salvation alone. Has not this a voice for you, O care-

less one? You who are not looking for Him; you to whom it would not be glad tidings were you told, "The Bridegroom cometh;" pause, I beseech you, and consider your situation. You, as an unbeliever, are going on to meet two things—DEATH and JUDGMENT. The believer also is going to meet two things, but oh! how different are they—CHRIST and GLORY. Death and judgment are behind him, not before; he looks back to the Cross, and knows that for him they were ended there. He is on the other side of judgment; and now the bright prospect before him, and for which he looks, is the time when the Lord shall again appear unto salvation, *i.e.* the deliverance of the body from this evil world.

Sin brought death into this world by the first Adam; but, for the believer, the death of the last Adam has put away sin and delivered him death and judgment.

To you who care not to look for Him, I would give this solemn warning: "If thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a

whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer. They shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and *they shall not escape.*"

But unto you who look for Him are these blessed words written: "They shall see His face." Delight yourselves therefore in the Lord; be ye ever on the watch-towers looking for His appearing the second time without sin unto salvation. Wait patiently for Him though He should tarry. "He that shall come will come." Meanwhile, beloved Christians, let us rejoice in the blessed truth that, "As He is, so are we, in this world."

W. T. P. W.

IN Luke xv. the grace and love of God are shown out, first in *seeking*, and then in *reception*. In the first two parables we have the seeking; in the third, the reception by the father. One great principle runs through them all; it is the joy of God to seek and to receive the sinner. He is acting upon His own character. No doubt it is joy to the sinner to be received, but it is the joy of God to receive him: "It is meet that *we* should make merry and be glad"—not merely meet that the child should be received.

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.

(Genesis xix. ; Luke xvii. 28, 37.)

THE 32nd verse of Luke xvii. "Remember Lot's wife," is the Lord's solemn comment on Genesis xix. ; and there is something weirdly strange about this word of the Lord's.

"Remember Lot's wife." What about Lot's wife? She stands the everlasting witness of the folly of not obeying the word of the Lord, the folly of a sort of middle path, when God's word has declared what is coming on the scene. Lot's wife is the picture of many souls: they would like to be saved, but they have not reached the point of safety, have not reached the spot where there is safety. The Lord says to such, "*Remember Lot's wife.*" Did she not want to be saved? Yes. Did she not wish to escape destruction? Yes. Did she not make a show of escaping it? Yes. *Did she escape it? No!* "*Remember Lot's wife.*" She *might* have been saved, but she was not saved, and yet she was not overtaken by the judgment of the cities; not one drop of that liquid fire fell on Lot's wife: no, she was cut off, but not by the judgment which fell on the cities.

There are two points, I believe, come out about Lot's wife: she was *unbelieving*, and she was *disobedient*; and, dear unsaved reader, is not this what you are? Have you believed God?

Have you obeyed the Gospel? You know you have not! "Remember Lot's wife."

Because of her indifference, because of her cold-heartedness, she was turned into a pillar of salt. She was a *hypocrite*, she appeared to leave the city, she appeared to be going to the mountain, but her heart was in the city; she did not really believe in the judgment coming; she said in her heart, "I see no sign of judgment coming; I will look back and see if what those men said is true:" she looks back, and is turned into a pillar of salt.

Did the judgment come? Yes! Lot's sons and the cities of the plain were all destroyed. God is not mocked! And the Lord says, that "as it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be when the Son of Man is revealed." This is not the Lord's coming into the air for His people, but His coming with them to the earth for the pre-millennial judgments.

The last act of the world towards Christ was to nail Him on a cross between two malefactors. The last the world saw of Christ was, *dead* between two thieves! Did they not see Him when He rose from the dead? No! Did they not see Him in resurrection? No! Have they seen Him in glory? No! Faith has; but the world saw Him *last* on the cross, to which, with wicked hands, they had nailed Him; it will see Him *next*, in the day of which Luke xvii. speaks,

when He comes again in judgment, when He puts His hand to His strange work of judgment.

Do you know, my friend, there is judgment coming? The world is like a murderer between the passing of his sentence and the execution of it; and what is that? A condemned felon, only waiting the moment when, on the scaffold, that red-handed murderer shall expiate his crime. The world is like that. Its condition is fixed. But what comes in between the sentence and its execution? A way of escape! You who have not taken that way of escape, "Remember Lot's wife." She was one who knew there was a way of escape and did not take it! The angels dragged her even out of Sodom, but that did not save her from the judgment of God. She was dragged out of Sodom, but she never reached *the mountain*. Half way will not do; there is no safety half way, either for Lot's wife or for you.

We bring the message of judgment, judgment coming, but before it falls there is a way of escape for you, if you will take it; for judgment *is* coming, surely coming.

You may say, "I do not think I shall live to see the world judged." Very likely not, because the Lord may do with you as He did with Lot's wife, cut you down, before the judgment comes. The Lord does not say, "Remember Sodom," but "Remember Lot's wife," the woman who might have been saved but for her own awful

folly, and was very nearly being saved, but—*she was not saved!* Cut down by God's hand in judgment, because she did not believe the message, how solemn is the word, "Remember Lot's wife."

Did she not *hope* to be saved? Yes! Did she not expect to reach a happy place with her husband and daughters? Yes! Did she reach it? *No!* She was cut down, because there was no faith, either in the judgment coming, or in the way of escape.

We read in Genesis xix. 12, "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? Son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place." Are you the only one of your family? Have you any still unsaved? "Bring them out," says God; "get them out of the world, break the fatal spell that binds them to the world of the dead, loose the chain that holds them, bring them out to Jesus." He wants your faith to pierce the clouds, wing its way to the very throne of God, and there leave your loved ones at the feet of Jesus.

The evangelist's desire is to drag you out of the world to Christ. "Out of the world?" you say. Yes, right out, for if your heart is out of the world you are morally outside the scene. A Christian brought to know Christ, having the joy of the Lord's love in the heart, is entirely

outside the present scene, or if occupied with it, is only so in order to get souls out of it.

How do I get my heart out of the world? I get a glimpse of Christ, I see Him before the day of the execution of the coming judgment doing a work for *me*, whereby *I* can escape from the coming judgment, and then going back to the glory; my heart gets attracted to Him there, where He is, and drawn completely away from the world. Home, *then*, is the place where He is who has won my heart, and this scene becomes a wilderness to me, because He is not in it.

Before God judges He always warns; and have not *you*, my friend, had many a warning note falling on your ear? Look at the grace of God in this chapter. The angels find their way to Sodom, they are, if I may so speak, evangelists to the house of Lot, and while declaring what is coming on the scene, they point out a place of safety.

And what has God done? Before the day of judgment falls on the world, His own Son has stepped in, and done a work on the cross, whereby the sinner may escape.

There is a way of escape, and God works, and the Holy Ghost works, and His servants work, to try to get you on the road that leads to a place of safety.

The very fact of God's sending a Saviour is

the irrefragable proof that man needed salvation, and how shall we escape if we make light of Christ, if we "neglect *so great* salvation"?

Have you not heard the message often, and yet you are unconverted? I would fain, like the angels, lay "hold upon your hand," and bring you forth, for you are, like Lot, a lingerer still. You do not deny that judgment is coming, and yet you linger. What has seized you, to be any longer careless about your soul? Put the Bible in the fire, and I could understand your conduct; but tell me you read the Word of God, tell me you believe Scripture—believe the tale of the blood-shedding and death of the Son of God—tell me you believe the tale of the day of judgment coming, and I cannot understand you. Oh, wake up, wake up, be no longer careless! If you merely say you believe Scripture, and are in the world and of the world, depend upon it the world knows very well who belongs to it, and God knows. God knew that Lot did not belong to that defiled scene — Sodom, and "delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked."

The angels said to Lot, "Up, get you out;" and to you, unsaved soul, I say "Up, get you out." Men talk of the progress of the world. Where is the progress? "Oh," you say, "look at science." Yes, I grant it. "And look at the inventions, the improvements." I grant it,

but are children more dutiful? Are servants more faithful? Are masters and mistresses more considerate and careful? Are husbands more tender? Are wives more prudent? No! no! The world is making great progress, but to what? I will tell you. To judgment! To judgment! Did not Sodom progress? Yes! and all of a sudden it was judged; and "As it was in the days of Lot, thus shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed." Then, in fancied security, they reared their heads proudly aloft, and defied God, and so they do now. But the judgment came *then*, and it will surely come on this scene in which you are.

But that judgment is not what I press so now. Lot's wife never saw the judgment; she was cut off, but not by Sodom's judgment; and you, halting, unbelieving sinner, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Lot's sons-in-law did not believe the word about coming judgment; they seemed to say, "If you are going to leave the city—give up the world—we are not;" and they remained, and tasted the judgment they courted.

"Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city," says Lot. But what thought the sons-in-law? They thought he was a fool, and was playing the fool for their amusement: he seemed to them as one that mocked. It was not they who mocked him, but "he

seemed as one that *mocked* unto his sons-in-law." The very idea of *their* city being overthrown was ridiculous, for Sodom had never been more busy, never more prosperous; the sun was shining, and there was no sign of coming judgment. They refused the message that told them of the way of escape, and perished in its overthrow. It was sheer unbelief, and many a time has not the preacher seemed to you as one that mocked? But search the Scriptures, and see if these things are true or no.

I am not mocking you, I am warning you, delivering my own soul too, and if you sink into the lake of fire—you *will* if you do not come to Christ—you can never say in its depths that you were not warned. Oh, flee to Jesus, flee to the mountain, "escape for thy life."

Perhaps you say, "I would rather stay where I am." Very well, but you can never say you were not warned. Do you say, "Christians are not consistent"? I own it; but are God's words true? It will be no consolation to you by and by, that you did not believe because Christians were not consistent.

Arise! flee for thy life, flee to the Lord now, lest thou mayest never have another opportunity.

"Oh, but," you say, "you do not expect the Lord so soon, do you?" I do expect Him every moment, and I will tell you what, if He comes *to-night*, to-morrow you will believe. "Believe

what?" Believe the devil's gospel, for the devil has a gospel. Oh yes, *you* may yet be a believer, but you will believe a *lie*. "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii.).

I have no doubt part of the devil's gospel to you will be, "You are all right." Satan will say, "You are getting on all right now you have got rid of these troublers."

The troublers are taken up to meet Christ, and the world will go on just as before, but no more troubled by these preachers. Sons and daughters no more troubled by converted parents, brothers no more troubled by converted sisters. No! the troublers are gone, the fools, the madmen in your eyes, are all gone; and you are left to enjoy a Satanic, balmy calm, untroubled by anything about your soul—*till, till* one day the bubble of fancied security bursts, and swift destruction falls, and there is *no* escape.

Oh, arise! flee now! now while you may. Have you lingered long? delay no longer. The Lord would lay His hand on you and bring you forth. *Can* you linger still? You that have hesitated—have not decided—have not been in earnest about your soul hitherto, oh, hesitate not, linger not, lest *you* taste judgment, before the day of judgment. "Remember Lot's wife," lest the mercy of God be too long disregarded, and He show no longer mercy but judgment.

Thank God you are still in life, still here where the Gospel is preached ; if you had died yesterday, you would have been *in hell!* You that are undecided, impressed about the truth, half decided, but not quite, oh, "Remember Lot's wife." Will you refuse the Lord's hand, that would touch you, and drag you now to Jesus ?

Look ! the angels drag them outside the city, but outside the city is not safety, out of the world is not *safety*, to have broken with old habits is not safety, to make good resolutions is not safety ; you must get to the *mountain*, get to Christ.

The mountain, I take it, is the same place where Abraham had communion with God ; the mountain, I believe, typifies Christ—Christ the only place of safety, Christ God's salvation, Christ risen from the dead, Christ the sinner's friend. Hear God's exhortation to you, O soul—"Escape for thy life." Hear also God's warning word to the unsaved soul, "Remember Lot's wife." Who bids thee be warned by her—take warning by her solemn end ? The Lord ! They are His own words.

She started on the road, but she never reached the mountain. Nothing can save your soul but Christ ; anxiety will not save you, desire to be saved will not save you. She got out of the city, but she never got salvation. She turned round

to see if there was any truth in what she had heard, and if she might not yet get back to Sodom, and she stands the witness of the righteous judgment of God on a soul that was not real, was not true, did not with her heart believe the message; and tell me, shall it be with you, Christ and the mountain top, and safety, or judgment on the plain, *eternal* judgment? Do you say, "I will think about it, I will think over what you say"? Then to you I say again "Remember Lot's wife," one that turned aside when God said, "Escape to the mountain."

Reach Christ you must; it is not how near have you got, but have you got to *Him*? I do not know how near she was to Zoar; she might have been just outside the gates, and her husband going in, but she never went in; never, never.

And I do not know where you are: you may be but two inches from Christ, but let me tell you, if you are but one hair's-breadth from Christ, that hair's-breadth will ensure your eternal damnation; you and Lot's wife will be in the same case, eternal monuments of the righteous judgment of God on your own outrageous folly—you *might* have tasted salvation, but you *did not*.

God lingers over you, calls you, would drag you forth, points you to the mountain top,

points you to Christ; "Stay not," He says, "do not halt or hesitate, there is no place of safety, peace, or security, till you have got to that spot, the risen Christ in glory." You say, "Did not Lot get to *Zoar*?" Yes, and he got safety there, but he did not get *tranquillity*; he had *security*, but he had not *peace*, he had doubts and fears in *Zoar*, so, soon, he went to the mountain.

Going into *Zoar* is like people who desire to be saved, but who want a little bit of the world too. "Is it not a little one?" says Lot, *i.e.* he is half-hearted. Must I make a clean cut? he says.

It is a sorrowful thing to be in *Zoar*. *Zoar* is a kind of ditch, into which the devil likes people to fall, who really are converted. He likes them to take a bit of the world with them. "It does not do," he tells them, "to be too true, too out and out for Christ."

Oh, my friend, escape for thy life and flee to the mountain; never rest till you reach Christ. *Look* not behind, "Remember Lot's wife." Smoking corpses, a burning city, and ashes throughout all the plain, were the only things that remained to speak of the utter folly of disbelieving the warning of God. I said the *only* things, but there was yet another. Had a traveller drawn near to Sodom that day, a strange sight would have met his eye—a pillar of salt! Charred? No! Blackened? No!

No sign of that fiery judgment had touched the Pillar of Salt. No! It stood the witness of the folly of going half way, of being *half persuaded*, *almost* decided, but only *almost*. "Remember Lot's wife."

What turned her back? Love of the city she had left. Oh! whoever you are, decide for Christ now. Supposing the Lord were to shut the door to-night, where would *you* be? You, who think you would like to be a Christian *some* day,—think it is a good thing to be a Christian,—mean to be one *some* day,—to you, I say, "Remember Lot's wife."

Ye halters, ye undecided, ye who know the claims of the world, think of her, on her way to salvation but never reaching it—having her back for a moment turned on the world, but turning round again. Let me beseech you, decide *now*: the way is open, the Lord calls thee, the evangelist beseeches thee, God urges thee, the Church would welcome thee; turn round, own your sin, confess your guilt, acknowledge your danger. Come to Jesus!

He will receive you, pardon you, you shall know now His salvation, know security and tranquillity likewise. There remains but one thing for you to do, get to Christ, reach Christ, believe on Christ.

Oh, couldst thou bear, through the long, the morningless night of eternity, to be the counter-

part of Lot's wife? And what is that? A person who was lost within sight of salvation, who went down to the pit passing by the open door of heaven on the road. Oh, do not risk such a fate! Come now—turn now.

May this lead you who are unsaved, so to remember Lot's wife, that you shall never be like her. If I remember her, I will take good care never to be like her. The Lord give you to hear God's word to you, and to believe on His Son.

And for us who are Christians, if there is but one day more before the return of our Lord, may we know what it is to do as these angels, to seek to drag those whom we know out of the world, and to draw them to Christ.

Unsaved reader, wouldst thou "remember Lot's wife"?

"Then linger not in all the plain,
Flee for thy life, the mountain gain!
Look not behind, make no delay!
Oh! speed thee, speed thee, on thy way.
Haste, traveller, haste!"

If thou slightest the warning of that Pillar of salt, thy future is thus solemnly pictured:—

"'Almost persuaded,' harvest is past!
'Almost persuaded,' doom comes at last!
'Almost' cannot avail;
'Almost' is but to fail;
Sad, sad, that bitter wail—
'Almost' but lost!"

W. T. P. W.

THE SAVIOUR'S CALL.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—REV. iii, 20.

"Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded . . . I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear cometh."—PROV. i. 24—28.

"Once the master of the house is risen up and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are."—LUKE xiii. 24.

I am standing outside thy door to-night,
 Seeking thine heart to win;
 The world for awhile has withdrawn its light,
 Wilt thou open and let Me in?
 I have travelled far on a lonely road,
 In sorrow and agony;
 I have borne sin's heavy and crushing load,
 All for the sake of thee!

I am standing to plead with thee to-night,
 While the dews of midnight fall;
 O'er the moaning and surging waves of life,
 Dost thou hear My yearning call?
 I would free thy soul from the chains of earth,
 From its care, its sorrow, and sin;
 I would give thee joy for its hollow mirth—
 Wilt thou open and let Me in?

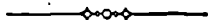
From the glorious heights of heaven I came
 To seek thee and to save;
 But the world—it gave Me a cross of shame,
 And a lonely borrowed grave!
 I left My radiant home above,
 All for the sake of thee;
 I have died to prove My deep, deep love—
 Wilt thou open the door to Me?

Thou hast wander'd far in the paths of sin,
 Thou art weary, and sad, and lone ;
 But My blood can cleanse, and My love can win,
 May I make thine heart My own ?
 The world—it has given thee care and pain,
 Often famine and misery ;
 I offer thee treasures of priceless gain—
 Wilt thou open the door to Me ?

If thou *wilt not* answer My pleading voice ;
 If thou wilt not open to Me ;
 Thou wilt sadly repent thy wilful choice
 Through a lost eternity.
 And *thy* bitter cry will arise too late,
 “ Open, O Lord, to me !”

While the door of grace, where thou mad'st Me wait,
 Must be shut for ever to thee !

A. S. O



CAN YOU SAY YOU ARE SAVED ?

SOME time ago, while staying at the seaside, I was asked to go and visit a poor girl who had been confined to her bed for more than a year, and with little apparent hope of ever being able to leave it. Shortly after, I found my way to her lodging, and was shown upstairs to a tiny room, in which was little more space than sufficient for her bed and the chair beside it, on which she asked me to sit down. She seemed glad to see me, but quiet and rather silent ; however, after looking at me for a moment she appeared satisfied of my sympathy and interest, and a few questions soon drew out her sad story. She told me how she had fallen down

a flight of stairs three years before, and had received such an injury that the doctors said she could never hope to walk again. Here her eyes filled with tears, as she spoke of her mother, now dead, and her grief. "But," she said, "I am accustomed to it now, and I don't mind it nearly so much; at first I could not bear to be in bed and to see the bright sunshine, and hear the birds sing outside; now, thank God, I am content."

"Do you love the Lord, then?" I asked.

"Yes, Miss, indeed I do."

"I am so glad of that, for it must make a wonderful difference to you when you are alone all the time. And are you happy, then, and ready to go when He sees right to take you?"

She looked at me for a moment, and then replied, "Oh no, Miss, I can't say that."

"Why is that? If you love Him can you not trust Him? Has He not saved you? or, can you not say that you are saved?"

She stopped for a moment, and then said, "Oh, Miss, it would be too great presumption for me to say that."

Silently I asked the Lord to give me the right word, so I asked her, "Do you think He is willing to save you?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Is He able?"

"Oh yes!" she was quite sure of that.

“Then why was He nailed to the cross, why did He hang there for those dreadful hours, and why did God hide His face from Him? Only because He was bearing our sins; He was being made the curse; He was tasting death that we might never taste it, and now He is able and willing, and ready to save *all* that come to God by Him. Nay, more, The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all, and His own word to us is, ‘He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life.*’— (John iii. 36.)

“Now,” I added, “I should think that the presumption is, not in believing His word, but in doubting it. You believe that He died on the cross for us?”

“Yes.”

“That He bore *all* our sins there?” “Yes.”

“That He bore yours as well as mine?” “Yes.”

“Well, then, the Lord says, *you are saved, you have eternal life, you have got it now.*”

She seemed intensely surprised, but could not quite grasp it. I found her some proof passages in her own Bible, and after a short time left her.

Several days passed before I could go again. At last I found myself once more beside her bed. She welcomed me very warmly, and said, “Oh Miss, I am so glad you have come. I did want to see you. I have thought over all you told me, and read your verses again and again.”

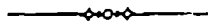
“Well,” I said, “and are you afraid to say

now that the Lord has saved you? Can you trust Him now?"

She looked at me with such a bright face, her eyes beaming, and the colour mantling her poor wasted cheeks, whilst a smile that seemed to say almost more than her words played round her mouth as she said, "Oh yes, Miss, I see it now."

I saw her often afterwards before I left the place, and had many happy times with her.

The Lord give you, dear reader, to taste the joy of being *His own!*—*saved*, and of having *eternal life*. "And that life is in His Son." I.



YOUR FUTURE.

DEAR Reader, what about your *future*? your *past*, whatever it has been, is gone for ever and cannot be recalled, your *present* is slipping away moment by moment with every beat of your pulse. Your *future*—ah! have you ever thought about it—the endless, *endless future*? Perhaps you say, "I have never given it one serious thought." Dear friend, why is this? If a man had a bill to meet on an appointed day, would he not be prepared for it? or if he had a friend coming to see him, would he not be anxious to be quite ready for him?

Ah! my unconverted reader, there is a solemn event in *your future*. God says, "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb.

ix. 27). Do what you will, you cannot avoid DEATH. But the Scripture just referred to does not end there, solemn though it be to contemplate death, and though the miserable annihilationist would fain have us believe that the unconverted man perishes in death like the beast; for I read, "after this the JUDGMENT." This, my friend, is what I especially desire to call your earnest attention to. As you think of your future path, there stands right against you in the way DEATH and JUDGMENT; what a future yours is, dear friend, if you continue in your present road. And you cannot escape it. God cannot remit the sentence. He has said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And His word also says, "ALL have sinned." Thus ALL, including my reader, are under the sentence, which is death, followed by judgment.

I earnestly pray that every unsaved soul who reads these words may realise his danger, and see that, except by this sentence of death and judgment being fully borne, there can be *no salvation*. For oh, dear friend, when you have thus found out your need, and have cried from your heart to God, "What must I do to be saved?" we have to tell you that He is "rich in mercy," "not willing that any should perish;" that He has said, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24); that though He is of "purer eyes than to behold

evil," and cannot "look on iniquity" (Hab. i.), yet "doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him" (2 Sam. xiv. 14). Are you indeed so anxious to be saved that you say, "Do tell me how these things can be?" Then listen, and may God bless His Word to you.

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ DIED FOR the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). "Christ also hath once suffered FOR SINS, the just FOR the unjust" (1 Peter iii. 18).

"Who His own self bare OUR SINS in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24).

"He appeared to PUT AWAY SIN by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. ix. 26). "ALL thy waves and thy billows (the judgment of God) are gone over me" (Psalm xlii. 7).

Now, my friend, do you not see that HE has borne the SIN; HE has passed through DEATH; HE has been under the JUDGMENT. This is the means God has devised to bring back His banished, to bring you back, poor sinner, into His presence in perfect peace and happiness, and that, too, in perfect righteousness. "How do I know it is for me?" some soul will say. Ah, my friend, when you feel your need of it, you will not raise such a question, but you will joyfully accept the word that says, "By him, ALL that believe, are justified from ALL THINGS" (Acts xiii. 39). Death and judgment are now no longer in your future, as the consequence of your sins, if believ-

ing in Jesus; yea, God is righteous and just in justifying you (Rom. iii. 26), because His own Son has fully and infinitely met every claim, and discharged all your responsibility as a guilty, but now believing sinner. How simple, yet how blessedly true.

And now, what is your future? Blessed be His name, Christ has so settled the questions of sin, death and judgment, that God can give you in lieu of sin, righteousness (2 Cor. v. 21); of death, eternal life (John iii. 36, x. 28), and of the fear of judgment, the hope of glory (Rom. v. 2). What an exchange! what a future! The *dark* future of death and judgment is gone for ever, for Christ has taken them; so that as He has passed through them, I can now look at them AS BEHIND me, for He went through them FOR ME. And He has brought in eternal life and the glory of God, and given them to me as my present possession and future hope. This is what is BEFORE me. Is not this a *bright* future?

And think, that all this blessedness may be yours this moment, even now, for the Word is "To him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH ON Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5).

"But the fearful and the UNBELIEVING . . . shall have THEIR PART in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the SECOND DEATH (Rev. xxi. 8).

H. P. A. G.

SO GREAT SALVATION.

(HEB. ii. 3.)

WE may safely say there never was such a time as the present for the preaching of the Gospel. Young and old, rich and poor, learned and illiterate, every grade and rank of society in Christendom, have heard in some way or another of this "great salvation." Great, indeed, is our responsibility, and terrible the judgment of those who can afford to make light of it—who, busy with their merchandise or their money, their science or their pleasure, eager to please the world, or governed by the lusts of their own evil hearts, "neglect so great salvation."

Some there are who, with the bold indifference of their sceptical minds, make light of God's proffered mercy, think their own thoughts, and shut out God altogether.

Others, again, are fascinated by the gaudy tinsel of this "Vanity Fair," the excitement of the "cup" or the billiard-room—"the pleasures of sin for a season."

Others, educated and cultivated, are seeking the advancement of commerce and science. But, dear reader, to whatever class you belong, pause, for you may be neglecting—what? the eternal interests of your soul: despising—what? the goodness of God, that would lead thee even now to repentance; braving—what? "the wrath to

come;" and all, that you may carry out your own desires, or satisfy your own ambition. Remember, friend! remember that the end of these things is death, and after death the judgment. What things? you say. Well, anything whatsoever that leads you to reject the Lord Jesus Christ, that keeps you from receiving "so great salvation."

You will tell me that you are not a rejector of Christ, you do not like such strong expressions; you do sometimes think seriously, and attend to the ordinances of religion. Yes, dear soul; but, alas! your very religion may leave you where it found you—if not a rejector, at least a neglecter of this "great salvation."

But why press this one thing so much? Because it is "so great," and of such eternal importance, that it demands your immediate interest, it claims your whole attention. It is that which your soul needs. God wants now to make it yours; and if you neglect it, how shall you escape? The Apostle includes himself in this question, which defies all answer; yet surely he, if any, might have escaped by his own doings or efforts.

Why is it that Paul, by the Spirit, so qualifies this salvation? You have but to read the preceding chapter to get the answer: "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. i. 2). Measure the cross by Christ, and

thus learn its meaning; consider the greatness of the Saviour, and thus know what a salvation it must be.

With God from all eternity, higher far than the angels, co-equal with the Father, "the heir of all things," "by whom also he made the worlds"—witness Him taking the place of a man, and then humbling Himself unto death, "even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 7, 8). Hear the Son, "which is in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18), crying out as the Sinner-bearer, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46), and as Ps. xxii. 15 expresses it, "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." See Him, in the language of Isa. liii. 12, "pouring out his soul unto death." Or again, Jonah, as a figure of Christ in death, could say, "Thou hast cast me into the deep: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me" (chap. ii. 3).

Remember who it is that now bears, at God's right hand, the marks of His shame and death on Calvary. Was it not the Lamb, of God's providing, that went from the heights of glory to the depths of woe? And why? That He might secure for us salvation—"so great," because none less than the Son of God could work it out—"the salvation of God," for God Himself wrought it by His Son. Well may the Apostle say, "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast,

and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard it." There is no escape; for "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. x. 28, 29)—this same Spirit which now is pressing upon your acceptance this "great salvation."

Oh, friend! will you trifle longer, and will you still delay or make excuse? God forbid! What will your business, your science, or your pleasure do for you before "the great white throne"? Awful is your guilt for so long neglecting; but now believe, even now decide for so great a Saviour; and when "the great day of His wrath has come," you shall be able to stand (Rev. vi. 17).

On the other hand, you may have been awakened, and now you are feeling the greatness of your sins, your unfitness for God. Perhaps, moreover, you have been trying to improve your condition, to give up your sins. What a relief, then, for you to "stand still!"

if now you are willing, and "see the salvation of the Lord" (Ex. xiv. 13), to hear that shout of victory, "It is finished!" (John xxi. 30); to believe in Him who, by the shedding of His own blood, "obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12). What must the love be that gives you "so great salvation?" what the grace that invites you, where and as you are, to receive such a Saviour? Fear not, then, dear soul! but learn that Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey (or receive) him" (Heb. v. 9).

"Salvation! oh, salvation!

Endearing, precious sound!

Shout, shout the word '*Salvation!*'

To earth's remotest bound.

Salvation for the guilty,

Salvation for the lost,

Salvation for the wretched,

The sad and sorrow-toss'd.

Salvation without money,

Salvation without price,

Salvation without labour,

Believing doth suffice;

Salvation now—this moment!

Then why, oh! why delay?

You may not see to-morrow,

Now is salvation's day!"

T. E. P.



SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.

(EXODUS xii.—xiv. ; JONAH ii.)

THE blood had been the token
 When judgment passed us o'er ;
 The word our God had spoken
 Was true for evermore ;
 But, tracked by foes pursuing,
 We faced the swelling tide,
 No way, no succour viewing,
 To reach the other side.

Who made through those deep waters
 A passage dry and free ?
 Whose arm triumphant brought us
 Beyond that mighty sea ?
 While those who once ruled o'er us
 Sank in its awful tide,
 And lay in death before us
 On this, the other side.

Jesus! those waters teach us
 What Thou hast once endured :
 That they might never reach us,
 Thy death this way procured.
 We praise Thy name all-glorious,
 The risen One who died ;
 And share Thy place victorious,
 This Resurrection-side !

Not only as forgiven
 The countless debt we owed,
 Our portion now is heaven,
 All things with Thee bestowed.
 From Jordan, too, as learning
 That with Thee we have died,
 Ne'er let our hearts be turning
 Back to that other side !

WHITE AS SNOW.

DURING the winter of 187— I was the guest of a Christian lady residing at the pretty village of C——, in Sussex. We sat talking of that happy time when the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and we shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, and be for ever with Himself, when we were disturbed by a violent knocking at the door, accompanied by the sound of a man's voice singing a low song.

“Don't be alarmed,” said my friend, “it is only Nat W—— in one of his drunken fits; he will pass on directly, or the police will take him away.”

“Does he often annoy you in this manner?” I inquired.

“Oh yes, very often when he goes home this way.”

“But who is Nat W——?” I asked.

“He is one of the villagers,” replied my friend; “he lives in the little white cottage by the beach, and for the last six years he has been a confirmed drunkard and infidel. His wife has been bedridden for the last twelve months with disease of the spine, and for the last two she has been anxious to see Mr. F——, the minister; but Nat says that he will be the death of the man, whoever he be, who dares to go to talk to his Dorothy about religion; and he abused dreadfully a Christian man who

tried to see her, and refused to allow him to enter his cottage. When he is absent from home he locks his door, so that no one can get in until he returns, and for the last two months not a soul but the doctor has crossed the threshold of their cottage."

"How dreadful," said I, "do you think she is saved?"

"I fear not," was the reply, "and the doctor says she cannot live more than three months; but Nat will not let you see her; it is useless to make the attempt."

As it was getting late we separated for the night, but I could not rest; thoughts of this poor woman filled my mind. I pictured her lying, alone and neglected, in her little cottage, rapidly drawing near to eternity, and yet, as far as was known, *unsaved*; and I lifted up my heart to the Lord, and asked Him to send one of His servants to speak to her of Himself as the One who died for sinners, and who was their only Saviour and friend.

In the morning, on opening my Bible, my eye fell on those solemn words, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." (Isaiah vi.)

It was just the answer I needed to my prayer, and I determined to see Mrs. W—— that morning if possible.

The snow was falling fast when I set out,

carrying with me some little dainties I thought might be fancied by the invalid, and lifting up my heart to the Lord to incline her husband to allow me to speak to his wife, I reached the cottage.

In answer to my knock, a gruff voice inquired, who was there. "A friend," I answered, "do open the door: I want to speak to you." Upon this the door opened, and Nat appeared, asking what was my business. I replied that I had brought some jelly for Mrs. W——, and asked if I might see her."

"But who has sent you?" he asked in surprise.

"My Master," I answered.

"But who is your master?"

"He is the 'King of kings.'"

"I know nothing of Him," said Nat, looking much surprised; "but where do you live?" I told him where I was staying, and he exclaimed, "What! have you come all this way in the snow to see Dorothy? then come in, you shall not be disappointed," and I thankfully followed him into the cottage.

Such a scene of dirt and wretchedness I had never before witnessed; there was no fire in the grate, and scarcely an article of furniture in the room, and Dorothy was shivering with cold. "Do you think you could light a fire, Mr. W——," I asked; "your wife is very cold,"

“I have not a stick in the house, and no means to obtain any either.”

“Don’t lock the door,” said I, “I will soon be back again;” and leaving him standing watching me, I hurried to the nearest place where wood and coal were to be obtained, and requesting them to be sent immediately, I returned to the cottage. In a short time a cheery fire was blazing in the grate, and Nat produced a small saucepan, into which I put some beef tea I had brought, and soon had the pleasure of seeing Dorothy enjoying a nourishing meal.

“How good it is of you to take so much trouble for me,” said the poor woman; “what makes you so kind?”

“The Lord Jesus sent me to you this morning,” said I, “to tell you He loves you so much that He came down into this world and died on the cross, bore all the punishment that was due to you as a sinner, and God has proved that He is satisfied with what Jesus has done, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His own right hand in heaven, and now the work is finished, and God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”

“Oh, is that all true?” asked Mrs. W——.

“I have been a great sinner, and hated the very name of religion or anything good, and now I am dying, and I am afraid to die, for I have been

an enemy of God, and I know I deserve to be sent to hell, and why shouldn't He send me there? I am a lost woman, *yes, lost, lost!*"

"Thank God you know it," said I, "for I have a message for you; listen to this, 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke xix. 10); so, you see, Mrs. W——, it is those who *are lost* Jesus came to save. He wants to save *you*, just as you are; it gives Him greater joy to save poor sinners than any human mind can imagine; will you give Him this joy now, and let Him save you now? He is able to do it and He is willing; He waits with outstretched arms to receive you; He speaks to you and says, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' (Matt. xi. 28.) And 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.'" (John vi. 37.)

"It is all very beautiful," said Dorothy, "but it is not for me, I am *too bad*, I have been *too wicked*; if I had only thought of these things when I was well and strong, there might have been hope, but I have lived an ungodly life, I never wished to be saved till I was told I must die, and now it is too late; my life has been spent in the service of Satan, and he will pay my wages in hell. Oh, it's too late! it's too late!"

"It is true the wages of sin is death," said I, "but, 'The gift of God is eternal life, through

Jesus Christ our Lord.' (Rom. vi. 23.) God offers you His gift, Christ, instead of the wages you have deserved; it is not yet too late. Remember the thief on the cross; he had been Satan's servant or slave all his life, yet at the very last he turned to Jesus in simple faith, and said, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom;' and Jesus, in His infinite love, answered him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' Will you not, Mrs. W——, come to Jesus as this poor thief came?"

"Oh that I might come!" said she, "but you don't know how bad I've been."

"But Jesus knows all about it," I answered, "and He says, 'Come now and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" (Isaiah i. 18.)

"White as snow," she murmured, "Oh, how precious, how sweet; white as snow."

As it was time for me to leave her, I read the 53rd of Isaiah, and took leave of her; but as I reached the door she asked me to tell her once more of scarlet sins being white as snow; I did so, repeating also "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and promising to come again to see her the next morning, if possible, I left her.

The next day I saw her again, and the next, and the next; but still she seemed to linger,

longing to be saved, yet fearing to take the truth to herself because she was so great a sinner.

One fine morning, as I sat by her side talking of Jesus, she said, "I believe I am the greatest sinner that ever lived." "Then come to Jesus at once," I replied, "for He says 'I came not to call the righteous, but *sinner*s to repentance.' And again, 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us.' And again, 'While we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.' And again, 'For when we were without strength in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*.'" (Romans v. 6, 8, 10.)

"Oh, do tell me more," she exclaimed, "that just meets my case; I've been ungodly, and an enemy, and a great sinner, but this gives me hope. Oh, tell me more!"

I read the 3rd of John, from the 14th verse to the end of the chapter. At the end of the 16th verse she exclaimed, "Oh, how kind it was of Him; how He must have loved us!"

"Yes, indeed He did," I replied, "and all He asks us to do in order to be saved, is to believe on Him, to trust Him fully, entirely."

"Is that all?" asked Dorothy, "have I *nothing* to do?"

"Nothing," I replied, "Jesus has done everything. On the cross He said, 'It is finished,' and if you try to add anything to what is finished, in

earthly things, you only mar and spoil it, so in this you can add nothing to it, it is complete."

"Yes, now the work is finished,
 The sinner's debt is paid,
 Because on Christ the righteous
 The sin of all was laid. (Isaiah liii. 6.)
 For God released our surety
 To show the work was done,
 And Jesus' resurrection
 Proclaimed the victory won." (Rom. iv. 25.)

"I see, I see," she exclaimed; "'he that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life.' Oh, do help me to praise Him; I can never thank Him enough; I do believe on Him; I do trust Him; oh, how I long to see Him to thank Him for His love, His wonderful love in saving me. I don't think there will be one soul in heaven who will sing so loud as old Dorothy, for I've been a greater sinner than any of them ever could be; oh, how wonderful it is that Jesus should love His worst enemy so much as to die to save her from eternal death; oh, what glory to think that very soon I shall be with Him. I can thank Him better then, when I see Him face to face."

Dorothy lingered only nine days after this, but her faith never once wavered, for it was fixed, not on her frames or feelings, but on the imperishable word of the living God; because He said it she believed it. I was with her as much as possible, but no one thought the hour of her de-

parture was so near. I was with her in the morning at twelve, and at four in the afternoon a messenger came to tell me to go at once. I hurried to the cottage, and found her very near death, but rejoicing in the certainty that she was going to Jesus.

“Read about ‘white as snow,’” she said, and I did so. She lay still a moment, and then said, “Let me say good-bye to you now, as I may not be able soon.” I bent over her for a moment, unable to speak: she pressed my hand in hers and said, “I shall meet you above, farewell! God bless you, and make you a blessing to many others, as you have been to me.” As soon as I could speak I read her favourite chapters, the 3rd of John, and 21st and 22nd of Revelation; she smiled and said, “That is where I am going;” then turning to her husband, who stood beside her, she said, “Nat, will you come there? If so, you must come to Jesus as a poor lost guilty sinner, and He will in no wise cast you out; give up your false infidel doctrines. You are better off than I, for you can read the Bible for yourself; oh Nat, my dear husband, do believe in Jesus.”*

For some time after this she did not know us. Once I asked, “Do you know me?” She shook her head. “But you know Jesus?”

* God blessed this dying appeal to Nat's conversion. For the account of this see our number for September.

I added; she smiled and said, "Oh yes." Just before her spirit took its flight she looked up with a smile; I bent over her, and asked her to tell us what she saw. "Jesus! Jesus!" she replied, "don't you see Him? Can't you see Him? Hark, He calls me. Yes, I come, Lord Jesus, I come to thee." Another bright beautiful smile lit up her face, and with the name of Jesus on her lips she passed from this world of sin and pain and death to be with the One who had loved her, washed her from her sins in His own blood, and made her white as snow.

A. V. M.

"BEHOLD THE MAN!"

Lo, the marks upon Him there—
 Why so mangled, rent, and torn?
 Why those wounds upon His brow—
 Wounds of rugged, tangled thorn?
 Piercèd feet, head, hands, and side,
 Tell me that my Lord has died.

Why within the tomb enclosed,
 Lifeless, silent, still, and dead,
 Bound with linen clothes, and laid
 With the napkin 'bout His head?
 Tomb, and death, and napkin say,
 Love, pure love, has had its way.

Why uprising from the grave,
 Spite of all that man can do;
 Taking now the life He gave,
 While the angels wondering view?
 Death defeated, empty grave,
 Tell me Jesus now can save.

Why ascending up on high,
 Victor over every foe,
 Prince of life, no more to die,
 Endless blessings to bestow ?
 This, that blest ascension proves—
 Christ in glory ever loves.

A. M.



“ GOING—GOING—GONE ! ”

“ Going—going—gone ! ” said the auctioneer, as he handed the article he had been exposing for sale to the highest bidder, and the article became the property of a new possessor.

“ Going—going—gone ! ” said the spendthrift, as he squandered away his last piece of money, and found himself a pauper on the face of the earth, and the piece of money belonged henceforth to the successful gamester.

“ Going—going—gone ! ” rang out the church bells, as the old year gradually faded away ; and when the midnight hour had struck, it passed on to the page of history.

“ Going—going—gone ! ” said the little child, as it watched the grains of sand silently gliding into the lower globe of the sand-glass. The last grain fell, and became mingled with the others.

“ Going—going—gone ! ” said, slowly and solemnly, the physician, as he stood beside the death-bed : the bosom had ceased to heave, and the pulse to beat—all was over. Life had retired,

death had stepped in; mirth had vanished, gloom had cast its shroud over the scene. The smile of joy had flitted from each countenance; and re-echoing throughout the silence of that chamber, and striking heavily home upon the mourning hearts around, rolled that unwelcome sound, "Gone—gone—gone!"

"Gone," no more to return; "gone," no more to be seen nor heard; "gone," no more to be enjoyed, or caressed, or loved; "gone," only to be remembered; "gone," from life to death; "gone" from time to eternity; "gone"—but WHITHER? To an eternity of joy, or an eternity of woe? to an eternity of heaven, or an eternity of hell? to an eternity of the presence of God, or an eternity in company with the devil and his angels?

Whither, ah! whither hath "gone" that soul? There lies the body; but body and soul have now parted. The one may be decently laid in the coffin, and buried in the clay; but the soul—that precious, priceless, and imperishable soul, over which man hath no power to kill nor to destroy—where hath the soul "gone"?

Turn back for an answer to the time when that soul had not "gone," when it was only "going," and ask how it went?

It was "going" the road of sin, and it has "gone" the way of death and judgment.

It was "going" the road of "wicked works,"

or “ dead works,” and it has “ gone ” to receive the curse.

It was “ going ” the road of amiability, respectability, uprightness, and morality, avoiding, nevertheless, the second birth, and it has “ gone ” to hear the unalterable decree, “ I know you not, depart from me.”

“ Gone ” to death, “ gone ” to hell, “ gone ” to damnation.

Oh, sinner, awake, awake! Thou art “ going, going,” and wilt soon be “ gone ”—“ GONE ” FOR EVER. “ Gone ” to thy judgment, “ gone ” to thy part in the lake of fire, “ gone ” to thy weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Thy body will lie quietly in the grave; but thy soul will be “ gone ” to torment, to await the opening of the tombs, and the raising of the bodies that sleep in them; and then with re-united body and soul must thou appear before the “ great white throne ” to meet the eye of thy Judge, and find thyself hurried away to “ the lake of fire, which is the second death.”

On that dread morning, death and the grave shall give up their inmates, for “ all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth,” and the grave will then be cleared of that dust which it has held for years or centuries. Oh, what a reunion when thy body shall recognise thy soul, and shall see in it the spring of all those sins and

misdeeds of which thou wast guilty when on earth! But almighty power shall produce this reunion; and death and the grave being now emptied, the lake of fire shall be filled—that second death that shall never, *can never*, die.

Oh! man, woman, living in sin, or else, if not in open sin, yet unborn again, unrenewed, unconverted, trusting your supposed "good works" or your kindly disposition, let me entreat you to take thought.

Your time is "going," "going" swiftly, and will soon be "gone." You yourself will soon be "gone," BUT WHERE? Where, oh! where would you be "gone" if taken away now, *at this moment*? Say, Are you ready? Are you forgiven? Are you saved? Have your sins been washed away in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you a child of God? If not, I tell thee lovingly, faithfully, thou art "going" to hell. Arouse thee, or thou mayest be found there! "Flee from the coming wrath."

As the tree inclineth, so probably will it fall; and "as the tree falleth, so," most surely, "will it lie." Reader! may I ask what is your present leaning, your inclination, your tendency, your proclivity, your bias? Your end will, in all probability, be as your leaning. Of the two thieves who were crucified only one was saved, and the other, with equal opportunity and access to the Saviour, was lost.

As a matter of fact death-bed conversions are very rare; and it is folly in the extreme to live unsaved, and hope for a death-bed repentance. At such a moment the body may be agonised with pain in every member, and the mind totally unfitted for sober, calm, and deep reflection. Moreover, that is the moment chosen, above all others, for the last grand assault of the devil upon the soul. The valley of death is haunted by gloom, and tenanted by the devil. Death is his weapon; and when the cold hand of the King of Terrors is laid upon its victim, then does Satan appear with all his darts and delusions to becloud the soul. It is then he repeats in awful power, and, alas! with great success, the two hopeless words, "TOO LATE!" "Your life," says he, "has been mis-spent; your opportunity is over now, the door of mercy is firmly closed against you, and it is *too late!*"

"All true," says the soul, "too true. I have sinned, I have closed my ear to warning, and my heart to God; and now, racked with pain in every part of my body, and filled in every region of my soul with blank, hopeless despair, I sink, I fall—lost, ruined, undone, damned!" and the fearful scene, but too frequently witnessed, is brought to a close. The soul has "gone" to "outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

" The way of transgressors is hard." They live hard, they die hard, and they spend a hard eternity. The road on which they travel here is rough ; for whilst sin may afford its momentary pleasures, yet the conscience tells its tale, and the prospect of meeting God and rendering account to Him creates trouble, fear, and anguish. The eternity throughout which they must exist hereafter will be one of misery chiefly because, when they knew the right way, they refused to walk in it. They neglected the great salvation ; and the one bitter, grievous, and poignant sorrow of their hearts will be this terrible thought : "*I might have been saved.* I might have spent ETERNITY in yonder regions of everlasting and amaranthine glory, instead of in this 'place of torment.' I might have heard the loving words, 'Come, ye blessed,' instead of the words, 'Depart, ye cursed' ; but I loved sin and the world, and turned a deaf ear to the earnest calls of mercy and of love." Such will be the sad soliloquy of many a soul. Reader, shall it be thine ?

Oh, let me, in closing, press on thee to accept this great salvation now ! Come to Jesus now ; and having been saved by Him, then go forth to serve Him, that thy bent, thy tendency, thy life may be clearly, distinctly, faithfully, that of a true, fearless witness to the truth of God ; that there may be no question in the mind of anyone who may know you that you are "going" in the

way of the Lord, and that when the "gone" may have sounded over the departure of your spirit, "to be for ever with the Lord"-may be the succeeding words of the mourners.

J. W. S.

DO YOU HOPE, OR KNOW, THAT YOU
HAVE ETERNAL LIFE ?

THIS question, dear reader, is one of the deepest importance, and your answer will evidence either that you are, if *hoping*, still in uncertainty as to the salvation of your precious soul, and consequently without peace with God ; or, if *knowing*, in the conscious enjoyment of God's grace toward you through the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom you believe.

Most of those to whom I put my query decidedly answer "I *hope*," very frequently adding, "it is impossible to *know*." If you agree with such a reply, allow me to show you from Scripture that it is not only possible, but actually contemplated by God, that whoever believes in His Son should not only have eternal life, but know that it is possessed even now. To effect my object I cannot do better than relate how one who, like you, "*hoped*" was led to "*know*."

I was preaching the Gospel in the south of Ireland, having but one evening to devote to that particular place. In the afternoon a young

believer informed me that her mother had promised to come to the Gospel meeting at night. She was an elderly person, by no means opposed to the things of God, but had never given evidence of having simply received the truth of the Gospel in its peace-giving power. Anxious as the daughter was for her mother's blessing, she was nevertheless importunate that I should not speak personally to her for fear of her being offended, and laid rather a strict embargo on my lips should I happen to come in contact with the old lady.

At the close of the evening Gospel meeting, as I was standing near the door, I saw Mrs. H—— (whom I recognised from the afternoon's conversation) passing slowly out. Offering her a little tract, and at the same time expressing a wish that she might receive no harm on her way home from the rain, which was falling in torrents, she replied that she did not think she would, and further, that she was glad she had come, for she had much enjoyed the meeting.

As I had been speaking on the text "Be it known, therefore, unto you that the SALVATION OF GOD is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it" (Acts xxviii. 28), I added, "I trust you now know the salvation of God, and have eternal life."

"I hope so," was her reply, showing no desire to pass me.

“ But why should you only ‘ hope,’ my friend, when God wishes you to ‘ know ’ that, if believing in His Son, you have eternal life ? ”

“ Well, sir, I believe in the Son of God, and all I can say is I ‘ hope,’ and I don’t think anyone can ‘ know ’ as long as they are in this world.”

“ If you will permit me,” I answered, “ I will show you just one little verse in the Word of God which will settle that matter definitively.”

“ You need not trouble yourself,” said she, “ I know the Word of God well. Ever since I was a child I have studied it, and I don’t believe there is a verse you can show me that I don’t know.”

“ Just one, Mrs. H——.”

“ Well, where is it ? ” said she.

Taking her large-print Bible from her hands, I found and read to her, “ These things have I WRITTEN unto you that BELIEVE in the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life.” (1 John v. 13.) I read it a second time, and then said, “ Do you believe in the name of the Son of God ? ”

“ I do,” was the emphatic reply.

“ You really do own that you are a lost sinner needing salvation, and that nothing but the blood-shedding of the Son of God could avail to put away your sins ? ”

“ I do.”

“ You repudiate all thought of salvation by your own works, confess that you are an undone,

guilty, lost sinner, and now simply believe in the name of the Son of God ? ”

“ I do,” was again the short and sincere answer I got.

“ Well, then, granting all that, have you eternal life ? ”

“ I hope so.”

“ Oh,” was my reply, “ I see it now ; in the days when you went to school, which is, of course, a great while ago, they used to spell differently then from now.”

“ How so, sir ? ”

“ Why K-N-O-W used to spell HOPE in those days.”

“ Not at all, sir.”

“ What did they spell ? ”

“ Why, of course, they spelt KNOW, the same then as now.”

“ There is a mistake somewhere,” I replied, “ there must be, for you say you believe in the name of the Son of God, and He says, ‘ These things have I written unto you that *believe* in the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye *have* eternal life,’ and you stand there and tell me that you only *hope* you have it.”

“ Let me see that verse myself,” said the old lady, suiting her action to her words by diving her hand into her pocket, and taking out and adjusting her spectacles. Once and again she read slowly to herself, and then most emphatically out loud, “ *These things have I written unto you*

that BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD, that ye may KNOW that ye HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." The Spirit of God blessed her perusal of the sacred message, and filled her heart with peace as she believed it. "Hope" died on the spot, and faith and amazement mingled had full possession of her soul. Looking up she now added, "Well, is it not strange? For, often as I have read the Epistle of John, I never saw that verse yet. Of course I must have read it, for I am very fond of St. John's writings, but I never saw it in the light I do now. I am very glad you spoke to me, sir, and showed me that verse. Dear me, how dark I have been, and there it was all the time, and so plain, too, I wonder I never saw it before!"

"Well, thank God you see it now, and you believe it simply as it stands, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, there's no room left for 'hoping' or doubting now; I'm *sure* now, and I have to thank you for drawing my attention to the Lord's word."

We had a little more conversation, and then, seeing that she was now resting simply on the Lord and His blessed written word, I bade her "good night," closing our short and only possible earthly interview with this question, "And now, Mrs. H——, if a friend meets you on your way home and asks, 'Have you eternal life?' what shall you say?" With a face now beam-

ing with joy in the assurance of God's salvation she replied, "I should tell them that I KNOW I HAVE IT because I believe in Jesus, and God has said, 'These things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.' Good night, and good-bye, sir."

To her it was truly a good night, and to me truly good-bye, for not many weeks after the dear old lady passed away to be for ever with the Lord, in the sweet enjoyment of the present possession of eternal life.

And now, my dear reader, I trust you will be as simple as was the one of whom I have written. If you know that you are a ruined, lost sinner (and you must know it if you accept the testimony of the Word of God), just look away from yourself simply to Jesus. You will never get peace by looking into yourself, or trying to realise or feel assurance. This only is obtained by simply receiving God's testimony to you. You must receive His witness *to* you before there can be any witness *in* you. Nothing can be simpler. I must be in a relationship in order to enjoy its proper affections, or fulfil its duties. I must *know* that I am a son of God before I can feel like one; so must you. I must know (and I do know) from God's Word, that I "have eternal life" before I can (and I do) feel that I have it; so must you.

W. T. P. W.

RESURRECTION LIFE.

"Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord."—Rom. vi. 11.

"CAN you tell me what it means to stand justified before God?" said an anxious soul to me. "I can understand how we may find *forgiveness* through the finished work of Christ, but how is it that a sinner can come into the presence of God not only saved from hell, with sins forgiven, but in the happy liberty of one who is *justified*, or looked upon as though he had never sinned—a new creature altogether?"

"Simply," I replied, "by possessing the life of One who was raised again for our justification. We read in Romans iv.: 'Who was delivered for our offences'—we find forgiveness there; but further—'was raised again for our justification.' Now *this* is a life totally disconnected from our old state as sinners; a *resurrection* life, on the other side of death and judgment."

"Do you mean that the life we get by believing in Jesus is not a *forgiven* life, but a new one entirely, and hence a justified one?"

"Exactly so, for Christ is our life before God, nor does He see us apart from Him. But let us take an example. My watch is stolen by one who is afterwards apprehended and brought before me, a guilty convicted criminal. There he stands, exposed to my just wrath and con-

demnation. In my compassion I forgive him, setting him at liberty. But does this justify him for the future as to life and character? Not at all—for it is out of my power to do so. He remains merely a forgiven thief, and nothing more or less, to the end of his days.

“But then, let us suppose that in answer to the just claims of the law the thief has to go to death to expiate his crime. *This* indeed is the end of his thieving life; death has brought it completely to a close.

“But now a mighty power appears on the scene, and quickens him into life again. Is this the old forgiven thief-life raised once more? Ah, no! death made an end of that; the law spent its utmost force and power upon it when it put him out of existence, and his *raised* life is a perfectly *justified* one, on the other side of condemnation and death.

“How boundless the liberty and blessing death has wrought for us whom God has thus placed beyond the reach of the just judgment of law upon a condemned life—for I understand now the Scripture which says, ‘ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ;’ and again, ‘I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.’ It is clear also that we are justified by faith, and not by the works of the law, ‘for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.’”

“But will you tell me how it is that so many Christians are not enjoying all that the death and resurrection of Christ has done for them, and are constantly weighed down in spirit over a sinful nature and many failures?—like the one, in Romans vii., who cries out, ‘O wretched man that I am!’”

“Because they do not see that though the law is in full force as being ‘holy, just, and good,’ they have died out from under its power in the Person of Christ, who *in death* met fully and for ever its righteous requirements, and that in Him risen they have a life which in itself meets these requirements, constantly rising up to delight the heart of God. In this life we not only stand justified, but being in itself of God it delights in holiness.”

“Is this, then, what Paul means in Gal. ii., where he says, ‘I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me’?”

“It is, indeed; for nothing short of death can bring us deliverance from our former state, introducing us into the liberty of another. Death was the penalty of a broken law, for ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.’

“In Jesus, as God’s spotless Lamb, and our Substitute, we behold Him who went into death, and thus redeemed us from the curse of the law,

being made a curse for us. This risen life is ours to-day, and hence Paul could triumphantly exclaim, 'yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' In Him, also, we are not only dead to the law but to an earthly religion, or worldly ordinances, which were contrary to us; and to the world itself as things 'not of the Father.' Paul could rejoice in being crucified to one and all of them."

"It must give unspeakable rest to the heart to know that in virtue of God's own ransom, even Him who has been set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, we not only stand justified freely by His grace, but God Himself is just while He justifies, because of the value of that blood to Him."

"We should never separate the truth contained in the Scripture first referred to, as to forgiveness and justification, but should ever grasp *both* sides as the fulness of God's glad tidings; even as Paul, in giving it forth, says, 'through this man (Christ Jesus) is preached unto you forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are *justified*.' Forgiveness is one side, and this eases the conscience from the burden of guilt, meeting its need; but if we stop short of justification, or realising what our new life is, and where it places us, we not only miss the liberty which is ours to enjoy, as a heavenly people whose life is hid with Christ in God, but our walk as Christians

remains more or less a worldly one—for we fail in making Him who is our life an object for the heart. Alas! how very many thus have Christ for the *conscience*, and do not know Him as the all-satisfying portion for the heart.”

“Does not this arise from failing to apprehend what we are introduced *into*, as well as delivered *from*, as children of God?”

“It does truly; for if we have been delivered from sin and sins, and introduced into a new creation scene, the measure of our separation to God from all that delights the old nature is Christ, our life, *where He* is, who becomes the centre of our heart’s affections as a living person, and the one object before us.”

“You mentioned the old nature just now as that within us still inclined to be active. What power are we to bring practically to bear upon this?”

“The power of *death*—for death is the weapon which God has placed in our hands to mortify our members with, just as Samson, in slaying the ‘heaps upon heaps,’ grasped the thing which had died to minister death to so many. As a matter of *fact* we, as Christians, still possess the old nature or principle of evil, which Scripture calls ‘the flesh,’ but as a matter of *faith* we have died out of it with Christ (our old man is crucified with Christ), and hence our power practically against it is to *reckon* it dead” (Rom. vi. 2).

“How blessed thus to find on the authority of God’s changeless Word, all that is ours through identification with Him whose love for us many waters could not quench.”

“Blessed, indeed! and the conscious appropriation of it brings *peace*—real and *abiding*—for ‘being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ”

“The Lord is risen : The Red Sea’s judgment flood
Is passed, in Him who bought us with His blood.
The Lord is risen : We stand beyond the doom
Of all our sin, through Jesus’ empty tomb.

The Lord is risen : With Him we also rose,
And in His grave see all our vanquished foes.
The Lord is risen : Beyond the judgment land,
In Him, in resurrection-life, we stand.

The Lord is risen : Shut in are we with God,
To tread the desert which His feet have trod,
The Lord is risen : The Sanctuary’s our place,
Where now we dwell before the Father’s face.

The Lord is risen : The Lord is gone before,
We long to see Him, and to sin no more!
The Lord is risen : Our triumph-shout shall be,
‘Thou hast prevailed! Thy people, Lord, are free!’ ”

FRANKLY FORGIVEN.

NATHANIEL WILSON was the son of poor but respectable parents, residing at M——. Being an only child, he was indulged in everything it was possible for his parents to obtain, and in consequence he grew up wayward and unruly. As he grew older he obtained employment with a number of young men, who by degrees persuaded him to join them in their evil ways.

At first it was but occasionally he would accompany them on a Sunday excursion to L——, or a Sunday would be spent on the water; but gradually this way of spending Sunday became habitual, and nothing but very unfavourable weather would keep him at home. In vain did his father remonstrate with him on his evil ways, and his mother plead with him to give up his evil companions and accompany her to a place of worship. He told them he could only be young once, and he meant to enjoy himself while he could. In order to obtain more liberty, as he said, he left home with several companions, and obtained employment in a distant town, where he threw off all restraint and grew bolder in sin.

In reply to his mother, who sent him a Bible and urged him to read it, he said: "The Bible is all very well for old people who can no longer enjoy life, and for those who are going to die;

but I am well and strong, and don't need it now. I mean to be religious some time before I die; but there is plenty of time yet, and I mean to get all the pleasure I can out of life while I am young. I will be very religious some day, but not now."

Time passed on, and Nat went farther and farther on in the broad road that leads to destruction; his evenings were chiefly spent at the public-house, or at other so-called places of amusement. One evening one of his chosen companions told him of an infidel lecture that was to be given close by, and asked Nat to go with him to hear it, just to see what sceptics had to say. At first he refused, for although he had often *wished* the Bible were not true, as passages he had learned when a child came into his mind and condemned his course of life, yet he recoiled with horror from the thought of being present at such a meeting; but after some time the persuasions of his friend were successful, and he agreed to go, saying that if they found it very bad he could come out. The infidel lecturer was an educated man, and noted for his eloquence, and Nat and his companion listened eagerly to his lecture, and drank in the poison it contained. Again and again they went, and in a short time Nat became a confirmed infidel.

Soon after this he removed to C——, where I saw him, and about the same time he became a complete drunkard. He went on in this way for

more than six years, when the Lord in His great mercy met with him, and drew him unto Himself.

Nat had the greatest contempt and hatred for anyone whom he called "religious," and a minister was his special abhorrence. Therefore when his wife wished to see Mr. F——, Nat swore an awful oath that no canting parson, or any religious man or woman either, should ever darken his door; and to insure against their coming while he was out, he always locked his door. He told me after his conversion he would not have let me into his cottage, but he could not understand why I should take the trouble to come so far in the snow to take jelly to a sick person I had never seen, and further he thought it might cheer his Dorothy up a little to see a stranger.*

At first when I read to Mrs. Wilson he went out, but after a little time he began to stay in, and would busy himself about something at the other end of the room; but in a short time I could see his work lay untouched for half-an-hour at a time, and his whole attention was absorbed by the gracious words of love and mercy from God's own word; then, as if recollecting himself, and afraid he would be detected listening, he

* The conversion, on her deathbed, of his wife through this and subsequent visits recorded in our last number, to which the reader is referred, was the first link with the writer.

would again busy himself with his work, though several times I saw a tear falling down his dark cheek. He never spoke to me unless in answer to a question, until one day, after I had taken leave of Dorothy and was just starting for home, he said, "May I ask if you really believe all that you have been reading to Dorothy, or do you only read it to cheer her up a little?"

"Mr. Wilson," I replied, "I would not deceive anyone for the sake of cheering them, least of all one who must so soon leave this world for another. I have been reading God's own words, which never will deceive one soul that rests upon them."

"But the Bible is not the word of God," said he.

"Then will you tell me whose word it is?" I asked.

"Oh, man's, of course!" he replied.

"But was it a good man or a bad one wrote it?" I asked.

"Oh, a bad one," he answered.

"Mr. Wilson," I replied, "depend upon it, if a bad man had written the Bible, he would never have condemned sin, and pronounced such an awful sentence on those who do sin as the Bible contains; neither could a good man have written so many falsehoods as the Bible contains, *if it is not what it professes to be—the word of God.*"

“I really believe you are right,” he said. “I never looked at it in that light before.”

“But will you read it yourself?” I asked. “Have you a Bible?”

“Yes; I have the one which my mother sent me. It has laid in my box for many long years, but I will promise to read it—yes, that I will.”

After this he seemed to shun me, and I had no means of knowing whether he had kept his promise or not until after the death of his wife; then, as we stood together beside the body of the one we had both loved, I said, “Mr. Wilson, she has gone to be for ever in the bright world above, with the One whom not having seen she loved, never to feel pain, or sorrow, or death again, but to enjoy the cloudless joy and blessedness of the Father’s house. She can never return to you, but will you go to her?”

“Never, never,” he exclaimed. “I shall never see her more; there is no place for infidels where she is gone.”

“There is room for all there,” I replied, “who will take the place of lost sinners as she did, and who are saved by Jesus as she was.”

“*Lost! lost!*” he exclaimed despairingly; “don’t I know I am lost? Can hell itself be worse than what I am enduring at this moment? Oh, I know it is memory that is the worm that dieth not, and it is here already.” Claspings his hands

upon his chest as he spoke, he went on, "Yes, it is memory, I am sure. You don't know what I've been, or you would not be seen near me—you would loathe me, but not more than I loathe myself. I broke my mother's heart, and she died of grief. I've never been into a place of worship since I was fourteen years old. I've been a drunkard, and I have laughed at the Bible, and hated the very name of God, and I know I shall have to appear in His presence and give an account to Him; He will be my judge, and I have blasphemed His name. Yes, I know I am a lost man as I walk about. It is no use. I wish I had not read the Bible; I should not have known then till I died, but now I have no rest day or night."

"It is true, Mr. Wilson," I said, "that you are lost, but still you may escape the punishment of your sin, for another has been punished instead. Listen!" and I read, "'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.'"

"Yes, yes," he replied, "but it is not for me. Every page of the Bible condemns me."

"Yes, this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. Jesus says, 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he

kath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God' (John iii. 18)."

"I am condemned every way," he said mournfully; "I must go to hell, there is nothing else for me. There never was such a great sinner before. I have had so many opportunities, and only thrown them away; there is no hope for me."

"Mr. Wilson, will you promise to read the first chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, to-night, from the thirteenth to seventeenth verses? You will read of one who was a blasphemer, and the chief of sinners, who yet obtained mercy." He promised to do so, and I left him.

The next week I saw him daily, but he did not get any hope; he seemed like the man Bunyan wrote of, who was shut up in the iron cage of despair. His agony of mind was such as to make him afraid to sleep, lest he should awake in hell. At times I feared his reason would give way beneath it. I tried in vain to persuade him to go to the preaching, or to see a Christian man who had been an infidel; he always refused, and his anguish of soul seemed to increase, yet he diligently searched the word, though it only condemned him, he said. One day when I went to see him, and he had poured out his usual tale of despair, I said, "Mr. Wilson, do you think Jesus could love you?"

"Yes," he replied, "He is almighty. He could, but He never will."

“Do you know,” I asked, “that you are now committing the greatest sin of your whole life?”

“No! How can that be?”

“Because you are making God a liar, for the Lord Jesus says, ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,’ and you say He will not receive you; therefore you are making God a liar, for He Himself says so; see John v. 9 to 13.”

“God forgive me!” he exclaimed. “I did not know that. What shall I do? what shall I do?”

“You can do nothing,” I replied, “for the simple reason there is nothing to be done. Jesus HAS DONE EVERYTHING; when He died on the cross He completely glorified God about sin. He bore all God’s wrath that you might never bear it, and the only thing you as a poor sinner have to do to be saved is to rest on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ—to cast yourself entirely on Him—to accept Him as your own Saviour for time and eternity; and God Himself declares ‘He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.’”

“But must I not pray for it?” he asked.

“Does it say, ‘He that believeth *and prayeth* hath everlasting life’? If I had in my hand something you wished very much to have, and I told you it was for you, would you ask me over and over again to give it you?”

“No; I should take it and thank you for it,” he answered.

“That is what God is doing. He offers you Jesus, salvation, eternal life—everything you can possibly need in Jesus; it is His free gift.”

“Oh, but I’ve been such a great sinner,” he said.

I turned to Luke vii. 41, and read to the 43rd verse. “You see,” I said, “there was a great difference in the amount owed by these two debtors; but did the creditor make any difference between them?”

“None,” he answered, “for he frankly forgave them both. I see how it is; I see, I see. Dorothy owed only fifty pence, and I the five hundred; but He will not cast me out—He says so, and I cannot doubt Him. I have nothing to pay, nothing at all; I can bring nothing to Him but sin, but, ‘He frankly forgave them both,’ I see! I see! The vastness of the want of my soul is perfectly met by the infinite vastness of the means appointed by God to supply it. The death of the Son of God is alone sufficient to blot out my sins, aggravated and innumerable. The righteousness of the Son of God alone is so spotless as to answer the demands of the perfect law of God; Christ has wrought the work alone. For man, for all men, for whosoever will. My soul forgets all but its Almighty Saviour, and its own

safety; and now I can say, My Lord, my Saviour, my all."

The change in Nat Wilson was indeed life from the dead. He became as bold in the Lord's cause as before he had been in the service of Satan. To his old companions he told what the Lord had done for him; nor did he fear their scorn and contempt, and they did not spare it. When they laughed at him he said, "You may laugh yourselves into hell, but you cannot laugh yourselves out again." Then he would urge them to come to Jesus, and say, "I'll pledge my word He will receive you, for you cannot be so bad as I was, and He received me just as I was; and so He will you if you will only come to Him. It will give Him joy, and I am certain it will bring joy to you. Why, friends, there's no real happiness out of Christ. I've tried the world, but it can never satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit; it will only last a very short time, and then it leaves you more unsatisfied than before. Such are the world's pleasures, the pleasures of sin, which are indeed but for a season, and presently they will (unless you repent and turn in faith to Jesus) land you in the lake of fire."

Nat remained in C—— long enough to prove to those who had known him before that he was indeed a new creature in Christ Jesus. He loved the society of Christians, and listened with

delight to their conversation; the Bible was his constant companion—his much-loved guide. His master, however, went to America and took Nat with him, and out in the bush he is now seeking to lead those with whom he comes in contact to that Saviour who loves him and has frankly forgiven him, and is soon coming to take him to be for ever with Himself.

Reader, when will you come to the Lord?

A. V. M.

MAN'S BEST, OR GOD'S BEST.

(ISAIAH lxiv. 6; LUKE xv. 22.)

EVERYBODY hopes to go to heaven; no one expects to be in hell. How they are going to get to heaven is another thing; the most general thought is this:—

When asked, "Do you want to be saved?" the answer is, "Of course I do, everyone wants to be saved."

"How are you going to be saved? Upon what ground do you expect to get to heaven?"

"Oh, well, I suppose we must do our best, and look to the Almighty for mercy."

Such, I repeat, is the general thought, looking to the Almighty for mercy on the ground of having done their *best*; and perhaps, dear reader, you are one of this class.

Well now, suppose I dress you in the best suit

of good works you could possibly make for yourself, and put you in the presence of that holy, holy Lord God, whose eye can search into the very deepest recesses of your heart. Would you be at ease? Would it suit you to be there, exposed to His gaze?

Do you think the prodigal in Luke xv. would have liked to have sat down in his father's house with the clothes (or rather rags) he wore among the swine? What is more, do you think his father would have allowed him to sit down—yea, *even come in to the house in that filthy state? Never!* He must be fit not only for the house, but for his father's eye. So with sinners; there must not only be fitness for *heaven*, but there must be fitness for the *eye of God*.

“Oh, but,” you say, “you are not going to compare me with that profligate son, surely? I have not gone into excesses like that, and that is not a man's *best*, but his *worst*.”

Very well, I will dress you out in your best. Now, reader, see if this fits you. You are respectable, moral, and religious; a Church member, a regular communicant, a Sunday-school teacher, a tract distributor; your life before men has been such that no one who knows you (however they may have watched you) can lay one single wrong to your charge; your life before your fellows has been *blameless*. Like the young ruler in Luke xviii., you can say when the law is presented to

you, "All these things have I kept from my youth up;" but, like him, you have never seen the spirituality of the law.

Now there is the best suit I can think of just now to dress you in. If you know any other good thing, you are welcome to put it on. But wait now, come, be honest with yourself. Are you conscious of ever having had *one wrong thought*? Do you really love God with *all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and your neighbour as yourself*? (Luke x. 27.) Why, take to-day, has God been in *all* your thoughts? Were you thinking of your business, your family, your pleasure, your rest? If you were, then God was not in your thoughts at that moment.

"But, surely, people must look after their business?"

Of course they must, but then you are going to heaven by doing your best; and you see God wants *perfection*, and you have not got it.

"Oh, well, if you come so close as that, of course we cannot think of God with *all our mind*."

Then stop! there is an awful rent in your suit. True, the eye of man does not see it, but there it is, you see it, you acknowledge it. *One sin is enough* to send you to hell for ever. And God sees it, and if it were not that you *are* darkness, and *in* darkness, you would see far more rents—in fact, you would see that your beautiful suit was filthy rags altogether.

Now we will just bring the light (the word of God) to bear upon it, and trust the Lord to reveal to you something you have hitherto not seen.

“All our *righteousnesses* (not wickednesses) are as filthy rags” (Is. lxiv. 6). This is the very best you can do, says God. Had He said your wicked ways, you would have assented to it at once; but it is your righteousness, your almsgiving, your prayer-saying, your psalm or hymn-singing, your moral blameless life—all, all, is as filthy rags. God wants perfection, and you have not got it to give Him. He has pronounced His judgment as to your very best. It is not what I think, or some one else says; it is God's word.

Now would you like to stand before Him clothed in what men would call a nice suit and envy your having it, but what God calls filthy rags? Ah! does that make you tremble? No wonder! unclean, a leper, covered with filthy rags (self-righteousnesses). What could God do with you in heaven? What sort of a place would it be if you got there? What! put a leper in heaven? Have filthy rags in heaven? Never! You would be seized by mighty hands and hurled from the battlements of heaven, down, down to hell.

“But God is very *merciful*.”

True, He is, but He is *just* as well, and all the time you are talking about His mercy you are refusing it.

What would you think of the prodigal, if when the father is holding out the *best robe* to put on his shoulders, he were to push past into the house, saying, "Oh, my father is very merciful; he surely won't turn me out?"

"Ah," you would say at once, "the fellow was mad to try to enter the house in his rags, when his father was holding out the best robe to clothe him."

So it is with you. You are despising the *righteousness of God* which He is waiting to put upon you. It is "unto all, and upon all them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22); and you are trying to push your way into heaven clothed in your own rags. God is such a loving, kind, gracious God, that He gave His only begotten Son, and when that Spotless One was on the cross, our sins were laid on Him, and that holy God hid His face from the One He loved. Why? Because of sin. Ah, yes, God hid His face from Jesus, that it might beam forth in love on you for ever. God was so holy that He must turn away from Jesus when He was on the cross, making atonement for our sins. And now, having been glorified about the question of sin, He will not—yea, He is so righteous, He cannot—condemn the poor sinner who trusts that Jesus whom He has raised from the dead, but will clothe him with the *best robe*, the righteousness of His own providing, and fit

him for His presence for ever, and *all for nothing*.

Now, if you want to be saved, you must be saved in *God's own way*, and *God's own time*, which is "*for nothing*," and "*now*." And if you will not submit to be saved in God's way, you must be damned in your own way. "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16).

Oh, sinner, come to Jesus—come now. Do not push on into hell. Satan is deceiving you; he wants your soul, and when he gets it, he will turn round and laugh at you for your folly. Remember, that clothed in the *best robe* which God has Himself provided, and which He offers to you *for nothing*, you are sure to land in glory; but clothed in your own rags, you are sure to land in the *lake of fire*.

Oh, do think of it—to be *shut out* from God, from *heaven*, from *your friends* who are saved, from everything that is good. And to be *shut in* with the *devil* in the *lake of fire*, with those who are eternally lost, and everything that is wicked. Oh, turn, do not burn; turn to Jesus. Do trust Him. Although in heaven, He still speaks to you, and says, "Come unto me, all ye that *labour* (that is you, who are doing your best) and are *heavy laden*," and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). And perhaps as you read this paper you feel a desire to be saved, you are just wishing you were sure that you had the best

robe. Ah, it is Jesus; He is speaking to your heart. Satan never gave you those desires. Now, do listen to Jesus, and do not let Him turn away and say, "I *would*, but ye *would not*. I knocked at their door, but they would not let me in. I spoke to them, but they turned a deaf ear. I besought them to have eternal life, but they had no heart for it. The best robe was offered them, but they did not want it, they preferred their own rags."

Oh, sinner, what love to come so close to you! What long-suffering grace to bear with you so long! Ah, you had better believe on Him *now*. You have no time to lose. See, He *waits* to be gracious unto you. But He will not always wait. How slow He is to leave you. Throw yourself into His loving arms. *Believe and live*. He says, "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John vi. 47). He does not tell you to *do* anything. No, He has done it *all*. "It is finished," the robe is made. Submit yourself to be clothed with the righteousness of God, and do not go about any longer trying to establish your own, by doing the best you can (Rom. x. 3). Be like the prodigal clothed with the best robe by his father. His part was to stand still and let his father put it on:—yea, thankful to get it. Do you likewise. Leave your own rags, and let God clothe you with His best robe. "To him that *worketh not*, but *believeth*, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). W. E.

"GOD SAYS EVERLASTING LIFE—EVER-
LASTING LIFE."

"*God says.*" What a sure foundation indeed for the heart to rest upon. "GOD SAYS"—the God who "cannot lie"—"with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Yes, "*God says*, 'Whosoever believeth should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

Such were the words which cheered my heart not long since, gasped out slowly and with considerable effort, but with marked emphasis on the "*God says*," by a young stonemason dying of consumption in the infirmary of the Union workhouse of the town I reside in. He had been discharged from the county and borough hospital as incurable, and taken into the Union until such time as it was decided which of two other Unions should shelter him during his last days upon earth; for there was some dispute as to what parish in an adjacent county was responsible for him. In this God had His purposes, and overruled all to His own glory and dear K——'s eternal blessing.

While in the hospital he had been often spoken to about his precious soul, God's love to the world, and Christ's "It is finished" work for sinners; but he left apparently unconcerned, like all such cases, thinking—hoping—he would recover. Among others who were interested in him was the house-surgeon, who asked me

(thinking he was to be removed to a town at some little distance) if I knew of a Christian who would find him out and visit him in the Union there. I did so, and received answer that my friend would seek him out and put the truth before him.

Shortly after, while visiting the Union infirmary in my own town, in one of the wards I came upon a fine young man lying in a bed in a corner, to whom I spoke, asking him a few questions. All at once it flashed upon me this was the person I had asked my friend in another town to try and find out, and set Christ before. Asking him, "Is your name K——?" he replied in the affirmative.

I tried to point him to God's remedy for man's ruin—God's Lamb—the One at His right hand. He did not seem to care much for this. Noticing upon the stool by his bedside one of those penny copies of the Gospel of John, I asked him where he got it? He said the house-surgeon of the hospital had given it to him. "Shall I write your name in it, and will you let me mark and underline some passages in it for you?" He willingly assented. I forget now what most were, but one, the 16th verse of the third chapter—"For God so LOVED the world, that he GAVE his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth on him should not perish, but

HAVE everlasting life"—I distinctly remember, and for a good reason, as will be seen.

K—— was visited by others as well as by myself, and as far as one could judge, with no effect on his conscience or heart, his bodily strength gradually giving way under the terrible disease he was suffering from. It so happened I did not visit the Union for two or three weeks, absence from home being one of the causes; on my return the one who had given the little book told me, "You will find a change in K——." I could but rejoice with trembling, knowing how apparently indifferent he had been to the blessed news—not actually rejecting what was said on one's visits, but meeting the Gospel by what another has too well described by that dreadful "Yes."

Oh, it does so dishearten when visiting, if one were not cast upon God to carry home His own word to heart and conscience, to be continually met with, "Oh, yes, I know all that, I believe what you say," while there is no real concern, no anxiety, no sense of being a ruined sinner before a holy, holy God; for as soon as this is really owned, how easy, speaking after the manner of men, to pour in the wine and oil of the glad tidings.

Well, I went to the Union next visiting day, and at once to see K——. He was altered in appearance indeed, very much worse, so weak,

and in great pain. I sat where I had often sat before, and asked him how he was. He said he was all right. "What makes you think so, dear K——?" With effort he replied, "God—says—'Whosoever—believeth—shall not perish—but—have—everlasting life.'" The Lord be praised! His own work—His own word, not a syllable as to his feelings or his thoughts in anything. Again I tested the now dying man, and took his hand. "Are you happy?" He nodded, and again gasped out slowly, "GOD SAYS (emphasising the *God says*) whosoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

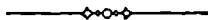
He took his hand out of mine and laid hold of the penny Gospel of John, which was turned back to back so as to have that pencil-marked and underlined verse open before him; he was too far gone to *read* it, but he knew and believed it. What a simple testimony to the power of the Word of God! What an unanswerable reason for the hope that was in him. "*God says.*" We rejoiced now without trembling, and I could praise God for what HE had wrought. I bade him farewell, not looking to see him in the body again down here; he grasped my hand and dozed off.

The next Wednesday, to my surprise he was still at home in the body, and so absent from the Lord; of course much weaker, scarcely

able to move his lips ; but on speaking to him he brightened up, and as I spoke of God's love and His satisfaction in the work of His Son, I saw his lips move, and listening attentively, caught what he twice said in the faintest whisper, "*Everlasting life, EVERLASTING LIFE,*" and ceased, too weak for more. But enough.

Again one bid him farewell, and we parted until that day when the trumpet shall sound the assembling shout, the Archangel's voice be heard, the dead in Christ rise first, and then we which are alive and remain be caught up *together with* them in the clouds to *meet* the Lord in the air. He passed away the Friday following, now absent from the body, at home with the Lord.

Dear reader, may this simple account speak to your heart. "*God says,*" is the point, not what *you* feel or think. "*God says,* Whosoever believeth HATH everlasting life." God also says, "He that believeth not shall be damned." May it be with you *now—to-day.* "*God says everlasting life.*" God grant it. S. V. H.



SATAN'S JUGGERNATH:

A WARNING TO THE DISCIPLES OF FELIX.

FOR many ages the idol Juggernath, enshrined in his granite temple at Orissa, ruled by his fearful dominion the heathen myriads of the East. Upon the annual festivals he was dragged

by hundreds of devotees upon his ponderous car sixty feet high out of his sacred hiding-place, amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands gathered to do homage to their wooden monarch, justly termed by some "The Moloch of the East."

The abominable and blasphemous scenes which take place at such times surpass description; nor are they confined to the vicinity of the temple, but are produced on a smaller scale at innumerable shrines over the whole extent of the vast Hindoo territory. Such wickedness gives a solemn proof of the depths of debasement into which the man has fallen, who once bore the image and likeness of God, so as to be esteemed by the Creator "very good." But how soon was the fair creation marred through belief of the serpent's lie! "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the image of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts."

Millions have perished through their superstitious devotion to Juggernath. Some by cruelly torturing their bodies; others by long pilgrimages beneath a burning sun, until they fell to rise no

more; and many by throwing themselves before the murderous wheels of Juggernath's terrible car were instantaneously crushed, to the admiration and senseless glee of the assembled spectators. Oh, the dire effects of enthralling superstition! Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ, bringing life and incorruptibility to light, can dispel the gross darkness which covers the people.

"Thank God," you may say, "I am not a poor pagan." Amen, I heartily respond. But what do you think you are—a Christian? "Of course," you may reply, "we are all Christians." Yes, you are in a sense, for you have been baptised unto Jesus Christ, acknowledge the Scriptures as the divine revelation, know about the one true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent as Saviour and Judge. You may even be a clergyman, an office-bearer, or, at least, a communicant at the Lord's Supper.

"Well," you may say, "is all this not being a Christian?" As to privilege and profession, it is; but as to reality in God's sight, no. He must have truth in the inward parts. He looks upon the heart. Have you felt yourself to be "vile," only fit for the judgment of hell-fire because of your sins? In measure the Holy Spirit always teaches this to those who are saved. To be a Christian, you must know for certain you have believed in Christ crucified; have redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of

your sins according to the riches of God's grace ; be united to Jesus risen and glorified at God's right hand, by the Holy Spirit given you ; and have your heart, mind, and life all absorbed by Jesus, your absent and coming Lord.

"Ah, sir," you may say, "if this is true Christianity, I know nothing about it." Alas ! poor soul, surrounded by light and privilege, your damnation will be greater than the heathen whom you pity, and may even give your donation to send bibles and missionaries to enlighten. Alas ! poor soul, for you are a disciple of Felix, and under the power of Satan's Juggernath.

"Juggernath !" you may exclaim ; "there is no such horrible thing here." There is an influence present, yet more potent, because more delusive ; for even now the spell is upon you, a snare by which that old serpent the devil has wooed millions from the very presence of the blessing of God into the curses of never-ending perdition. Satan used idolatry to destroy men in the past, and will again use it with awful results in these Christian lands in the future (Rev. xiii.) ; but he has another thing now which he uses with terrible effect.

In order to explain clearly what it is, I shall relate the substance of a dream, dreamed by a servant of Christ, which I read about long ago. It is as follows : He dreamed he saw Satan, his princes, and innumerable demons, convened in counsel. The subject of debate was as to which

would be the most efficacious way to ruin the souls of men where the grace of God was saving through belief in the Gospel.

One demon said he would go and be a spirit of infidelity in men's minds, causing them boldly to deny the existence of a Deity, the immortality of the soul, Satan, or a future state. Diabolus said that would not succeed, for God had not left Himself without a witness. Creation told of His eternal power and Godhead, and within He had placed conscience as an unerring monitor, so that men, though they might live as infidels, would find it hard to die as such.

Another demon said that he would persuade men that there was a God righteous and holy, judgment to come, and an eternal state. That man was a sinner and must work to gain God's favour, as He required His holy law to be kept; and if he did so, then, perhaps, God would be merciful in the judgment day, and Christ's death would make up what they failed to accomplish. Or, he would tell others that "God is love," as it said in the Bible; that He was not strict to mark iniquity, and all would be saved at last; so they must keep themselves decent and easy, all would be well; only enthusiasts preached about sin, hell, and damnation. Diabolus said that would not do either, for most men were too slothful to work for salvation, and those who did in the end would give it up as useless, when they found their

hearts as hard as ever and peace afar off; to tell men that God was love was likewise vain, for death was a witness to God's judgment of sin not to be gainsaid, the Cross of Calvary and the Bible telling the same truth, that God would in no wise clear the guilty.

A third demon now spoke. "I shall go as an angel of light, and will tell men to believe the Bible to be God's word; Jesus, the Christ, to be His Son, the only sacrifice for sin, and the Judge of the appointed day; that heaven and hell are realities, salvation by faith essential, and the blood of the Lamb the only purifier from guilt. I will persuade men to receive all this as true, but to be in *no hurry* to believe to the saving of the soul, as there is *time enough*."

"Good," cried Satan. "Go and prosper."

A dream, yet no dream, for this spirit has succeeded too well. Procrastination is his name. Satan's Juggernath, indeed, to the millions deluded by him, hugged as a darling idol by the sons of men, becomes as a fire to burn with an eternal burning. Satan has changed his tactics so as more effectually to delude with all deceivableness of unrighteousness them that perish; even where God works in saving grace: side by side with the evangelists, there he works also.

"Procrastination is the thief of time," is a true saying. "Procrastination is the thief of souls," is as true. Awake O sleeper! You may lose your

soul; delay is dangerous. You know about God's Saviour, but have not received Him as yours; of eternal life by faith, but have not believed; and of forgiveness through the blood, but have not accepted it yet. Do you still, like Felix, postpone your decision though assured of the truth? Beware how you tamper with long-suffering mercy. God plainly declares that "*now* is the accepted time; behold! now is the day of salvation." "Come *now*, and let us reason together."

Now He commands all men everywhere to repent. You are ready for judgment. God is ready to save. You need commit no other sin in order to be lost. You are already in "the broad road." Just go on as you are, loved by the world, respectable, and even religious, quietly *neglecting* the great salvation, and you shall certainly be damned. Oh, how shall ye escape? Only by believing in Jesus as your Saviour *now*. "Believe in the Son and live," are God's gracious terms. Accept them and be saved. Refuse them, listen to the winning, silvery voice of procrastination, whispering to be in no hurry, but wait a "more convenient season," and you choose the way which seemeth right in your own eyes, but which *ends* in the ways of death—the second death, and the lake of fire, with the voice of slighted love to haunt you through the endless ages of eternity, "I would, but ye would not."

T. R. D.

THE NECESSITY OF LOVE.

“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”—LUKE xxiv. 44—51.

“And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel: which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”—Acts i. 10, 11.

Most people, no doubt, are aware that the Acts of the Apostles comes from the same pen as the Gospel of Luke. Acts is an appendix to the narrative of the Lord's history on earth. In Luke you get Him going up to heaven; in Acts you get the further truth, that He who has gone up will so come in like manner as He went up. He went up in the clouds; He will return again in the clouds. From earth He was seen to go up; to earth will He be seen to come again. I am

not speaking now of the intermediate blessed fact that He is coming into the air for His people, before He is seen from the earth at all, because now I am addressing those who are not His people—those who have not received into their hearts this Saviour, the blessed Jesus. On such I want to press this passage in Luke xxiv. “Thus it behoved Christ to suffer.” Here is the Lord just before He goes off the earth leaving this company, who had known and loved Him, to be His witnesses and to tell this tale, that thus it behoved Him to suffer. And oh, if it behoved *Him* thus to suffer, is there not something that behoves you, my reader?

Does it not behove you to repent and believe, in order to the remission of your sins? If there is an absolute necessity that He should suffer and die, is there no necessity laid on you? What was Christ's necessity? Why did it behove Him to suffer? On the one hand, because of the glory of God; on the other hand, because of His deep love to you and me. Was *He* under sentence of death? Did He need to suffer because of that? Far be the thought. There was no necessity beyond the necessity that love knows, and the necessity of love is, that it can give itself no rest till it has its object in the place love would have it in.

It was love brought Christ down, love made Him suffer, love made Him die: it was love, and love alone, infinite love to you and to me. He loves,

too, to put on your heart and on mine the weight of His love ; and knowing that nothing but suffering could meet our case, He comes down willing to suffer, prepared to suffer. Why ? Because you could not be saved if He did not ; because I could not be saved if He did not ; because if you suffer for your own sins, you must suffer for all eternity : for what mere mortal could exhaust the judgment of God in respect of sin ? None ! None but an Infinite Being could do so, and Jesus was that.

None but God could know what sin really is, and what the judgment due to it is ; and Jesus is God, and He, as God, knowing what God's thought was—what the judgment was, came down and bore the judgment Himself. There was the necessity of love, He says, that I should suffer, for they never could be saved if I did not. And when He has borne sins, drained the cup of wrath to the very dregs, and risen up out of all the suffering, He says, Go and tell every one that it behoved Me to suffer that forgiveness might be preached to the whole world. And where does this forgiveness commence ? At the guiltiest spot in the whole world—*i.e.*, pardon begins at the very spot where they killed Him. Now let me ask you, Are you forgiven yet ? Forgiveness and life eternal are the fruits of the Saviour's blood, and who may have them ? *All, all who believe.*

Oh, careless man, careless, worldly woman, you who have only lived for pleasure, you who have thought of nothing but pleasure here, have you ever thought of the sufferings of the Saviour? Have you ever thought that He took that fearful woe that you and I might have weal for eternity, that He took sorrow that you and I might have joy for eternity? Have you ever thought of Him, of Jesus? Has it ever bowed your heart to think of what it cost Him to rescue such as you and me?

Pause and think one moment now. Cast a backward look at His wondrous history, with its close of agony and of shame. Oh, is it nothing to you that for such as you and me, He, the Lord of glory, gives Himself up to be sold for the price of the meanest slave—that He is willing to pass through *anything* if only He may carry out the deep purpose of His heart, meet the claims of God, burst the bonds of the grave, annul death, break the devil's power, and *save you*? Yes, save you; that was the deep purpose of His heart. Have you ever thought of it?

Behold Him in the garden! With torches and weapons his enemies draw near to take Him. How easily might He have escaped; for when He asked the question, "Whom seek ye?" and followed it with "*I am He*," they go backward, and fall to the ground. He might have escaped, but what of His people? Listen again. "If ye seek

me, let *these* go their way"—that is, He says, "You may have *Me*, but you must not have *Mine*, you shall never have *Mine*." Ah, Jesus will give up anything and everything, give up Himself if He may only save you. And this is *my* Jesus, mine own Saviour, *my* Lord, my blessed Jesus—*mine*. Oh, would you not like to be able to say of Him too, "*Mine, my* Jesus"?

What won my heart was this, "He *gave* His back to the smiters." He suffered everything; and was left alone in His grief, for He looked for comforters and found none. And at that moment—when everyone had forsaken Him, and He turned to God—at that moment, when comfort from God would have been the more grateful to His heart, broken by reproaches, that is the very moment that God takes to show His hatred of sin, to turn away even from Him when it was laid upon Him, so that He cried in His depth of unfathomable agony, "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?"

There the magnificent depths of His affection came out, for He was willing, I may say, willing even for God to forsake Him, that He might vindicate God's honour, and save you and me. Heaven, and earth, and hell witnessed a stupendous struggle that day—a struggle between life and death, between love and hatred; but love is more than conqueror, and Jesus, dying, leaves this precious legacy to

every poor sinner, "It is finished!" The work is finished that sets the poor sinner free. Heaven rejoiced with loud hosannas, and hell, I believe, trembled and was dismayed. And what shall earth do? What shall you and I do? Take those words and believe them, and rejoice in them, too, shall we not? Have sympathy with heaven's joy, shall we not? I will, at any rate, and I counsel you to do the same.

But there is more. He who died has risen again. Angels came down, and rolled away the stone from that tomb where they had laid Jesus. Why did they roll it away, think you? Was it for Him to rise? Far be the thought! No, no! They rolled away the stone that you and I might look in and see that He has risen, see that He is free. Who is free? The sinner's substitute; *your* Substitute, if you will take Him as such—the One who, I can say, bore *my* sins. Can you say that too? He bore my sins, but now He is free, and so am I.

My sin brought in death, but Christ's death put away my sin; and now the resurrection of Christ is the evidence from God of the value of the work which Christ has accomplished, and which God has accepted, and by virtue of which the sinner is accepted too.

No arch can rest save on two pillars; and what stupendous pillars we have for the arch of faith to rest upon—Christ's death and Christ's resur-

rection! And what about your feelings, do you ask me? I will tell you. My feeling is one of *absolute* security, resting on such mighty pillars.

But "Repentance" as well as "remission of sins" was to be preached.

What is repentance?

It is a man judging himself before God. It is not like so many steps you have to climb up in order to be saved; but if you have given heed to God's testimony, listened to His word, and you have been living in pleasure and sin all your days, you will find you cannot but repent. The Prodigal Son when he turned round and thought of his father, found that he had mis-spent his life; and, whoever you are, I challenge you, Have you not mis-spent your life? Oh, answer this question now between your heart and God; or at the great white throne you will have to answer it, yea, have there to own—I mis-spent my life, my life was one great mistake. My heart was not God's, my life was spent in distance from God. I knew not God's Son; He had no place in my affections or my thoughts.

Is this true of you, dear friend? Oh, how you need forgiveness! for you have lived in a so-called Christian land, possibly have professed to be a Christian too, and have been a hypocrite as well as a sinner, for you have been professing to have what you have not got. To find out "I am *not* worthy," that is repentance. The moment I

wake up to find what my life has been, I cannot help judging it; that is repentance.

Look at the thief on the cross. Too bad for earth, on the road to hell, he spends his last hours in abusing Christ! Look at it! Hear him abusing Christ. But listen! Jesus is heard to speak. Hearken to what He says: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." And the man says to himself, "Why I have been taunting Him, and He is praying for me; what a wretch I am!" And then his neighbour, the other thief, speaks again, and says, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." And this one says, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation, and we indeed *justly*?" He learns his own case in the presence of Christ, and judges himself, and then he turns to Jesus, with, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." And Jesus says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

A few more hours roll away, and this same man, who had taunted and reviled Christ, enters heaven—enters that scene of glory *in company with Christ*! Too bad for earth, he is just the one for a Saviour to pick up and save. You will find when a man really sees his sin and guilt, that you have no need to preach repentance to him, for he judges, he condemns himself.

And what is the effect of repentance? It is this: If in repentance I condemn myself, I take

that work out of God's hands. Why will a man be condemned by-and-by? Because of his sin. Why will a believer never be condemned? Because he has condemned himself already, taken, as it were, the work out of God's hands. You must repent, or be judged by God; and if judged by God, be damned. He who says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," says also, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

"Oh," you say, "but I do not believe in being damned." But *Jesus did*, and suffered to save us from it.

"But I do not believe in everlasting punishment." But *Jesus did*, and underwent the wrath of God that we might never undergo it.

There is repentance on the one hand, and remission of sins on the other. And oh, my friend, will not you take the pardon, the forgiveness, He proclaims, take the life eternal He will give? Decide for God and His Christ; repent, turn round to Jesus! You may not have another day in which to decide this eternally-important matter. Yet another hour, another moment, and He may have come back in the cloud for His people. Jesus had taken His own out as far as to Bethany, and lifting up His hands, He blessed them; and while He blessed them He was parted from them, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. He was taken up; and they, with

their eyes still fixed, are told, "This *same* Jesus shall so come in like manner."

And what is the next thing in the world's history? The Jesus they have despised and slain, the Jesus they have cast out of this world, shall come back to it, and *every eye* shall see Him. Would you like Him to come now? "No," says the unconverted man. Why not? Because you are unprepared, unready, unwashed, unforgiven. My friend, you had better make haste. God says, "*Now* is the accepted time;" and you had better not put off any longer the grave matter, the eternally-important matter, of your soul's salvation. Oh, trust Jesus with it *now*, and know the sweetness of His pardoning grace! Oh, gaze on Him, and know that sweet, sweet sense of the remission of sins! For, if you trust Jesus, I can tell you this, God delights to honour those who trust Jesus. How sweet to stand between His first coming and His second! His first coming has made us meet to be where He is; His second coming will place us where He is. His first coming took my *sins* away; His second coming will take *me* away. The Christian stands between His first coming and His second. What a thing it is to be a Christian! Who would not belong to Christ? Oh, my friend, will you not decide for Him just now, and take the eternal life He offers?

COULD YOU "DIE VERY HAPPY"?

It is a solemn thing to stand at the bedside of a dying sinner, to mark the feeble frame, the dimmed eye, and to think of the living soul about to be launched into eternity. To bend over that precious, immortal being, and present the name of Jesus as the one sure foundation, and yet to see scarce a movement of the lips in answer to the words of earnest appeal and faithful warning—unwilling, even if able, to respond to that name of life and healing—oh, this is a solemn reality indeed.

Mrs. M— had been long trained to nurse and care for others, and though her education was small, not so her natural tact and confidence in her own powers, along with which her real practical ability rendered her worthy of esteem in her calling; but now, in her declining years, a severe attack of bronchitis had brought her very low. Her natural energy was all vain to grapple with such a disease, and she looked indeed like a dying woman. And oh, how hard, how apparently encased in indifference, spite of many appeals from some of those who had proved her care and skill in times of weakness! Yet it was for them in united desire to bring this helpless one to Jesus, and still to wait on Him for the answer to their prayers.

A servant of Christ, who had come over to

preach the Gospel in the city of B——, was requested to visit Mrs. M—— on the afternoon of the Lord's-day. With unhesitating earnestness he addressed her as a dying woman. He spoke of the Pharisee and the publican, urging on her that there were but these two classes, and to one or other she must belong. There was little response from the proud, hard, worldly-minded sinner; but faith was given about her to the man of God, and he advised that she should be visited daily. "Is not my word like as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Day after day was the Scripture read by one or another to Mrs. M——, Psalm liii., &c., and parts of Romans. Before the week ended the confession came that she had hitherto "cast his words behind her" (Psalm l. 17); but it was reserved for the following Lord's-day, when she was visited by the same dear servant of Christ, to witness the breaking down, the taking her true place with the publican, owning at the same time that she had rejected Christ thirty years before, and that (under a cold exterior) she had been going through much for some months past.

Oh, what a history is that of the soul ere it is constrained to accept the salvation of God! Brought much in contact with the world through her calling, Mrs. M—— evidently valued the things of the world; but God takes His own

gracious way of breaking from every prop the one He will have to be with Himself for ever. Mrs. M—— had lost her husband and both her children, and now her hardly-earned savings had been partly taken from her. But self was the most difficult prop to abandon, proving how it is by the power of God alone that such an one, as indeed any, can be brought to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" How many a woman is pursuing her quiet round of domestic duties, amiable and self-complacent, whether her fair form be clothed in the height of fashion, or she be less attractive in person and apparel, but "without Christ" written on all that pertains to her. Let such an one be stripped, and brought into the presence of God, what is man, what is woman there?

"I never was in darkness," was the cool rejoinder of a lady to one who had in vain offered a tract for her acceptance, which she had refused, saying, "I don't annoy myself with these things." Surely of such it is written, "Now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

But God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined into dear Mrs. M——'s heart as she lay on that sick-bed. Contrary to the fears of those who had thought her dying and unsaved, she was raised up in measure; and during the few months that remained

of her mortal life, there was sweet evidence of her being a new creature. Able at times to go to hear the Gospel, her earnest countenance has been marked as she listened to the Word of life; and though there was not at first the full assurance of faith, the sweet, subdued expression on her face as she was spoken with of Jesus, and the answers given to another servant of Christ who questioned her as to her faith, showed the reality of the change in her.

When others of her friends had been removed from her neighbourhood, it was given to the Lord's servant last spoken of to visit Mrs. M——, when she was again brought low through a recurrence of her former malady, and to testify his satisfaction as to her faith in Christ. And her own message to another Christian friend who was with her not long before the end, was that she should "die very happy."

Dear reader! if yet a stranger to God's way of salvation, do you not wish from your heart that these words may one day be true of you? Do you wish to die very happy? Then come to Jesus now. In His presence you will learn what you are as a sinner, and how your every need is met in Him, the unspeakable gift of God. And may the faith of those who have long waited and watched over what seems a hard and desperate case be encouraged by that of Mrs. M——, who, though after so many years' deliberate rejection

of Christ, "found mercy." And let us magnify the grace of Him who goeth "after that which is lost until He find it."

"Is there a thing too hard for Thee,
Almighty Lord of all?
Whose threatening look dries up the sea,
And makes the mountains fall.

Lo! to Thyself I lift mine eye,
Thy promised aid I claim;
Father of mercies, glorify
The risen Jesus' name.

Salvation in that Name is found,
Cure for my grief and care;
A healing balm for every wound,
And all I want is there."

G.



GOD'S LAMB FOR ME.

"WHAT can be the matter with S——?" I asked of a friend a few weeks ago; "she looks so wretched and miserable, and wears on her face so different an expression from the bright, happy one which a short time since told of a purged conscience, and a mind at perfect peace with God."

"Ah," replied my friend, "she says she is not saved; that she does not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and that her sins are not forgiven."

Being much interested in my little friend

S——, this intelligence sent me to my knees before the Lord, to ask of Him wisdom to deal with her case, and to teach me to know how to speak “a word in season” to the weary one.

Soon an opportunity for an interview occurred, and the following conversation, so far as I can remember, passed between us:—

“My dear S——, I am much grieved to see you so troubled. What is the matter?”

“Oh, my sins are not forgiven, and I am so very unhappy.”

“But this is a very different tale from what you told me some time since, when you said you were sure your sins were all forgiven, and that you were happy in the Lord. What has made the difference?”

“Oh, I am afraid I said what I did then to make you pleased with me; and now I fear I don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ at all, and I am not saved.”

“What you say grieves me very much indeed; and I must ask you, in the presence of God, one very solemn question. When you told me before that your sins were all washed away by the precious blood of Christ, did you say so *only* to please me, or did you really think it was so at that time?”

“Oh, I could not tell a lie about it. I did think really it was so then, but now I know I was mistaken.”

I saw at once that what I had before suspected was true: our great enemy had occupied the dear little one with her own faith rather than with its object, the Lord Jesus Christ; and then, having swept away that faith from her view, she sunk in the Slough of Despond.

I turned to the first chapter of Leviticus, and read the following words: "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd and of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own voluntary will, or (for his acceptance) at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him" (verses 2, 3, 4).

"Now, S——," I said, "if you were called to die to-day, what would be your hope?"

With a burst of tears she replied, "I should not have any."

"Come," said I, "let us look at this Scripture. You are a poor guilty sinner, are you not?"

"Oh, yes."

"You cannot therefore approach to God trusting in yourself?"

"Oh, no."

"This man who came to God brought a lamb, we will say, and you remember of whom it is

written, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world?' (John i.).

"Oh yes—the Lord Jesus Christ."

"Very well. When the Israelite brought his lamb, he put his hand upon its head, which was the same as if he had said, 'O God, I am a poor sinful man, but I bring this innocent lamb as my substitute; please accept *it* for *me*.' Can you this morning say, 'O God, I am a poor sinful girl; but please accept Thy Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, for me'?"

"Oh yes, I can indeed; it is just what I want."

"That is right. Now tell me, what does God say here?" and with my finger I pointed to the words, "And it shall be accepted *for him* to make an atonement *for him*." She looked at me more brightly, and I said, "Who is the '*him*' here?"

"The man who laid his hand on the head of the lamb."

"And whose words are these?"

"God's."

"Are they true?"

"Oh yes."

"Now, look, I want to show you another Scripture: 'He hath made us accepted in the beloved' (Eph. i. 6). Who is the Beloved?"

"The Lord Jesus Christ."

"And who are the '*us*' here spoken of?"

“Those who lay their hands on the head of God's Lamb.”

“This, you say, is your position; and now, though Satan says you are not accepted, God says here you are ‘*in the beloved.*’ Which will you believe?”

“Oh, I must believe God.”

“Now read on. ‘In whom we have redemption through his blood, the *forgiveness of sins.*’ You said just now your sins were not forgiven; see what God says here. There are one or two other places where our sins are spoken of, which I would like also to show you.” I turned to Isaiah liii. 6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” I pointed to the first words, and asked, “Is that you? Have you gone astray?”

“Oh yes,” she replied.

Then, still pointing to the following words, “Have you turned to your own way?”

“Yes,” she said again.

“Then you see your sins were laid by God on the Lord Jesus Christ (pointing to the last clause); for the ‘us’ in the last clause refers to the same persons as the ‘we’ in the first and second. Let us see when this was done: 1 Peter ii. 24, tells us ‘Who his own self bare our sins in his own body *on the*

tree.' Then it was He bore our sins *on the tree*. Is He bearing them now?"

"Oh no; He is on the throne of God in heaven, and they cannot be there."

"Quite true. Let us see what He has done with them: 'As far as the east is from the west, *so far* hath he removed our transgressions from us' (Psalm ciii. 12). Do you know how far the east is from the west?"

"No."

"Quite so; it is a distance which cannot be measured. If God had said 'as far as the north is from the south,' I should know the distance was about 8,000 miles; but no one has ever measured the distance between the east and the west. They can never come together, and God says '*so far* hath he removed our transgressions from us;' and again, 'Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back' (Isaiah xxxviii. 17)—that is, where God cannot see them. Now you see that in Christ Jesus we are 'accepted in the beloved,' and that 'we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,' and God Himself tells us so in Eph. i. 6, 7. Shall we kneel down now, and bless God together that He has 'accepted us in the beloved,' and forgiven us all our sins for Christ's sake?"

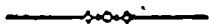
"Oh yes, please."

We knelt, and the sorrowful and despairing one rose from her knees with the assurance of

salvation, and knowing "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." To the God of all grace be the praise for ever!

And now, if any poor doubting, fearing sinner, tempted sorely by Satan, should read this paper, let him remember that Christ is God's Lamb; that "he has offered *himself* without spot to God;" that "he loved us, and gave *himself* for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2); and that through the sweet savour of His person and work ever ascending to God, everyone who can in faith say, "O God, accept Thy Son for me!" is accepted certainly by God according to all the preciousness of that Beloved One to God, "for unto you therefore who believe is the preciousness" (see Greek, 1 Peter ii. 7). May God seal these consolatory and establishing truths upon the soul of every distressed one, and he shall have "joy and peace in believing," even a *present, personal, perfect* salvation, such as the dying thief received, when the Lord said to him, "*To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*"

J. V.



JORDAN.

O! once I saw that river
 With deep and gloomy roll,
 Cut off life's peaceful pathway
 Before my ruin'd soul,

While far beyond its banks there lay
 A region bright and fair,
 And like a cloud of glory,
 Fell the sunlight everywhere.

I sought to stem those waters—
 I could not bridge them o'er;
 My eye looked onward hopeless
 To that happy Canaan shore,

Until from out that glory
 A voice of love I heard,
 Which fell like music round me,
 And cheered me with a word.

No more in dread and darkness
 I listened to the flow
 Of that relentless river,
 Where Christ the Lord lay low.

He bid the floods o'erwhelm Him
 Till all the rage was o'er,
 Now timid feet step dryshod
 Where death had rush'd before.

No wave of that dread river
 Can rise against me now,
 Since all the deadly torrent
 Roll'd o'er His holy brow.

With ever deep'ning worship,
 And wonder at His love,
 I trace His path thro' Jordan
 Back to the throne above,

That path is mine to follow,
 That glory is my home,
 Save only that the river
 Is empty when I come.

Oh! love, and peace, and glory!
 My heart is fill'd with song;
 Oh! quiet, holy Canaan,
 No more I look and long.

The One who forms your sunlight
 Is now my Life, my Friend;
 His presence is my home-land,
 His welcome knows no end.

THE LOOSE ROPE.

It is a lovely morning, the sea bright and beautiful as the summer sunshine can make it; a full-rigged man-of-war ship is sailing along, there is no sign of a storm, and nothing seems to threaten danger of any kind; who could believe that that noble ship is soon to be the scene of death? that those on board are this very day to witness the committal to the deep of one of their number? and that one now full of life and energy. But so it is.

Now everything is in ship-shape trim, every hand on board under order and discipline. The officer of the watch is just giving some orders, when he hears a sound. What are they all moving to do? Why do they look so scared? All is apparently right. But above, one of the sailors has slipped, and even now is falling. But, stop! there is a rope; will he fall near enough to lay hold of it? Yes, he has got *one*, but, oh, horrible sight, *he has got the wrong one*—one that is not fastened to anything secure, it gives, it pulls, it comes with the poor man, and grasping it he falls to the deck, from whence he is lifted in fearful agonies, only to die in a few minutes.

O, my beloved reader, bear with me if I ask you one plain question. Have you made sure of your rope? or if you should fall at this moment, would you be trusting to anything short

of that rope which is as secure as the foundation of God's eternal throne? God is offering it to you, He has dropped it at your very feet, you have not to seek for it; oh, let me implore you, as you value your immortal soul, do not wait to lay hold of it until you feel yourself falling. Satan will say—does say, "Time enough, no need to think of such things now." But there *is* need.

As that young sailor ran up the rigging that morning, full of health and strength, would he not have laughed had he been told of what was before him? But if he had believed he would fall do you not think he would have made sure that he had a good stout rope ready? And I am quite sure that he would have seen it well secured, but, you see, like everyone who has not laid hold of Christ, he was totally unprepared to meet death, grasped at one of the many loose ropes hanging near, and what was the consequence? You may go on well enough as you are, until death knocks at your door, then the devil will have plenty of loose ropes ready for you to catch, but he will take good care not to throw you the only one that is secure. God is showing it to you *now*, He is offering it to you *now*, and oh, my reader, are you refusing it? Stay! You may never have another chance, you had better accept at once.

The Lord Jesus came to seek and to save *the*

lost ; do you know you are lost ? Then He came to seek and to save you.

O, think of it, the eternal Son of the blessed God coming to save such as we are, and man indifferent ! God waits to receive, to pardon, to justify, and all on the ground of this blessed work of Christ, and yet how few lay hold of what He offers. Man is so loath to own himself ruined, lost, and only fit for hell, but directly he does so he justifies God, and what is the consequence ? *God justifies him !* There is nothing to be done, simply *nothing*, for everything has been done and settled more than eighteen hundred years ago. God is satisfied, and now He can receive us through Christ.

Once more let me ask you not to look at any of the loose ropes ; do not say, "If I should fall, I can catch by so and so." Do not believe Satan's lie ; he would tell you, "You go to Church regularly, you are very charitable, you read your Bible, you say your prayers, you never use bad language, or read bad books, or drink, or in fact do anything very wrong." These are *all* loose ropes, and there are thousands more, for he has got them of all kinds to suit different people ; but turn your back on them, take God at His word, grasp the one only secure rope, CHRIST, and you can never, never fall.

LOOK! LOOK AT THE CROSS!

How stupendous is the thought that heaven's Lord—the mighty former of the heavens and the earth, the sustainer of all things, the One who could say, "All the gold and the silver is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills"—died in agony upon the cross! The creature crucified its Creator! the created thing suspended between heaven and earth Him who had created it! Oh, wonder of wonders! what can it mean? Why this death, this agony, this suspension upon the cross, this being enveloped in thick darkness? Why the rollings of the billows of Divine wrath over the soul of One who never had sinned? Why this outpouring of blood?

Reader, can you tell why was all this? Let thy soul weep at the very thought, let the fountain of thy tears be unsealed. Do you plead ignorance? Do you say I can hardly tell why? Oh! listen, then, to me, and I will tell you.

There is a bright heaven above—a scene of marvellous and inexpressible glory—where God dwells: a scene of light, and love, and blessedness. But, alas! man, poor man, is a sinner, and God and His abode are infinitely holy—no sin can ever enter there. God hates sin, and He must judge it, yet He loves the sinner. But how is He to spare the sinner, and yet vindicate His throne and character in the judgment of sin? To judge the sinner personally, would be to exclude him

from Paradise for ever; and God's love, then would not be satisfied, for it yearns for the sinner. God had one only Son, who had been with Him from all eternity, His delight and joy. To spare the sinner, this Son must be given up to die.

But Deity cannot die, hence the emphatic words, "A body hast thou prepared me." (Heb. x. 5.) The Word was made flesh, and this body was given up as a spotless sacrifice upon the cross. The Son of God dies as the sinner's substitute: bears the sin, endures the wrath, finishes atonement, and as the Prince of Life rises again from the dead, the mighty Saviour of all who believe in Him. Sins have been put away, the blood that cleanses the sinner who believes has been shed, and now God can introduce the pardoned one into His presence of light, and into His Paradise of glory.

Yes, God would save the sinner, and that is the meaning of that dreadful cross, the agonies, the forsaking, the blood-shedding of that blessed One who hung there.

Dear reader, can you look at that scene and remain unmoved? I challenge you! I warn you not so to do! He was there, then, that you might be saved—that you might escape eternal woe. Do you know Him as a Saviour—as your Saviour? Can you bless God that you are saved? If not, make no delay: flee to Him at once, be washed

from thy sins, be accepted in Jesus, and read in His precious blood your title to enter Paradise above.

“ O Lord ! we adore thee
For Thou hast redeemed us ;
Our title to glory
We read in Thy blood.”

E. A.

LOVE'S TRIUMPH.

(LUKE XV.)

*Thou art seeking souls, Lord Jesus,
Up and down this world of sin,
Waiting in Thy grace and pity
That Thy word may enter in :
Stoutest hearts have long resisted ;
But when nothing else can move,
See another and another
Melting down beneath Thy love !*

Ho ! thou wanderer in the country
Where “ a mighty famine ” reigns,
What shall ease the inward craving
When thy soul of “ want ” complains ?
Is one faint desire now turning
To thy Father's house so fair—
Longing, though but as a servant,
For the peace and plenty there ?

Ah ! thou knowest not that Father,
How he yearns His lost to greet ;
See, from far he marks thy coming,
Runs His weary one to meet.
“ I have sinned ”—thy lips must utter—
The confession meet and true—
But He waits not for the story
Of the wanderings which He knew.

'Tis when seated at His table,
Drest in tokens of His grace,
That thy shame will yet be deepened
In remembering all thy ways.
But the Father's love shall triumph,
For His heart hath had its way ;
And the joy which there beginneth
Never more shall pass away.

ANON,

THE GREAT POT.

“And Elisha came again to Gilgal; and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage; for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. *And there was no harm in the pot. And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. But his servitor said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people that they may eat; for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord.*”—2 KINGS iv. 38—44.

I.—ELISHA, GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE MAN.

WE have in this short Scripture that which the Spirit of God delights to give. In the presence of ruin on man's side, it was ever the delight of the Spirit of God to give us the remedies on God's side. In this Scripture, then, we have utter ruin on man's side presented to us, and, at the same time, the blessed remedies on God's side.

That which marked the ruin on man's side is characterised by two things: the first is *dearth*,

and the second is *death*. On man's side there is nothing but death and dearth; on God's side there is nothing but life and plenty.

I want you to mark how full of deepest meaning every word of this passage is.

Elisha is God's representative man on earth; God has never left Himself without a testimony on the earth, in the days even of the greatest failure and ruin. A little lower down, Elisha is called the "man of God." Now, what is a man of God? A man may be a Christian and yet not be a man of God. A man of God is a man who, in a day of ruin, in a day of evil and wickedness, stands out for God. That which actuated every motive of the God-man on earth was always to do those things which were pleasing to God. He cared for God's interest on this earth. Elisha, then, was a man who cared for God's interests on the earth: he was God's representative man. And where is he found? This leads us to another word of deep significance in our verse.

II.—GILGAL.

"Elisha came again to Gilgal." Gilgal is the place of blessing. I speak now of moral blessing. Gilgal was the place where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away.

The man who is at Gilgal has eternal blessing within his grasp; the man who is not at Gilgal is a long way off from eternal blessing. Gilgal

is the place of self-judgment—a place where self is very little; a place where men, women, and children are on very bad terms with themselves; and if you are not at Gilgal, let me tell you, you are a long way off from God.

There are just two classes of people, and you, my reader, must belong to one of them. Either you are at Gilgal or you are not. Are you among those who are building on something they can do? That is the very opposite of Gilgal. If you want to think well of yourselves—if you want to retain your own reputation in the world—Gilgal is the last place you will come to: but the man who knows that he cannot stand before God, cannot bear to be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary—who knows that if he was thus weighed he would be found wanting—that man is at Gilgal: for Gilgal is a place of Divine realities, and God must have reality. And you, my reader, must have reality too; and if you will not have reality in the day of God's grace, you must have eternal reality in the day of His judgment, in the place where hope never comes.

You may be a sham and a hypocrite here, but there are no shams or hypocrites before the great white throne; all is reality there—all is terrible reality in the lake of fire.

Oh, I ask you, on what ground do you stand before God? Have you got into that sacred circle which encompasses every blessing—the

presence of God? People keep out of the presence of God—hide, like Adam, behind the trees of the garden; behind their business; behind anything, to keep themselves out of the presence of God.

To come within the reach of that sacred circle, the presence of God, that is the way to get to Gilgal. Do not be afraid of the light of that presence. He will not accuse you: humble you He must; bring you low. He must; show you what you are He must. The moment you are brought low in the light of God's presence you are at Gilgal, the place of self-judgment, and within the reach of eternal blessing.

“And there was a dearth in the land.” Now a famine in the land of Israel was a decided mark of the judgment of God, for if Israel failed in what they undertook to do, viz. to keep His law, then His governmental dealings must come in in judgment. But in spite of the famine there is always blessing at Gilgal.

And is there not a famine in this world—a spiritual famine? Did not the rich young man in Mark x. know what it was to experience famine? He had everything for time, and nothing for eternity. “My soul craves,” he seems to say, “something that shall be mine for ever.”

Oh, dear soul, you are badly off if you have nothing for eternity!

This is a world that is full of five things physically: tears, and death, and sorrow and

crying, and pain; and full of sin and death morally. The broken hearts, the yearning, anxious, careful, troubled faces on every hand, tell us what? That there is a famine in the land—that there is a want in the human heart!

But “the sons of the prophets were sitting before him.” These men, who were in external relationship to God, were at Gilgal, in the place of self-judgment; they had nothing good to say for themselves. It is a great thing not to have anything good to say for ourselves, for if your lips are not silenced in the day of God’s grace, they will be silenced in the day of His judgment.

These sons of the prophets were in the best of places, and in the best of postures, “sitting before him.” Restlessness is the mark of an unsatisfied soul; going about to make good our own case is the very opposite to Gilgal; because going about to establish our own righteousness is not submitting ourselves to the righteousness of God. You must be either a doer or a receiver, and

“Doing is a deadly thing—
Doing ends in death.”

Here they are “sitting.” Go back in thought for a moment, and picture that group of hungry men in the place of self-judgment, God’s representative man there with them. Israel is ruined, but God is not ruined.

Who is the first to speak in this group? Is it the sons of the prophets telling Elisha their need?

No. There was the representative of the living God, and he knows their need, he knows the dearth, the famine.

God's representative broke the silence, and when you get in reality to Gilgal you let God do all the talking: bow your heart, and let God have everything to say.

Elisha does not speak to them; there they are in their weakness, in their poverty, and he knows it all; he speaks to his servant. What does that mean? He falls back on his own resources. It means that there never is a need that God has not resources to meet that need: there never is a want that He is not able to supply out of His own fulness. He has a provision now to meet all the necessity of the case.

III.—THE GREAT POT.

Here we have Elisha, God's representative man, speaking to his servant, falling back on his own resources, and what does he say? "Set on the great pot." Why the great pot? Because everything connected with God is great. Everything connected with man is little. "God is rich in mercy, for his *great* love wherewith he loved us." That is what faith says, and when the Lord Jesus was down here, and spoke of God's provision for the needy, He does not say, "A certain man made a supper," but "made a *great* supper."

Again, when the Apostle warns the Hebrews,

it is, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." When the Lord is spoken of as the resource for Israel in a coming day, it is as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He is "the great Shepherd" too; in short, dear reader, I announce to you a God who is a great God—great in all His resources for you, and I ask you, do you know this God? "Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets." There is plenty with God to meet every need.

IV.—THE WILD VINE.

But, now, the next verses tell of evil, sorrow, and desolation—of death and judgment. Here is a man who turns away from the place of self-judgment—turns away from Gilgal—goes out in self-will; and, beloved reader, if you are not in the place of self-judgment before God, you are in the path of self-will.

The prophet had said not one word about herbs; they were in the posture of weakness, of receivers, of doing nothing, and having nothing, but receiving all from the living God. And now one man goes forth into the field, to gather herbs, following his own thoughts, like Paul when he said, "I thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Oh, my readers, are you governed and controlled by your own thoughts and the

power of Satan, or by the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God ?

Here self-will displayed itself in activity—"went out," turned from the place of blessing to the field. What is the field ? "The field is the world," Scripture says. Is there anything in the world that is good ? There is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; and "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof." Yet here this man goes out into the field. I pray you notice the simple language of Scripture.

He went out, governed by self-will, governed by the thoughts of his own heart. You may tell me he was governed by a good motive. I grant it. You may tell me he went in search of what was good. I grant it ; for herbs in Scripture are always good things. But he went into the world in search of what was good. He went out from where he could have eternal blessing, and went into the world in search of what was good. Did he find it ? He found a "wild vine." Now the wild vine is the true picture of man's condition, in self-will away from God, which only yields death, and ruin, and judgment.

I can tell you, my reader, as one who has tried, there is not such a thing in this world as true, abiding joy. The vine in Scripture is ever the figure of what produces joy. How vain the pursuit of joy in the world ! How bitter the fruits, how terrible the remorse.

The world has no wine to offer, only "stolen waters." Proverbs ix. gives us what Christ's wisdom presents, and what is offered by "the foolish woman," the world. He, Christ, says, "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled." And, my reader, if you only lay bare your heart before the Son of God, come to the Saviour, open your heart and let Him in, I will tell you what He will bring into it—Divine, eternal gladness.

"Stolen waters are sweet," and is not sin sweet? Do you not roll it as a pleasant morsel under your tongue? You know you have found it sweet, but listen to the end: "Her guests"—the world's guests—"are in the depths of hell."

Why do you think they are called "stolen waters?" Because every sin you indulge in, you indulge in at the expense of the glory of God, and you are a robber, robbing God of His honour. For why were you created? Was it not for His honour and glory? Oh, beloved reader, believe me, there is not in the world such a thing as joy; you can find poor transitory pleasures of the moment, but there is no wine there. Where is there wine? In heaven with Jesus there is wine, there is joy; and if you do not know Him you have never known joy. Fleeting pleasure you may have known, but deep, divine, eternal joy you have never known. Yet you may know it now,

this moment: if you come to Him, He will put eternal gladness into your heart.

“And gathered thereof wild gourds.” The gourd is a symbol of man, satisfied with his own doings. The man that is away from God is the man that walks in darkness and ignorance—“Knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.” “Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.” This man was totally ignorant, did not know what he was about. An ignorant man, away in self-will, away from God, doing for himself; and once more I say,

“Doing is a deadly thing—
Doing ends in death.”

The result of this busy, uncalled-for action follows:—

“They cried out and said, “O thou man of God, there is death in the pot.” How solemn! oh, how solemn! We preach the coming of the Lord often—we have the bright, the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord to receive us to Himself, but there is another side of the picture too. Do you know that we are all dying men and dying women! It is only a question of days, or months, or years, and then, if the Lord delays His coming, you must die, I must die; there is not one who can stand up and claim exemption. “For as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” You know you have sinned,

and the soul that sins must die. Have you ever looked it in the face? Over every man, woman, and child in this city this sentence of death hangs! Have you ever weighed in the light of eternity the vanity of the moment of your stay upon earth? What is our life? It is even a vapour.

Oh, dear reader, death is an awful calamity to the unconverted man. I should be afraid to die if I did not know Christ as my Saviour! For death is a reality, and after death there is the judgment, and then the sentence, and then—the lake of fire. You may seem to have health and strength, but the seeds of mortality are in you.

The Lord give you to face the truth, and then there is the blessed remedy here.

V.—THE MEAL.

“But he said, Then bring meal.” The man who could meet the dearth could meet the death. God’s representative is here, and he says, “Well, if you have done your worst, it is only an opportunity for God to do His best.”

What is the meal? Christ in humanity is the meal. He came from heaven—from glory. He knew what the death and the judgment were, and what does He bring. Life! He comes from glory, He goes down under all the death, under all the judgment. He was cast, as it were, into the pot.

“Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead.” One man brought in the ruin and the death, but another man came down into the scene, went into conflict with the one who had the power of death, overcame him, spoiled him of his power, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. Whoever you are, I can tell you, on the authority of God’s own Word, Christ died for all. He was the meal that was cast into the pot, and what did He bring out of the grave? He brought life and incorruptibility out of it! That is what Christ has done!

Has He not triumphed? Has He not gotten the victory? He has! He has broken every barrier down, and now to a Christian to die is gain. What gain! For the only link the believer has with a groaning creation is the body, and when death comes it is only to break the last link and to set me free. For He gives the victory, He sets me free, He gives everything for time and for eternity. He has done everything. The Saviour loved, the Saviour died, and then there is that cloudless morning of the resurrection.

I ask you, my reader, has death any fear, has the grave any quiver of dread for you? Or is death only a cloudless passing into His own bright presence? For the Christian the brightest moment is the moment that he passes away to be for ever with the Lord.

You would not like to die without Christ, would you? You would not dare to? If you knew assuredly that this would be your last night on earth—and it may be—if you knew your head would never again be raised from the pillow in life, would you dare to lay your head tranquilly on your pillow without knowing that you had Christ?

I will tell you one thing. I would not dare to die without Christ; and I will tell you more—I would not care to live without Him either. And if you knew you would be saved next week—and there is no warrant in Scripture for knowing any such thing—you would have lost what eternity could never recover for you: a week's walking with, a week's enjoyment of, the Son of God! For salvation is not merely being rescued from hell at the last; salvation is learning to know the Son of God and walking with Him, being made like Him now. Will you dare to live another day on this earth, that lies under the judgment of God, with your soul in your own keeping? I would not, I dare not, and I counsel you not to either.

“And He said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat.” There is enlargement now; it is not for the sons of the prophets only, but for the people; it is not salvation for the few, but for the many. Go and tell them all, Christ says, of the victory, tell them of the triumph, tell them what I have accomplished.

There is not a single atom of ruin and judgment on man's side that He has not gone under, and risen out of, a victor.

Do you think it is a weak Christ you have to do with? Oh no! no! You are either under Satan and weakness, or under Christ and power. It is a victorious Christ, a triumphant Christ. Will you be ashamed of Christ? Ashamed of the Son of God in glory? Can it be that you would be ashamed of the One who has all power? Oh, come out now on the side of a victorious Christ, on the side of the One who had a pathway of shame and a death-crown here for you, but left you a pathway of life and glory.

If you are not for Christ, you are against Him; and can you be against the One who died for you? Oh, bow your head, and heart too, to Him. He is sitting there, King of Glory, till His enemies be made His footstool; will not you bow now? Will you wait to be made His footstool? "Pour out for the people." Why pour out? What does God want you to do? Eat. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." That means owning this One who has been down under death—owning I need that death, and appropriating it to myself.

What will your poor souls feed on if you refuse to feed on Him? The husks that the swine do eat? "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good."

Do not leave it till to-morrow. Tell me, have you a keener appetite for the things of this poor passing world than for what God in His grace presents to you? Will you be a blessed, a satisfied man or woman, now and for ever; or will you continue in all the misery and desolation, the want, the famine, of a rejecter of Christ?

“Blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Him.” Will you not taste and see that He is good, and have that blessing for your own?

“Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.”

E. P. C.

THE TWO RESTS—SALVATION, COMMUNION.

MATTHEW xi. 28—30.

THERE are two rests spoken of here—the rest of salvation, and the rest of communion. The second rest cannot be known without the first: the first is the introduction to the second. Let us look at them both. And first,

THE REST OF SALVATION.

Nothing can be more simple than the way in which salvation is here presented in the aspect of rest. Blessed word! What is rest? It is a ceasing from labour. Those who need rest, those by whom rest is welcomed, are those who labour; and, accordingly, such are they to whom Jesus Himself speaks of rest. And how.—oh,

how does He present the thought to the already wearied one? Does He speak of work in another field? Does He change the sphere of the working one's toil, but still direct him to work in another way? Does He speak to the worn and jaded heart of one single effort in another direction? No; not one, not one.

Oh, labouring soul, listen to *His* words—not mine, not man's—but *His*: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Hast thou ever heard anything so sweet, so suited to *thy* case as this? Yes, toiler for salvation, worker for eternal life, poor heavy-laden soul, this word is for *thee*! Jesus gives—I beg you mark that word—gives rest! And what a rest! A rest as perfect as the One who gives it, and a rest which, therefore, leaves nothing further to be provided, and nothing more to be desired. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 13, 14); "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). It is a rest which the word of Jesus is pledged to give. And mark, beloved reader, it is a *present* rest; for it is linked with coming—that is, the one who comes will not be

kept waiting, but will get rest *the moment He comes.*

There was one who, under the power of His gracious words, began to long for rest, and came in spirit to Him, ere she knew to Whom she had come; but she was not kept waiting, for His "I that speak unto thee am He" rolls away the burden from that sin-stricken heart, and sets the accusing conscience at rest for ever (Heb. x. 2), and so fills the heart with His own joy, that *self* is lost sight of altogether, and nothing is before her heart but the One who has told her "all things that ever she did," and the precious souls around her who are strangers as yet to ~~that rest~~ which her own heart so fully knows (John iv.).

There was another who, in the midst of a lucrative calling, found his conscience accusing, and his heart unsatisfied, and the desire of his soul that which the world could not give; and he ran and climbed a sycamore-tree to get a sight of Jesus. He was not kept waiting; for what "I that speak unto thee am he" had been to the woman of Samaria, "Zacchæus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house," was to Zacchæus; and Zacchæus was at rest.

Beloved reader, let me ask you the question ere I proceed further, "Is this first rest yours, or are you still seeking rest, but finding none?" Listen again to His "Come unto ME." Mark

that He does not say to this or that so-called "place of worship," or to this or that ordinance, or to this or that man, but "unto ME." And let me, for your encouragement, give you His own words, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

And now let us turn for a little moment to the second rest.

THE REST OF COMMUNION.

This is the rest which the believer finds in learning the Lord's mind so as to be able to work for Him with the assurance that He has set us to work, that we are therefore doing that which is according to His mind in the way which is according to His mind—that is, really, that we have no mind or will of our own in service, but that He is working in us. This is the blessed rest which Mary had in Luke x.: she "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." Martha was "cumbered" and "careful;" Mary had "chosen that good part." Do not suppose, dear reader, that Martha ought to have been doing *at the same time* just the same thing as Mary—that is, sitting "at Jesus' feet"—for these bodies of ours must be cared for; but that, had she learnt the heart of Jesus as Mary had, she would have been doing her work "as unto the Lord" (Col. iii. 23), and in grace rejoicing in her sister's blessed leisure.

The first rest, then, is found in knowing Jesus

as the Saviour; the second, in learning Him as the pattern. The mistake which many thousands of really earnest souls are making is, that they are trying to learn the second rest before they have experienced the first—trying to learn Jesus as the Model before they have learnt Him as the Saviour. This can never be: and for the simple reason that till Christ is known as the Saviour there is no life to God (John iii. 36; Eph. ii.; 1 John v. 12); and hence no power to walk, no power to act for God at all. And hence, such souls not only get no peace, but, endeavouring to be holy while strangers to the power of holiness (2 Cor. v. 14, 15), they get, in spirit, under the law which was given by Moses (John i. 17), and instead of getting peace, they get far more wretched and miserable than they were before. And no wonder; for the testimony of the law is, that the man who keeps God's judgments and statutes shall live by them (Lev. xviii. 5; Ezek. xx. 11). But the poor, labouring soul under law soon finds how utterly incapable he is of keeping it according to God's standard (Deut. vi. 5; Mark xii. 28-31; Luke x. 25-28; Matt. v. 28; 1 John iii. 15; James ii. 10).

Moreover, to aggravate his sorrow, and fill up his cup of wretchedness to the brim, he finds that not only is he no nearer God than he was at the first, but that he is CURSED; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth

not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). Such is the result of trying to learn that which is alone the effect of the second rest: true service to God, without the knowledge of the first. The "terror of the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 11) is all that is learnt, and an unsatisfied and accusing conscience the result. I repeat, the first rest is the gate through which the second is entered. There cannot be true rest of soul except in the reception of this first rest into the heart; and this rest, in one word, is Christ.

I may here apply a word morally, for the sake of illustration, which is found in another connection in Heb. iv. 10: "He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." So I may say, dear reader, that the one who has entered into this blessed rest of which we are speaking, salvation, is the one who has ceased from all his own works, doings, for salvation, and has learnt that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

"Till to Jesu's work you cling, DOING is a deadly thing—
By a simple faith, Doing ends in death."

"Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the

righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that BELIEVE: for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the JUSTIFIER of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 20-26).

Come *now* to Jesus! Take Him, trust Him, appropriate Him by faith in His finished work for you (John xix. 30), and your heart shall know, the moment you believe, the full joy and blessedness of the first rest, and through grace, shall be enabled to prove the practical power which the second gives to walk to His glory.

R. H. G.

PROBATION; OR, TRIED AND FOUND GUILTY.

A MAN commits a crime, is arrested, brought to trial, and formally charged with the crime; witnesses are produced, and tender their evidence. The judge sums up, and the jury retire. They bring in a verdict of *Guilty*, and the judge solemnly passes sentence on the wretched man,

and the case is closed. I ask, Is such a man now on probation? No; he has been, and failed. Is such a man now on trial? No; he has been tried, and found guilty. Probation is ended, the trial closed, the result known. A few swiftly-passing hours, and the sentence will be put into execution.

Child of Adam's race! "thou art the man!" Whether king or subject, nobleman or peasant, master or servant, rich or poor, moral or immoral, learned or unlearned—whatever thy name or station, "thou art the man." God has had man on probation, and he has failed. The result is known, for the verdict has gone forth. "Guilty!" All the world guilty before God. God, the judge of all the earth, has spoken out. He has already made known His judgment of man—all men. There need be no waiting till the day of the great white throne to know God's judgment; there need be no doubt, no uncertainty as to this solemn, all-important question. God's verdict is, "Guilty!"

"There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans iii. 22, 23). Your self-righteous heart may disclose itself by rebelling against the truth, you may throw down this paper with disgust; but, nevertheless, the truth remains, and will face you once again—in the day of the execution of the wrath of God Almighty. That day is fast approach-

ing, bearing down upon the guilty with irresistible force, like some mighty avalanche, which will carry you into eternal perdition—the lake of fire, where their worm dieth not—tormented throughout the eternal ages with the ever-present remembrance, “I was warned of this, and closed my ears against it; fool that I was!” Oh! the agony of that moment when you discover that it was all real, all true, and that you have been deceived, cheated, sold. Oh! the remorse that will take possession of you then, when the wrath of God, of which you were often warned, comes upon you in all its terrible reality. The very thought of it is oppressive; what, then, the reality?

Again I repeat, man's probation is at an end; you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting; God has tried man, and the result is already known. “Guilty.” Here is God's charge, Romans iii. 9—19; read it, and remember it is what God says. “We have before proved that they are all under sin;” that is, no future thing to be yet proved, but already it is proven. And then, in verse 10, it is written, “There is none righteous, no, not one.” Who could say that but God? Who could make such a sweeping statement but God? See Psalm xiv. 2: “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God.”

Here you have man on probation, on his trial, and the Lord Himself looking to see the result ; and what is the conclusion arrived at ? what is God's judgment ? Listen ! "They are all (mark, *all*) gone aside, *all* become filthy (mark, *all* filthy) : there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Remember this is what God has concluded ; this is His judgment of man, already come forth. God says, none good, all filthy. Man may flatter himself that he has something to his credit before God, like the Pharisee in Luke xviii. 10—14 ; but God puts him in the dust with "none good, all filthy." Yes, even man's (your) "righteousnesses are as filthy rags" in the sight of God (Isaiah lxiv. 6).

This is terrible evidence to be produced against self-righteous men. The heart may rebel against it, the lip of pride may curl as you read it, but it remains nevertheless. You may refuse to bow to it now, but you will meet it again under different circumstances, when the One who is now the Saviour of guilty sinners fills the throne of judgment ; then you will cry out, "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah vi. 5).

But there is more in the charge than even this : "Their throat is an open sepulchre" (verse 13)—a sepulchre, where rottenness and corruption hold sway. God compares man's throat to that, send-

ing forth its foulness, polluting the moral atmosphere. See the words of the Lord Jesus in Matt. xv. 18, 19: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;" corruption enough, surely! But there is more than this, black as it is: "With their tongues they have used deceit, and the poison of asps is under their lips." Terrible testimony against man, the noblest of God's earthly creatures; but how fallen! Oh! the misery and the sorrow, the burning pain, that the deceitful, the lying lip of man has caused; but it will surely meet its doom at the hands of a righteous though long-suffering God. "And all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. xxi. 8),

Let us read the remainder of the charge: "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." What a terrible picture, and yet how true! The first man that owned his state before God, and took a sacrifice, and was accepted by God, was murdered by his own brother. That was the beginning of man's probation, and the end of it was when man murdered the only One with whom God could say He was well pleased (Hebrews xi. 4, and Acts vii. 52). The trial of man is closed, and God has given us His verdict.

Every mouth stopped, and all the world guilty. Mark it well, as one who has to give an account of himself to God. He says, "*All guilty!*" How awfully comprehensive God's sentence is; and then He has all power to put it into execution. Who can stand in the day of His wrath?

Traveller to eternity, ponder thy steps, read the word God has given, mark well, and learn; for if God has revealed His mind and pronounced all guilty, is it not the most foolish of all follies—is it not ruining, soul-damning madness for you to have thoughts of your own, or to listen to the thoughts of others? Is it not simply the father of lies seeking to blind you to the true state of affairs, as he did Eve, when he said to her, "Ye shall not surely die," and she believed his lie rather than God's truth, and she did die.

God has said, "*All guilty.*" Sentence has gone forth; you are simply awaiting the execution of it, which is approaching with awful swiftness. And is Satan, aided by your own deceitful heart, blinding you to your helpless, hopeless state, and leading you on to that blackness of darkness, the eternal dungeons of the damned, where not a ray of hope or mercy ever enters? Awake! awake! The day of vengeance is at hand, and you are still unsaved. God says, "*All guilty.*" What is to be done? To speak of improvement or reformation is mockery to one under sentence of death; he might weep from morn till night, and

from night till morn, tears of bitterest remorse and sorrow, but still there is that terrible hour approaching nearer and nearer. His own efforts are useless, for justice is relentless; he is shut up to judgment or sovereign grace. And oh, blessed news! God comes forth in grace, asking nothing from man, but providing for him.

Listen to God, who, in sovereign grace, stands in the presence of the guilty one, and speaks thus: "You have been convicted?" "Yes." "And sentenced?" "Yes." "And that righteously?" "Yes." "I have come to tell you that I have found a way to save you. My own Son has died, having been made sin; the claims of a broken law have been met, justice is more than satisfied in His death, and He is alive again, and in His name I offer you a full pardon (Acts xiii. 38, 39). You have no righteousness—I will accept you in Him; the only condition is, that you submit to be saved altogether by Him, letting your own name go, and believing in His name (John i. 12, and Romans x. 3, 4)."

This is the free, sovereign grace of God, in which He is enabled to act through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, "whom God hath set forth, a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rom. iii. 24, 25), not only pardoning sin and justifying from all things, but making us the righteousness of God in Christ. And it is all

ours the moment there is faith in the One whom God has set forth, condemning ourselves and believing God's glad tidings concerning His Son (Rom. i. 1—3), even as we read, "Unto all and upon all them that believe" (iii. 22).

Thus is the question of righteousness settled for God and for man: Jesus comes down, takes the sinner's place, and bears all consequences; and believing in Him, we get His place, and share all the blessing in which the second Man and last Adam stands. Truly, this is grace worthy of God—thus proposing to take the guiltiest, and set him in His own presence in all the acceptance of His Beloved Son (Eph. i. 6). Well may the apostle designate it "so great salvation," and ask how shall we escape if we neglect it (Hebrews ii. 3).

Careless one—religious, unsaved one—beware! Gentle and simple, beware! God has written "*Guilty*" against all the race of Adam; there is no difference. That same God has provided this great salvation; how shall you escape the wrath of God, eternal damnation, if you neglect it? Justify God by condemning yourself. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be eternally accepted in all the acceptance of Christ: "It is no more I, but Christ," was Paul's confession. Doubt no more; the judgment is past as well as the probation, for the believer (John v. 24).

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light."—Ps. cxix, 130.

"DRAW the curtain back a little, Annie dear, that I may see the sun set, and bring your chair nearer to me, and read something—something that will give me comfort." And the sick girl sighed wearily, and turned restlessly on her couch, now watching with a troubled look her sister's movements, as she hastened to fulfil her requests, now fixing her large, lustrous eyes on the deep bay window of her room, through which the sun, setting with unusual splendour for a winter's afternoon, was plainly visible.

Yet it was not of the sunset that the young sufferer dreamed, nor of any earthly light, as, presently, she softly murmured, "At evening time it shall be light . . . at evening time it shall be light;" then, with deep feeling, "O Annie, Annie, it is evening time with me *now*, but it is *not* light, it is *not* light!"

Her sister drew closer still, and took the little wasted, burning hand, which rested outside the coverlid, in both of hers, and, as she looked lovingly on the troubled face of the one so dear to her, her own reflected the trouble of it.

For a moment neither spoke, but hand clasped hand more tightly; then the sick girl broke the silence once more.

"Annie, tell me, tell me truly, if you were an

I am, if you were *dying*, would *you* be afraid? . . . You need not try to contradict me, dear, I know now that I am dying . . . I heard every word Dr. — said yesterday . . . Do not be grieved, my pet sister, it is better I should know, and but for that I should not have guessed it even, for I am not so *very* ill?" Her eyes had a questioning look, as though she would fain have asked, could she have made a mistake, in spite of the certainty of her previous tone.

Sorrowfully Annie bowed her head; she had no words. The death-knell to all their hopes for that bright young life had been given the night before, when their kind physician, who had known her all her life, and who loved her like his own child, had said, "It is only a question of a week or two at the longest,—not that even, if the disease continues to make the same rapid progress."

This was his judgment, and they had listened to it with the agony only those can understand who have thus hearkened, once at any rate in their lifetime, to words that tell them that the life for which they would gladly lay down their own is ebbing surely and rapidly away; that no love of theirs, no tender care, can stay the loosing of the "silver cord" which binds the beloved one to earth, but that soon, very soon, the parting which looks so terrible *must* come.

A half-checked sob had been Annie's only

answer to her sister's last words. Each was thinking of the other. Then, as a flood of crimson and golden light poured into the room, the young sufferer returned to her question.

"Would *you* be afraid, Annie? Tell me."

"I do not know, Nellie dear; it is so hard to tell beforehand. I do not think I should, and," she whispered, "you have Jesus, and Jesus will be with you and carry you through."

"But I am not SURE, and oh, remember, Annie, it is for *ever*, and for *ever*, and for *ever*. I must make no mistakes now. What can I do to be *sure*?" and, trembling with emotion, her face flushed with excitement, she raised herself slightly on her elbow, and gazed into her sister's face.

"But, Nellie, darling, we came to Jesus, you and I both, did we not? and we read together of His love, and His willingness to receive us, in His own Word. You remember the day when we found out we were sinners and needed a Saviour, and we came to Jesus. I have never doubted since, and I did not think you had."

"I was never *sure*; as you were, Annie, and last night, when I heard the doctor say I must die, and die soon, I was terribly afraid. I used to be happy sometimes, when we were singing hymns together, and when ——'s letters came, with the verses of Scripture to meet my dark doubts I sometimes thought I saw it all for a

moment, but the doubts came back, and now I am so afraid, and I cannot find comfort."

"Look to Jesus, Nellie, dear," her sister tremblingly said, hardly knowing, in her deep love, and sorrow, and anxiety, what to say.

"Yes, but, Annie, He might forget me; I've known so little about Him, and I have not served Him. . . I do not know Him *enough to die with*, Annie. . . He might let me go. . . It is like a big, dark river in front of me, and I am afraid to go down into its deep black waters alone."

The words were spoken almost convulsively, and the slight frame quivered, as though in mortal agonies. Eternity, in all its reality, was before her, everything she had clung to on earth was slipping from her grasp, and there was not the certainty in her soul that underneath her were the Everlasting Arms.

Have you, my reader, ever for one moment, in the darkness and silence of the night, with no human eye near, faced eternity *alone* with God, without the peace-giving knowledge that your life was hid with Christ in God, that His life, His joy, His home were yours? If you have thus faced it, in all its solemn reality, you will understand *something* of this young girl's agony of soul. I say *something* of it, for probably you have never yet been in the border-land between time and eternity, with the certainty that there were only a

few more settings suns, and then, for you, time would be no longer, and eternity would have begun.

These two young sisters, of whom the dying girl was the elder, had, but a very short time previously, been awakened to a sense of their lost condition, and their need of a Saviour, through reading a paper in the pages of "God's Glad Tidings." Annie, the younger, had, in simple faith, at once appropriated Jesus as *her* Saviour—His death, His blood-shedding, as the atonement for *her* sins. She had no questions, no doubts. At the very moment when she discovered her need, the One who could meet that need was presented to her, and she received Him, and trustfully had clung to Him.

With Nellie it had been different. Though alive to the fact of her need, she had, as yet, never laid bare her soul before Jesus, and let Him meet it all. There had been reserves in her heart, doubts and questionings in her mind; and now with death before her, as she said, she did "not know Him enough to die with."

For a moment, as Nellie finished speaking, her sister leaned her head upon her hand, quietly asking the Lord Jesus she so simply trusted, to come in and lighten the darkness in her sister's soul. Then she said, "Nellie, Jesus does not want you to go down into the dark waters alone: He will go with you. I know Him well enough to know He will never forget

you, never forsake you, if you trust Him. I wish I knew how to tell you better, but I know there is a verse in the Bible that says He will never let anyone go that has come to Him, if only I knew just where to find it."

The dying girl had sunk back on her pillow exhausted, but now she once more raised herself, and said eagerly, "Find it, and show it to me in the *Bible itself*, Annie, for I cannot believe anything else now! Oh, if it only said He would never let *me* go!" and the burning flush on her fair young cheek deepened alarmingly.

Afraid of the consequences of such intense excitement, Annie said, soothingly, "Will you not lie still a little while now, and try to be quiet, and to-morrow I will find it, and read it to you."

"To-morrow!" answered Nellie, "I may not be here to-morrow, and I might be in *hell*. 'It may be very sudden at the last, and she may go at any moment,' " she added, quoting the doctor's very words. Then, after a moment's pause, "This is not half so bad for me, Annie, as lying thinking of it alone, as I have been all the time, though you did not know it. I cannot rest till I am *sure* that Jesus will have *me*, and not let *me* go."

Annie felt the truth of her words, and, opening her Bible, searched carefully for the verses she wanted; but she was as yet young in the faith,

and knew very little of the Scriptures, and page after page of the precious book was turned over, and anxiously but unsuccessfully examined, while her sister watched her with almost impatient eagerness.

The short January afternoon was rapidly closing in; the last gleam of sunlight was dying away, and Annie was bending low with her little Bible, that the bright firelight might shine on its pages, when a knock came at the bedroom door, and a servant entered with the contents of the evening post-bag.

There were several letters and parcels, but one only, a small pamphlet tied round with a piece of green string, seemed to have any interest for the dying girl, and as soon as the servant had closed the door, after lighting the shaded lamp and drawing in the curtains, she said, quickly and anxiously, "Perhaps God has a message for me in this, Annie. He sent us one before through it; open it for me now."

Surely the Lord in His pitying love for that poor anxious, weary heart, sent that silent messenger at that very moment, and in even a more seemingly trivial thing still connected with it, His heart assuredly planned, His hand guided.

The pamphlet was the number for January 1876 of "God's Glad Tidings," containing the deeply touching story of the conversion and "going

home" of "The Young Doctor." The paper wrapper that had been tied round the little book was folded in at the thirteenth page, by accident doubtless on the part of the sender—by design surely on His part who numbers the very hairs of our head; so that as Annie, at her sister's anxious appeal, tore the wrapper away, the thirteenth page lay open before her, and the first words that met her eye were, "Listen to His own words, 'My sheep know my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I *give unto them eternal life*, and they shall never perish, neither shall any (man or devil) pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' (John x. 27—29.) There, will that do?" In loving wonder and praise she read the paragraph through, with its question at the end, which was just her own heart's question to her sister.

"There, Nellie!" she said, "there are the very verses I was trying to find; God has sent them to you Himself straight. Now, you *will* believe them."

Awe, and wonder, and hope, and a dawning sense of relief struggled together on that dying face. "Give me the book, Annie," she whispered softly, and my Testament, and put the lamp by me, and leave me a little while; you need not fear, dear one, I promise you to ring if

I feel worse, or when I am ready for you." Annie rose and obeyed her directions, only waiting to coax her sister to take part of a glass of fresh milk that had just been brought up.

An hour passed, and Nellie's bell did not ring, and Annie scarcely dared to intrude, but when another hour had nearly gone by, she crept anxiously to the door, and opened it softly. There was no sound. She moved noiselessly into the room, almost dreading to look towards the bed. But her fears were groundless; the sight that met her eye filled her heart with gladness. Nellie was sleeping sweetly, a half smile on her slightly parted lips, and a look of untroubled peace on her fair young face such as Annie had never seen there before. The little pamphlet, with its precious verses from God's own Word, was lying open just where the full light from the lamp shone upon it, close by her side, while one hand still clasped her New Testament, opened at the tenth chapter of John's Gospel, as though she had searched for herself and found the words in her own Bible, and in the rest of soul they had given, the body had found rest also. Quietly Annie sat down and watched her till at last she began to fear lest her beloved sister would never again awaken, and rose anxiously to call their mother and others of the family, praying all the time—oh, so earnestly—for just one word, one assuring

word, from her own lips, to tell her for certain that the look of rest on her face was the rest that Jesus gives to every weary one who comes to Him.

The Lord gave her, as He delights to do, far more than she asked Him for.

The movement, slight though it was, had awakened Nellie. She opened her eyes, and seeing her sister, said, with a bright beaming smile, "O Annie, I seem almost to have been in heaven. 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinner*s.' So He *came* to save *me*, for that means every sinner, and it is nothing at all to do with *my* holding on to Him or serving Him well, or even knowing Him well, though I would like to, for He says, '*I know them*,' so He knows me well, all my badness too, and yet He says, 'Neither shall *any* pluck them out of my hand.' . . . That *must* mean that I cannot even take myself out of His hand. . . How good He is! Yes, that will do, even to die with."

Tears of deep, holy joy filled the eyes of both, and songs of thanksgiving arose from their hearts. Presently Annie asked, "Did you see it at once, dear?"

"No, not at once. When you read those verses I felt there might be something for me; I was sure it was the Lord who had sent that message just then, and I wanted to be alone with Him to have it *settled*. Then something, I sup-

pose it was Satan, whispered, 'Yes, He holds *His own sheep*, of course, but suppose you are not one of *His sheep* at all?' Then I was as badly off as ever, and even worse, for my hopes had been raised. Then, in my agony, I turned over the pages to see who it was had had this same fear in dying as I, and my eye caught these words a page or two further back, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.' Oh, how sweet that word *sinners* was! . . . 'If I am not one of *His sheep* I am a *sinner*,' I said aloud, 'and Jesus came to save sinners. Even Satan cannot cheat me of that name, a sinner, nor deny His right to save me . . . and those He saves He holds fast.' . . . I wonder I did not see it before, but, . . . O Annie, what relief it is for peace to come after such agony!"

A smile of almost more than earthly beauty lit up her face, and again her eyes closed, and, though not sleeping, she lay quite still, as though absorbed in her new-found joy.

For some weeks after this Nellie lingered. It seemed as though the entering in of God's Word had given not only light to her soul at evening time, but even strength to her body, as though for a time the very joy of her heart kept her above pain and weakness.

One day, when she had been speaking of Jesus very earnestly to a young friend, her mother

entered, and seeing her look so bright and animated, said, "Why, Nellie, I believe we shall have you well again, after all, my child."

"Yes, mother dear, Jesus has made me whole," she answered; "not as you mean, though," she added; "I am going to the land where the inhabitants shall no more say 'I am sick,' but, better still, I am going to *Jesus*."

Nellie could not keep the treasure she had found to herself: her heart was filled with the burning desire to be the means of imparting it to others—to be the channel of communication between a giving God and needy hearts, even though they recognised not their need.

Life was a reality to her, death was a reality, eternity was a reality, and, above all, Christ was a reality, and she longed that others whom she knew and loved, might not wait till a death-bed to have everything thus made real.

"My one regret now in dying," she said one day to her youngest sister, "is that even eternity cannot give us the honour of being on Jesus' side when all the world is against Him, of pleasing Him by being loyal and true; but you still have time, Annie dear, to be true to, and to be out and out for Jesus; and to win His 'She hath done what she could.' I shall rejoice to hear Him say this of you in that day."

Taught by the Holy Spirit, whose delight is to take of the things of Jesus and to show them to

us, she learnt much in those few short weeks. Whenever it was possible she craved to have the Word of God read to her, or to read it for herself. "I want to know as much as I can of Jesus before I go to Him," she would say to her sister, who was the sharer of all her thoughts, and to whom this was a time of real profit; for Nellie was the teacher now, instead of the learner, not that she took that place, only there was a constant bubbling up of the living waters wherewith Jesus had filled her soul, which refreshed and strengthened all who came near her.

When the last week in January came to a close, and February set in, it was evident, even to those who tried to blind themselves to the fact, that Nellie was sinking fast. Her sufferings were intense, so intense that even Annie, who clung to her sister with more than ordinary sisterly love, could no longer desire to keep her here. Yet the young sufferer bore all so uncomplainingly, very unlike the lively, high-spirited Nellie of a few months back, who, though an almost universal favourite, and loving and generous even to a fault; could yet brook little patiently, that crossed her thoughts and will. Very unlike, too, the weary, restless, miserable Nellie of a few weeks back. But who can teach like Jesus?

"How can you bear it, my child?" was her mother's almost heart-broken expression one

day, when the pain had been even more than usual.

"He gave *Himself* for me," was the soft reply, "Himself, Himself!"

Many times during those weeks she asked to hear again the record of that death-bed which had been the means of bringing peace to her. "God's message to me," as she called it.

It was still early in February when the end came. Those who loved and watched her had feared it would be terrible suffering at the last, but gently, peacefully, Jesus Himself put her to sleep.

The sun was setting with almost as brilliant colouring as on that January afternoon just five weeks since, when, in bitter agony, Nellie had told out to her sister the terror and dismay of her soul. She seemed to remember it, for, turning her eyes towards the glowing west, she murmured softly, "Evening time . . . and Jesus is . . . the light. . . The city . . . had . . . no need of——." She stopped, a radiant smile of intense satisfaction lit up her face, there was a slight movement, a half-drawn sigh, and Nellie's freed spirit was in the presence of Him who is the light of heaven, and who had been the light of her young heart in the otherwise dark hours of suffering and death. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord," she was tasting what it is to be with Jesus "in Paradise."

And now may I ask you who have read Nellie's simple story, do *you* know this Jesus "enough to die with"?

Knowing about Him is not enough; talking about Him, or singing hymns about Him is not enough. To meet death *peacefully* I must know that on Calvary's cross He fully glorified God, and entirely put away my sins, every one of them, so that I stand in God's sight without a sin on me; and to meet death *joyfully* I want to know more still, even the person of the One to whom I am going, want to know Him, not only as the rest for my conscience against this terrible charge of sin, but as the satisfying portion for my heart. I need this to be true of me:—

"There no stranger God shall meet thee,
Stranger thou in courts above;
He who to His rest shall greet thee,
Greet thee with a well-known love!"

X.

"MOUNTAINS OF SIN!" OR, "GOING TO CHRIST"?

It is now some months since this bitter cry, "Mountains of Sin!" escaped the lips of a dying woman who was living in the village of—, in one of the western counties of England.

I had often seen her, and other Christians had constantly visited her, but although she professed

to be saved, it was our general impression that she was a miserable hypocrite.

It was painful to hear her talking freely about "her sins being washed away by the blood of Christ," and yet no hatred of sin manifested by her words or appearance; although it was a well-known fact that within a few weeks of her supposed conversion she had been living a shamefully degraded life. I one day asked her if she did not look back on her past life with grief, when she remembered it was her sins which helped to nail the Lord to the cross. "Oh, of course, we are all sinners," she replied; "but it says, 'Only believe,' and I do believe, so I know I am saved." I could not believe that the Holy Spirit had been working in that soul, for surely there would have been some sense of the depths of sin Satan had led her into, though at the same time that very knowledge would bring out in greater fulness the love that met her need.

Reader! do you know anything of this great love which led the Lord of glory to humble Himself even to the death of the cross for sinners such as you and I? We cannot measure such love. But you may ask, Why need He have died? Was there no other way to be saved? No! for "without shedding of blood there is no remission"—that means no forgiveness. Are you a sinner? I suppose none would deny that fact. Well, then, hear the sinner's sentence: "The

wages of sin is *death*" (Romans vi. 23), and "after this the *judgment*" (Heb. ix. 27); so you see this must be your portion—*death* and *judgment*—unless another will step into your place and bear it for you. But who can do that? for *all* have sinned, so all alike are under condemnation, and thus all must receive their own deserved sentence.

Now, mark the wondrous love of God: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Why, then, did God, out of the love of His own heart, give His Son? It was to die in the sinner's stead: and now His blood has been shed, God is satisfied, and delights to send forth the glad tidings of a full and free salvation for all who believe in Jesus.

But you may ask, How can I know that this salvation is for me, and that I am one of those for whom Christ died?

Turn to Rom. v. 6—8, "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*. . . . But God commendeth His love towards us in that while we were yet *sinners* Christ died for us." If the Holy Ghost has opened your eyes to see that you are without strength, ungodly, and a sinner in the sight of God, the above Scripture says it was for such that Christ died; and cannot you then say, I see from God's word that Christ must have died for me, as I am in-

cluded in that class of persons for whom He died, and if I can say He died for *me*, it was to bear my sins on His own body on the tree (1 Peter ii. 24). Oh, the peace and rest it gives the anxious soul to know that all the burden of sin, which it is utterly unable to lessen or get rid of, was borne by the only One who knew the amount, and could meet it all; and not until He had met it all did He say, "It is finished," and that leaves nothing for the trembling sinner to do but to praise the One who did it for him.

But there is much more connected with the cross of Christ, and what He in His great love there underwent for us. We deserved death—Christ died in our stead. We were under judgment—Christ endured the judgment for us. There was all the wrath of a holy God against sin: Christ bore it for us. We must have been for ever banished from God's presence: Christ was forsaken of God on the cross that we might never be, when He cried, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii 48).

Yes, reader! during those hours of darkness He was bearing sin's heavy load, and it was for the *ungodly*, the *sinner*, the *enemies*. He drank the bitter cup to the very last drop, so that nothing should remain for those who believe in Him but blessing.

Now if any soul sees something of this wonder-

ful work of Christ on the cross, and in some faint degree can estimate the cost at which we were delivered from Satan, and brought to God, surely there must be a corresponding loathing of the sins which cost God's Son such terrible agony. This I never found in Mrs. —.

I had been absent some months from the village of —, and on my return I met the daughter of Mrs. —. She was in deep mourning, and looked very sad and ill. "How is your mother?" I asked. "She is dead," was the answer. "And what was her end?" "I hope she was saved, for she cried for mercy, and we read, that all who, 'call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

I could say nothing, though the poor woman looked so wretched. I had no comfort to give her, for I feared that "the hypocrite's hope shall perish," was true of the one who was gone.

In a few hours I heard the terrible facts of the sad end of one who was merely a professor "without Christ" and "without hope."

When she knew that she was dying, terror seized her, and incessantly the cry came from her lips, "Mountains of sin! mountains of sin! they get higher and higher! Oh, pray for me! Is there no mercy?—they will sink me into hell!" At last, in great anguish, she told them she saw Satan on her bed, and died actually gnawing her tongue with torment already begun.

How different were the last moments of one who but a few months before, in the same village, departed to be with Christ. With a face radiant with joy, he said he could not think of his body—which was covered with wounds in a mortifying condition—"for," said he, "I am going to Christ!"

I would ask everyone who may read this perfectly true account of Mrs. ——'s death to weigh the matter carefully, and compare the end of one who had Christ, and so forgot his suffering body in the joy of going to be with the Lord for ever, and that of the poor lost one without hope, whose heart-breaking cry of "Mountains of sin!" will linger for many a day in the ears of those who were standing terrified by her deathbed. Would you like to pass into eternity with all your sins weighing you down to hell, or with the joy of knowing that Christ had borne them all for you, and that the "mountains of sin" are rolled away for ever?

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Reader! "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

READY FOR SALVATION, OR READY FOR JUDGMENT—WHICH?

“They that were ready went in.”—Matt. xxv. 10.

THERE are two things, my reader, which God has got absolutely *ready*—salvation is ready to be revealed for the *believer*, and the Lord is ready to judge the unbeliever; as Peter says (iv. 5), “Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.” Now, I ask you, Which are you—the one for whom salvation is ready, or the one for whom judgment is ready?

If you cannot say you are ready for salvation, you are like the foolish virgins in Matt. xxv., *outside, not ready*. What a place to be in! The Lord is just ready to reveal salvation, and what is that for the Christian? To take him up to glory: and nothing but the long-suffering and mercy of the Lord keeps that salvation from being revealed—His unwillingness that any should perish.

Faith in Christ secures present as well as eternal blessing. First I have the salvation of the soul, and then there is the salvation of my body. My soul is saved, and I am forgiven, by faith, now; but then there is something else God is going to do—take us out of this scene, and put us with Christ in glory. Salvation is ready for the believer, and the believer is ready for salvation. It is a great point to be *ready*.

If you are not ready for salvation, you are ready for judgment! Do you say, "I am a *professing* Christian"? Are you a *real* one?—that is the question. Were not the five foolish virgins *professing* Christians? Of course they were. Did they not go to church or to chapel? Of course they did. They appeared all right; but the five wise virgins take good care to see they are ready to meet the Bridegroom. They had the oil in their vessels. The vessel is the body, and what is the oil? The oil is the Holy Ghost. And who gets the Holy Ghost? Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. You do not get the Holy Ghost to help you to believe; but after you have believed, you are "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." That is how Scripture puts it.

We read in Matt. xxv. that, "They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut." The believer is shut *in*, the unbeliever is shut *out*. Which, my reader, are you? When you stand before the Lord, what will He be to you? Will He be your judge? Unconverted soul, He is your judge! Christian, how will you meet Him? As the Bridegroom of your heart. Is it not so? You meet Him in the air, and go in with Him.

Christian, you shall be *ever* with the Lord! Sinner, you shall be *never* with the Lord! You

shall see Him *once*, but only to hear Him say to you those terrible words, “*Depart from me, ye cursed!*”

Christian, *comfort* one another with these words, “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.” Sinner, I would I could *awaken* you with these words, for there is no comfort for you. He is ready to judge you, for then you will be left outside for judgment. What an awful thing to be a sinner in your sins! Every one of them is remembered, written down, and will be brought up against you in that day!

This year 1876, think you it has rolled away for ever? No, no! “This year 1876,” you ask, “will it rise again?” Yes, it will. What will come out by and by when before that great white throne you stand, a sinner in your sins? What will come out when the books are opened? Why are there *books*? Because there is a book for every sinner, and God makes no mistakes in His book-keeping. When the book of your history is opened, labelled with your name, everything in that book will be found most accurate. First, brought up by godly parents—heard of Christ from your infancy—perhaps attended the Sunday-school, maybe even became a teacher, and a member of a Church; but your soul was never washed in the blood of Christ, you never came to Him as a lost sinner for salvation; and the years, with their record of utter forgetfulness

of Him, roll on, each record divinely true, each record condemning you, and you stand and hear their soul-damning testimony. And then this year 1876 tells its tale : “ Listened to preachings about Christ, and never believed : from January to December was warned, exhorted, besought, pleaded with, to come to Jesus ; but the year has run its course, and this soul is an unbeliever still, without Christ still.” Will not this year rise ? Will it not rear its head then, and, as in that day thou criest for mercy, will it not say, “ Mercy was tasted by thousands in this year, but thou didst not taste it ; grace, like a shining river, flowed through the land, but thou didst not accept it ; week after week mercy was pressed on thee, and thou spurnedst it ; thou never bowedst the knee to Christ, never ownedst thou wert a sinner, never turnedst and criedst for mercy, and now wouldst thou cry for it ? There is no longer mercy for thee, no longer a door of escape for thee.” What an awful testimony !

We are waiting for Christ. Will you not join the Lord's host of ransomed ones ? Oh, the sweetness, the joy, the blessedness of having Christ ! Do not delay. Let this year be the last that shall find you without Christ. Receive Him, and go on your way, able to tell others what Christ is, and what He has done for you.

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