PREFATORY NOTE.

WE place before you, dear reader, another Volume of our FAITHFUL WORDS, *and with it offer our best wishes for your prosperity for time and eternity. We have sought, through the year that is past, to speak the truth of the Gospel to the best of our power, and to present it in the light of the peculiar difficulties of the day in which we live, and, we trust, we have your sympathy and confidence.*

It would seem that the words of the Lord Christ, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (*Rev.* iii. 8), *are now being fulfilled, for in all parts of the world His faithful servants have an access to their fellow men, such as we fail to find mentioned previously in the history of the Church. Now, with the open door, opened by His Almighty hand, and kept open at His pleasure—as at His pleasure it will be shut—His words are heard, "Behold, I come quickly"* (*ver.* 11). *It is but for a short season longer that the marvellous favours of this day of liberty will be extended, for days darker than the Dark Ages are yet to come, indeed, are rapidly approaching. Christian reader, in the presence of the open door, set before you by the Lord Himself, and in the sound of His solemn words, "I come quickly," oh, be in earnest, for the Lord. Extend the sphere of your labours, for probably you can be somewhat more zealous than you are for Christ, and for souls; more solicitous for the good of those who know not the gospel, and for those who know it but imperfectly. Never forget that the printed message is a mighty weapon for your use. In the presence of the foes of Christ and the Bible it is no time for sleep! Moreover the night comes, when all work will be at an end.*

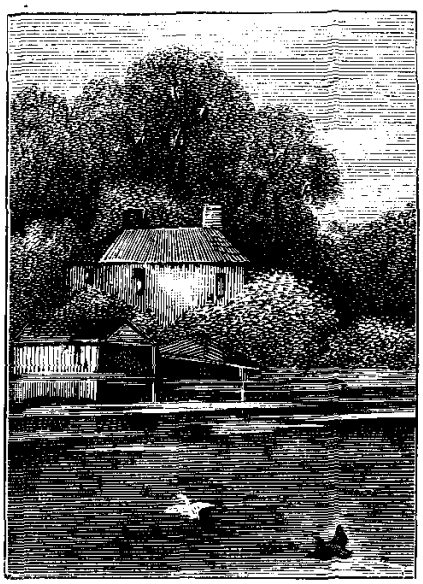
We very gratefully acknowledge the help of friends, whose papers appear in this Volume, yet, in so doing, would remind them that a new year calls for fresh efforts. Time presents us with its twelve months each year in such rapid succession, that we are constrained to ask our helpers and correspondents to remember the need of our Magazine.

It has to be added that the various articles in our Volume are both original and true. We never wittingly insert any incident that is not capable of absolute verification, for we hold that to conjure up gospel stories, and to let the imagination run wild in inventing accounts of the dealings of GOD with the children of men, is a grievous dishonour to His truth.

THE OLD SHEPHERD (*see page* 66).

Faithful Words

For OLD and YOUNG.



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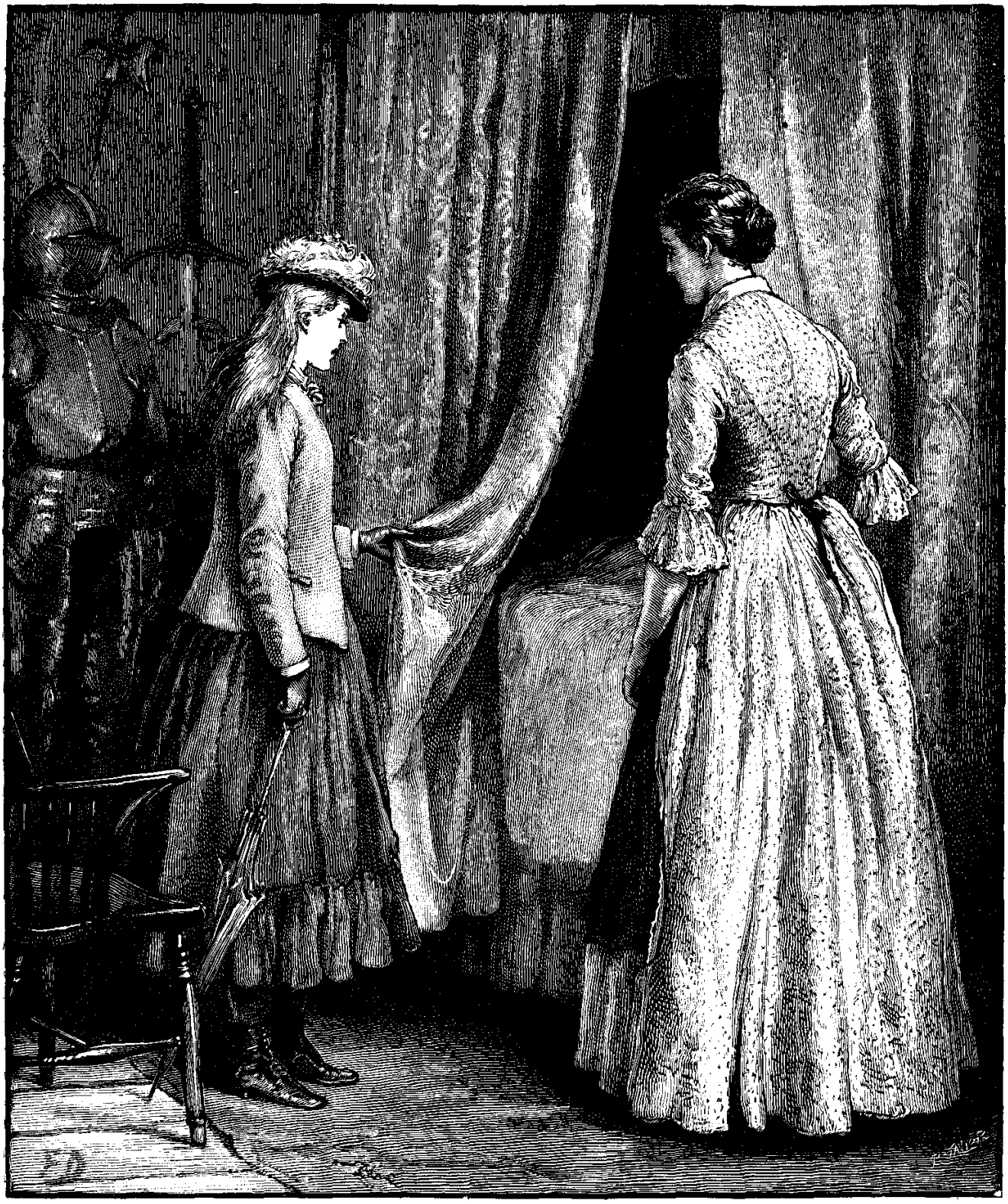
FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE THREE STONES.

THE THREE STONES.

LYING upon my table, as I write, are three pieces of flint. These silent stones lead my thoughts back more than twenty years, when, one lovely summer day, three gentlemen, accompanied by a girl of about fourteen, might have been seen wending their way along a country road, on the borders of Gloucestershire.

The girl, whom we will call Lily, was a niece of one of the party, and was spending her summer holidays at her uncle's, in the picturesque village where he lived. She had been charmed with the lovely parks and beautiful dales of the neighbourhood, and was just now listening, with rapt attention, to a graphic history of the ancient Roman road upon which they were travelling. They were on their way to "The Beacon," which stands upon the top of Broadway Hill, and which, to Lily's amusement, the country people called "Broadie Bacon."

Upon reaching it, they were admitted by a woman, who smilingly recognising one of the gentlemen, dropped a courtesy as he introduced the other visitors. They proceeded up a spiral staircase, and, after partaking of some refreshment in a curious little eight-sided room, went out on the leaden roof, and enjoyed the beautiful prospect of waving cornfields and teeming orchards, the people below appearing as pigmies.

After a while they descended through the trap door, and seated themselves again in the octagon room. Here Lily listened for some time to a discussion between the gentlemen upon some abstruse question but, as it grew argumentative, the young girl wearied of it, and slipped away. She set off on a little journey of discovery on her own account; descending a few steps she saw a door ajar, and peeping inside, her attention was at once riveted.

This room was of the same shape as the other, and its walls were covered with ancient shields, helmets and breastplates, and different sorts of weapons, from the Saxon bow and arrow, to the clumsy blunderbuss of more recent times. These articles covered two sides of the room, while in a corner was a bed hung round with old-fashioned curtains.

The woman, who had admitted the party on their arrival, catching sight of the young girl, came to the door, and said, "Will you please to come in, Miss, and look about a bit? You will be sure to like to see these ancient arms." As Lily was examining the curtains of the quaint bedstead, she was surprised to find lying behind them an old woman.

"Oh! that is my poor mother, Miss," said the woman; "she has chalk rheumatism;" and turning up her mother's sleeve, showed to the amazed girl how the bone of the arm would bend up, and a chalky substance like whitening fall from the sleeve.

While talking over the poor old woman's malady, it occurred to the girl that the sufferer, who had been confined to her bed for many years, had a soul which must be saved or lost for ever, and as she held the old woman's hand in hers tenderly, she thought, "Perhaps this dear woman is ignorant of the great salvation."

"You are only a child," suggested Satan. "You require to be taught yourself. These people will think you bold and forward if you set yourself up for a teacher." Then the scripture came to Lily: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed." (Luke ix. 26.) Now, she was naturally very nervous, and, with a flushed and tearful face, she looked at the old woman lying so helpless before her, and gently asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"Why, yes, my dear," replied she, "I was made a Christian when I was a baby."

Lily opened her eyes in astonishment, for she knew the word of God says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Gazing earnestly on the sufferer, she said, "I am much younger than you, but please let me ask, if you know who Jesus Christ is?"

"He is something to do with God," replied the old woman. "It is very far to church from here, and of course it is a very long time since I was there; but I never did anybody any

harm, and I always paid what I owed, so I have reason to hope to go to heaven, because God is merciful."

Lily was deeply shocked to discover the great spiritual darkness of this poor invalid, who, although living in a land of Bibles, was trusting entirely in her own goodness, instead of in the merits of Christ the Saviour. Silently sending up a quick petition to God for help, she began repeating passages from the Bible to prove to the old woman her lost condition. "All we like sheep have gone astray." (Is. liii. 6.) "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.) "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.) Then in earnest, simple language, Lily told how the Father had sent His only Son, that He might save the lost, and how the Son of God had said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 9.); and she described the Cross and Calvary. Indeed, she quite forgot her timidity, and her listeners became eager to hear. The Holy Spirit helped the girl, as she entreated the old woman to rest upon Christ alone and upon His great work for eternity, because "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." (John iii. 36.)

Clasping Lily's hand, the aged woman exclaimed, "Oh! Miss, I never heard it like that afore. I am a wicked old creature, not to have loved such a Saviour. Will you kneel down and pray for me?"

"And for me, please," echoed the younger woman.

Can my young readers imagine how hard this was for Lily to do? She had never prayed for other than the ear of God before, and now here were two women, with streaming eyes and anxious hearts, waiting for her, a child, to help them and lead them in prayer. It was to Lily a hard struggle between a deep desire to help these anxious souls, and great natural timidity; however, she knelt down, though feeling so confused that she feared she would be unable to put into words the many emotions and thoughts of her heart. Again the Spirit of God helped her in her weakness, and the words flowed freely.

At the conclusion they both kissed the girl affectionately, thanking her again and again for her prayer and her words; and the old woman declared that the Lord had sent her as a messenger of glad tidings to her soul.

Lily now became afraid she would be missed, and was just about to seek her uncle, when the door opened, and the gentlemen entered to enquire after the aged invalid, of whom they had heard. Lily turned towards the ancient armour, first whispering to the old woman not to mention their conversation, when the uncle, catching sight of his niece, exclaimed, "So you are looking at the curiosities? I expected to find you here."

On reaching the outer door, the daughter drew Lily back for a moment, and throwing her arms around her, said, "God bless you, Miss. Will you pray for me, and for my poor old mother?" This Lily promised to do; and then the woman turned to the mantel shelf, and taking from it three stones presented them to Lily, saying with tears, "I have nothing to give you but these stones. Please take them, Miss, and every time you see them pray for us."

Lily carried the stones to her country home, and for months, whenever she saw them, she breathed a prayer that God would save and bless the poor women.

Two summers passed away after this event—summers during which the girl heard nothing of the old woman at the Beacon, but at the end of that time a friend from that neighbourhood enquired of Lily if she had visited an old woman at Broadway Beacon, and then, without waiting for a reply, continued, "She died a short time ago, and I have been asked to tell you that she died very happy, trusting in Jesus. She often told the minister, who visited her, about some young girl, with dark curly hair, who had told her of her sins, and had taught her of the Saviour's love; and she would say, I believe in Him, and want to thank that young lady, and to tell her how God has heard her prayers. The minister has enquired as to what girl it could

have been, but nobody seems to know, but we now think it may possibly be you."

Lily felt quite unable to reply. She asked no questions, but hurried away, and in the silence of her own room shared with the Saviour the joy there is in the presence of the angels when a sinner repents. It seemed almost too great a blessing, that the few trembling words of a child should have been used of God to save a soul.

Years have passed since then, but Lily still keeps the three stones, and can never look upon them without thanking God that He helped her to speak for Him that day.

Some few years ago, in company with her husband, Lily revisited the Beacon; but it was shut up, and all she could learn was that the woman had left the place.

Dear Christian reader, we have given this incident in the hope that, if the Holy Spirit constrains you to do anything for the Lord, it may encourage you not to reason with self, or with convenience, or with Satan, or to think how strange the work is, or that someone else may do it better. If it be to comfort a poor child, or to point a poor old woman to Jesus, let nothing hinder when the Holy Spirit calls. Lily heard no voice, yet she was persuaded that God required her to tell these people about His love. There may be a struggle to do right, but the joy, the sweet happiness, and the deep satisfaction that fills the obedient soul will surely follow.

O eyes, just reading this page, will you not drop a tear for the perishing? O tongue, so eloquent in some cause of your own, will you not speak a word for the dear Master who has shed His blood for you? O hands, now clasping this, will you not clasp some other hand in yours, and lead some wanderer home? Then shall the voice of these three stones and the memorial of a young girl's early experience be not in vain. R. C. C.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

"A HAPPY new year to you!" is the salutation which greets us, as we walk down the street on this first day of the new year. Bright and happy it seems, for the sun, as if desirous of ushering in the new year becomingly, is shining with even some pretence of warmth. But our business is not this morning in the broad, sunny street; we turn into a dark and squalid-looking court, and reach the door of our destination—the last house in the court, in which we had been told a man lay dying. We knock at the door, which is partly opened by a tall, gaunt, famished-looking woman, with a child in her arms, who peers suspiciously out at us through the aperture.

Having apparently satisfied herself that we are not the rent-collector, and with the hope, perhaps, that we may be the doctor's new assistant, she opens the door a little wider, and enables us to explain that we have heard of her husband's illness. Bidden to enter, we learn that the husband has been down with rheumatic fever for nearly four weeks; that another child is also in bed upstairs with a fever, while the child she holds in her arms has but just recovered. "You'll excuse me, Sir," says she, "for I am but weak myself," and she sinks wearily into a chair.

Mounting the creaking stairs, we enter the room above, and see the husband. There, upon a bed, sits the object of our visit, a man of some forty-three years. His back is propped up by a chair fixed behind him, his brows are knit with pain, whilst beside him in bed lies the child, who is "down with the fever."

"A happy new year!" What a solemn irony the words, which so lately rung in our ears, would contain if we pronounced them here! Happiness? The squalor, the agony, the quick, short breath, the poor hands, with the joints knotted out of all shape, the clammy sweat upon the sick man's brow! We are full of sympathising pity, as we learn from him the length of his illness, the pain he has suffered, and gaze on his distorted hands, which he stretches out as mute witnesses of his suffering, and then thrusts them beneath the clothes to keep them warm. He has not slept a wink for three long weeks, and is about worn out; in fact, last night, at twelve o'clock, he made sure he was dying, he says. We sympathise with him in his suffering, and then, after a momentary prayer for gui-

dance, ask him gently how it would have fared with his soul if he had indeed died at twelve o'clock last night.

The sick man turns a quick, searching glance upon us, as if, poor fellow, no one had ever questioned him as to his soul's salvation before, and then slowly ejaculates, between the short breaths, "It would—have been—all right."

"Then you have," we reply eagerly, "got hold of the Lord Jesus Himself as your Saviour?"

"I have," says the sick man; "leastways He's got hold of me."

"Thank God for that! and how long have you known it—or rather Him?"

"This morning, Sir, shortly after twelve o'clock."

"Then it is a happy new year to you?"

"It is indeed." And we praise the Lord together.

Somehow the court does not seem so bad after all as we leave it, for are there not ringing in our ears and hearts, with a deeper meaning than perhaps ever before, the words, "A happy new year! a happy new year!"

And, reader, how is it with you? If, instead of reading these lines, it may be, in health and strength, you were stretched upon your death-bed, could you look back to the time when you by grace, as a poor lost sinner, took shelter beneath the blood of Christ? Could you look on with joyful anticipation to an eternity to be passed with that blessed One who died for you, and say, "Yes, thank God, it is all right with me"? If not, remember this one thing, and this one alone, can meet the claims of a holy and sin-hating God—the precious blood of Jesus. Speaking to Israel, on the day that they took shelter from the destroyer beneath the blood of the Paschal Lamb, the Lord declares, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exod. xii. 2.) It was, indeed, their happy new year's day. Happy, too, are they who know that Christ, their Passover, is slain, and, therefore, can keep the feast. What a portion is theirs! The judgment, which was their due, is behind them, for it has fallen on their Substitute, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and the glory, which was His by right, but which He would not have alone, lies before them. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Deut. xxxiii. 29.) Yea, happy now, and happy throughout eternity. My reader, may such a happy new year be yours. J. F.

TOO BAD TO BE SAVED.

ONE morning, a young man, a stranger, knocked at my door, saying that he had been advised to see me. "I cannot work, I cannot sleep, I cannot eat," said he, with a look of intense anxiety; "I am in such misery about my soul," adding that he felt so ill he thought he must die, and yet that he dare not die, lest he should go to hell. The doctors he had sought had given him medicine, but still he could not rest, for no sooner did he fall asleep than a text of Scripture would seem to appear upon the wall, and then, before he could read it, it would be snatched away as by a hand.

The young man, I heard afterwards, had called upon every one whom he had reason to think was a Christian, and who knew the forgiveness of sins. He took every opportunity of being alone to kneel down and cry to God for pardon, but something ever seemed to say to him, "You are too bad to be saved." He said he felt he was dying as he talked to me.

"You are dying to the pleasures of this sinful world," was my answer. To which he replied that he could not forsake sin, for the devil had such a hold on him.

I asked him to tell me some of the sins that troubled him most. Spending his wages in the pot-house appeared to be the chief burden on his mind. Then, as he spoke of his sins, he exclaimed, "Oh, you do not know what I feel! I am too bad to be forgiven. There never was such a vile wretch as I am."

To this I answered, that I had been just such a wretched sinner myself, until I came to Jesus, and owned to Him my lost state. I assured the young man that we are all on a level before God. That all have sinned, and come short of His glory, for there is none

righteous, no, not one. Those who are without Christ are altogether lost, from the beggar on the dung-hill to the king upon the throne. Having given him these texts, I assured him the Scriptures declare that there is the one Saviour for all, for "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

The young man attended some gospel services on the following Sunday, but merely said that it was too beautiful for such a sinner as he. Shortly afterwards he returned to his home by the seaside, his soul's salvation still the one overwhelming consideration with him.

Would God, dear reader, that you, if unsaved, might be as much in earnest as he was. You must find Jesus as your Saviour while you are here in this world, and have everything as to the forgiveness of sins settled with Him, or you can never dwell with Him in heaven. Oh! be real and true; bring yourself into the true light.

This young man's distress of soul continued for about six months. He had an unusually keen sense of his lost state before God, and he earnestly longed "to get Christ for himself," as he expressed it. A few weeks after his return home, he saw that all his sins were atoned for by the Lord Jesus Christ. He was enabled to trust in the Saviour, and to rest in peace upon His sacrifice. He knew, through the Holy Spirit's teaching, that "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin," and, since that glad reality has been his enjoyed portion, he has been telling of the love of Christ to poor sinners.

Dear reader, God's salvation is for those who see themselves lost and ruined in sin. In this condition it is we want mercy, and Christ has died that we may have it. F. T.

NEVER LEFT, NEVER FORSAKEN.

"I WILL never leave thee, nor forsake thee," says our God of each believer. The word is most personal: "thee," says our God. Therefore, whatever the trial or the care for this year, we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.

"THE preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Solemn words of truth, verified in every-day life, and most abundantly so in this our age of wisdom. The word of the cross, that is, the divine truth of the cross, expressed in the Scriptures, is folly to the wise but yet unsaved man. And it is folly to him because he is above it, beyond it, too proud for it; he has progressed outside the circle of the word of truth of the gospel. The truth of God respecting Christ crucified does not suit him; he is not suited to it. But the fact of man in his pride seeing in the work of the cross but foolishness, evidences his dead spiritual condition, and the expression of his pride is but the ringing out of his eternal death-knell, for the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. To another class of men, the divine truth of the cross is the sublimest wisdom, the most glorious majesty; "To us which are saved it is the power of God."

Thus, in the minds of different persons, the doctrine, the truth, the testimony of the cross is as wide asunder as the poles. To one reader of this page the gospel is but folly, to another it is divine wisdom. We will not blink the question, or seek to ease the issues. Every day the lines are becoming more and more distinct. Men are ranging on different sides. We must stand either for God's wisdom or for man's; we must be firm for the Bible truth of the cross, or give up Christianity altogether as a foolish notion.

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS TO THEM THAT PERISH FOOLISHNESS;	BUT UNTO US WHICH ARE SAVED IT IS THE POWER OF GOD.

On one side of the line, or the other, is each reader of this page. Whether we *perish* or are *saved* depends upon our regard for the cross of Christ.

God recognizes that the world has its wisdom, and that a particular age has its particular wisdom. Thus, in St. Paul's days, the Corinthians had their philosophy, as in

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our own day men have theirs. Now this wisdom and the word of the cross are opposed to each other, as are darkness and light. The wisdom of the age places man on a pedestal; the word of the cross lowers man down to the dust. Human wisdom exalts humanity; the divine wisdom in the cross exalts God; and God has said: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." As men look back they are wont to smile at the wisdom of past generations; and in the future, it may be a few years hence, very much of the wisdom that produces this day's infidelity will be the occasion of a scornful smile. It will be brought to nothing, and in the light of the truth of God it is already a thing of naught, laid low and brought to emptiness by the cross of Christ.

Looking at the purpose of God in the cross of Christ, and at Christ risen from the dead and in glory, St. Paul exclaimed: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" Where is the scientific man, the religious man, the moralist of the day? The truth of the matter is, that mere human ability no more reaches to divine mysteries than does the power of a horse to draw a load, enable it to construct a railway. And thus the Christian can but smile at the wisdom of this our age, which teaches man's descent from the jellyfish, his cousinship to apes, and his progress towards extinction; and weep over its religiousness, which utterly omits Christ's cross from its creed, and evolves human salvation out of fallen man's efforts.

One thing is apparent in the wisdom of to-day to the simplest, and of this thing the age boasts—"the world by wisdom knew not God." In wise old Athens, Paul, who gloried in Christ's cross, and who had seen Him at the right hand of God, "found an altar, with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD" (Acts xvii. 23), and in Christendom the wise people of this century boast in their agnosticism, in their NON-KNOWLEDGE of God. From the highest to the lowest—from the educated man, who expresses himself in elegant speech, to the unlettered, who rudely utters his notions—the fashionable wisdom of the day is NON-KNOWLEDGE of God. The Wise and the Scribe have joined hands in many a pulpit, and the Disputer of the times tells his congregation of professing Christians, that large portions of the Scriptures are fable, and that the cross of Christ is not God's way of saving man.

There can be no doubt that, at this present hour, *the* truths Satan is most vigorously assailing are those that surround the cross of Christ. So-called Christian men will tolerate Christ without His cross; they will accept His life without His death. He may be a pattern for them to improve themselves by, but they reject Him as the Saviour saving by His blood.

From of old, Rome and all its offspring have made light of the cross of Christ. Crucifixes it has in abundance, pictures of dying Christs almost innumerable, but never such truths as these—"By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"; "Sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Rome has the shadow, but not the substance of the truth of Christ's cross; it has the material sign, but not the divine meaning of it, and thus over the greater portion of Christendom, and for centuries, the full truth of Christianity has been unknown.

The sacrifice, the atonement of Jesus, was perfect in itself. It stands

"*Once for all*" (Heb. x. 10),

allowing no repetition, no further dying, no mass, none other sacrifice.

The effects of that sacrifice, that atonement, upon those whom it covers are perpetual, for such persons are

"*Perfected for ever*" (Heb. x. 14);

they cannot be more safe, more set apart to God, than they are. The measure of their being set apart, or sanctified, to God is the measure of the infinite value of the sacrifice of Jesus. Even as that was made *once*, so are these perfected *for ever*—that was made once for all, and it has effected a result which is everlasting.

Now, for centuries, Rome has by the mass, by her priests, and by her whole system of

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religion, fought against these Scriptures and their meaning. To her, and to all who are of her doctrines, whether they be called by her name, or by a Protestant title, the word of the cross, the Scripture teaching, the divine truths respecting Christ crucified, are, as was this truth to the Jews of old,

A STUMBLINGBLOCK.

Over the perfect and eternal character of the sacrifice of Christ, the feet of religious pride stumble. No longer can a man bring of his works to God—no longer can he offer his penitence or his prayers to God, for God presents to him, lost and dead in sin, worthy only of judgment and of doom, the death of His Son as his salvation.

And Rome is in our hearts! Alas, it is hard—oh, so hard!—for man to trust for salvation only and entirely to

CHRIST CRUCIFIED;

to Him, made sin for us, who knew no sin; to Him, suffering the Just for the unjust; to Him, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Man turns into himself to find the remedy he feels he requires—he is slow to believe. It is natural to man to look into himself for a sign. "The Jews seek after a sign." Unconverted but religious man seeks after a miracle, a wonder—the smile or the tear of an image, a vision or a dream, a marvel or a mystery, an inward feeling or an experience. But God's sign for man is His Christ crucified. "The blood shall be to you for a token," and the reception of God's token is faith's satisfaction.

When a man believes what God says respecting the cross of His Son, he is saved, for "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching" (*i.e.*, that which is preached—Christ Jesus and Him crucified) "to save them that believe." (1 Cor. i. 21.) And when a man believes the gospel of God, he has there and then done with the system of religion—call it by what name we will—which lowers the sacrifice and the atonement of Christ to the level of the old Jewish religion, and which, by its priests "standing and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices," treats His blood as if it were such as could "never take away sins." (Read Heb. x. 11, 12.)

In former years the brave spirits who witnessed for Christ had Rome to battle with; in our day, not only is it Rome, or Ritualism, or human religiousness, which contends against the word of the cross, but we are returning to the situation of eighteen hundred years ago, when infidelity, which scorns Christ crucified, arrays its ranks against the word of Christ's cross. Our forefathers, who were burned in defence of the truth of the cross, who preferred death to the denial by transubstantiation of the truth of the offering of Christ being once for all, would stand amazed at the religious wisdom of the Protestant of this nineteenth century, which totally denies the atonement of Christ, and which is worse and more fatal—if that be possible—than the errors of Rome.

The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the very centre of the stronghold of the Christian faith, and thither the enemy, having gained the outworks, now addresses his forces. Let, then, the true Christian rally around the truth of Christ's cross, for, though men reckon it weakness and foolishness, it is both the power and the wisdom of God.

By the cross, God can be just, and yet justify the sinner, and "the weakness of God is stronger than man." By the cross, God can display His wisdom in bringing rebellious sinners into glory with Christ in heaven, and "the foolishness of God is wiser than man."

May each of our Christian readers now, more than ever before in his life-time, make much of the word of the cross. Let us take as the inscription for our banner for this year these words:—

JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.

LIGHT BEARING.

CHRIST is the Light; His people are lamps, or luminaries, emitting light which has Christ for its source. He shone in this world, and the darkness comprehended it not; His people are enjoined to shine as lamps in the world, holding forth the word of life. His people are called to be on the earth after the pattern of the Lord, and thus to witness for Him. In the glory the saints will be ever, as it were, a medium through which Christ will shine to the glory of God—a lamp bearing His light.

ONE OF WICLIF'S POOR PRIESTS PREACHING.

Standing up for the Bible.

AN open Bible was unknown in our country in former days, and only by hardship, suffering, and death, was the privilege we now all may enjoy of reading the word of God in our own tongue, won for us by our forefathers.

Long, long ago, *portions* of the word of God, it is true, were rendered into the tongue of the people. Over one thousand years since, Cædmon, a monk, who died in 680, composed Bible histories in verse. This he did at the instigation of Hilda, the abbess of the fine old abbey of Whitby, the ruins of which still stand in their glory on the hill over the harbour of that town.

The Venerable Bede, who died in 735, "for the advantage of the church," translated into the language of the country, the Gospel by St. John, and that this work was m[illegible] dear to that g[illegible]od man's heart, the touching story of his death shows: — "When the morning dawned, he told us," says one who was with him, "to write diligently what we had begun. This being done, one of us said, 'There is yet, beloved master, a chapter wanting; will it be unpleasant to ask any more questions?'

"He answered, 'Not at all. Take your pen and write with speed.' He did so.

"At the ninth hour, he said to me, 'I have some valuables in my little chest; fetch them, that I may distribute my small presents.'

"He addressed each, and exhorted to prayer. We wept.

"In the evening, his pupil said, 'Dear master, one sentence is still wanting. 'Write it quickly,' exclaimed Bede. When it was finished, he said, 'Support me while I go to the holy place, when I can pray to my Father.'

"When he was placed there, he repeated the Gloria Patri, and expired in the effort."

After him, King Alfred translated portions of the word of God into the tongue of the people, and this brings us to the year 900.

A century later, an archbishop of York, Ælfric by name, wrote, "Whoever would be one with God, must often pray, and often read the Holy Scriptures. For when we pray we speak to God, and when we read the Bible, God speaks to us. The whole of the Scriptures are written for our salvation, and by them we obtain the knowledge of the hereafter." He translated portions of the Scriptures into the then language of England, the Anglo-Saxon.

These are instances sufficient to show that from very early times the people of England had at least parts of the word of God in their own language, and that it was not among them only in Latin, nor in the hands of the religious orders alone. They show also, that holy men of all ages have one thought as to the people at large having the word of God in their hands and hearts.

The Bible was read, more or less, at least in Latin, in the centuries gone by, as is evident from the numerous quotations made from it, and the allusions to its stories found in old writings, and it is equally evident that the religious powers of those old times did their best to keep the people generally in ignorance of what God says to us.

Without obedience to the Bible, religion—though it be called Christian religion—becomes very much what men like to make it, and, in the old times we are now contemplating, the Christian religion became so utterly unlike that which God proclaims and teaches in His word, that in very large districts of so-called Christian countries it was little better than paganism.

The religious authorities — popes and bishops — were often more powerful than kings and nobles, and they did very much as they pleased. They formed a system of horrible tyranny in the sacred name of Christ, enslaving men's spirits, and making them really their serfs. Were such popes and bishops not known by religious titles, they would be regarded as monsters of cruelty and wickedness, but there is a foolish notion that a man's office gives sanctity to his character.

However, in the face of the growth of darkness, there were men and women bold enough to walk by the light they had received either from the small portions of the Scriptures that had come into their hands, or from the words of these Scriptures repeated to them by pious people. These were called heretics, and the religious powers of 1229 sought to set them down altogether. Archbishops, bishops, and priests were bound together by oath to search them out, to bring them to punishment, and to destroy their houses, and the lay people were also sworn to have nothing to do with heretics, which oath was to be repeated every two years. The same council ordered also that no layman should be in possession of the Bible, Old or New Testaments, written in Latin, and it commanded the suppression of translations into the tongue of the people: "We also forbid," said these servants of God, "the common people to possess any of the books of the Old and New Testaments, except, perhaps, the Psalter.... Having any of these books translated into the vulgar tongue we strictly forbid."

Thus did the religious leaders of Christendom, and the men, who stood before God on earth as the servants of Christ, treat His word and those who longed to read it. A man who dared to keep and to read his few written verses of the Bible was a heretic, and destruction or penitence his choice. If he would hold to his faith in God, death was his doom; if he became penitent, he was obliged to wear a cross on his right and left side, and, until the pope, or his legate, thought fit to attest the purity of his faith, the unhappy man remained an outcast.

These decrees were obeyed in great part, as the scarcity of the manuscripts of portions of the Bible, in the language of England of those days, proves.

Some one hundred and fifty years after this decree, God ordered that the whole of His word should be given to England in the plain language of her people, and of this great act we will now speak.

England was then entirely Roman Catholic, it must be remembered, and the man who translated the Bible from the Latin into the English tongue lived and died a Catholic. This great and learned man was John Wiclif, and his work was accomplished long before the art of printing was discovered. He had copies of the Scriptures, which he had translated into English, written, and, by the help of faithful men, circulated in the country. Thus, despite popes and councils, and the dread of fire and bonds, the whole of the Scriptures entered England.

Some years before this translation of the Bible and its circulation, a strong spirit had arisen in the land against the iron rule of the popes, and their exactions of money by foreign prelates. The England of the earlier part of the reign of Edward III. was vigorous and great—a considerable portion of France had fallen to the English crown, and the people were in no mood to be commanded by foreigners, whether popes or priests. God paved the way for the determination to read His word by arousing the spirit of religious liberty in the land, and, as we shall see, He raised up protectors for Wiclif, though several of them worked only for political ends. The northern part of the country was especially imbued with this spirit of freedom, and Wiclif, who was a Yorkshire man, and of good Yorkshire fibre, stood with the politicians of his times who strove for liberty.

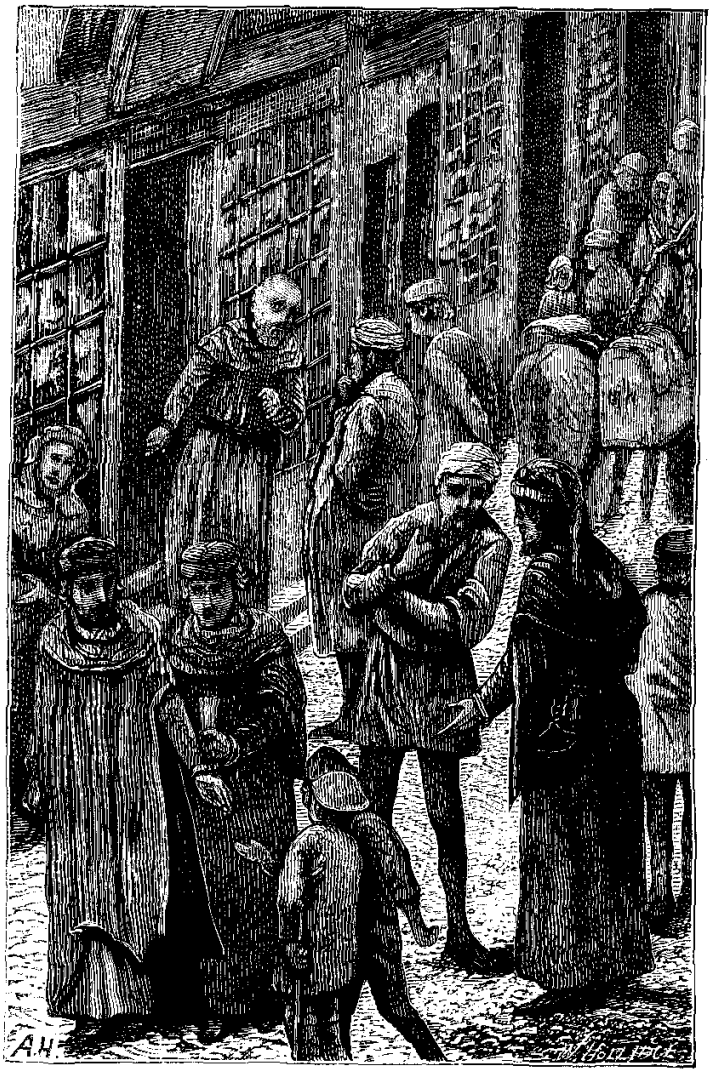
Wiclif went to Oxford in his youth, and was a student at one of its then five colleges. There he underwent the hardships common to the students of those days. The comforts of our times were not meted out to poor university students five hundred years ago; some had to herd together in "halls," others to make shift in miserable and dirty lodgings, and others even had to beg for their subsistence. Oxford was a most unhealthy spot, but it was the centre of the country's learning, and hence the wisest and the most eager for knowledge flocked there, and faced all hardships to win the prize of knowledge. An unruly town it was also, and the students had their own pitched battles in a style very much to their list. Fierce, indeed, were these struggles, often ending in bloodshed and occasioning many deaths. In the ruder times of five hundred years ago, questions were fought out by sword as well as argued by the tongue, so that the students wielded their weapons and crashed through one another's helmets in order to give force to or to gain victory for their opinions. These fights were often between the northern and the southern factions, the former being on the side of obtaining greater liberty in the country.

The circumstances of such days called up men of great courage to be leaders, or, shall we say, only men of great courage could be leaders in such stormy seasons. Hence we can see how university life trained John Wiclif not only in sciences and arts, in astronomy and moral philosophy, in music and language, but in courage and character, in nerve and vigour, and in a spirit that allowed no obstacles to quench its fire.

In the year 1348 the awful Black Death appeared in England. This scourge swept away tens of thousands, and nearly one-half of the population of England died under it. Its contagious character was such that the breath, the clothes, and the very places touched by those seized with the plague, helped to spread the pestilence. People in their terror thought the day of judgment was at hand, and that God had sent the angel of doom to prepare men for Christ's coming.

In 1349 it reached Oxford, where Wiclif was a student. We are told he devoted himself to God at this time, and prayed earnestly for divine direction as to his course in life.

Some ten years after this we find Wiclif in high honour in the university, his learning and his wisdom being unrivalled. He was a fellow of one of the colleges, and was an acknowledged master of the philosophy of the day. Now the wisdom of five hundred years ago, as that of our own century, relegated the study of the Bible to obscurity. The teachers of Scripture knowledge were called



A STREET IN OXFORD IN WICLIF'S TIMES.

"bullocks of Abraham," "asses of Balaam," or by other uncomplimentary titles, and they had to procure rooms and audiences as best they might in the University; but John Wiclif, filled with the sense of what the Scriptures really are as the word of God, with God-given courage, devoted his talents and his learning to their cause, and, drawing large numbers of the students to hear his lectures, lifted up the study of the Scriptures from its current disesteem. One professor would be honoured by one title, another by another. Wiclif became known as the Evangelical Doctor.

After this we see him a parish priest—a Roman Catholic priest we mean—a faithful man labouring amongst the sick and the poor of his parish, yet engaged with untiring zeal in the vast work of bringing the truth of God before the country at large. The low and careless state, into which the accepted teachers of religion had fallen, led him to collect about him earnest men, who should go forth as missioners, preaching the gospel and warning of the wrath to come. These men were evangelists, not committed to any one locality; but who went and who dwelt "where they should most profit, and for such time as might be convenient, after the moving of the Holy Ghost." They were poor, wandering preachers, "burning with zeal for souls." These men, "barefoot, with a staff in their hand, and clad in long russet gowns reaching down to their heels," went about the country preaching daily, not only in churches and churchyards, but also in markets, fairs, and other open places. Rich and poor stood spell-bound listening to Wiclif's "poor priests" denouncing sin, proclaiming eternity, and telling them that papal indulgences were vain, confession to the priest useless, and invocation of saints and worship of images idolatry.

In these old days, as in apostolic times and in our own, the Gospel of God carried its own divine force with it. Wickedness, philosophy, religiousness fell before it. Both great and small believed the word of God, and trusted Christ for salvation and for holiness. People then, as now, were divided, some siding with the truth, others fighting for their own error, so that on the arrival of a preacher into a neighbourhood, might be seen assembling a body of armed men prepared to give him a hearing, and then, during his sermon, the crash of arms and the shouts of combatants, would announce the arrival of another party determined to drive the people away. Such congregations would have among them, as well as eager listeners, angry abbots and monks, rectors and curates, ill liking the plain truths of the preachers and their pious lives.

Thus it was God began to work in this country some five hundred years ago.

And I Love Jesus.

LITTLE fair-haired, blue-eyed Mary was rather more than five years of age. Her brother Benjamin had taken some little thing, for which offence his mother was chastising him. In the midst of her mother's lecture to the boy, Mary attracted general attention by straightening her little figure against the wall, and calling out in her pretty, lively manner,

"Mother, I pray to God to keep me from stealing and telling stories, and eating the sugar, and He does keep me. Don't He, mother?"

The mother of these children often talked to her little ones about the good things of God, and of how much Jesus loves children. One day when her mother had been talking to Mary about Jesus, the dear child listened with more than usual attention, and clasping her little hands together, and looking earnestly up to heaven, exclaimed—

"And—I—love—Jesus!"

She would on no account be dressed, or be put to bed without prayer. And if some busy morning anyone attempted to hurry her downstairs until she had finished her devotions, little Mary would resent it with tears.

Everybody who knew Mary loved her. Nothing pleased the young men in her father's employment better than to have little Mary standing demurely in the factory, as with folded hands she sang her favourite hymns, the following being that of which she was most fond—

"Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong."

Mary liked very much to hear about heaven, and somehow or other she gained the notion that she must be dressed very clean, and wear her white frock when she went there. Often would she run to her mother, exclaiming—

"Mother, I want my best frock on to go to heaven."

At such times a sharp pain would dart through the heart of her fond mother, for the thought would arise, What if my darling should die? How could I part with her, even if such should be the Lord's will? But the Lord says, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." And this became the experience of Mary's mother, as it will certainly be of every one who simply trusts in the Lord.

Mary was evidently ripening for glory. How is it that some of the most beautiful of the buds of earth are early taken to blossom in heaven? On her sixth birthday, dear little Mary was taken with the fever, and nine days after that, she was translated from the nipping frosts of earth to bloom for ever in Paradise.

When the darling was dying, her mother noticed that the eyes of the child appeared fixed upon the ceiling, with an inquiring glance. "Are you looking at the angels, Mary?" asked her mother.

"Yes, mother," said the child, pointing in one corner of the room; "they are up there." And then Mary went to be with Jesus.

Mary was carried to the grave by the teachers of the Sunday school, and all the scholars walked together in front of the coffin. Why should we weep because this fair young flower, this beauteous bud, just opening to our sight, has been transplanted by Almighty power, to the fair world where all is peace and light?

"I used to think that if the Lord called me to part with that dear child, it would be the death of me," said her mother to me; "but, instead of that, at her death, the Lord gave me more of His own presence, and He has made me peaceful in the thought of my darling being free from pain, and suffering, and disappointment, and with the Saviour who loves her so much more than I ever can."

RHODA.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

I WAS staying a little while ago at a seaside place, where there were rows and rows of houses, each with a piece of ground belonging to it. That was not anything out of the way, was it, children? I dare say you have, every one, seen the same thing ever so often, even in your short lives; but I don't expect any of you have thought what I thought about those houses and their little gardens. Shall you like to hear what they made me think of? Why, of the rows and rows of little boys, who sit before me every Sunday evening, when I am at home, while I talk to them about Jesus. What I thought of is just as true of girls as of boys, and, therefore, is just as true of you, little reader, whether you are a boy or a girl.

Picture to yourself a whole row of little lads, or lassies, standing side by side like a row of houses, one a bit taller than another perhaps, or rather older, or a little neater, still like a row of houses their small bodies stand, looking at you out of the windows of their blue or brown eyes. They will not stand steady for long, I know well, so let me say at once what I have to say about the gardens.

Well, if the house is like the body that God has given you to dwell in, the garden seems to me to be a figure of that precious soul with which He has trusted you, and which you are responsible to cultivate in such a way as to give Him pleasure, and to bring Him glory. And I want to ask you to-day, dear little ones, in the words of the old nursery rhyme, "How does your garden grow?"

There was a great difference among the gardens that I could see from my window, and I wonder which of them is most like the garden of your soul. One of them made me sad every time I looked at it; it was just a mass of weeds, nettles, thistles, and such like; here and there a bright poppy or a

large white daisy made me think how gladly flowers would have grown there, if they had not been choked by the brambles and weeds that had got full possession of the ground.

Ah! it was a *neglected* garden! Is yours a neglected soul? Just a soul left to grow anything, unchecked by its owner—bad thoughts, bad tempers, bad words and ways? Now and then, perhaps, there is a little kindly act, or a better impulse, like the bright poppy among the brambles, but nothing grown with care for the eye of the Great Husbandman, who comes seeking fruit and finding none.

The wise King Solomon knew a great deal about gardens, and he describes one exactly like this in Proverbs.

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (ch. xxiv. 30-34).

You see, he tells us it was laziness which made that man neglect his vineyard, and perhaps it is just that which makes you neglect your soul. You think you are going to attend to it "some day," and the devil lets you think so, as you take "a *little* sleep" or "a *little* slumber," and he knows it must end in "poverty" and "want" for all eternity.

Poor little garden! One morning, I heard voices talking below, and on looking out, beheld a man with a long scythe mowing down all before him on the neglected ground. "It may as well be cut down, and cleared away," he was saying to a neighbour who stood watching him, and so "poverty" came! "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Oh! how awful for the slothful neglector, when the word goes forth, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee!"

But all the gardens were not like this one. Here is another that does not look any prettier than that of which we have been talking, though it certainly is more useful. The owner has turned it into a fowl-run, and it is full of cocks, and hens, and chickens, the only variety being that, on wash-days, ropes are stretched across over-head, and the clothes of the household flap in the breeze. Is this a nice garden, do you think? It is not *my* idea of such! Ah! dear children, it is a picture of many a soul in this work-a-day world, wholly given up to business and money-making. Very early in the morning my mother was disturbed by the crowing of the cocks, and late at night we often saw tired hands gathering in the linen off the lines.

Thus, many a one toils very hard year by year, and is thought very sensible and industrious by the world, but there is no fruit for the eye and heart of the Great Gardener, any more than there was in the lazy man's garden, and God says of all his toil that it is "labour for that which satisfieth not."

Now, let us look at a third. Part of it is also given to the fowls, and used as a drying-ground, while on the other half is a tennis court, much worn, and, close to it, a swing for the smaller children of the house. No flowers, no fruit, hardly a blade of grass to be seen! As I looked the words my little boys often sing came to my mind—

> "Room for pleasure, room for business,
> But for Christ, the crucified,
> Not a place that He can enter
> In the heart for which He died!"

Is this a picture of your soul, my child? Are you diligent at your lessons, and full of fun in the play hours, and so think all is right? Do you say, "I am no idler; if I have a bit of fun it is but fair, seeing that I work well, and one can be young but once in one's life." True, but what will the harvest be? Look again at what wise King Solomon says: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccles. xi. 9.) Look to it that you have that in your soul which will bring you an eternity of joy, and make your life fruitful to the glory of God.

There were many other varieties of gar-

dens, but I cannot describe all. The next time you pass such a row as I have been telling you about, try to draw for yourselves the lesson each plot of ground can teach you. I will only mention one more of these seaside gardens, and I am glad to say it was the one belonging to the house in which I was lodging, for I should like my little soul-garden to be like that.

The piece of ground was no larger than the others, but every inch of it had been turned to the best advantage. There were neat little paths running between beds of bright flowers; tall white lilies lifted up their fair blossoms, while bright-coloured pansies occupied the ground below; there was the homely sweet william and the brilliant nasturtium, and many others. On the one side were rows of gooseberry and currant bushes, with a few pear and apple trees, while a bed of strawberry plants and a row of lettuces completed the miniature kitchen-garden. At the far end of the plot of ground was a small conservatory to shelter delicate plants from the rough, cold winds of winter. In the opposite corner stood a little rustic summer-house, where the master could rest when he came into his garden to gather his lilies, or to eat his pleasant fruits. There were posts at each corner of the little grass plot near the house, showing that clothes could be hung out to dry when needful. A neat shed for tools proved that it was no idler's garden that I looked on.

Now, do not you agree with me in calling this a right sort of garden? King Solomon tells us of such an one in his beautiful song. If you will find it in your Bible, and look carefully through it, you will see plainly enough that, though he sings about sweet-smelling flowers, and tall trees, and delicious fruits, he does not mean flowers, and fruit, and trees at all, but just takes them all as figures of what God thinks beautiful and sweet in the souls of His beloved children. Solomon tells us that he had been making his soul-garden pleasing to the Lord's eye, and had carefully sought to shut out the little foxes that would spoil the tender grapes—that is, the naughty tempers, words, and ways which would hinder the Holy Spirit's fruits—and that then he turned to the Lord and said, "Let my Beloved come into His garden." Now, how should you like the Lord to come and look round in yours? Is it fit to meet His eye? Would it give Him joy? Could He find such a cluster of fruit in your soul as is written of in Gal. v.—"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"?

Dear child, you have but one soul. Oh, may you early arouse to the sense of its great value, and to your own immense responsibility as to it.

D. & A. C.

Texts for the Month.

THESE should be filled in without the help of a Concordance. We have chosen a very happy word to begin the year with, and we hope you will be profited and pleased during your work in finding out where the texts are that teach us of the SAVIOUR.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
1	Tu	Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ			
2	W	A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord			
3	Th	Beside Me there is no Saviour			
4	F	There is no Saviour beside Me			
5	S	They forgat God their Saviour			
6	**S**	**Thou gavest them saviours**			
7	M	Christ, the Saviour of the world			
8	Tu	The Saviour of the world			
9	W	The Lord gave Israel a saviour			
10	Th	O God of Israel, the Saviour			
11	F	S. shall come up on Mount Zion			
12	S	A Prince and a Saviour			
13	**S**	**A just God and a Saviour**			
14	M	Love of God our Saviour			
15	Tu	Saviour (Deliverer) of all men			
16	W	We look for the Saviour			
17	Th	The appearing of our Saviour			
18	F	Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour			
19	S	Through the.....of God and our S.			
20	**S**	**Apostles of the Lord and S.**			
21	M	By the commandment of God our S.			
22	Tu	According to the.....of God our S.			
23	W	In the sight of God our Saviour			
24	Th	All...shall know that I...am thy S.			
25	F	Thou shalt know that I...am thy S.			
26	S	So He was their Saviour			
27	**S**	**The Saviour...in...trouble**			
28	M	The only wise God our Saviour			
29	Tu	Adorn the doctrine of God our S.			
30	W	My Refuge, my Saviour			
31	Th	God my Saviour			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

DO I BELIEVE IT?

DO I BELIEVE IT?

NOT long ago I was staying at a little town amongst the beautiful hills of Savoy. A nice little girl, belonging to one of the waiters at the hotel, was often to be seen playing about. Her father, who seemed to be very fond of her, came one day to tell us, with great satisfaction, that his little girl was going to be an angel. This did not mean that she was going to die and turn into an angel, as I have sometimes heard people say of their departed friends. No doubt you are aware that nobody ever does really turn into an angel. Those who die, and go to be with the Lord, remain human beings; only, when raised from the dead, with perfect bodies and souls, and they will be higher than the angels, because they are joined to the Lord Jesus Christ, and their bodies will be like His glorious body. This, however, the waiter did not know anything about, and he did not mean either that his little girl was at all likely to die. It was only that she was to be dressed up as an angel to walk in a procession, and he was pleased at this, because the prettiest little girls were chosen to be angels, and their parents thought they looked all the prettier in the angel's dress, which I will describe to you by and by.

The next day the procession was to pass through the town. It was a very strange sight for people not accustomed to such things. An English labourer in the hay season, with his tanned face, would look fair and fresh beside the labourers in the sunny vineyards of Savoy. These men, or rather the older ones amongst them, to the number of sixty or seventy, headed the procession, each one carrying in his hand, in the broad daylight, a very long lighted tallow candle.

Their old and withered faces, the colour of mahogany, their rough grizzly hair and beards, formed a very strange contrast to the flowing veils of white muslin which they wore over their heads. They were clad also in flowing robes of the same muslin, in the manufacture of which economy had not been forgotten, for the bottom of their dark corduroy trousers, and their heavy hobnailed boots, were seen pounding along the pavement below the hem of their garments.

They were followed by perhaps a larger number of old women, as brown and as withered as themselves, who also carried tallow candles in their trembling hands, dropping the tallow upon their white robes, which were made like those of the men.

The angels followed. They were very numerous, and of various sizes. Some were tall shop girls with gay parasols; others, like the waiter's little girl, were small toddling children. The robes of the angels were also of muslin, but of various colours; pink and emerald green seemed to be the prevailing taste. Small stars, hearts, and diamonds cut out in gilt paper were stuck in profusion upon the muslin, and each angel was furnished with a large pair of paper wings, not in the shape of the feather wings, which are commonly seen in the pictures of angels, but in the shape of a butterfly's wings, and gaudily painted and gilt.

The angels were followed by chorister boys and priests, and here and there, walking alone, was a saint, which means a person representing one of the saints whose names are put down in the calendar. The saint whom I best remember was a clumsy looking boy of ten, dressed in a sheepskin, and carrying under his arm, as you would carry a rather unwieldy parcel, a large sheep from a toy shop, the stand and wheels having been taken off.

"That," said a man who stood by, "is St. John the Baptist, but he doesn't carry his lamb in the right way. The fact is that the real St. John the Baptist, who has had to practise carrying the lamb, is only six years old, and when they put on his hairy garment just now he kicked and screamed, and said it scratched him, and the curate had to find another boy, and give him tenpence to be St. John, instead of the little one. So, you see, his garment doesn't fit, and he doesn't know how to make the best of himself."

At last came several boys, in robes of many colours, carrying between them large clothes-baskets of rose leaves. These leaves they sprinkled as they went, to prepare the

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way for that which followed, the great crowning object of the procession—what was it? Four priests, dressed in scarlet and gold, carried each one the corner pole, which supported a canopy of scarlet satin with bright yellow fringe. Underneath walked the chief priest, in a robe of various colours, carrying a gaudy cushion, upon which was a gilt shrine. And in this shrine was the little round wafer, in the honour of which the whole procession paraded through the town—the wafer that is called God!

And so it passed on, amongst the mocking laughter of the men and women who stood at the street corners, and turned away from it, saying, "What nonsense!" "Those priests must have something to amuse themselves with, for time must hang heavy on their hands with nothing to do, whilst we are working in the vineyards in the hot sun. Ah, bah!"

"Do you believe that that is the Lord Jesus Christ theyare carrying on the cushion?" I said to a woman. I had gone down the steps into her little cellar kitchen, and she was standing with her head just above the pavement.

"Do I believe it?" she said. "Lady, Christ is God, and He is man also. As God He is everywhere. As man, He has a human body, which can only be in one place at a time, and that place is up in heaven. Lady, you couldn't be here in my little kitchen, and in your hotel at the same moment. Nor can the Lord's body be in two places at once. No, lady, I do *not* believe it."

I must tell you how I made the acquaintance of this woman, Marguerite. On the Sunday before, when we came downstairs to breakfast, we found upon the table a large handbill. It was as follows—

Summer Season, 1877.

FEAST OF PENTECOST (WHIT SUNDAY), AND OF THE FIRE BRIGADE.

May 27.

PROGRAMME.

10 a.m.—Concert in the Place Centrale.
11 a.m.—Musical Mass.
Noon.—March past of Band, and of Fire Brigade.
12.30.—Banquet under the Horse Chestnuts.
3 p.m.—A variety of games.
Donkey races. Jumping in sacks. Blind man's buff.
Walking on a horizontal pole. Conjuring tricks.
8 p.m.—Illumination of the Public Garden. Fireworks.
To conclude.—Rustic Ball till midnight.

Thus was the day to be spent which, according to the calendar, was set apart in remembrance of the coming of God the Holy Ghost, to unite those who believe the blessed Gospel to Christ in glory!

"Will the priests go to all these amusements?" we asked.

"The priests? Yes, they like a bit of fun as much as we do," replied the man to whom we put the question.

How would it be possible to have a quiet day? Then we remembered that the more the main streets and the public gardens were crowded, the more quiet and deserted would be the back streets on the hillside. Perhaps it would be a good opportunity to find some of the old and the sick, who would be keeping house alone, whilst the young ones were jumping in sacks, walking on the greased pole, or dancing at the ball. So in this hope, I started on an expedition up a long, steep, narrow, winding street, which ended at last in a sort of wide staircase of rough stones, shaded by a trellis covered with vines. At the corner of the street, before the staircase began, was an old grey house with a niche in the wall. There stood an image in the niche of a woman with a gilt crown, and a gay dress, and a child in her arms. I need not tell you that this was the Virgin Mary, in honour of whom paper flowers were stuck in a gilt jar in front of the niche, and faded stocks and marigolds were hanging by the string which had once tied them into a wreath. Near this niche sat an old woman just outside her door on a rush-bottomed chair. I offered her a gospel, saying—

"Madame, this little book will tell you the way to be saved."

"Thank you, I know the way to be saved already; I don't want to learn it."

"Will you tell me what it is?"

"I can tell you in two words: we must do good works—that's the way to heaven. Everyone knows that."

"If that is true, everyone will be lost, for——"

"If you can get to heaven by your good works, why then did the Lord Jesus come down from heaven and die upon the cross?

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You could have gone there without Him." These words were spoken suddenly by a voice behind us.

Looking round, it was startling to see, peering above the pavement, the head and shoulders of a woman. A strange, unsightly head! Rough, reddish hair, streaked with grey, hanging wildly in all directions—no cap—a brown and ill-featured face, and bright grey eyes.

"Do you know," she continued, still addressing her neighbour, "that the Lord died on the cross? What did He die for? Not for *His* sins, for He had none: He died for ours. Do you know what He said when He was just going to die? He said, 'It is finished.' What was finished? He had finished the work that takes us to heaven. And if it was finished, how can you add anything to it? What more is there to be done when all is finished? And, if we could have done it ourselves, do you think He would have come down here, and have been nailed to the cross, to save us?"

But the old neighbour said only, "Ah, bah! then thieves and drunkards may go to heaven any day, as well as honest people."

"Let me tell you," said the woman on the cellar steps, "that it is just the people who believe in Jesus, who are *not* thieves and drunkards; no, they are changed, and they love God, and they want to please Him. But as to those who believe in their own doings, the less said of their doings the better."

"Ah, bah!" again said the old neighbour, and, catching up her chair, she disappeared into her house, and shut the door.

So now you see who is Marguerite. She looked sadly after the old neighbour for a moment, and then she invited me into her cellar.

"Did you learn all that from your priest?" I said to her.

"My priest? No; my father and mother told it me."

"Does your priest say the same?"

"No. I have known a priest sometimes who would say it, but very seldom. No; they think like that old lady, but they don't know what I think, nor what I say. How can they?"

"Do they never come to look you up?"

"Me! Why should they? I'm not rich, and I'm not ill. No; they leave me alone, and I leave them alone."

"Are you a Protestant, then?"

"No, I'm a Catholic—that's what I'm called; but I know some Protestants who think just as I do. After all, the thing is whether we believe in Jesus. People may be called one thing or another, but there are only two sorts after all. I've always remarked that."

"Do you go to mass?"

"Yes, I go sometimes. I've been told that one ought to go sometimes; but I don't go often—I go very seldom, for it does me no good. I don't understand what the priest says, and I always think he dresses himself up, and turns this way and that, just because he wants something to do. His life must be a very dull one, just because he has so little to do. So I just go in and sit there, but I don't know what the good of it is."

"Is it you who hang the flowers round that image?"

"I? No. There are young girls about the place who have nothing better to do. That amuses them; but I have my washing, and I think that's a better employment."

"Have you got a Bible?"

"No, I never saw a Bible in my life. All I know I learnt from my parents."

Thus Marguerite had been living all her life, and we may thank God that there may be many more living in the dark places where the Bible is so seldom seen, but yet knowing the great and wonderful gospel, taught to them by God, the Holy Ghost, in few and simple words, "Christ died for our sins." Happily for them they are untaught and ignorant as to those matters which their priests believe and teach. All the more let us, as we have the opportunity, take to them the blessed word of God. And let none think lightly of the idolatry, and of the sin of those who dare not come to the light lest their deeds should be reproved, and who therefore keep back from the starving souls around them the word of life and salvation—those who profess to change a piece of bread

into God Himself—those who fall down and worship it as God—those who make the works of men the door of heaven, and cast contempt upon the perfect work which caused the veil of the temple to be rent in twain—those who profess that they can forgive sins, and bring departed souls out of punishment by their prayers; these men abound even in our land of Bibles, and year by year, more and more of the ignorant and the foolish are falling into their hands, turning from light to darkness, from the Bible to man's foolish heart, from the Spirit of the living God to music, and shows, and ceremonies.

And thus, whilst many an ignorant French or Italian peasant is looking up simply to Christ, "not knowing the depths of Satan," there are many amongst *us* longing after the stolen waters that are sweet, and little knowing that the dead are there, and that the guests of the apostate Church are in the depths of hell.

"It is not at all true that we keep the Bible from the people," a priest said to me some months since. "Oh no; we earnestly desire them to read it."

But a few days before, I had received a letter from a young man, also a Catholic, who had once told me he was greatly grieved that the Bible was not read amongst them. He, therefore, began to translate the New Testament into a dialect spoken by many millions, who as yet have no Bible. But his translation proceeded slowly: sometimes his papers were lost—sometimes, on their way to the publishers, they disappeared. It seemed strange and unaccountable. And now, just before the priest's visit, I had received a letter from him: it was to say that the *real* cause of all these delays was this—were he to proceed with his work it would bring upon him the "greater excommunication" of the Church.

"This, you know," he said, "would be for a Catholic a terrible sentence; it would deprive me of all religious privileges till it was removed. As an obedient son of the Church, I could not risk such a sentence, so my work must cease," and it has ceased.

"I am not of their mind," he said to me; "but it must be so," and the millions are still waiting for their first Bible."

"You are quite mistaken as to all this," continued the priest, when I told him the story. "We are always glad to find any who care to read the Bible. You see, this little Testament I always carry in my pocket."

Yes, I saw the outside, but I said, "Is not that a book of prayers?"

"Oh no," said the priest, putting it back in his pocket.

"Can I get one like it?"

"No doubt."

"But I have often asked for one at the booksellers. They have none; they said they could only get me a large one with notes. Has yours notes?"

"Oh no; nothing but the simple Testament."

"Then where can I get one?"

"Leave it to me," said the priest. "I am going to N—— to-morrow; I will get you one there, and post it at once."

But days, weeks, and months have passed, and I am still waiting for it. F. B.

HOPING.

"ARE you a Christian?" said we to a young girl the other day, who we knew was anxious about her soul's salvation.

"I hope so," was the reply.

"Have you eternal life?"

At this second question the countenance dropped, and the tongue was silent.

Again we asked, "Did you ever thank God for the gift of eternal life?"

"I pray," was the response.

"Christ is God's gift to sinners; those who possess God's gift have eternal life, and the forgiveness of their sins. Believe in Jesus, and give thanks to God for His gift of eternal life."

We proceeded to this text: "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"; and, having read it, enquired of our young friend, "Do you believe on the name of the Son of God?"

"I do," she answered; and we believed she did so most truthfully.

"You believe that He died for your sins upon the cross?"

"I do," was the response.

"Let us read the text again. 'These things have I written unto you'—now put your own name here—'that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.'"

The darkness rolled away; God gave faith to our young friend, and she appropriated the gracious word to herself. Long afterwards she looked back with thankfulness to that night, as the occasion on which she passed out of darkness into God's marvellous light. E.C.

FATHERS AND MOTHERS, PRAY ON.

"COME along; we will go and hear this humbug preach," said William to his wife one Sunday evening. The young man was the son of Christian parents, and the child of many prayers. He had had every inducement to grow up in the fear of God, and in the knowledge of a Saviour's love; but he had no heart for the things of God, and, finding his Christian home a check on his desires to enjoy the world, he left it, choosing the life of a sailor, where he had his full fling. Getting tired of a sailor's life, he enlisted in the Royal Artillery, and, being an intelligent and smart man, rapidly rose to a non-commissioned officer. After the lapse of eight years, his eyesight failing, he was invalided, and came to reside in the island of G——, to use his subsequently oft-repeated words, "as one of the devil's best servants."

When discharged from the service he was still a young man, very powerful, over six feet in height. Having a few pounds in his pocket, he soon found friends kind enough to help him to spend it; but when his money was gone, his friends went too, and it was in this condition we found him one Sunday afternoon, nineteen months ago.

William had turned to his wife, and asked her where they should go, as they had no money. She, poor woman, tired and sad at heart, ventured to suggest that they should go to church, when suddenly William remembered that a few days before a young lady had put a tract in his hands with the following announcement on its cover:—

"God is light.

"——— will preach the gospel at the Sailors' Bethel, on Sunday night, at 6.30 o'clock.

"God is love."

From the depths of his pocket he pulled out the tract, which was about the "Parable of the Sower," and, having read it, made the remark we have already quoted, and the pair went to the Bethel.

On reaching the building they found it nearly full, and were placed right in front of the preacher.

The hymn, "Sowing the seed by the daylight fair," had just commenced.

"Hum," muttered William to himself, "strange, after my reading that tract on sowing the seed"; but more astonished was he when the preacher besought God that some poor prodigal before him that night, the child of many prayers, might be brought home to God. William began to wonder who had told the preacher about him, and he was greatly relieved when the prayer came to an end. Then, to his surprise, the preacher, looking straight at him, gave out the hymn, "Where is my wandering boy to-night?" This had such an effect on William that he was unable to stand up to sing, and he and his wife remained seated. The visible agitation of both encouraged the preacher to speak further on the prodigal.

To William's great surprise the subject of the address was "The parable of the Sower"; his first impulse was to flee from the room, feeling that he was again singled out; but God, who had begun a good work, was able also to carry it on, and he was constrained to retain his seat. At the close of the meeting he and his wife were found weeping over their sins, and seeking mercy at the feet of Jesus.

William called at the preacher's house the next night, to ask him to pray to God to strengthen him, and to keep his feet in the narrow way. At that time William was warder in a prison, and, being a man of a violent

temper, was often very rough in his conduct towards the prisoners; but when God forgave him his sins he began reading and praying with those under his custody.

On one occasion, a man noted for fighting, who was continually in prison for short terms, again made his appearance in jail, and was overheard asking the other prisoners whilst at the mill, "What's come over William? has he turned religious? When I was here before, he was continually swearing, and one day knocked me clean over a form; but now he seems kind to everybody."

This testimony cheered him much, for all his thought was to adorn the doctrine of Christ his Saviour, who had so graciously had mercy on him.

Thus, after thirty years of prayer, were the petitions of the godly parents answered on behalf of their "wandering boy." Fathers and mothers, pray on, for our God is abundantly able to save. J. H.

SAVED AND SAFE.

ON visiting a Christian who had recently passed through a severe illness, I remarked to her, "What a blessing it is to know that in a little while we shall be with the Lord in glory, where there will be no more suffering or pain!" when, to my astonishment, she replied, "Yes, if I were but sure that I should get there."

"You will be no safer in the glory than you are at the present moment," I answered. "Oh! yes," she exclaimed, "*I shall* be safe *then*, but I am not at all sure that I am now." I quoted the words of the blessed Lord from John x. 27-29, "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 one* is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."

"Yes," she quickly replied, "but He was speaking to Jews then." I saw at once that Satan was seeking to undermine the faith of this weak child of God, and that nothing but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, would put him to flight. Taking out my Testament, I turned to the Scripture referred to, and said, "Well, we will admit that the Lord was addressing Jews, but who does He refer to in the 16th verse—"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, and one shepherd"? "Oh, they are Gentiles," she answered, "but I am not at all sure that I am one of His sheep."

Perceiving in this a further effort of the enemy, I exclaimed, "What! you a recognised believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not know whether you are one of His sheep?"

She replied, "I am certainly a believer in Him."

I then asked, with some degree of warmth, "Who are the sheep?" She appeared puzzled. "Listen to this," I said, turning to verse 26. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep." "Now, you see that *unbelievers* are *not* His sheep, even though they may be religious persons like the Pharisees whom the Lord was addressing; there are those who do not enter by Jesus—who said, 'I am the door of the sheep.'"

"I see it all now," she exclaimed. The enemy was completely routed, and she, poor soul, was rejoicing in the Lord, that "Great Shepherd of the sheep."

Souls too often get occupied with their own thoughts and feelings, or the opinions of others, instead of getting God's thoughts, which can only be known from His written word. A Christian said to me recently, "Were I to have the assurance of salvation, as you have, it would lead me to walk loosely, and I should get into all sorts of sin." "Which, in plain English," I said, "means, that God, in the riches of His grace, has caused words to be written for the comfort and joy of His saints, which if you believe will lead you into all sorts of sin." No! No! The aged Apostle John wrote in his first epistle ii. 12, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake," and in the first verse of the same chapter, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." W. C.

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God Creating and Reconciling by His Son.

IT pleased God that all fulness should dwell in the Son. The mind of the blessed Trinity was, that in Him all the divine abundance that has been and will be made known to creatures, should have its abode. The Son expresses the fulness of the Godhead; He is the Word, and by Him God is made known, and His glory displayed. By the Son the whole of the creation was called into existence, "by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." Hence, all that displays God in His creation is called forth by the Son. Such a truth completely destroys, in the devout Christian's soul, every infidel notion respecting evolution, and fortifies it against the deadly poison of Darwinism.

"By Him and for Him" were all things created—not only *by*, but also *for*—for His glory and good pleasure. The beginning and the end of creation and its glories, are thus presented to us, and healthful words are these to have in the soul, where the miasma of unbelief in the Creator is so often breathed.

Now, it is too true, that a part, at least, of the things visible and invisible, some, at least, of the thrones and dominions, principalities, and powers of His hand are in revolt against Him. The fallen angels, and fallen men, are enemies to God. Satan is God's foe, and fallen men are alienated from God, and are enemies to Him by wicked works. The enmity is patent on the earth where we see it, the enmity exists outside the earth where we do not see it, but by God's revelation we know of its existence outside the world. Men are apt to reason solely from their range of vision, but God tells us of things "invisible," and we believe.

Now, out of the fulness that dwells in the Son, God has purposed to reconcile to Himself the things in earth and the things in heaven. God will not permit that for ever the earth shall be in rebellion against Him, and given over, in chief part, to the worship of demons, nor will He permit that the heavens shall be for ever sullied by the presence there, though it be but on occasions, of Satanic powers.

The way whereby God will reconcile these things to Himself is like the reconciliation solely of God Himself. He planned the reconciliation, and He planned the means whereby it shall be effected. No enemy of God can reconcile himself to God. God ever maintains His own glory as the Reconciler.

The means whereby the reconciliation is effected is the blood of the cross of Christ; thereby, in His own good time, God will purify both earth and the heavens, and bring all into perfect purity and peace before Him. The Lamb of God is He, who of the fulness that dwells in Him, bears away the sin of the world; and in the coming day the sin of the world will be taken away, and the smile of God shall fill it with joy. By the body of His flesh, through death, at this present moment the saved soul is brought into friendship with God, and by that sacrifice all things in earth and in the heavens will enjoy the uninterrupted favour of God.

The fulness of Christ—the abundance of power, of glory that dwells in Him—expresses itself nowhere more marvellously than in His cross. His cross is the centre from which radiate countless blessings to the creature, and endless glories to God. His death is the fountain-head whence the river of divine favours to fallen men flows forth, while for ever to God the savour of the death of Christ will be abiding freshness.

The present blessing of the true Christian is, that he is now reconciled, that he is now in the friendship of God, while devils are stirring up wrath, and fallen men are in rebellion. The Christian is delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and he is translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

God created all things by Christ—God will reconcile all things in the heavens and on earth by Christ—and these two glories of His in creating and in dying, are those which the infidelity in Christendom is this day so boldly denying.

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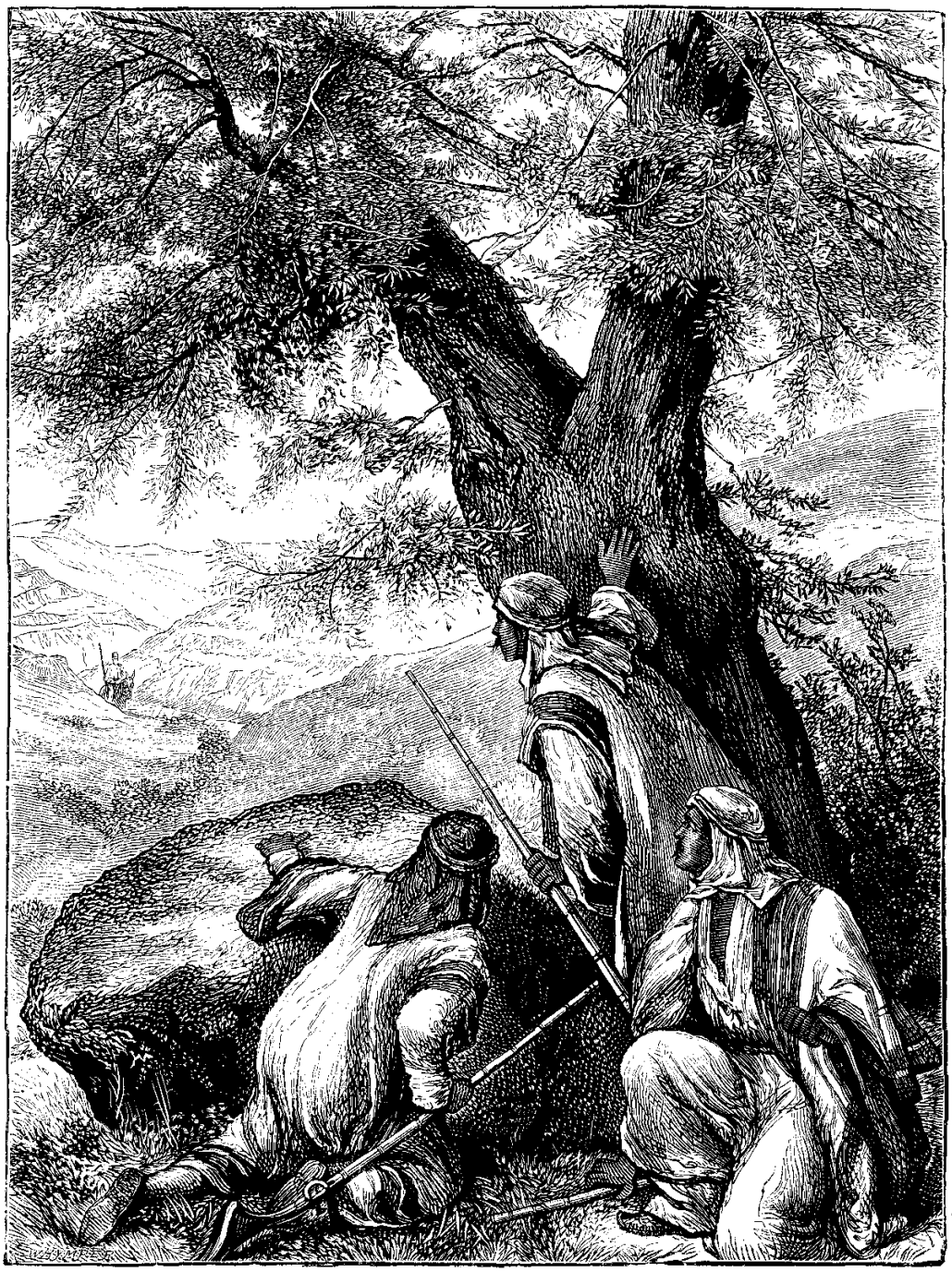


From Jerusalem to Jericho.

THE road from Jerusalem to Jericho had a very bad name in the days of our Lord, and it is still one which is infested with robbers, who, crouching behind rocks or trees, lie in wait for the unwary traveller. They make nothing of wounding and stripping their victim, and of leaving him half dead, and to perish, if no aid should come to him. From these familiar incidents, so often occurring on the well-known road from the city of Peace to the city of the Curse, our Lord has taught us of the terrors of the downward way that, starting from God, leads to destruction, and His most gracious love in

finding us in our misery, and taking us out of it.

Jesus is the sinner's Friend—the Friend of the friendless and the hopeless—as such He ever proved Himself when He was here—yet on this earth He was a stranger, unrecognised by the religious people of the Jews, and unknown by the Gentiles. In His parable He likens Himself to "a certain Samaritan"—a stranger, therefore, to the Jews, for "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans"; they were strangers, and as such kept at arm's length from one another. To this day, to the mass of mankind, Jesus is a stranger, but He is nevertheless the Friend and the Neighbour who loves us.

"A certain man," said the Lord in His parable, "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead," and in these words He portrays the sinner on the downward road, the prey of sin and Satan, overcome, overwhelmed, and dying in his misery. The beginning of the journey may seem gay enough, but before the end be reached, the sinner learns too well, by bitter experience, what thieves and what wounds accompany that journey.

Now, who will be the traveller's friend in his extremity, as robbed and wounded he lies "half dead"? A certain priest came by his way, and "he saw him"! Had the priest the heart or the power to help the wounded man? "He passed by on the other side." The priest left as wide a margin as the width of the road between himself and the half dead man, neither will nor power was in him to deliver.

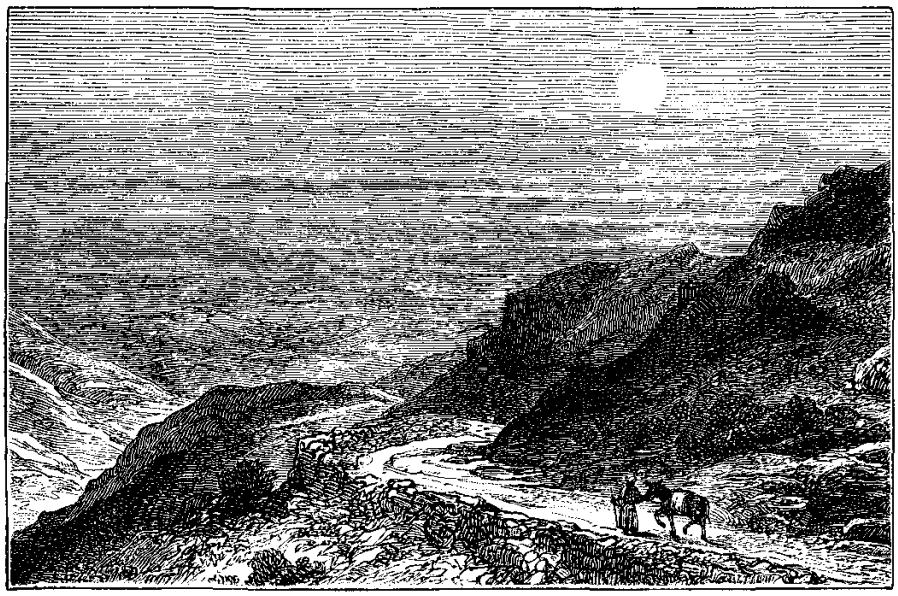
A priest as a priest could not help a half dead man! It was not his province so to do. He could in his office wait upon the divine worship, but not upon a dying sinner, to such service he was not appointed. He could stand near the holy place and help to bring in the offerings of the people, but to bow himself down over a fellow man in his dying state, to soothe, to heal, to lift him up—this was not the priest's work. The priest was not appointed to come down to the level of a wounded sinner: "he passed by on the other side," keeping his garments clear from the defilement of the touch of the dying man.

"And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." The Levite might teach man God's law, but he could not save—he could not give power to the dying to live. "Do this, and thou shalt live," said the law, but how could the law help the dying! The law might look on the sinner in his sins and misery, and, as it were, exclaim upon his dying state and the folly that had led to it, but it was not the office of the law to save or to befriend. And such as repair to the law do not find salvation there; God did not send it to give life, but to convince of sin.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was"—yes, *where he was*, just down to the man in his need. Is not this precisely what Jesus has done for us? He came down to us where we were naked, wounded, and dying! Such was the journey He took—that way of wonders—from the glory to the cross, and back, through the empty grave, to the glory whence He came. "And when he saw him, he had compassion on him." Such is His heart towards the victim of sin's misery. There is not a sinner ever so low down in sin, ever so wretched, but that Jesus is moved with compassion towards him. He is the Friend in need, and the Friend indeed.

He "went to him"—he not only *saw*, he *went*. He stooped down over the dying man; he bound up his wounds with his own hands, he saved him from death; he poured in the oil and the wine, he healed and gave life; and then he set the man upon his own beast. He became the Servant of the sinner He had saved! Oh! what a Saviour is He! Who of our readers says, as He considers Jesus, "Does not our heart burn within us?" The saved soul knows by experience the gracious love that saved him.

Not only this, he "brought him to an inn, and took care of him"—he brought the poor man to a shelter. True, he did not at once bring him home, but to a gracious wayside shelter, where the wounded man should be



ON THE ROAD FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO.

under the care of the loving stranger. And so it is, Jesus takes care of the sinner He has saved; He never leaves him to shift for himself. His salvation is perfect all the way through, from the moment He puts away our sins until He comes again to bring us into His Father's house.

Then the stranger went on his way—whither? The parable does not tell us, but we may well conceive the stranger journeying from Jericho to Jerusalem—from the city of the Curse to the city of Peace—from earth to heaven; for so it was with the Lord when He taught His love in this parable. He has left the earth; He has gone up to the Father; He has departed to the home on high, and now His people are in the inn, under the care of the Host, under the care of the Holy Spirit, and at the charges of Jesus, whose words are, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Thus are the objects of the Lord's love cared for in time!

His coming is near at hand, but until He comes the sinner He has rescued is the object of His love and solicitude. How eagerly would the rescued man have watched for the return of the stranger who had befriended him! Shall it not be so with us? Let us look for Him, for His return is nigh, and when He comes He will take us away from the inn and bring us with Himself to the eternal Home.

Texts for the Month.

THE sound of a familiar voice is quickly recognized, and before the very words spoken can be distinguished. How pleasant it is to hear the voice of one we love, and how gladly do the people of God hear His voice! Also, God listens to the voice of His people—He hears their cry to Him. He has heard the prayer and the cry of every child of His; and now He is listening to every whisper of our heart, and every sound of our voice appealing to him.

By-and-by every one who does not love God will tremble at His voice. Let us then make much of the voice and the words of God and of Jesus.

You will please fill in chapter and verse, and will not use a Concordance, but carefully hunt out the passages.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
F	1	They heard the voice of the Lord			
S	2	I heard the voice of the Lord			
S	3	**Abraham obeyed My voice**			
M	4	If ye will obey My voice indeed			
Tu	5	Diligently obey the v. of the Lord			
W	6	Carefully hearken unto the voice of			
Th	7	Hearken diligently unto the v. of			
F	8	He made thee to hear His voice			
S	9	Every one...the truth heareth My v.			
S	10	**My sheep hear My voice**			
M	11	I turned to see the voice			
Tu	12	There came a voice from heaven			
W	13	God heard the voice of the lad			
Th	14	God hearkened to the v. of Manoah			
F	15	The Lord heard the v. of Elijah			
S	16	The Lord hearkened to the v. of			
S	17	**Hear my voice, O God**			
M	18	Lord, hear my voice			
Tu	19	Though they cry...with a loud voice			
W	20	The voice of the archangel			
Th	21	The Bridegroom's voice			
F	22	They shall hear My voice			
S	23	Thunderings and voices			
S	24	**He cried with a loud voice**			
M	25	With a loud voice glorified God			
Tu	26	Paul cried with a loud voice			
W	27	She knew Peter's voice			
Th	28	Saying with a loud voice, Worthy			

Because Jesus died for me.

I WANT to tell you a true story, dear children, about a little boy whose name was Peter. At the early age of three and a half years, little Peter would say, "I love Jesus because He died for me," and he loved to speak and sing of Jesus. He would say, "I love muber and farber; but I love Jesus best." Indeed, little Peter put Jesus first in everything.

One day he had been disobedient, and this grieved his mother very much. A little while afterwards, Peter came to his mother saying, "I have asked Jesus not to let me go Satan's way any more."

On another occasion the dear child was very unwell, and on his father asking him one morning how he was, he looked up with a happy smile and said: "I am better;" adding, "I did ask Jesus to make me better, but if He had not I would have loved Him."

The Lord Jesus was soon going to take this little lamb to be with Himself.

During his last illness Peter suffered very much, and was quite unable to speak, but was very bright and happy.

He liked to hear his father sing:

"There is a happy land
Far, far away,"

and—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus:
Safe on His gentle breast."

He would join in by moving his lips, and pointing upwards.

His mother one day told him that as soon as he should be out of her arms he would be in the arms of Jesus. Peter did not forget this, for when he knew he was going to be with Jesus, he was not happy until his mother took him in her arms, then peacefully fell asleep.

He was four years old when the Lord took him home to be with Himself.

Dear children, can you say, as did little Peter, "I love Jesus because He died for me"?

L. L. B.

A SAVIOUR AND A FRIEND.

ANNIE W. came to Jesus, and found in Him both a Saviour and a Friend. By reason of her attention, and the pleasure she took in saying her text every Sunday for some time, I had thought that little Annie had something the other girls in her Sunday school class had not. So one afternoon I wrote her a little note, asking her whether she could say that Jesus was her Saviour.

The next Sunday afternoon, Annie brought me a note as follows:—

"Dear teacher,

"In reply to your note, the Lord Jesus is to me a Saviour and a Friend; He died on the cross to save me from my sins and washed me whiter than snow.

"Whiter than snow.

"Christ died for the ungodly.

"The wages of sin is death.

"Your affectionate pupil,
"ANNIE W——."

I have given her answer in her own words; is it not a beautiful answer from a little girl of eleven years old? I wonder how many of the girls and boys who read FAITHFUL WORDS can say the same. It may be some

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of you are like another little girl, who wrote to me to the effect that she had no part nor lot in this matter! What a solemn thing to say!

Oh, girls and boys, if you did but know what is in the heart of this precious Saviour who died on the cross for sinners, how gladly would you come to Him to get blessed, and say—

"I hear Thy welcome voice,
Which calls me, Lord, to Thee,
For cleansing in Thy precious blood,
Which flowed on Calvary."

He has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) S. E. B.

Standing up for the Bible.

II.

MORE ABOUT JOHN WICLIF AND HIS TIMES.

IN the earlier part of Wiclif's life, his energies were directed chiefly towards attacking the evils of the religious world of his day, and in gaining freedom for his country from ecclesiastical thraldom. In the latter portion of his life, he was chiefly intent on giving the people of England the truth of God, which should save their souls, and make them free indeed.

We saw last month Wiclif as a mighty power, in Oxford, but in London also he was well known, as we may judge from this description of him by one of his enemies:—

"Many great lords of the realm, or, more rightly, I should call them devils, embraced his mad doctrines . . . . . he drew after him many citizens of London into the bottomless pit of error. He was an eloquent man, and pretended to look down on worldly possessions as things transitory and fleeting, in comparison with the things of eternity. He ever ran from church to church, and scattered his mad lies in the ears of very many."

No wonder that the rich and luxurious bishops and abbots hated him! Wiclif's teaching cast bitter reproach upon the splendour of their plate, their fine apparel, their prancing horses, and their following of dandies. In the year 1377 they began in good earnest to try to put him down by force, and the houses of convocation summoned him to appear before a council, to be held in St. Paul's Church, London.

Wiclif was no doubt popular with many of the citizens of London, for it is ever the case that a faithful preacher of Christ gathers adherents about him for the truth's sake; certainly he had among the greatest people of the land strong political supporters, chief amongst these being the Duke of Lancaster, and Lord Henry Percy, who was marshal of England. A vast concourse of people had assembled around St. Paul's, to see Wiclif and his judges; and Our Lady's Chapel, situated at the eastern end of the church, where the trial was to be held, was thronged with dukes and barons, archbishops and bishops. The marshal went first, making way through the crowd, and encouraged Wiclif not to fear the concourse of people, nor the great personages who composed his tribunal. Such was the greatness of the excited crowd that it was no easy matter to force a way through the people.

The church was packed, and through it Wiclif must needs go in order to reach Our Lady's Chapel. Lord Percy, being lord marshal, took command, and made his way up the nave, and that not in a mild manner. Seeing the secular arm controlling in the church, Courtenay, the Bishop of London, became furious, and exclaimed to Lord Percy that, had he known what command he would have kept in the church, he would have prevented his coming there at all. To this Lord Percy angrily retorted that come he would, even should the bishop say nay to him.

High words, between the leaders of the ecclesiastical and the secular powers had thus already begun, before Wiclif had reached the place where he was to be tried. As he stood before the tribunal, to hear what charges should be advanced against him, Lord Percy took upon himself to bid him be seated, saying as he had so many things to answer to, he had need to repose on a soft seat. This, the Bishop of London declared he should not do, for neither was it law nor custom that any one cited to appear before his ordinary should be seated during the time of his trial. Thereon, the lord marshal and the bishop began wrangling, the Duke of Lancaster joining in. But the bishop's tongue prevailed,

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so that the duke from railing took to threatening, declaring he would bring down the bishop's pride, and that of all the prelacy in England also. "Thou," said he, "bearest thyself so brag upon thy parents"—these were the Earl and Countess of Devonshire—"who shall not be able to help thee: they shall have enough to do to help themselves."

"My confidence is not in my parents, nor in man, but in God, and in God only," replied the bishop.

This mild answer so nettled the duke, that he whispered to the one next him, but in a whisper meant to be overheard by many, "I would rather pluck the bishop by the hair of his head out of the church, than take this at his hand."

Here was a signal for a general uproar. The Londoners present shouted they would lose their lives sooner than see their bishop dragged out by the hair; the sitting broke up in tumult, and so Wiclif escaped out of the hands of the bishops!

Riots and bloodshed succeeded the day's proceedings.

The enormous amount of labour Wiclif underwent, together with the strain he had to endure by reason of the assaults of his enemies, brought upon him an attack of paralysis. His sickness was seized upon as an opportunity by his foes for trying to induce him to recant, and accordingly four doctors, selected from the four orders of friars, which he had so vigorously assailed, were deputed to wait upon him.

Wiclif lay upon his bed and heard all the doctors had to say. They informed him death was very near, and that he should call back anything he had said against their learned and holy brotherhoods. He then beckoned his servants to raise him in his bed, and fixing his eyes on the visitors, exclaimed in the words of the 118th Psalm, "I shall not die, but live," adding, "and shall again declare the evil deeds of the friars."

They retreated in dismay.

In the early portion of Wiclif's career England was great and strong, but in the latter part of his life the country lost power, failed in war, and its old glory departed. The court was in a corrupt state, and the king being old and feeble, was led by bad persons. However, the spirit for freedom from the thrall of popes and prelates was as strong as ever. When the old king died, he was succeeded by his grandson, Richard II. a boy of some eleven years of age, and then the Pope began to try his strength against Wiclif and his party. Bulls and letters, issued from Rome, while councils sat and sent out their commands, till countless kinds of opposition assailed Wiclif. Every day the battle became more and more hot; the religious powers bearing down upon the few brave men, who were bent upon giving their countrymen the word of God.

It is comparatively easy to fight for a country's liberty, and for freedom from the thrall of a body of priests, and in such a struggle there will be many ardent patriots to flock to the standard, but it is not easy to fight for the truth of God, to contend earnestly for the faith once declared to the saints. In such a conflict the soldier of Christ very often has to stand almost alone, and of God only can he obtain the strength to continue the strife. While it was England or Rome, Wiclif had many an Englishman on his side; but when it came to be a question of Rome or the Bible, he had but few to stand by him. Both the Duke of Lancaster and Lord Percy commanded him to obey the Pope's orders as to doctrine, and the proctors and masters of Oxford stood questioning whether they should obey the papal bull or protect Wiclif. The bull commanded them upon privation of the Pope's favour, and the indulgences and privileges granted to them and their university, to apprehend Wiclif, and any other in the university corrupted with his doctrine. In the end Oxford turned against him, and issued an edict threatening any man who should associate with him with the "greater excommunication," and then once more the Duke of Lancaster, his powerful friend, bade Wicliff submit himself on the doctrinal question.

But Wiclif had been studying the Scriptures for years; his soul had gradually become re-

leased from very much of the current Romish teaching—he knew himself as one of God's freed men; and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." How could he submit to man, and reject the authority of God's word? His eyes were open to the blasphemy, that the priest has the power to turn the bread of the sacrament into the very body of Christ; and against this stronghold of Rome, which really rejects the Bible truth respecting the one sacrifice of our Lord once offered, he would speak in his vigorous and unmistakable English. No less openly was he determined to speak of the evil of keeping the Bible from the people, notwithstanding all papal bulls, councils, bishops, and all human powers.

"Those that call it heresy," said he, "to speak of the Holy Scriptures in English, must be prepared to condemn the Holy Ghost, who gave it in tongues to the apostles of Christ to speak the word of God in all languages that were ordained of God under heaven. . . We are not to believe the words or discourses of prelates any further than they are founded on Scripture . . . Since, according to the faith, which the apostle teaches, all Christians must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and be answerable to Him for all the goods with which He has entrusted them, it is necessary that all the faithful should know these goods, and the use of them, for an answer by a prelate or attorney will not then avail, but every one must then answer in his own person."

In reply to the common argument that none but the priestly class should have the word of God in their hands, lest bad use should be made of it, he says, "What sort of Anti-Christ is this, who, to the sorrow of Christian man, is so bold as to prohibit the laity from learning this holy lesson which is so earnestly commanded by God? Every man is bound to learn it, that he may be saved, but every layman who shall be saved is a very priest of God's own making, and every man is bound to be a very priest."

Bible truth made its way in the country through his incessant labours, and by the work of the "poor priests" and the issuing of tracts, and thus, notwithstanding all the bulls of the Pope and all the councils of the bishops, Wiclif's followers increased in numbers.

He went on with his work, toiling at Lutterworth, his parish, with most marvellous energy, preaching and translating, and there he remained, protected by some of the greatest men of the land, and shielded by God's almighty hand.

The powers adverse to the Bible were not going to leave Wiclif and his followers to do their list. Five years after the failure of the trial in St. Paul's Church, a council was held in London, under the headship of Courtenay, who had become Archbishop of Canterbury, and consisting of bishops, theologians, and ecclesiastical lawyers, having for its object the suppression of heretics, and Wiclif books. It has been called the "Synod of the Earthquake," because just as it was commenced an earthquake shook London. Some stood in doubt whether to go on with their business, but others took the earthquake as a sign that they should proceed.

1382 is a memorable date, because from this synod issued the English Inquisition, whose bloody history extends over nearly two hundred years. The bishop styled himself "chief inquisitor," and each bishop was to be an inquisitor in his own diocese; preachers, and their maintainers and abettors, were to be arrested and held in "strong prison," and generally the faith of men in God was to be commanded by the religious authorities of the country.

Wiclif appealed to Parliament against the powers of this council, but his friends were persecuted—some gave up the struggle—some were imprisoned—yet he was left in comparative quiet. He continued his great work of evangelizing, and devoted himself to this work with more and more intense zeal as the end of his course approached. Evangelizing is giving out the truth of God's gospel to men, the length and breadth of which can only be found in the Scriptures of truth. Let us hear how he valued the Scriptures. Speaking of the seed being the word of God, he exclaims: "O marvellous

power of the divine seed, which overpowers strong men in arms, softens hard hearts, and renews and changes into divine men, men who had been brutalized by sins, and who had departed infinitely far from God. Obviously such a high morality could never be worked by a priest, if the Spirit of Life and the Eternal Word did not above all things else work it." And the following words may well be laid to heart by preachers of this day: "It is to speak lightly to say that God might, of His mere power, forgive this sin without the atonement which was made for it, since the justice of God would not suffer this. . . . God may not accept a person, to forgive him his sin without an atonement, else He must give free license to sin both in angels and in men, and then sin were no sin, and God were no God."

Thus he continued ceaselessly with his glorious work, until one December day, as he was hearing mass in his church at Lutterworth, he was seized with paralysis, and sank to the ground. He was carried to the parsonage, and breathed his last on the last day of 1384. Thus ended his career; he had lifted up the banner in England for freedom from the popes, and had greatly succeeded. He had laboured for the people, giving them the word of God in their own tongue, and none had been able to stay his hand.

By Wiclif's direction, and partly by his own hand, the whole of the Scriptures were in circulation among the people. "This Master John Wiclif," laments a chronicler of the period, "has translated into English the gospel which Christ gave to the clergy and doctors of the church, to be by them communicated to the weaker sort, and the laity according to their needs"—the chronicler does not seem to have found in what part of the Bible Christ is said to have given the gospel to the clergy and doctors for them to use at their list!—"and has thus made it more accessible to the laity, and to women who are able to read, than it was to the well-educated and intelligent clergy." Another complained of Wiclif, as "completing his malice by devising a translation of the Scriptures into the mother tongue."

Wiclif's translation was made from the Latin, and is therefore not so exact as our own, but his and that of Purvey, which followed it, were soon most highly valued. The whole of the New Testament was an exceedingly costly work, and stood at the value of half a year's income for a substantial farmer, but so esteemed did the Bible become, that it was not an uncommon thing for a farmer to exchange a load of hay for a few of its chapters, and small portions of the book would be hidden on the person, or under the floors of houses, or in secret places where the possessors could find them, and read alone the wonderful words of life. The highest in the land had copies of the sacred book, and the Bible and its teachings were firmly planted in the land. A voice arises to us in our day from this old love for the Bible in our country, where the whole of the New Testament now may be bought for one penny, and where no law exists to hinder its perusal by the simplest and the poorest.

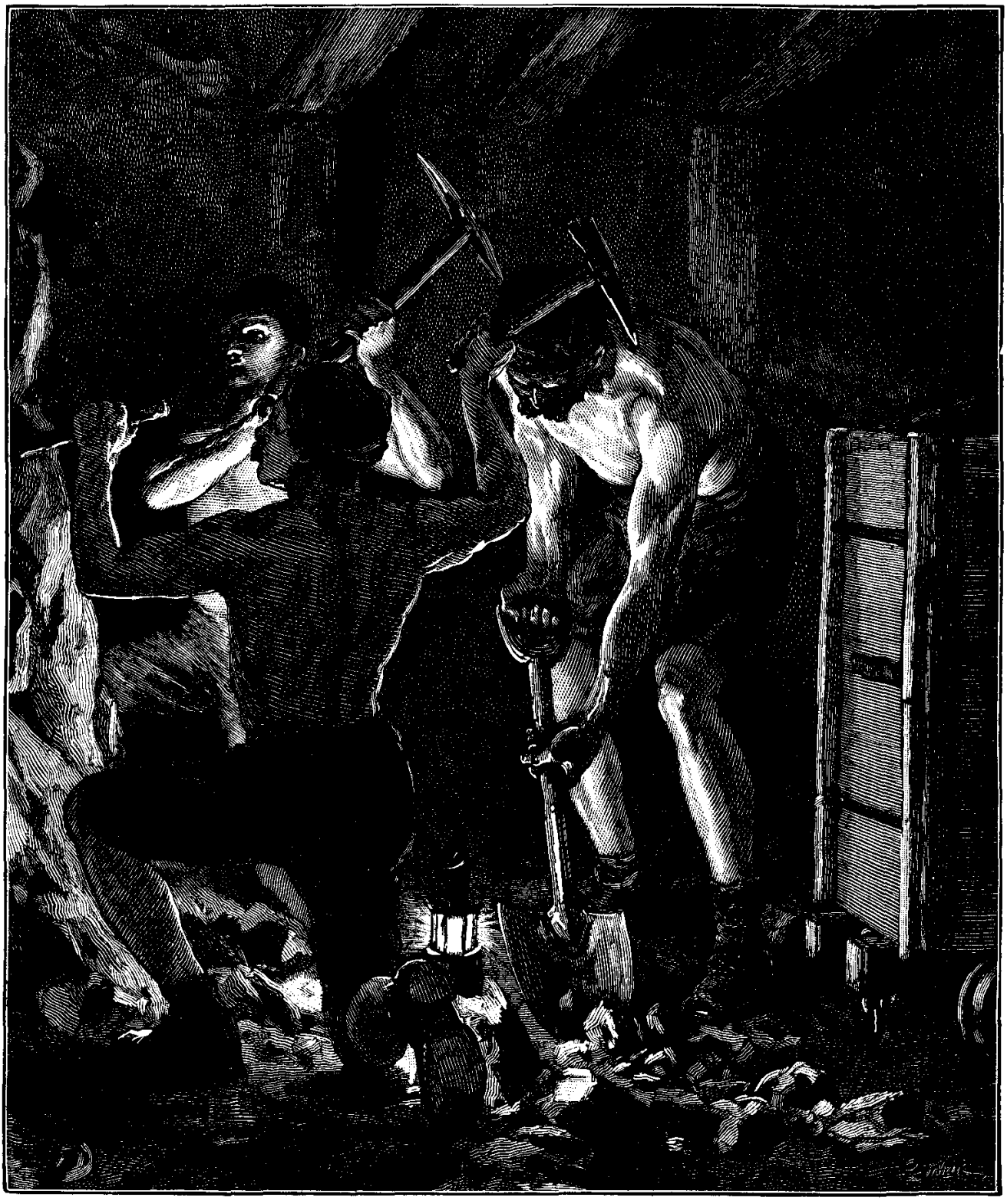
For some twenty-five years Wiclif's books and teaching were permitted to circulate in the country, but in 1410 there was a great burning of them in Oxford, and also on the continent many of them were similarly destroyed. Forty-one years after his death Rome held a "sacred synod," which gave sentence that "John Wiclif was a notorious, obstinate heretic, and that he died in his heresy," and it cursed and condemned "him and his memory."

"This synod," so runs its decree, "also decreeth and ordaineth that the body and bones of the said John Wiclif, if it might be discerned and known from the bodies of other faithful people, should be taken out of the ground, and thrown away far from the burial of any church."

So his body was dug up from its quiet grave and burned, and the ashes were cast into the river Swift, and were borne away to the sea. Such was the foolish malice of Rome against the bones of the man who gave first to England God's word in our mother-tongue, but the words of the Scriptures which he gave forth none could destroy, no, neither by sword nor fire; they lived in many hearts to the glory of God.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



GEORGE, THE MINER, AND HIS CRY FOR HELP.

GEORGE, THE MINER, AND HIS CRY FOR HELP.

"GEORDIE" had fallen out with his minister, and for a number of years after that event, he attended neither church nor chapel, except on rare occasions. Yet he was far from satisfied, for he had really spoken the truth when he told the minister he wished his soul were saved. To reach this end George first tried self-reformation, and set himself to the task of making himself a new man. As drink had long held the mastery over him, with firm purpose he broke from under its power. Endowed with a resolute will, he next freed himself from the power of the pipe. After that he took in hand the vice of swearing; and, together with his two brothers, who worked with him in the mine, he entered into a covenant to abstain from bad language. They agreed that for every oath, any of them uttered, a halfpenny was to be paid into a common fund, which money was to be applied to some good purpose. Suffice it to say, George was completely vanquished in his halfpenny system of casting out the swearing devil, for, as he said afterwards, "It would hae taen a' oor pay, if we had paid a ha'p'ny every time we swore." George thus learned that while it is comparatively easy to abstain from such a vice as drinking, when it comes to curbing the passion of the heart, there is but little power in man to keep the evil words from coming out of the lips. What shall then be said of evil thoughts? What power is there in sinful man to bring them into captivity?

Thus some seven years passed by, and only once or twice during all that time did George hear a sermon. Yet he was no further from God than multitudes who attend so-called "places of worship," and say prayers with readiness and regularity. Frequently, however, in his endeavours to promote self-reform, he formed the resolution to make a fresh start, and to go regularly to church; but this resolution was never carried out.

One morning, some two hours after George had begun his day's work in the mine, a great quantity of coal fell suddenly upon him. He was in a lonely place, and though he cried out, there was no man to answer. As he lay buried beneath almost a ton of coal, bruised and crushed, all his life, yes, all his black guilty career, passed before his eyes. All was there in a moment of time, as he realized eternity was but a few minutes' distance from him. He felt that he had mocked God, and his agony of soul was intense. He tried to drag himself out from beneath the mass of coal that was crushing him, but was powerless. He saw death was at hand, unless help should quickly come, and he knew, that, if he died as he was, hell must be his portion. There was only one resource left, and that was prayer, and out of the depths of his soul, George called upon God. His prayer was not a long one; he cried, "O God, if you will only take me oot o' this, I'll be a new man."

Now there was a man in the pit, whose duty it was to watch for fire-damp; he was stationed at some considerable distance from the spot where the accident had occurred, but, at the moment of the poor miner's cry to God, a strong desire came over him to go to George. This was not his duty, for he had examined the place where he worked that morning, and there was no need for him to go there again till evening; but, why he knew not, he felt he must go and see him.

Thus it was that, within fifteen minutes of George's cry to God, help was at hand. The coals were rolled off, and careful, though rough, hands brought him to the bank, and thence in a cart he was taken to his home.

As he lay upon his bed, George's heart turned to God, and he earnestly sought salvation.

About a month afterwards a gospel tent was pitched on the village green, and one of George's brothers, whose heart had been softened through the illness of a child, attended the meeting. There the Saviour found him, and the young man made a profession of faith in Christ. On the Saturday evening at the end of the first week of the tent services, this brother came to see George, who was out of bed, though not yet able to go to work, and told him that he had been to the gospel meetings, and was now saved.

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This brought George to the tent the next night, where he listened with deep attention to the preaching of the men, and at the close of the meeting he took his place among the enquirers.

On the following Tuesday I visited him in his home. We sat down together before the open Bible, and I read to him a portion of the fifth chapter of the first Epistle of John. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Then we knelt in prayer on the stone floor, and before we rose, George yielded himself to God, and rejoiced in Christ his Saviour.

This is the word on which his soul rested, "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." E. C.

FULL ASSURANCE: AND HOW THE LORD BROUGHT ME TO IT.

HOW happy it is to know truly by Spirit-wrought experience, the blessedness of being fully and for ever reconciled to God in Christ! It is then that self is put into its proper place—helpless, hopeless, undone self! And it is then that Christ takes His proper place as our All in All. Then indeed we have perfect peace, for "He is our peace." (Eph. ii. 14.) The condemning burden of our sins no longer oppresses us, for we know that "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. i. 7.) Then we know our vileness is fully met, for "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7); and His beauty our glory, for "He of God is made unto us . . . . righteousness." (1 Cor. i. 30.) Oh, what blessedness is thus ours in Christ!

We are "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) And then, when He shall come to receive us unto Himself, what unspeakable blessedness shall we enjoy through all eternity! To Him alone the praise!

But not always was I able to speak thus. Through long months and years I longed, oh, how I longed, to be in possession of such assurance! As I look back upon it, how sad—yes, I may almost say, how unnecessarily sad—has been my spiritual history! And how wondrously good and gracious has He been, who, through long years of doubt and distance, bore with me, and at last enabled me fully to trust Himself. I set forth the record of the Lord's dealings with me, to the glory of His name, and for the help of those who may be in the same position that I was once in.

And what was that position? It found expression in that verse of Newton's, which was constantly on my lips—

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> Oft it causeth anxious thought—
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I His or am I not?"

There were times, indeed, when, for a little while, I seemed to get upon the mountain top, and breathe the bracing air; but anon the valley depths engulfed me, and peace and assurance both were far from me. My feelings ruled and decided my condition. Wretched rule to go by! as variable and as fitful as the wind.

I had been piously brought up. From my earliest days I had been accustomed to listen to the preaching of the word, and to mingle with the congregation of God's people. I became what is called "a member of the church" when very young, and though I lapsed from this membership, my name was soon written on the roll of another congregation. How terrible it is to contemplate how many are thus enrolled without true faith in Christ, and who are but strangers to the salvation He gives!

I went on to be a teacher in the Sunday school, a mission worker, and indeed I became a preacher of God's gospel. How could I do such work? I often wonder now. Yet I knew the theology of the plan of salvation,

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and something of the philosophy of it too. And I held to that plan most strenuously, condemning all self-effort, enforcing the necessity of faith in Christ, and urging His all-sufficiency for our salvation; and I believed it—*in a way*. But my belief was not such as simply appropriated and rested in all Christ was, and all He had done. I had *zeal* for God, but I had not *peace* with God. I was a stranger to full satisfaction of soul, for I was looking into self for it, and refusing to find it only in Christ.

I now reached another and most important epoch of my life. I had been preaching from time to time in various places, and being somewhat fluent and fervid, I was pressed to enter the ministry, and thus become a regularly ordained preacher of the word. I had been for some years debating this question, and looked at it in all kinds of ways. At first I was greatly disinclined to take the step, but eventually thought that my refusal to go forward might be refusing to enter the very path in which I might find the peace I so longed for.

During my college course I was noted for evangelistic zeal, and was constantly engaged in gospel work. And in this respect I was no hypocrite; I wanted others to be saved; and yet it was only at times, and then only with hesitation, that I could say I was saved myself.

At last I found myself the pastor of a congregation, in a large and busy town, amongst a numerous working-class population. How I worked! What restless activity! What endless schemes for doing good! But where were the peace and power I hoped for? Ay, where? What a disappointment it was! What an intolerable burden did it come to be! I heard men and women all around me bearing earnest and praiseful testimony to the full assurance of faith in Christ, which God had given them; I could only listen in sad and yearning silence. And I prayed, oh! with what agony I prayed!

Having been some time in this condition, I remember being introduced to a poor fellow far gone in consumption. A few months later a sister of his came to me and asked me if I remembered meeting him, telling me he had come home to die, and that he was without God and without hope, yea, even filled with contempt of the gospel, and of the salvation therein revealed. She asked me to go and speak to him, at the same time warning me that he might order me out of the house, and entreating me not to let him know she had requested me to come.

I went, and found him very weak, and open to receive sympathy. I talked with him for awhile about his body, and then I began about his soul. He would scarcely hear me. The reference to eternal things moved him to pour out strong complaints of the unchristian character and conduct of many professing Christians whom he knew. He grew excited, and I thought it best to close our interview. I turned to Rev. xxii. 17, and especially emphasized the clause, "Whosoever will, let him come." I asked him, "Do you wish to be saved?"

He replied, "I can't say I do."

"There is only one thing I can do for you," I said; "will you let me do it?"

He asked, "What is it?"

"Go down on my knees, and pray God to show you yourself as a poor, lost sinner needing salvation, and to make you willing to be saved," I replied.

"You can do it if you like," he answered.

"Then I like," said I, and I knelt down and prayed, and left him without further remark.

That was on a Tuesday. I went to him on the following Friday, and he received me cordially. I read to him part of Romans iii., and prayed again, and left him. The next morning, his sister came to my apartments about nine o'clock. Her heart was so full she could not speak, but I understood that she wished me to accompany her to the sick chamber. I found her brother in bed, and completely off his mental balance, wandering wildly in his talk. But he clearly showed conviction of sin, and seemed perfectly sensible to all I said about his soul's condition. I remember one thing he asked me, "Do you believe in science?"

I answered, "Yes, I believe in science, in

its own sphere, but science can do nothing for you now."

"I have been a bit scientific," he replied, "but I have made a great mistake."

After talking a little while, and urging Isaiah liii. 6, especially the latter part—"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 prayed at his bedside, and left, ay, left, saying to myself—

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causeth anxious thought—
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His or am I not?"

I was coming to a crisis as to my own condition of soul. Seeking the salvation of others, seeking it faithfully, up to my light, whilst not fully assured of my own; it was becoming more and more intolerable, and causing me daily greater anguish. I went down that same evening, and a cold December evening it was, to the pier of our town, and there, no one being present, pleaded with God for a full hour, entreating Him to lead me into the full and clear assurance of faith. And my prayer was heard.

That night, at half-past nine, the sister of the sick man came to a concert where I was presiding—for concerts and entertainments formed one of my schemes for advancing the Lord's cause; oh the folly of it!—and called me to come quickly to see her sick brother. If he was off his mental balance in the morning, he was now raving mad, crying out with a strength of voice truly astounding, and with an agony truly terrible, under the awful sense of his lost and undone state. As I stood in the room alone with him, I never more truly cried to God for help. I had to deal with a soul in the agony of conviction, wanting peace, peace to which I myself was still a stranger. I felt shut up to one scripture, one truth, one testimony, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." It was doubtless the Lord's way of bringing this truth home to my own soul. At last the dying man fell back exhausted.

I remained in the house till four o'clock the next morning, which was the Lord's Day, and then went home. No truth was ever borne in upon my heart with greater force than was that contained in the last clause of Isaiah liii. 6 by the strong emphasis of the terrible circumstances of that night.

On the occasion of my next visit, as I entered the sick man's room, it was evident that he had undergone a great change. He received me with a smile of welcome, and said, "Ah, sir, I couldn't understand you harping on that one text, 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all,' but I see it now: He has made an end of sin, and I just believe it." In words such as these he made it clear that he had, by simple faith, received God's record of His Son, and was rejoicing in God's salvation; and, as he thus spake, at that very moment I received it too, and we rejoiced together. Blessed, simple gospel truth! what peace and joy it brought to the dying man and to the pastor.

Next morning at six o'clock, the young man called his friends around him. The end was near. His sister wanted to fetch me, but he stopped her, saying, "Do not trouble him. Tell him it is all right. Thank him for me." At nine o'clock he passed away.

To God be all the praise. He had done great things for me as well as for him who was gone. Since then there has been conflict, ay, and failure, but the assurance remains, for it does not depend on self at all:—

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

My history is finished. It tells how the Lord brought me to full assurance. But I should not be telling the truth if I did not own that, from the day the Lord gave me peace and assurance, I cast aside as worse than folly all my old schemes of concerts, religious entertainments, and the like, carried on professedly to aid the cause of Christ, but really, all of them, worldly hindrances to true godliness. Some of my old friends blame me for the narrow views I now entertain, but God's cause never has been, and never will be advanced by worldliness, and, indeed, His cause has no greater damage done to it than by professedly Christian workers bringing in the world's devices to help on the glory of Christ.

Oh, seeker of salvation, let me lovingly and solemnly urge you to believe this precious truth, and the same assurance will be yours: "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." W. M. S.

"I DID NOT KNOW WHERE I WAS GOING."

IT was a lovely morning. The July sun sparkled on the dancing waters of a highland lake, as a merry party rowed across it to a quiet spot, where they were soon disporting themselves in the water, with all the exuberance which is peculiar to the most attractive recreation of bathing. But how quickly such scenes may change! An incautious leap into deep water, a smothered cry for help, and a young girl was struggling face to face with death. It is needless to dwell on those three or four minutes of intensified agony, that appeared so long, until, through the mercy of God, friendly hands were able to lift into a boat the unconscious form which a few minutes ago was bright with young life.

Presently they could rejoice to see breathing restored; she was resting quietly, and then she began to realize how that she had been on the very threshold of eternity. Solemn were the thoughts that pressed on all amidst our thanksgiving, while a special gravity was in the young heart of her, so recently snatched from death. These were words that fell from her lips: "Oh, the agony of mind I felt when I saw no escape from drowning, and I did not know where I was going. Oh! I shall never forget it—never may I forget it!"

And why should not this incident that spoke so loudly to my young friend have a voice for you, dear reader? Will you not let it bring to you the moment, which may be much nearer than you think, that shall usher you into the presence of God? Who can tell the dreadful agony of facing that moment with no assurance of acceptance, but, on the contrary, with a fearful looking for of the judgment that follows death. For "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Are you content to drift on to that inevitable hour, without thought, or, it may be, with putting thought away because it is unwelcome?

God, who in your heart you dread, my reader, loves you, pities you, and sends you warnings to disturb your false peace, so that you may find true rest in His own love, through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray you, do not put these things off till you, too, have to face death, and then learn by awful experience what it is to have no hope. J.

Justification and New Creation.

GOD justifies all who believe in His Son, and all who believe in His Son are, by God's power, a new creation in Christ.

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24), the believer is accounted by God as a righteous person, and is no longer regarded as a sinner in his guilt; his sins are pardoned, and he is free from every charge, and stands before God a free man. Being in Christ, the believer is by the work of God a new creation. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17); he is in Christ, who is risen from among the dead, and who lives beyond death; he is in Christ, who has borne the judgment due to sin, and has died because of it, and who now lives beyond judgment. The believer is before God a new creation, having the life of Christ communicated to him in the power of Christ's resurrection.

JUSTIFICATION.

In order to our having peace with God as once guilty sinners, we need to be built up in His grace in justifying us. God justifies the sinner from his sins, God justifies the ungodly; and He does so on the ground of the sinner's belief of His word. By this truth our hearts are made strong in God, and we are taken out of the misery of trying to get rid of our sins in order to merit God's favour, and out of the hopelessness of trying to justify ourselves by our works. Our good works do not come into account until after our justification. All that we may do, before we believe, is absolutely worthless, for until we believe, we are in the relation only of the

guilty to our Judge; we are justified by God on our faith.

God has, in His grace, laid down in His word the terms upon which He justifies the ungodly.

ON GOD'S SIDE.	ON MAN'S SIDE.
God has set forth Jesus Christ "a Mercy Seat, through faith in His blood..to declare..His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." (See Rom. iii. 25, 26.)	A man's faith is counted to him by God for righteousness, and God counts the righteousness "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him [God] who justifieth the ungodly." (See Rom. iv. 5.)

The Lord Jesus was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, and God's righteousness is shown by the death His Son suffered for sinners, by the judgment He bore, and the wrath He endured on account of sin; and it is shown also by God raising up from among the dead the Substitute for sinners, after He had satisfied every claim of divine righteousness in respect of sin by His death.

On man's side there is nothing to be done by the guilty sinner in the way of righteousness. All that he can do is to cast himself in his guilt upon the work which Jesus has accomplished; and all who trust God and believe in Jesus, by whom the righteousness of God has been magnified, are justified by God on the ground of what has been done, and done for ever, by Christ.

When a sinner believes God, God justifies that sinner, and he is absolutely justified. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39); *all* persons who believe, whoever they may be, are justified by God from *all* things, whatever these may be. On our side it is not a question of much faith, or little faith, but of faith in God. We must have, each one of us, real dealing with God for ourselves about our sins, and about Christ who died for us. Historic faith is not saving faith: "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. x. 10.)

Obviously every man's faith is his own faith. We cannot believe God for one another; faith is a matter entirely between ourselves and our God. And on God's side, when He sees in us this faith, He Himself justifies us, and as God is the Justifier, the justification is absolute, for it is divine. No creature, neither man nor devil, can interfere in respect of this great work of God for us. "It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" (Rom. viii. 33, 34.)

Let us emphasize the fact that God justifies the believer absolutely, and that the believer is cleared from every charge that could be laid against him, the measure of the clearance being the perfection of Christ's work on the cross in putting away sins, and the glory of God the Father in raising Him up from the dead.

Now, we say, as we are built up in this grace of God in justifying us, we have peace with God. We have nothing to fear from God; we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 2, 11.)

NEW CREATION.

Not only does God justify the guilty sinner who believes, and for ever free him from his guilt, God also new-creates the believer: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"—or, "there is a new creation." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

We sin by nature, and hence are sinners; but, in addition to the fact of our sinning, we have a sinful nature, and this the Scripture teaches is dead to God. Life Godwards will never arise from it. We may conceive a guilty man allowed a fresh chance, and sent out into the world to try to become a different person; but when the guilty man has died, all probation, all testing is over for him. God declares of us, as natural men, that we are dead. There is no exception to this state, any more than there is to the sinning of men; hence there is no probation for man now—he is not only a creature who commits sinful acts, he is a sinner, dead in his nature to God. The Scripture speaks both of our acts and of our nature.

FALLEN MAN'S ACTS BEFORE GOD.	FALLEN MAN'S STATE BEFORE GOD
"*All have sinned.*" (*Rom.* iii. 23.)	"*All were dead.*" (*2 Cor.* v. 14.)

We can suppose a thief being forgiven for stealing, or a blasphemer for blasphemy, but we cannot conceive the root-principle of evil which produced the theft or the blasphemy being forgiven. We pardon our child who has done evil, but we cannot pardon or wish

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to pardon, the principle in him that led to the evil doing. Now God pardons our offences, but He does not—nay, He could not as the Holy One—pardon the root-principle of sin in us. Life to God will never, can never, arise out of this root-principle. God says of man, as a fallen creature, that he is dead, and God's gracious way of deliverance for man, as dead to Himself, is to give man life in Christ, who is risen from the dead, and who lives to God Himself.

Let us place together the old and the new—the state, which is ours as born into the world, and the state into which we are placed by God as believers:—

THE OLD.	THE NEW.
Dead through the offence of our father Adam. (Rom. v. 15.)	"Alive from the dead.....In Christ." (Rom. vi. 13, 11.)
"Dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1.)	"God....even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." (Eph. ii. 4, 5.)

Life from out of the dead, life after death, life after the judgment due to sin has been borne, and the root-principle of sin has been condemned, is here presented. The believer has a new life in Christ, and is no longer dead to God, as he was before he believed, and this life comes to him from Christ risen; it is life after death—a life, therefore, which is altogether of a new character and nature from that which he received at his birth into this world. Life from Christ risen, comes to us from Him after He had died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification. This life from Him is outside the world, outside sin, outside all the evil that is in the world through the first Adam's disobedience. And being partaker in this life in Christ, the believer is a new creation.

Upon the absolute security of this position we do not enlarge. We are perfectly secure; being justified by God from all things, yet we may say, having life in Christ, who has died for us, and who lives to die no more, is more than security! God shows us that we are His in Christ, who lives to Him in the bright glory on high, having left this world by the door of death.

The practical result of our being in Christ, and a new creation, is very great.

As Christ risen from the dead lives *to God*, so is the believer exhorted, being in Christ, to live *to God*. (Rom. vi. 10, 11.)

The believer is exhorted to yield himself *to God* as alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness *to God*. (v. 13.)

As those who live, believers are told they "should not henceforth live unto themselves, but *unto Him* who died for them and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 15.)

Here are motives of Christian life distinct from every other that ever were on the earth before Christ rose up from among the dead, and went back to God. The kingdom—if we may so term it—wherein these motives have a place, is that of life beyond death, and where the power of sin and the world cannot enter. Too well does the believer know that sin is in him, the flesh is in him, and that, though of him God has said "there is a new creation," he is in the world, subject to temptation. He knows, too, that he has his old nature as before, but because of what is true concerning him in Christ, he is to live out the truth practically—he is to live to God, to yield himself as one who, by the power of God, is alive from the dead in Christ.

The believer is not only to walk on earth in the joy and liberty of justification, but he is to witness, by his ways and character, that in Christ he is a new creation.

FAITH IN GOD.

FAITH in God's word is submission to and acceptance of the word. In every-day life it is often impossible to get people to believe facts, simply because such facts are beyond the conception of those addressed; but when the fact presented is backed up with the personal assurance of the speaker, though it be not understood, it will be believed or disbelieved, according as the truthfulness and reliability of the speaker be accepted. Now in the things of God, as expressed in His word, we are met with the character of God. Do we, let us ask ourselves, believe God? Is God true? We may believe when we cannot understand. "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.)

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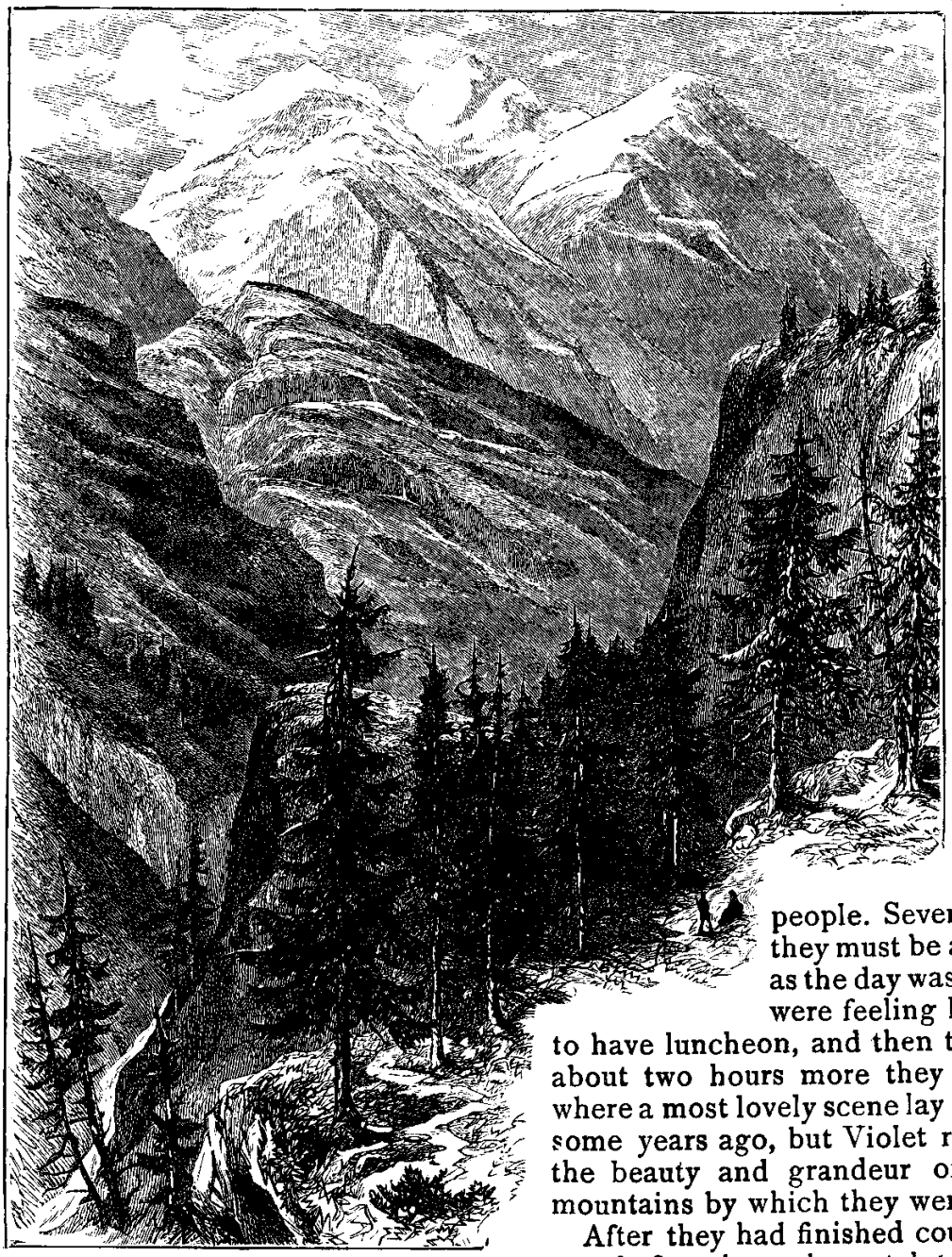

THE SIDE OF A SWISS MOUNTAIN.

AN ADVENTURE IN SWITZERLAND.

I AM going to tell you a true story, and I want you to answer the questions I am going to ask you about the story.

One evening in June, a young girl, whom I will call Violet, and two boys, Gerald and Hugh, who were staying at an hotel near some beautiful Swiss mountains, settled that the next day they would go up one of them and see the view from the top. The morning was fine, and off they started, being bidden by their parents to be back not later than half-past six in the evening. When they came to the foot of the mountain they thought it would be a much quicker way, besides giving them more fun, if they went straight up instead of following the winding path. At first they all enjoyed the climb very much, but after a time it became rather tiring work — however, they agreed that it was very pleasant to be going a different way from other people. Several times they thought they must be almost at the top, but as the day was wearing on, and they were feeling hungry, they decided to have luncheon, and then to rest a little. After about two hours more they reached the summit, where a most lovely scene lay before them. It was some years ago, but Violet remembers distinctly, the beauty and grandeur of the snow-covered mountains by which they were surrounded.

After they had finished counting the mountain tops before them, the watch told them it was much later than they had thought it was, and taking a look round, they came to the conclusion that the side of the mountain opposite to that which they had come up, would be the shorter way home. They hoped to save time, but in a little while the descent became very rough work even for the boys, while Violet could get only very slowly down the steep places. Presently it became smoother, so they all set off running, for it was

getting late. As they ran, they heard someone shouting, to which they paid no attention, but the shouts being repeated, they looked round and saw a man running rapidly after them, and calling eagerly to them. They waited. In a few minutes he came up to them, almost breathless, and when he could speak he said, "Oh, it was well you stopped when I called to you, for in a few minutes more you would have gone over the precipice below us, and then nothing could have saved you from being killed at once." The man spoke in French, but they all understood enough to know the narrow escape they had had of death, when not at all thinking it was near.

Children, death is not likely to be brought before you in quite such an unexpected way, but are you ready for it? Two of the three of whom I am telling you, knowing that they were sinners, had asked the Lord Jesus Christ to wash their sins away in His own precious blood, which cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John i. 7.) One of them had often heard about salvation, but he had never asked God to make him fit for heaven. Dear children, ask yourselves, "Which of these three am I like?"

The man, who under God's guidance, had so kindly saved the lives of these brothers and sister, told them they had wandered very far from home, and that he must go to his cottage and get a lantern, as it would be dark before they could reach the foot of the mountain.

It soon became dark, and part of their way led through a wood, and glad they were of the guide and his lantern. By-and-by they saw lights in the distance, and then heard shouting, which the guide, familiar with the different mountain cries, told them meant, that people were searching for them and wanted to know if they were unhurt. He shouted, "All are safe!" and in a little while the young wanderers were with their parents, who, as they welcomed them back, and heard their story, could not be thankful enough to their Heavenly Father for having shielded their children from the great danger to which they had been exposed. I need scarcely add that our young friends did not attempt this kind of mountain climbing again.

Now I think you will agree with me that you may be hastening on, not knowing whither you are going, very much in the manner of our three young friends. And my question is, Is the path you are taking a safe one? Will it lead you at last to be for ever with the Lord Jesus in heaven? or, will it bring you to the judgment? This paper is a voice calling upon you to stop, and I trust you will heed it, as did our young friends the kind Swiss peasant, whose voice saved their lives.

Suppose, after the man had told them of their danger, Violet, Gerald, and Hugh had refused to go with him, and be guided by his lantern? Whose fault would it have been if they had been lost? And whose fault will it be if you should at last fail to enter heaven? I think the lantern the guide carried, is like the Bible, which shows us the way to heaven, and which those who love it can say "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm cxix. 105), and I pray you may be guided by God's word in the right way, and that your lives may be spent to the glory of God.

D. H. E. B.

THE LITTLE IRISH GIRL'S PRAYER.

AILEEN is only six years old, and not very big for her age. Her mother loves her very dearly, for she is a bright, sweet, little girl, and makes sunshine in her home. And it is no wonder that she is a good, pleasant child, for she knows the love of God to her, and she loves Him back again.

I have never met this little girl, so you will ask how it is I know so much about her. Well, a friend of mine in Ireland told me all this, and also gave me a copy of a little prayer that this dear child wrote, which is now lying on the table beside me.

Aileen never meant any one but God to see her prayer; but she somehow dropped the piece of paper on which she had written it, and her mother picked it up. It was on part of an old newspaper wrapper, and the dear mother's eyes filled with tears as she read the large, irregular writing, and under-

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stood for the first time what was in her little daughter's heart, making her so unselfish, gentle, and thoughtful.

This is what Aileen had written :—

"My own dear God, I love You, and forgive me for being bold, I am very sorry. God, I do love You, and I wish I was in heaven, and when I die take me up to You."

You see, she is only a very little child, and does not know perhaps all you do about God's way of saving sinners. She does not say a word in her prayer about Jesus having died for her. She may not have been taught much about Him, but she has anyhow heard enough of God's love and goodness to make her love Him back again, and to long to be with Him in His bright home.

Let us consider what she says in her little prayer, and you ask yourself how far you can say what she does. Now, to begin with, could you call God your "own dear God," as this little Irish child does? Oh! what a wonderful thing to be able thus to claim Him as your own. Like David, who says, "Oh! God, Thou art *my* God." Is He not a God worth having? so strong, so wise, so loving!

Then Aileen says, "I love you." Like King David, again, who exclaims, "I *love* the Lord!" Do you really love God? I remember very well the time when I did not, and what a shock it gave me one day when I awoke to the fact that I should not be even happy in heaven, because I had no love for God! Ah! that is many years ago, and I am so glad now that I can say with Aileen that I do love Him who first loved me, and that I know it will be just fulness of joy to be by-and-by in His presence. But how is it with you, my child?

Then our little Aileen owns herself a sinner before God, and, believing in His love and grace, she asks His forgiveness. Have you ever done this? Have you turned to the Lord, simply and truly, and told Him that you know yourself to be a naughty child, as Aileen says, in her Irish way, "*very bold*"?

I daresay you are bigger and older than she is, and have done many more naughty things than she has. Have you ever, like her, been "*very sorry*" yet?

I know a youth who, when he was but seven years old, felt the burden of his sins so heavy, and yet he was what people would call "such a good little boy." But Willie looked at himself in the light of God's presence much as Aileen does, and could not bear to feel how unfit he was for His holy eye, so he crept away under a stack, and prayed to God to have mercy on him, and God did have mercy, and saved him, and made his heart glad, and to-day he is a rejoicing Christian, seeking to bring others to Jesus, the Saviour.

Aileen is not afraid to again repeat, "*I do love you.*" Surely God has, by His Holy Spirit, made her to understand that, if He hates sin, He loves the sinner; so, instead of running away to hide from God, like Adam and Eve did when they found out they were sinners, this little child flies to God with all her sins, and, as it were, hides in Him. She is not afraid then to ask Him to welcome her into His bright heaven when she leaves this world.

I wish I could tell her about Jesus coming to fetch His redeemed ones home, for that is a far more joyous hope than the thought of dying so as to get to heaven. You see if we die, though we may be ever so happy ourselves, we must leave some sad hearts behind us to grieve over the empty places; but, at the Lord's coming, all that are His will be caught up together to meet Him in the air, and there will be no sad partings. When Jesus went away He promised He would come back again to take His people to His Father's house. And they have been waiting for Him ever since. It is a blessed hope, for they long to see Him, "whom absent they love," and to be with Him for ever. We do not know how soon that glad day may be, but He hath said, "Surely, I come quickly."

"It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,
When sunlight thro' darkness and shadow is breaking,
That Jesus will come in the fulness of glory,
To receive from the world His own.

"Oh, joy! oh, delight! should we go without dying;
No sickness, no sadness, no dread, and no crying;
Caught up through the clouds with our Lord, into glory,
When Jesus receives His own."

When Aileen's mother read her little girl's

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prayer she was terribly afraid God was going to take her darling away from her. But I hope myself very much that if Jesus does not soon come, Aileen may grow up to be a holy, happy Christian, living to serve the only and true God, who has already won her young heart to Himself, and waiting for His Son from heaven, even "Jesus who has saved her from the wrath to come." D. & A. C.

The Stronghold of the Priests.

IN our two previous numbers we took a brief glance at Wiclif and his times, and at his great work of giving to the English people the word of God in their mother tongue. The Bible taught Wiclif how evil is Rome's doctrine of Transubstantiation; and we saw how his rejection of that teaching brought him under the condemnation of the Pope, and how that the powers of the Church at last commanded the burning of his bones. The doctrine of Transubstantiation is the very stronghold of the priests. Demolish this belief and the whole system of the Romish priesthood perishes; and such being the case, we shall do well to learn a little about it.

The true Christian assuredly confesses that his faith stands on the word of God, and his attitude towards that word should be such as to ensure for him, a like commendation to that bestowed by the apostle upon the Thessalonians, on whose behalf he ceaselessly thanked God, because when they received the word of God, which they had heard of him and those with him, they "received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God." (See 1 Thess. ii. 13.)

The apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost, communicated the word of God to men in early days, and those men received that word not as the word of apostles, "but as it is in truth—the word of God." Two test questions for us in our day are: "Do we receive that word as the word of God?" "Do we refuse to receive as of divine authority any other word?"

Now the church of Rome teaches regarding the sacrament of the Lord's supper, that after the priest has pronounced the words of consecration, the bread and the wine cease to exist, and that in their place comes the true body, blood, and bones, and also the soul—yes, and the divinity of Christ. This Church affirms that the very same body which was crucified, buried, rose again, and ascended into heaven, is there, but under the appearance of bread and wine. "Are we to believe, that the God of all glory is under the appearance of our corporeal food?" "Yes," is the answer; "as we must also believe that the same God of all glory suffered death under the appearance of a criminal on the cross." "What is the mass?" The answer is—"The sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, which are really present under the appearance of bread and wine; and are offered to God, by the priest for the living and the dead." "Is the mass a different sacrifice from that of the cross?" "No," runs the reply; "because the same Christ, who once offered Himself a bleeding victim to His heavenly Father on the cross, continues to offer Himself, in an unbloodly manner by the hands of the priests on our altars."

The catechism, from which these questions and answers are quoted, puts in a popular way the terms of the belief expressed by the Council of Trent, held in 1545-7 which terms are as follows: "This holy Synod doth now declare it anew, that by the consecration of the bread and of the wine, a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood; which conversion is, by the holy Catholic Church, suitably and properly called Transubstantiation."

Thus it is claimed that the Romish priest has the power to convert, or change, natural bread and wine by consecration into the very body and blood of Christ Himself.

Numbers of our forefathers were burned, or otherwise martyred, in defence of the truth of the Scriptures as opposed to this doctrine, and since in our day the priests, and the doctrines of Rome are spreading in this country, we should be thoroughly alive to the real root of the matter. Probably at our

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THE BURNING OF FRANKESH, BLAND, MIDDLETON, AND SHERTERDEN, IN 1555, AT CANTERBURY.

very doors are those who bring the error into our families, and to the hearts of our children, though they do so by subtle means, and under cover of a name which is Protestant.

Our readers have the Scriptures in their hands, and if they have read them, they know that there is not one single word which can by any means be interpreted to show that any priest at any time has power to turn any bread and wine into God or Christ. "It cannot be proved by Scripture," says a Romish bishop; and quoting from a cardinal we get the acknowledgment that "that part which the gospel hath not expressed—namely, the conversion of the bread into the body and blood of Christ—we have expressly received from the Church."

However, there are words of Scripture which

are used by Rome, and by others who do not call themselves Papists, to prove the doctrine, and they are these—"This is My body" (Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 22; Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 26), words which, we know, Jesus spake at the institution of the Lord's Supper. It is taught that the Lord by these words actually changed the bread and the wine of the Passover into Himself on that occasion; and further, that when He said to His apostles, "This do in remembrance of Me" (Luke xxii. 19), He made them priests in order to do what He had done!

We may well stand amazed at the boldness which thus wrests the plain meaning of our Lord's words, turning them into a denial of His atonement on the cross, and into a rejection of the truth, that He offered up Himself once for all to God. And we may, indeed, mourn how that the loving appeal of Jesus to His own to remember Him, in the partaking of the emblems of His body broken and His blood shed, has become forced into an authority to constitute His apostles able to change bread and wine into His very body.

"We are sanctified," says the Scripture, "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all"; and again, "This Man [Jesus], after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God .... For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." The work of Christ effected on the cross, being a perfect work, was effected once for all, and the results of that gracious work are perpetual—He sat down *for ever*, because He had perfected *for ever*, those who are sanctified. Therefore, those for whom He died are secure for ever; and further, since the sins of His people are forgiven, there can be no more offering for sin, for "where remission of these is [sins and iniquities], there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. x. 12, 14; 17, 18.)

There are many of the true people of God in the Romish faith, and such are secured for eternity by Christ's work for them on the cross, and it should make us mourn to think of God's own people living apart from the peace and joy in Christ, which is their portion in Him; but far, far more sad is it to consider the terrible wrong this doctrine does to Christ Himself! Thereby the minds of millions are taken off from Christ's cross to consider the sacrifice of the mass, and instead of believing on Jesus, who has finished the work His Father gave Him to do, they believe that their priests are making God favourable to them, by sacrificing to God the bread and wine of the Lord's supper, which they assert they change into Christ, or into God Himself.

How did such doctrines find their entrance into Christendom? By degrees! Nothing is said respecting priests in connection with the breaking of bread in the Bible. In the history of the Acts of the Apostles we find that the early Christians broke bread from house to house, and that their custom was to come together to break bread as disciples. (Acts ii. 41-47; xx. 7.) The church in Corinth so far forgot the solemnity of the feast that they were rebuked by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xi.), who reminded them that he had told them what the Lord's Supper really was—the remembrance of Christ in His death.

We may form an idea of how simple the worship of early Christians was from the words of the heathen historian Pliny, who says, "The disciples held their meetings on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, and sang praises to Christ, and after this they met again to partake together of a simple and innocent meal." But, as time went on, instead of the disciples meeting together to break bread, as we read was the case in Troas, "the ministers alone, instead of the congregation, took the charge of distributing the elements" (Dean Stanley.) About a hundred years after Christ's death, we read of the innovation of water being brought in, together with the bread and wine, and also of a *president*. Justin Martyr thus speaks of these presidents: "The tried men of our elders preside over us, who have obtained that honour, not by purchase, but by character," which statement proves they were not at that time looked on as a priestly class. Some years later it had become the rule, in the place of mutual participation round one

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common table, to have the distribution of the bread and wine "from no other hands but those of the presidents." (Tertullian.) But though this was so, the idea of the priestly class had not in those times prevailed in Christendom.

Some time after the removal of the apostles, a sanctity became attached to the actual bread and the wine used at the Lord's Supper. "We invoke the Holy Spirit," writes Irenæus (A.D. 178), "that He would make the sacrifice (the bread and the cup of blessing) both the bread, the body of Christ, and the cup the blood of Christ, in order that they who partake of these antitypes may obtain remission of their sins and life eternal." Here is a great advance, or descent—a great advance towards Transubstantiation, a great descent from the loving memory of Jesus by such as rejoiced in His love and salvation. However, coming so far on as A.D. 406, we hear it said by Chrysostom, "The nature of bread still remains in it."

These quotations will suffice to indicate that it was by degrees only that the early simplicity and teaching of the Christian faith were departed from. We have seen the *president* arise, and then the president become a *priest;* the plain bread of the Lord's Supper regarded as so unlike bread, that it was necessary to say of it, "the *nature of bread still remains* in it," and the act of breaking the bread and drinking the wine in remembrance of the Lord termed a *sacrifice.*

Had we space to add more, we could show how that, as ages passed on, it came to be accepted and believed that he who distributed the bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper, was not an ordinary Christian man, but a *priest,* and that that the *priest* changed the bread into the *body* of Christ, and offered that body a *sacrifice* to God.

Now it was in defence of the truth of God, and in opposition to the errors "received from the church" in reference to the Lord's Supper, that so many of our forefathers were burned or otherwise destroyed.

"Touching the mass, what say you?" enquired the learned doctor who was examining one: "Believe you, that when the priest hath consecrated the host, our Lord is there as well, and in as ample sort, as He was, hanging on the cross?"

The martyr replied: "No, verily; but I believe that Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, as appeareth in Heb. x. I hold your mass for none other but a false and counterfeited service, set up by Satan, and retained by his ministers, by which you do annihilate the precious blood of Christ, and His oblation once made of His own body."

This brave soldier of Christ was so terribly punished on the rack, before he was put to death, that one of his shoulders was drawn higher than the other, and his neck was so wrenched on one side that he could not move himself. In this state of suffering he was laid upon a bed, and then wrote out his confession, from which we have taken the words quoted.

With others he was condemned to be tied to a post, and to be afterwards strangled, a ball being placed in his mouth to prevent the people hearing his words. Thus these men were led to their death, crying aloud to the people as best they could, that they died for Christ.

We have space only to make a reference to the deaths of Frankesh, vicar of Rolvenden; Bland, parson of Adisham, and two others, Sherterden and Middleton, who were burned together at Canterbury in 1555.

Bland, when before his judges, who had made an appeal that he should not stick to his own judgment, but humble himself to the holy church, which, said they, "hath determined that after consecration there remaineth no bread, but the natural body and blood of Christ," answered, "Master doctor, if we take to humbling ourselves, then must we know by the Scriptures, that the same church determined nothing but according to the Scriptures; as this is not, therefore I do not believe any such transubstantiation, nor ever will, God willing!"

On another occasion an examiner, speaking of the probable mouse eating the consecrated bread, said, "The substance of Christ's body doth not fill the mouse's belly; for although it doth receive the outward forms

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of bread and wine, yet it doth not receive the substance inwardly, but without violation. And a mouse doth not eat the body of Christ, to speak properly; for it doth not feed it spiritually, or corporally, as it doth man, because the mouse doth not receive it to any inducement of immortality to the flesh." To this Bland answered that the mouse will live with consecrated bread, and that, according to the argument, both the unworthy receive and the mouse eat of it to the same effect!

Bland knew that his death was settled on, and he said, "If I thought not my death to be at hand, I would answer you all the rest. . . . . I submit myself to our Saviour Jesus Christ, and His holy word, desiring you in the bowels of Christ to do the same."

He, with the other three, was condemned "As guilty of most detestable heresies, and as an obstinate, impenitent sinner, refusing penitently to return to the lap and unity of the holy mother Church." This condemnation carried with it deliverance to the secular power, which meant death. So these four men were tied to two stakes, and were burned for Christ's sake, and for the defence of the truth of God's word.

The following sentences are taken from Bland's prayer before his death: "Thou seest, O Lord, that whereas I might live in worldly wealth to worship false gods and honour Thy enemy, I chose rather the torments of this body, and loss of this my life, and have counted all things but vile dust and dung, that I might win Thee; which death is more dear to me than thousands of gold and silver . . . Thou rememberest, O Lord, that I am dust, and not able to do anything that is good . . . . give me strength against this element, that as it is to my sight most irksome and terrible, so to my mind it may be, at Thy commandment, as an obedient servant sweet and pleasant; and through the strength of Thy Holy Spirit I may pass through the strength of this fire into Thy bosom. . . . O sweet Saviour, spread Thy wings over me . . . conduct me unto everlasting life. Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit; Lord Jesus, receive my soul. So be it."

Texts for the Month.

WE will this month look for some texts that teach us concerning the Lord's work wrought out for sinful men on the cross, showing how perfectly He finished the work He undertook, and how perfectly His work has put away the sins of all who put their trust in Him. These truths are of the utmost importance, and we trust our young friends will, while searching out the Scriptures, remember the words of the texts, and have the truths contained in them written in their hearts.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
F	1	The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world			
S	2	Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners			
S	3	**God...sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**			
M	4	I came down from heaven...to do... the will of Him that sent Me			
Tu	5	The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all			
W	6	He hath made Him to be sin for us			
Th	7	Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God			
F	8	I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do			
S	9	Jesus...said, It is finished			
S	10	**By the which will we are sanctified through the offering.....Jesus Christ**			
M	11	Him hath God exalted...for to give...forgiveness of sins			
Tu	12	Having made peace through the blood of His cross			
W	13	He is our peace			
Th	14	Whom God hath set forth...a propitiation through faith in His blood			
F	15	Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins			
S	16	His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree			
S	17	**Who gave Himself for our sins**			
M	18	By Himself purged our sins			
Tu	19	Washed us from our sins			
W	20	The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin			
Th	21	Your sins are forgiven			
F	22	Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more			
S	23	How much more shall the blood of Christ...purge your conscience?			
S	24	**Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God**			
M	25	Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust			
Tu	26	Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law			
W	27	Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins			
Th	28	There is...no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus			
F	29	None other name under heaven ...whereby we must be saved			
S	30	Stand fast...in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free...			
S	31	**Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven**			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

SOWING AND REAPING.

SOWING AND REAPING.

WHEN it pleased God to save my never-dying soul, and to give me perfect peace respecting the forgiveness of my sins, through faith in the work of the cross for me, I longed to see others brought to know the gospel, and took every opportunity of speaking to whom I could, of the salvation there is in Christ.

A poor old man and his wife, who went into the country in the summer to earn sufficient to keep them in the winter, worked on our farm in harvest time, lodging in the barn at night. They were very clean people, and they did their washing and mending on Sunday afternoons, so as to be ready for the coming week. I longed that these poor people should know the love of Jesus, and, as they always took themselves to one spot for their Sunday work—down a lane some short distance from my cottage—I had no difficulty in finding them, and with Bible in hand went to them, saying, "I am come to read the Bible to you, if you will let me." "Oh, come, ma'am," gladly said the old woman, and they began to put away their washing. Assuring them I would not stop long, I read about the resurrection, and told them they would have to die, and that they would rise again, and stand before God, pardoned or unpardoned. They listened with great attention, and thanked me for reading to them.

The next Sunday I started off to them again with my Bible, and as soon as they saw me coming the old man got up, and taking his great coat, spread it out upon the bank for me to sit upon, both of them greeting me with, "Welcome, ma'am! Welcome, ma'am! do sit you down, and read to us."

How delighted I was to be received in this way! Poor old people! They drank in the word of God, the one as eagerly as the other, and began to ask many questions, so many that I could not answer them, for at that time I had not been converted to God more than two years, and all I knew of the gospel was that it gave peace with God through the blood of the cross. I felt I just needed to be always looking up at Jesus, at God's right hand, seated there for me, a poor saved sinner.

I continued to go down the lane to the old couple every Sunday afternoon when the weather was fine; and when it was wet, they came to our kitchen, and heard the Scriptures read to them, and it would have done my readers good to have seen their gratitude. Seeing that God had opened their hearts, I took them to some gospel services, and as the old woman was afraid the people would be looking at her, as she said she was not tidy enough to go to such a place, she was set up with a bonnet and shawl, and she and her husband heard the word preached a few times.

Neither of them said they were really saved, but we were assured God had put His grace into their hearts, although they could not acknowledge the wonders of His love to them in saving their souls. They remained on the farm some six weeks, and left our neighbourhood after harvest.

That part of my story which has to do with the reaping has now to come. Nearly twenty years had passed away since the incidents just narrated occurred, when, a short time ago, one Sunday morning, I was passing down a road near my cottage, and observed an aged man sitting under a large tree, reading a book. I said to the friend with me, "Let us pass over and see what book he has." The man took no heed of our coming, his head was bent over the book, so I walked up close to him, and glancing over his shoulder saw that it was the New Testament.

"You love the word of God, do you not?" said I, interrupting his reading.

He looked up, and, fixing his eyes earnestly on me, exclaimed, "Yes, ma'am, I do; and surely you are the lady who taught me to read it, down in yonder lane."

"Where then is your wife?" I enquired.

"She is gone to glory," said he, "just a little first, you know, and it won't be long for me before I follow her. She died so happy that I could not fret for her."

The man was bent down with age. He had again found some work in the neighbourhood, and thus we met once more.

Oh! what joy it is to see the seed growing up into everlasting life! God's precious book was a treasure to him indeed. And so it is to me, dear reader, for in passing through many deep trials the love of Jesus and His blessed company have always been with me. Will you not have Him for a Friend for yourself? Fellow-Christian, sow beside all waters. God will water His own precious seed, and it shall spring up, and bring forth fruit, some thirty, some fifty, and some a hundredfold. F. T.

CHANGED.

IT was not always so with Michael, but changes do come, and, when they are for the better, it is a good thing indeed. Had he been asked two weeks earlier to "take a hand" at cards for a pair of shoes, he would have consented at once, but now, through the grace of God, he was resolved to have nothing more to do with card-playing. He was not particularly well stocked with shoes, it is true, but he had come to the conclusion that it was better to wait till he could go with the money in his hand to the shoe-shop and buy them, than to play a game at cards in the hope of winning a pair.

Michael's friend, who had asked him to "take a hand for a pair of shoes," was scarcely prepared for a strong, manly, healthy "No" to his question; but Michael gave him frankly to understand that he had done with cards for good and all. "No more cards," he said; "I've served the devil long enough," and certainly he had, and that in a great many more ways than in playing at cards. But whatever power the "king of hearts," or the whisky bottle, or bad language had had over him in the past, their power and government were gone, and their reign at an end. For Michael had now met with the Lord, and had received Him in his heart; and the Lord had given him of the living water, and had satisfied his soul, and now, instead of blasphemy, prayer and praise were upon his lips.

His old companions said, he was setting himself up for something, as if he were better than other people; and that he was thinking himself very good, but that it would not last, and other such familiar speeches.

But what led to this change, and how did it come about? Well, one day, two large railway carts had drawn up on the village common, both well loaded, and willing hands were soon at work, relieving them of their contents. The loafers scoffed, and some of the respectable people said, "It was a shame that any such thing should come to the place. It was a disgrace, indeed it was, and they wondered that any decent body would go near it."

Had it been a travelling circus, or a wild beast show, there would have been nothing very objectionable, but it was neither, and objections were abundant.

After the carts were unloaded, if you had taken stock of what lay upon the village green, you would have seen several long poles, and a whole host of irons, and planks, boxes, and bags large and small, several coils of rope, and a number of bundles of canvas. In a short space of time, poles, ropes, canvas and pins were joined together, irons and planks were transformed into seats, and, when all was completed, to the satisfaction of those interested, there stood, ready for service, and for usually the Lord's use, a summer pavilion, called "a gospel-tent."

The canvas cathedral was duly opened, and some of the people came to hear, others to see. A young man who liked the service, invited Michael to the tent. Accepting the invitation, he accompanied this young man. The gospel address being finished, a meeting for enquirers was announced; the young man hurried away, but Michael remained, and that night he learned in his soul's happy experience that, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And this was how the great change in his life came about.

His first night at the tent was his last night in the devil's service. When God works who can hinder Him?

It is now some years since Michael came to the tent, but it is only a few weeks since we saw him and worked with him in the gospel. E. C.

A WORLD GUILTY, AND A WORLD LOVED.

HISTORY was about the only subject a certain gentleman cared to read—princes, parliaments, and people, wars, and rumours of wars, had taken full possession of his mind: indeed, the past seemed to interest him more than the present, and as for the future—he was no prophet.

One day a Christian friend persuaded this lover of history to read a small piece of ancient lore, about which he was ignorant. It required a good deal of coaxing to get him to handle the book containing this portion of neglected history, but at last he said—"Well, just to please you, I'll read it this once."

It was an ancient letter, addressed, "*To all that be in Rome*"; but, as he read, he found it concerned all men. "*There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*" (Rom. iii. 10-12.) There was no mistake about this; histories had affected him in an indirect way only, but this was evidently the portrait of every man, for it was written, that "*all the world may become guilty before God*" (19).

He took in the details of this portrait:—

Eyes: "*There is no fear of God before their eyes*" (18).

Mouth: "*Their mouth is full of cursing*" (14).

Lips: "*The poison of asps is under their lips*" (13).

Tongue: "*With their tongues they have used deceit.*"

Throat: "*Their throat is an open sepulchre.*"

Feet: "*Their feet are swift to shed blood*" (15).

Yes, the portrait included himself, for it said, "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" (ver. 23). He had never seen a universal history of the human race compressed into so small a compass: yet, certainly it was an epitome of all he had ever read—sin—sin—sin—sin. "*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight*" (ver. 20).

When his friend called, he asked what he thought of the book.

"Think," said he, "why the picture is awful; it has haunted me like a nightmare!"

"Will you try another portion?"

"If you promise it shall be brighter."

"Certainly," said the proposer of the reading-lesson; "you have read the third of Romans, now read the third of John."

As soon as he was alone, the lover of history took the Bible, and found the chapter named.

"Another bit of history," he thought, as he read the first few sentences; but the third verse staggered him. "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Evidently, thought he, Nicodemus, to whom the words were spoken, did not understand them, and our friend was glad that he had asked for an explanation; it was just what he himself wanted. The fourteenth verse seemed a little plainer—"*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.*" He remembered the old story of Israel's disobedience, and how that, because of their sin, all the people were dying, and again, how that all who looked to the appointed remedy did not die. And here was a parallel.

"Jesus was lifted up. On the cross," mused the dear man, "that if I, bitten by sin, and dying, look to Him, I shall be saved and shall not die."

Then he read the sixteenth verse. "*God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" And the Holy Spirit showed him how "*all the world,*" declared to be "*guilty before God*" in Rom. iii. 19, was loved, notwithstanding all, loved by God, who gave not a brazen serpent, but His own beloved Son, who died instead of the guilty and condemned world, "*that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*"

"Oh, that sixteenth verse," said he, when his friend called again, "if I could only believe that it was true towards me."

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"You believe the first passage you read in Romans?"

"That I do, and it makes me wretched."

"The second passage comes to you with the same authority as the first, and if you believe it, it will make you glad. The same divine voice that speaks the one, speaks the other."

He believed God's love to a guilty world, and that Jesus had died for sinners—he believed for himself that Jesus had died for him, that he should not perish, but have everlasting life, and after that, he became a man of one book. Some few months passed, and he was laid aside. Knowing what a book-worm he used to be, a friend called, and said he had brought him some volumes to read.

Taking his Bible from his pillow, he said, "This is all I read now."

The Book of God had been used by the Spirit of God to the salvation of his soul. He had been born of water and the Spirit. What wonder he loved it? W. L.

A WORD OF WARNING.

"WHAT do I believe? that is my own affair; every man has a right to his own opinion." Stay, stay! man has no right to have opinions of his own about his salvation, since "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel." And though man may play the unbeliever here, such hardihood will in the end bring terror and endless misery.

An infidel, who claimed the right of believing what he considered reasonable—that is, who believed what he wished and nothing more—lay moaning upon his deathbed: "I am going—I am going I don't know where." Another dying in the same condition, said, "I am taking a leap in the dark;" whilst others, bold deniers of the Scriptures, have perished in despair.

Some do not like to believe anything which may interfere with their ease and pleasure—they live without the fear of God, and die as careless and indifferent as they lived—they "have no bands in their death." Of such we hear daily, "Died so comfortably; never gave a sigh—just slept away!" But, oh! the unutterable woe of the spirit, when having left the body it discovers the reality of eternity, and begins its endless lamentations. Alas! alas! with how many thousands has it been thus, who are NOW at this very moment in hopeless misery, while their infidel followers on earth scorn or neglect their precious opportunity?

How frequently when the godly fall asleep speaking of Christ, of glory, of happiness, the unbelieving watchers by the bed will whisper, "How his mind wanders; he is delirious! But you know he always had these fancies." And thus they quiet their own guilty consciences, which declare to them, "You know neither the Christ, nor the glory, nor the happiness of this dying one."

Let our readers ponder the true story we are about to relate, for God forbid that in such matters as these we should add one word of fancy to the narrative. A lady, who had often heard, with a jesting spirit, the gospel preached by some poor and simple men, was taken seriously ill, and upon her sick bed became greatly alarmed as to the state of her soul. She longed to be sure she was going to heaven, but knew not whom to seek to tell her of the way. Then she thought of the despised out-of-door preachers, and begged her husband to send for them. In his pride he said he would not have such men in his house, and though his unhappy wife pleaded with him that for love to her soul he would let some one come, who could tell her how she might be saved, he would not yield. He told her she could have the sacrament if she liked, but she knew too well in her inmost soul that no sacraments could take away her sins. At last her agony of soul increased so fearfully, and her cries, "What must I do?" were so terrible, that they became unbearable to her husband, and he bade the doctor stop "the delirium" by administering opiates! A vein was opened—the subtle fluid was injected, and the cries of soul-agony ceased; the moanings, "What must I do to be saved?" were stilled, and the sufferer fell into a deep sleep.

In the very act of death, just as she was

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dying, the hapless lady awaked! and looking round, cried, with a fearful shudder, "Oh, dreadful! oh, horrible!"—and her soul was in eternity.

Do you believe that this was merely the fancy of a disordered brain? Do you think that these thoughts of *sin*, of *judgment*, of *eternity* were delirium?

Be warned, be warned! and while you have health and strength still granted to you use the opportunity to seek and to find pardon and peace through Christ's blood.

God is Light: God is Love.

GOD has been pleased to reveal Himself to man, and to declare His nature to us, so that we may understand what He is. There is, therefore, no excuse for any one, with the word of God before him, to plead ignorance of God, or to say, Since we know not what God is like we cannot know in this life what we shall receive from Him in the next! To say, No one can tell what God is, and how He will deal with man, is but declaring the Bible to be a fable, and God's revelation of Himself a myth.

Now God has been pleased to describe to us what He is in His nature, and He has done so in six short words:—

GOD IS LIGHT. 1 John i. 5.	GOD IS LOVE. 1 John iv. 8.

Not all light, not all love, but both light and love. Were He all light, there would be no hope for sinful man; were He all love, there would not be hatred in Him of sin.

The infidelity of our day, which prevails among professing Protestant Christians, attacks God's very nature, for it practically denies that He is light. It refuses the scripture truth, "In Him is no darkness at all," and asserts that though a man live a bad life and die in his sins, yet he may hope for mercy in God in the future, because of God's love. Since God is love, says the gospel of the wider hope, we may all hope to be saved, simply because God is love.

The wrong against the nature of God which prevailed in former days, practically denied that God is love. It pictured Him as an angry Being, whose severity had to be overcome by the tenderness of the heart of His Son. In Roman Catholic teachings this wrong is intensified, for God is portrayed as being moved towards men not only by the tenderness of the Son of Man, but also by that of a woman—the Virgin Mary!

The truth is, God is both light and love. He will in no way pass by sin, or allow sin in His presence, but in love He has made a way consistent with His holiness for men not only to abide in His presence, but for their being there to His glory—"holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. i. 4.)

In God, says the Scripture, is no darkness at all; therefore to say we have fellowship with God, and yet to walk in darkness, is but to lie against God's very being. God never has tolerated sin, and never will tolerate it. Nevertheless, He loves sinners in their sins, and He loves us because He is love. The motive is His own heart. A man's good works do not induce God to love him, neither do our prayers nor our goodness incline God's heart towards us, for His heart is towards us, sinners though we be, because He is love.

The Scripture which shows us what God is, also shows that in the cross of Christ God has manifested Himself for man as both light and as love.

In the cross of Christ both the light and the love meet,

and thence flow out towards guilty man in divine perfection. In the sufferings, the blood-shedding, and the wrath-bearing of Christ, we behold the light which God is; in the giving up of the Son, in the sending Him to the earth, we behold the love.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) Both the love and the light appear! The love in the sending of His Son, because God is love; the light, in the propitiation of His Son, because He is light. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," witnesses the love; "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" proves the light.

In the cross of Christ God manifests what He is for man; there He reveals Himself for us in our sins and distance from Himself.

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There He has vindicated His own holiness and manifested His own love on the behalf of sinful men! There He has glorified Himself in order unto our salvation as both light and love. Yet men tell us this day they want no suffering Saviour, no dying of God's Son for them, no putting away of their sins by His sacrifice, but instead they are content to dare to face God as they are, sinners though they own themselves to be, since God is love! His love is and must be like Himself: He is Light, and He is Love.

In the propitiation of His Son God has glorified Himself in relation to sin, and He now sets forth His Son as the object of our faith, so that we may come to Him in our sins, and find everlasting forgiveness through the blood of the cross. He asks no great thing of man; He has done the great things Himself. He asks of us our trust in Himself, our trust now, in this life, while Christ is unseen and hidden in the heavens, and before the unseen world becomes seen to us, before we behold the judgment throne, or heaven and hell.

Have we proved God for ourselves in the cross of His Son? Have we found in God perfect love, loving us even in our sins; perfect light, meeting our sins according to His own view and estimate of sin? Happy, then, is our portion. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment." (1 John iv. 18.) God's perfect love has cast out our fear! Let us not doubt, or hesitate, for "he that feareth is not made perfect in love"—he does not stand firm and strong in God's love.

In the coming glory, God's people will rejoice in Him Himself. He who is Light and Love will be their everlasting reward and joy. They will be at home in His light, and in His love. They will delight perfectly in the nature of God, of which even now all of them are partakers. There will be no hindrance to their fulness of joy, as is the case with them now, for no sin will be either in them or on them. They will find their delight in the things which delight God; they will be before God in the sunshine of His love, and they will be themselves before Him, according to His light, holy and without blame.

GOD'S WORD ENTERING THE SOUL.

How often have we heard the truths of God's word without their entering into our souls! But at length the day comes when the truth so often heard is received into the heart, and from that day the change comes in life and purpose. The oak showers its harvest of acorns upon the ground, but only that one which enters the soil results in a tree. Some one grain of seed of the incorruptible word, as it were, entering the heart, by the Spirit's power, results in a life for God and in fruit for eternity. How frequently it is the case that one little sentence effects this. The hearer is cut to the heart and his whole self is absorbed by a line of a hymn, one or two words, or a fragment of a text.

HOW TO READ.

A FEW days since, I was visiting the aged inmates of a workhouse infirmary. In one of the beds sat a little old woman with a bright, pleasant face. She repeated many verses of Scripture to me, and appeared to enjoy them thoroughly.

I remarked, "God has blessed you with a good memory."

She said, "Yes, ma'am, He has, but then I tries to remember. I often thinks of what a lady said to me years agone. She said, 'When you reads think of a coe. What does a coe do? It eats all it wants, and then it goes, and it lies down, and it chaws the cood.' And then the lady said, 'Now you should be like the coe. Don't forget when you reads, don't shut up the Book and forget all about it, but be like the coe and chaw the cood.'"

I said, "That was good advice."

"Yes, ma'am," she answered, "it *was* good advice, and I have chawed the cood many a time after reading, and now when I lies awake of a night, as I often does, I says over my verses out of my Bible and my hymns, and they are a great comfort to me."

May we not all take a lesson from these simple words? Are we not all far too apt to read and forget, to close our book, and forget to "chaw the cood"? H. L. T.

ANTIQUARIANISM.

SOME believers live in the past, and they are men of the past. Once they lived in the present, and thought out the thoughts of the men living around them, and sought from God wisdom to help their day and generation. In that earlier time they were useful to their fellows, but, having become antiquarians, their present usefulness is comparatively small. Interesting and well-informed persons they are; they charm you with stories of fifty years ago, and with accounts of movements long since gone by; they can paint pictures of the past, till the pictures look so life-like, that the spectator can almost imagine himself living in the scenes depicted. They describe the grace and the holiness, the breathings after God, the love and the unity of the Christians, the triumphs of their faith in the days of yore, but the present, this very hour, with its infidelities, its retrograde spirit, its rebellion against God, is not that which inspires the soul of the antiquarian.

These Christians are like the curators attached to museums who show and explain to visitors the armour and the weapons of the dead, and point out how the soldiers now at rest won battles and overthrew the foe.

Antiquarianism is interesting, but for usefulness we need wisdom to discern the signs of the times. We are called to serve our day and generation; we are the living among the living, and should seek to enter into the difficulties of the hour, and to think out the thoughts of the men among whom we move.

Records of the past should encourage us to be zealous in the present; tales of the victories of old should fire us with eagerness for victories for to-day; the noble deeds and vigorous faith of saints now with Christ in paradise, should appeal to us to quit ourselves like men, and to be strong—strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, this very day.

Older people are in danger of antiquarianism. The young, as a rule, object to antiquarianism. The knowledge of how men served God five hundred, or fifty years ago, rightly used, should be an example of how men should serve Him to-day. The question should be how shall victory be gained to-day over the evils and errors of the day. England may blazon Nile and Waterloo upon her standards, but did war break out to-morrow, England would have to fight fresh battles. Christians may boast of Luther, or of Whitfield, or of Wesley, or speak of the great men whom they knew, but they want to see men so living in God's presence that their souls are stirred for God, and led into active warfare for Christ!

We would earnestly beg of our older readers to beware of becoming antiquarians. Let the older Christians use their experiences of God's ways, and their knowledge of His word, yes, and of the good they have seen in His saints also, to help the young; let them seek to be living, moving, burning witnesses their own very selves for God, and for eternity. Or, if this cannot be, if our reader feels that he has grown too old and too stiff for use, we would ask him not to tell the young stories of what happened long years ago, in such a way as to lead them to suppose that God was more gracious in the past than He is in the present. This would certainly make the young in faith doubly disheartened —first by the effect of the story of a bright but long since faded past, and next by the sight of an antiquarian.

Little Rosie's Prayer.

I AM all alone, this evening, and my thoughts have fled to the scenes of childhood. Should you like to know what is just now occupying my mind, and what in heart I am looking at so intently? I see a child of about five or six years of age. It is her bed-time, and the ever attentive mother has bidden the little maiden good-night, after having, as usual, first listened to the little one's evening prayer.

Rosie had a happy home; she lived in a town, but her father had a large garden, and there, in the beautiful summer weather, Rosie and her five brothers enjoyed plenty of play. Mr. and Mrs. C——, the father and mother of these children, were both Christians, so that frequently ministers of the gospel and other good people were visitors at the home of little Rosie. She had been taught to read by her mother, and could read a chapter pretty fluently by the time she was four years of age, before she could speak quite plainly.

Rosie had also been taught to believe that God hears and answers prayer. She herself had often read the very words of Jesus Himself, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." So, upon this particular night, on which the eye of my mind is gazing, I see the child get out of bed after she is left alone, and, kneeling down, clasp her hands and, with an earnest expression upon her young face, pray, "Oh, good God, up in heaven, the Bible says, Ast, and it shall be diven you, and whatsoever you ast in faith, believing, ye shall 'ceive; now, great God, I want a big doll, like the one I saw down the town; please let me find her on the pillow when I wake in the morning 'cause I do believe, Oh, God! Let me have the doll, for Trist's sake. Amen."

The little girl arose from her knees and got into bed, "quite sure, certain, and positive," to use her own expression. She really believed, without a doubt, that the doll would be upon her pillow in the morning, and so, with a contented mind, she fell asleep.

Morning dawns at length, and Rosie awakes with the feeling all of us have known at one time or another, a strange feeling that something unusual is about to happen; the child rubs her eyes, and sits up and stares eagerly around. "Oh! I know," says she, with a happy smile; "my new doll!" A look of blank surprise crosses Rosie's face as she looks around and sees nothing on the pillow. The child examines every crevice of the bed, and every chair and table, as well as every corner of the room, and indeed everywhere that a dolly could lie. Rosie did not for one moment doubt that God heard prayer, and yet here was a problem she could not at all solve; no amount of rubbing her little eyes or puzzling her young brain could make her understand it, and so overwhelmed was she with disappointment, deep, and real, and bitter, that she sobbed in very misery, not loudly, but with a sort of heartbreak very painful in a young child, and with her head buried in the bedclothes. The child's thoughts, if uttered, would be something like the following: "I am sure Jesus did say, Ask, and it shall be given you: and yet I have asked, and it is not given, and, oh, dear! my mamma says God cannot tell lies, and the Bible is all true, and I read only yesterday, 'Whatsoever ye ask in faith, believing, ye shall receive.' I am sure I did believe for certain that I should have the doll, and it is not here. Oh, dear! oh, dear! But perhaps mamma or Mary has been in the room and taken it away." And as this thought occurred to

ROSIE AND HER DOLL.

Rosie she stopped sobbing, and pulled away at the bell, which soon brought the nurse up stairs.

"Oh, Mary," asked Rosie, "have you taken from my pillow a nice, big, new doll?"

"Why, whatever is the matter, and what are you talking about, child?" replied Mary; "you have been dreaming."

"What is dreaming?" asked the poor child, pitifully.

"It is fancying something that is not true," answered the nurse.

"Oh, Mary, do go away, and send mamma. I'm so miserabubble," and the little girl began to cry again. Mary evidently could not enter into her trouble, and felt inclined to laugh at her distress; but she quickly fetched the mother, who for some time could not comprehend the meaning of her little daughter's sobbing ejaculations. "Oh, mamma! I did believe, and it isn't true! It can't be true. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" The doubting God's truth was the worst trouble of all to the child.

At last Mrs. C—— so far pacified Rosie as to be able to get from her the cause of her grief; and then, in the gentlest manner, she tried to bring to a child's comprehension the facts that God is our loving Father, and that His word is always true, but that He does not always give us just the very things we ask for. He is so much greater and wiser than we are, that of course He knows best what is good for us, and will always give us the very best things possible, if we leave Him to choose for us. "But," continued Rosie's mamma, "if the Bible promises us bread, God will always give us bread, if we believe and ask for it. The text does not promise a new doll, yet, if it is the will of your Father in heaven, Rosie dear, He will give you a new doll, when He thinks proper, how and when He pleases; we must leave that to His wisdom, darling. My little child must trust in God to do what He thinks best, and leave it all to Him, just as she trusts in me to give her what food I think proper every day. So now, Rosie, you must ask your Father in heaven to forgive all the naughty, unbelieving thoughts His little girl has been thinking about His holy word, and then, darling, go to sleep again, or you will have a bad headache."

Rosie did as her mother desired. Shall we listen to her prayer? "Oh, good, great God, forgive me for thinking the Bible was not always true; and if it is best for me, please let me have a nice, new big doll someday, when you want me to have it, for Zesus Trist's sake. Amen."

That picture of the past ends just there; would my young readers like a sequel to it? Some months had passed away, and Rosie was busy at play with her brothers, when she was called into the parlour to see a visitor.

"Come here, Rosie, and see what this lady has brought you. What have you to say for it?" said Rosie's mamma, holding up to her child's delighted eyes a beautifully dressed doll, quite as large as a baby in long clothes. Rosie came shyly forward, speechless; but with glistening eyes she took the treasure, and then, abruptly turning towards the visitor, she proved her gratitude by a sudden and tremendous hug, which went a long way towards squeezing the breath out of the kind-hearted little body who had brought the doll. The lady in question was always doing some kind action or speaking some kind word to the young, and my mind's eye now sees her making the heart of the little child dance with joy, and I see also the cheeks of little Rosie flush with pleasure and excitement, as she clasps her long-wished-for dolly to her bosom, and endeavours to thank the kind giver in a becoming manner: but the child could find no words, for it was just the very sort of doll for which she had prayed months before, and had almost given up hoping for. Rosie kept the large doll many, many years, and never forgot the kind lady or the prayer answered after many days.

Dear children, will you allow me to ask, Do you ever pray? If not, begin at once. Tell God all you want. First receive Christ into your heart, by believing His word that He died to save you. Then believe that because He lives, you shall live also. Then tell Him all your desires, both for the body and the soul, leaving God to answer in His own way.

RHODA.

THE RECRUITING SERGEANT.

WITH blackened face and begrimed clothes, "big Jack" was tramping steadily homewards after his usual heavy day's work at the iron foundry. I cannot tell you what his thoughts were as, with hands thrust far into his pockets, and head bent down, he slouched along the road. He was not a lad of many words at any time, but the contented look on his pleasant face ever told of a heart at peace with God. Whatever his reverie may have been on the evening in question, it was suddenly interrupted by one whose appearance formed a marked contrast with "big Jack," in the grimy working clothes.

Right in the pathway stood a smart recruiting sergeant, resplendent in spotless scarlet coat, and looking just as trim, and clean, and as well-to-do as possible. "Big Jack" instinctively drew on one side of the pavement, lest contact with his sooty coat should soil such marvellous cleanliness, thinking to pass unnoticed. But the sergeant noticing the broad, vigorous frame, and the honest look in the grey eyes that glanced at him, saw material such as he was seeking, stopped the youth, saying abruptly—

"Ain't you about tired of this job, young man?"

Smiling pleasantly, although his words were gruff enough, "big Jack" answered—

"And if I be, I ain't a-going to take up with your'n," and without further parley he trudged on to the humble home, where his patient widowed mother awaited him.

Now it struck me, when Jack told me this incident, that we Christians might learn much from the ready zeal of the recruiting sergeant. Not one moment did he let slip in accosting an entire stranger to give him an invitation to serve his Queen. As we pass through this world, "by sin undone," many a gloomy face we meet that bears the unmistakable stamp of a sin-stained life; could we not ask such if they are not weary of the service of a hard master, whose only wages are death? Might not the homely words of the sergeant, "Ain't you about tired of this job?" apply to them with a sorrowful intensity that they did not to the one to whom they were addressed? Surely if we did but show the same diligence and energy in pressing the claims of our Master, we might win more souls to enlist themselves in His service. I fear that among our every-day associates there may be some who have never heard a like interrogation from our lips, nor received any invitation from us to enrol themselves under the banner of our Leader. Let us, dear fellow-Christian, seek to show our colours as unmistakably as did this soldier. What a long way off that brilliant scarlet coat could be seen, giving undoubted proof that the wearer was a servant of Her Gracious Majesty the Queen! Should it be less evident that we are Christ's servants, stamped as His blood-bought ones? Let us each one seek to prove ourselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ, glorying in the privilege of being His ambassadors, not easily rebuffed, if we meet with a discouraging reception, but putting forth every effort to recruit the bright ranks of the army of the Great Captain of our salvation, from the sorrowful band of heart-sick, weary captives of the enemy.

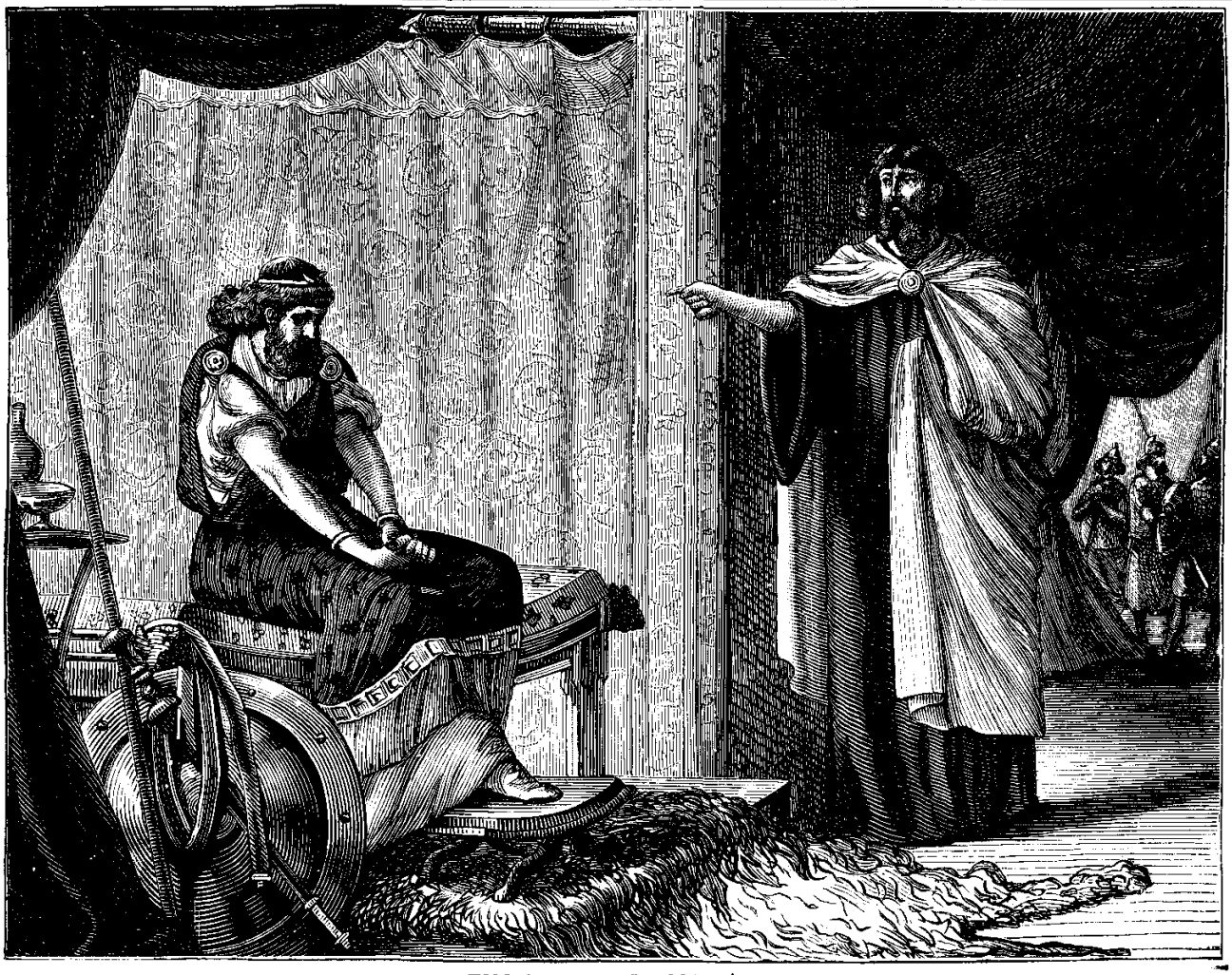
D. & A. C.

A WORD TO WORKERS.

WE should stir up our hearts in the fulness of Christ's love to more zeal and joy in our service. Is there not too often in Christian workers a lack of what may be termed real enthusiasm? An ardent, burning desire for souls arises from the burning within the breast of the fire of divine love. Think what salvation is, what heaven is, what glory is! Look on to the crowns, the palms, the songs, the triumphs, and surely there will be more courage in the Lord's work. If we look only at the misery and the sorrow we get overcome.

Thou art the Man!

WHAT an easy thing it is to see the faults of others, and how difficult it is for us to see our own sins! Possibly we may be indignant at a sin done by another, while we are asleep as to the same class of sin done by ourselves! So it was with that



THOU ART THE MAN!

great man, that mighty servant of God, King David. He had sinned, but his soul slept as to the sin. Yes, for months together his soul had lost its sensitiveness, one great witness of a believer being in God's presence. But after a while the Lord sent to David. Think we David could have gone to the Lord for communion and for sweetness of soul, while he slept as to the sin he had committed? Surely we know enough of our own hardness of heart to be aware that, as the shepherd must needs seek the sheep, so must our God of grace seek His backsliding people. The Lord sent to David, for He is full of grace.

So the prophet came to the king with this message from the Lord, "There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him."

But the king did not understand the message; he took it, as we often take the messages of God, as a word about someone afar off, not as His word to ourselves. It was God's word sent to David personally, yet he perceived not its application; but applied it to another. His wrath was kindled against the mean and shameful act, against the selfish-

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ness and the cruelty of the man described, and he said, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

Do not be harsh with David! The story is written for our admonition; God certainly had it not written to hold David up to shame, and to expose lack of tenderness and sensitiveness in him! The sins of the great servants and the noblest of the saints of God are not told out by our Father in heaven, that His little servants and small saints might exalt themselves at the expense of their betters. Had mere men penned the stories of God's saints, they had made them all heroes and idealities, or, worse, exaltations of the human race! God speaks of His servant's sins, but He does so that we may take courage while we remain humble. Let us apply to ourselves the solemn words of God—thou art the man. Let us not lay as a burden upon another what we should feel as a weight upon ourselves. When our indignation because of sin arises, let us seek first to judge ourselves.

In the midst of David's wrath against the man, and as he waited but to know his name to decree his death, Nathan said to him, "Thou art the man."

Thou art the man! Oh! how changed are our thoughts about sin when we feel our own guilt! Thou art the man! Thou hast done this very evil thing thine own self.

The truth respecting himself was brought home to him; David felt his sin and confessed —"I have sinned against the Lord." His sin came before him in its true character; he was discovered, exposed to himself, and thus was in the light respecting himself.

Forgiveness was his portion, but nevertheless the hand of God's government was against David. His house had to suffer from the sword, for he had slain with the sword. He had brought distress upon Uriah's house, so would distress fall upon his own house. Sin bears its bitter fruits, even though it be forgiven. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

They gave their Bodies to be Burned.

IN our last number we spoke of the doctrine of Transubstantiation as the very stronghold of the Romish faith, and showed how the doctrine had by degrees established itself in Christendom.

The church may change its belief; the truth never varies. Man adds to his notions; the word of God ever remains the same—it cannot be added to or diminished from. "Believe the church; bow to the church," cries Rome and her children; but we may enquire, What is meant by believing the church? The church of Rome has developed a system of doctrine and practice by slow degrees. If we of this day believe the church, we believe what our fathers did neither believe nor know of nine hundred or eleven hundred years ago!

Bede flourished in England in 700, and, "for the advantage of the church," translated portions of the Bible into the language spoken in England in those days. He thus wrote: "Poor men . . . . understand in bread and wine, being visibly set before them, a thing invisible, to wit, the true body and true blood of the Lord, which are true meat and true drink, wherewith, not the belly is filled, but the mind is nourished." And Bertram, who was of the same age, says, "Outwardly it is bread, the same as before." From a sermon in Saxon of Elfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 996, who, as has already been noted, affirmed that whoever would be one with God must often pray and often read the Scriptures, we take these sentences: "Christ is said to be bread by signification, and a lamb, and a lion, and a mountain. He is called bread because He is our life and angels' life; He is said to be a lamb for His innocency; a lion, for strength, wherewith He overcomes the strong devil. But Christ is not so, notwithstanding, after true nature; neither bread, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why is, then, the holy housel [the Eucharist, the sacred bread] called Christ's body, or His blood, if it be not truly what it is called... Without they be seen bread and wine, both in figure and in taste, and they

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be truly, after their hallowing, Christ's body and His blood, through ghostly mystery."

These quotations show that the doctrine of Transubstantiation, as now laid down to be believed, was not held in 996, but they also prove that something very like it was growing up in men's minds. Thus we are not surprised to learn that, less than a hundred years later than Elfric (A.D. 1059), a synod of archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other prelates, enforced one Berengarius to recant his belief in the bread and the wine not being made by the priest the body and the blood of Christ.

In those rude old days, as in our educated times, miracles came in to the support of a new doctrine. The host, it was said, was turned into the likeness of flesh and blood. Actual blood was seen dropping in the cup. The bread on the altar became a child, whom the priest handled and kissed; and after having so done returned the child to the likeness of bread! As to this last miracle, Berengarius observed that the "false varlet," the priest, "goeth about to tear him with his teeth whom he had kissed before with his mouth!" Other similar miracles or visions were reported, and thus, by miracles and councils, the doctrine, in all its terribleness, at length took firm hold of the church.

We need not question the appearances and the visions; the question is, Who sent them—God or Satan? All the visions or the miracles that may be seen or wrought do not unmake one letter of the truth of God. In the dark days yet to come, the Wicked, who will be revealed, will by Satan's energy do great things in "all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. ii. 9); therefore small tokens of Satan's power, communicated to his agents before these days, need not be considered surprising.

The doctrine being more or less generally accepted in Christendom, it next became necessary to stamp it with the authority of the church. In 1215 a great council was held, under Pope Innocent III., and thirteen hundred bishops enacted and decreed that "the body and blood of Jesus Christ are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body, and the wine into the blood." This is the date when the professors of Christ's name in their daring first raised in the church the black banner of idolatry. Then it was that men bearing Christ's name, men called Christians, were by the church's authority commanded to believe in salvation through the priests' work instead of Christ's work. And such as would not so believe were brought under the pains and penalties attaching to heresy.

Further to fix the idolatry into the souls of men, a few years later, it was decreed and commanded that the bread made by the priests' work into God's Christ should be lifted by the priest over his head, and adored by the people. And further still, as a few more years proceeded, other popes commanded the offering up to God of this sacrifice as propitiatory for the living, and for the dead, in order to the remission of sins, and for the good of souls in purgatory.

Thus, little by little, Satan introduced heathenism into Christendom. "While men slept, His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." (Matt. xiii. 25.)

Though God has ever had His witnesses to His truth in the church, the church, as she was in the dark ages, had become the prey of evil men and seducers, who wax worse and worse, deceivers, and being deceived. (2 Tim. iii. 13.) Holy men there were then as there are now, but Rome's effort was to crush them, and to remove their witness from the face of the earth. As we view the present in the light of the past, we tremble at the progress made in our land towards the doctrine we are speaking about. May our readers arouse themselves to what Rome is doing in our country in the nineteenth century! England is now her hunting ground; here she is seeking her converts, and gradually, and little by little, is she leading the minds of this Protestant country, and accustoming its people to sights and to doctrines that surround the awful idolatry of Transubstantiation.

The truths of the Christian faith—of God's own love in giving His Son to die for sinners, of the satisfaction rendered to God on account of sins by Christ on the cross, of the pardon of the sins of all who believe, of

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Christ's present glory on high, having taken His seat at God's right hand, and being before God and for us as the High Priest—are all undermined or overturned in the soul by the notion that a priest can offer to God a sacrifice which shall propitiate Him.

We will now take up two more examples of the courage and constancy of the martyrs who died in defence of the truths attacked by the doctrine that has been before us.

Sir Walter Mille, a Scotchman, was one of these, and his courage stimulated very many in the cause of God's truth. When Sir Walter was imprisoned he was an aged man, and very feeble. He was brought out of prison to answer for himself before a great assemblage of bishops, doctors, and friars, and he had to be helped up into the pulpit of the church where the proceedings were carried on. He knelt in prayer, and remained so long praying that the archbishop's priest who questioned him called on him: "Sir Walter Mille, arise and answer to the articles; for you cannot hold my lord here over-long."

"Thou art against the blessed sacrament of the altar," proceeded the priest, "and sayest that the mass is wrong, and is idolatry."

Then, with a strong, clear voice, which made the church ring and astonished the mass of people present, Sir Walter answered: "A lord or a king sendeth and taketh many to a dinner, and when dinner is in readiness he causeth to ring a bell, and the men come to the hall, and sit down to be partakers of the dinner; but the lord, turning his back unto them, eateth all himself, and mocketh them: so do ye."

"Thou deniest the sacrament of the altar to be the very body of Christ really in flesh and blood."

"The Scripture of God is not to be taken carnally, but spiritually, and standeth in faith only. And as for the mass, it is wrong, for Christ was once offered on the cross for man's trespass, and will never be offered again, for He ended all sacrifice."

"Thou preachest secretly and privately in houses, and openly in the fields."

"Yea, man, and on the sea also, sailing in a ship," replied the brave old man.

"Wilt thou not recant thy erroneous opinions? And if thou wilt not, I will pronounce sentence against thee."

"I am accused of my life," rang out the reply; "I know I must die once, and, therefore, as Christ said to Judas, 'What thou dost, do quickly.' Ye shall know that I will not recant the truth, for I am corn, and no chaff: I will not be blown away with the wind, nor burst with the flail; but I will abide both."

Upon these firm words sentence was pronounced against the old man, and it was determined that he should be burned. But his consistency and courage had so moved the town, that the provost would not give orders for the execution of the sentence. The people would not sell the bishop's servants a cord to bind Sir Walter Mille, nor a tar barrel in which to burn him.

At length he was led by the bishop's armed men to the place of martyrdom, and the priest in command bade him go up to the stake.

"Nay," replied Sir Walter; "wilt thou put me up with thy hand, and take part of my death? Thou shalt see me pass up gladly, but by the law of God I am forbidden to put hands upon myself."

Then the priest led him up to the coals and the wood, and he ascended gladly, exclaiming, "I enter into the altar of God."

Seeing him about to speak to the people, the armed men sought to stop him, but the vehement cries of the multitude, and especially of a number of young men, who shouted that the bishops would go to the devil for their sin, intimidated them, and gained a hearing for the old Christian warrior.

He knelt upon the coals, then arose, and said: "Dear friends,—The cause why I suffer this day is not for any crime laid to my charge (albeit I be a miserable sinner before God), but only for the defence of the faith of Jesus Christ, set forth in the New and Old Testaments unto us; for which, as the faithful martyrs have offered themselves gladly before, being assured, after the death of their bodies, of eternal felicity, so this day I praise God that He hath called me of His mercy, among the rest of His servants, to seal up His truth with my life, which, as I

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have received it of Him, so willingly I offer it to His glory.

"Therefore, as you will escape the eternal death, be no more seduced with the lies of priests, monks, friars, abbots, bishops, and the rest of the sect of Antichrist, but depend upon Jesus and His mercy, that ye may be delivered from condemnation."

As his voice swept over the crowd the people answered with lamentations and tears. Having prayed again, his executioners hoisted him upon the stake, the flames encircled him, and he cried, "Lord, have mercy on me! Pray, people, while there is time."

The stoutness of his spirit and his constancy in Christ so stirred up the people, that no other martyr was burned after Sir Walter Mille in Scotland.

The touching testimony of that godly man, Master Laurence Saunders, parson of All Hallows, in Bread Street, London, who suffered martyrdom in February, 1555, shall end this paper.

"Grace and comfort in Christ! Amen. Dear wife, be merry in the mercies of our Christ . . . We be shortly to be dispatched hence unto our good Christ. Amen, amen. Wife, I would you sent me my shirt, which you know whereunto it is consecrated. Let it be sewed down on both sides, and not open."

Can we imagine her tears as she fulfilled his desire, and as she sent him the garment in which he was to be burned?

"Oh, my heavenly Father, look upon me in the face of Thy Christ . . . He will do so, and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, death, hell, and damnation can do against me. O wife, always remember the Lord. God bless you! Yea, He will bless thee, good-wife, and thy poor boy also. Only cleave unto Him, and He will give thee all things. Pray, pray, pray!"

The following extract is from a letter written on the very morning he was burned.

"Oh, my dear brethren, whom I love in the Lord, being loved of you also in the Lord, be merry and rejoice for me, now ready to go up to that mine inheritance, which I myself am most unworthy of; but my dear Christ is worthy, who hath purchased the same for me at so dear a price . . .

"God's blessing be with you always! Amen. Even now towards the offering of a burnt sacrifice. Oh, my Christ, help, or else I perish! "LAURENCE SAUNDERS."

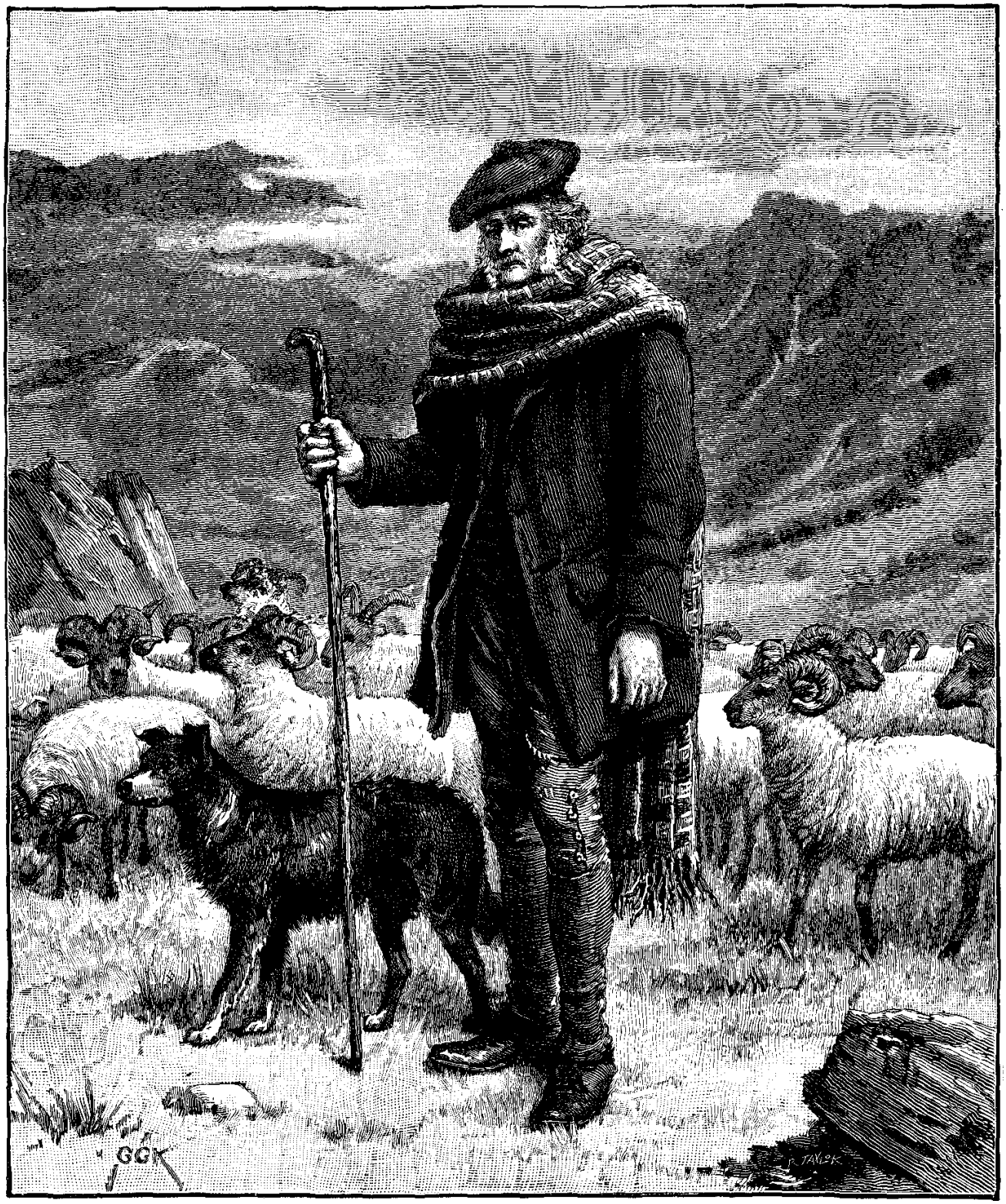
Texts for the Month.

OUR subject for texts to search out this month is CHRIST'S SACRIFICE AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
M	1	He was manifested to take away our sins			
Tu	2	Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world			
W	3	Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself			
Th	4	Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many			
F	5	One sacrifice for sins			
S	6	While we were yet sinners Christ died for us			
S	7	**Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity**			
M	8	Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us			
Tu	9	Without shedding of blood is no remission			
W	10	It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul			
Th	11	No more conscience of sins			
F	12	In whom we have...the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace			
S	13	That...remission of sins should be preached in His Name			
S	14	**Having forgiven you all trespasses**			
M	15	Who forgiveth all thine iniquities			
Tu	16	He shall redeem..from all iniquities			
W	17	The people...shall be forgiven their iniquity			
Th	18	As far as the east is from the west..hath He removed our transgressions from us			
F	19	Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven			
S	20	And I will pardon all their iniquities			
S	21	**There is forgiveness with Thee**			
M	22	Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive			
Tu	23	To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses			
W	24	I will forgive their iniquity			
Th	25	If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins...			
F	26	I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions			
S	27	I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions			
S	28	**Thy sins are forgiven thee**			
M	29	Who is this that forgiveth sins also?			
Tu	30	Dead in sins...quickened...together with Christ			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE OLD SHEPHERD.

THE OLD SHEPHERD.

NOT long since I was on a visit to some friends in the country, when word came to the house in which I was staying, that the old shepherd was very ill, and obliged to keep his bed. Indeed, he had been ill for several days, but, his cottage being some distance from any other dwelling, no one had been aware of his illness.

In the afternoon of the same day, as my friends were starting to take him some nourishment, I asked to be allowed to accompany them, to which they gladly consented. On our arrival at the cottage, we, with some difficulty, ascended the broken stairs, and found the old man, about seventy years of age, in bed. After he had partaken of some of the refreshments we had brought him, I thought I might have a word with him. Seeing a Bible lying upon an old chest, I took it in my hand, asking him if he knew anything of its contents, to which he replied, "I cannot read."

"Well," said I, "that is your misfortune, no doubt, not your fault. Do you know anything about the Lord Jesus Christ?"

The poor old man seemed anxious to hear what I said, and raised his head towards me, enquiring, "Who did you say, sir?"

I replied, "The Lord Jesus Christ, God's only Son, the Saviour of sinners."

He said, "No. Where does He live? I never hered of He afore."

My feelings at this unlooked-for ignorance I cannot describe. I was speechless. Lifting my heart to God in silent prayer that He would give me words to speak, I opened the Bible in my hand at the third chapter of John's Gospel. I read several verses, and explained to him, as best I could, our state before God as sinners, and God's great love to us in giving His Son. As I was talking the tears ran down his cheeks, and, clapping his hands together, he exclaimed, "Sir, if that be true, then I be a lost sinner!"

I assured him it was God's word, and that God cannot lie. He repeated again and again that he was a lost sinner, and asked if I thought that God would look in mercy upon such an old sinner as he was. I assured him Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. The old man fully realised his lost condition, and I have no doubt that the seeking Saviour found and rejoiced over this lost one.

May this incident be used to stir up God's servants to spread abroad His truth in the villages and lonely cottages of the country. How little do Christians realise the awful amount of practical heathenism that prevails in this Christian land! J. D.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

DURING the spring of 1887, I was holding some gospel services at G——. One Sunday night the Spirit of God rendered the meeting particularly solemn. I was speaking from the all-important question, "What think ye of Christ?" (Matt. xxii. 42.) I earnestly pressed on the hearers the solemn truth that eternity hung on that question, and that it was one that must be answered sooner or later by all men, for it is written, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." (Phil. ii. 10.) Amongst the audience might be noticed two men, strangers to each other, who evidently came in to laugh, but who, soon after the meeting began, became as if spell-bound under the power of the word of God. Both went away rejoicing in the wondrous love of Jesus, who "receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." With reference to one of these men, I write these lines.

The Friday, following the Sunday we referred to, a military-looking man accosted me, saying, "May I shake hands with you; for, by God's blessing, you have turned the lion into a lamb?" My heart was over-flowing, and I could not help weeping for joy as he witnessed a good confession for Christ. Undoubtedly all believers are miracles of saving grace, but I think, when you read the following story, you will admit that he was a special instance of the love of God. After he had for nine months led a godly life, I asked him if he would tell me a little of his past history, to enable me to recount what might be a blessing to others.

He had been a soldier for many years, and late in life had married a Christian woman.

Two years after their marriage his wife fell ill, and for eight years suffered patiently; then she fell asleep in Christ, with her latest breath imploring her husband to be sure and meet her in heaven. At the time of her death he was in a good situation, and had a very comfortable home, and as he was in the habit of conducting family worship, and was fond of singing hymns, he always spoke of himself as a child of God, and indeed thought that he was saved. But when his wife, whom he had idolized, went to paradise, in his grief he gave up his profession of Christianity, and, apart from her godly influence, soon began to go astray. Being now invited to leave his situation to come to the Island of G——, he did so, and there, falling in with evil companions, he was soon, like the prodigal, left without a penny, and was consequently, friendless.

Everything was gone—his health impaired, and his state truly deplorable. For five days and nights he wandered about, without food or shelter; sleeping behind walls or under hedges, and actually eating any refuse he could pick up. This awful wretchedness, to one used to home comforts, and until latterly respectable and even refined, nearly drove him mad. Thus he communed with himself: "When I had plenty of money, I had plenty of friends; but now, even those whom I considered as my true friends have deserted me, and I feel everything on the earth is a vain show. Even the hope of meeting my darling wife in heaven is gone, for God could not have anything to do with a wretch like me. I will wait till it is dark, and then drown myself, and thus put an end to my misery." At nightfall he went to the pier-head, and was actually on the point of committing the fatal deed, when a policeman, who had been watching him for some time, arrested him, and placed him in confinement all night. The next morning he begged so hard that the constable allowed him to go away, and during that day a publican offered him a lodging and board if he would pay up on pension day; this offer he gladly accepted, and was accordingly installed in a public-house, where he already owed a few pounds for drink.

Whilst living here, remorse and shame at his present life began to fill his mind, and, with a desire to give it up and turn over a new leaf, he determined to call on a minister of religion and get his counsel and help. But, alas! he sent word that he had no time to see him then, and the poor fellow, with his new hopes of a fresh start nipped in the bud, by the very one whom he thought would encourage him in his good desires, felt that everything, even religion, was a sham. He now recklessly returned to his old ways, and plunged head-foremost into sin again.

At about this time, one evening, the conversation in the tap-room of the public-house was about various preachers in the island. One asked the old soldier if he had ever heard the sergeant preaching; and, as the talk went on, two or three stated that whenever they did attend "a place of worship," it was always to these soldiers' meetings they went. As our poor friend listened, many a conversation he had had with his wife came back to his mind. She was a native of the Island of G——, and, having heard at a distance of the soldiers' meetings, affirmed that, if God ever spared her to revisit the home of her childhood, she would attend them, and he recalled her making him promise he would himself attend the services. All this had entirely slipped his memory, but here, in this unexpected place and way in the public-house, and among his boon companions, God began the work in his soul. He thought of his promise to his departed wife, and that he must fulfil it, and accordingly agreed with one of the men to go to the meeting the next Sunday.

Sunday arrived, and though somewhat under the influence of drink, and not seeking any good results from the preaching, yet, to fulfil the promise he had made to his wife, and partly also from curiosity, the old soldier repaired to the meeting-house. Whilst going in, he said in a jocular manner to his companion, "I'll go in now, and hear this blabbering preacher." As he sat and listened God's Holy Spirit strove mightily with him. Like many others, he had never before seen himself a sinner, and, at times, had even

considered that he was as good as any one; but here, suddenly, the awfulness of his sinfulness was pressed on his heart. The preacher explained that there are only two ways, the broad road, which leads to outer darkness, and the narrow, which leads to the eternal city. He then quoted these words of Jesus, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x. 9), and earnestly invited the vilest sinner in that meeting to come there and then to Jesus, the Door, assuring his hearers that Christ would turn none away.

Whilst listening to these words the prodigal cast himself as a sinner on the mercy of God; he took God at His word, and came just as he was to Christ. On leaving the room, he confounded his companion by telling him that he had decided in the meeting for Christ. Yes, God blessed "the blabbering" of the preacher to the salvation of his soul. And now, one of that preacher's closest friends, and most active helpers in the good work of God, is the man who first went to hear him scoffingly.

Truly, it is good to hear the old soldier sing his favourite hymn, the chorus of which is:

"Sing it o'er and o'er again,
Christ receiveth sinful men;
Make the message clear and plain,
Christ receiveth sinful men."

Poor sinner, there is a day near at hand, when they that are ready shall go in to the marriage, and then the door will be shut. Oh! do make haste, and come to Him, who now in the day of grace, "receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." (Luke xv. 2.) J. H.

I WON'T GO HOME TILL I AM SAVED.

THE above words were uttered by a young woman in deep anxiety of soul, to whom I had spoken a few days before about the love of God.

She came to the village chapel, where a series of gospel meetings was being held, and there was brought to deep conviction of sin.

The last meeting came to an end, but she found no rest. She lingered for a few moments, and then left the building. On going up the village street, I heard some one running behind and calling out my name; it was a Christian lady, the mistress of the young person referred to.

"Will you return, and speak to my maid, for she says she cannot go home till she knows she is saved?"

So we all went back together; and after prayer I read these words—"Having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20), and I asked the anxious enquirer, "Who made peace?"

"Jesus," she replied.

"When did He make peace?"

"When He died," was her answer.

"By what means did He make peace?"

"By His blood."

I then showed her that since the peace was made, and that God was glorified by the blood of His Son respecting sin, she had not to do anything herself, but only to trust to what the Lord had accomplished.

"If He made peace, surely you were not left out?"

"No," she replied.

"You believe then that He made peace, and that the salvation of God is for you, do you?"

"Yes."

"*Will you not praise Him for it?*" I asked.

How suddenly her countenance changed! Though her face was still wet with tears, and her eyes red with weeping, yet above it all there shone a radiance that spoke of peace within. We knelt to praise God. On rising from our knees, I said, "My dear girl, let me say this to you, the secret of peace is, 'looking unto Jesus.' If you look in at yourself for comfort you will soon be miserable, but if you look out to Jesus you will always be happy;" and so we parted.

Some time after this I had a happy letter from her, telling me of her continued joy and peace in Christ, and how He assisted her in her work, and of her longings after a holy life.

Reader, do you believe on the Son of God? By His blood shed upon the cross, peace has been made. Have you peace? If not, learn a lesson from this narrative.

J. H. J—g.

WHY DO I SAY I AM SAVED?

SOME friends of mine often drive to the villages near them, giving away gospel books and tracts. One afternoon they stopped before a few cottages, from one of which an aged woman came out to take the offered book. My friends said a few words to her as to her feebleness and great age, and then went on to speak of eternity, which she was nearing. They were glad to hear in reply that she was saved, and had been so for years. They asked why she believed herself ready. Drawing herself up erect, as she stood by the carriage, she said—

"Why do I say I am saved? Because Christ died for my sins, and was raised again for my justification."

Happy Christian! She knew more than all the philosophy or science of this nineteenth century can teach! When this scene has passed away for ever, she will be reigning in life through Christ, who was everything to her.

SAVED THROUGH A HYMN.

IN an upper room are three young men—two are brothers, whose mother, a pious woman, had departed to be with Christ some years previously, and since then they have been living together in apartments. These are both strangers to grace and to God; the third is a Christian, who has just come in to stay the night, and leaves by an early train in the morning.

He has been there before, but, through lack of courage, had failed to speak to them of Christ. He has confessed this to his Lord, and once more he has an opportunity. It is getting late, but he has not yet spoken to his companions of their need of salvation, although earnestly desiring to do so. He is distressed lest the opportunity be again lost, so he silently asks help of the Lord to speak. A hymn presents itself to his mind, and, almost surprising himself at the peculiarity of the step, he sings aloud these verses:—

"We've no abiding city here:
This may distress the worldling's mind,
But should not cost the saint a tear,
Who hopes a better rest to find.

"We've no abiding city here:
Sad truth were this to be our home!
But let the thought our spirits cheer—
We seek a city yet to come.

"We've no abiding city here:
We seek a city out of sight;
Sion its name—the Lord is there;
It shines with everlasting light.

"O sweet abode of peace and love,
Where pilgrims freed from toil are blest!
Had I the pinions of a dove
I'd fly to thee, and be at rest.

"But hush, my soul, nor dare repine:
The time my God appoints is best;
While here to do His will be mine,
And His to fix my time of rest."

Weeks and months passed away, and the three friends met again, when the younger of the brothers reminded their friend of the hymn, saying he could not forget how happy he appeared to be while singing it. "And," said he, "I am the fruit of it, for I am rejoicing in Christ as my Saviour." And he recognized the answer to his mother's prayers, long ago presented at the throne of grace, but not forgotten by the Hearer of prayer!

Shortly after the interview the young man removed to a town on the south coast, where he was used to the conversion of several. A few extracts from his letters will interest the reader:—

"I am thankful I have a Friend to whom to take my trouble and ask advice; if I had not I think this stroke would have taken my life." He refers to a heavy trial, occasioned through the gambling of his brother. "My heart bleeds for my brother—would to God that my former life had not been a hindrance! Remember him in your prayers."

Speaking of gospel service, he says, "I love the work; one of the meetings was the best, I think, I have attended. My soul seemed in raptures!"

Seven months later: "My health changes with the weather; one day I seem almost at death's door, and the next, almost well; but I thank God from the depth of my heart I have no fear of death before my eyes, 'The blood of Jesus Christ avails for me.' I can never express my feelings, but the thought of being with Christ fills my soul with unspeakable joy.

"I can truly say that the things I once hated now I love, and what I once loved now I hate; but the longer I live the more I see my utter weakness and helplessness, my full dependence upon God."

In the last letter received he writes, "What advantages the Christian has over those who know not God as their Father! Though I am at the present time in sorrow, and my hopes seem blighted, yet I can rejoice, for I know that my Father will cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him.

"How near the Lord seems. Sometimes we speak and almost expect to hear His voice in return, and feel His touch drawing us nearer to Himself; and so we do, in a voice so gentle and sweet that we feel our souls going out after Him, and the more we know of Him the more we want to know, and I don't think we shall ever be satisfied with our knowledge of Him in this life."

My young friend has now fallen asleep—he has found the better rest above. D.

MY CONVERSION.

FOR a long time I had known my natural state before God—that I was lost, condemned already, dead in trespasses and sins, without hope and without God in the world. I knew that I justly deserved God's judgment, and that I had not a rag to stand in in the presence of a holy God, who will have nothing less than a robe of spotless righteousness. The question of eternity gave me much uneasiness, whenever I thought of it, and that was very often.

On the 10th of May, 1874, I went with my dear brother—now with the Lord—to a meeting, where he was to preach. I shall never forget *how* he spoke; it seemed as if every word were addressed to myself. He said that however much he, or anyone, might love us, or desire our salvation, "none can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him"—"powerless, dear friends," he continued, "am I myself to help you; if your salvation depended upon any fellow creature, you would perish." Again he quoted his text, and his face grew paler than usual, and I felt that he was yearning over my soul. Then he lovingly set forth the truth as expressed by the latter part of the verse: "Deliver him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom."

Much as I felt the power of that address, I still remained in darkness. I lingered in the building, and several of the Lord's people came and spoke to me after the meeting, but without effect.

One old gentleman, seeing one and another in conversation with me, asked what was going on. Someone answered, "A soul seeking Christ."

"Oh!" said he, "the seeking sinner and the seeking Saviour will not be long apart."

"But," said I to him, "suppose I were to die to-night?" He looked very straight at me through his spectacles, and turned away without another word.

Oh! my friends, who read this, and are workers for the Lord Jesus, do not be so ready to leave an anxious soul as was that old man!

As we left the building, my brother walked home with a friend, and as I followed them my thoughts kept me company. I well remember standing outside the house, looking up into the clear, starlit sky; when, as though spoken to me by the Son of God, by whom those stars were made and held in their places, His words came into my heart—"He that believeth on Me *hath* everlasting life" (John vi. 47); "Yes," I exclaimed, "I believe on Thee, Lord Jesus—but I have not everlasting life." Again the passage recurred to my mind. "But I am not converted," I argued in my unbelief. A third time the glorious statement was pressed upon me. Then, to put it from me, as being too unlikely, I reasoned, "I don't *feel* in any way different from what I did this morning, or last week, so I cannot have everlasting life." The Holy Spirit once more brought home the same words of Jesus to me, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." But still, in my miserable unbelief, did I continue to reason that it was impossible. At last I was brought to this:

"God made me, and He knows better about me than even I know about myself. He says if I believe on the Lord Jesus I have everlasting life, and I do indeed believe, therefore I must have it if He says so. Thank God, there's joy in heaven over me, a sinner that repenteth to-night."

I managed somehow to tell my story to my dear brother when he rejoined me, and he did indeed rejoice with and over me. My joy the next day was increased; and as some of the beautiful passages in Rom. viii. came to me, I found myself striking the table with my fist, as though I were repeating them emphatically to an audience.

Reader, notice God's wondrous grace, abounding over my unbelief. When alone with Him I dared to argue, reason, and question; still He did not leave me in my ignorance to perish; but, in deep compassion, condescended to plead with me in His tender, gracious manner, until He overcame all my unbelief and shed the light of His love into my soul. When I think of that night, and of my former life, I feel what a wonder that I shall be in heaven with Jesus! Blessed be God so it is, all through the riches of His wondrous grace. Jesus bore the awful judgment for me—and I am saved, praise God!

It has been my happy privilege to tell others of Him for about twelve years. I would urge on my reader to accept now the same precious Saviour, and to rejoice in His word. "He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life, because God, the Son, says it."

J. T. S.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

GOD alone is the teacher of the knowledge of Himself, and he who would know God must needs go to God's school to be taught. Natural science is acquired by toil and search, the knowledge of God is gained by faith in His word. God's ways are not man's. The first lesson learned in God's school is faith, and all must enter this school at the infant class, for except a man be converted and become as a little child he will fail to know God.

Between the Two Great Judgments.

THERE is a judgment to come, and every man will have to give an account of himself to God. The career of man on the earth, and the words and deeds of every one, will be brought into the light, and will be judged by God according to His estimate of right and wrong. It is the fashion of the day to suppose God will deal with man, not according to the divine standard of good and evil, but according to human ideas or tastes. This misconception of God's character will avail nothing in the coming day, for the dead, small and great, called forth by irresistible power, will stand before the tribunal of divine justice, and all will have to give an account of themselves to God. Man may spend this lifetime as he lists, but escape from the judgment that follows after death will be impossible. Let no one be deceived—there is no choice as to giving an account of ourselves in the future to God.

The result of the day of judgment, let it be ever remembered, will be eternal, and the sentence then passed will be unrevoked for ever.

Man stands facing judgment to come, and earnestly do we press this most solemn consideration upon our readers.

But there is a judgment of God against sin that is passed. In that judgment we may read, without difficulty, the character of God in His dealings with sin. In that judgment no drop of mercy alleviated the cup of wrath—no light shone in the darkness—righteousness had full sway, and sin its deserts. The One judged was none less than the Son of God. He knew no sin—He was holy and perfect—but He stood in the place of the guilty, and God made Him to be sin for His people, and dealt with Him as the Substitute. "Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all." In that hour "it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him." Then He "put Him to grief"; then He made "His soul an offering for sin." (Is. liii. 6, 10.) In the sufferings of Jesus on the cross, we repeat, we read what the character of God is in His dealing with sin.

What the agony of the judgment was to the gracious Saviour we may learn in measure from His sufferings in Gethsemane, when, looking on to the cross, He prayed, if it were possible, the cup might pass from Him, His grief being such that "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (Luke xxii. 44.) But the cup could not pass from Him if sin was to be judged by God according to His own perfection and righteousness; the cup could not pass from Him if we were to be saved, and it did not pass from Him—Jesus took it, and drank it to the last drop, in order that He might save us who trust Him from meeting the vengeance of God against our sins.

The results of that judgment are eternal, and the mercy flowing from it remains unchangeable for ever.

If man stands facing the judgment to come, no less does he stand with the judgment of the cross of God's Son casting its light upon him. Man's position is that of being between the judgment of the cross that has been, and will never be repeated, and the judgment of the Great White Throne that is yet to be, which will never be repeated. Will our reader make this matter a personal one? Will he in spirit take up his position between

THE JUDGMENT OF THE CROSS AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT WHITE THRONE,

And ask himself, as in the presence of the unchangeable God, whether the eternal results of the judgment of the cross shelter him from the eternal results of the judgment of the Great White Throne; or whether he is content to ignore the judgment of the cross, and to face the judgment of the Great White Throne?

Such as truly trust in Jesus and His blood are for ever delivered by what He suffered upon the cross, from the condemnation that will fall upon those who shall stand before the Great White Throne. On the cross the Lord Jesus was judged in the sinner's stead, and on the Great White Throne He will sit and judge sinners. On the cross He bore the penalty sinners deserve to bear for their sins; on the Great White Throne He will judge sinners for their sins. These are His own words—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me...shall not come into judgment (R.V.), but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) Such as are sheltered by the cross of Christ from the wrath to come will not even stand to be judged at the Great White Throne—they "shall not come into judgment."

Everyone who knows what the Scriptures teach regarding God, either rests his hope for salvation on what Christ suffered for him on the cross, or dares to face God without the merits of that sacrifice. He may go on to death and the judgment that comes after death, with the boldness of those who expect to be made fit for God through the purifying fires of their Protestant purgatory, or with the unconcern of those who expect to be delivered from the result of coming judgment by the intercessions of their priests, but the word of God gives no hope for salvation from the judgment to come—the Great White Throne, other than through the judgment that is passed—even the cross of Calvary.

Now, standing as we each do in this lifetime between God's two great judgments of sin—between the cross of His own dear Son, and the throne of His judgment—most earnestly do we appeal to our reader to give himself no rest until he be assured that the work of Christ on the cross has delivered him from the wrath which is to come. Now is the season of opportunity, now is the day of salvation, and now God most graciously sets forth on the behalf of sinners the virtue of the atoning blood of Jesus. Now mercy smiles from heaven itself upon man, and love beckons the vilest and the worst to salvation and peace. But when the judgment throne is set, neither mercy nor love will be on the sinner's side; on the contrary, the sinner, his sins, and the Judge, will be brought together, and brought together for judgment.

And let it never be forgotten that the result of judgment will be eternal, and that the sentence passed then will be, like the salvation given now, irrevocable.

CHRISTIANS BURNING BIBLES IN CHRISTIAN ENGLAND.

The Word of God cannot be Bound.

THE entrance of God's word gives light (Ps. cxix. 130), while such as have not God's word "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." (Luke i. 79.) The countries now called Christian were without the knowledge of God before the gospel came to them, and the only true thoughts men have of God reach them through His word. In the early years of Christianity "the rulers of the darkness of this world" fought against the entrance of the light of truth into the domain of heathenism by fire and sword. The early Christians, who proclaimed the word of God in a variety of ways, were tortured and slain by thousands, and the greatest efforts were made to destroy every Christian from off the face of the earth. What gave them their courage? What enabled them to conquer, even through blood and fire? The word of God! They had received that word into their hearts, and by God's Spirit in them they uttered its truths, and they became more than conquerors through Him who loved them.

The heathen themselves testified to the manner of life of the early Christians, though they despised them as the worshippers of the One who had been crucified, and regarded with contempt the belief of His coming again. When the aged Ignatius was brought before the Emperor Trajan, Ignatius spoke of having Christ in his heart. "Dost thou mean Him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?" asked the emperor. "Yes," Ignatius replied,

"I mean Him who crucified my sin, and who has cast all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry Him in their hearts."

The end was, Trajan pronounced this sentence: "We command that Ignatius, who affirms that he carries within him, Him who was crucified, be put in chains and taken by soldiers to great Rome, there to be devoured by the beasts for the gratification of the people." And, being taken to Rome, the aged man—for he was one hundred and twenty years old—found his grave in the jaws of the wild beasts. Some eighty thousand heathen people, seated, tier above tier, in the Coliseum, saw the Christian die, or, should we not rather say, pass out of this world into paradise! The small remnant of the martyr's bones were carefully gathered up and buried by faithful men, who looked for the resurrection, and who knew that Christ was as truly in the heart of Ignatius, absent from the body but present with the Lord, as He had been when Ignatius was in the body but absent from the Lord.

The truth of God is almighty. When it enters the heart of man in the power of God's Spirit, it makes men greater than death, and fills them with the realizations of the unseen and eternal.

As we read in the Acts of the Apostles, very much of the early teaching had been utterances of men sent by God, with direct messages from Himself. The inspired writings were addressed to individuals, to churches in particular, or, to the church generally, and as time rolled on the Christians began to collect together these various inspired writings, and, early in the second century, they were collected together as a whole.

The writings of the teachers in the different localities were also highly valued, but their character is so entirely unlike the Scriptures, that it would seem as though God Himself had built a wall around His own word, to mark off the inspired writings from mere human teaching, and to let all see without hesitation the difference between His truth and the exposition of it.

The Old Testament came to the hands of the early Christians from the Jewish synagogues, and, together with the writings which compose the New Testament, was recognized in the church at large as the Book of Authority —the Word of God.

Part of the religious service of the early Christians consisted in reading, and hearing the Scriptures read; "We meet to read our sacred writings . . . with the sacred words we nourish in faith," says Tertullian.

Before the second century closed, there were various spurious gospels and epistles in the Church, but we know, even in the apostles' days, such were to be found! St. Paul refers to a forged epistle to the Thessalonians—a "letter as from us," written to shake their minds and to trouble them (2 Thess. ii. 2), and thus we can see how, from the very first, Satan has assailed the truth of God from all sides, destroying where he could, and where unable to destroy it, undermining its authority.

About the year 300 a supreme effort was made by the heathen to get rid of Christianity. Seeing that tortures and death did but rather increase the number of Christians than diminish them, a determined attack was made upon their writings. The Emperor Diocletian decreed the destruction of the Christian religion, and the rooting out of their books, in consequence of which, over a very large portion of the Roman empire, the command went forth for the burning of the Scriptures. Numbers of Christian writings were destroyed, and so thoroughly was the work done that to this day the most ancient copies of the New Testament Scriptures cannot be found. So fierce was this persecution, and such multitudes of Christians were slain, that the heathen thought they had gained their end. A medal was struck in honour of the victory, one side of which has the image of the god Jupiter with his thunderbolt, trampling upon a kneeling figure representing Christianity!

However, a few years later proved that neither the Christians nor their writings were destroyed.

After this the enemy commenced a fresh mode of attack upon the truth, which proved far more successful than the first. Diocletian

being dead, Constantine became emperor, and he, instead of persecuting, allied himself and heathenism with Christianity. He made laws in favour of the Christian religion, and presided over Christian bishops in council, being still a heathen by profession, for he was not baptized until the illness which ended in his death!

One of the effects of allowing this Roman emperor to manage the affairs of God's Church was, that those who bore the name of Christ began to practice the cruelties of the heathen, and speedily wielded the sword against each other! It had been said of the early believers, "See how these Christians love one another," but under the new laws and rules which Rome had introduced into the Church—all so different from those of the Scripture—violent men, in the name of God, and with "Praises to God" for their war cry, tortured and slaughtered, and with fire and sword forced into submission such as disagreed with them. Alas, from those dark days till now, "Obey the Church" is often heard, where the voice should be, "Obey the Scriptures"; and, "Persecute the enemies of the Church" is shouted by such as arrogate to themselves that they are the Church of Christ.

The Church of Christ should certainly represent Christ to the world, and should by walk and ways demonstrate to the world what is the Christianity of the Bible.

We leave the strifes and divisions which tore the Church so sorely in those old days, and come down to the times that followed the gift of the Bible to the people of our own country in their mother tongue, to which we referred in our two previous numbers. We find precisely the same principles at work which wrought in the early centuries of Christianity—on the one hand, the enemy seeking to snatch the Scriptures from men, and destroying such as would read God's word; on the other, martyrs and confessors of the truth standing up for the word of God, and having, like old Ignatius, Christ in their hearts. One way or another, by destruction or corruption, by force or by fraud, by open war or by insidious alliance, Satan to the very end will do his utmost to hinder the entrance of God's word into the heart, and to reduce men to sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

It was not the "great Rome" of the heathen Emperor Diocletian who commanded the burning of the Bibles, which our picture illustrates, but servants of the great Church of Christian Rome! The flames which consumed the written words of God and of Christ, were not lighted in a heathen city, but in the streets of Christian London, and at the command of Christian rulers! It was a Christian bishop who supervised the casting of the holy Scriptures into the fire, and professedly Christian men whose hands flung God's words into the flames. These things happened in the days of Henry the Eighth. Is it possible to conceive the Church of God doing what the heathen did in their hatred against the Scriptures? Can we imagine the Church of God seeking to destroy the word of God from off the face of the earth? or, at least, destroying it and burning it, though keeping in museums some hidden copies of it? Yet such is the case! Can we conceive the Church burning Christians for reading the Bible, as the heathen had burned Christians for the same offence? Yet such is the case. Numbers of men and women have perished at the hands of the Church for the crime of reading God's word! Wherein then in relation to the Scriptures, and to those who read them, does great Rome of Christian name differ from great Rome of heathen name?

We will put side by side two instances of suffering, even to most bitter death, for the sake of Christ and the Scriptures. In the time of the pagan persecutor, Diocletian, a band of Christians was seized in the house of a church reader, where they had assembled together to hear the word of God read. The proconsul demanded of the reader if he had any sacred writings in his house. "I have such," he replied, "but they are in my heart." The Christians were subjected to most awful tortures, and one of them crying out, the proconsul reviled him, "Thou art now beginning to taste the suffering due to thy crime."

The sufferer thereupon replied: "To glory! I thank the God of the Kingdoms! It appears—the eternal, the imperishable

kingdom! O Lord Jesus Christ, we are Christians; we are Thy servants, Thou art our hope! O God, most holy, most high, almighty, we praise Thee, for Thy name's sake!"

"Thou shouldest have obeyed the law of the emperor," retorted the proconsul, to whom the dying martyr answered, "I reverence no law but the law of God, which I have learned. This law I keep, for it I am willing to die. By this law I am made perfect; there is no other."

In the reign of Queen Mary, a young man, nineteen years of age, William Hunter, one day entered the chapel in his town, and began to read in the English Bible, which lay upon the desk there. "Sirrah," cried the priest, "who gave thee liberty to read the Bible, and to expound it?" From the priest he at length had to appear before the bishop, who sent him to the convict prison, and commanded the keeper to lay upon him as many irons as he could bear, and there Hunter was kept for nine months.

On one occasion the bishop sent for him, and offered him reward if he would recant, but Hunter answered: "I thank you for your great offer; notwithstanding, my lord, if you cannot persuade my conscience with the Scriptures, I cannot find it in my heart to turn from God for the love of the world." Then said the bishop, "If thou diest in this mind thou art condemned for ever."

His father and mother and his faithful brother saw him in the prison, and his mother declared her joy in having such a son, who could find it in his heart to lose his life for Christ's sake.

"For the little pain I shall suffer, which will soon be at an end, Christ hath promised me, mother," he answered, "a crown of joy. Should you not be glad of that?"

The godly parents kneeled down with their son, and, with tears, the mother said, "I pray God strengthen thee, my son, to the end."

When he was at the stake, a letter arrived from the Queen, and the sheriff said, "If thou wilt recant, thou shalt live; if not, thou shalt be burned."

A priest, who also sought his recantation, but in vain, cried to him, "Look how thou burnest here: so shalt thou burn in hell." As the flames gathered around him, he cast his psalter to his brother, and said, "I am not afraid;" then, lifting up his hands to heaven, said, "Lord, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit."

Surely Pagan Rome and Catholic Rome, are marvellously alike in their hatred to the Bible and to those who read it, and strangely alike is the grace of God to the martyrs, whether of Rome Pagan or Rome Catholic.

Do we Protestants think that Rome has changed because we live in the nineteenth century and not in the fifteenth century, or the third? Rome hates the Bible now as bitterly as ever, and she persecutes, when it is possible to do so, as in the olden times.

The strange story of the translation by Lasserre into French of the four gospels in the year 1886 bears out what we say of the undying hatred of Rome against the truth of God. This translation has a preface, in which Lasserre deplores the fact that the gospels are scarcely ever read by those who profess to be fervent Catholics, *and never by the multitude of the faithful.* "The gospel," says he, "the most illustrious book in the world, is become an unknown book," yet, he continues, all the fathers of the Church urged the people to read both the Old and New Testaments; and he most earnestly declares the necessity of leading back the faithful to the great fountain of living water which flows from the inspired book.

Strange to say, Lasserre's translation was commended by the Archbishop of Paris, and received the approval and benediction of the Pope! It became most popular in France, was read by thousands, passed most rapidly through many editions, when suddenly it was proscribed as a book of degraded doctrine, which no one was to read or possess! All the copies for sale have been recalled. The book is no longer to he had. The author has submitted to the voice of the Church! Rome once more has trampled out the truth of God from her fields in Christian France. Let all who would hear more of this strange story read the pamphlet, "The power behind the Pope," by Dr. Wright, price sixpence, published by Nisbet & Co., London.

Trusting the Lord.

A CHRISTIAN mother, known to me, has two little girls, one aged nine, the other seven. One evening I was reading the Scriptures with her, and as the children were listening attentively, I said to them, "You know the Lord Jesus may come at any moment, even to-night." The elder of them crying, answered, "Ah! I do hope Jesus won't come to-night, for my sins are not forgiven me," begging me to kneel down and pray for her.

Before doing this I asked the younger child how it would be with her should Jesus come. She said, with such a joyful face, "Oh! Mrs. T., I should like to see Him. I wish He would come to-night, for He has forgiven me all my sins."

We then prayed, the elder child crying all the time most bitterly. When we rose from our knees she said, "I am so wicked, I am afraid to go to sleep to-night lest Jesus should come and not take me." I told her to go up-stairs to her bedroom, and, when she was alone, to tell Him everything that was in her heart. She said she would go, if her little sister would come too, and the two children went together, the little one doing her best to comfort her sister, explaining to her the love of Jesus, and asking her to trust Him.

I would rather not mention the name of this dear child, or say where she lives. She is always doing something for Jesus. She writes letters, and puts them under the doors, or in the letter boxes of the houses where she has reason to think the people do not love the Saviour.

Once she felt so very sorry for a man whose life was a wicked one, that she wrote him an earnest little note, and then made so bold as to ask to speak to him of Christ. The man's life became quite changed after that. She so loves to spread the blessed name of Jesus as far as she can, and writes out verses of Scripture, and drops them on the road, and then prays to the Lord to make the people read them.

This dear child does all this little work quite alone, and does not say a word about these things to anyone. It is only by watching that I have found out what I now tell you, and discovered, that for two years—that is from the time we first read the Bible together—she has been thus occupied.

The mother of my little friend is very poor, and has many trials. One Saturday she was asking God to send them something for Sunday, if He would please to do so, for there was nothing in the house. As the evening grew on she said—

"It's quite clear God does not intend we should have anything for to-morrow."

"Oh, mother," said the child, "I feel sure He does, for I have asked Him to send us something for a fire, and some money too."

GOD WILL SEND US SOMETHING.

A few minutes later the last post came in, and the postman brought a letter with money in it, and as the mother opened it, her little girl said, "I was sure God would send it."

Trust Jesus, dear children, trust Him for all your sins, and bring to Him all your needs. The child believed the answer would come in answer to prayer, and God sent it. God is true, and if we go to Him in faith, nothing doubting, He will answer our prayers. F. T.

KARL AND FRITZ.

ONCE upon a time, my sister and I were staying in an hotel, close to a beautiful blue lake in Italy. There were a great many people in the house, and among them two little boys, with curling, fair hair, rosy cheeks, and bright blue eyes. They were noisy, merry, healthy little fellows, and we could hear them racing up and down the long corridors, with shouts of laughter that made us laugh too, as we sat quietly over our books or work.

We soon found out they were the children of an invalid German gentleman and his wife, who had rooms at the end of the passage that led past our doors. The poor sick father evidently did not much care for the noisy play of his restless little sons, for they were seldom in his room, and, when not out walking with their English nurse, they mostly made a play room, as I have told you, of the long corridors.

My sister and I, being both very fond of children, set our door open one evening, and without much difficulty, enticed the small German boys to come in. Karl and Fritz they said were their names, and that they were five and six years old. They could speak English prettily, and soon made themselves quite at home in our sitting-room; with busy fingers opening our work-boxes or photograph books, and wanting to know all about everything that they could find or see, just like you English children do.

They had not been long with us before we began to speak to them about Jesus, and how He loves little children, and how happy it is to belong to Him. Karl and Fritz opened their blue eyes wide, and came close to us to try to understand whom we were talking about, but plainly could make nothing of it. Then we found out that our dear wee visitors had never heard of God or the Lord Jesus; they did not know one word of all the beautiful things you have been taught. Was not that sad? They listened though, keeping quiet for a long time for such restless little boys, until it was time to run off to bed.

The next evening came a bang at our door, and then two merry faces popped in. We soon began to tell them some more about Jesus, for nothing pleased them so much, and when we said we would teach them to sing about Him, I cannot tell you how delighted they were. So we sang a little hymn, that I have no doubt many of you have learned:—

"Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so:
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.

"Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin;
Let a little child come in."

Our dear little boys sang out well, shouting the words with such glee that, even when the tune did not come quite right, it was pleasant to hear them, for they were so much in earnest. We had to talk over every line to make them quite understand it, and then sing it again and again. Afterwards we showed them a Bible, and explained that it was God's book, and Karl looked very grave as he handled it, but Fritz only jumped about the room, clapping his hands and singing, "Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so," like a dear little silly boy that he was.

They came for several evenings after this, and learned the hymn so well, that we thought it was time we took another. We began to teach them:—

"When He cometh, when He cometh,
To make up His jewels,
All His jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and His own.

"Like the stars of the morning,
His bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown.

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"He will gather, He will gather,
The gems for His kingdom;
All the pure ones, all the bright ones,
His loved and His own.

"Little children, little children,
Who love their Redeemer,
Are the jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and His own."

I cannot tell you what a great joy it was to dear little Karl when he heard that Jesus was really coming back again some day, and that we who love Him should then see Him, and go with Him into His beautiful home.

"Oh! will He come soon?" asked the boy, his face all in a glow—"will He come soon? I should be so glad."

"Yes, dear child, He says He is coming soon; we don't know how soon; it might be to-night, or we may have to wait a little while, but He certainly will come."

"But will He only take the little children when He comes?" he enquired very earnestly; "won't He take any big people to be 'gems in His crown?'"

"Oh yes, darling," I answered, "that He will. He will take all who love Him. However big and old, or however young and small they may be. They will all go together to Jesus' bright home, when He comes to make up His jewels."

"Then," asked Karl, lifting very earnest eyes to my face, "will He take my papa too?"

I could only draw Karl up to me, and kiss his little anxious face, as I answered, "You may be sure, darling child, He won't leave any behind who belong to Him."

"But does my papa belong to Him? Does he love Jesus?" urged Karl.

"I do not know your papa, Karl, and so cannot answer your questions." Karl's bright face had clouded over, and all he could say was, "I must ask papa; oh, I must ask papa if he loves Jesus, and if he will be glad when He comes."

And with these words on his lips, he drew Fritz out of the room, and shut the door behind them.

Day after day went by, and the quick steps of our little friends never hurried up to the door, and their merry, prattling voices were not heard in our room. At last, one day, I met the children on the broad staircase. They tried to run past me, turning their rosy faces away, but I caught hold of Karl, and asked—

"Why don't you and Fritz come and see us these evenings?"

He struggled to get away, saying, "Oh, we daren't—we mustn't—let me go;" and then he was off.

We were both so sorry, for we had grown to love our little Germans, and we were sure they loved us too. We feared their parents might have prevented their coming because we spoke to them of the things of God. Well, we prayed about it, and made up our minds we would go and call on the German lady and gentleman, and beg leave for the children to come to us again.

So, having sent to ask if they would see us, the next evening we went down the long corridor to their room. Our hearts sank when we first saw the father of dear little Karl, for, before he had said a word, we felt that his child's eager question was sadly answered by his unhappy face. It was not only that he looked terribly ill, as he lay upon the sofa, propped up with many cushions, but his poor, dying face had, oh! such a hard, miserable expression on it, and his eyes wandered round so restlessly and fretfully, telling but too plainly that he knew nothing of the love of God, or peace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

After a few kind words of sympathy about his illness, we turned to the mother, who sat with an anxious, weary look on her face, by the side of the sofa, and told her how much we loved her bonny boys, and how sorry we had been not to see them of late. She answered she was afraid they were very noisy little fellows, and that they must have tired us, and then she looked at her husband, as if she wanted him to say the rest. He thanked us for our kindness to his boys, but added he did not wish their religious education to be interfered with, and so would rather they did not go to us any more.

Very gently we replied that we would not wish to interfere with any education that he was giving his boys, but that we certainly

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had talked with them about Jesus, the Saviour whom God in His love had given to die for sinners, and that the story of His life and death must be sweet to all who felt their need of Him, whatever their religious training.

His pale face grew red as he answered angrily, "I don't wish my boys to hear such things. I don't believe in God or the Bible; and I wish my sons to think with me."

We tried in vain to get the poor sick man to see how awful it was for him to be living or dying without God and without hope; and we begged him at least to let his dear little boys hear of a Saviour who could fill their hearts with gladness, and their eternity with fulness of joy. The mother looked greatly distressed, but the father was only angry; and fearing we should perhaps make him more ill than he was, if we farther excited him, we got up and said good-bye, and sorrowfully left the room.

A few days later I saw Karl once again. I was going along the corridor and he was running full tilt towards me. He put his head down, and would have run past me, but I caught him with a hand on each shoulder, and kneeling down so as to bring my face on a level with his, I said slowly, "Darling little Karl, listen: Jesus loves you; this you know, for the Bible tells you so. *Never forget that.* And the Bible is *God's* word, and it is all *true.*" Karl nodded his head emphatically two or three times, as if to say that with all his heart he did believe it, but he did not speak. I kissed the sweet, rosy cheek for the last time, and he ran on. I never saw him again. They left the hotel soon after this.

And so my story is ended! Do you say, "But that is no end at all"? Well, no more it is, but I have told you all I know about Karl and Fritz. I sometimes pray there may be a bright and beautiful ending to their story by-and-by—that when Jesus comes to number up His jewels, my dear wee German friends may be found among the little children who love the Redeemer, and be bright gems for His crown.

Will you pray for them too? And, oh, do thank God, if you have parents who love to talk to you of Jesus.

D. & A. C.

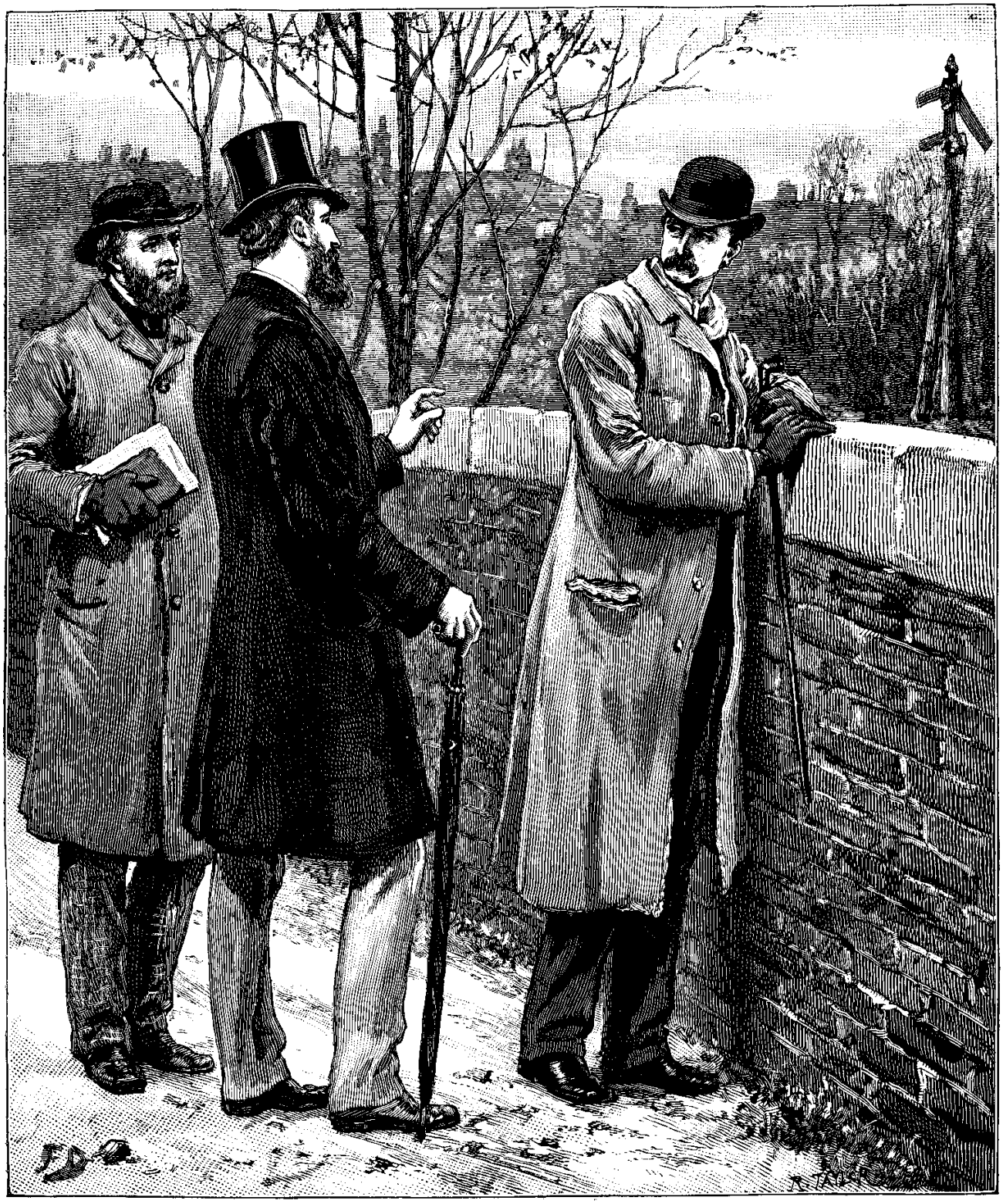
Texts for the Month.

WE have chosen texts this month on the SCRIPTURES. We wish that our dear young friends might not only find out where the texts occur, but learn them by heart. Anyway, will you read down all the texts, from the beginning to the end of the month, and note the variety of gracious and wonderful things the Scriptures declare concerning themselves.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
W	1	All Scripture is given by inspiration of God			
Th	2	Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.			
F	3	God, who...spake in times past...by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken...by His Son			
S	4	The Scripture cannot be broken...			
S	5	**Thy word is truth**			
M	6	The word of the Lord endureth for ever			
Tu	7	No...Scripture is of any private interpretation			
W	8	Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God			
Th	9	The word of God is not bound			
F	10	The word of God is quick and powerful			
S	11	Thy word hath quickened me			
S	12	**I will shew thee that which** is noted in the Scripture of truth			
M	13	Promised...by His prophets in the holy Scriptures			
Tu	14	Search the Scriptures...they are they which testify of Me			
W	15	Receive...the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls			
Th	16	Take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God			
F	17	Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby			
S	18	Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord			
S	19	**Lay up His words**			
M	20	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly			
Tu	21	Being born again...by the word of God			
W	22	Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it			
Th	23	I rejoice at Thy word, as one that findeth great spoil			
F	24	The souls of them that were beheaded...for the word of God			
S	25	Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written...that we through...comfort of the Scriptures might have hope			
S	26	**Ye received the word of God** ...not as the word of men, but as ...the word of God			
M	27	Noble...and searched the Scriptures daily			
Tu	28	Not...handling the word of God deceitfully			
W	29	If any...add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues ...written in this book			
Th	30	If any...take away from the words ...of this prophecy God shall take away his part out of the book of life			
F	31	I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



THE CALL.

THE CALL.

"HARK! What's that?"

"Oh, it is only the bugle-call of the rifle corps. They have to fall in for battalion-drill this afternoon."

Anon both speakers retire from their window of observation, and bestow their thoughts upon other matters. That bugle-call was no summons to them.

Very different results, however, were produced in Albert S. from the moment that his ears caught the sound, for that call bade him prepare to obey a second, which would soon sound, ordering him to "fall in."

Before the battalion band he will presently be seen, his axe upon his shoulder, a pioneer; his heart proudly exulting that he is thus preparing himself in the event of his services being required to fight in defence of his queen and country. And Albert S. stood high in the estimation of the members of the corps to which he belonged, for he had taken great pains to make himself efficient, and he was known to be a brave man.

One day, however, his courage was suddenly put to a severe test, and it failed him altogether. He was in the vicinity of Portsmouth on the occasion of a grand review, and then his soul was stirred to its utmost depths, but not by the clamour of trumpets, the clashing of weapons, or the roaring of cannon, but by the sight of five simple words which were painted up upon the side of a house, and the words were these: "Prepare to meet thy God."

This was a call to which he was consciously unfit to respond, and the fact caused his heart to sink within him.

When he had reached his home again, Albert S. was only too desirous to banish the incident from his mind. He was diligent enough in obeying the bugle-calls, but he tried to forget the heart-searching summons that had terrified him so much. Are you even now doing the same, dear reader? If so, may God make it impossible for you to forget these words, "Prepare to meet thy God."

Some two years after the occurrence narrated, Albert S. was standing upon a railway bridge. His health had failed him, and he had been compelled to give up his employment. No longer could he "fall in" in response to the bugle-call. The bridge was near his residence, and as he stood upon it he noticed that some one had written something on one of its sides, and he read these words: "*Prepare to meet thy God.*"

This *second* summons to prepare to meet his God, emphasized, as it certainly was, by the solemn fact that he was now weak and ill, was more than he could endure. That handwriting upon the wall filled him with terror, and he turned away to look over the opposite wall of the bridge, and at that very moment two servants of the Lord reached the spot.

They were going to visit a dying Christian, and, without knowing why, they had taken a rather roundabout route to get to his house, and so found themselves upon the bridge.

Their attention was arrested by the sight of the stranger, looking so ill and so melancholy. They accosted him in a gentle way, and spoke to him of the love of Christ. One of them passed on; the other paused, and looking Albert S. in the face, he said, "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD."

Did ever aspen leaf tremble more in the wind than Albert S. at this *third* summons. Terror-stricken, he wended his way home, wondering whither he could flee from the wrath to come!

God, who had sent these three calls to Albert S., now sent another of His servants to point the poor trembling sinner to Jesus, his Saviour and Deliverer. The Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears. He found in Christ salvation and peace, and the words, "Prepare to meet thy God," now lost their terrifying effect upon Albert S.'s heart and conscience.

So changed was he that, save One, none could have possibly foreseen that the once terror-stricken rifleman would become so bold and fearless as a good soldier of Jesus Christ? This was the Lord's doing, and marvellous in the eyes of those who were privileged to witness it.

To those about him, and to those who

came to visit him, Albert S. boldly testified of Jesus, who had delivered him from eternal death. He followed the Captain of our salvation in the bright assurance of His triumph. And when the last conflict came, Albert calmly and fearlessly awaited the coming up of the king of terrors, and with earnest gaze fixed upon Jesus, he said, "Is *this* death?" This was said in such a tone of triumph during the final struggle that those who stood by could but realize that in all things we are more than conquerors through Him that loveth us.

Reader, prepare to meet thy God. A. J.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

SOME four or five years ago, God was richly blessing His word in the village of A——, and the surrounding district. How truly could it be said at that time, the kingdom was being taken by force, for old and young, rich and poor, were striving to enter in, and many were saved.

Amongst those who heard of this work of God's Spirit was a young woman, a servant in a house in the neighbourhood. She was thoroughly aroused, and was brought under deep conviction of sin. Night after night she went to the services, but, although greatly in earnest to obtain peace, she found it not. The series of meetings came to a close, and she remained without the joy of salvation. Morning, noon, and night, for two years, there raged within her breast a tempest of despair. "For two years!" Yes, for two long years, for her own lips made the statement on the night God gave her peace.

As the months went by, anxiety as to her soul increased, sleep forsook her, appetite failed, and her friends feared that she would lose her reason. She waded through these waters of soul-trouble alone, for, foolishly, she never breathed a word to anyone regarding the matter. At length her health broke down, and she had to give up her situation and return home; but even there she maintained her silence.

Having a sister in an adjoining town she was persuaded to visit her, in the hope that the change might prove beneficial. Her sister, a true Christian, soon saw what ailed her, and, among other efforts to help, took the anxious enquirer to gospel services.

Every Saturday evening an open-air preaching was held on the Exchange, and to this the two sisters went. The duties of the one resident in town called her home early, so she left her sister listening eagerly to the preacher, with the earnest prayer that the Lord would bless her with the knowledge of Himself.

As the meeting dispersed, those who were anxious about their souls were invited into an adjoining hall for personal conversation, and our young friend went among the number.

Some believers present, having ascertained her spiritual state, directed her to the word of God; but all seemed of no avail, for midnight darkness rested upon her soul. However, the darkest hour often precedes the dawn. Falling down upon their knees, these Christians asked the Lord to dispel the gloom, and lead the truly heart-broken sinner into His light. Rising from prayer, one of them drew from his pocket a small article, and, laying it upon the form at a little distance from her, said, "Suppose I were to give you this as a present; let me ask you, would it be yours?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Are you sure?"

"Certain."

"Now tell me, what have you to do to become the possessor of it?"

After a moment's silence she replied, slowly and thoughtfully, "Take it"; and then she broke forth, "Oh! I see it—I see it!—the Saviour presents Himself to me, and I must take Him."

"To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

As the divine light stole gradually into her soul she lifted up her voice in adoring praise to the blessed Redeemer who had revealed Himself to her.

Are you, my reader, seeking Jesus? Be not cast down, although after many days' search you have not found Him: He is waiting to bless you. J. G.

WITHOUT MONEY AND WITHOUT PRICE.

IN one of the many dark villages of Spain, several persons were lately brought into the marvellous light of the gospel of God's grace. Although isolated from other Christians, having only an occasional visit from any of the Lord's servants, those young converts were kept bright in the joy of salvation; and meeting together on the Lord's days, to read the Scriptures, encouraged one another in the faith.

Such proceedings could not fail to attract attention in a Roman Catholic village, and though the consistent lives of the Christians excited some measure of admiration among their neighbours, still they were stigmatized as heretics by the community in general.

An aged shepherdess, named Beltazara, who lived in a lonely hut on the hillside above the village, heard of the joy and peace that some of its inhabitants had found, and sighed that she knew nothing of it. In her old age and loneliness, she had long pined for the assurance of a bright and eternal home, where her wearied spirit would find the love and the rest that had not been her portion in this world. From her very small earnings, she weekly laid by a little sum, which she handed over to the priest, that he should purchase for her an entrance into heaven; but her troubled conscience made her still uneasy, lest it should prove insufficient to bring so great a boon, much as she had to stint herself to give it.

At length, Beltazara determined to seek out those who were rejoicing in a present salvation, and to unburden her mind to them. The little band of Christians welcomed her lovingly, and, hearing her trouble, rejoiced to find that she was a hungering soul.

Shortly after this, two Christian women, who laboured much for the Lord in Madrid, visited this village, and were at once asked to speak to Beltazara. They had long conversations together, during which, with many tears, Beltazara declared her readiness to give anything or to do anything for her soul's salvation. She was slow to drink in the wondrous truth of God's love in providing a Saviour, and her anxiety of soul seemed at first but to deepen. Far into the night she would stay, in eager converse with her patient teachers, who simply and earnestly sought to make it plain to her that Jesus had died to purchase pardon for the sinner, and that now it was offered to her freely, "without money and without price."

Beltazara's astonishment was great when she at length grasped the fact that the priest was powerless to open the gates of heaven to her, and that her hardly-earned savings had been but thrown away. Not long afterwards she was enabled to simply cast herself, as a lost sinner, at the Saviour's feet, and, fully trusting in His finished work, she received forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting in Him.

Beltazara now proved the enmity of the world, for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Her humble dwelling was attacked, great stones being hurled at it by the angry Roman Catholics, which not only threatened the destruction of the little hut, but also endangered her life. However, God graciously preserved her, and kept her faith from failing, and enabled her to stand unflinchingly for the Lord.

The priests became thoroughly alarmed, seeing one after another of their flock abandoning the idolatrous practices of their fathers, and forsaking the worship of saints and images. They made a house to house visitation, carefully choosing an hour when they would find the women alone, hoping that in the absence of their husbands they would the more easily win them back again. Many of those simple souls could not even read, but, spirit-taught, were enabled to silence their opponents. One, who was rather more intelligent in the word than the others, was a special object of the priests' attack. They remained about an hour and a half in argument with her, Beltazara being present. The missioners declared to this woman, that as a heretic, she was condemned already, and going straight to hell.

"Then, if you please, sirs, what must I do to be saved?" repeating the question of the jailor in Acts xvi.

They replied, "Burn the Protestant books; return to the church of your fathers; con-

fess your sins to the priest; do penance, and if you wish to read a gospel, we will give you one that is suitable for you."

"How different is your gospel from that of St. Paul," she quietly replied. "He says, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.' (Acts xvi. 31.) Thanks be to God, I have proved the blessed truth of it in my own soul, and not for all the world would I part with His precious word."

And so the baffled priests had to leave as they had come, having utterly failed in persuading this faithful disciple of Christ to return to her delusive religion.

Beltazara's delight, at their defeat, was unbounded. The dear old woman, wishing to express her satisfaction at the divine wisdom with which her friend had met their arguments, sought to bestow a reward according to her means. Drawing a penny from her pocket, she said to a little girl standing near, "Run and buy her a small loaf, for she has answered very well."

I cannot tell you more about Beltazara at this time, but I would ask you, dear reader, if you have learned what God taught this poor woman, that salvation is "without money and without price"? (Is. lv. 1), or are you bringing something to God, thinking to purchase it? No doubt you do not offer him money, as Beltazara did, through her priest, but you may be bringing Him your good deeds, your prayers, or your religious observances. God can no more accept these, than He could her money, to purchase admittance into heaven, Oh! I pray you, come to the Saviour just as you are, a poor, vile, guilty sinner. Trust to the finished work of Christ, which is all sufficient for the soul's salvation. Let the language of your heart be:

> "Lord, I come, my sins confessing,
> Jesus' blood my only plea,"

and you will prove that God is true to His word: "the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.)

W. W. H.

EIGHTY YEARS!

ON visiting in the West of England, a short time ago, I called to see a dear old Christian, who for many years had been rejoicing in Christ as her Saviour. Finding her husband at home, and knowing him to be unsaved, and unconcerned about his soul, I sought an opportunity of speaking to him. His wife having said how feeble he was, I enquired after his health. He replied, "I have never been ill in my life, but I now sometimes feel giddy and shaky."

I asked him his age.

"I am eighty years old," he answered, "and what can you expect?"

As he was very deaf, I moved my chair closer to him, and said, "You have eighty years of sins to meet your God with. What will you do with them?" and then proceeded to tell him that unless, as a poor, lost sinner, he came to Christ, and trusted the precious blood, which alone can avail for sin, he must for ever bear the judgment of God Himself.

At this he looked astonished, exclaiming, "You are making a mistake about me! I have never done any harm; I have always paid my way, and been respectable. And although I never went to church but the day I was married, I am a good deal better than many that do go."

"Ah! but," I answered, "you were born in sin, and you have been practising it all your life. Your whole history for eighty years is one dark cloud of sin. But the God against whom you have sinned loves sinners, and gave His Son to die for our sake. This moment eighty years of sin will be blotted out for ever by the precious blood of Him who died, if you confess your sinfulness and trust the Saviour."

His dear wife fell on her knees, saying, "O God! nobody ever told my poor Charley so straight as that before. Save him now, Thou must save him now." Her prayer was heard; the Spirit of God wrought conviction in his soul, and gave our aged friend to see the darkness of his sins. Thus after many years of blindness to the reality of his guilt before God, his eyes were opened, he saw his need and sought for mercy.

A few months later, I received a letter from a friend, telling me how happy the old man was—sometimes singing, sometimes praying, but never doubting the efficiency of the precious blood. Often he would say, "Eighty

years of sin! Ah! the precious blood! Oh, the depth of the riches! Grace! Eighty years of sin! Precious blood!"

Friend, on what are your hopes built for eternity? You may have trodden the paths of sin for many years, every step bringing you nearer the end. Are you trusting in any fancied goodness of your own? The devil will help you to cast a veil over the dark life of sin, but it will be stripped off, and the great question will have to be faced, and you, the sinner, must bear the judgment due to your sins to all eternity, unless you are sheltered by the precious blood of the Son of God.

How can we speak of the judgment of God against sin? Never was the hatred of God so fully seen against sin as at the cross, nor was the love of God to sinners ever more fully manifested than there. The cross will stand for ever, as a declaration of God's righteousness in the judgment of sin, and of His love in the pardon of sinners who believe in Jesus.

Think of the greatness of God's love to you in the suffering and death of Jesus; every drop of that precious blood, which was shed on Calvary, proclaims God's love before heaven, earth, and hell.

May you, with dear old Charley, trust that blood that cleanseth from all sin. T—R.

A YOUNG MAN'S DECISION FOR CHRIST.

I HAVE recently heard of the conversion of a young man, whom the Lord was pleased to save in answer to much prayer.

His father, mother, and sister were Christians, and he went with them willingly to gospel services, prayer meetings, and Bible-readings. He seemed to have a great desire to know Christ as his Saviour; still, on being asked if he was saved, he would say "he hoped to be."

The enemy thus hindering him from entering into peace, I asked him on one occasion why he did not decide for Christ. He answered that he did not know what it was, but felt that something was holding him back.

I invited him to attend a meeting at a few miles' distance, and he accompanied me by train. We had to walk back, and as we went along I was much impressed to ask him to decide there and then, believing that the Lord was only waiting to hear his "I will."

After some hesitation, he said, frankly, "Yes, I will decide." Light broke upon his soul as I repeated this text to him, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that *heareth* My word, and *believeth* on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is passed* from death unto life," and, fully trusting in Christ, he was enabled to say that he knew he was saved.

He has since taken his stand with the people of God in his neighbourhood. E. R.

Power from on High.

POWER! Oh, how God's servants yearn for more power! How shall the fight be fought against the forces of infidelity and superstition, and how shall the vast mass of indifference be broken up? How shall captives be won for Christ, and the number of His soldiers be increased?

It would almost seem that, as they sigh over present infidelity, several of God's servants are growing faint-hearted. They say: "People's minds are taken up with the popular religious notions of the day, and they simply ridicule the old truths of the Bible." Others of God's servants seem so occupied with, what may be termed, religious machinery, that they find but little leisure to go down deep into the workings within the hearts of men.

True it is, that one contented with the noise and show of religious machinery will not perceive the need of which we speak. The flourishing cause, the well-filled building, the elegant music, the eloquent discourse, do not mean power; with all such things existing, the power of God the Holy Ghost may be absent, and the end be but building up the profitless "wood, hay, stubble" which will be burned up in the great day. (1 Cor. iii. 10, 12, 13.) "A successful church does not mean souls won for Christ," said a minister of a London congregation to us the other day. There also may be the exact opposite of all this exteriorism, and instead, the plain religious service, the orthodox congregation,

coming and going week after week. But still no movement of God the Holy Ghost, no witness of His work—nay, the spirit of stagnation.

Certain evidences mark the existence of spiritual power in a community of believers. There will be holiness in life and walk, love to Christ, devotion to the sick and the poor, caring one for another in the affections of Christ; and also there will be a gathering out from the world and the ranks of the enemy of sinners for God and for Christ. Neither the whirl and bustle of mere religious machinery, nor a state of stagnation, can exist in the presence of true power.

THE NEED OF POWER FELT.

Once let the soul of a believer be awakened to the fact that divine power is needed, and the desire be awakened in his heart for the work of God, then hope is near, for a step is taken out of the former state of contentment.

POWER WHICH IS OF GOD.

Power! What do we mean? Power that is not common to men, power that no strength of man can attain to, power which is above, beyond, outside all mere human ability—the power of God. None, save God, can really turn the heart of man to God—none, save God, can fire the Christian with divine energy, or make the sinner feel his sins.

When our Lord was leaving this earth for heaven He said to His disciples, "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." (Luke xxiv. 49.) They had had the advantage of His blest company and guidance, but nevertheless they were not fitted for the work before them without being endued with power from on high. Even all that they had seen and heard of Jesus would not suffice—even all the knowledge of His ways, and the memory of His words, would not effect the end required—they must first be endued with the power from on high.

NO POWER OF OURSELVES.

Power from on high! How these words take us out of ourselves! We lift up our eyes to God our Father, and to our Lord in heaven. We are nothing; we can do nothing. What! do we heartily, honestly thus speak? If so, there is a further step gained. Yes, when we truly believe our own inability, we are on the way to power, provided we believe it not as a doctrine, but as a reality—believe it not in the abstract, but for our very selves—believe it in the presence of God, for such belief cannot exist as a dead thing in the soul.

GOD THE HOLY GHOST, THE POWER OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

The power is of God the Holy Ghost. His coming to earth is the promise of the Father, and when the Lord ascended to heaven He sent the Holy Ghost to earth to abide with us for ever. He came to be the Comforter, who should not depart, but who should dwell in us, and be with us; He came to be the Teacher, to lead us into all truth; He came to be the energy within, who should work in us, so that He might use us to be God's instruments for the cause and glory of Christ.

The Holy Ghost has come—this we believe. We have read of His coming to the earth in the book of Acts, just as we read of Christ's coming to the earth in the gospels; we believe one reality even as we believe the other. We know, too, that He is here carrying out the promise of the Lord. May we not add that here again we have another step, for herein is faith in the truth of God's word—yea, in the verity of the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth.

Nevertheless, we feel that, with these steps taken, how very little of the power from on high is really in us. We stand, for example, face to face with a godless soul, a sceptic, an indifferent spirit, or, shall we say, with one halting between two opinions, or, perhaps, with one who is seeking salvation. But how little penetrative force is in our words! They seem to glance off—or, if they seem to enter, they enter too slightly, and the one to whom we speak remains very nearly in the same state as before we spoke. Or shall our example be the public service? The sermon is preached, but who cries to God for salvation.

WHAT IS LACKING?

Now comes the crucial question: "How is it, why is it," says the servant of Christ, "that I have so little power?" On God's side,

we may reverently say, no hindrance exists. He has sent the Holy Spirit to the earth to be with the church and in His people. If, therefore, there is lack of power in serving Christ, the hindrance lies in the servant.

CERTAIN THINGS REQUIRED.

There are certain things on the part of the servant of God which, we may say, God requires of him who would be used in His service, and of these we place first, *faith*.

Again and again, as the disciples beheld the Lord's works, He enjoined on them faith. Our faith is a condition that God lays down as a necessity, if His power is to be manifested through us. We do not speak of the great works that God has wrought by His power through the agency of His servants, or of marked periods in the history of the church, but of such works as every true-hearted worker feels would surely accompany his feeble efforts for his Lord, were there not some lack in him, or some hindrance through him. If, then, in the most humble service of the Lord, there is barrenness, we must enquire how it stands with our souls and with God, and ask, Have we faith?

Faith is not barren. Where there is genuine faith there are patience and courage. Faith is not mere enthusiasm, but it is the very nerve and fibre of spiritual work. It cannot be explained or measured, but it is that link with God, that keeping touch with Him about the business in hand, which makes that special business conducted in the power of God.

All this is known experimentally by every true worker for the Lord, who has felt these things again and again, but who, none the less, may have worked on at times for months together and yet have failed in faith!

Prayer should be our next exhortation to ourselves. "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting" (Mark ix. 29), said the Lord to His disciples, when they were astonished both at their own inability and at His might. We may certainly say, the greater the faith the more the prayer. There may be much praying, at least at public meetings, and remarkably little prayer. There may be the sound of prayer, but no praying.

The Lord associates fasting with prayer, therefore self-denial and dependence are necessities if we would be vessels fit for the Master's use. We cannot live in self-seeking and be used of God, neither can we work in our own strength and be used of God. True prayer comes from a true heart. We need to look into our hearts and see if there be any evil thing harboured there, which hinders our simplicity of trust, and which mars in us the spirit of prayer. We refer especially to private prayer, for if right there, we shall not be far astray in the season of public prayer.

Where there is faith and prayer *communion* flows out as a consequence. The servant whose heart is, as we have said, in touch with God will be in communion with God. Unless there be communion with God how can the heart receive His communications? There may be great zeal and much labour, yet both may be misdirected. We cannot expect to fulfil our Master's will unless we first obtain our Master's bidding. We must not expect to have the power of God the Spirit with us in service, if we are running our own errands. "Who will go for us?" precedes, "Here am I: send me." Very frequently the true use of a servant is lost because he is working in a wrong place, or in a wrong way. When we speak of faith we do not mean faith in the prosecution of our own ends, but faith in God to carry out His will, and all the prayer possible will not avail if "we ask amiss."

Now God has given His Spirit to be in and with His people; the power from on high is here! Let us see to it that we are not hinderers of His working in us to the blessing of others, and to the glory of His Son, in these days when power is so deeply needed.

CHRIST'S JOY AND HIS PEOPLE'S JOY.

HE shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied; they shall see His face, and His Name shall be in their foreheads. He shall look round upon the vast company of the redeemed, and shall see His heart's desire fulfilled in their presence with Him in glory; they shall look upon the face of the Lamb, and behold His joy, and the radiance of His joy and glory shall be reflected from their foreheads.

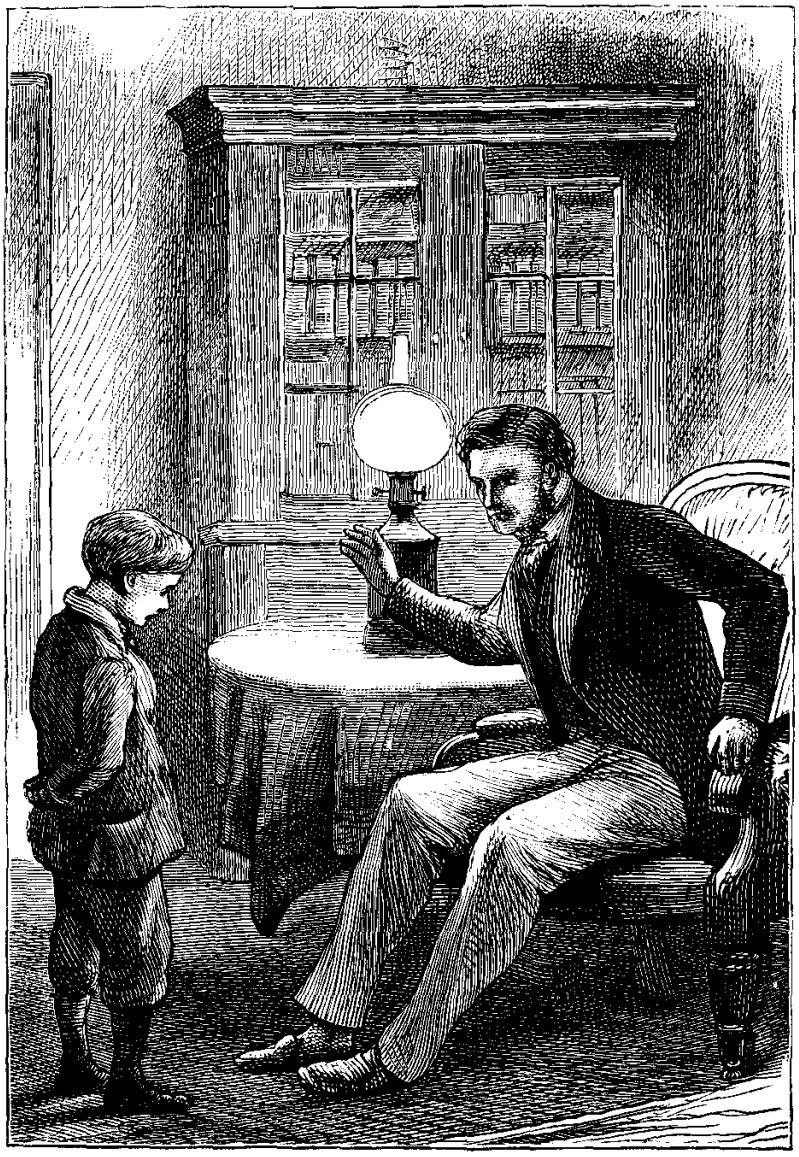
Five Boys.

A FEW years ago I was staying at the seaside with five boys. I longed to see them saved. I knew we should soon have to be separated, and I thought, possibly, we might never meet again, so I read God's word to the lads, and explained it to them. One at least of them I had good hope did love Christ, and it occurred to me to have a little talk with each one separately on the evening before I left them, and to ask each pointedly if he were saved.

So I began with the eldest. He told me he was saved, and in response to very close questioning he gave me to believe the reality of his confession. The next was self-righteous—he was full of his own goodness—so I had to rebuke him by telling him Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. The third seemed broken-hearted, but there was, I fear, no reality in his case. The fourth surprised me, for I did not expect such earnestness from him. He was most solemn and real, and said he was saved; he wished to show his colours, and asked me if he might walk with me the next day, and buy some texts for his bedroom walls, to put them there when he returned home. The fifth was light and indifferent. So we parted.

About a year afterwards I saw all these dear boys again, and found that two of them were really living for Christ. They have been a great blessing to many of their schoolfellows and companions, and one of them has had the joy of seeing his brothers saved. God's precious word, wherever it is received into the heart, brings forth fruit to His glory.

Older Christians should not be so slow in speaking of God's beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to children. Youth is the age, of all others, in which the truth is most readily received. Even if it does not spring up for years, it is often sown on good ground when we do not know it. We are responsible to



ONE OF MY FIVE BOYS.

God to sow the precious seed. He will water it, and cause it to grow.

How sweet to see the lambs of Christ's flock praising Him! Some little time since I was one evening where a dear little boy of five years of age was singing—

"And such a cruel death He died—
He was hung up and crucified,
And those kind hands that did such good
They nailed them to a cross of wood."

"Why did they kill Jesus like that?" he said.

"Because we are sinners," I answered.

"But why did they nail him to the cross?" he continued.

"If He had not been nailed there, you and I could not go to heaven," I answered, "for His blood washes away our sins."

"But," continued he, "I don't see why they should kill Him so cruelly, for He looks so good."

"What!" said I; "have you seen Him?"

"Yes; up in heaven," he answered.

God can reveal Himself to a dear child. Little do older people recognise what goes on in the heart of a child—how that the Lord Jesus speaks to children, and fits them for heaven. T.

I HAVE GIVEN MYSELF TO GOD.

AT the time I am about to relate, Ethel was eight years old. She was one of many children who regularly came to our children's services, and we often had little conversations with her. Although so young, she was thirsting for the water of the fountain of life.

One Sunday evening, she said to me, "I've given myself to God to-night," and, then referring to the address, she said, "It was such a sweet story, that when it was over I was wishing it was going to be told all over again, and then it seemed as though Mr.—, the speaker, knew my thoughts, for he gave out the hymn, 'Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and His love.' Why, here it is all over again, I thought, and just when the others were singing I was giving myself to God."

Dear little Ethel! she is now one of the number who are waiting to see the Lord Jesus face to face when He comes. Shortly after this, I found that Ethel was longing that her sister, too, might drink of the water of life. I. V.

Texts for the Month.

THE texts chosen for the month relate to PRIESTHOOD AND ACCESS TO GOD.

			Book.	Chap.	Ver.
S	1	The Son of God abideth a Priest continually			
S	2	**Because He continueth** ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood			
M	3	He is able...to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him			
Tu	4	We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God			
W	5	He ever liveth to make intercession			
Th	6	Having...boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus			
F	7	In whom we have boldness and access with confidence			
S	8	An High Priest.....in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin			
S	9	**Every high priest is ordained** to offer gifts and sacrifices			
M	10	Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come			
Tu	11	Through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God			
W	12	By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified			
Th	13	Jesus made a surety of a better testament			
F	14	There is...one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus			
S	15	He is the Mediator of the new testament			
S	16	**In Christ Jesus ye...are** made nigh by the blood of Christ			
M	17	Through Him we...have access by one Spirit unto the Father			
Tu	18	By whom...we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand			
W	19	Accepted in the Beloved			
Th	20	We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous			
F	21	Christ that died...also maketh intercession for us			
S	22	Christ is...entered into...heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us			
S	23	**I am the Way...no man** cometh unto the Father, but by Me			
M	24	No man can come to Me, except the Father...draw him			
Tu	25	Every man...that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me			
W	26	I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved			
Th	27	Ye...are...an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices			
F	28	Ye are...a royal priesthood...that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness			
S	29	Thou...hast made us unto our God kings and priests			
S	30	**They shall be priests of** God and of Christ			

An Unholy Alliance.

JEHOSHAPHAT, the pious King of Judah, and Ahab, the impious King of Israel, had allied themselves together. "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses," said Jehoshaphat to Ahab. They were going to make war for Ahab's benefit. They had feasted together, and now they sat upon their thrones together in the sight of the city of Samaria. It was a strange thing to witness the king who had served God so well, who had done so much to destroy the idols in Judah, and who had received such great tokens of divine deliverance, in alliance with the king whose lifetime had been one of rebellion against Jehovah, who had done "very abominably in following idols," and who was a proverb for selling "himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord." Could such an alliance prosper?

In prospect of the coming battle, Jehoshaphat said to Ahab, "Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day." Then Ahab assembled his prophets together—about four hundred men. These were probably the prophets attached to the calves of gold set up by Jeroboam, who by them "made Israel to sin." These idols were set up to prevent Israel from going up to Jerusalem to worship Jehovah in the place the Lord ordained to set His name there. So the kings sat, and the prophets stood around them and spake smooth things: "Go up to battle," they cried, "and prosper."

But Jehoshaphat was uneasy: "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him?" he asked. He was in a most humiliating position. He had committed himself to the alliance with Ahab, yet he looked for Divine guidance. Let this spirit of contradiction be a warning to ourselves, for God does not guide in an evil path, but out of it.

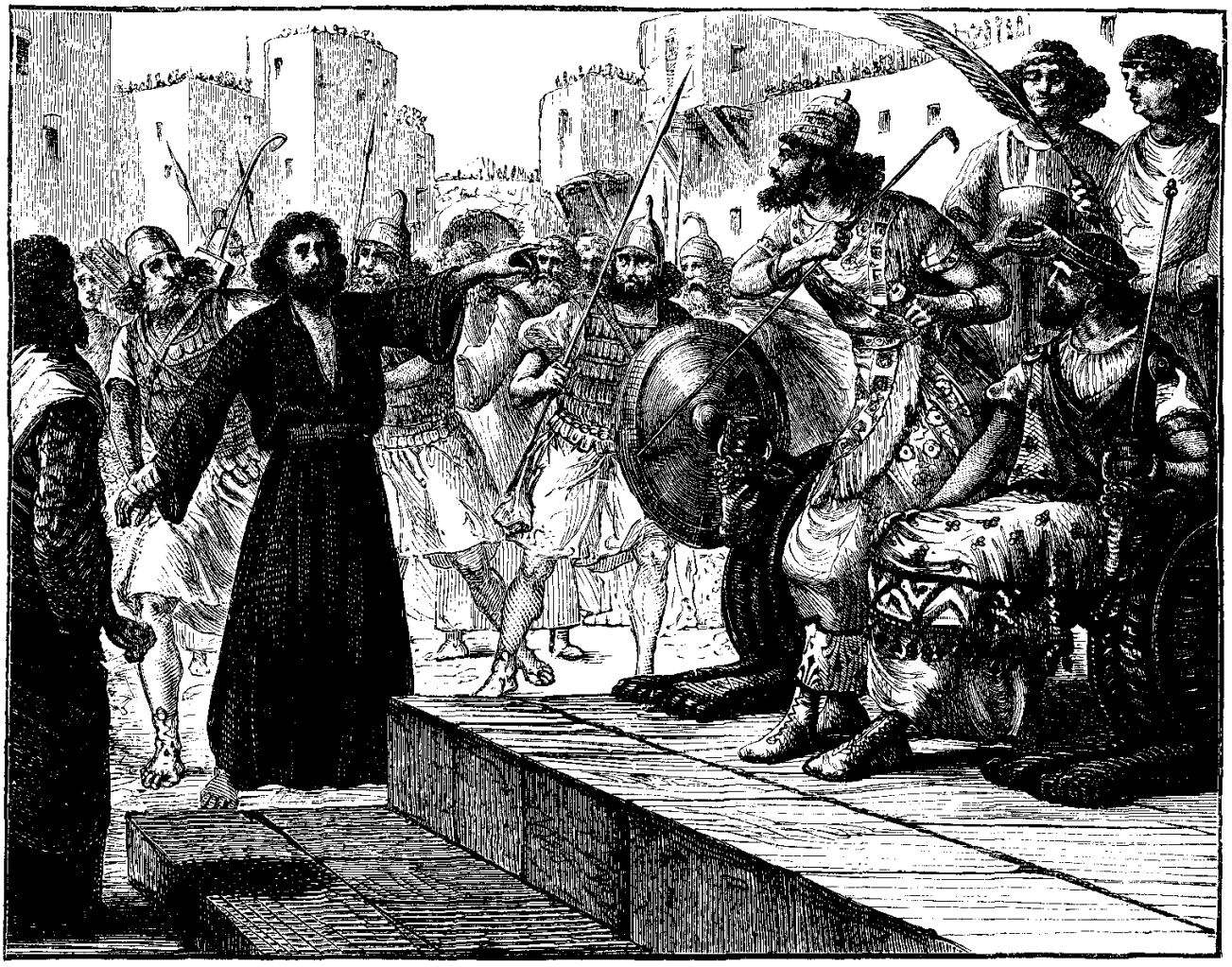
There was one prophet of Jehovah left in Samaria, and he was in prison. "I hate him," Ahab had said, "for he doth not prophecy good concerning me, but evil." However, to please Jehoshaphat, Micaiah was sent for.

While he was coming, all the prophets prophesied prosperity, and one of them for Jehoshaphat's special benefit added to his words a "Thus saith Jehovah." This was Zedekiah, who had brought horns of iron to emphasise his prophecy. "Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them," he cried. These iron horns—these emblems of power—offered the very assurance the kings wished to have, and the accommodating spirit proclaimed the future the kings desired. The promise of what they wished for was given to them in the Lord's name by the lying spirit. We may well take this solemn warning to our every-day life, for a lying prophet who foretells an issue in accordance with our wishes will ever be at hand when we have departed from the plain commands of our God.

Presently the messenger brought Micaiah to the kings, and on the way he bade him speak like the rest—"The prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good." Be popular, Micaiah, go with the stream, it is a great day for union; see you not that all are of one mind; be thou, therefore, harmonious! Does not the same sentiment now echo around? All are for unity, all are for sinking their differences—what matters it whether a man discredit the Bible, or teach that the atonement of Christ is a fable; what matters it whether we believe nothing or everything?—let us be one. Yes! let the pious be one with the impious, the believer with the infidel, only let us be in alliance. Speak good things, for it is the fashion. Away with the old narrow-minded spirit; away with the old and hard belief of the Scriptures!

Thus enjoined, Micaiah stood before the kings and the four hundred prophets of good, and to the loud chorus of their voices, saying, with one assent, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper," he echoed, mockingly, "Go! and prosper."

But his tones galled Ahab, who adjured him in Jehovah's name to deliver the message Jehovah had given him. Then Micaiah declared his vision of defeat and ruin—even all Israel scattered upon the hills as sheep



MICAIAH AND THE KINGS.

without a shepherd—and lifted the vail, and showed the mystery of a lying spirit blinding men's eyes, the mystery of God-sent delusion making the rebels against Him believe lies.

This solemn warning, which he himself had sought, failed to move Jehoshaphat. It was too late; he had committed himself and his people to Ahab's cause. He could not retire from his position. So far did he fall, that he heard the ungodly king's sentence on Micaiah, and saw him carried off to the dungeon for delivering the message of God. How Ahab's prophets must have despised Jehoshaphat at that moment!

It is easy enough to compromise the truth, and to ally oneself with rebels against God, but it is utterly vain to hope to compromise the alliance, for when once allied with the enemies of God, the people of God are forced into giving up the truth and their conscience, while of necessity their moral influence vanishes.

There is a remarkable comment on the effect of Micaiah's words—if we may term it—in the narratives of this incident in both the books of Kings and Chronicles. "So the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead." It is as if the Spirit of God would indicate to us, for whose sakes these things are written, how steep the down-grade is, and how fatal it is once to get in motion upon it. "*So*"!—the sequence to the solemn warnings of Jehovah's prophet is this—"*So*" Jehoshaphat went down, down to the bitter end!

Christian readers! Let us look to the end. Temporizing with evil, uniting with the

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enemies of God's truth, may be popular; there may be the four hundred prophets of good foretelling the favourable result of such a course on the one side, and the solitary prophet warning of evil on the other, but the end will be as God has proclaimed it shall be. Therefore, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (2 Cor. vi. 14-16.)

The battle came, and the word of Jehovah was fulfilled. The allied army was broken up; Ahab fell mortally wounded in his chariot, Jehoshaphat fled to save his life. The end of the unholy alliance was defeat, and shame, and death.

Let us take our warning from the story, for God has declared that what a man sows that also shall he reap, and in our times the temptations to compromise the truth and to enter into alliances with the enemies of God's word is terribly severe, and numbers of God's people are falling under the temptation, and are thus losing the value of their conscience, while their moral influence vanishes away. If a Christian man desire to be despised by the enemies of the truth, let him ally himself with them. If he desire to bring shame and dishonour upon His Lord's Name, let him associate that Name with Belial. Defeat, shame, and death are the results of an unholy alliance.

The Christian Priesthood and Persecuting Priests.

IT should ever be before the Christian's sight that Christ Himself is the key to the mysteries of true Christianity. Were this principle more fixed in the minds of Christians, very much of the infidelity and the superstition of the day would have no place with them. The Lord is now risen from the dead, and ascended to glory on high, having been once slain, and from His position of glory the peculiar blessings of Christianity issue forth. Our present paper has for its subject the Christian priesthood, and we recognize what this really is, as we recognize the glories of Christ in His priesthood on high.

In the Jewish economy, God, in His sovereignty, called Aaron to the priesthood, and ordained that Aaron's sons should be the priests in Israel; hence, such only as were descended from Aaron could minister before God, and for the people in the worship of God. Now the Son of God, by the oath of God, is consecrated High Priest for evermore (Heb. vii. 28), and the Jewish priesthood is put aside. Christ is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister there of the sanctuary, which Jehovah Himself has made (viii. 1, 2) a holy place, worthy of Him whose honour it is to serve there. Wondrous, indeed, is the grace of God! For serving His people who are on earth, and being in God's presence for them in heaven, is an honour to the Son of God.

The glory of the Son of God in His high priestly office, eclipses that of every other high priest, and the holy place in heaven itself, of God's ordaining, in which Christ now ministers, occasions every earthly sanctuary to be but a mean thing. The old sanctuary in Israel was made of earthly things, after the pattern of heavenly things; the excellencies of its shadows consisted in the heavenly realities they portrayed. Now the crowns, the honours belong to God's High Priest in heaven; the tiaras and the tinsel to man-made priests on earth. True Christianity does not concern itself with such earthly things as gold and jewels, but with heavenly realities.

As the family of the high priest of old formed the true priestly class on earth, so now that class is formed solely of the people of the High Priest above,—Christ, the Lord. In Israel there was an inner circle, comprised of the Levites and the priests; in Christianity every one of Christ's people is of the same circle, and is a priest to God. There can be no inner circle in true Christianity, since all of Christ's people are, in Him, absolutely near to God. The whole company of those

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whom Christ has cleansed by His blood are a kingdom of priests to God and His Father, and they are priests by virtue of the work of Christ. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. i. 5, 6.) The people of God collectively are "an holy priesthood," and "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9), and they have, each one of them, "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." (Heb. x. 19.) Thus does the Holy Spirit of God use the inspired pens of St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul to teach us who are of the Christian priesthood.

The glory of Christ in heaven in His present ministry in the presence of God for His people, is bound up with the truths of Christian priesthood, as also are the privileges and holy liberty of His people on earth in their worship.

We search the New Testament Scriptures in vain for the mention of any priestly class among Christians; indeed, the only priests there spoken of are Jewish or heathen, excepting, as we have observed, the whole company of true Christians. No man is a priest to God now, who is not washed by Jesus the Lord in His own blood, and whom Jesus the Lord has not Himself made a priest.

In Judaism the priests stood between God and the people, and were His divinely appointed agents to bring to God the sacrifices of the worshippers, but when, at the sacrifice of His Son, God rent the vail of the Temple, such service came to an end. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18), and now "through Him we both" (Jews and Gentiles) "have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. ii. 18.)

Before the establishment by God of a priesthood upon this earth, the heathen had priests, who, dwelling in their idol temples, engaged themselves with their mysteries. These men stood aloof from the generality; they were venerated as having access to the gods, and were regarded with superstitious awe by the masses of their nation. The notion of a class being by virtue of their class holy men, is common all over the earth, but is refused by true Christianity.

Every evangelic minister of God rejects the assumption of a priestly class, and abhors the idea of a priest offering sacrifice to God to propitiate Him on behalf of sinful men, or of a priest standing between God and those who would approach Him. And we may say that no one, who knows that Christ died for him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood, and has made him a king and priest to God, His Father, could tolerate in his soul the assumption of a man standing between Him and God. No such freed-man could bear the bondage of going to the priest instead of going direct to his God.

The present belief in the priestly class grew up in Christendom by degrees. Towards the close of the first century the pretension of the Christian ministry to direct sacerdotal claims was first asserted, and gradually the notion of a sacred order of men amongst Christians leavened Christianity. As individual piety waned, so the spirit of having a man's religion conducted for him by another developed; as men's souls grew in distance from God, so they were glad to have mediators and intermediaries in their religious services. By degrees the doctrines of, "Go to the holy man," supplanted the gospel truth of "Go to the blessed God." As time went on, tier above tier, arose the spiritual orders, each one higher and more important than the other, till the spiritual edifice was gradually reared, and, as this building grew, so were the spirits of the generality of Christians further and further removed from the early simplicity, and from God.

As an example of the enormous change that had come over the minds of Christians from that which existed in apostolic days we give the words of Cyprian (3rd century): "The bishop is in the church, and the church is in the bishop; and if anyone be not with the bishop, he is not in the church"—and also a quotation from a writing of the same period: "The bishop . . . . the mediator between God and you . . . . your king and governor, your earthly God . . . . As we

may not address ourselves to Almighty God, but only by Christ, so let the laity make known all their desires to the bishop by the deacon, and let them act as he shall direct them." Thus, early in the Christian era, were men made slaves of a class.

With the ascendency of Rome the power of the priests prevailed, and as Romish teachings grow, so does the idea of the priestly class hold men's minds. It has been recognized for many years that, if a man be a priest, he is a holy man by virtue of his office, and that by that right he possesses powers of a spiritual kind. A priest, Rome teaches, even if he should be living in "deadly sin," has ability to stand between God and man, and can obtain the ear of God!

Holiness becomes God's house for ever, and it is but the greater condemnation for a man who professes to be near God, to live in sin, while such an one cannot have the ear of God, or access to Him, since God is holy. If any Christian is living in sin, he is at a moral distance from God; any other thought is a reproach upon the very holiness of God Himself. Alas! then, for the cause of Christian morality, as the assumption of the priests increases in our land!

The Lord gives the simplest of His people a very easy rule for judging of a man's spiritual pretensions: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matt. vii. 16.) If the fruit be bad the tree must be bad, for a good tree does not bring forth corrupt fruit.

As we look back upon the times when the early simplicity of the Christian faith being no more, a class had risen up to hold men's souls in their sway, we may trace immorality upon immorality, and cruelty upon cruelty, wickedness upon wickedness to that class. The murderers of God's saints, the men who systematically prevented the word of God from reaching their ears, the men whose lives were often so horribly wicked that the world cried out against them, were of the class of the persecuting priests. The Waldenses in their day (about 1000 A.D.) rejected the common belief of Rome, they repudiated image-worship, declared the mass to be an abomination, the host an idol, and purgatory a fable. These men were tortured and slain in Spain, in France, and in Germany, and, under the leadership of priests, faggots were lighted at the entrance of caves into which they had fled, and men, women, and children suffocated.

Time would fail to record a thousandth part of the slaughter, at the hands of the persecuting priests, of faithful Christians for the crime of believing God's word; for very rivers of the blood of Christian men have flowed in Christendom. Were the slaughterers heathen we should not be surprised, but when we know that these men of blood called themselves the priests of God, we are aghast with horror. We judge them by their fruits, and, whatever their pretensions to holiness, their corrupt fruit witnesses to their real character.

The most marvellous system of cruelty that Christendom ever knew, and one which surely outvies every system of pagan cruelty, is that of the inquisition—"the Holy Inquisition," as it is called. About the year 1200, terrible powers were delegated to the inquisitors both by popes and kings. Woe to such as read the Bible, or possessed the Book in their native tongue, and woe to the Jew in whose hands was the Talmud! No hope, no mercy was to be bought or received from the inquisitors. The wretched victim of their spleen would be shut up in a dark dungeon, and with scarce food enough to keep him alive, and, if he did not confess to the charges, true or untrue, brought against him, he would be tortured, while, if he did confess, he would be slain. Never was such a tyranny of darkness as that of the inquisition, conducted by men calling themselves the priests of God.

Let us picture to ourselves one of the scenes of horror of the inquisition, called an Act of Faith—an "Auto da Fé."

It is the country of Spain, in 1683. The royal court has assembled, and the glory of the kingdom is present to witness the torture and the death of the victims of the inquisition. The officers of the inquisition, preceded by their banner, kettle drums, and trumpets, arrive, and the inhabitants of Madrid, dressed

in their best, are in great excitement to see the show. A hundred poor creatures, or more, are to be destroyed or degraded, some are to be burned, others are to be scourged. Now the nobles of great Spain descend to the executioner's work; they lead the victims to be burned, and bind them with thick cords to the stakes.

Amongst these is a Jewish maiden of seventeen years of age, a girl of remarkable beauty. From the scaffold, where she is bound, she looks upon the queen, and appeals to her majesty, whose canopy is close beside her: "Great queen, will not your royal presence be of some service to me in my miserable condition? Have regard to my youth, and oh! consider that I am about to die for professing a religion imbibed from my earliest infancy!" But the queen dares not say a word, for the girl has been declared a heretic by the inquisition.

Now mass is celebrated, and the chief inquisitor bowing to the altar, and with the gospels of God's mercy to man in his hands, and with a cross borne before him—emblem of the dying love of Jesus for His enemies—demands of the king the oath to destroy all heretics. And the slave of the priests, the King of Spain, bareheaded, takes the oath, and thus the scene of blood begins.

Of the twenty-one men and women then burned, some thrust their hands and feet into the flames as if unmoved by the torture, and the rest of them died with perfect resolution.

Our comment on these deeds of darkness, perpetrated in His name, shall be Christ's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We pass over some six hundred years, and come to the enlightened days of our own century. In 1809, part of the great Napoleon's army was stationed at Madrid, and one of his generals forced his way into the building of the Holy Inquisition. Discovering a secret passage they descended into a large square room, called the Hall of Judgment, in the centre of which stood a large block with a chain fastened to it. Chained to this block the accused had to sit, with the throne of judgment and the raised seats of the holy fathers around him.

Leading off from this hall were cells, in which many a wretch still lived. All chained down, all naked, and some but children of ten years of age, and some men and women of seventy.

Again the explorers discovered other chambers—these were the places of torture, and in them were the instruments of cruelty, some for breaking every bone of the body, some for tearing the flesh into ten thousand fragments. Perhaps, the most ghastly of these was the Virgin—a large figure richly dressed, and having the appearance of a beautiful woman, with outstretched arms. The victim was driven up to this figure, and when he closely approached it, it opened, seized him, and a thousand knives cut him into as many pieces.

It may be urged times have changed, and that we live in very different days. But men's hearts have not changed, and the priests of Rome have not changed. Even in our own land such as so closely follow their steps, tell us to our faces, that the sword should be used against the people who will not obey them! We may be assured that the special class of persecuting priests, which has persecuted for hundreds of years, will persecute again if they get the opportunity.

So recently as the year 1883, a Spanish newspaper, referring to the burning of a large number of Gospels by order of the Government, thus writes: "Thank God, at last we have turned towards the times, when heretical doctrines are persecuted as they should be .... Catholic Barcelona.... has had the very great pleasure of witnessing an 'Auto da Fé,' in the last part of this century.... There is but a step between this event, which we now record, and the setting up of the Holy Inquisition. The re-establishment of the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition must soon take place. Its reign will be more glorious and fruitful in results than in the past.... Our Catholic heart overflows with faith and enthusiasm.... What a day of pleasure will that be for us when we see freemasons, spiritualists, freethinkers, and anti-clericals writhing in the flames of the Inquisition."

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

THE OLD FAGGOT GATHERERS.

THE OLD FAGGOT GATHERERS.

WHAT a curious looking old place, and what a peculiar position it is in to be sure! and yet one cannot but notice the great improvements that have been made since the old people came into it. It is only quite recently that one would have expected to find cabbages and other vegetables growing in the garden, as the place seemed such a wilderness, but now sweet-scented wallflowers and other plants adorn the garden all the way down to the beautiful stream that flows along its edge.

The house had been almost in ruins for years, but certainly it is astonishing what a little labour and ingenuity can do towards making even the dingiest looking place attractive and comfortable. But I must not stay talking about the garden, but go inside the house, and see how the poor old man is, as I am told he is very unwell. How is it there is no response to my knock? Surely there must be someone in?

On opening the door I hear, or fancy I hear, a feeble voice saying, "Come up." But where can the way up be? There is only one room downstairs, and a place where firewood is kept. Surely the staircase cannot be out of this little side place? But so it is. It is the most comical sort of staircase, or apology for one, you could possibly imagine. I, however, soon get to the top, and am there greeted by a feeble old man, who strives to come to meet and welcome me. The only furniture in the room is a four-post bedstead, one chair, and a log of wood. The old man kindly offers me the chair, but I soon make a seat of the log of wood, drawing it near to the cheerful fire which is burning in the grate.

"Well, my friend, how are you to-day; are you getting any better?"

"Thank you, sir, but I am only very poorly just now. I'm a'most choked with cold. The parish doctor came to see me to-day, and he says I'se suffering from bronchitis. And what grieves me most is, that if I don't soon mend a bit I shall have to be put on the parish, and I don't like the thought on it a bit. As long as the good Lord gi'es me health I can work and scrat together enough to buy the few things as I want, but when I'se feeble like this, I'se good for nowt at working. But I must bide the Lord's good time, bless Him. He's always stuck to me, and helped me through before, and maybe, aye, I'm sure He will agen."

"I'm very sorry to find you so weak in body, but tell me, are you quite happy in your soul?"

"Aye, sir, that I am."

"And what makes you happy?"

"What makes me happy? Why, for a poor old man like me to know that my sins are forgiven, and that God loves me and cares for me. I can't help being happy when I think of all He's done for me, and the way He has taken care of me so many years."

"And what makes you think your sins are forgiven, my friend?"

"Why, because the Saviour died a'purpose to take 'em all away, and He did it."

"And how long is it since you knew these things?"

"Ah! it's a vast o' years sin' I first gave Him this poor owd heart o' mine, that it is. Maybe it'll be forty years sin'."

"And what kind of circumstances have you been in all these years?"

"Bless the Lord, I've never wanted meat all these years, nor health either, until lately. You see, sir, I was the first to start the stick trade in this town. I began when a young man. I had a pony and cart, and have gone to the different woods roundabout wherever I knew they were felling trees, and they lets me have a pony load of branches for a shilling. These I tie up in bundles, and take them round the town to sell."

"And how far do you go now for your sticks?"

"We go nine miles to the woods, and nine miles back. This is a good day's work to get the sticks, tie them in bundles and bring them home, My poor old wife here, who is o'er seventy, always goes wi' me; but, oh, dear! the wet days in the woods give us such bad colds. We can't stand 'em now as we used to do. We thowt nowt about a wetting when we were younger, but this dreadful bronchitis

seems to pull me to pieces. Oh, sir! if me and the owd woman hadn't the Lord to comfort us, what a dreadful thing life would be to us.

"Aye, dear me! I've seen a lot of folk taken away in my time, that I have. My first wife was a dear, good creetur, that she was! I had her over thirty years, but the Lord took her away from me. I buried her in K—burn churchyard, about four miles from here. She was always a sick 'un, but, my! wasn't she a good creetur! And then there was Billy Watson, a great strong chap, and he was taken away after a few days' illness. I knew him well. I used to speak to him about his soul, but he always said, 'Oh, it's all right, I isn't agoin' to bother mysen just yet awhile.' But now he is lying near my first wife in the churchyard.

"I've been with scores on 'em when they died, and, oh, dear! wasn't it grand to be with those who knew Jesus when they passed away. It was splendid to see 'em so happy just when they were going through the dark valley. It did one's soul good to see 'em, that it did. Nearly all my owd friends have left me and gone to glory some time sin'. I seem to be almost alone in the world now.

"I sometimes sit here and think about all the good times we used to have when I was younger. Aye, but we used to have some grand meetings in our village. Some of us used to meet together in our little cottages, and pray for the farmers and our neighbours, until they gave their hearts to Jesus. And, my word, didn't we pray! The Lord seemed at one time to make us pray day and night. We could hardly sleep for praying, we were so anxious about the people's salvation. It used to be, 'Jimmy, just come and pray with me a bit.' And another would say, 'Come in, Jimmy, and let's pray a few minutes.' And, oh, my! didn't the good Lord send us lots of blessing. It seemed as if all in the village was shouting out, 'Oh, my poor soul! Oh! what a sinner I've been! God have mercy on me, a big sinner!' And God did have mercy. He led the people to the Saviour, who soon set them right by showing them that He had died for them. Aye, yes! it does me good to think about those good times again."

"I'm sure it must do, my friend," I said; "and how blessed it is to remember that the Lord who has blessed you so much is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' He loves you as much now as He did then, and He has promised, 'My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.'"

And as I looked at those aged faces, beaming with true happiness, the happiness which Jesus alone can give, I could not but feel what a power and a reality the grace of God is in the heart. It makes a man live above his circumstances and his trials. These people are thankful, delighted and happy when God puts into the hearts of kind people to send them even a little pudding, a packet of tea, or any other kind gift. They praise God for the mercies they receive, whereas so many receive a thousandfold more than these poor people, whose hearts scarcely know a note of praise or thankfulness to their heavenly Father. These poor folk are happier than scores of rich people I know, whose enjoyments are only found in the attractions and magnificence of many of this world's pleasures. These are fleeting, and most of them have, like the serpents, hidden stings, whereas the real pleasures, which alone can satisfy the cravings of the soul, are centred and found in that salvation, which makes us sons of God and heirs of eternal mansions and happiness.

It is quite refreshing, after visiting people who are much better off and much more discontented with their lot, to go to this poor old cottage, where, destitute of nearly every comfort which in this nineteenth century-civilisation seems almost to be a necessity, these poor, tidy, God-fearing old people are patiently toiling on, struggling against poverty and sickness, working honestly with their remaining strength and thankfully praising God for every mercy, however small, which the good Lord sends them.

If any unsaved one reads these lines, remember, though you may possess much gold, you are poorer than these stick gatherers; if you do not know the love of Jesus and

the salvation He gives, your treasure will have to be left behind, whereas these poor people have their treasure in heaven.

And, dear Christian, there is also a lesson for you in this simple narrative. Do you never murmur or feel discontented, or weary or discouraged, because of the way? Think of the bright light shining from this poor cottage, where the circumstances seem to be all against them. If God can enable Joseph to serve Him in Egypt, Daniel to pray and trust when in the lions' den, Paul and Silas to sing praises and rejoice whilst their backs are bleeding from the blows of the cruel lash, and their feet tied in a loathsome dungeon, surely we, who are more favoured, ought not to murmur or distrust, but live as Paul would have us when he says, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, rejoice." R. M.

HE WAS WOUNDED: WE ARE HEALED.

PREACHING once in a country district, the writer perceived one among the congregation wearing a very self-satisfied air. The preaching, however, had not proceeded far, before self-satisfaction gave place to indignation, for the gospel does not flatter the flesh, but rather brings it to nothing, in order to exalt Christ. It was no wonder then that our self-satisfied friend left the place, determining, as she afterwards told me, never to enter it again. Had she ever missed going to her church? Had not she attended the sacrament regularly? Was not she a good wife, mother, and neighbour? and what more could you want? Lost, indeed! A pretty state of things when a respectable woman like herself was talked to in that way! So she took herself off.

Up to this time, while taking herself very much into the question, she had left God out, but He was about now to deal with her, and, accordingly, on the Sunday following, in spite of all her resolves and righteous indignation, she felt more and more uneasy as the hour for the preaching approached, till, at last, she could bear it no longer, put on her things and went to hear. Again the message was given of a Saviour who had come to seek and to save that which was lost; of One who received sinners, and eat with them; and the disagreeable thought kept forcing itself upon her, "What if, after all, you *are* lost?"

In a very different frame of mind she left the preaching that second Sunday night, and the anxiety which had then commenced was only deepened by her subsequent attendances.

It was soon after this that the writer, happening to get an opportunity of speaking to her alone, elicited from her the facts just narrated. Thankful at this evident work of the Spirit in her soul, he gave her text after text, proving the perfect safety of every lost sinner who believes on Jesus; but all in vain, for though she was thoroughly sincere, and her need evident, she seemed quite unable to appropriate God's message to herself.

Now it happened, that late in the ensuing week, a near relative of the writer's was taken seriously ill, and he accordingly had to ask a friend to go and preach in his stead. He seized, however, the first opportunity afterwards to call on our anxious friend, and found her in the enjoyment of peace with God. Surprised at the sudden change, he asked how she had acquired her new-found joy, when she replied as follows:—

"That young man," said she, "who came to preach instead of you last Sunday, took as his text the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and when he began to preach there was one verse that he didn't seem to be able to get away from. He kept saying, 'It's this way: *He* was wounded, and *we* are healed. It is very simple! Don't you see, that if He was wounded for *our* transgressions, we *must* be healed? It's plain enough; for all that believe He *was* wounded, we who believe *are* healed.' And, at last, I began to think, if He was wounded for me, I *am* healed."

Now I daresay, if the writer had happened to have entered during this gospel address, he would have said, "Dear me, he's getting on very badly; this will never do. If he goes on like this he'll scatter all my congregation." But then, you see, God does not work by the grand discourses, and eloquent ad-

dresses, but by His Spirit; and I think I have somewhere read that that honoured servant of the Lord, Mr. Spurgeon, relates that his own conversion was of a similar character to that just described.

Now, why I relate it is this: I want to press on any who are harassed with doubts or fears, what a perfect security is the portion of every believer in Jesus. Yes, *He* was wounded, and *we* are healed. Jehovah's sword awoke against His fellow, and He never sheathed it till justice was satisfied. Ah, but you say, "That's just what I want to know. How am I to know that God *is* satisfied?" "I'll tell you.

"Is Jesus on the cross?" "No."

"Is He in the grave?" "No."

"Where is He, then?" "He is in the glory."

"Quite so. And He died for your sins?" "Yes."

"You are sure of that?" "Quite sure."

"Then are your sins in the glory?" "No; they could not be there."

"But the One who bore them *is*, and that is the proof that God is satisfied, and that your sins are for ever blotted from His sight. If God were not satisfied with Christ's sacrifice for your sins, He would be still in the grave. He is not in the grave, but on the throne—the eternal proof to all that God is satisfied. *Are you?*" J. F.

FAITH, NOT FEELINGS.

AN old lady, whom I visited frequently, would often appear restless and uneasy. She seemed much exercised, and it was evident that the Lord was working in her soul. I asked her if she was saved.

She said, "No; it has been my desire for a long time to know that."

"Do you not know," I asked, "of One who also has a great desire for your salvation, and who has been waiting for it a much longer time than you have? He left His glory that you might know your sins were forgiven, and He would willingly receive you, if you will trust yourself to Him."

"I would give anything," she answered, "to feel as happy as you."

"Stay," I replied; "God wants you to accept, not to give; receive salvation as you would receive a gift from a dear friend."

"Well, I'll think about it; but something seems to tell me I am too old to serve the Lord."

"God says, 'Whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely,' I answered; "'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Is that not enough? Can you not believe?"

"I can believe," replied the old lady, "but I cannot feel I am saved."

"If you want to be saved, you must be saved in God's way, and not in your own. Lay aside your feelings, and take God at His word, and peace will follow. 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.'"

"Sometimes," she said, "I think I am saved, and at other times I am so miserable that I begin to despair."

"Give up all your own efforts to save yourself," I answered; "come simply trusting in Jesus, and I can assure you, on the authority of God's word, He will never cast you away. 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

After three weeks I saw her again, and she told me how happy she was then that she could fully rest and trust in the Lord. E. R.

A SIMPLE STORY OF GOD'S GRACE.

G. T. was naturally a kind-hearted young man, but, like many others, he was fond of gay society, and sought satisfaction in all kinds of worldly amusement. When entreated by his friends to attend to the concerns of his soul, he would carelessly reply, "That will never trouble me." After a while G. commenced reading infidel books; he gave up attending any place of worship, and it became his delight to scoff at God's people. One day he called on a Christian friend for the express purpose of arguing her belief in Jesus out of her, but, finding his errand fruitless, he turned to blasphemy. But God had already opened His ears to the prayers sent up from His believing children for the salvation of G.'s soul.

Soon after this, G. having left his home, a friend would occasionally send him gospel books, but these were seldom read. However, one night, while on his duty, G. picked up one of these books. At first he read simply to beguile the time, but he soon became interested in it, and, before the book was finished, G. T. had become convinced of his state as a sinner before God, and of the awful consequences of his sins. He sought pardon, and pleaded the merit of Christ, and in the end peace and joy filled his soul. He realized that his sins, which were many, were forgiven him. This was the text on which he rested: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.)

To all who had previously known him the change was most evident. Instead of spending the Lord's day in the alehouse, he earnestly engaged himself in the Lord's work with people whom he met about the concerns of their soul. Instead of his mouth being filled with oaths and curses, he spoke the praises of God. He was a testimony to the truth of this Scripture: "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."

May God bless this simple story. We long that others may prove, as did our friend G. T., that joy can be found alone in Jesus. Come to Jesus, dear reader, and seek peace through His death. He is far more willing to save than we are to be saved. It is not by working or doing, but by simply trusting in the finished work of the Lord. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," and "by His stripes we are healed." P.

A CRY FROM A BACKSLIDER.

THE writer of the words given below is with the Lord; he was an earnest servant of the Master, and ended his course in peace. The gentleman of whom he writes, has now, we believe, also departed this life. He, too, once served Christ and lived for His glory, but he gave way to the seductions of the world, and fell into a sinful course of life. Wealth and luxury surrounded him, and after some years of estrangement, in which the one spent his life for Christ, and the other for the world, the two old friends met again.

The former writes, "Tell —— that I have had two interviews with poor ——. He is in the deepest depths of distress about his sins and departure from the Lord. When I called to see him, as I entered the room where his manservant was standing, he exclaimed, 'Oh, H., the hand of the Lord is upon me, upon my wife, and upon my family. I am the vilest of the vile, the blackest of the black, the most miserable of the miserable, the most wretched of the wretched. I cry to the Lord day and night for mercy. I say, pity me, Lord, pity me, and let Thy mercy reach a poor wretched creature in his deep distress.' He added, 'Tell all who knew me my sad state, and ask them to cry to the Lord for mercy for me.'"

The way of transgressors is hard. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shines brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

The Lamb of God.

JOHN THE BAPTIST, the messenger prepared by God to go before Messiah's face and make straight His way, the stern denouncer of sin and hypocrisy, had given him by the Holy Spirit a very remarkable insight into the glories of Jesus. As an example, he thus announced the Lord when he saw Him coming to him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." These are most notable words coming from the herald's lips. He did not announce Him as the God-sent Ruler of the world, and cry, "Behold the Messiah; behold the King"—far different thoughts concerning Jesus filled his mind—he proclaimed Him as the God-given Offering for the Altar, the Sacrifice, whose holy death and precious blood should bear away the sin of the world!

Jesus was rejected by man from the very first. His pathway led to the cross; man revered Him not as the Lamb of God. The sceptre is more congenial to the mind of man than the cross—power and majesty may captivate; from weakness and shame men shrink away. The Eternal Word, the only begotten of the Father, the Maker of all

things—essentially Life, and Light, and Love—is the Lamb of God! The only One whom God ever sent to the world to be a sacrifice—the only Sacrifice ever well-pleasing to God—the only sacrifice by which sin can be borne away. The Lamb of God "taketh away" the sin of the world! "Taketh away," in connection with sin, is a most marvellous word; not merely does He forgive, He removes sin. Sin stood in the way of friendship between man and God, but the Lamb of God removes this obstruction. He takes it away from individuals now; He will take it away from the world eventually. By His suffering, even to death, God effects reconciliation. His weakness and shame precede the display of His power and His majesty.

As we meditate upon this truly wonderful Name of Christ—THE LAMB OF GOD—let us enquire whether we have been called from our former hopes and former selves to new hopes and purposes, to new scenes and new affections, by beholding the Lamb of God. Our thoughts of Jesus are all in fault if we have not seen Him by faith as the *Lamb* of God, and all our thoughts of God are false until we recognise in Jesus *God's* Lamb.

We can conceive men following Jesus for the sake of His healing touch, His gifts and His bounty. Men are willing to receive the benefits Christianity has conferred upon the human race, such as the mercies and the kindness that mark off Christian lands from heathen countries. But, oh, how few receive Him as the Lamb of God! How few delight in His willing offering of Himself a sacrifice to God on account of human sin! How few prize beyond all price His wounds and His sufferings unto death for their sins!

The same pen that chronicles the Baptist's proclamation of Jesus, tells us how the writer himself saw Jesus as the Lamb upon the throne of God: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain." (Rev. v. 6.) As John gazed upon the Lamb, the marks of whose wounds were apparent in the midst of the very seat of God's eternal majesty, he heard the harps and songs of heaven, and saw the multitudes there prostrate themselves before the throne.

Angels and saints, might and majesty supreme, filled the vision of John, but the highest height of the glory was occupied by the Lamb as it had been slain. Such is God's will. The glory of His throne and the death of the Lamb are united, never to be sundered. The sceptre issues from the cross, the glories of the kingdom from the shame of Calvary. The songs of heaven and the echoing praises of earth well up from the virtue of the blood of the Lamb of God, who bears away the sin of the world.

Reader, how do you regard Jesus, the Lamb of God? This is a question to you of eternal importance. The throne of God is not to be robbed of its glory by men or devils. The surges of the sea of rebellion against divine justice may break over earth's barriers, and for a while cover this world as a flood, but thus far shall they go and no farther—here shall their proud waves be stayed; heaven, peopled with saved sinners, earth in harmony with heaven, will abide at rest in the power of the throne of God, established in righteousness by the blood of the Lamb.

Hearken to the voices of the redeemed, to the unison of every tribe and kindred, tongue and people of earth! Hearken to the songs of heaven; listen to the harpers harping with their harps, and to the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels answering to the song with loud acclaim! What is the burden of the majestic song? what is the theme of every tongue? It is the dying of Jesus for sinners on the cross.

"Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon the throne.
Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own!"

Is Jesus slain for sinners the Saviour of your soul? Have you gone to Him, and upon your knees thanked Him for His dying love? Have you received Him as the gift of God, the Lamb *slain* for *you?* Well then it is for you both for time and for eternity!

"All hail! Redeemer, hail!
For Thou hast died for me;
My praise shall never, never fail
Throughout eternity."

IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON.

"TO every thing there is a season," and the season for the gospel worker is this present moment; "the night cometh, when no man can work." Never again will he have a better opportunity for working for eternity than this day offers. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." *Now* is the period which may be brought to a close at any moment, for when the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, this "now," this day of salvation will be over. *Now*, the golden present, the opportunity which will never return. Therefore, let us heed the Scripture exhortation, "Be instant in season and out of season," remembering that *in* and *out* of season means always, everywhere.

Nor is it only because the day is far spent and the night is at hand, that we need exhort one another to the work, for a deep desire after reality in divine things abounds in many hearts, and calls for the loving energy of every true servant of God. The only ease infidelity offers is "a leap in the dark," and the only balm formalism presents is an undefined shadow of a substance which may or may not be found when life is passed! The no-belief of the sceptic covers unrest of soul; the ceaseless effort of the formalist to reach to rest evidences that the desired end is not attained. But the true Christian has rest, for he has Christ, and Christ dwelling in the heart by faith fills the breast with life, light, and liberty, and is the unanswerable witness to theories of darkness and doctrines of unrest.

Christians, you have "the treasure" (2 Cor. iv. 7); in you is the fountain of living waters (John vii. 38), and you are set here upon the earth to bestow of the treasure and to communicate of the living waters to others. Men, women, and children around you thirst; they are poor, they need Christ, and God has given you His salvation not merely for your own blessing, but that you may be a blessing to others—even as He said to Abraham, "I will bless thee . . . and thou shalt be a blessing." And certain it is that the nearer a Christian dwells to the source of all blessing—God Himself—the fresher, the sweeter, the richer are the streams of blessing that, through the Spirit, flow out of his heart to the refreshment and blessing of others.

Let us then arise, and shake off the dust of the earth from our souls, and go forth as from Christ to the christless world, with hearts and hands laden with Divine bounties to the unsaved and the unsatisfied. Be instant in season and out of season, for always do men need Christ, and peace, and rest, and joy.

WAIT TILL YOUR TEMPER IS OUT.

"HE never would say a word to his servants while he was out of temper," said an old servant of a truly noble master, —"never, whatever the provocation, but he waited till he was not angry. And how he was loved, for he was always just, as well as kind."

Let this be taken by masters and by parents as a word of counsel. When a man is out of temper, or in a temper, he is not himself. Scolding is often but the letting off the steam of our ill feelings, and with such anger there is sin. Anger is very frequently but the result of selfishness, and an indulgence to a turbulent state of soul—a sinful relief to an explosive state of mind.

A godly man must be angry without sin, but if he lets his temper get up he will sin by his anger.

The Christian should never be out of temper, or in a temper, whatever the provocation, but since provocation does not always produce peace of soul, the example of admirable behaviour of the fine character we have quoted should be imitated. In the instance before us, the gentleman in question acted as he did out of self-respect, he was too noble, too proud to dishonour himself, but the Christian should seek to act honourably and nobly, out of reverence for his Lord and Master. Besides which, Christ gives the power to behave with Christian nobility, He is the Christian's strength. Let it not be that the noble-minded of this world shall shame the Christian by noble ways!

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Sing, Dada, Sing.

MANY true and sweet stories we have given of dear little children, who have heard and believed in the precious name of Jesus. I will now tell my readers of my little grand-daughter.

The dear child was only two years and eleven months old. She had a Christian father and mother, and nothing gave her more joy than for them to sing together in the evening, while she sat on her dada's knee, as she called her father. This little child fell very ill last February—she was taken with a distressing cough, and during this time of suffering her father would often propose to sing after her cough was over, which greatly pleased her, and then her voice would rise louder than those of the others! During her illness, there was only one hymn that was most precious to her—

> Jesus loves me! this I know, for the Bible tells me so.
> Little ones to Him belong—they are weak, but He is strong.
> Yes, Jesus loves me! yes, Jesus loves me!
> For the Bible tells me so.

This verse was on her tongue so long as she could get breath to utter it. "Yes, Jesus loves me! yes, Jesus loves me!" she never tired to sing.

The last day of her little life, her father felt sure his darling was soon going to be with Jesus, and as he watched her short breathing, she looked up, and said, "Sing, dada, sing."

"Shall dada get the fiddle and sing, dearie?" said he.

"No, dada, no; sing 'Jesus loves me,'" she answered.

He then said, "Shall dada play the piano, and sing, dearie?"

"No, dada, no," she answered again; "sing 'Jesus loves me, this I know.'"

And as her father sang the verse, her dear sweet voice surprised them, so loud and strong it was, and she sang the verse through with her father.

The little eyes were fixed upward for a long time; a stranger who was looking at her, asked what the child could see, and what her fixed gaze meant. "She was looking at Jesus," replied the mother.

Dear children who read this story, when you read your Bible and sing your hymns in your Sunday-school, remember this dear child, and learn to know them in your hearts. Ask the Lord Jesus to teach you His love to you. We are strangers, but I pray for all who read this story, for the Lord Jesus loves little children. F. T.

I OUGHT TO LOVE JESUS.

"I OUGHT to love Jesus," sang a little girl, as she ran down the street. "Why ought you to love Jesus, dear?" I asked her, but she only looked at me, and ran away. Ah! dear boys and girls, she is like a great many children, and grown up people too, singing words but not giving a thought to the meaning. It is quite true we ought to love Jesus, because He loves us, He died for us.

One summer day, there was a great stir among some children; it was their school treat, and you know the bustle there is to

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get ready and start in time. Then the fun in the field, or park, the nice games, the tea! One girl went to the treat just as happy as the others, and as well as usual; she joined in the games, and no one thought of death at that moment. She had just taken hold of her sister's hand, to join in a game, when she fell back; some thought she had fainted, but oh! how sad! she was dead. I do not know if she loved Jesus or not; if she was one of His blood-washed ones, she is singing in glory now.

"I ought to love Jesus;" yes, for we do not know how soon He may come back again; will you be ready to meet Him? Oh! think of Jesus' love; He died for you, will you not trust Him? I did not tell you about the sad, sudden death of this poor girl to frighten you, but that you may ask yourself, If I had been that girl, where should I have been now? You know very well, if you have not come to the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, you will never be fit for His presence. Oh! come now, while you are young; it will be much more difficult if you wait until you are older. Jesus is waiting for you, He wants to save you, to bless you, to make you happy. A. M. P.

WHO TAKES CARE OF YOU?

BABY was only three years old, and, on the day of which I am speaking, as the family was at dinner, and she busy with spoon and fork in hand, her blue eyes were looking round the table, and her little ears listening to all that was said.

"I wish Maggie would make haste home, for we must start soon," said the mother, looking at the clock.

"Yes," replied Susie, the elder sister, "for we cannot leave the children only with Ann."

Baby looked from one to another, and then in her little language said, "Jeser (Jesus) will take care of we." I forget the answer the mother made, but I often think of the little child's sentence, and oh! how I wish every one could say the same from the bottom of the heart, "Jesus takes care of me." E. P.

Texts for the Month.

WE have selected some texts for you to find out in the Bible on a subject of very great importance. Young and old should give an attentive ear to what God says on the subject of IMAGES and IMAGE-WORSHIP, and the more so as in our present day God's solemn word on the subject is not respected as it formerly was in our country.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
M	1	Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image			
Tu	2	Take heed...lest ye...make you a graven image			
W	3	Ye shall not make with me gods of silver			
Th	4	Neither...set thee up any image, which the Lord thy God hateth			
F	5	Ye shall make you no...standing image			
S	6	Neither shalt thou worship any strange god			
S	7	**Turn from these vanities** unto the living God			
M	8	Neither be ye idolaters			
Tu	9	Beloved, flee from idolatry			
W	10	Their molten images are wind and confusion			
Th	11	Your images shall be broken			
F	12	I will...destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease			
S	13	Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols			
S	14	**Turn ye not unto idols**			
M	15	They be no gods which are made with hands			
Tu	16	What profiteth the graven image?			
W	17	Idolaters...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire			
Th	18	We will not...worship the golden image			
F	19	They shall go to confusion...that are makers of idols			
S	20	An idol is nothing in the world			
S	21	**What agreement hath the** temple of God with idols?			
M	22	They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image			
Tu	23	Graven images...an abomination to the Lord			
W	24	Their land...is full of idols			
Th	25	He maketh...a graven image, and falleth down thereto			
F	26	They...offered sacrifice unto the idol...the works of their own hands			
S	27	Then God...gave them up to worship the host of heaven			
S	28	**Changed the glory of the** incorruptible God into an image ...wherefore God also gave them up			
M	29	What have I to do any more with idols?			
Tu	30	The idols He shall utterly abolish			
W	31	Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image			

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Image-Worship.

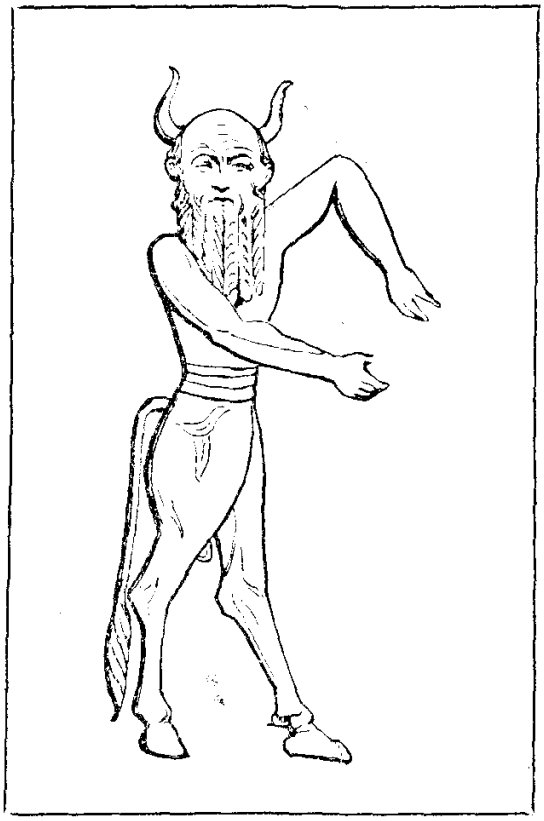
THE worship of images, the bowing down to them, and the introduction of images or pictures into divine worship, is distinctly forbidden by God. Image-worship, in its varied forms, is a Pagan practice which has prevailed since the flood, and which still prevails over the greater portion of the earth.

In ancient days, some hero after his death would become revered, and as generations passed away, the story of his acts would become magnified far beyond their real proportions, legends and fables about him would grow up, until at length the hero became a god to the people. His image would be made, and eventually he would be worshipped. In very much the same way, the "Saints" have come to be adored. They are the religious heroes of Christendom, and legends and fables have grown up around these celebrities, till they are recognised as men and women of mystic holiness. Images and pictures of these "saints" are held to be sacred, and people bow themselves before them.

In Pagan countries horridly-shaped idols exist; figures they are of beings supposed to rule the unseen world, and these images suggest to the eye and mind of the worshippers, a being, whose strength and power and whose vindictive spirit have to be appeased. By means of such images men bow down to demons, to unseen powers, to evil spirits, who are enemies of the Lord God Almighty, and who are certainly no friends of man.

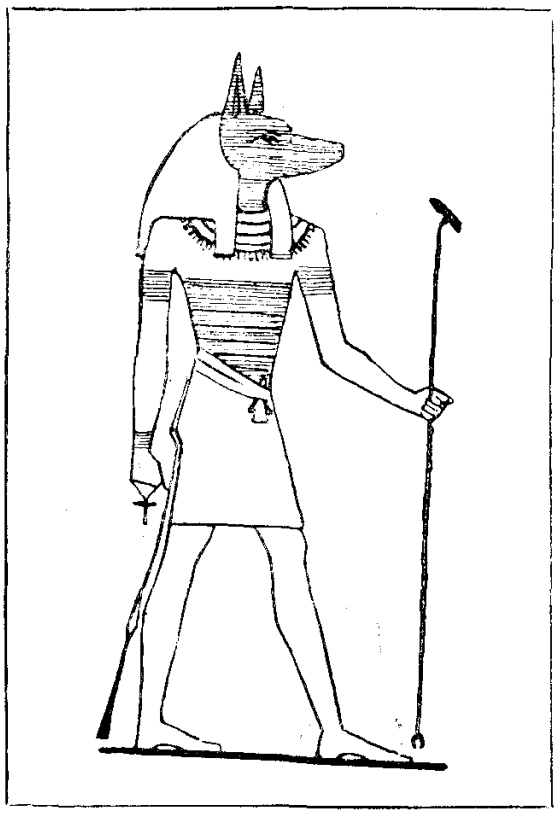
Images representing beasts and birds and fishes, the sun and moon and stars, and creatures, part human, part animal, or mystic, are also worshipped, and have been worshipped for centuries by thousands of men, women, and children.

How terribly Satan had hold of the human race before the flood the Bible tells us; how far the idolatry, which after the flood attached men's minds to demon worship, came from antediluvian days, we can only conjecture; however, we know that amongst the images held sacred by the nations that arose soon after the flood, are those which suggest a connection between men and demons. Some of the images of the gods were creatures with wings, cherubim and dragons; others were partly men, partly fish; others, again, were partly birds and partly men.



The figure here given of half-man half-bull, reminds us, by its horns and hoofs, of the popular notion in England of Satan, yet the original of the illustration is thousands of years old, and comes from Nineveh. So that this strange notion has a history attached to it which can be traced back almost to the flood!

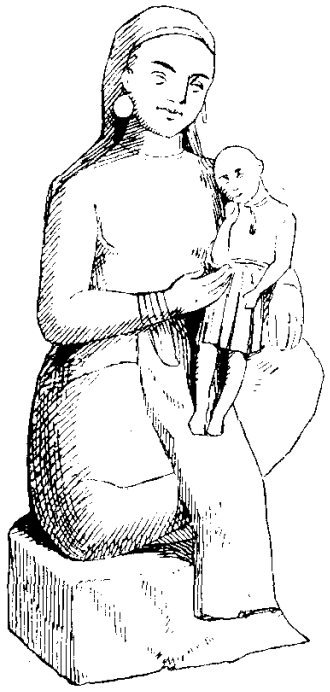
Another very ancient demon was the jackal-headed monster, Anubis. This creature, the ancient Egyptians supposed, conducted the souls of the departed to their destination, and in the day of judgment weighed up in the scales of truth, the good and the bad actions of men, whereby their future was determined. A similar belief in a god, or demon, of a kindred character, existed among the Romans, so that for centuries Satan has had control over men's minds in matters referring to the souls of the departed, and the future state of man. What belongs to God alone, Satan has given men to believe belongs to himself.



ANUBIS.

The ancient idols, representing a woman and a child, possess intense interest, evidencing that from the earliest ages this kind of image has been worshipped. We place together three illustrations of this class of image—one very ancient, being of Babylonish origin; another, ancient also, but being such as may be seen to-day in India; a third, modern, and being such as is to be found by tens of thousands in Christendom!

Surely as we look at them we may read a lesson on image-worship which should make us run! How alike the three are in idea! A woman and a child! Before them men by millions prostrate themselves. There is no such notion connected with worship in the Bible. Who, then, originated it? As the idea these images present, has existed upon the earth for thousands of years, we may without hesitation declare that one mind invented it. And as it is accepted by tens of thousands of human beings, who have bowed and do bow down themselves before these images, we can but acknowledge that millions of human beings are slaves to the idea this one mind invented!

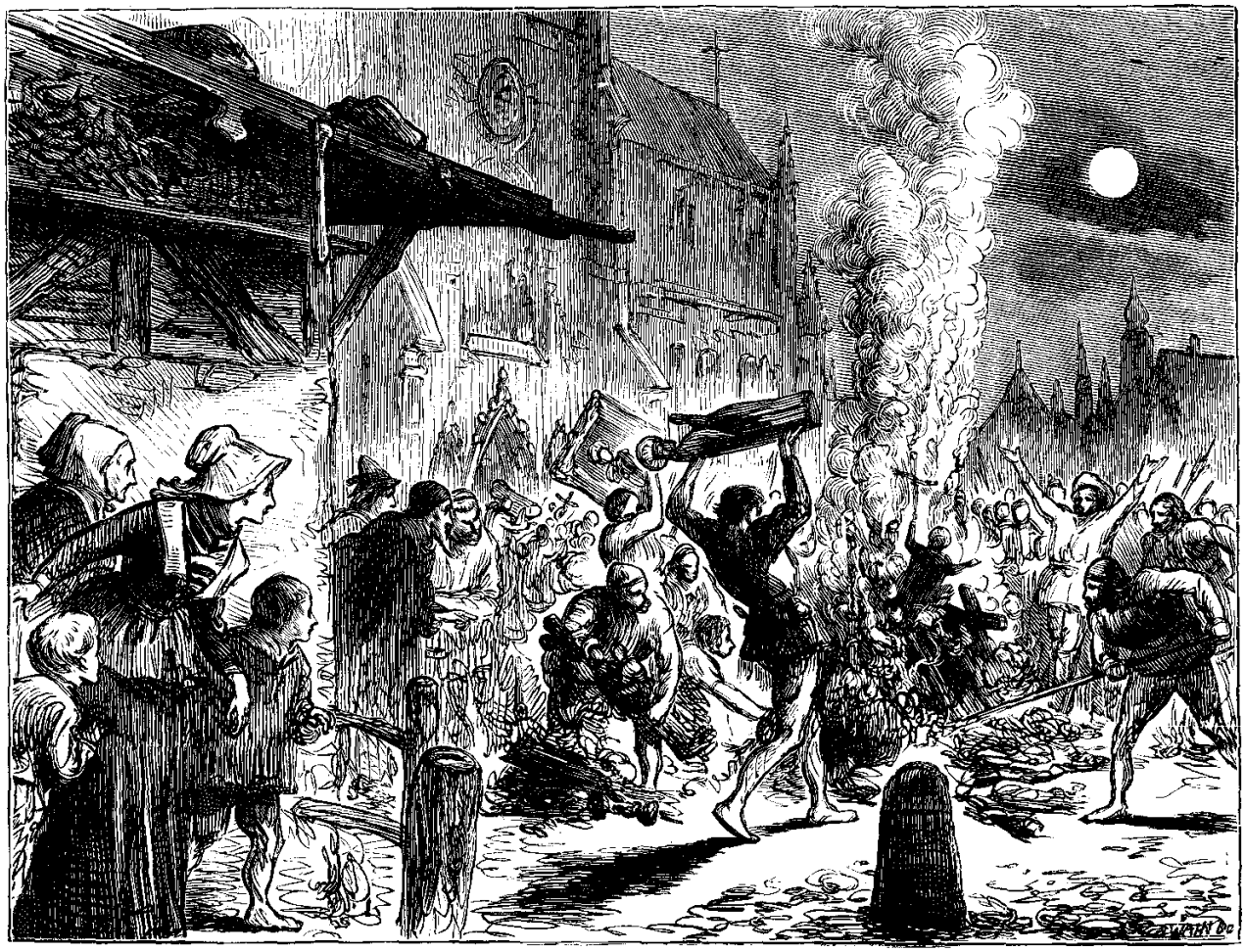


BABYLONIAN.

INDIAN.

CHRISTIAN.

God has said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." (Exod. xx. 4, 5.)



BURNING IMAGES IN BASLE IN 1529.

We look upon the representations of these three images, and we tremble. Such images as the first of our illustrations present to the eye were worshipped by men when God gave His second commandment at Sinai, and such as the second and third present, have been worshipped by men since He gave the ten commandments.

How strange it seems that that church which professes to be the true Church of God should not only offer the third image to her people that they may bow down themselves before it, but that that Church should deliberately efface and alter part of God's word in her catechisms! Let us hear what she teaches as to the ten commandments. We quote from Butler's Catechism, recommended by the four Roman Catholic archbishops of Ireland: "Say the ten commandments of God. I. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods but Me. II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. III. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. IV. Honour thy father and thy mother. V. Thou shalt not kill. VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery. VII. Thou shalt not steal. VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods. (Exod. xx.)."

The second commandment is effaced, and

the tenth is split into two to supply the deficient number, and yet the catechism continues, "Is it necessary to keep all, and every one of the *ten* commandments?"

Thus will Satan influence men to alter even the letter of the word of God in order to maintain the heathen practice of image-worship in Christian churches—that awful sin so hateful in the eyes of God. For images to which men bow down, are an outward and visible sign of the power which demons have who control the minds of men.

We would earnestly appeal to our readers to consider the sin of image-worship, for it is creeping even into Protestant churches and homes in our land. Many who would reject the notion of worshipping an image, allow a sort of reverence for it, they think of it as a sacred emblem worthy of pious attention, a representation which aids them in their thoughts of better things. Such thoughts are but the stepping-stones to idolatry. Image-worship is a sin so deep and terrible, that in order to perpetuate it in Christian churches men are daring and impious enough to blot out *one* of the ten commandments of God. And having done so, they endeavour to hide their impiety from the eyes of their fellow-men, who have not God's word in their hands, by pretending to reverence the Scripture; in proof of which we continue to quote from the catechism referred to. Having given us nine commandments instead of ten, this question is attached to the nine, "Is it necessary to keep *all* and *every one* of the TEN commandments of God?" Now, note the answer—a terribly self-condemning one, an answer calling to mind the inspired words, upon the crime of mutilating God's word, "God shall take away his part out of the book of life" (Rev. xxii. 19): "Yes; the scripture says: 'Whoever shall offend in one becomes guilty of all'; that is, the *observance of the* OTHER *commandments* will not avail him to salvation." (James ii. 10.)

In the early times of the Church neither images nor pictures were found in Christian worship, and this greatly astonished the heathen. In our own day, in China, the heathen will enter a place where Christians worship, and looking round will express their amazement because no idols are there. The omnipresent God is unknown to the heathen, and they cannot understand the Christian bowing to and worshipping an unseen God. The heathen objected to the early Christians because they had neither temples, altars nor images, and because they worshipped One who had been crucified. And so careful were the early Christians to avoid connection with images, that they would not even make masks, lest by so doing they should form a likeness of anything! Consequently, image-worship, as it now exists in Christendom, has grown up in the field of nominal Christianity, in direct opposition to the early practice and faith of the Church. Surrounded, as the early Christians were, with the idols and base and immoral pictures of the Pagans, we can readily understand how they began to have their own emblems in opposition to those of the heathen. For example, they were fond of that of the dove, and that of the shepherd with the sheep upon his shoulder; thus by that which was at first a very simple thing, the introduction of representations into Christian worship occurred. By and by, not the dove and the shepherd only, but pictures of martyrs, and holy men of the Bible, yes, even of Christ Himself, were made and found their way into places of worship.

Fathers and Bishops of the third and fourth centuries protested against these practices. Writing in the fourth century to Constantia, the daughter of Constantine, Eusebius says, "What, and of what kind, is this image which thou hast written about, and which thou callest the image of Christ? Hast thou ever seen such a thing in a church thyself, or heard of it from another?" Later in the same century, the aged Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, coming to a church near Jerusalem, and seeing on a curtain a figure either of Christ or of a saint, he declared it an abomination contrary to the Scripture, and tore the curtain down, saying, "The cloth would be better used to bury a poor man in."

However, as time went on, the faith of the early Christians degenerated more and more,

and became further corrupted with heathen influences, till Paganism so affected the Christian faith, that image-worship extended in thousands of Christian churches.

Over and over again, in the history of the Church, when God has revived His truth in the souls of men, the heathen practice of image worship has become an abomination in their eyes, and the images have been destroyed and burned. It was so in Israel of old. How the fire and energy of the faithful arose in times of Jehovah's reviving grace, and how they burned the idols, and destroyed the groves of the idolaters. Just so is it also in our day in heathen countries where the gospel penetrates. The idols are abolished out of the land. Axe and hammer are lifted up, and down tumbles the wooden god. Often do the missionaries to the Chinese record how the wayside images are dashed to pieces by the Christian converts. If we could but imagine ourselves converted to God from idols, we might be able to conceive the horror and indignation of our souls when we looked upon the images to which our knees had bowed, and by which the demons had enslaved our souls.

When, some three hundred and fifty years ago, the truths of the Bible took hold of men in Switzerland, and they became free, the people arose against the images, to which they had formerly bowed down. They saw them in their true character—not mere wood, or metal, or stone, but signs of rebellion against God, and of the slavery of men. How many a Christian has been chained in soul by these images! How many an one has come to the sacred building, where was the representation of the saint of whom he desired to ask good, and has poured out his pence and his prayers kneeling before it! What tears have been shed before the image! What appeals have been made to it in the fancy that an ear to hear was there for pity, and for guidance! Looking at the image, and praying before it, the worshipper has felt a strange influence steal over his soul — maybe, he beheld its smile—certainly, a mystic power held him, and he felt that these things were the proof his prayers were heard. We remember an African, who in the days of his heathen life had fallen down before his gross wooden gods, describe his experience. He related how an influence had fallen over him in the presence of his idols, and how that he had been held by a superior power when before them, constrained and spell-bound, and, though he could not find words to describe clearly what he meant, for he had not a good knowledge of the English language, yet his meaning was plain. The terror of the demons he had worshipped through his gods of wood was upon him as he bowed before them.

Now, when God sets a man free—and if the Son shall make you free, then shall you be free indeed—whether he has been a heathen or a Christian worshipper of images, he no longer tolerates their influence; not only does he abhor image-worship as a sin against his God, but he repels it from him as slavery to demons.

In Basle—we speak now of the year 1529, when the reformation and the power of God's word laid hold of that city—the people armed themselves and attacked the images they and their fathers had worshipped. Breaking open a side door in the cathedral of St. Peter, one of the townsmen by his axe revealed a number of images hidden away. One of these rolled out, and falling upon the stone floor, broke into pieces! Unable to save themselves these saints and angels were speedily smashed up by the armed citizens, while those who had worshipped before them were amazed that these images "wrought no miracle to save themselves, for if all accounts were true, prodigies had been done on trivial occasions" by them.

As the night fell the cathedral and the churches were emptied of the images, and their broken remains were carried to the open squares, piled up and burned, the citizens standing around and warming their hands in the chill spring air.

The images overturned and destroyed, a flight of monks, and priests followed, and Basle was delivered from its bondage, and, thank God, to this day over a great portion of Switzerland there is freedom to read God's word.

Let us in conclusion look to our own land! In the house of the Christian, still called Protestant, there is the inner chamber, and therein is the shrine with its images! And lo! before the shrine the worshipper bows himself and prays! "Aids to worship" are these images and pictures! "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. iii. 4.) They are no aids to the worship of God. Let us obey God—"thou shalt not bow down thyself to them." That shrine, those images, are but paganism revived. These emotions and these feelings that steal over the spirit as the breaker of the second of God's ten commandments prostrates himself before the image or likeness, are either the effect of a heated imagination or the influences of demons over his soul.

Be of Good Courage.

DO not be ashamed of your colours, young Christians. It may be more difficult for a young Christian to show his colours than for an older one, because the older is recognised as what he is, whereas the younger has to fight his way into a position. But the difficulty should but add intensity to the appeal—do not be ashamed of your colours. Your young friends will make their bids for you, no doubt—the society in which you move will try to win you for itself; but you cannot serve two masters—you cannot serve God and mammon.

Everyone who tries the experiment of serving God and serving the world fails in doing so—nevertheless, thousands waste many of the precious years of their lives in the attempt. So long as you try to serve two masters you will get no respect from the servants of either! Worldly people despise the Christian who is afraid of showing his colours; Christian people distrust him. There must be no shilly-shallying over the matter—you cannot be loyal to Christ if you are serving His enemies—therefore the more need not to be ashamed of your colours.

It is the fashion in our day for religious people to salute every religious flag—to be ready to dip the colours of the Lord Jesus Christ to those of His enemies, and to call such treachery charity. But there are disguised rebels in the ship, whose advice produces this false peace. On such lines the day must come when Christ's enemies will get the command, and then woe to the professor of His Name.

Such time-serving ways take the very heart and soul out of true religious conduct, and make men, who ought to be firm for the truth, limp and worthless. True, it is no easy thing for the young to go against the fashion! "Why should I be peculiar?" "Why should I do what others object to do?" are questions of very great weight with young people. All the more need, then, not to be ashamed of your colours.

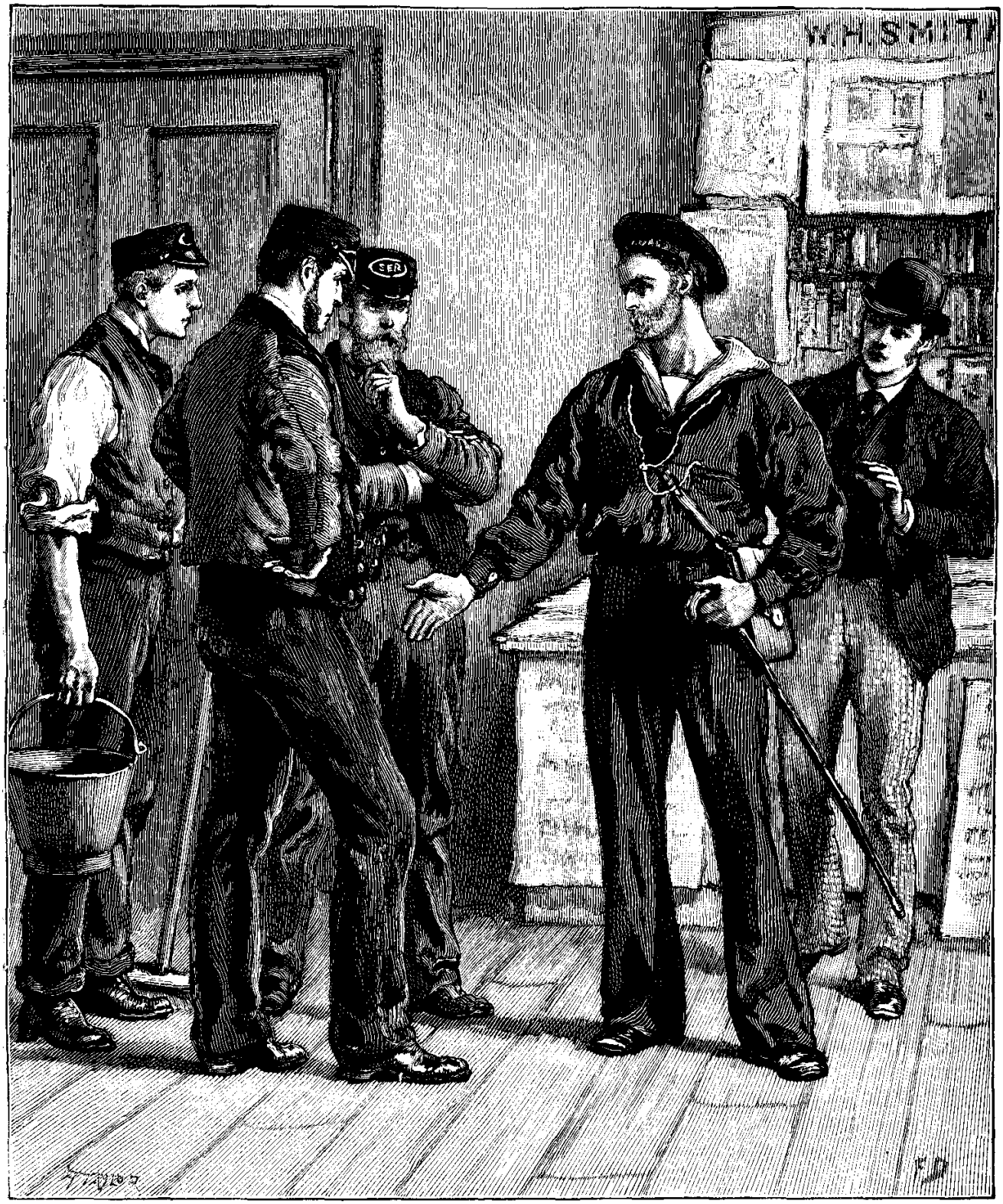
One thing is certain, where there is devotion to Christ and love for Him, the fashion of the day will have but little effect on the conduct of the Christian. What! be loyal to Christ and allow your friends to ridicule His Name, or to make light of God's word in your presence! To joke over texts of Scripture and take the sacred word of God—perhaps part of a verse—to make a riddle out of in order to raise a laugh! No; such behaviour would be *impossible* to the loyal heart. But this kind of thing is one of the small and low fashions of our day, and one from which the young Christian does not always find it too easy to clear himself. Therefore, all the more need to show your colours.

"Be of good courage" is a divine exhortation to us. So long as this world has Satan for its god, and Jesus, its rightful King, is rejected, let us quit ourselves like men and be strong. If strong and brave for Christ, our path in life as Christians will be comparatively easy, but if weak-kneed and feeble-hearted, our Christian life will be a sorrowful one—one ever of attempt at compromise, and *always* a compromise of Christ's glory, and of our own integrity of conscience.

Be of good courage, young Christians, for the Lord is your strength, and you shall become strong in Him and in the power of His might. A life spent bravely for Christ is a life worth living.

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



A SAILOR'S LIFE STORY.

A SAILOR'S LIFE STORY.

I WAS born on the 4th of April, 1852, at Manchester, and up to the age of nine, being blessed with a loving mother's care, never knew the want of anything. On the 16th of April, 1861, all our family were gathered around the death-bed of my mother, and my two brothers and I were brought to her side to receive her last caress and blessing. While there, our mother sang "Jesus, lover of my soul" right through, and then, with her last breath, "Rock of Ages." When she came to the lines—

> "Nothing in my hand I bring;
> Simply to Thy cross I cling,"

She fell asleep in Jesus, whom she had long loved in life.

At the age of fifteen years, I came into the navy, and was sent to the "Impregnable," at Plymouth, thence on to the "Ganges," at Falmouth, for twelve months' training. When sixteen years old, I was sent to the "Royal Adelaide," at Plymouth, the receiving ship, and was drafted in August, 1868, to H.M.S. "Galatea," Captain H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh, in which ship we circumnavigated the world, and were paid off in June, 1871, at Plymouth.

After returning to Sheerness, I was drafted to H.M.S. "Kestrel," bound for China. But on reaching Aden, I was invalided home with rheumatic fever. After various other voyages to different parts I came into the Coast-guards.

My first station was the watch vessel at Hurnford Waters, near Harwich. After being there seven months I went to Ramsgate, where the great event of my life took place, for there God met and pardoned me for Christ's sake. There I could see how that my beloved mother's dying prayers followed me all through life. How often have they come between me and vice, being mercifully answered in saving me from those whose feet led to death. And on how many a time when exposed to danger have her form and prayers, and the Sunday-school influences of boyhood's days, risen up and saved me from many a snare.

But this is how I came to be brought to God. I had got entangled with companions who were daily card-playing and drinking, and often cursing, swearing, and blaspheming. Many times we have sat and played Sunday through when off duty. This sort of conduct soon led to my being careless, and eventually I was found fault with by my officer for neglecting duty. He ordered me to do a portion over again, and I refused. For this I was reported for insubordination, and made a prisoner. I was then tried, found guilty, and degraded. My three good conduct badges were lost to me, and the end of it was I was fined fourteen days' pay, and had thirty days' confinement.

The punishment only made me worse. The evil one had laid hold on me, and to my shame—for I am keeping nothing back—I swore a fearful oath I would shoot the officer. I kept my revolver loaded, ready if he came to me out on the cliffs at night. But God had not forgotten the mother's prayers; His Spirit was watching over her erring son, and God in His mercy kept the officer from coming near me.

One day I was sent to the railway station for some papers, and the clerk at Smith and Son's, Mr. M., a believer in the Lord, heard me swearing to some porters who were sympathizing with me in my trouble. He came over to me, touched me, and, calling me aside, spoke to me about my soul. I was dumb.

Reminding me of my oath, he asked me, "If God had taken you at your word, where would you spend eternity?"

I broke away from him, but the arrow had gone home.

No cards that day. My seat was vacant that night at the Free and Easy. Instead of my old sinful pleasures, I saw myself on the verge of hell.

Unable to bear the misery, I went the next day again to the book-stall and saw Mr. M. He took me to his house, and there conviction of sin began. I became miserable and wretched, feeling myself a lost sinner.

Oh! how I suffered the tortures of the lost! No rest for the conscience. Self-reproach! Misery! Night after night would I fling my-

self down on the sands and cry for mercy, but the door seemed closed. This distress continued until I went to hear an evangelist who was speaking at the Wesleyan Chapel. His text was: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." (Ex. xii. 13.) Bless God! I saw myself under the blood, and when the preacher asked those who wanted salvation to stand up, I arose and went into the vestry, where they prayed for me.

I thought I was saved that night, but did not obtain settled peace with God until three nights after. Coming out of the chapel, I had a beautiful vision of Heaven and the glorified ones there, and, when I retired to my rest, I heard, as it were, a voice saying, "Only believe, only believe."

"Yes, Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief," I said, and sprang out of bed. At that moment I took hold of God by faith, and have had that peace that passeth all understanding ever since. This was in 1882.

The next autumn I was sent to another station, but was only there seven weeks. Having received the knowledge of the forgiveness of my sins, I could not help telling others of what God had done for my soul, the result being that I was reported for preaching the Gospel without permission, and was shifted to Alford Haven and confined to my quarters for three months as punishment.

God's hand, however, was in this, He had a purpose in view, though unseen by man; for by His grace I have been the humble instrument in His hands of leading many precious souls to the Saviour, who loved them and died to redeem them. My only hope and plea is that since He has done so much for me, that He will take this life of mine and consecrate it to His service. Time, talents, body, soul, spirit, all would I lay at His feet—only to be nothing that He may be glorified by my life.

I remained at Alford some few years, and then was promoted and sent to another station. My time for pension will expire within a few months, and then I hope by God's grace to go forth into the harvest-field as He may direct.

Per M. V.

HAVE YOU DECIDED FOR GOD AND FOR CHRIST?

THERE is a moment when the sinner saved turns to God. A man may live for years agreeing to the necessity of salvation, and yet remain all the time unsaved. Numbers and numbers of souls assent to the needs be of salvation, yet die without it. The greater number of our readers assent to the needs be. Oh, let us ask each one—Have you turned to God? Has your heart bowed before Him? Have you owned your sins to Him, and have you really and truly cast yourself on the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon? Be assured of this, dear friend, that there must be direct and personal dealing with God, or the soul is still afar off from Him.

Some little while ago, three Christian men were speaking together of the moment in their lives when they had truly decided for God. One had been a drummer boy in Ireland. A Christian soldier of his regiment was dying in the camp, and he had called the heedless drummer boy to his bedside, and made him promise he would that night kneel down beside his cot and pray to God. The boy declared he would, and went slowly and thoughtfully back to barracks. It was a testing moment for the lad. The men observed something strange about his behaviour, and chaffed him, till at length the hour for sleep came. Four times did that drummer boy walk round his cot in fear of man, yet not daring to break his promise made to the dying soldier.

Presently he fell down upon his knees by the cot-side, in the sense that God's eye was upon him. He could but kneel, pray he could not, for he did not know how to pray—all he could say was, "God, teach me how to pray."

For a month he knelt thus by his bedside, each evening being pelted with turf and brushes, until at length God showed him from the Scriptures, salvation through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The turning point with that lad was his kneeling down by the side of his cot. There the battle was fought and the victory won. That one act of decision was of eternal importance.

The second man was the son of Christian parents, and had been brought up with every religious advantage. The day he left his home in the country, his godly parents and neighbours had pleaded with him to give himself up to Christ, but the young man had come up to London unsaved. He entered the police force in London. He was a quiet living man, but morality will not save the soul or give us peace with God.

One night, when in the police-station off duty, he could not sleep, but for hours cried to God to save his soul. At about two o'clock in the morning God showed him that neither prayers, tears, nor good wishes can procure us salvation, but that in Christ, and Him crucified, salvation is to be found. There and then he closed with Christ, and received Him as his Saviour, and is now at peace. As he said, the moment of decision with him was that in which God was showing him by the Holy Ghost, that not in his goodness, but in Christ and His blood is salvation for sinners. He, by grace, decided in his soul as God the Spirit spoke to him.

The third man had been led by a pious friend, an old comrade, to attend a chapel, where God showed him His word, "Whosoever!" He laid hold on that one word, *whosoever*. The deciding point with this man was believing God's word, that it was true, and true for him, and the result was he testified that God had given him life everlasting in His Son.

God may deal with men's souls variously, but let us learn from these three witnesses, who agreed that a moment came in their lives, such as they had never had before, when they in spirit had decided for God and for Christ, and that from that moment all had been changed to them.

Now God may lead up to this point by a long process, or bring the soul to it at once, but certain it is, that every sinner saved by grace, does come to close quarters with God. He is no longer standing afar off considering the needs be for salvation, nor at a distance from God making resolutions, but he does believe God.

Again we would repeat our question, "Have you decided for God and for Christ?"

SOME FELL BY THE WAYSIDE.

IT was nearly nine o'clock one lovely Sunday evening, when, as I stood talking with a relative, on the pavement in front of his residence, we saw a young girl whom we knew approaching. After enquiring of her welfare, our conversation took a different turn, and little heeding the continuous rush of the passers-by, we proceeded to "the old, old story of Jesus and His love," and entreated her to yield her heart to the Lord.

Years have passed since then, but my memory still retains a vivid recollection of the glow on those pale cheeks, betraying the deep emotion that the message from God had produced. Encouraged to still greater earnestness, we pleaded with her, as she valued her soul's salvation, at once to come to Jesus.

For a few moments she stood, apparently halting between two opinions, and then expressed a great desire for salvation. She went on to explain that being in service, her mistress would expect her to be in by nine o'clock, so that she could not linger longer that evening. We felt almost unwilling to let her depart, until she had found that rest for the weary and sin-stricken soul, which the Lord Jesus has promised to give to every one that comes unto Him.

Finding that Lizzie would be at liberty on one evening during the week, we obtained her promise for that evening. But when the evening came we waited in vain for her.

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side." (Matt. xiii. 19.) So it proved to be with Lizzie; though the seed had been sown only on the Sunday evening before, and though she had appeared to be so much affected by the story of salvation, the enemy had succeeded in catching away that which had been sown in her heart in the few days that intervened. And all this happened at a time when she was softened by recent bereave-

ment, and we knew the sorrow she felt at the death of a tenderly beloved brother.

Her brother had drunk in the gospel message as one long athirst; with deep desire he had taken the repentant sinner's place at the feet of Jesus. There his longing soul had been satisfied and filled with joy. "But then," the sister argued, "my brother was dying, and I am enjoying good health."

By placing before her an attractive picture of this world's pleasures, the enemy succeeded only too well in persuading the young girl to close her eyes and ears to the truth, and the door of her heart to Him who had knocked and sought admission. Having once yielded herself to the suggestions of the tempter, Lizzie soon became indifferent to the truth, and soon after coolly informed me that if life only were before her—that is, if there were no eternity to dread—she would not think of the Saviour.

Alas, how many at this moment are pursuing the same downward course! It may be that you, my reader, can remember a moment in which you were almost persuaded to cast yourself at the feet of Jesus, and claim His proffered mercy; but you did not improve the golden opportunity, and now, where are you? Consciously afar off from God, with less desire for salvation than you then experienced. And what has the enemy given you in exchange for that "word of the kingdom," which you foolishly suffered him to catch away? Nothing better than a vision, a mirage of pleasure, which you have been vainly attempting to grasp. And if the Lord were now to deal with you according to your sins, you would be lost for ever to all hope of salvation.

Oh! listen to the voice of the Saviour now. Cease to do evil; learn to do well. Oh! receive Christ's message of love and mercy now, and neglect not so great salvation. Is there not mercy in store even for you?

Come with me to visit one who is shedding bitter tears. Years have rolled away since the little incident of that Sunday evening took place. Lizzie is now a wife and a mother. Do you ask why she weeps? It is not now because of bereavement. She is weeping because she once lightly esteemed Christ, and salvation through Him; because she had been guilty of hardening her heart against the earnest, appealing voice of One, who loved her with more than earthly affection. She deserves not His grace or favour, but if He will now but speak peace to her soul, she will gladly receive His word, and hide the same in her heart.

The seed has once again fallen, not now by the wayside, but into good ground. Lizzie has inclined her ear; she has come unto Him; she hears; and her soul lives. Oh, what mercy to one so consciously undeserving! While Lizzie praises the Lord for His unwearied goodness to herself, at every opportunity she earnestly beseeches those about her not to do as she once did, lest the enemy catch away the seed that is being sown in their hearts. A. J.

GOD'S CARE.

I WAS terribly hard up, having had to sell nearly everything to pay expenses before I came home. I was very anxious to set up my Gospel room with twelve forms, and also, as the cold weather had set in, I badly wanted a waistcoat. I did not know what to do, whether to buy the forms or the waistcoat; but the tailor's price decided me in favour of the forms; he asked fifteen shillings for the warm garment I required, so I gave up all hope of buying it for a month or two, and, in the meantime, made this need a matter of prayer. I just told the Lord how that in Egypt, by turning my house into a soldiers' and sailors' meeting house, I had completely emptied the family stock; and that now, being in delicate health, I was feeling the cold of England very much. I prayed He would guide one of His children to send me the waistcoat needed, and that very week I received a letter from Colonel D.'s lady, saying, "Knowing, dear S*** H., that you are not strong, and feeling I should like to do something for the Lord, I was impressed to knit you a warm woollen waistcoat, and send it herewith, hoping it will fit." Well, I was dumbfoundered! I had not written to Colonel D.

for months, and here, through his wife, God had sent me a splendid, warm waistcoat, worth a dozen tailor's make.

When preaching a little while ago, I told the people about this answer to prayer. Now, the place being full inside, some of the audience had to sit outside in the verandah, and amongst these was a Christian named J.W., who never loses a chance of speaking a word for the Master, and is a bright light wherever he goes. This J.W. has a wife, and, I think, eight children, and having spent almost beyond his means in the Lord's work, he was just then hard up for a suit of clothes. Hearing my story about the waistcoat, he went home, saying to himself, "Well, here is my suit of clothes shabby and threadbare; why not tell the Father, and ask Him for a new suit?" No sooner said than done, and when J. W. does pray he always seems to lay hold of the very throne.

The next day, as he was walking down the street to his work, a gentleman at the other side of the road beckoned him to come across to him, and then said, "John, I think your clothes are beginning to look shabby; go to the tailor, and get measured for a new suit, and put it down to my account?"

J. W. was simply overwhelmed at this proof of God's care over him. Encouraged afresh to make known his requests to God, he remembered that his poor fund was very low, so that when visiting the needy he had little to give them. He therefore laid that matter before God, and lo! that same day he received by post a £5 note with the words, "For your poor work."

May God increase our faith in His power and in His love. J. H.

NOW!

I WAS asked to speak to a young man, who had stayed behind after a gospel meeting. I found him in great distress of mind, and laying my hand on his shoulder, I asked gently, "My friend, what is your trouble?"

He replied, "I am anxious about my soul. I had been going to a Bible-class, until I got troubled in my conscience, and then gave up attending. My companions laughed away these impressions, but I could not keep from my class. I have been going on in this miserable way for months, sometimes going to the class, and then again keeping away from it for weeks. Now to-night, since I have been sitting in this hall, the Spirit of God has said to me, 'This is your last chance; if you don't accept Christ to-night you will never have another opportunity.' Oh! sir," he added with intense earnestness, "tell me, can my sins be forgiven?"

I told him that God had said, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," and that the promise was, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Now," I said, "my brother, let us get down on our knees, and confess your sins to God, and ask Him to forgive you."

Together we knelt down, and the young fellow, in broken, heartfelt words, poured out his soul to God, asking His forgiveness. Ere we rose from our knees, the answer came, and he was able to thank God that his sins, which were many, were all forgiven. As we shook hands on parting he said, "I am a different man since I came in here. I came in a miserable man, and am going out a happy one."

S.

AN EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S POWER.

A CHRISTIAN, advanced in life, was talking over with us the trials he had gone through the last few years, and the lessons God had taught him in the time of trial. During the long illness of his beloved partner in life, our friend had been her nurse day and night, and his own hands had to do everything. "One thing I can say," he exclaimed, "goodness and mercy have followed me! And I have learned, in a way never known to me before, the value of the atoning blood of Christ, and His intercession on high. It would have been impossible for me to continue through my difficult path had I not been sustained by the intercessions of Christ, and I could not have dared to remember what my life is, was it not for the atoning blood of Christ."

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How to Meet Modern Infidelity.

IT is ever a good thing to have the eyes opened to facts, even though the facts be distressing. To live in the imagination that all is going on well, when the absolute contrary is the case, is but to live in a vain show, to live life in unreality. God has done much latterly to open Christian people's ears and eyes to the real state of the professing Church, and to prove to them that the boasted progress of to-day is, as far as Christian faith goes, progress towards the apostasy foretold in the Scriptures.

The most treasured of Christian truths are scorned, in not a few instances, even by ministers of the Christian religion, and truths once revered as the very holiest of all are defiled by the boldest infidelity. Twenty years gone by, it would have been deemed miserable croaking to whisper, that we should live to see men rejecting the truth of the atonement, permitted to hold high places in what are called orthodox Christian communities, or to find the protests of Protestants perishing as uncharitable speeches out of the land.

What will a few more years bring forth? The seeds of infidelity are sown broadcast over the land, and every fresh crop of weeds only multiplies a thousandfold the awful and soul-destroying growth. "The time will come," says the word of God, "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;" and really it would seem that that dark day here foretold is present. The prophecy continues: "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth"—showing the wilful character of the perverseness, and it closes: "and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4). For the judgment of God lies upon the perverse, so-called Christians, who reject His truth. Men are already being turned to the fables of Buddha in our "Christian England," while blank, dead No-God-ism is an accepted creed by many. "Benevolent agnosticism" merely tolerates the acceptance of the Christian faith in "weak-minded" men and women out of consideration for their feeble brains!

Christians in deed, and not in name, need arouse themselves. Every believer in God and His truth has a work to do, and probably but little time in which to do it. The same page which foretells what is now upon us, gives us our orders for the battle—"But watch thou in all things." Be thou awake thyself in all things, arouse out of the easy-going, feather-bed Christianity that prevails—for who can deny that the very privileges our forefathers won for us by their blood, have become but arm-chairs for us to repose in? Who can question that the favours of God to us in this our day of Christian liberty are too often made by us but a bed of ease upon which to lie? God calls us to the front, to labour, and to suffering, and such a life must be one of trial, and hence runs the order of the day, "Endure afflictions."

The indifference of believers, and of the day, is to be met by a wakeful spirit; its ease, by the endurance of afflictions; its infidelity, by the evangelist's labour. "Do the work of an evangelist." The scornful men, still called Christians, who believe in no God, require to hear the gospel of God. Or, if they have so turned away their ears from the truth that they will not listen to it, or if because of their perverseness, God has in judgment turned their minds to believe fables, then their scholars and their dupes require to hear the truth. "Do the work of an evangelist," then, fellow Christian. Labour for souls, for that is the evangelist's work, and for this work, heart, not gift, is requisite.

"Do the work of an evangelist!" Be the sphere of the work where it may, be you man or woman, rich or poor. Let the field of labour be that of the large congregation, the Sunday school, or, more important still, the private circle and the homelife—"Do the work of an evangelist."

Remember what an evangelist is, one sent from God to proclaim His heart of love to perishing men. The affectionate appeal, the loving testimony, the witness to what Jesus is, and to what He does for souls, have in them such winning power, that nothing this day's religion offers, can approach unto. There is power in the gospel that infidelity

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cannot withstand; there is might in the truth of God, that no lie of the devil can resist—labour then for souls.

Meet modern infidelity by doing the work of an evangelist; meet the agnostic by the truth of the love of God; meet the remorse that the service of sin produces in the soul in the slave of sin, by the truth of the preciousness of the blood of Christ; meet the blank, dead creed of no future existence, by tears such as Jesus shed over the refusers and rejecters of God's grace. "Do the work of an evangelist."

Modern infidelity must be met, as all infidelity has to be met, in God's way, by God's power. The heathen are converted to God from their idols by the truth of God's gospel; the practical heathen in our own cities and villages are converted to God in the same way, and so are the educated, the refined, the learned, who ridicule the word which in their souls they do not comprehend.

THE PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIFE.

THE chief desire of the true Christian is to live to God. The divine life that the believer possesses is evidenced by godly desires, while the Spirit of God, who dwells in His people is ever most graciously controlling the heart and leading the believer towards God. But we have to look well to ourselves, lest our desires remain but such. God calls upon us to devote ourselves to Him. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God," says the apostle, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." God gave His Son to die, a sacrifice for us; God expects from us that we give ourselves to Him a continual life sacrifice. This is the path of real holiness, and a life-long path it is.

Further the exhortation runs, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Rom. xii. 1, 2.) The inward work here spoken of is continuous—it is a work that goes on, or should go on, day by day. Maybe, a very little day by day, yet it is everyday work. The mind, the seat of man's intelligence, is graciously acted upon by God the Spirit, and thus through the renewing of it the transforming of the whole man takes place, so that at length the Christian rejoices in what God is, and what He delights in.

Let us seek from God for a portion of His word that may be to us the day's bread, and let that portion fill our minds, and thus renewing of the mind will take place. Then we shall not be conformed to the world, but shall be transformed to likeness to Christ, and we shall prove for ourselves in our experience what is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God.

INDIA-RUBBER MEN.

"INDIA-RUBBER men, two a penny!" Such was the street-cry, that the other day fell upon our ears, and so charmed were we with the idea, that we did not even turn round to see what the cheap little flexibilities were like. India-rubber men! Who can deny the abilities of flexibilities? They may be turned and twisted, drawn out and pinched into countless shapes, which, were they not india-rubber men, would be impossible.

An india-rubber man will do anything you wish. You can make what you like of him by your finger and thumb. He is unresisting, pliable, without a character of his own, and, after having been pulled into a variety of shapes, returns by the force of his elasticity to his original form.

And how cheap they are! yet surely none too cheap, for they are not worth much, since they are, after all, but playthings. India-rubber men? No, they are not men at all, but india-rubber!

Be not, Christian, of this race and genus, for though we live in the Iron age, the times have made many men mysteriously pliable, or, may be, men have made in these times a manufactory for turning out flexibilities.

Remember, if you are to be of practical worth on this earth, you must be firm for God. You must have a conscience. You yourself must be strong and decided.

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Light in the Valley.

MARY was the daughter of a servant of God, in our neighbourhood; she had been brought up in the love and fear of the Lord, and was early called to the service of the Saviour, and early obeyed the call. She had a sweet, smiling face, and always appeared cheerful and happy. Life opened before her very brightly, and as she was an only daughter, who could wonder that her father should hope to enjoy the companionship of such a daughter for many years, or that her mother and brother should delight in her? But the ways of God are often inscrutable; He "moves in a mysterious way," and to us it appeared a most strange providence that our young friend should early wither and fade, and that the life which might have been so useful should soon be lost. Did we say lost? No, not lost; for it had been everlastingly found in Christ.

Our loved one was ill a long time. She caught a slight cold in the spring of the year, only slight, we thought it, and at first no danger was apprehended; but she gradually grew worse, and, notwithstanding every remedy that affectionate love could try or medical skill suggest, the dear girl continued to get worse and worse. Throughout the long trying days and sleepless nights Mary was never heard to murmur. She was not only cheerful, but even merry at times: she would converse upon the subject of her death in perfect peace and with real happiness.

Who could depict the calmness and peacefulness which pervaded the whole household? Her beloved brother gave up his occupation,

LIGHT IN THE VALLEY.

and came to cheer the dying couch of his precious sister; but she herself was the one who often cheered the hearts of those so soon to be bereaved. God was the portion of her much loved father, and he was able to submit without a murmuring word to the early death of his darling child. Could they grieve, as those who have no hope, when the light of heaven was already reflected in the face of the patient sufferer? How like the entrance gates to the celestial city did her sick room become!

On the Monday before her death, Mary thought she was going, and so, indeed, did her friends. The sick girl looked around upon her sorrowing father and mother and brother, and, thinking herself about to leave them, exclaimed, "My love to all. There is Light in the Valley!"

But she again rallied, and spent another night awaiting the summons. On the Tuesday morning Mary said to a friend, "I wonder if Jesus will come and fetch me to-day." She then began talking to the Lord in a most simple and childlike manner, saying "Oh, Lord Jesus, come and fetch me." But again it was not to be upon that day. On Wednesday morning, those who were about her bed saw that her eyes were very much dilated and fixed; she exclaimed, in a tone of wonder, "Oh! what do I see?" "It is the angels coming to fetch you, my dear," replied her brother. A young, friend who was present, repeated a verse of the hymn—

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the gath'ring waters roll,
While the tempest still is high."

These words the dying girl followed, at first in an audible tone, but gradually only her lips moved, the voice being silent, and with one gentle sigh she passed away. About a month before her death, Mary declared that the time of her illness had been the happiest time of her whole life.

My young reader, are you perhaps looking forward to a long life? "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." This young girl had as bright an eye, and as rosy a cheek as it is possible you could have. When we looked upon her merry face, how could we possibly anticipate that the lamp of her life should so soon be put out? And what authority have you that your morning of life shall not end 'ere noon? Are you ready? Oh! could you know Christ, as our dear Mary did, so that to die might be gain. My young reader, stop and think, for you have a soul to be saved or lost. Which will it be? Mary was leaving behind all that could make life happy, yet she was willing to go, and could say as she passed through the dark shadows of death, "There is Light in the Valley." RHODA.

The Treasure Hidden in the Field.

HIDING treasure was a very common occurrence in Palestine. It may seem to us a strange thing that anyone should take his valuables into a field or garden and bury them in order to secure them from robbers, for our notions of security are very different from those of the people in Eastern lands. But to this day the produce of the land in Palestine is often kept stored in the earth in a huge kind of jar, and such stores are hidden away by their owners in the field so that strangers cannot find them. There are various incidents given in the Old Testament referring to this custom—a custom, the traditions of which in relation to the discovery of the hidden treasure, is in the minds of all the inhabitants of Palestine to this day. Indeed, when persons from our own countries go to that land searching for remains of ancient cities, or monuments that might throw some light upon the past, the inhabitants believe they have come searching for hidden treasure, and most jealous are they lest such treasures should be discovered and carried away.

"Slay us not," cried the ten men who escaped Ishmael's cruelty, "for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey," and by the revelation of this secret they bought themselves safety. Achan, we know, hid his treasure in the earth in his tent; and in our Lord's parable we have the slothful servant digging in the earth,

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and there hiding his lord's money. (Matt. xxv. 18.) He placed it where it would be quite secure.

"The field," we should remember, signifies an uncultivated place rather than, as we use the word, a tended piece of land, and, therefore, in the Bible "the field" signifies a place where less notice would be attracted to it than one near a dwelling, and constantly under the hand of the owner. Such would be the hiding-place where the treasure would be placed.

The Lord uses "the field" in His parables as a figure of the world, for, according to His *own explanation, "the field is the world."* (Matt. xiii. 38.)

In His parable He says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field" (ver. 44), and in these words the existence of a secret is presented to us. In the world there lies a secret treasure. This treasure is of surpassing value to the finder, the parable continues, for "the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

The finder, to begin with, hides the hidden treasure! He places it where he considers it will be perfectly secure from the eye of others; he wishes to obtain it for himself—to have it as his own portion. And having hidden it, the joy of the treasure he has found is such that it surpasses all his wealth. Then to obtain it, he sells all that he possesses, and buys the field for the sake of the treasure in it.

We cannot fail to recognise in the man Jesus Himself, who found in the world the treasure of His own people. From everlasting His delights were with the sons of men (Prov. viii. 31), and "from ages and generations" the secret of what the treasure of the church of Christ is was hidden. (Col. i. 1-26.) It "was kept secret since the world began" (Rom. xvi. 25)—"hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9). The Lord had His eyes all those ages upon the treasure, and His heart rejoiced in the treasure He had found before He came to this earth to win it for Himself.

Such was His joy in His people, that to obtain them, to have them for Himself, He left His heavenly glories and became a man on this earth. He, as it were, sold all that He had; He surrendered heaven's wealth, and took up poverty on earth, and at length gave up His very life and blood to purchase the field for Himself. For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame (Heb. xii. 2); and, having bought the world for Himself, He obtained the treasure of His people, who were in it, for His portion.

The world is His as Son of God, because He made it, but in a peculiar sense it is His as Son of Man by right of purchase. *He can, therefore, do with it as He pleases.* For the time He leaves it almost alone, for at this present hour His thoughts are on the treasure which is in it. His church is His joy. "Christ...loved the church, and gave Himself for it...that He might present it to Himself." (Eph. v. 25, 27.)

It is well for us to look both at the world and the church (we mean now by the "church" such as are really Christians) as Christ looks at both. It seldom comes into the thoughts of men that this world, with all its glory, and all its rebellion, is Christ's by purchase! He is rejected and despised, but none the less does the world belong to Him. If God please that the Lord shall wait for public entry upon His rights as Son of Man, what shall we say? Jesus waits in patience for His kingdom and glory, and for the time being Satan, the god of this world, has the chief control over its nations and people. However, this will not continue, for presently Christ will come, and the usurper will be displaced.

In this period of Satan's power Jesus is most graciously occupied with the treasure in the field—with the church. Such as are truly Christians are members of the church of Christ; they each go to form part of the whole, which is so precious in His eyes. Let us, then, consider His joy in His treasure! Let us admire the marvels of His love! For why should He, before whom heaven bows and angels humble themselves, elect to find such value in poor sinners, whom He has saved and formed by His Spirit into His church? We can but wonder at His grace, and thank Him for His salvation.

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HIDING TREASURE.

The world is going on its course to the end foretold in the Bible. The church will be taken out of it before the hour of the world's tribulation arises, and will be housed in heaven. The treasure that the church is to Christ, the world in its present state cannot know. Indeed, such language as we are now using would appear but folly to the world. For what does it understand of the glory and the wealth of Jesus, or of His love even to death for sinners? And what does it know of the future glory of the church of Christ, or of that day when He shall so display His own united in glory "that the world may believe" the Father "sent" Him to this earth!

YOUR FATHER KNOWETH.

"YOUR Father knoweth that ye have need of these things," says the Lord to us. Now, the fact of our Father's knowledge of our needs should satisfy us as to them, in the same way that the knowledge by a little child of its mother's eye being upon it rests its heart. The child is quieted because it is aware that its mother knows its need. Now, are not our prayers at times rather giving our Father information upon matters than the outcome of our trust in His knowledge of our needs, and of His love to us? A fretful state of mind betrays a lack of confidence in our Father's love and care towards us. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need"—what rest for the soul is there in this assurance! Let us quiet our souls as does the little child who rests in its mother's knowledge of its need.

Reverence for Relics and Sacred Places.

ONE of the most amazing superstitions that can possess the mind of one calling himself a professing Christian is reverence for relics. "We honour them," says the controversial catechism, "as precious remains, which bring to our remembrance distinguished sanctity, and as dear pledges, which animate our confidence in the communion and intercession of saints." We pity the untutored savage, bowing before his fetish tree, adorned with rags and similar tributes of his reverence; we stand in wonder at the man, educated in the knowledge of the living God, who holds in religious honour old garments and metals, teeth and bones! "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

Such reverence does not arise from any right thought of God, it is merely for the exaltation of man—yes, of dead men! Speaking of it in the gentlest way, it is "of the earth, earthy," and of the Christian it is written, "our conversation is in heaven." Heaven and its citizenship, heaven and its character, has nothing to say to such substances as cloth, or wood, or jewels. How utterly contrary to the thoughts of Paradise, where the spirits of the saints are, is reverence of their bones and garments! It seems superfluous to write that the living God has no pleasure in such things. Nevertheless, since His compassion is as infinite as His glory, the Christian, who knows the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ should regard with pity all who, bearing Christ's Name upon them, have fallen so low in their thoughts of the Christian religion as to give religious honour to the relics of the dead.

Some little time ago we were looking over a magnificent old church, where every sign of wealth was in profusion. Presently we found ourselves before a very handsome tomb, whereon lay a figure robed in sumptuous apparel. We gazed upon the superb garments that adorned the recumbent figure of the saint, when, on close inspection, lo! from beneath the broidered cap a skull grinned into our eyes, and out of the sleeve of the coat a skeleton hand beckoned with its ghastly finger!

Allowing that the skeleton in question was really that of the saint before whose tomb we stood, and allowing, further, that the saint in question had really lived a saintly life, of what sense or use could his skeleton be to the living who stood before them? "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is all that can be said of the decaying bones, denied a decent burial! Devout men carried Stephen to his grave, and buried him with great lamentations; thus did they honour his remains. Such crude, low feelings as

would expose the holy dust of a martyr to gaze did not enter into their conceptions.

In Cologne Cathedral—one of the most refined and lovely buildings in the world, a very masterpiece of human genius and power—there is a relic chamber, where, in cases of most choicely wrought silver and gold, adorned with rare jewels, amounting in value to many thousands of pounds, there are various curiosities. It cannot be pleaded that these relics are retained in the cathedral, which is the pride of Germany, for the benefit of half-formed minds, for the crude and the ignorant; no, they are there to appeal to the cultured and the learned, to men whose intellectual power is the very opposite of that of the African savages who surround their fetish tree. Amongst these relics is an ivory knob, said to have been attached to the staff of the Apostle Peter, having in it, it is asserted, inherent miraculous power. Also among the relics are to be seen part of the skull of Saint Sebastian, and, more extraordinary still, the reputed remains of the Magi!

Relics are of considerable value to the buildings which contain them, or, rather to the custodians of these buildings, for, quoting again from the book already referred to, we have it stated, "God has often granted great favours through them." The building or the shrine where the relics are placed, attracts very frequently large sums of money in gifts because of the supposed good accruing from them. Thus, the ivory knob, attributed to the supposed staff of the apostle, is stated to have raised the first bishop of Cologne to life again after he had been dead forty days. Such wonder-working treasures, therefore, are held in high honour, for why should they not work miracles still?

When the apostles were living, mighty miracles were wrought through them, as the Scriptures testify. But the miracles were wrought by living men, not after these men were dead, by their sticks. The secret of the power of those days was the Spirit of God who dwelt in them. "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people," and such was the divine power flowing out from Peter, that "they brought forth the sick into the streets . . . that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." (Acts v. 12, 15.) This divinely used agent thus spake to the people, as to the power which issued from him and others, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God . . . of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus . . . and His Name, through faith in His Name, hath made this man strong . . . yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (ch. iii.) The apostles gave all the glory to the Name of Jesus. Not one particle of honour did they collect for themselves. On the contrary, most earnestly did St. Peter protest against "distinguished sanctity" in connection with the miracles wrought by him, and most earnestly did he declare they were wrought for the glory of the Son of God.

Reverence for relics, and adoration of the saints to whom the articles, now relics, formerly belonged, are very closely united. Indeed, relic-reverence is but a link between the saint the relic brings to mind, and the person whose confidence in that saint is animated by the relic. Relic-reverence does not contain in it what St. Peter spoke of, "His Name, through faith which is by Him."

A lady, who once devoutly accepted relics, tells us how she had been shown two linen threads, carefully preserved in a glass case, which she was assured had belonged to a dress worn by the Virgin Mary while on earth! These two threads were held in high esteem by the possessors of them, who regarded them as wealth of the best kind. What possible good could a dress of the blessed Virgin do our souls? The notion that spiritual virtue can emanate from clothes, old or new, worn by persons long since dead, is simply a barbarism of pagans.

The ancient pagans, who had not heard of the living God, honoured the bones of their heroes—they were relics precious in their eyes. The Buddhists, too, have their relics—as, for example, the sacred dress of Buddha,

and they also have their shrines for their sacred articles. Going back to the days of the ancient Egyptians we find, according to their traditions, that the limbs of the body of their great god, Osiris, were all held as sacred, and were each of them the occasion of temples being built in different parts of Egypt to their honour. How terribly alike are the heathen superstitions and those of Christendom. The ancient pagans had their sacred arms and legs of their *god*, as in our own days "Christians" have the sacred arms and legs of their *saints!* Man worship, man exaltation is the soul and spirit of relic-reverence, and such worship and exaltation is dishonour cast upon the living God and His Son.

The actual worthlessness of some reputed old tooth of St. Peter, such as, not so many years ago, the Pope presented to the Emperor of Austria in token of his regard for that monarch, or the essential uselessness of a dress said to have been worn by a saint a thousand years back, should be apparent to every one. There is moreover a painful absurdity in relic reverence, for such is the demand for them, that the reputed arms of the Apostle Peter are several in number, while at least three heads—each of which is said to be genuine—are attributed to him!

The altars and the shrines which contain relics, naturally are held to be peculiarly sacred, and to these pilgrimages are made. Now God once had His holy place on earth, and this must not be forgotten. He chose to place His Name in a special locality, and such a place was accordingly holy. This might be, for example, His holy hill of Zion, in the holy city of Jerusalem, where was the holy place of His Temple. Not to honour the place set apart by Him for sacred use was rebellion against Him, while to set up other sacred places in opposition to that of His appointment was a grievous and terrible sin.

In our day Christ has been rejected upon the earth, and, therefore, there is no holy place here. The earth is stained with His blood, and awaits judgment. And not until He has come from heaven and has executed judgment upon the rebellious, and has set up His throne here, will there be a holy place again on earth. Until that day the only holy place the Scriptures recognise for Christians is heaven itself. "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." (Heb. ix. 24).

Not to recognize the holy place on high is to fail in seeing one great characteristic of Christianity; but to set up a holy place on earth, and to place in it relics of the dead, is rebellion against God and His Son. The idolaters in Israel of old set up their golden calves to attract the people from the holy place of Jerusalem, where God dwelt; and the erection of holy places on earth with their relics is a similar kind of sin, for such things blind men's souls to the only holy place God now allows—even heaven itself.

A holy place on earth was for God's earthly people the Jews, but speaking of earthly hopes and of Christ Himself as the Messiah, St. Paul says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." (2 Cor. v. 16.) The Christian's connection with Christ is with Him risen from among the dead, and all right thoughts of the true holy place will be regulated by the reality of His resurrection.

Pilgrimages to holy places are, therefore, each and all of them false to the truth that God's people are strangers and pilgrims on earth, and that heaven is our home. The great book of Christian pilgrimage is the Epistle to the Hebrews; there Christ is presented to us as the Priest on High, with heart of perfect tenderness, and arm of perfect strength, "able to succour" (ch. ii. 18), "able also to save" (ch. vii. 25), and Him we are exhorted to "consider" (iii. 1). And there believers are presented as pilgrims passing through this wilderness, on their way to rest—enterers into rest—the rest of God, but not yet at home (iv. 1, 3, 9). Alas, that the great pilgrimage character of the Christian should be lowered through little journeys by boat or train to shrines where Christ in heaven is not considered, but where it is asserted some vision of a saint has once been seen. The great reality, Christ Himself, is rejected, in

order that some one's dream or vision may be exalted.

"Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," and such all Christians are, let us see to it that our zeal in our pilgrimage is not less vigorous than that of those whose calling is earthly to their sacred spot below! Christians are exhorted, "as strangers and pilgrims" (1 Pet. ii. 11), to carry themselves through the world as on their way to heaven. They are not exhorted to go from holy place to holy place on the earth as pilgrims, but to go through the evil world itself as pilgrims to heaven, and this is quite another thing. According to Scripture teaching the world is under sentence of divine judgment for the crucifixion of the Son of God, and holy places on it are a notion in defiance of the solemn fact of its real condition. What contempt upon the cross is the pilgrimage paid to the reputed sepulchre of Jesus! What blindness to the glory of His resurrection has fallen on those who, instead of looking up to heaven and seeing Jesus there, occupy themselves with visits to His supposed place of burial.

Neither is the exhortation to walk as a stranger and pilgrim given in view that some favour may be obtained by such behaviour. No, in the possession of the favour of God's love, being redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, being born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, the believer is exhorted to demean himself in the world in such a manner that God may be glorified. He is going home to his God and Father, and passing through the world itself to that home.

Pilgrims on their way to a holy place on earth hoping to gain a favour from God by their journey are a spectacle of unbelief in the Gospel. Every step they take is a denial of the truth that God *has* blessed His people with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. Passing through the world to the "better country," the "heavenly," is the pilgrimage which pleases God, for of all true pilgrims He has said, "God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. xi. 16.)

Texts for the Month.

THESE are chosen in relation to the subject of the preceding paper. Our relation to Christ risen from the dead, and our hope of being with Him in glory, are truths which deliver our souls from all such notions as reverence for relics and for pilgrimages to sacred places on the earth; while such truths as the texts selected on worship contain, balance our souls in true reverence to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
Th	1	If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth			
F	2	Beware lest any man spoil you through...vain deceit			
S	3	God...hath...made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ			
S	4	**If any man be in Christ, he** is a new creature			
M	5	The Father...hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light			
Tu	6	God...hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ			
W	7	Why seek ye the living among the dead?			
Th	8	We walk by faith, not by sight			
F	9	Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty			
S	10	Built up a spiritual house,...acceptable to God			
S	11	**Holy brethren, partakers** of the heavenly calling			
M	12	Our conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven			
Tu	13	Fellow citizens with the saints			
W	14	I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims			
Th	15	They were strangers and pilgrims on the earth			
F	16	An inheritance incorruptible,... reserved in heaven for you			
S	17	I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world			
S	18	**Here have we no continuing** city, but we seek one to come...			
M	19	The hope which is laid up for you in heaven			
Tu	20	Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear			
W	21	The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal			
Th	22	God...hath prepared for them a city			
F	23	We which have believed do enter into rest			
S	24	Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest			
S	25	**Do not I fill heaven and** earth? saith the Lord			
M	26	Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst			
Tu	27	Ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father			
W	28	True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth			
Th	29	We...worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus			
F	30	If the Son...shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed			
S	31	Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

BETT GOOD.

*BETT GOOD.**

WE once had tea with an old lady of the royal family of God. She was ninety-four on her birthday previous to our visit, and she lived in a small cottage by the roadside. A little stream flowed past the door, typical of the greater stream of God's goodness, which never failed her. The village, in which she had spent all her life, was a notable place, we discovered — notable for badness, for "they swear, and fight, and drink," was the description given to us of the villagers.

The old dame, of whom we write, went by the name of Bett Good, for her life was a recognized contrast with the wickedness of the village. Good she certainly was, through the work of the Holy Spirit leading her into ever-increasing likeness to Christ her Saviour.

On our mentioning the name of Jesus, which is always a pass-word with God's children, the old lady responded, "Jesus! beautiful, beautiful Jesus! Holy Jesus!"

She could appreciate the beauty of holiness, and saw its perfection in Christ. Do you see this beauty in Him, or do you admire the Lord merely as gentle and kind, without regard to His holiness?

We told her our thoughts of Christ were exactly in harmony with hers, at which she broke out with the words—

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good!"

Her old Bible was produced, with its cover carefully sewn on, and many of the leaves stitched in. We read the aged saints' charter, John xiv., and when the many mansions were mentioned, she chimed in, "And I want to go and see them."

What wonder that a princess should wish to view the palace of her Father!

We paused a moment over the word "If—" "If it were not so." Did it mean there was any room for doubting? Did she ever say "If," and yield to doubt? "Most certainly not," was her simple answer; "but I feel nohows sometimes."

"And what do you do then?"

"I say, oh! all you bad thoughts and bad feelings go out of me. Jesus, Jesus, come in to me, fill me."

A good remedy for bad thoughts and bad feelings! And when Jesus fills the heart there is no room for fears.

In the course of our conversation, we repeated John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Oh! that does me good," exclaimed the old woman.

"You don't believe in Jesus, do you?"

"Don't I? That I do. Jesus, Jesus, I love Him."

We then repeated another gospel text, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

"That's what I say," responded the old believer. "I am a sinner, and He has saved me, the good Lord!"

She then gave us a little of her past history. She had brought up a large family, but had always had her wants provided for.

"I never owed anybody anything, and no one can come after me."

"What a lot of bread you must have eaten in ninety-four years! Mountains of bread! Surely your Heavenly Father will give you the little you still need to the end of your life."

To this she most heartily responded, she was sure she would not be suffered to want.

She had known many troubles, and had been once robbed of her last farthing, she told us, and this led us to refer to Job and his trials, at which the old saint was so stirred, that, putting up her hands, she began to sing a quaint ditty—

"I remember Job, how he made a stand,
When the Lord laid on him His heavy hand,
And how in affliction he found a Friend,
And so shall we, and the times shall mend."

But tea was ready, and the singer of nearly a century joined us in saying grace, adding, "May the Lord make us *truly* thankful, that's what I say. When I go to bed I sleep, but I soon wake up, and then there's Jesus always with me. Blessed Jesus! I

* Our first introduction to this old lady will be found in "Real Life Stories," No. 13.

do praise Him. Don't know if that's right?"

This seemed to be a favourite saying with old Bett; we assured her she was quite right, and that the Lord valued such praise. It pleases Him better than fine song or the organ. How many of us, we wonder, praise God with the simplicity of this poor soul? Poor, do we say? No! she was rich indeed.

Before we parted, she gave us a little bit of gospel that was worth its weight in gold.

"Do you know where my hope is?" she asked. We guessed, but wished to have it in her own words, so encouraged her to proceed. And she said, "In Jesus, lovely Jesus. I say to Him, You saved me, Lord. You did die for sinners. You saved me. I am a sinner."

Reader, is this your hope? Try Christ, the Saviour of sinners, for old Bett's way is God's way. Jesus the Saviour, the Saviour for sinners. Jesus the Saviour, who died for, or instead of, sinners. Lord, save me, I am a sinner! He is the only way of salvation.

As we left her cottage, she gave us a farewell exhortation in these words—"Stick to Jesus. Don't let Him slip. Let everything else go. Give up all, but stick to Jesus."

Three years after, some of the same party were again in that village, but they could not find Bett Good. The princess had gone to the palace. W. L.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.

A LITTLE village was enjoying a period of heaven-given revival. A spirit of prayer had fallen upon the Christians of the place, and very soon the result had been manifested in many desiring salvation, who had hitherto lived very godless lives. It was soul-stirring to hear those Christians pray; the formal, mechanical prayers, so much in vogue, were exchanged for earnest, simple, direct petitions, and, in answer, homes and hearts, that had been dark through sin, were lit up and made bright with the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. It could not be said that everybody in the village was converted, for, as in Paul's lodging at Rome, "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not."

Among the many who flocked to the meetings, came at length William H., one night. He was the eldest son of a Christian mother, who had fallen asleep. His sister, who kept house for him, was a godly woman, but William was yet unconverted. Invitations to the meetings had been given him from time to time, but until now not one of them had he ever accepted. He would give a quiet smile, and would offer no opposition, but not on any account could he be induced to come. But now, that the power of God was upon the community, many attended the meetings, who had never before been near them, and this night, to our joy, William turned up among others. He was interested, and came back several times, and earnest prayer was made on his behalf.

On Halloween (the last evening in October) the Christians had a special social meeting, at which tea, prayer, and praise formed the programme of the evening. Our friend William, who had by this time been coming to the meetings two or three weeks, was very much displeased at the proposed tea meeting, declaring that for his part he could see no meaning in such a gathering; it seemed to him a senseless thing for Christians to meet together in a hall, to drink tea, pray and sing hymns together. It was a queer way of holding Halloween; he would hold it, he said, as well as any of them, but in a far happier way. So he set out for a public-house spree, in a neighbouring village.

William did not return for a day or two. How he got home, early the following Sunday morning, he knew not; but he arrived without his hat, and with his purse well emptied. When he awoke, after a few hours of heavy sleep in bed, he was in an awful state of mind. He felt as if he were going to die, and his first thoughts were to arouse his sister and tell her he was dying; but on second thoughts he resolved to lie still, and die without telling anyone. However, he soon came round, and felt himself again. But one sorrowful consequence of his spree remained: it had entirely quenched his spiritual impressions, and damped all desire for the meetings.

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On Fridays it was my habit to visit the village from end to end, and this fact was well known to William. For some while it so happened that I had visited one-half of the village in the forenoon, and the remaining portion in the afternoon, his cottage being usually the last that I visited before the evening meeting, as it stood quite at the end of the village. Unknown to me, he had watched where I usually left off in the forenoon, having made up his mind to avoid me, and to come no more to the meetings. For one or two Fridays I missed him, and could get no trace of him.

On one of my subsequent visiting days, it so happened that I stopped about five doors short of my usual forenoon portion. Purposely to escape me, very early in the afternoon William went to see a young man in one of these houses, reckoning that at that hour I should have already been there. When I came back from dinner to resume my visiting, the first house I entered was the very one into which he had gone to hide from me! He had just entered when I came in behind him. "I have not seen you for a while," I said. "Are you coming to the meeting to-night?"

"Yes," he replied, quickly and emphatically, for he was so startled by my unexpected entrance, just at the moment when he was sure he had escaped me, that, for the life of him, he could not say no! I had no idea that he had gone into the house to evade me; he told me all this afterwards.

That evening there was a very blessed meeting, and the power of the Lord was present to heal sin-sick souls. The preacher expounded the first Psalm, dwelling on the contrast between the righteous and the wicked; and, while listening to the preaching of the word, faith came by hearing, and William passed from death unto life.

The following Sunday, instead of hiding from me, he sought me out to tell me of the blessed change he had experienced, and of the joy he now had in Christ Jesus, the Saviour.

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John v. 6.) J. C.

HAPPINESS IN THE WORKHOUSE.

NOT a very likely place in which to find much happiness, is probably one's first feeling on reading this title; but the following story is all true, and is written in the earnest hope that it may lead some, who know not the peace and joy that no circumstances can take away, to the personal knowledge of the only One who is both able and willing to give them to all who come to Him.

It was a fine day in the early autumn, and the brightness, that the sunlight brings, contrasted strongly and sadly with the scene that came before a lady, on entering one of the sick wards of the Sydenham Workhouse. The occupant of each bed there knew what pain and sorrow meant, and often, too, without a relation or friend to speak a word to them.

Going round the ward, the lady came to a man who willingly accepted a little book she offered, and, thanking her for it, seemed glad to enter into conversation. He observed that his circumstances were not very cheering, but he hoped things would soon be better. He had come into the workhouse because he was too ill to bear the noise of the lodgers in his mother's cottage. He added that he found the time pass very slowly, and hoped soon to be well enough to go out, and get to work again.

Whilst he was speaking, the lady looked at the card over his bed, on which she read his name, Henry Martyn, and the disease from which he was suffering. She knew that, in course of time, this meant that death, not life, was what awaited the poor man before her. She silently asked God to enable her to speak to him about his soul.

After a little more conversation, she asked if he was fond of reading.

Henry Martyn replied, "Yes, I am rather, but I get tired of too much of it."

"I suppose then you have a good deal of time for thinking just now?" enquired his visitor; "more than you care for, I expect."

"Yes, miss," he answered with a smile, "I have decidedly."

"Tell me, did you ever think how many

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sins are enough to shut you out of heaven for ever?"

Clearly he had not, for, after a pause, he said slowly, "No, I have not before, but I suppose one sin would shut us out, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, it certainly would," answered the lady, "for God tells us 'there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth.' And can you not remember more sins than one that you have committed in your past life?"

"Oh! yes, miss," was the answer. "I haven't done anyone any particular harm, but I could not say I have not often sinned."

"Well," said the lady, "if death should come to you, would you like to die as you are?"

"No, I should not," answered Henry Martyn thoughtfully.

"Then," replied his visitor slowly, "since death may come to you, do you think it is wise to go on living in a way that you would not like death to find you?"

"I don't think it is," he said, "but I never thought at all about these things before. No one ever spoke to me like this, and I don't understand it."

His visitor sought to explain to him God's remedy for sin, the gift of His own Son, who was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." (Is. liii. 5.) She then left, promising to come again soon.

On her next visit to Henry, after enquiring about his health, the lady asked him, "Have you thought any more over what we were speaking about last week?"

"Yes," he replied, "that I have, and I should like to know that my sins were gone, but I don't seem to see how I can—I am no scholar, and don't understand these things, but, perhaps, you can explain it to me?"

"Let me read to you what God says about it," she answered, "for I might tell you one thing and some one else another; but if we have God's word for it, there can be no doubt or mistake." She then read Luke xv., and explained how the lost, helpless sinner is welcomed home, if he only come as a sinner, seeking the forgiveness the Father is so ready to bestow.

"How can I be sure God will have *me?*" he asked.

"Because the Lord Jesus says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out,'" the lady replied. Then, seeing the anxious, puzzled look in the poor man's face, she added, "You know what coming and asking for what you really want, means in earthly things? The little children teach us this; when they want anything that we can give them, they come and ask us for it. Won't you promise me that you will not go to sleep to-night before you have come to God as simply as a little child, and have settled this matter?"

After a moment's pause he answered, "I will."

"Good-bye. Remember He has promised, if you come to Him, He will in no wise cast you out."

In a day or two the lady again stood by Martyn's bed, and in answer to her question, "How are you feeling to-day?" he said, eagerly, "Oh! so much better, but it is not the doctor's medicine that has done me good, it is because I am so very happy. I did come to the Lord Jesus that night, and asked Him to wash away my sins, and He did not send me away. Now I am not afraid to die."

The bright, peaceful look in his face told, even more plainly than his words, that the anxiety of soul had quite passed away.

Dear reader, if you were placed as Henry Martyn was, could you truthfully say, "I am not afraid to die?" If not, ask yourself the question that was put to him, "Is it wise to go on living in a way that you would not like death to find you?" Remember, God says, "After death the judgment," which means that if you die as you are, you will have to stand before Him, at the Great White Throne, an unsaved sinner, and be judged according to your works (Rev. xx. 12).

Henry Martyn did not get well, as he fancied he would, though he lingered on some little time, gradually getting weaker in body, but not losing his joy in Christ—far from it.

One afternoon he said most brightly to

the lady, who had been reading to him about the Lord Jesus Christ, "God bless you for all you have told me about Him; when I saw you first I said the time went by very slowly, but now I am so happy I hardly know how time passes, it goes so quickly. Though I am only in the workhouse I could not be happier than I am, and soon I shall be with my Saviour for ever."

And so he was. About a week before Christmas, 1887, his spirit passed peacefully away from that workhouse ward, to be for ever with the Lord who loved him, and had washed him from his sins in His own blood.

D. H. P. B.

SUDDENLY DESTROYED.

STANDING at a street corner, one Lord's day evening, listening to the old, old story, of Jesus and His love, I saw some men laughing and making fun of the speaker. I moved nearer to hear what they were saying.

"It is all very well if a man is going to die," remarked one.

"Yes," laughed another, "I mean to be converted on my death-bed."

Poor deluded souls! Satan was whispering the old lie, "Time enough yet," in their ears.

One of the speakers had no death-bed. He started off to work as usual, one windy morning in early spring; several times he went up and down the long ladder, helping in the erection of a building. While busily engaged at the top of the edifice, a sudden gust of wind came, he lost his balance, and fell to the ground. His fellow-workmen rushed to the spot, but only to find the lifeless body of their poor comrade. Great was the anguish of the widow's heart, as the corpse of her husband was carried into the cottage, but oh! who can tell the far greater anguish of a lost soul!

There is no salvation in the next world; an endless eternity with the devil and his angels! A thousand years will pass, but it will be eternity still. Think of it, my unsaved reader; a never-ending eternity of woe, anguish and gnashing of teeth, lies before all those who refuse or neglect this great salvation, which is offered to you now without money and without price. Come to the Saviour just as you are—a guilty, lost, helpless sinner. The Lord Jesus is speaking to you now; He has, perhaps, spoken to you before, in some illness when you thought of death, and that frightened you; but you have still put off coming to Christ. Or perhaps some dear friend died, and Jesus called you then in your sorrow; oh! heed His voice, I beseech you, for that voice of love and mercy will cease one day, and "then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer." (Prov. i. 28.) Why will the Lord not answer? Read the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter, "Because I have called, and ye refused."

A. M. P.

I HOPE SO!

ARE you ready for eternity? "*I hope so!*" Are your sins forgiven? "*I hope so!*"

Too often "I hope so" is merely a polite way of putting off giving a direct answer to a question too little liked. Sometimes it expresses the true state of a heart which dares not, yet longs to say, "I am sure!"

Let us get to close quarters, dear reader, for sooner or later to close quarters you must come with death and with eternity. Are you ready? Are you now, this moment, prepared for eternity, being fit for meeting God? Not fit in yourself, for that you never will be, but fit because Christ has made you so, because He has washed you from your sins in His own blood. It is impossible to be more fit than Christ makes us. If He has washed us from our sins in His own blood, it is He who has done this great work, and by His blood alone, which was shed for us on the cross. The work is perfect.

"I hope so!—nay, I believe, I am sure!" said a young man to us the other day. He had hoped for a long time, but as the Scriptures were presented to him, he set aside his questionings, and took God's word as God utters it, and accordingly became sure. He had at last "set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.)

Are you ready for eternity? Do you answer, "I am, by God's grace. My sins are forgiven me for His name's sake"? (see 1 John ii. 12).

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The Growing of the Gospel.

"THE word of the truth of the gospel . . . . bearing fruit and increasing." (R.V.—Col. i. 6.) Producing fruit and growing! Such is the character of the word of the truth of the gospel, when it is sown or planted in the world. The divine seed springs up, bears fruit, and extends its sphere of growth. The seed falls into one human heart, and then that person becomes the means for its propagation among others. In the natural world, one seed wafted over miles of waters, and falling at last upon a desert reef, will in time become a forest. The seed produces fruit and grows; the seed has in itself a reproductive power which the Creator has bound up in it. Thus did the word of the truth of the gospel come to Colosse of old; brought there by human hearts and lips, by the power of God the Spirit it sprang up and produced a Church of God, in the midst of the waste of waters of paganism. And such is the character of the gospel throughout the world still. It is seed which bears fruit and increases.

If in us and in our hands the seed, which is the word of God, does not grow and increase, we must look to ourselves for the cause. Plant an acorn, and in time there will be an oak, and the tree will not cast its acorns to the ground in vain. The years of life of the tree are spent not only in the tree becoming fully grown, but also in the reproduction of itself; such energy, if in vain, would be contrary to nature. Not only does the tree grow, but it increases the number of oaks as it grows: one seed becomes one tree, and one tree becomes a forest. If in the Christian the seed of divine truth does not make him fruitful in every good work, and increasing in [or, by] the knowledge of God, there is something in him which calls for immediate self-judgment, for, if he be a growing tree, by him there will be an increase of Christianity. The gospel is a fruit-bearing power, a divine power to save souls, and to make them become in their turn fruit-bearers by the gospel.

The growth and increase of infidelity should exercise every Christian, and cause him to bestir himself afresh in order to the diffusion of the gospel. If we may suppose oak trees so feeble that they bear no acorns, then we may understand the species dying out. The dying out, the diminishing of a given company of Christians, has some decaying principle in it, some fatal principle which militates against the true character of the word of the truth of the gospel. We have seen whole forests blighted and apparently perishing, bearing upon them the evidence of a destructive influence, and such forests are a parable to ourselves.

In countries, for example, such as Egypt, where in former centuries numerous churches and Christian congregations existed, but where now these are no more, and instead, that which is anti-christian dominates, we behold the full result of this decaying principle. Or, to come from the great to the small, in order to see an illustration of this, we place ourselves in some village of England where, a century ago, great zeal for God was present, where souls were saved and saints helped on, but where now, alas! empty buildings and empty benches lift up their witness. What the special agent of destruction was, and how that decay set in, man may never be able to trace, but the Lord, who walks in the midst of the candlesticks, and whose words to the churches are, "I know thy works," has seen and judged the causes of the decay.

Let Christians allow in their souls that decay in Christian life and work is the effect of an evil cause, and something has been gained. It is ever a difficulty to recognize a spiritual condition in which we move as being a faulty one, for we are usually in it or of it ourselves; and it is more difficult still to judge ourselves as contributors towards it, for the moment we do so, we have in spirit separated ourselves from the condition. Is it neglect of prayer, or indifference to the Scriptures, or love of ease, or spiritual pride that is the worm at the root of the tree, or the secret cause that has robbed it of its vigour? If we have perception from God to recognize what the evil is, we shall have the grace in the first place to recognize the evil in our-

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selves. We cannot take the mote out of a brother's eye, while we have a beam in our own.

When there is, to begin with, real self-judgment and true faith in God, and then a humble and prayerful spirit, it is amazing what may be effected by even one believing Christian. What wonders have been wrought by one truly disinterested and devoted spirit —by one believer disinterested save for God's praise, and devoted to His glory! How marvellously has God wrought in reviving grace through the instrumentality of some insignificant servant of His, while the prayers of two or three unknown persons have often brought down showers of blessing upon a whole district, and transformed a wilderness into a fruitful field. "Growing and increasing" has become the description of what had been formerly like waste lands.

Let the Christian, who laments the poor spiritual growth and sorrowful crops around him, encourage his heart in the Lord, and pray without ceasing.

GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO DO.

FOUR little children sat on a settle one rainy afternoon, for they could not run down the lane and play there as usual. Fancy these four little creatures sitting all in a row for an hour together, longing to be tumbling about and making a noise, and imagine their misery! One of the four, sitting between the others, began at length to fidget and kick its legs about, upon which the mother shouted at the child, "Be quiet!" After a while, upon the little creature repeating its movements, the mother took it up and bounced it down hard upon the settle, crying, "There, sit quiet."

Thus were these four small children taught the bliss of home on the rainy afternoon, and taught the duty of doing nothing on the settle.

On another afternoon these four children began to play at sitting quiet on the settle. Very happy they looked; their faces were brimful of fun, indeed so delighted they seemed, that a lady, who happened to open the door of the cottage in search of the mother, felt assured there must be some mischief brewing.

As she watched them, they cried to her, "Look, we are having such fun! We are sitting still, and see, we have lighted a fire under the settle." And sure enough they had, and only by the providential entry of the lady into the house, were these little children saved from being burned.

The four children on the settle on the rainy day are quite a parable to us, for had their mother had the wit to give them occupation instead of forcing them into doing nothing, they would have learned how to amuse themselves instead of so nearly destroying themselves. *Give them something to do;* if carried out would often save many a child from misery.

Give them something to do, we would say to such older Christians, as try to repress and suppress the young. No good comes out of denouncing the misdirected energy of young converts, or of thumping them down to silence in their seats, but in leading them into wise paths, there is great profit. Some older Christians are like the distracted mother, who would set all her small burdens in a row, and simply cry out to them, "Be quiet." Now, be sure of this, the end of such training will be mischief, and just because there is so little wit to direct young Christians into gracious occupation, do they often begin to play with the fire, almost to their destruction.

RUNNING WITH PATIENCE.

"LET us run with patience the race that is set before us." Run with patience! This means constant energy, continual progress—"not as though I had already attained"—not a pausing in the career of the Christian life, as if the race were over and the goal won. What a heart-searching exhortation lies in these words—"*run with patience*"! There is full energy on the one hand, and the ballast of faithful steadiness on the other. There is but one way to reach to such a state, and that is having the heart full of the object to be gained—Christ Himself. Having the soul filled with Him gives both the energy and the stay we need.

A Narrow Escape.

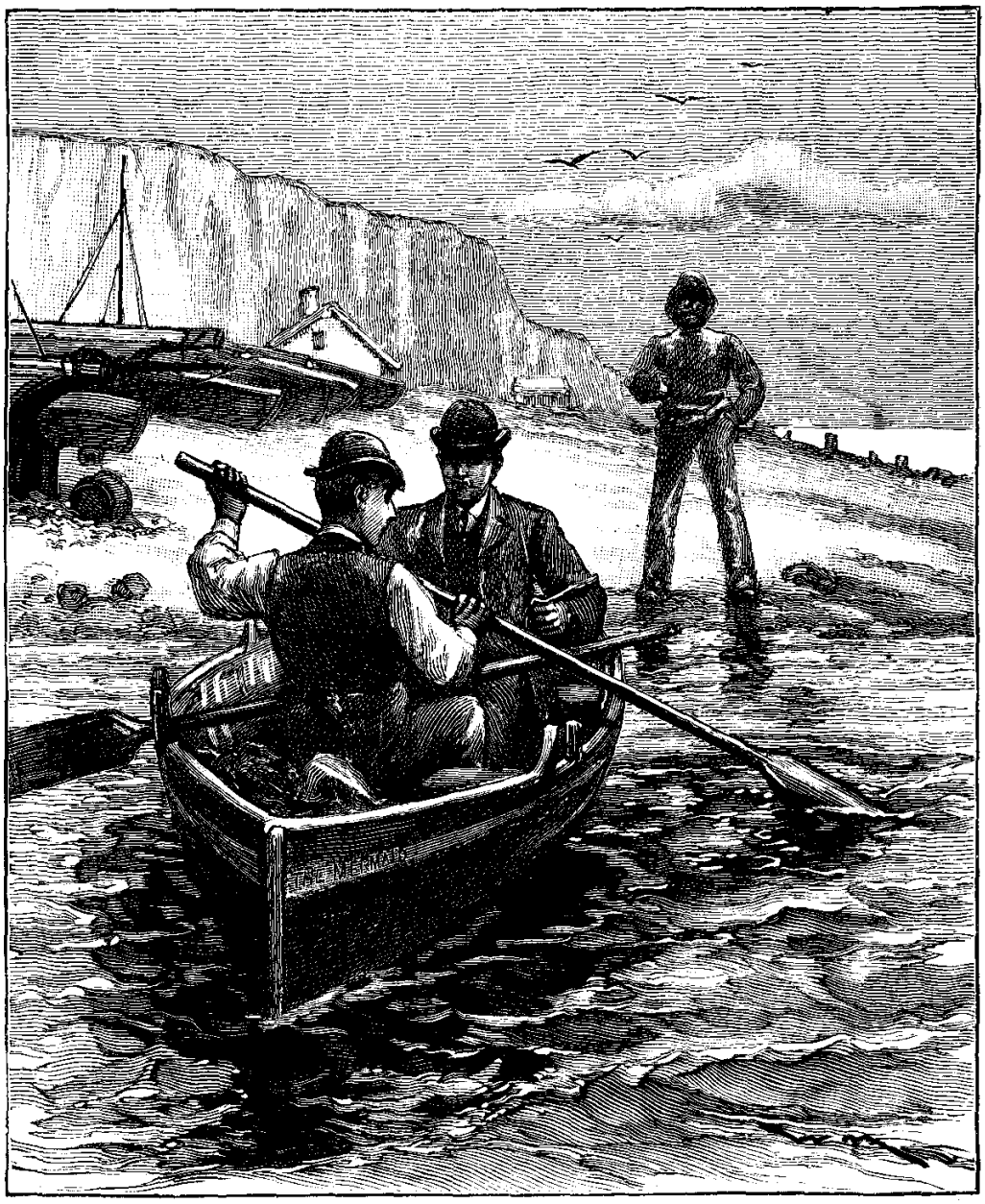
"I SAY, Tom, what do you think of a row and a bathe this afternoon, instead of going to the Young Men's Bible Class? It's such a jolly sort of day, and one hates to feel tied and bound to attend the class every Sunday."

"Well, I don't know, Alick, I don't care about going, and besides I should hardly like anyone to find it out if we went."

"Oh, dear me! you've not much to fear on that score. We will hire a boat from old D. the boatman, and tell him not to let anyone know. We can then row a mile or so up the shore, where nobody will see us, and have a good bathe. Won't it be grand, on such a splendidly hot day as this?" And he danced with delight at the pleasing prospect.

The qualms of Tom's conscience were soon silenced, for he was dreadfully afraid lest Alick should think him too cowardly to stay away from his class for one Sunday.

A few moments later and they were bounding along towards the shore, where D., the old boatman, lent them their favourite boat, "The Mermaid." If Tom had confessed the truth, he would have owned to feeling a little uncomfortable about the expedition; not that he was afraid of boating, but somehow or other it seemed a bad thing to do on the Lord's day. His parents had always kept that day very strictly, and perhaps, after all, they might get to know about it somehow



STARTING FOR THE PLEASANT AFTERNOON.

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or other. Yet, as he had promised Alick, he would not go back now, but would try and enjoy himself as much as possible. The prospect of a swim was certainly a very strong temptation in such sultry weather.

They were soon seated in "The Mermaid," and, pulling with a long and a strong pull, their little craft bounded merrily over the water towards the spot where they had decided to bathe.

"Don't you think, Tom, we had better go a little farther out from the shore? We can then have such good dives, and we shall be ever so much more private."

"All right, Alick, anywhere you like, you know best."

A few more pulls took them well from the shore into deep water. To undress and plunge in was but the work of a few minutes. How enjoyable it was! Like ducks they swam about, and dived, and plunged. They had been in the water some time, and were getting rather tired, when Alick said, "Come and rest a bit in the boat; we will then have another good dive before going home." With a little effort, they got into the boat safely, and rested a while.

"Now, Tom, for another dive!" and Tom plunged into the water. Alick stood on the edge of the boat ready to follow. One, two, three, and away he went!

No sooner had he come up again than he shouted in dismay, "Oh! Tom, look what I have done! I've upset the boat, and she's gone to the bottom!" And so it was. In springing off, his weight had capsized the light boat, and she had immediately filled and gone to the bottom, with their clothes, watches, and all their belongings. Their distress was great, for they were some distance from the shore, and there was no help at hand. There was nothing for them but to swim for it, and a long swim it was. Half tired to begin with, they struggled bravely to regain the shore. It seemed as though they would never get there. "I'm done for," gasped Tom.

"A few more strokes," said Alick, encouragingly, although he too was beginning to feel terribly exhausted, "and may God help us!"

"Lord, have mercy on us," prayed Tom, as almost in despair they battled onwards, fighting for life. At last both reached the shore, utterly prostrate. Fortunately, a man, from a cottage close by, seeing their exhausted condition, helped them to his cottage, where they were revived and refreshed.

Through the mercy of God the lives of the the lads were spared.

Dear reader, are sin and its pleasures keeping you from seeking the Saviour? Have you found greater attractions in the world than in Christ Jesus?

And yet how fleeting are earthly pleasures! and how unsatisfying, often leaving a terrible sting behind them. But the pleasure of living for Jesus and of being used for His glory is satisfying, and is as an everflowing stream of joy in the believer's soul. If you would be ready for all emergencies, disease, suffering, death—if you would live a noble life, if you desire happiness of mind and peace of soul, come to the Lord Jesus Christ for cleansing and salvation, and you will receive in this world great blessing, and in the world to come everlasting life. R. M.

A VERY SHORT PRAYER.

ONE Sunday evening, not long ago, the writer found himself in the south of London, where a number of little folks of from three to eight years of age were assembled for a children's service. In order to gain their attention he had the words, "Lord, save me," put on a board. As the children were reading it over, a little maid came up and said, "I say my prayers every night at mother's knee."

"Do you, my dear, and what is the prayer?" To which the child replied by repeating the verse—

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
And if I die before I wake,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take. Amen."

And then she added, "When I have finished my prayers to-night I shall say, 'Lord, save me.'"

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The little child's simplicity charmed me very much. She seemed to speak from her heart, and speaking from the heart to Himself is what the Lord Jesus loves to see. I am quite sure it pleases Him to hear this little prayer, "Lord, save me," when it comes from the very bottom of the heart. He delights in mercy, and He is mighty to save. I know that such of you as have truly called on the Lord to save you are the happy children, and that you feel like singing all the time, and that the burden of your song is this—

"I've found a Friend, oh, such a Friend!
He loved me ere I knew Him!
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.
And round my heart still closely twine
Those ties which nought can sever,
Since I am His, and He is mine,
For ever and for ever."

I want my young readers to go to the blessed Jesus, believing He hears them, and to say from their hearts to Him, "*Lord, save me.*"

Suffering for Righteousness' Sake.

THE Christian life must be more or less a constant warfare. No zealous or faithful heart can go through many months together without some suffering for righteousness' sake, and, though in the end victory will rest with the believer, very often circumstances will seem to be all against him, and his only honours will be the wounds he receives. Let no young believer be disheartened or discouraged because he has to endure suffering for the truth's sake. The greatest conquerors for God's honour have often been the greatest sufferers, and had they not had good courage in God they would have fallen back to the rear, and we, who now enjoy the fruit of their victories, should be under the government of darkness. If Luther had not been of good courage how should we Protestants fare? Had he swerved or given way before persecution when in the power of God he lifted up the banner of the truth, with justification by faith thereon emblazoned, how should we who rejoice in the liberty of our open Bibles now stand?

And in small circles the principle likewise holds good that the believer is called to pursue with courage his path for Christ's glory, and that on that pathway he will have to suffer for his Master's sake.

The long roll of the great witnesses of the Bible attest this truth. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" was the martyr Stephen's testimony against the religious rulers who had betrayed and slain the Just One Himself! The world, whether wicked, moral, or religious, hated the truth, and the confessors of the truth have to face its opposition in their path of duty.

Jeremiah, the prophet, whose heart was full of grief because of Israel's sin and rebellion in his day, declared the testimony of Jehovah against the people in the face of continual opposition, and through constant suffering. The Jews would not hear the truth of their defeat, overthrow, and captivity. His faithful words brought him almost to death. The wilful princes petitioned the king against him: "We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt." The end was that, rather than humble themselves under God's hand and before His servant, "took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." (Jer. xxxviii. 4, 6.) Men hate to hear the truth; still by the truth are they saved. Even in the terrible sin of these princes, one man—a foreigner, it is true—was raised up for Jeremiah's deliverance.

How childish it is to be angry with the truth! Shall we content ourselves by living in a fool's paradise? Certainly our life lived there will be but a brief one, and then will come the reckoning day. Those princes who so maltreated Jeremiah were all of them shortly afterwards slain. (Jer. xxxix. 6.)

Righteousness and truth must in the end

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JEREMIAH BEING LED TO THE PIT.

prevail, for God has so declared; but since sin is in the world, and Satan rules over the world, there must be a battle between good and evil, falsehood and truth, right up to the great day of victory.

During their time of suffering, God stands by His people in a remarkable way; He gives not only the courage to endure the afflictions, but peace, so that they are borne with a heart at rest. We do not feel sorrow the less because our hearts are at peace, but we brave the sorrow in quite a different way from what we do when our hearts are fretting or uneasy. No one of the great men of the Bible seems to have had a heart more thoroughly broken than Jeremiah, yet amid his lamentations and his sorrows he gives us occasionally words of the deepest calm. He says even of the time we are thinking of, "They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me.... I called upon Thy Name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon.... Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not." (Lam. iii. 53, 55, 57.) When God Himself says to us "Fear not" He fills our hearts with peace. God's "Fear not" kept Jeremiah's soul at rest even when the stone slab of the pit was fixed over his head, and he was left, as the princes thought, to perish.

About Purgatory.

THE doctrine that after death there will be a state, in which men's souls shall be purified and made fit for heaven, is on the increase. The doctrine is an exceedingly old one, and one which is spread over a great part of the earth. It certainly does not come

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from the Bible, for in the word of God we read in the clearest terms that the spirits of His people upon leaving the body forthwith go to be with Christ. Jesus said to the thief upon the cross, who trusted in Him, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43), therefore, that man, whose life had been so evil, and who was saved at the eleventh hour, had no purgatory to pass through. As Stephen died, he cried, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts vii. 59), and the Apostle Paul, in the prospect of his own martyrdom, says, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." (Phil. i. 23.) Neither he nor Stephen looked on to a state into which they should enter before coming into Christ's own blessed presence. When instructing the church of God at Corinth, and "all the saints in all Achaia," the apostle, inspired by God the Holy Ghost, shows that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. The believer passes from the state of being here on earth in the body, into the state of being out of the body, and with Christ in paradise. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:... we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 6, 8.) Thus God teaches us the very opposite to the belief, now growing to be common in our land, that after death there is a state preparatory to that in which the spirit will enter the presence of Christ.

When the resurrection to life occurs, the bodies of the holy will be raised, and the holy will be, spirit, soul, and body, fitted for eternal glory, and, saith the Scripture, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Rev. xx. 6.) All who partake in it will be *like* Christ, and *with* Christ. (See 1 John iii. 2, and 1 Thess. iv. 17: "We shall be like Him"; "so shall we ever be with the Lord.") Therefore, their state will be perfect, and it will also be everlasting, for they will "ever be with the Lord." Thus God makes it clear to us that upon dying, the spirit of the believer is present with the Lord, and that at the resurrection, his spirit, soul, and body will be for ever with the Lord. There is no purgatory for the believer.

As regards such as die out of Christ, the Scripture plainly tells us that after death comes the judgment. "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.) The spirits of such as die out of Christ, the Apostle Peter teaches, are in prison (1 Pet. iii. 19), not in purgatory! They are in a place where they are awaiting the judgment.

When the judgment comes its decision will be final and everlasting. Sinners will be "judged every man according to their works" (Rev. xx. 13), and it is expressly said of that judgment, "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (ver. 15).

Not one word does the Bible breathe about a place where the souls of the wicked may obtain purification after this life is over. Such a doctrine is utterly opposed to the plain word of God. There is no purgatory for the unbeliever.

It is here, in this lifetime, that the purging takes place, and the purging, the cleansing, the fitting for glory, are accomplished by what Christ on the cross suffered in the stead of sinners; He alone is able to make sinful man fit for God's presence. The blood of Christ purges the conscience (Heb. ix. 14); it cleanses us from all sin (1 John i. 7), and God the Father has made us, who believe, in this lifetime fit for the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. i. 12).

Whence, then, we ask, comes the doctrine of a state after this lifetime in which the souls of men will be made fit for future bliss? It is found among the heathen of both ancient and modern times. The ancient Egyptians held it; so did the heathen Greeks; while it is common among the Chinese and other heathen to this day. The same evil spirit who perverted men's souls and taught them to worship idols perverted their minds to believe in purgatory. The terrible doctrine comes from the Father of lies.

When the belief in purgatory was first accepted by men we cannot tell; that the notion

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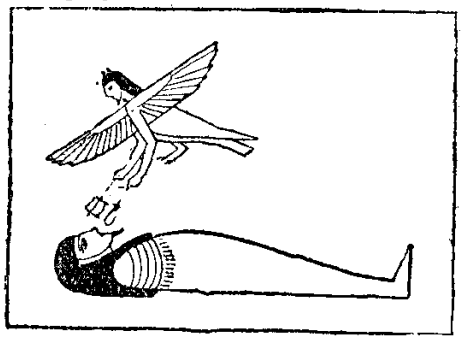
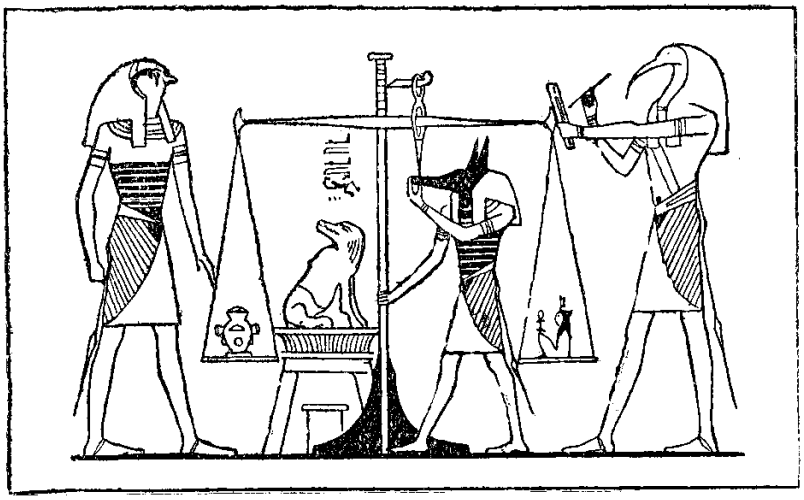
is a very ancient one is well known. In the religion of Egypt, at the time of the exodus, the belief was present. Those people recognised that the soul lived after death, and apart from the body. The familiar illustration of the winged soul hovering over the corpse happily indicates this belief.



Below lies the body in its mummy case; above hovers the soul, having in its two hands the emblem of life—the sail representing life's transient character; the cross and circle representing life in its enduring essence.

Moses must have often witnessed the performance of the rites attending the burial of the Egyptian dead. If the deceased was accepted to have lived a good life, praises would be poured upon his memory, amid the acclamations of the multitude, and his remains would be conveyed to the tomb. This was done when the virtues of the departed, according to the belief of those people, had entitled him to bliss. In other cases, an accuser would come forward, and lay such charges against the departed as hindered the relations from burying the body. Perhaps the man had been a glutton—maybe he had not paid his debts—anyway, he had offended against the laws of right living as accepted in Egypt. When the voice of the accuser prevailed, the body of the departed was denied the tomb; and then "the grief and shame felt by the family when the rites of burial had been refused were excessive ... the awful sentence foretold the misery which had befallen the soul of the deceased in a future state. They beheld him excluded from those mansions of the blessed, to which it was the primary object of everyone to be admitted; his memory was stained in this world with indelible disgrace. It is true that the duration of this punishment was limited according to the extent of the crimes of which the accused had been guilty, and when the devotion of friends, *aided by liberal donations in the service of religion and the influential prayers of the priests*, had sufficiently softened the otherwise inexorable nature of the gods, the period of this state of purgatory was, doubtless, shortened" (Wilkinson). Is it not remarkable that now, just as in those old days, living men professed to be able to determine whither the soul of the departed had gone, and priests then as now were ready to "soften" the gods, and to lessen "the period of the state of purgatory" by their "influential prayers" when they received "liberal donations" for the service? There is little to choose between the two religions so far as purgatory is concerned.



Some of the gods of the Egyptians (for their gods were many) superintended the judgment of men. We see here a picture of them so engaged. They are weighing a man's heart contained in a case, against a weight emblematic of truth. The scales are even, therefore all is well with the individual whose life has been weighed. Indeed, one of the gods compliments him upon his good works and life.

Such as read the Bible know that in this

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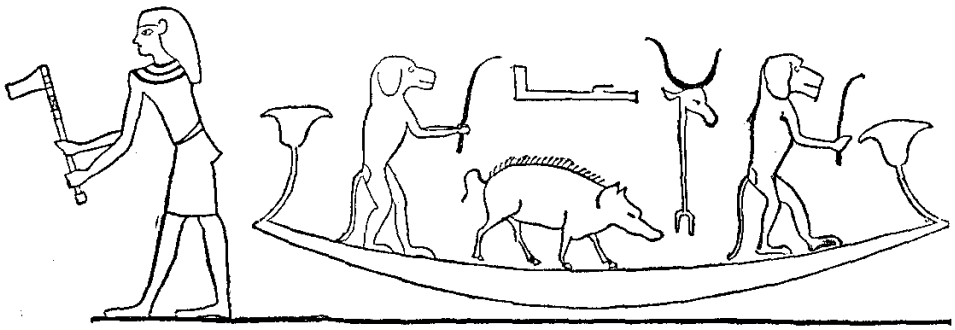
life a man's future is determined, and that it is determined by his acceptance of Christ, the Life and Saviour, or by his non-acceptance of Him. "He that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.)

The idea of purgatorial judgment meted out to such as had fallen short of the standard of good required by Egyptian belief was of a most debasing kind. Like others who hold the same belief, they had no notion of the nature of God, who is light. For, as an example, they believed that the soul of a man who had been a glutton, was sent back to this world again to enter the body of a pig, and so to exist in punishment for his former habits.



The above picture taken from the monuments expresses this belief. A man with a hatchet cuts off the connection of the boat with the sacred shore whither the soul had been conducted for judgment, and under the custody of the two monkey-like looking demons it is led back to this world to live a while in the purgatory of the body of a pig.

The wise teachers of India, whose views are being accepted by many who once were Christians, have similar beliefs. Such are the follies to which the minds of men become subject, when the faith in God is thrown aside. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Rom. i. 22.)

The pagan Greeks and Romans believed in their purgatory. The poet Virgil describes how the souls of the departed are exposed to various penances to render them pure—some being hung to bleach upon the wind, some being plunged in water, others purged in fire—until by length of time the scurf of each committed crime is worn away, and so at length no speck of the stains of sin remains.

The natural conscience of the heathen tells them their lives fall short of what they know should be; they recognise they are sinners. But not knowing how God cleanses away sin, and not knowing that He gives such as believe a new nature capable of delighting in holiness, they reason, as do the unbelieving philosophers of Christian lands, that there will be a state of existence following that of life on this earth, in which the soul will become purified by punishment for a condition of holiness and bliss. Alas, that Protestants, as well as Catholics should teach the purifying powers of purgatory, and thus practically deny the efficacy of the atonement of Christ for bringing a sinner to God. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Pet. iii. 18.)

What the heathen poet Virgil wrote is remarkably like the sentiments of the Christian poet Dante. Many of our readers have doubtless seen the pictures illustrating his poem, with demons punishing human beings for their crimes during life.

We add a description of a large Buddhist temple in China, in the city of Yung tsï Hien, Ho-nan province. Our friend thus writes to us:—"After passing through large halls, around each of which stood huge idols of Buddha, with burning incense before each, as well as lighted candles, and groups of shaven-headed priests chanting their prayers and counting their beads, we passed through a long succession of small rooms, each filled with the most hideous figures the depraved mind of the heathen could imagine. This we soon learned was a representation of the Buddhists' hell. There was one large image, six or eight feet high, seated on a throne in the centre of each recess, representing the prince or king of some special department of torture, with his name and

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office written on a strip of calico over his head on the wall. Each of these demon kings was surrounded by a host of most ugly attendants, some of them red and some black, whilst in front of the presiding demon kneeled some imaginary wretch waiting to receive judgment.

"In other departments the sentences of punishment were represented as being carried out, and most awfully real did the large, life-like painted images appear! In one case the sinner was tied to a wooden post, and was being sawn through vertically by two demons who appeared greatly to relish their work. In another the sinner was being forced into a common mill and being ground to powder by two heavy stones, turned one upon the other, by the efforts of a donkey and a number of demons. Red paint smeared on the stones represented the miscreant's blood oozing out. In other departments demons were pushing men into immense jars of boiling oil, or roasting them on hot irons. Many other revolting things were represented as *being done in those infernal regions.*"

This graphic description would apply to the horrible pictures of hell and purgatory common in very many chapels and mortuaries in Christian villages. How vain are such thoughts, but how painfully alike is much of so-called Christianity to heathenism. Among the rules given to the first Jesuits sent to China was the following:—"Rule V.—He (the missionary) must make use of whatever has the appearance of truth and piety in the religion of the country where he preaches, and endeavour to reconcile it to his own doctrine. It is not material that this cannot be done without distorting the heathen as well as the Christian religion. The little sin committed upon such an occasion is amply atoned for by the benefit it produces."

There is but a step between heathenism and very much of what is called Christianity in our day! And under cover of the liberal teaching and the Romish teaching in vogue in so many churches and chapels, Satan is steadily introducing heathenism into the country. God, arouse His people to the reality of things.

Texts for the Month.

LET us look out in God's holy word some passages which speak to us of the important subjects of present fitness for His presence, and of being with Christ when this life is over, also some passages about the solemn truths of the body rising again to judgment.

			Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
S	1	**Christ Jesus ... a propitiation ... for the remission of sins**			
M	2	By whose stripes ye were healed..			
Tu	3	Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people			
W	4	God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth			
Th	5	Jesus...delivered us from the wrath to come			
F	6	He that heareth...and believeth... shall not come into condemnation			
S	7	God hath not appointed us to wrath			
S	8	**Who shall separate us from** the love of Christ?			
M	9	We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ			
Tu	10	We may have boldness in the day of judgment			
W	11	Your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus			
Th	12	God ... hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace			
F	13	Them...which sleep in Jesus			
S	14	Lord Jesus, receive my spirit			
S	15	**To-day shalt thou be with** Me in paradise			
M	16	Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ			
Tu	17	At home in the body, we are absent from the Lord			
W	18	Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord			
Th	19	All that are in the graves...shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life			
F	20	The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed..			
S	21	Shall change our...body...like unto His glorious body			
S	22	**We shall be like Him, for** we shall see Him as He is			
M	23	So shall we ever be with the Lord			
Tu	24	All that are in the graves...shall come forth...they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation			
W	25	Spirits in prison			
Th	26	It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment			
F	27	Judged every man according to their works			
S	28	Everlasting punishment			
S	29	**Whosoever was not found** written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire			
M	30	The Father...hath committed all judgment unto the Son			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

THE OLD MAN'S FLOWER GARDEN.

THE OLD MAN'S FLOWER GARDEN.

SOME few years ago, in one of the villages in the North of England, a praying band of God's children assembled together every night for eight months to entreat a blessing on their village and its neighbourhood. Their cry was, that precious souls, who were living around them, "without God and without hope," might be brought to the Saviour. Just at that time I had commenced speaking "a word for Jesus," and, why I know not, felt a certain inclination to go and preach the gospel at this very village. This desire was the more strange, as the place and people were unknown to me, and the village was over sixty miles from my home.

On telling my wife this wish, she replied, "Well, it is quite clear you cannot go, for all the money I have in the house is two shillings and sixpence, and that has to last us some days." This seemed to finish the matter, still I could not get over the feeling that I was to go to the village.

The next day I went to a friend, to whom I spoke on the subject, and he replied, "How strange! for I have received a letter this morning from the old Christian, in whose house a prayer meeting has been held for eight months, and he says that he has heard of a young man who has begun to preach, and that, whilst in prayer, God said to him, 'Send, and ask him to come.'" This quite convinced me that I should go the following Saturday night.

I soon procured the amount of money required for a return ticket, and started for the railway station, some five miles distant from which lay the village. Not a soul was there to be seen on my way over the moors, but, with the help of a full moon, I could just decipher the pencil sketch that I had of the paths to be taken, and in due course arrived at L——.

I was not long in identifying the house to which I had been directed, the peculiarity of its garden being such that no one could fail to recognize it! Yes, there it was, a humble cottage with a neat garden in front, having a path up the middle. Instead of growing vegetables like his neighbours, the dear old Christian, to whom it belonged, preferred to yield his garden as a silent testimony to God. In the clear moonlight I could distinctly read, traced in large letters in various brightly-coloured plants, the words, "God is Light," "God is Love." As I stood admiring the simple designs, and thanking God that I knew Him as both Light and Love, I heard the sound of prayer within, and, knocking at the door, a voice exclaimed, "Praise the Lord! I believe that is he!" and sure enough it was.

I was greeted in true primitive style by this honoured old saint. When I mentioned the delight I experienced in reading the texts in his garden, he replied, "Ah, yes! nearly all who pass through the village stop and read my little sermon, and when I see them doing so I send up a prayer to God to bless it to their souls."

The prayer-meeting being ended, the dear old man's cup completely ran over when I told him I preferred open-air preaching to supper, so we sallied forth, and God gave us a real good time, the people coming out to listen, and some to give glory to God. For some weeks I went backwards and forwards to that village, and God blessed mightily, to the pulling down of the strongholds of the evil one, and the casting down of the imaginations of men's hearts, and many were saved.

One evening, after the greater number had gone, I felt a heavy hand laid on my shoulder, and with sighs and weeping, a voice said, "Ah! John, I canna keep from greeting." It was W., a man whom I had always believed to be a Christian; but, no, and now he opened his heart to me, and told me of his doubts and fears. We looked together into the blessed word of God, and prayed again and again, till at last my poor friend was able to rejoice in the knowledge of a present and eternal salvation. It was by this time morning, and nearly time for me to go off to the station to return home, and with great joy in my heart I retraced my steps.

Shortly afterwards I left England for nearly two years. On my return, I found my way

again to this village, and the first question I asked a Christian friend was, "How is dear W. getting on?" He replied, "What! John, have you not heard that God took him home, to be with Jesus, just a fortnight ago?" No, indeed, I had not. Little did I imagine, as I bade good-bye to the hale and big north countryman, and he remarked weeping, "John, you are not strong enough to go to that dangerous climate"—for I was ordered to Egypt—little did I imagine that he, the strong one, should be taken, and I, the weak one, should be left, yet such was the inscrutable will of God.

That evening, as I entered the room where dear W. had been saved on that eventful night, a feeling of deep sorrow and yet of joy filled my heart. After commending the meeting to the Lord, I said, "Let us sing our dear W.'s favourite hymn—

"I'm waiting for Thee, Lord,
Thy beauty to see, Lord,
I am waiting for Thee,
For Thy coming again."

As that hymn ascended from the lips of his fond parents and weeping friends, the Spirit of God seemed to remind us all of the resurrection morn, when we should be re-united.

I was anxious at the close of the meeting to hear some details of W.'s last days; his dear wife told me that after he found peace through Christ he was never so happy as when serving God. One day he took a bad cold, which he neglected until he became so seriously ill with bronchitis, that a doctor had to be called in, who expressed fears as to his recovery. When W. heard this, he joyfully committed himself into the loving hands of his God and Father, who doeth all things well. A short time before he died, he requested that his favourite hymn should be sung, and, round the dying bed, the assembled children of God sang together, "I am waiting for Thee, Lord." Dear W. then passed away, happy in a Saviour's love. J. H.

SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS.

WHILE carrying on mission work in a low district of a large city, I observed, amongst those who came to hear the gospel preached, a woman and her daughter, whose demeanour bespoke a higher culture and more refinement than I was accustomed to among my audience. Their clothes were not much better than those of the others, but a certain gentleness and politeness marked them, and I observed, also, a handsome old-fashioned brooch in the mother's shawl, and a ring of the same type on the daughter's finger.

For a time they came and went almost unobserved, no special opportunity occurring for me to make their acquaintance, and I feared if I took notice of them I might frighten them away.

However, one evening the daughter was alone. The subject of the address on that occasion was particularly impressive, and I thought I could see indications of deep emotion on her face, so I determined, if possible, to follow her up. Hastening to the door at the close of the meeting, I enquired after her mother, and heard that she suffered from a trying and incurable complaint, and that that evening her pain had forced her to remain at home. I asked if the invalid were a converted person. The daughter at once replied that she was, and with an assurance that made my heart rejoice.

I learnt, too, that her father had died some time before, and that she was the only child alive out of a large family. She admitted that her own hope of long life was feeble, as she suffered from heart complaint, which a doctor had said might carry her off at any time. Then I said, "I suppose under such circumstances you have given yourself into the Lord's hands?"

"I don't know that," she replied; "I do say my prayers, and read my Bible, and go to church, but I cannot say that I am at peace with God. I wish I were."

"Indeed," was my answer, "if you only knew what it is to have perfect peace with God, to have the knowledge that your sins are put away, and to be sure that the smile of a loving Father, as well as the friendship of Jesus, are yours, you would wish very much more than you do now to possess all these things."

She had been gay and foolish in the days of prosperity, and her love of gaiety had caused her mother much anxiety. Fear of sudden death had been her only reason for giving up the ball room, and this fear had also solemnized her thoughts, drawing her to think more of her mother's God, and at length to long for the calm and peace her mother possessed. She had sought this peace, and prayed for it, but it seemed to be far away, and, during the preaching of the night in question, she had felt as if God would not have anything to do with her, and her heart seemed ready to break.

I pointed out to her that God proclaims peace to sinners, solely through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, reminding her that while God has said, "There is no peace to the wicked," He has also sent the message of peace to them through the blood of His Son. "Peace has been made through His blood," I continued, "and, because of this, God now proclaims it to all who believe in Jesus."

"But," she said, "I don't know what this 'believing' means, I thought I did believe; I do not doubt God's word."

"Well," I replied, "you believe that you are very sinful?" "Yes, indeed, I do."

"That you cannot save your own soul, and that unless you are saved by another, you must perish?" "Yes."

"And you believe that God has provided a Saviour, even Jesus, His only begotten Son?" "Yes."

"And that the blessed Lord Jesus willingly came from heaven, laying aside His glory, and took a body of flesh and blood, and that, having become a man, Jehovah laid on Him, Jehovah, Jesus, the iniquity of us all, and that He bare our sins in His own body on the tree?"

"I think I do believe that," she replied slowly.

"Let us put it to the test," I suggested. "God points us to the cross, and bids us look there and see His Son, whom He gave for us, and upon whom He laid our sins. God graciously tells us to believe His record about His beloved Son, and about the work He did there. We look to Christ on the cross, and thank God for giving His Son to die in our stead. Test yourself. As you think of your sins and of God's love, can you respond by faith, saying, "The Son of God, who——"

Slowly she repeated, "The Son of God"——

"Go on with the text," I said. "Who loved me," she continued, and then stopped, exclaiming, "But is it not presumption in me to say that?"

"No," I replied, "not if you are a believer. Paul said it, and he was the chief of sinners; I said it, and I, too, was a great sinner. Appropriate Christ as your own Saviour, and, as you believe on His name, believe unhesitatingly that He loved you, and gave Himself for you."

I was sure my young friend's heart had received Christ, and I urged her to confess Him. At last she did so, and, as we parted, I said, "Never mind about your enjoyment of peace, trust Him wholly who loved you, even to die for you."

The peace this seeking one longed for, soon filled her heart. It could not be otherwise, for her sins were forgiven, and the judgment she feared was past. She had nothing to fear, and everything to hope for, now that she knew and believed the love of God.

The mother and daughter continued to attend the meetings for some months. Occasionally I missed the mother, but did not wonder, knowing her weakness. I had bright moments of conversation with the daughter, Annie, and heard her gratitude to the Lord for having revealed Himself to her in His love and grace. By degrees, I came to know more about their circumstances, and found that there had been many deaths in their family, and lastly the father's, and that their means had been greatly reduced. The mother could do very little work, and that only of the lightest description; her occupation was dressing dolls for a wholesale fancy goods store, and very little per dozen she received. Annie went out to work, and her earnings were their chief income, from which the rent and other things had to be met. Her little gains scarcely afforded sufficiently warm clothing in the cold winter mornings, as she hurried to her work. This

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much I knew, but perhaps unwisely excused myself from helping them, fearing they might be offended.

The rest of my story I will relate in the mother's words. "One day, Annie complained that she did not feel well, but she kept on with her work, although I could see she was not fit for it. At length she was obliged to take to her bed, and sorely wasted and enfeebled she was. I was not able to get what she needed, for I had to nurse her; the money was gone, and you see she would not let me tell anybody our troubles, or ask help from any of our relations. I saw that her illness was just like that of the others.

"Well, she was sitting up in the bed one afternoon, and it came into her head that she would like a little beef tea, such as her father had when he was ill. 'Mother,' said she, 'will you make me a cup? I think it would do me good.' Oh, sir," continued her mother, "you cannot think what it cost me to tell her that we had no money. Then she took the ring off her finger, and said, 'See, mother, I shall never wear this ring again; go and sell it, and buy what we need.' It had been my own mother's ring, and I would have kept it, if I could, as a family relic, and in memory of my poor child, but it was sold, and I made her the cup of beef tea, which revived her.

"Then she made me sit on the bed beside her, and asked me to hold her in my arms, and she looked out at the sunset, for you see we are high up, and these windows are large.

"As we watched the sun go down, Annie made me repeat all the passages of Scripture that I could remember, and then she said, 'Mother, put your arm lower'; and she laid her head upon my breast, as she used to do when she was a little girl. She then asked me to sing the hymns I used to sing to her when she was a child. They came back to me, or I seemed to get back to them, as I held her like a child upon my breast.

"I had sung all I could remember, and you know they were none of the new kind, but the hymns I learned at the Sunday-school in my childhood. When I stopped, Annie said, 'Mother, there is a hymn we have at the meeting that I love so much; I think I could sing it myself,' so she began:—

"*Safe in the arms of Jesus,*
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest.
Hark! 't is the voice of angels,
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea."

"It was softly and sweetly that she sang, and I felt she would soon be 'safe from corroding care, safe from the world's temptations.' I knew it would be to me 'only a few more trials, only a few more tears,' and I wept. Still she sang on:

"Jesus, my heart's dear Refuge,
Jesus has died for me;
Firm on the Rock of Ages
Ever my trust shall be."

And then her voice died away. I thought she had sung herself to sleep, but when I looked at her, I saw that she had fallen asleep in my arms and in His." J. S.

LET ME PRAISE HIM.

FOR many weeks poor Mrs. Dunn had suffered much through a painful disease, that was slowly and surely wasting away her strength. She was a poor old widow, with none of the comforts of this life to alleviate the sufferings of her closing days on earth. Her bed was upon the floor, in a corner of a cheerless room, where she passed long, weary days, and still more weary nights.

She was miserable—yes, truly miserable, no gleam of hope cheering her heart, as day by day she drew nearer to eternity. Her early life had been spent in brighter surroundings, but she was now reaping the bitter fruits of long years spent in the forgetfulness of God; and her anguish was great at the thought of eternity.

The visits of some of God's children were gladly welcomed by her, and she would eagerly listen when they pointed her to the Lord Jesus, as the One able and willing to save her; she had not, however, faith to trust Him, and remained in darkness of soul, though very anxious to be "properly born again," as she once expressed it.

One afternoon, a friend, who often read

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God's word to Mrs. Dunn, found her with an unusual look of brightness on her wasted face. In a joyful tone she greeted her visitor, saying, "Mr. T. has been here to-day, and he gave me such a beautiful verse, it is this: 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' He saves the vilest: He has saved me!"

No wonder the old woman's face beamed with joy, as she told this glad news. Her fears were gone; she knew she was saved. Having at length taken her place among the vilest, the good news, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, was as living water to her thirsty soul. She was a sinner; Jesus came to save sinners, therefore He came to save her! Just as she was, she trusted herself to the Lord Jesus, who received her according to His own word, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

For a few weeks after this happy day, our old friend lingered in increasing suffering of body, but she enjoyed much peace in her soul, always rejoicing in the hope of soon entering the presence of the Lord, who had died to save her. When the hour of her departure came, her thoughts were centred on the Lord Jesus.

It was the privilege of two of God's children to be with her, just before she fell asleep. As they knelt at her bedside, and commended her to the Lord in prayer, the dear aged one burst forth into rapturous thanksgiving, saying repeatedly, "Oh, praise Him, praise Him; let me praise Him, let me praise Him," then her voice ceased; she had gone home, to continue in the courts of heaven the song she had begun on earth.

Will you join in this song, dear reader? Have you already begun its joyful strains on earth? None but forgiven sinners can sing the praise of the Lord Jesus, and it may be, as you read these lines, that you are inwardly conscious of the fact that you have never tasted the wondrous blessing of God's forgiveness. If this should be so, the wrath of God abides upon you, and to you I would repeat the message that brought peace to the troubled soul of my poor friend: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." R. E.

SAVED TO SERVE CHRIST.

A YOUNG lady, who had left the hall at the close of an afternoon Bible-reading, came back to ask how she could be saved. Her earnest, yet trembling enquiry was as sweet music to our ears. Only two days before, we had ventured to ask her as to her spiritual state, but had failed to obtain a single word in reply. How gladdening, therefore, it was to hear now the enquiry as to her salvation, springing spontaneously from her lips! Opening the New Testament, we pointed out that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, reading also other kindred Scriptures. She listened, as only those listen who are awakened to concern about their souls by the Spirit of God, and, as we read, light from above broke in upon her. Every word was as a ray of sunshine, every text as a well of comfort, and sorrow and sighing fled away.

"Should I continue to teach in the Sunday-school?" she suddenly asked, now that the way of salvation had been made clear to her. The question was quite an unexpected one, and somewhat surprised us.

"Teach in the Sunday-school?" we questioningly replied. "Yes, to be sure, if you have a mind to. It seems to us as if you were only now fitted to teach others of Christ. What makes you put such a question?"

"Oh!" she said, in a quiet, subdued manner, "I feel so conscious of my own sinfulness that I do not see how I could teach the children."

We simply repeated our former statement, that it was only now, in knowing Jesus as her Saviour, that she was in a fit condition to be a Sunday-school teacher.

"Then you really think I should go on teaching?" she asked in a most eager way.

"Most assuredly," we answered.

To help her, if possible, by way of illustration, we told her of a maid who was sweeping a room; the sun's rays meanwhile revealing the dust she was raising. Being rebuked for making such a dust, she replied, "Oh! it is not me, it is the nasty sun that is

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doing it." "Thus," I added, "the light of God's truth by shining into your heart, now reveals what was always there, though unseen because of the darkness that covered it." She smiled when she saw the point.

"Now that you know Jesus as the Saviour from sin, go and teach the little children about Him," we said, "and you will be sure to teach them as you never did before."

"I will," she replied.

We then prayed for God's blessing on her, and on her labours for the Saviour whom she had found, and bid her farewell. J. C.

Brought to God.

THE sufferings of Christ are, and ever will be, the theme of praise of all who love Him. During His life on earth He was the Sufferer. He was "a Man of sorrows" and acquainted with grief. When He healed the sicknesses of men He sympathized with them in their sufferings in such a deep way, that He bare their infirmities. "They brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." (Matt. viii. 16, 17.) The heart of the Healer was afflicted because of the afflictions of His people.

But the sorrows of His heart in suffering *with* men are very different from His sufferings *for* men! He healed the sick with His word, or with His touch; He saved our souls by dying for us on the cross. He was with us in sickness, as a mother suffers with her child; He was for us in relation to our sins, as a Substitute suffers in the stead of another. Jesus had no sympathy with sin, and were we to regard His goodness as the Healer, in a similar way to His atoning grace as the Saviour, we should indeed make light of His sacrifice. The sufferings of the Lord for the sins of His people stand ever by themselves.

The sorrows of the cross cast their dark shadows upon Him when He was in Gethsemane. He entered that garden with the three chosen disciples. He went thither with them, seeking from them their sympathy! But we see Him going before them, alone in His grief! He was removed from them about a stone's cast; and, though they were near Him, He was solitary!

Ah! who can enter into these sufferings of Jesus? Of necessity He must be alone with His Father at such a moment. The very greatness of His agony demanded that this should be the case. No mere man could penetrate that grief, nor comprehend its depths. We follow, as it were, at a stone's cast, and with reverence consider Him. He kneels down and prays, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." (Luke xxii. 42.) And as He prayed "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The unutterable sorrow of the cross, with its cup of woe, because of sin, was before Him. But in that hour of grief He took the cup from His Father's hand. He surrendered Himself to His will.

Shortly afterwards His disciples forsook Him and fled, and Jesus was left in the hands of His enemies! They mocked Him, they scourged Him, and they bound Him to the cross. They pierced His hands and His feet. "When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him." Then Jesus turned His heart towards heaven, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 33, 34.) His forgiving love, His interceding cry arose from the cross. Men might spit upon Him, buffet Him, crown Him with thorns, crucify Him, and add mockery and taunt to His wounds; but the very blood our hands caused to flow washes away our sins.

The dark hours of Calvary wore on, and our blessed Substitute "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Peter ii. 24.) He "suffered for sins"; what those His sufferings were we shall never know, they were infinite. "He poured out His soul unto death," and Jehovah made "His soul an offering for sin." (Isaiah liii.

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10, 12.) If in Gethsemane the favoured three could but sleep for sorrow, and at His bidding must needs remain at a distance from Him, how shall we consider His sufferings on the cross? Yet while unable to measure His woe, we can remember Him, and thank Him for His atoning blood, and for His sacrifice of Himself.

God forsook Jesus upon the cross. God in His righteousness turned away from Him, for, Jesus had taken the sinner's place, and God made Him, who knew no sin, sin for us. Nor did His sorrows end until the sin-bearing had ceased. So long as there was any suffering for sin to be endured, He bore it; but having completed the work His Father gave Him to do, He cried, "It is finished!" Then of His own will and by His own power He gave up His spirit.

Yes, Christ has *suffered* for sins, but He has done so *once*, once and for ever! He will never suffer more for sins. The work of atonement is finished, completed once for all time and for all eternity. There is no more sacrifice for sins, for the sins of all His people are forgiven, (Heb. x. 18.) by virtue of His suffering for sins. Jesus is no longer the Sufferer. For having put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself. He is in heaven at the Father's right hand.

When He was on earth, men rejected Him as the Sufferer—they wanted power, rule, glory; now that He is in heaven they reject Him as the Glorified, supreme in rule and in power—they want a sufferer! They want a dying victim, an "unbloody" sacrifice!

Away with such thoughts! He has ONCE suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. His work cannot fail; its results are everlasting. He did suffer for our sins; He did suffer to atone for and to put them away; He suffered to the shedding of His blood, and to the endurance of God's wrath against sin, but His blood flows no longer, it has been shed once and for ever, and He lives to die no more. The life is in the blood, and His life has been given and the blood poured out for us.

He bears no longer the wrath of God against sin—the wrath has been borne once for all. Does anyone consider that Christ upon the throne of God is still bearing sins—still enduring God's wrath due to them? Can such corrupt thoughts lie in the soul of a Christian? A sacrifice for sin without suffering is no sacrifice.

Christ, by His suffering once for sins on the cross, has brought all who believe on Him to God. Believer, rejoice in what He has done for you. Surrender not to your own doubts and fears—surrender *not* to any teaching from any lip, the greatness and the glory of the result of the cross in your own particular case; you are brought to God—you are near to God. Once you were afar off in sin, but now, your sins being atoned for, you, being in Christ, are as He is in this world. (1 Jno. iv. 17.)

He, the Just One, once suffered for you, the unjust; He took your place, and bore your penalty. Now He has brought you to God, and, in loyal love to Him, you must seek to own the favour of the grace in which you stand. You do but honour Him in His suffering upon the cross for your sins, by rejoicing in the extent of the blessing which is now yours in Him.

We look around, and what do we see in Christendom?—a system of religious service that denies the great truth, that "Christ has *once* suffered for sins." Its priests teach that it is necessary that He should suffer often in the sacrament, which, they declare, but continues the sacrifice of the cross. Again, we see men denying that Christ did so suffer "that He might bring us to God." We must do our part, they teach, to get near to God in our own holiness and goodness; we need a religion that shall bring us step by step towards God; we need a gradual purification; we cannot know in this lifetime whether we shall be eventually saved or not, we must wait until and at the judgment day.

Believer, have none of these things, but thank the Lord for His suffering once for sins—for your sins; thank Him that your sins are gone — thank Him that He has brought you to His God.

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How a little Girl was Saved.

IT has been my happy privilege, for many years, to minister to the sick, old and young; and very blessed it has been to be able to speak to them of Christ. I was once nursing a lady, who had a large family of children; one of the little girls, ten years of age, was so naughty that she had to be sent from home during her mother's illness. This grieved me dreadfully, so that I cried to God in secret to let her come back, and also asked Him to incline her mother to let me have her in my room. I thought it would be a good opportunity to tell her how Jesus loved children.

After a few days the little girl came to see her mother, and I asked leave for her to stop at home. The mother replied, "Ah, no! nurse, she must go back to her aunt's, for she upsets the whole house, I cannot have her." I promised the lady that if she would let her stop, I would take the entire responsibility, upon which the child threw her arms around my neck, and said, "I will be a good girl."

I took every opportunity of reading the Bible to my little charge, and of speaking to her of Jesus. In a few weeks there was a marvellous change in her life and ways, even to the servants. Before I left the house, I saw this dear child was truly born again, and that Jesus was her Saviour. It was sweet to see how she longed to bring others to know Him; she bought little books and gave them to the servants, and told them all how Jesus loved sinners. It was a sad time for both her and me when we had to part; but Jesus was with her. Often she would come to my cottage for me to pray with her that she might be kept near to the Lord.

Several years passed away, and we lost sight of each other. Many were the trials of her life during those years. Some three years ago I was walking by a cottage, when someone tapped to me on the window. I turned, and saw it was this dear child of other days, now grown into womanhood. She came out to

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me, and sobbing on my shoulder, said, "Ah! come in, you are the very one I wanted to see. I am not sure if Jesus has pardoned all my sins; I have such doubts sometimes."

"Then you don't give Him credit for His finished work on the cross, do you?" I asked.

She looked questioningly at me. I quoted several passages of Scripture, to explain my meaning, such as Hebrews x. 17, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more;" verse 14, "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," and many others.

She rose and paced the room. For the first time she realized that Jesus, who was delivered for our offences, was raised again for our justification, and that her life was hid with Christ in God.

"Why did I not see this before?" she exclaimed.

I told her she had been looking at herself instead of at Christ, at God's right hand. I learned that her circumstances were cast in a trying path for faith, but her joy from that day was full. She became a faithful witness for the Lord wherever she went, and has since then been ever diligent in seeking to carry the good seed to those who are sunk in sin.

We were kneeling together only the other evening, to ask God to give the joy and liberty, which she now rejoices in, to all who believe in Christ.

Dear children, see how this once naughty little girl has grown up to be a servant of God. How blessed it was that she came to Jesus when she was but ten years old, and so became a joy and comfort in the home where she had given such trouble! Will you not seek the same precious Saviour while you are young, and then seek to win other children to Him, who do not know Him? I think you will like to read a little hymn written by this dear Christian:—

"Chasten, Lord, each fault of mine,
Holy thoughts renew;
Thy love into my heart doth shine,
Thy work I must pursue.

"Thine the power to save,
Thine to lead and guide
All those, Lord, who walk with Thee,
And nothing from Thee hide."

Dear children, I hope you understand that you have nothing to do for your salvation, only to receive Jesus. You must accept Him as a free gift. You are as poor helpless sinners, you can do nothing, but "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Sin was atoned for when Jesus died, and now "all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 39.) Mark "from *all* things," not from some only. Surely God's beloved Son is worthy of all our trust. F. T.

THE LOVE OF A MOTHER.

A GENTLEMAN, when visiting in a hospital in London, sat beside the cot of a little girl; wishing to win her confidence, he said, "My child, do you love your mother?" With a very serious look she replied, "Yes, I do indeed."

"But, why do you answer so gravely; what is that you are thinking about, my dear?"

Then the little girl replied with great earnestness—

"Because I can never love my mother, anything as she loves me."

The dear child loved her mother because her mother first loved her, and that fond mother's love was as a circle in which the child's love dwelt. Dear young readers, we can never love Jesus as He loves us. His is perfect and everlasting love. He died to save us, He lives to bless us. Can you say of Him what the little maid said of her mother? Yes! I love Him, indeed, but I can never love Him in anyway as He loves me.

Praying for the Dead.

SOME little time ago we were strolling about a lovely Italian town, on the outskirts of which stood its cemetery. We presently found ourselves opposite to a series of small chapel-like buildings, each of which had before its open entrance, instead of a door, an iron grating; indeed almost the whole front was composed of gratings. The sun was shining so brilliantly, and the shade within the buildings so deep that, for an instant,

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we did not realize what they contained. Row upon row, pile upon pile, all around the three walls of the chapels were skulls and bones—the remains of the townspeople of former years. In one of these chapels, directly opposite the grating, was a kind of altar, and placed about it, were five skulls, having on them their owners' old caps. These were the skulls of five priests who had officiated in bygone days, prayed for the dead, and taken money for their prayers. Now, the priests were dead, and their skulls, crowned with the dusty old caps, were offered to view. It was a pitiable sight, and not a little barbarous, at least according to the ideas of Protestants, who can see but faint respect to the dead in the exposure of their bones.

A strange text for a sermon on the contents of these chapels was inscribed upon the grating of one of them. The text was in the shape of a legend over a slit in a piece of iron, and was to this effect: "Cast in a coin to buy prayers for the poor dead ones!"

Yes! pray for the departed ones, upon whose skulls and bones you gaze; pray for the poor dead, their souls are all in purgatory, they all are in darkness, in misery, in fire, in torment. Pray for them, every one, and help them out. Pray for the priests who made the mass, who interceded with saints, angels, and the Virgin, to induce Jesus to induce God to be merciful; pray for the people for whom the mass was made, and for whom the prayers were sung; pray for them all alike, for they all are in purgatory—but put a penny in the slot. No penny, no prayer! The merit lies in the priests' prayers, and your penny will buy of that merit. Yet all the pennies given and all the prayers paid for, during the lifetime of these poor dead are confessedly so weak, so inefficacious, had so little merit in them, that you bystanders must come to their help with your penny!

But will the prayers your pennies buy be of greater worth than were those of the dead upon whose bones you look? When your turn comes, your bones shall help to adorn the chapel walls, and then your unhappy soul will be in purgatory, and your relations and friends and the benevolent shall be asked to pray for you—that is, through the priests, and they of course must be paid for their work.

We need, however, no more of this sermon. Never was there a more profitable religion—speaking pecuniarily—than that of praying for the dead. We appeal to our readers! Could you save your friend, not to say your child or parent, from torment by payment, then, surely, if you had a particle of kindness in your heart, you would give not your penny merely, but your whole substance for his redemption. The poor, who believe that prayers for the dead avail, are ground down to pay to their last penny; their love for their friends ever calling for their money.

But what profit is there in praying for the dead? The Holy Ghost says, "Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18-19.) The wealth of a man cannot redeem any from death; how much less shall money avail for the soul after death? If death cannot be bought off, who, afterwards, shall unlock the prison door? "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." (Psa. xlix. 7, 8.)

Our Redeemer gave Himself for our redemption. He paid the price by His own blood. This He did out of the love of His own blessed heart, and as much for the poor as the rich. He is our Redeemer, and none else; His heart and the heart of His Father is love, and such as plead for prayer to move God toward us in love, do but slander the very heart of God and of Jesus. "When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both," is God's way of goodness, revealed by Christ, towards sinners, whether their sins are the five hundred or the fifty. (Luke vii. 41.)

The idea of the payment of money being necessary to man's salvation is a most grievous sin against the wounds and sufferings of Jesus. What! shall a sinner be able to purchase a place in heaven because he has

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a long purse? And must another burn in purgatory, just because his relatives are poor? Jesus died for rich and poor alike, and "when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both."

If a man honestly prays for the dead, he must believe that they can be helped by his prayers, and that the dead need such help. Naturally he also believes that by-and-by he will require similar assistance. Now, it is evident that such belief discredits the absolute and perfect efficacy of the atoning blood of Christ. For if that blood is sufficient to cleanse away our sins, nothing else is required to do this. And if God is magnified in His justice and righteousness in relation to our sins, by the blood of His Son shed for our sins, it is self-evident, that to offer many prayers in order to make up a sum of merit as an inducement to God to pardon our sins, is but to insult Him by casting a reproach upon the value of the blood of His Son. Cardinal Wiseman tells us, "that by the voluntary performance of expiatory works we may disarm the anger of God, and mitigate the inflictions which His justice has prepared." But every prayer made for such purpose is practically telling God that the blood of Christ is not of sufficient value to cleanse us from all sin, and casts reproach upon His atonement.

We are justified now in this lifetime, and we are justified freely by God's grace, and this the Bible declares is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (See Rom. iii. 23-26) God has set Him forth, a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins.

Upon the belief that the dead may be benefited by the prayers of the living, a most extraordinary and anti-christian notion has been created. A common sight to be seen before the images of the Virgin and of saints is a notice to the effect that so many prayers said before the image will result in an indulgence. We will give our readers the words of one of these notices, which may be seen on the image of St. Peter set up in the Oratory, Brompton, London:—

"To those who, being truly contrite, pray before this statue for the welfare of the Holy Church and the intention of the Supreme Pontiff—

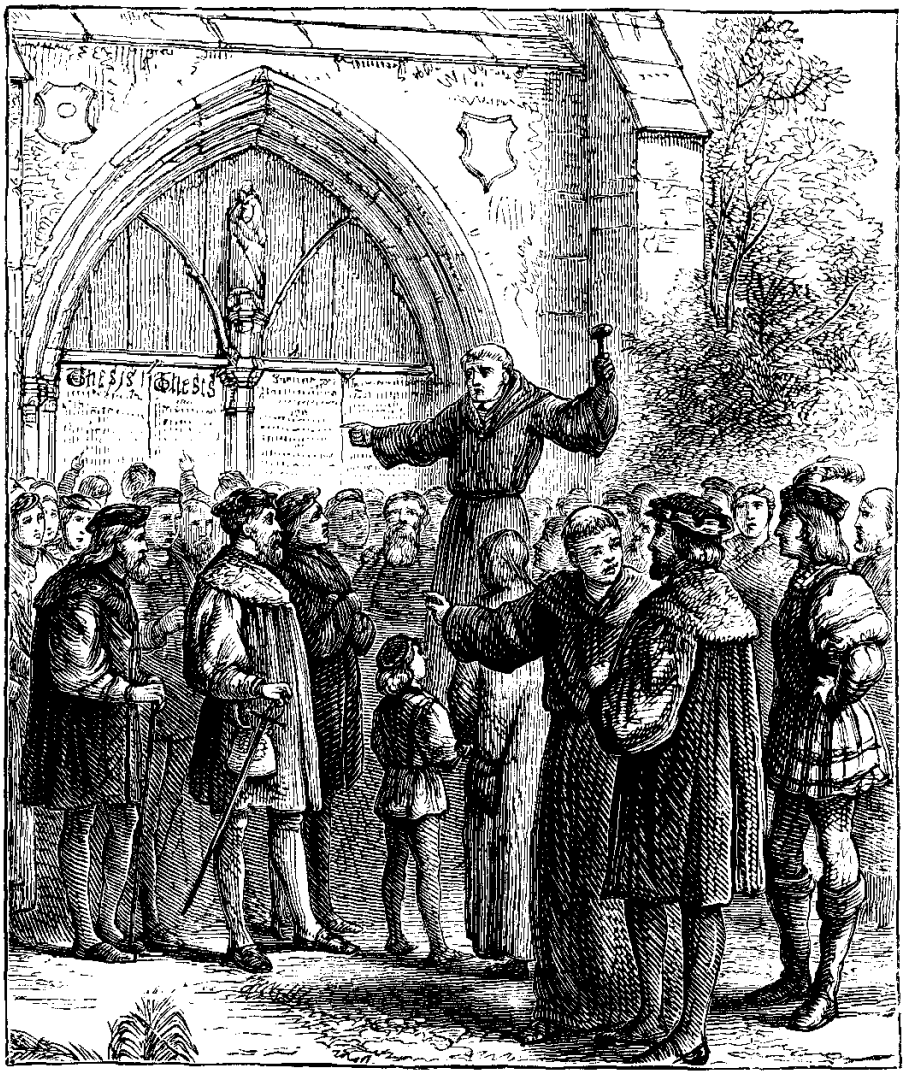
"Fifty days' indulgence, once a day, applicable to the souls in purgatory."

A friend, who enquired of the priest present, was informed by him, that to all sin committed, was attached temporal and eternal punishment. Eternal punishment was removed, he said, in confession and contrition, absolution being granted by the priest as the representative of the Church. Temporal punishment then remained, and this might be endured in this life or hereafter. An indulgence, he added, related to the remission of some part of the penance, which had to be inflicted upon the soul, as a remedial agent for its good; and, he said, the penance was intended to draw the soul nearer to God. He then said, "All virtue in prayers, fastings, and meritorious works was through the merits of Jesus Christ."

He continued, "I do not know what may be in store for me hereafter in the shape of purification, in other words, what intensity of suffering my case may require, therefore I gain upon earth by penance and indulgence all possible curtailment."

This priest was upon the lines of the heathen in his belief, for his hope for purification and fitness for God's presence lay in the future fires of purgatory—not in the atonement of Jesus for sins. He did not know, as the believer in Jesus does, what may be in store for him hereafter. His remarks as to the virtue in our prayers and fastings being through the merits of Jesus Christ, do but make the matter worse, for Jesus is Saviour alone. His sufferings for our sins, not our own sufferings for our sins, are our salvation.

The statue in question is a copy of that which stands in St. Peter's, Rome; it is of gilded wood, and the feet are brass. It represents the apostle seated, and holding in his left hand a key. Let us quote a verse or two from the Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter i.: "I saw . . . One like unto the Son of Man . . . and His feet [were] like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace



LUTHER NAILING UP HIS THESIS.

. . . And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen; and have the keys of death and of hell." Neither the church, nor St. Peter, but Jesus only, holds in His hands the keys of death and the grave.

Where does Jesus the Lord, and where does God, His Father, say one word to us about indulgences? It is, however, not pretended that there is Scripture evidence for indulgences being of divine origin, or that in the word of God there is authority to be found for them; indeed, indulgences do not seem to have been heard of before the year 600 A.D.

We must add a little more about them, as they are now getting so common in England. Indulgences may be bought with money as well as with prayers; they have been advertised in the daily papers in England, and offered for sale under the form of giving a subscription to a charitable object. It should never be forgotten that in former years a large trade was done in indulgences, and that by the sale of them untold wealth came to the coffers of the church. Thousands and thousands of years of exemption from purgatorial flames were offered in exchange for gold, and people of all nations crowded to

buy the offered parchments or papers whereon the exemptions from suffering were written.

Let us hear what that famous seller of indulgences, Tetzel, said:—"Indulgences are the most precious and the most noble of God's gifts. Come, and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins which you intend to commit may be pardoned. Indulgences avail not only for the living, but for the dead. Priest, noble, merchant, wife, youth, maiden, do you not hear your parents and your other friends who are dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss, 'We are suffering horrible torments! A trifling alms would deliver us; you can give it, and you will not"?

Then, as his eloquence waxed fervent, he would exclaim, "At the very instant that the money rattles at the bottom of the chest the soul escapes from purgatory, and flies liberated to heaven. Now you can ransom so many souls, stiff-necked and thoughtless man; with twelve groats you can deliver your father from purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him."

One day a poor miner met a seller of indulgences. "Is it so," he enquired, "that we can by throwing a penny into the chest ransom a soul from purgatory?" "It is so," was the answer. "Ah, then," replied the miner, "what a merciless man the pope must be, since for want of a wretched penny he leaves a poor soul crying in the flames so long!"

Another famous salesman was Samson, of Milan. On one occasion, after mass, he marched round the churchyard at the head of a procession chanting the office for the dead. Suddenly he stopped, looked up to heaven, and, after a pause, shouted, "See how they fly!" His keen vision beheld the spirits escaping from purgatory, and winging their way to paradise!

An echo came from the steeple, "See how they fly!—see how they fly!" while a shower of feathers fell upon the company, and the crowd saw, perched on the height, a man, whom they termed half-witted, but who thus dared to turn Samson's strength in opening the gates of purgatory into ridicule.

Unless people had believed in the efficacy of prayer for the dead, they would not have prayed or paid for indulgences, and as the sale of them was a very great, if not the chief, cause that lead to the Reformation, we place them—praying for the dead, and selling indulgences—together in this paper. In the old times such men as Tetzel used to visit countries at the head of a procession; the drum would be beaten, and noise and show enlisted to give honour to the salesman of the pope's pardons.

When Luther first heard of Tetzel and his traffic, he said, "By the help of God, I will make a hole in his drum," and he had good cause so to speak, for as he sat to hear confession, and the people owned to him their thefts and heinous offences, Luther, the priest, bade them break off from their evil ways, or he could not absolve them. Then they told him they were already absolved, and that they should not leave off their sins, and showed him their indulgences!

Luther's horror of the immorality of the business, his fear of God, and his love for the souls of men, led him to nail up his famous Ninety-five Theses upon the church door in Wittemberg, and that great act, perhaps more than any other, led to the Reformation! The Deformation, as many of our ceremonial Protestants now describe it! Those famous propositions were the battle-cry for liberty. Men arose and rebelled against the tyranny, the immorality, and the falsehood of the system of religion which professed to buy men's souls out of punishment for sin for silver and gold—which abstracted the wealth so acquired, and, far worse than all, which denied the grace of God, and which trampled under foot the atoning blood of Christ.

Texts for the Month.

WE cannot ask you to find any texts on praying for the dead, or indulgences, since such things are not to be found in the word of God, but we can give texts which, if truly believed, will prevent anyone praying for the dead, or seeking an indulgence. Will you search out the references for the passages from the Holy Scriptures we have selected, and may the truths these passages teach be in all our hearts.

		Book.	*Chap.*	*Ver.*
Tu	1 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.....	.....	.....	.....
W	2 None...can...redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him	.....	.....	.....

			Book.	Chap.	Ver.
Th	3	Thou, O Lord, art our...Redeemer			
F	4	By His own blood He...obtained eternal redemption			
S	5	Where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin			
S	6	**He was wounded for our** transgressions ... and with His stripes we are healed			
M	7	Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus			
Tu	8	Forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified through faith that is in Me			
W	9	Our God...will abundantly pardon			
Th	10	To give....salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins			
F	11	I will cleanse them from all their iniquity whereby they have sinned against me			
S	12	The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord			
S	13	**To him that worketh not,** but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness			
M	14	Justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law			
Tu	15	By Him all that believe are justified from all things			
W	16	Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth			
Th	17	Ye are sanctified...ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God			
F	18	The justifier of him which believeth in Jesus			
S	19	Who gave Himself a ransom for all			
S	20	**Whom He justified, them** He also glorified			
M	21	Christ died for the ungodly			
Tu	22	I lay down My life for the sheep... and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish			
W	23	Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us			
Th	24	He... spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all			
F	25	Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us			
S	26	In whom we have redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins			
S	27	**God, for Christ's sake,** hath forgiven you			
M	28	These are they which ... have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb			
Tu	29	Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am			
W	30	I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also			
Th	31	Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth			

Patient Continuance.

AFTER all has been said for great deeds, dear young Christian reader, patient continuance in well-doing deserves the greatest praise. Bright occasions of self-denial or victory are worthy of our high admiration and thanksgiving, but a Christian life lived in patient continuance in well-doing, oh! how excellent it is! Hundreds of Christians begin well, few comparatively continue patiently in well-doing. Really the story of many Christians' lives is almost like that of the old fable of the tortoise and the hare. We remember how briskly the hare began her race, laughing at the prospect of the poor, slow, old tortoise ever getting in before her, and how that, when she had neared the winning post, she said she would just take a nap till the tortoise came up, and then she would dash in first. But she slept longer than she had meant to do, and all the time the plodding slow coach kept on and on, and so it was that, after all, his slow pace won the race. Or rather we should say, that despite his slow pace, he won the race. Let them be plodding slow coaches, but if they are on the race course, patiently continuing in well-doing, we almost think they will exceed *in the end* some who make a fine start, but do little more.

Do keep working away, plodding along, dear young friend. You will do more by devoting a small portion of time daily to your Lord and Master than by making a grand rush on special occasions. If there is to be a special service, or special effort, to be sure, we shall have plenty of volunteers; but if it is only the plodding work of daily duty, too often but very few are willing to undertake and to do it.

Do more in little things and you will do well. Suppose you gave daily a few minutes to the service of one invalid. Three hundred and sixty-five of such gifts in a year would be golden gifts indeed! We knew a poor woman, who for years went every week to a sick neighbour, and tidied up her room for her. That was good service, was it not? What a grand total of patient continuance in Christian love and kindness did those visits

represent. It was a continual series of loving Christian actions, which made no blaze or stir, but which was precious in the eyes of the Lord Christ. We knew another Christian who used to write once a week to an invalid. Now, such a letter, full of all the bright things a young heart could collect about the Lord Jesus—about His people and His work, coming to one unable to stir out of the sick room, would be as good news from a far country—as a ray of heaven's sunshine into the heart once a week regularly. How would the letter be prized? And coming regularly, it would be of such value, it would be something for the prisoner to depend upon. Now, if you cannot visit any one regularly you can write to them. Do not say, "But what I might do would not be valued," for you have only to try, to prove how valued you may be. But be content to do the small things—at least till the Master calls you to do greater.

We should seek to use as many of the little things of life as we possibly can for God. We cannot continue in doing great things; great things are accomplished very rarely; but we can plod on in doing little ones. Also, it is very questionable whether any one ever did well one great thing, who had not done well several little things.

We have no hesitation in saying that the most useful Christians known to us are those who have the most "stay" in them, and that our fitful friends, who put on a great rush of energy now and then, are, as a rule, disappointing. We recall the happy service of some half a dozen young men in a poor district, and as we think of them, we remember first him of whom it used to be said, "You can rely on ——, for he is always at his post." Our young friend never was late, and never forgot to do what he had engaged to perform, and this continued for some years. He was not the most brilliant worker of that little band, but he was the most reliable, for he was the most patient in continuance in well-doing.

The other day we were hearing of another young man; he had begun his Christian career brightly, but, alas! like so very many, he had not continued with patience in well-doing. What a position of danger is his! "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke ix. 62.)

If we are redeemed by Christ we must be His disciples indeed, and follow Him. He does not offer us a bed of roses here, He offers us hardship. Those who would find in this world, which crucified their Lord, a place of ease, forget the cross. We cannot serve two masters. We must be out and out for Christ, or our Christianity is of little worth. And we say this, because a good heart for Christ gives the "stay" we need for our Christian life and work. One great reason, if not *the* reason, why there is not the patient continuance in well-doing there should be in the Christian is, that there is a want of heart for Christ.

To point out an error without discovering the cause of it, and advancing the remedy, is poor physician-ship; therefore we appeal to our young Christian readers to make more of Christ in their hearts. Seek to have Him to you as your own personal Friend. Take your concerns to Him in private, tell Him your temptations, your difficulties, tell Him exactly what you feel to be your need, and what you know you ought to feel, but which you do not. He will meet all your wants, and that greatest want the Christian can have, namely, insensibility to want. There is no state more sorrowful than that of spiritual numbness, that of not feeling our coldness, our dulness, our deadness. But if we open our hearts to Christ He will meet every need, known and unknown.

Patient continuance in well-doing will earn a crown by-and-by, but it carries with it here a great reward. There is a secret joy and calm in the heart of the Christian, who is plodding on with his work for Christ, that is above all the happiness and excitement the world can give. A selfish life is always a wretched one; whoever plans and toils simply for his own advantage, is a kind of miser; but God has ordered it that in serving others we obtain cheer in our own souls. "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. xi. 25.)

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.

THE HEART AND THE HEAD.

THE HEART AND THE HEAD.

A SHORT time ago, whilst in France, I received a visit from a French gentleman, well known in former days amongst the Roman Catholic priesthood as M. l'Abbé F. "We meet as children of God," he said, "as believers in the one Saviour." I knew this, for I had heard of his preaching the Gospel on the previous evening.

"How is it," I asked, "that you are no longer a priest and a Roman Catholic?" "I was a priest sixteen years ago," he said, "I can scarcely say I was a Roman Catholic, for up to that time I had been an atheist, though I had been a priest for several years. I took it up as a profession. When I spoke to other priests about my convictions that there was no truth in Christianity, and that there was no God, they said, 'We are not required to believe anything, we are only required to perform the services of the Church; you need have no scruples about it.'

"But, godless as I was, I had been brought up with a sense of honour, and as time went on I felt it would be impossible for me to go on acting a lie. I therefore went to my bishop, and told him I was an unbeliever, and that I could no longer endure to say and do things which deceived others.

"He told me he could not regard me as a good Catholic, and that he hoped I should come to a better mind. But I said I had no intention of altering my mind, and that thenceforward I wished to be known not as a Christian, but as an atheist.

"I therefore broke off my connection with the Church of Rome, and considered myself a free man.

"Soon after this, a Protestant pastor living at Paris, M. de P., heard of me, and invited me to read the Bible with him in the evenings at his house. I thought I should like to hear what Protestants have to say, so I went to these readings. I found the pastor a very clever man, and very learned, and I could not in the least answer his arguments.

"Nevertheless, the effect of his explanations was to convince me more firmly that there was no God. I can scarcely say why I continued to go there, but I did so for some months.

"One day, in the streets of Paris, a poor and shabby-looking man, with a pack on his back, came up to me. 'Sir,' he said, 'do you know that you are a sinner, and that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners? Go straight to Him, and He will save *you*.'

"I said not a word, for I was speechless: but I turned round and went straight back to my lodging. I shut myself up in my room, and I knelt down, and gave myself up to Christ.

"In that moment I knew that He was there, and that He loved me with unutterable love. He saved me there and then. I was so happy and thankful, I could do nothing but praise God.

"When I came to myself, I thought, 'How is this? an hour ago I did not believe there was a God, and now I know Him, and He loves me.' I needed nothing to convince me, He was there Himself.

"The next day I went to M. de P. I said to him, 'Jesus has saved me.'

"He looked very much amazed, and said, 'So you are convinced at last.'

"'No,' I said, 'I needed no convincing. He saved me Himself, I see it all now; He has opened my eyes, and given me forgiveness and eternal life.' And then I told him about the poor man who had spoken to me.

"To my astonishment he looked at me with a strange sort of displeasure. 'You refused to believe everything I said to you,' he said, 'and now you believe what a poor, shabby man said, whom you met in the street.'

"'I beg your pardon, sir,' I said, 'it was not the poor man I believed, but God; if God chooses to speak by the mouth of a poor, shabby man, He can do so; and it was God who spoke to me.'

"M. de P., you see, had been hammering all those months at my *brains*, but he did not know that my *heart* was miserable. The words that the man spoke went straight to my heart, and my heart turned to Christ, and He welcomed me, and filled me with His love and peace. So now, for nearly ten years, I have been preaching His blessed Gospel."

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"Did you ever see the man again?"

"Yes, one day, to my great joy, I met him. I found he was a colporteur, selling Bibles.

"'Ah,' I said to him, 'you never did a better day's work than when you stopped me in the street, and told me to go straight to Jesus.' I have often seen him since, and consider him my best friend. And I have seen many, many others brought to Christ by the same message, for there are many hearts as miserable as my heart was once, and Christ is the Saviour of all the miserable and lost ones who go straight to Him."

Miserable and unsatisfied ones, who read this paper, "to you is the word of this salvation sent." To you Christ calls by these simple words. Over you, Christ yearns with unspeakable love, if haply you will hear His voice, and open the door of your dark and dreary heart to Him. Do you doubt it? Ask *Him* if these glad tidings are true, "go straight to Him." F. B.

MY SAVIOUR.

"WILL you mind going to see Mrs. L.?" I was asked one day; "she is very ill, and has asked to see you, saying that she has often had little talks with you about Jesus."

I was quite willing to go, though I was positive that I had never exchanged a word with Mrs. L., whom I recognized from the description given in the course of conversation. On calling, I found her in bed and very ill, yet wonderfully happy at the prospect of going to be with Christ. She speedily discovered that we had never spoken to each other, but as we had in common one Lord, one faith, we were very soon most excellent friends.

Mrs. L. was well advanced in years, and she was in very poor circumstances, being almost entirely dependent upon others. At the time I first visited her, she had just had a severe paralytic stroke, which made her speech so strange and uncouth that it almost needed translating, but the ear became accustomed to it at last, and, after a time, with recovery and returning strength, her words became more intelligible. As is often the case, the sufferer became the means of much Christian joy to her visitor, who had sought to comfort her. No other word so well describes her state as "joyous." Unlettered, and unable to spell out even the text, "God so loved the world," she knew the words, and those of many other texts by heart. She was exceedingly bright in soul, and longed to be gone to see Jesus. "My Saviour" was the title by which she so often lovingly spoke of Him, and she would chide her daughter, who was weeping lest she should die, gently saying, "I'm going to glory to see my Saviour; why would you have me stay?"

But Mrs. L. did not die, and, when she was recovering, she told me of her early days and her conversion. When a young married woman she was accustomed to make the Sunday dinner a great feature in the week: probably it was the only good "square" meal that she and her husband had. As to any thought of God, or of attendance at a place of worship, that never entered her mind. But she had a converted brother, who often tried to entice her to a little cottage meeting held on Sunday afternoons. She always resisted his entreaties, and would promise to go only on a condition she knew he would refuse—namely, that he should come and have a hot dinner in her cottage on Sunday! For he, good man, was scandalized at the extensive labour involved in the "Sabbath" dinner. But, as she would not give way, he did at last, and the compact was entered into: he was to come and have a nice dinner of hot mutton, and she was to go with him in the afternoon to the cottage meeting.

He came, and she went; and, as she sat and listened to the simple, faithful words of the speaker, her anger arose within her, and she would fain have left the room, but for the fear of making herself conspicuous. At last the meeting was over. As they were leaving, her brother stumbled over the old-fashioned scraper at the door, and fell to the ground.

"There, Tom, that just serves you right!" she cried.

"Why, Sally, whatever for?" was Tom's astonished reply.

"You've been and told Mr. M. all about me."

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In vain did Tom protest that he had done nothing of the kind. She knew better. She had sat in the cottage, and had heard the preacher talk about *her*. He had exposed *her* before all the people, and where could he have known all about her, but from her brother, who had been so anxious to get her to the preaching? Vexed, indignant, and sin-stricken, she vehemently vowed that she would not go near the place again.

But she could not keep away. She had been wounded, and the same gracious Spirit, who had caused her to hear convicting words, broke down her angry resolution. She went again and again, till she rested her soul on Christ ["my Saviour," as ever after she called Him], and learned, if not the actual words, at least the truth, "that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

The words themselves belong now to her little stock of verses, and with wonderful energy does she repeat these words of God to her soul, upon which she can rest and be at peace.

With the true longings of a new-born child of God, Mrs. L. thought of her unsaved husband. There was a simple eloquence in her words as she told me that when in the harvest field, as the ripened corn fell before her, she incessantly prayed that her dear husband, who was ill at the time, might be as ready for the heavenly garner as the wheat was for the swift stroke of her sickle.

Many years have passed since then, but she still retains that distinguishing mark—care for the souls of others! One day, after she had recovered from the illness first mentioned, I overtook her plodding down to the town. She had heard that a man was locked up—an infrequent occurrence in the quiet little country town—and having put a few gospel books in her basket, she was taking them to him. "I'm going to speak to him about my Saviour. Oh, I do want to tell him about my Saviour!"

It seems that it was her custom to keep an eye upon the police station, and to perform the part of honorary chaplain to the unfortunate people that got into trouble, the kindly police giving the good old woman ready access to the prisoners.

Mrs. L. still lives, a lesson to those about her, and to us all, of simple dependence upon Christ for all things, temporal as well as spiritual. When she rose from her bed, after recovering from paralysis, her feebleness was so great that she could not stoop without danger of falling; then she would say, "I just ask Jesus to help me to do whatever I want; He helps me, then I have to thank Him, so it keeps me speaking to Him all day long, and, oh, I am so happy!"

We cannot think of this worthy woman without remembering that God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. Poor in the things of this life, untrained, untutored, Mrs. L. is yet rich in faith, and therefore happy in soul. The spiritual blessings she enjoys, are in no way hers through a mere intellectual grasp of various truths. Christ is hers, and she is Christ's, and it is the knowledge of this that makes her so happy. And, dear reader, with a like faith the like happiness may be yours.

JR.

I'M NOT READY.

A FEW months ago, in the village of M——, there lived a woman who was suddenly seized with what proved to be an incurable disease. As soon as this fact was made known to her, and she knew that her time was short, she began to be in great distress of mind respecting the eternity to which she was fast hastening, and to wish for some one to come and speak to her about the Saviour.

I was asked to visit her, and one Sunday morning made my way to the cottage. On entering, the first words that greeted me were, "Oh! Mr. H——, the doctor tells me I shall not live to Christmas, and I'm not ready!"

Never shall I forget the agony of that face, as with the tears streaming down her cheeks, and her hands clasped tightly together, she besought God to have mercy upon her.

As soon as she became a little composed, I read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and ex-

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plained how that the great sacrifice had been made, and that by His stripes we are healed, pointing out to her that all the sins of a life-time could be washed away in a moment by the precious blood of Jesus.

She seemed to be impressed, but lamented her folly in having left the great question of salvation unsettled until the end of her life, and said that she could not now feel the truth of what I urged. I again quoted some precious words to show that it was not feeling, but simply trusting in the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. I then prayed with her, and was obliged to leave.

I visited her again the next week, but there was no change. I asked if there was anything on her mind that prevented her accepting the offers of mercy. She said there was nothing, and she hoped to be saved. Earnestly did I pray that God would remove all doubts and fears, and that she might be born again. In the course of our conversation, she told me of the worldly, gay life she had been living for several years in India, and how all that time she had not thought of God, or of eternity, adding, "Don't you think it very mean of me, after all these years of gaiety, now to ask God to accept me, when I have no strength to serve Him? I think it is the meanest thing I can do."

I told her that need not be any barrier to the way of life, for if she truly repented of her former sins, God, who willeth not the death of a sinner, was willing and able to save her to the uttermost. Still no light seemed to break in, and the words, "I'm not ready," again fell upon my ears.

On another occasion I endeavoured, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, to present the gospel in all its fulness to her, telling her that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16), but all seemed to fall upon a deaf ear, and the impressions, which were manifested in the early stages of her illness, appeared to have passed away.

Long and earnestly did I pray that God would open her eyes, to behold in Him a sinner's Saviour, and that He would bring the wandering one into the fold. Once in speaking to her about her children, two of whom had died in early life, she urged me most earnestly to look after the lambs of the flock, and get them to serve Christ in their early days, and warn them not to put off seeking the Saviour till the end of life, as she had done.

Several times I visited her after this, but, instead of the brightness and hope of glory, there was callousness and indifference about the things pertaining to her salvation. I tried to rouse her to a sense of her danger, telling her again of a Saviour, who was still waiting to bless and save her. Once she said she hoped to meet me in heaven, which hope I trust may be realized in the bright home above, but these doubtful words are all I have to base it on. Owing to the nature of the complaint, I was unable to visit her at the last; and I was told by those, who attended her, that she died without giving any definite hope for eternity. He, who knows all the thoughts and intents of the heart, knew hers, and may have saved her even at the last.

Reader, are you ready? Let this little story warn you that it will not do to trust to a death-bed repentance. Are you going on as this poor creature had done, in the midst of the world's so-called pleasures, forgetting all about Him who died for you? Seek Him now while you are in health, so that the cry, "I'm not ready," may not be yours on your dying bed. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." T. H.

MY ONE SCHOLAR.

IT has been the common experience of the Lord's servants that the work, which has cost them something, has been the most manifestly blessed of God. I can look back on many a lovely walk, at sunset or in the moonlight, to preach the gospel at some mission room in the suburbs of a city, or in the country districts—pleasant company, too, making such walks the more enjoyable—as the woods rang with our hymns, and miles slipped away behind us imperceptibly, and

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almost regretfully. But if you ask me on which occasions I saw most distinctly the hand of God in blessing, I would tell of boisterous nights, when it seemed almost madness to attempt the road, and when snow, wind, and sleet made one stop now and then to take breath—when friends said, "It is useless going; no one will expect you, and no one will attend a meeting on such a night."

It was on just such a Sunday evening, that I took my way to a little roadside building, which I had secured for a Sunday-school. Through deep snow and driving storm I floundered, at first questioning if I should not turn back—then, when I had got half-way, resolving that I would go on, even if it were to find no scholars, for, truly, I could hardly expect a child to put its head out of doors on such a night.

Arrived at the school, as I expected, I found not a single scholar. Glad, however, of the shelter, I went in, and lit a fire that I might dry myself, and rest awhile. At length came a girl of from twelve to fourteen years old, and at my invitation sat down with me by the fireside.

Nearly thirty years have passed, and my one scholar of that eventful evening has in that time been both a wife and a widow; but the memory of that Sunday night lives, and will live for ever, for the seed was sown then, which God has made very fruitful, and a work begun in her soul, which has since, through her service to the Lord, brought joy and comfort to many a heart. I can vividly recall that scene—the teacher and the scholar sitting, one on each side of the fire. The difficulty arose in my mind as to how to teach one scholar. Should I take the usual lesson, or keep it for the class next Sunday? In the dilemma I looked to the Lord, and then, recollecting that the scholars had been given a hymn to learn, I asked the girl if we should take it for our lesson. She was delighted, as she had learnt it well, although it was a long one. After I had prayed for God's presence and blessing, the dear Scotch lassie stood up, and repeated verse after verse of the hymn, which was at that time new and unknown in that district. It began:—

"I need Thee, precious Jesus,
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty,
My heart is dead within."

I saw that she had learnt her lesson thoroughly, for she repeated it without hesitation—indeed, she was the oldest and best scholar in the school, the child of God-fearing parents, and the lady, in whose class she had been for years, considered her a pattern to all other children, and a thoroughly good girl.

As she went on with the oft-repeated words, "I need Thee, blessed Jesus," her voice trembled, and at the last sweet verse, "I hope to see Thee soon," the poor girl broke down, and, burying her face in her hands, sobbed bitterly. I was at a loss to understand the reason of her distress, and scarcely knew how to break the silence of the almost empty school-room, broken only by her sobs. At last I asked what was the matter, and in a little while she was able to tell me that it was the feeling that she needed Jesus that had overpowered her. I said that I had always believed her to be already saved, and so had treated her as a child of God. "Oh! that's just it," she sobbed out; "everybody thinks me good, and I try to be good—I don't mean to deceive them—but I am so wicked; they don't know how wicked. Oh! I need the blood of Jesus! I am a lost sinner. I have been very, very anxious for a long time, only I could not tell anybody, but now it has come out."

I tried to soothe the dear girl, and spoke of the joy she would have when she knew in her own soul, as I did, the preciousness of Jesus. Although no ray of light seemed to penetrate the deep darkness of her heart, yet, as we knelt down, and I thanked God for the work He had begun in showing her her need, and prayed that He who had said "Let there be light" might speak that word once more, and flood her soul with the light of knowledge of Jesus and His love, I had a delightful confidence that the Lord was working, and would finish what He had begun.

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I walked home with my one scholar through the snow-drifts, and when I left her at her father's door, and turned homewards, it was with so full and glad a heart that the way seemed short, and the storm nothing.

The following evening I went again to the house, and had a long talk with her mother. She told me that her daughter spent hours alone over her Bible and in prayer, and that she wished much that she could get peace for her soul, for she knew she had been long anxious. I then conversed with the girl, opening up to her the way of life as the Lord helped me, showing her the simplicity of faith; but it seemed all in vain—the sad, anxious look was still unremoved. I rose to leave, and when she opened the door of the cottage the moon was shining on the pure, white snow—it looked as bright as daylight—and I suggested her coming out to walk with me a little way. It was then, as we walked along speaking of the Lord, that her heart was opened to receive Christ as her own only Saviour, and that she was enabled to rest on His work as the only ground of acceptance with God.

As she bade me good night she could say—

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand:
All other ground is sinking sand." J. S.

In Christ's stead.

THE Son of God came to man, being the sent One of the Father. Through Him men could know who God is, and what He is. From His lips flowed out the living waters of divine love. He declared the Father, and he who had seen Jesus had seen the Father. He came from heaven on a mission of grace: He came not "to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John iii. 17), for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Cor. v. 19). There is not a single instance in the life of Jesus in which He turned a sinner away, and refused him forgiveness because of the greatness of his sins.

Alas! man returned Jesus enmity for His love, and for all His kindness requited Him the cross; at and in the cross the deepest depth of human enmity to God found shape and words. God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son; the world answered God's love with crying against His Son, "Crucify Him, crucify Him; away with Him, away with Him."

The Lord is here no more. He has risen from the dead, and He has taken His place on the throne of eternal majesty, and there, in His own body, He bears still the marks of Calvary. In heaven itself the witness exists of human hatred to the sent One of the Father, yet from those very wounds the witness is borne of the love of God to sinners, and to the willing grace of Jesus who gave Himself a sacrifice for sin.

Earth sees Jesus no longer in His ministry of grace, hears His voice no longer speaking pardon, not imputing men's sins to them. How then shall the design of God be carried out, and how shall the love of God to man, which the blessed One came to earth to tell, and died to prove, be made known? The apostle thus writes, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God; for He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.) The death of Jesus, more wonderfully than even His life, proclaims the love of God to sinners. "Be ye reconciled to God," is the word of God now to man; for the root-cause of the enmity is removed by the cross of Christ. God has dealt with the very core and spring of human enmity, with sin itself, in His judgment on His Son, for His Son has been made sin for us. As beseeching for God, we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, says the apostle.

Let us consider these words, "in Christ's stead," or "on His behalf." We may be acquainted with the wonderful fact that God is now reconciling sinners to Himself by virtue of the death of Jesus, we may know that it is utterly false for sinners to try to reconcile God to them, but how shall the ministry of reconciliation pass out through our souls to

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the souls of men? This is a question which is near to the heart of every worker in the gospel. Such know too well that more than a close understanding of the doctrine of God's word is required; they know that if they are to be used to bring souls to God they must so speak as to be communicators of God's love to men.

How shall we move souls by the wonderful truth that, by Christ's death, God has laid the ground upon which He can receive the vilest sinner? The only way to speak with power of Christ's death for men, is to speak in the secret of His love, His pitiful love—as we behold and hear Him speak in the gospels.

When the pride of man arose against Jesus, and the rebellious cities, Chorazin and Capernaum, had rejected Him, His heart overflowed with yearning for men. With the doom of those cities before His soul, He found refuge in His Father's love, and out of a heart of perfect grace invited sinners to His bosom; "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). His very distress over man's rebellious pride found relief in inviting the sin-burdened to Himself for rest. As we consider Him in this, His pleading with men who despised and rejected Him, let these words, "in Christ's stead," have their full effect over us. How shall men be won from their pride, but by love, the love of Jesus coming out of the hearts of His ministers?

We turn to another scene—the high day of religious joy in Jerusalem! It was the Feast of tabernacles, and all of the city was astir with gladness at its celebration. Jesus was there! He saw under the surface of religious joy. Even when voices are raised to swell the sacred song, or the emotions are excited by religious services, unsatisfied hearts will throb. He stood and cried in that feast-day, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." (John vii. 37.) He alone can satisfy the soul, He alone can quench soul-thirst, He alone can turn the empty heart into a fountain of refreshment for others. How shall men be won from their religion to Christ? From religion to Christ, do we say? Ah! thousands have religion, yes, Christian religion, who have not Christ. The mighty attraction of His love is the power that draws. When the Holy Spirits fills the believer, his heart overflows with Jesus' love to men. "In Christ's stead!" "on His behalf." Let us ponder over the words. As we meditate upon His love, as we drink of His grace, out of our hearts "flow rivers of living water." By the Holy Spirit's efficacy Christ flows out of the heart that is filled with Himself.

Again another scene presents itself. Jerusalem in its glory shines below Mount Olive. Jesus looks upon that city so fair, so beautiful He knows that there His death is being plotted. His eyes are filled with tears, as Jerusalem lies beneath Him. "He beheld the city, and wept over it." (Luke xix. 41.) Poor, guilty Jerusalem! City of divine solicitude! City about to be guilty of the death of the Son of God and Man! "He wept over it," but His tears were not for the crown of thorns, the nails, the spears, the cross; no, they were not shed for His own sorrows, but for the coming destruction of the guilty. "If thou hadst known, even thou .... the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

Would we speak of judgment to come? Shall we breathe the terrible words, "everlasting punishment"? Let us stop before we open our lips, and consider these words, "in Christ's stead"—"on Christ's behalf." How shall we speak of coming judgment so as to move men's souls? There is only one way, and that is the way of Jesus. His heart was filled with compassion, and yearned over the rejecters of divine mercy.

Let these words, "in Christ's stead"—"on Christ's behalf," have their place in our souls, for only as His love moves us shall our words move the hearts of men.

We are left on the earth to follow the steps of those who were ambassadors for Christ, who were filled with the Holy Ghost, who spake of the fruits of Christ's death in the power of divine love, and who, on Christ's behalf, and in His stead, laboured to carry to the souls of men the marvels of God's love.

Nellie's Cry and the Lord's Answer.

LISTEN, little ones, and I will tell you about my own sweet sister Nellie.

She was only twelve years old when she left us, yet, though I was myself younger and a very little child, I remember her, as though I saw her yesterday, sitting on a low chair by the fire, with her head resting on a pillow, for Nellie was very delicate during the last three years she was with us.

My mother observed, with ever increasing sorrow, Nellie's small, pale face gradually get paler and thinner, and her once buoyant footsteps becoming shorter and slower. And when, at last, she could not leave her room, our mother watched over and nursed her as only a mother can. Even then Nellie used to talk about what she would do when she got well; until one day, she was unable to leave her bed, and then all at once, the truth that she was passing away from this world appeared to dawn upon her. The prospect was not fair to Nellie, for in all her short life she had not thought much about Him who was waiting to fold her in His arms and carry her in His bosom. She did not seem to know how to turn to Him.

As our mother was making up the fire, Nellie called to her, so sorrowfully, and said, "Mother, I am dying," and then she added the dreadful words, "I am going to hell."

I really cannot tell you, my dear ones, who was the most pained at that moment, my poor, distressed little sister, or her well-nigh heart-broken mother.

If Nellie had asked for something she fancied, our mother would have taken any trouble to get it for her; but her cry of despair filled the tender mother's heart with the deepest sorrow, because she knew that Nellie wanted something which she herself could not give her. All a mother's deep love could not save her child's precious soul.

For fifteen or twenty minutes our mother stood still before the fire, fearing to move lest she should find her darling child dead.

NELLIE'S CRY.

Meanwhile her heart went up in earnest prayer to God, that He would make Nellie fit for His presence, by washing her in the precious blood of His only Son.

Our father had often told us of Jesus, how He had left His bright home above, and had come down into this world, and how He had died for sinners, and Nellie had loved to hear about the many mansions, and the white robes, and the tree of life, and all the beautiful things which the Lord has prepared for those who love Him, but she had not given her heart to Him. You see, dear ones, there must be a personal surrender of our hearts to Jesus Christ, for Him alone to save us.

This poor Nellie proved at the moment when she exclaimed, "Mother, I am dying; I am going to hell." Another heard that cry! Jesus, who came to seek and to save the lost, was very gracious to Nellie at the voice of her cry. He knew her need of salvation, He had sought her, and, while her mother stood motionless before the fire, she was found of Him.

Then Nellie said, "Mother"—oh! how the tone of her voice was changed—"Mother! Jesus has saved me."

Those five words turned all her mother's sorrow into joy. There is joy in the presence of God over one sinner who repents. Hitherto, Nellie had heard the story of God's love, in sending His well beloved Son into this world to die for sinners, as a sweet tale which concerned the world in general, now she could say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." I seem to hear again the glad tone of her voice, as she said to our father, when he came into her room in the evening, "Father, I am saved."

"Oh! it is such joy," she continued, in the same glad tone. "I thought I would get saved, and not let anyone know it, but I cannot keep it to myself if I would."

Too weak to read herself, she never tired of hearing the old, old story, of Jesus and His love. "Tell me more about Jesus," she would say. "It seems to me, if I get well, I shall never tire of telling people about Him."

But Nellie was not to stay with us long. One day she had been in great pain, which the Lord enabled her to bear very patiently. The pain continued until quite late in the evening, then suddenly it left her, and looking up, she said to our father, who was with her, "Heaven, heaven! So beautiful! so beautiful! I have no pain now, it is all peace. And oh! father, look, there is Jesus."

With these words Nellie sank back, for in her eagerness and joy she had raised herself almost to a sitting posture, and never again did she talk of getting well, for when the sun's first beams came softly in at the window, Nellie, dear Nellie, was at rest, where they have no need of the sun, for the Lamb is the light thereof.

I wonder if a dear child, who reads this, has not yet come to Jesus. If so, little one, come now. It seems to me that the dear Lord Jesus has a special love for children. He is just the same tender, loving Saviour now as when He bade the children so gently to come unto Him. It is such a sweet, real thing to belong to Jesus. You know He is coming again, perhaps very soon. You would not like the door to be shut before you get in, would you?

May you be numbered with Nellie amongst His jewels in that day, for His Name's sake. A.Q.T.

A WORD TO LADS.

AN incident, that occurred the other day, has worked itself into a parable in my mind, and I want to tell it, and the lesson I drew from it, to any lads who read this.

The sun shone brightly in the blue sky on a clear frosty day in autumn; the birds were singing sweetly, although with a sad note in their summer song, and the roads were hard, dry, and clean—a pleasant day for our drive to the market town, where we had several little commissions to execute.

By the way we met Robert, one of the youths of my Bible class, driving a black cow along the road. The cow walked sedately forwards, switching her tail from side to side; Robert followed, carelessly happy, whistling a cheery tune. We exchanged greetings smilingly, as we passed on our different ways.

The crimson sun was sinking low behind

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the hedge, and a cold breeze made us draw our wraps about us, as we drove homewards, through lanes that turned this way and that, leading us back by a longer, though pleasanter way, than the high road by which we had come. Presently we were surprised to see, tearing towards us at full gallop, the black cow; Robert far behind, breathless and hatless, vainly trying to overtake the animal and to turn her course. He slackened speed as he passed, and I could not resist calling out to him, "Hallo, Robert, are you taking the cow, or is the cow taking you?"

But poor Robert was hot, tired, and out of patience, and could hardly smile at my remark, as he set off running again as hard as he could. And so he and the cow both disappeared round a corner of the lane, and we saw no more of them.

Well, as I said, I kept thinking of this little incident, until it spoke to me of more serious matters. I thought how many a lad starts in his bright, sunny youth (like Robert with his cow on this sunny day), beginning something that he knows to be wrong, or at the least doubtful. The first pipe is smoked, the first glass taken at the public-house, the first oath uttered, the first theatre attended, the first ungodly companionship entered upon. You think to yourself, "Ah! but I have full control over myself; the first may be the last, if I choose; I shall break this off by-and-by, and will not allow it to get a hold of me, as it has done of poor So-and-so, who has wrecked his life with self-indulgence."

Thus you quiet the qualms of conscience, and you think you are driving the cow, and may whistle as you go along! However, wait awhile. Years go by; life becomes a more serious matter with you; you find that what you began as amusement is now a confirmed habit. But the pipe is smoked in moody silence; the glass is drunk sullenly at the public-house; the foolish song of the drunkard can no longer bring a smile to your lips, unless, like him, you have drunk so deeply as to forget all that should make you grave; the pleasure of these things is over, and you begin to think the time has come to break off with foolish companions and idle habits. And now you find that you have no control over what you thought you held well in hand; these things have become your master, and you their unwilling slave—the black cow has run away with you!

Do not think I have overdrawn the picture. At this very moment I know an intellectual, talented man, in the prime of life, who is weeping, groaning, and agonizing at times, in vain efforts to break the fetters that drink has thrown around him, and by which he knows the devil is dragging him down to hell. Why should you forge for yourself the first links of such a chain? "At the last"—ah! that bitter word "*at the last!*"—"it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." (Prov. xxiii. 32.)

I know also another—a young Christian man, who has over and over again, sought to break with his pipe. He has discovered that he has let it become his master, and that smoke he *must*, when the appetite for it, which he has so long indulged, awakens. He deplores the loss of time, of money—grieves that he should mar his testimony for Christ, by thus yielding to a worldly habit—and yet, again and again, the pipe asserts its authority over him, and he falls before it!

I do not now take up the point that there is deliverance in Christ from all and every sin—blessedly true for the one who has sought Him for a Saviour—what I press on you, dear lads, this day, is your own solemn responsibility as to yielding your members in any degree as "servants to uncleanness and to iniquity" (Rom. vi. 19), because "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. vi. 7.) I earnestly implore you to consider what the *future* must be of the *present* you are now living in. I would remind you that "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." (Rom. vi. 16.)

With life opening fair before you, let me entreat you to weigh fully the words of the wise king to young men: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the

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ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." (Eccles. xi. 9-10, xii. 1.) D. & A. C.

EASTERNS SITTING AT MEAT.

Open thy Mouth Wide, and I will Fill it.

THERE is a most cheering word in the eighty-first Psalm, and it is this: "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." The Eastern host and his guests around the table, assist us in laying hold of the fulness of the figure. A host, as a special act of favour, will give a guest some dainty from the dish. With his own hands he will supply him with the best morsel. Thus Jehovah speaks to Israel, once slaves in Egypt, once the bondservants of the tyrant, but by His strong arm made His freed men. The Lord looked at them as His guests, and the best things of His feast He Himself would give them. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

He has delivered, He has made free, He has spread the feast, and He has made His people His guests, and now what is required of us? That we have faith and a good heart to receive His blessings.

First, let us praise Him for what is past—for salvation accomplished, and for His own working out of our salvation. He has brought us out of the land of Egypt, He has redeemed us from the hand of the enemy. Let us rejoice in God's work for us.

Next, let us have a good soul appetite for what He has to give. We need fresh mercies every day, fresh spiritual good, fresh bread from God. We will not choose what we suppose we most want—we will leave that to our God; only as His hand has in it the good things He is waiting to give, we will open our mouths wide, that He may fill them.

Christians need to be constant receivers—indeed, a great element in Christian pros-

perity lies in receptiveness: the truly longing soul becomes satisfied. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The best receivers are the surest overflowers. Place a pitcher under a fountain, and after it is full it will overflow. Let the Christian get drinking of Christ, and out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.

We need to remember that God loves to give. He gives eternal life; He gives joy, and peace, and rest, and it is His pleasure to give.

Alas! God's ancient people did not respond to the gracious invitation—"But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would none of Me." They had not a heart for God. Hence God said, "I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust." We must never forget that our hearts will be, or will seek to be, satisfied with something. If we are not receiving the good things God is offering us we shall be taking in the evil things of our own lusts; and very frequently God allows us to go after our own hearts' lusts, because, like Israel of old, we will not have His good things

The believer should be earnest with himself, and ask what is his daily spiritual bread? A prosperous Christian life has to do with the state of the Christian's heart. Is there readiness to respond to the gracious invitation, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it"? What a lost life is that which is spent in walking in our own counsels! Upon it is written, as it were, "Oh! that My people had hearkened unto Me," and then God's own record of what He would have done for His people had they been willing to receive His bounties, "He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee."

Confession of Sin.

GOD teaches Christians in His word to confess their sins, both to Himself and, when they have wronged anyone, to one another also. Confession is a Christian's duty and privilege, and brings rich blessings with it. A believer may live a dull and a sunless life for years together, because he has not confessed some sin or other to God. Such an one is living at a spiritual distance from God, in the same way that a child, who had hidden his evil conduct from his father, would be living at a moral distance from him. Unconfessed sin lying upon the soul is a weight, hindering the Christian's race, and keeping the Christian in a worldly state. We are not now speaking of the unconverted man, but when a sinner is turned to God from his sins, he is real about his sins, he does not try to cover them up, he confesses them to God.

We must not confound God's ways with His children and His ways with sinners. In His ways with His enemies, "God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us..for when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." (Rom. v. 8-10.) In His ways with His children, God tells us, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John i. 9; ii. 1.) Christ is the Saviour for sinners. He is also the Comforter or Advocate with the Father for believers who sin. A sinner in his sins, and a sinning child of God are very different in relation to God. The great principle of confessing our sins to God is before us in these words, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When a sinner trusts in Christ's death, God pardons him and forgives him—hence such an one is a justified person; once he was ungodly, but, believing, he is justified from all things, he is a child of God. If he sins he needs a Father's forgiveness.

Our present remarks are directed to the children of God, and of all such it is written, "Your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." (1 John ii. 12.) They are of God's family, and are brought into relation with God, but many a child of God sins, and, alas, does so often wilfully. Now, confession of our sins to God is the condition upon which the child of God obtains forgiveness of the special sin he may have committed. An unforgiven child is still a child, but he is not in

the enjoyment of his parent's love. The child of God who does not confess his sins to God has his sin hindering his communion with his Father.

Self-judgment leads to confession, and confession meets with God's forgiveness. Heart to heart work with God is the secret of the prosperity of the inner life of the believer. God is light, He has made us the children of light; therefore, all that is of darkness should be separated from. Our remarks do not suggest morbid sensitiveness, and looking into self, but simple and child-like openness with God, whose perfect love casts out our sinful fear, for fear has torment.

When a child of God is in a truly gracious state of soul in the presence of his God and Father, he will find it comparatively easy to humbly own the sin with which he has been overtaken. That sin will grieve him, because it is a dishonour to his Father, and he will seek with all his heart to have it all out with God.

Where such a spirit towards God prevails in us, it becomes simple for us to confess our faults one to another. (James v. 16). A Christian, who is genuinely in God's presence, values the truth more than his own name, and pride is the secret cause why we do not confess our faults one to another. The only way to heal a wound our tongue has inflicted is to use our tongue in confessing the wrong done to the one we have so wounded. Christians, who are living as children of God, will be in a measure confidants one of another, and therefore confession will be natural to them. If we had grieved our best friend, we should not rest until we had put the matter right, our love to our friend would be the impetus to our owning the wrong we had done him.

The gracious ministry of this mutual confession is too little regarded, and, perhaps the lack of it, may be one cause for the terrible distortion of the Bible truth of confession which exists in the confessional.

How the confessional can be tolerated by those who hold God's word in their hands is hard to comprehend; nay, how such an institution as the confessional can exist in Christian lands is a marvel. It is due to two elements, which prevail in human nature —one being that, notwithstanding man's pride, it is part of his religious nature to like to have some superior person over his soul; the other being that, with all man's faith in a superior man forgiving sins, there is not faith in God to believe what He says as to His forgiveness of sins.

The slavery of giving oneself over in spiritual matters to another, is very agreeable bondage to persons, who do not know they are made free by the Son of God. Evidently, if souls were open with God, and spoke to Him, as to their Father, and to Jesus as their Friend, they would not wish for a superior person over them, nor could they tolerate the sinful slavery of having a man come between their souls and the Lord. If the weak in the faith appreciate superiors, the superiors enjoy their superiority—yes, and use it also, as the most Protestant of Protestant communities do at times too plainly witness. These superiors will have to be ashamed of their priest-like ways in the day of judgment, for their Lord has said, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." (Matt. xxiii. 8.)

The whole system of placing the soul under a man, whether out of, or, in Rome, is opposed to the Scriptures, and, just in proportion as it exists, so does Christian liberty not exist. True Christianity brings a man to God, and makes him the bond slave of Jesus Christ, and allows not for a moment that any creature should come between his soul and God, or that he should be a bondsman to any, save the Lord who bought him with His blood.

The rapid growth in our land of the confessional is too terrible evidence of the unbelief of men in God's forgiveness of our sins. If He has absolved us, we do not want a priest to absolve us. If He, for the glory of His Son, has done this work for us by virtue of Christ's merit, the absolution of the priest is but contempt upon God Himself.

We once asked an Anglican confessor how it would fare with him should he die before twelve that night. After some fencing, and then saying, it was not a question he was accustomed to have put to him, he confessed he was by no means assured whither his soul

would go if God called it away there and then! In our last number we recorded a similar confession from a priest of Rome. What is the use of such people? "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. xv. 14.)

The main spiritual object of the confessional is to keep souls at a distance from God—to hinder them confessing to God. Let anyone be enticed into the confessional, and thenceforward he, or she, is the slave of the confessor, who becomes a veil to obstruct the person coming to him from God's presence. Pour the confessions of your sins against God into the ear of a man, and so long as you do so, God will be to you a God afar off. Make your prayer into the heart of your confessor, and there will your prayer remain buried, for "there is one..Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. ii. 5.)

If the uselessness of the confessional, were all to be said against it, that were enough to call for protest, for Protestantism, but the system destroys purity and holiness, and corrupts the moral being of those who yield themselves to it. In their efforts to reach the mysteries of a heart, and to command the soul, the priests ask such abominable questions, and insinuate such atrocious suggestions, that any publisher in this land who dared to make them public would be exposed to legal proceedings. Shall anyone be impious enough to affirm that iniquity proceeds from God, or be bold enough to declare that such corrupters of morals are the servants of Him, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all?

Our forefathers arose against the priests of old, and we will give a few testimonies of those, who in our own day, have escaped the snare, to show that the same dark spirit that prevailed in the confessional prevails in it still.

"Day after day, I knelt at the feet of that man, answering questions and listening to admonitions calculated to bow my very soul in the dust. . . . Oh! how can the judgment be so perverted, as to call such pollution purity? . . . Once, my confessor had been unexpectedly called away—I went to the church porch for air while awaiting his return. . . . He came, with his unchanged smile and broad gaze, to summon me back to my terrible task.

"I was desired to repeat over again what had most harrowed my feelings . . . when I was told, in the most merciless manner . . . that the repetition would only serve to humble me. I leaned against the confessional for support; but, by promptings and suggestions, he at length gained his point."

Some while afterwards, this lady was walking with a mother of a family, whom she describes "as pure in heart as in life," and whom she had seen in long converse with the priest referred to. "I looked at her in wonder," she writes. "What would I have given to have thrown myself on her maternal bosom, and to have asked, 'Do you, can you, know of these things? And, if so, will you bring up your children to be exposed to such horrors'"?*

Another thus gives her witness. Driven to desperation by the corruptness of her confessor, she determined to escape from her convent. "My† soul abhorred the priests—they were vipers; I condemned the sisters and the convent as all defilement; I could not remain there longer; the very thought was unendurable! I would fly—escape—but where? And would not my soul be damned eternally if I abandoned my vocation? Ah! and would it not be also damned if I remained in the convent? If so, I would rather be damned *out* of the convent than *in* it."

We add a third testimony, that of one who was for many years a priest.‡ "I am now," says he, "seventy-six years old, and in a short time I shall be in my grave. I shall have to give an account of what I now say. Well, it is in the presence of my great Judge, with my tomb before my eyes, that I declare to the world that few—yes, very few—priests escape from falling into the pit of the most horrible depravity that the world has ever known," and he declared this to be wrought through the confessional!

* Personal Experience, by Eliza Richardson.
† Edith O'Gorman—Convent Life Unveiled.
‡ Père Chiniquy.

He tells us how that one night he was called to confess a dying priest, whose cry was, "Oh, my God, my God, what will become of me? I am dying; and I am lost!" "It was indeed an awful thing," he adds, "to see that old sinner wringing his hands, and rolling on his bed as if he had been on burning coals, with all the marks of the most frightful despair on his face, crying, "I am lost! Oh! my God, I am lost!"

The despair of this priest arose from the incredible sins arising out of the confessional: sins which he had committed, and the horrors of which filled his soul with the terrors of hell.

Where the slavery of the confessional exists, liberty before God is utterly impossible—nay, more, the liberty of a wife or daughter with a husband or parent is gone, for a third person has intervened, and to him is committed the secrets of the heart.* "Look at that man, that priest, who at the very time he is telling us his kingdom is above, has adroitly secured for himself the reality of the earth beneath. He lets you go, as you please, in search of unknown worlds; but he himself seizes on the present one; your own world, poor dreamer! that which you loved, the nest where you hoped to come back and be cherished. Accuse no one but yourself; it is your own fault."

"Really to reign, is to reign over a soul. What are all the thrones in comparison to this kingly sway? . . . The priest has a great advantage which no one else possesses. His business is with a soul *which gives itself up of its own accord.*"

Beware, lest you surrender your individual responsibility to God to any human being. To God you must give an account—to Him, in the great day that is coming, you must unveil yourself, your most secret thoughts, your whispers, your deeds. How shall you stand then? Even as you stand before God in this life, absolved or not absolved by Him, pardoned or not pardoned. Oh! trust the pitiful love of the Saviour, confess to Him, tell Him all, and, showing you His wounds, He shall show you the cost of your salvation, and bid you go in peace, and be free.

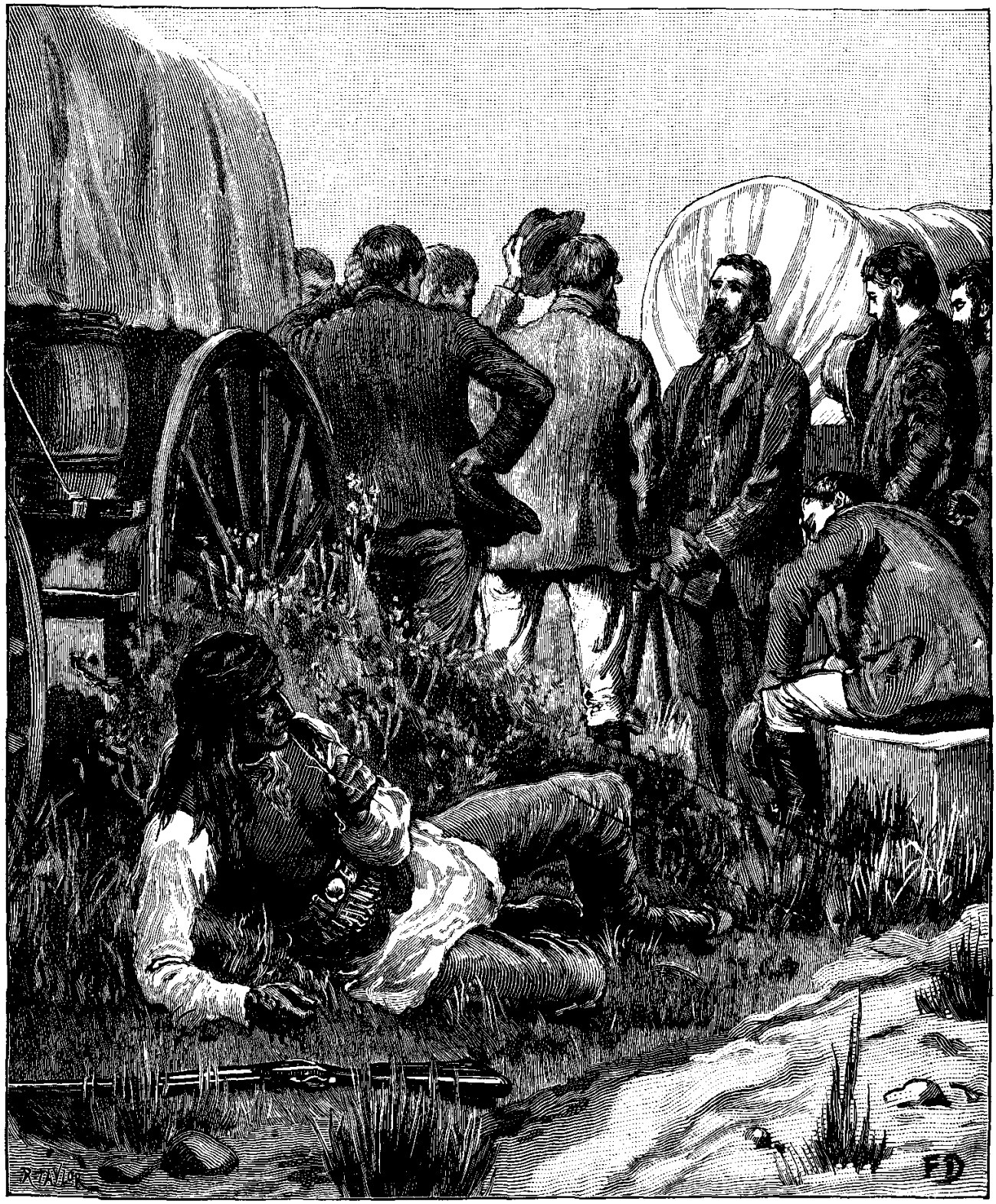
* Priests, Women, and Families. J. Michelet.

Texts for the Month.

			Book.	Chap.	Ver.
F	1	I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest...my sin			
S	2	I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession			
S	3	**Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy**			
M	4	Now mine eye seeth Thee...I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes			
Tu	5	Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow			
W	6	Blessed is he whose sin is covered			
Th	7	Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another			
F	8	Jesus the mediator of the new covenant			
S	9	By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place...for us			
S	10	**A merciful and faithful** High priest...to make reconciliation for the sins of the people			
M	11	Such an High Priest became us...holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily, as those high priests to offer up sacrifices			
Tu	12	Having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart			
W	13	All ye are brethren...call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven			
Th	14	Feed the flock of God...not for filthy lucre...neither as being lords over God's heritage			
F	15	The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge			
S	16	Jesus...was moved with compassion toward them			
S	17	**He is able to succour them** that are tempted			
M	18	Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses			
Tu	19	He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows			
W	20	Return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy and abundantly pardon			
Th	21	Turn unto the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful...and of great kindness			
F	22	The Lord...saveth such as be of a contrite spirit			
S	23	The Lord God...forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin			
S	24	**He shall...justify...for He** shall bear their iniquities			
M	25	Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth			
Tu	26	Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved			
W	27	Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful			
Th	28	Unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy			
F	29	Thy mercy is great unto the heavens			
S	30	Oh how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee			

FAITHFUL WORDS

For Old and Young.



JOE, THE INDIAN.

JOE, THE INDIAN.

JOE was an Indian, and an Indian with a very bad character, so bad that in his own country a price was set upon his head for the murders and outrages he had committed.

War had been his delight, but the neighbourhood having become too hot for him, he determined to go to a far distant tribe. A company of missionaries happened to be passing the place where he was, and Joe obtained the post of driver to one of their waggons, as they went to the country of the Cree and Saulteaux Indians.

However, being in the company of Christians did not make Joe a saint. He hated religion, and if he saw a hymn book he would scowl at it as if it were a serpent. Of the Bible he had even a greater horror, and whenever one was opened he always went away. On the Lord's day, not being required to drive, he would go off with his gun and spend the hours in shooting what game he could find, so that he might be well out of hearing of the worship of God.

As the party pursued their way, in the middle of July, there came a Sunday so hot that even Joe did not care to take his usual ramble, and he laid himself down in the shadow of one of the waggons, artfully selecting that of the missionary who was not expected to conduct the service.

But he had made a mistake, for the preacher whose turn it was to preach, was so overcome by the heat, that he had to beg to be excused, and the owner of the waggon, under whose shadow Joe was sheltering, offered to take his place. Hence the little company gathered about the waggon, and the meeting began. Joe was lying in the long grass half asleep, and was not a little annoyed at being thus disturbed, but to lie still while hymns were sung, and to see the hated Bible opened, was too much for him, he would move. So rising to his feet, he stretched his fine limbs; but the heat was great, and he was too lazy for locomotion, and he again threw himself upon the grass, and there he lay, full length upon his back, right in front of the preacher, his angry eyes flashing defiance at him.

"Lord, help me to preach to Joe," prayed the man of God inwardly, as he saw the opportunity before him. Forgetting everybody else, in simple speech he set forth the love of God to all His creatures. He told his hearers that though God gave them rain and sunshine, flesh and fowl, corn and fruit, yet they did not love Him in return, and that instead of loving Him, they hated Him, and His servants and His book. But did He send the lightning to strike them down for their enmity? No, He had given His Son to die, so as to put away their sins. He had shown His love to them, to the worst of them, even to the murderers, and if they would only believe in His Son, He would forgive them and make them His dear children.

Joe's eyes were fixed earnestly on the speaker, who as he went on, watched the anger fading out of them, and hoped the Holy Ghost was casting out the evil spirit from the Indian. Shortly afterwards the party broke up.

Joe did not forget that sermon. One day, walking beside another missionary, he said:

"Didn't the preacher tell awful lies that hot Sunday?"

"Lies, Joe? I did not hear any."

"He said the Great Spirit loved poor wicked Indians. Wasn't that a lie?"

"Not at all, Joe, it is in the Book. 'God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins.'" (Eph. ii. 4, 5.)

"But was not that an awful lie, that the Great Father gave His Son?"

"No, Joe, it is in the Book. 'In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'" (1 John iv. 9, 10.)

Then Joe said, "But it must be a lie, that He was preparing the beautiful country for them."

"No," he answered, "that too is blessedly true. It is in the Book. Jesus, the Son of

God, said to sinful men, whom He loved, and had saved, 'I go to prepare a place for you.'" (John xiv. 2.)

The end of the conversation was this. Joe said, "If all this is true, missionary, I'll stay with you, and never again go on the war-path."

When they reached the station, Joe did not want to go further, but stayed to chop wood and work. Time showed the change that had come over him. His consistent life proved that he was a truly converted man.

The following year the small-pox broke out among the Indians in the station where Joe was, and caused the death of many of them. Three daughters of one of the missionaries died also, and there was no one, but their bereaved father, to saw the boards for their coffins, and to bury them.

The missionary, with whom Joe had had the conversation, came over to see the sorrowing parent, and to speak to him words of comfort, and while doing so, a message came, that a poor Indian was dying under the fence, and wanted to speak with him. He at once went to the spot, and found there a living mass of corruption in the last stage of the terrible plague of small-pox. Both eyes were gone, and the face was so disfigured that it was almost impossible to recognise the sufferer.

"Who are you?" said the missionary. "Are you Joe?"

"Yes, I'm Joe."

"Is there anything you want to say to me, my poor friend?"

"I'm nearly gone, but it is all right. Only I would like you to take a message."

"What is it, Joe?"

"I can't see you, but I can see Jesus. You know that young man who preached that hot Sunday afternoon, and you know that my life has been a changed one since then. If ever you meet him, tell him that sermon made me a Christian. I'll soon be with Jesus, and if the good Spirit will let me, I'll come down to the gates of heaven to meet him."

So died Joe, the once wicked Indian, believing that God loved him, and had given His Son to die in his stead, so that being forgiven he was made fit for the mansion the Lord had prepared for him. W. L.

A LIVING SAVIOUR.

ONE Good Friday evening, a poor woman was returning to her home from a religious service, which had been marked by those emblems that naturally deeply affect our feelings. The dimly-lighted building, the black drapery, the slow and mournful music, and all these signs accessories to the great feature of the ceremony—a large crucifix! All this had its effect on the poor woman, who was a seeker after God, and downcast she returned to her home. She had not found Him, and knew not that He was seeking her.

Not far from her house was a mission hall, and this she had to pass. The poor woman was arrested by the sound of singing proceeding from this hall, and she climbed up the wooden stairs, and stood at the door for a moment. She could see inside the room, and instantly one thing struck her—the array of happy faces! The joyous countenances of many of God's children engaged her. What could their happiness mean? Why did they look so glad? What made them rejoice? Such questions passed through her mind, and such questions do pass through the minds of men and women when they behold the joy of the Lord filling the hearts of their fellow men. There is a testimony for God in the joy of His salvation which is unanswerable. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." (Psa. xxxii. 11.)

Presently the stranger was seated in the mission room. She had entered just before the speaker began his address. He opened the Book of God, and read these words: "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.)

The preacher told the sweet story of the love of Jesus, even unto death. He had been crucified. He had died. His hands

and His feet had been nailed to the tree. He had borne the judgment due to His people in His own body there. All that work was done. "It is finished," were His own words upon the cross. The eternal Son sent from heaven had become the Son of man, and for us He had been lifted up. Blessed sight, all sights above!

The poor woman had often looked at the crucifix, and had knelt before it; that night she looked to Jesus once crucified. She cast herself before Him, Himself, by faith—she heard that Jesus was no longer nailed upon the cross, no longer the suffering Saviour, but the Conqueror, the risen and exalted Lord of all. A living Jesus was presented to her longing heart, that evening, by the Spirit of God, and she found rest to her soul.

She, too, could rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, believing on Him, whom not having seen, she, by grace, had learned to love.

Which is it, reader, with you, the crucifix, or Him who was crucified? An image of a dead Christ, or Himself who liveth and who became dead? Which is it with you—the solemn pomp of outward religion, senses awed and feelings amazed, or the peace and joy which God gives by His Spirit?

Ponder over the question, and may Jesus Himself be to you Saviour, Succourer, Friend.

A VOICE FROM A DYING BED.

SOME time ago I witnessed the falling asleep of a very dear friend of mine, whose last words I cannot help repeating in warning to others. One evening, a little while before the Lord called her away to be with Himself, I was sitting by her bedside watching her. She was in a very precarious state, and, as I gazed on the wasted form, I felt that I could not hope to keep her long. Perhaps you, my reader, can remember seeing the departure of some dear one of yours; it may be your loved mother, or a very dear friend, and, as you read this, the whole scene comes again before you, and you recall the dying words, "Oh! my dear son, or my dear girl, will you not promise me that you will meet me in heaven?" With tears in your eyes, and quivering lips, you perhaps gave that promise.

But years have rolled on, and you are no longer that little girl or boy. "Ah!" you say, "indeed I am not; vast changes have taken place since then." Let me affectionately put the question to you to-day, Have you kept the promise that you gave that dear one? Have you sought and found the same Saviour? Have you a good hope of rejoining your loved one in heaven?

But I must return to my story. As I sat beside my dying friend, she looked up into my face, and said, fervently, "Oh! how glad I am that I accepted the Lord Jesus as my Saviour whilst in health. If I had put it off until now, it would have been perhaps too late." She stopped quite exhausted. As I looked at her poor suffering body I thought how changed she was from what I had known her. In moments of most acute pain she showed the greatest patience; it was evident that a divine power sustained her, that One was with her, who has promised to never leave nor forsake those who have been washed in His precious blood.

I well remember the last moment of this dear one. It was on a Sunday evening early in July, hardly a breath of air stirring, as in that quiet hour lay the dying one, surrounded by many loved friends. In their presence she passed calmly away, to be with her Lord and Saviour, whom she so loved and longed to see.

Dear reader, when that enemy, death, comes, you cannot bolt him out; all the friends in the world cannot hold you back when his cold, icy hand is laid upon you. Oh! sinner, delay not to prepare for that awful moment. What a day of salvation this is! The God of infinite grace is waiting; the door of mercy stands open. What are you waiting for? God bids you enter, why stay outside? The Saviour waits with outstretched arms. He is ready, why will you not go to Him? Listen to His loving words, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me." You have tried broken cisterns long enough, and proved there is nought there to satisfy.

The Saviour bids you to come to Him now, and He will quench your thirst. If you refuse His offer of grace, there is no other alternative but eternal perdition. Do you not think it is high time to wake up? Will you not solemnly consider these things? Jesus says, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." E. A. S.

GRACE TRIUMPHANT.

WE heard the other day the last words of a faithful, old Christian, who had *suffered both from pain and poverty, but who* was ever brave and of good courage, and never complained. "O death! where is thy sting?" she whispered, and then passed out of time into eternity.

What a grand triumph through Christ, the Lord, was here!

* * * * *

"I never knew grace until I learned that 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,'" exclaimed an aged Christian, upon his dying bed. "Grace, grace, grace, it is all of grace; and when we get to heaven we shall know and value His grace far more than we can do on earth." "I must be laid low before I can be taken up," said he, cheerily, referring to his sleepless nights and his days spent without rest or food, for he was too ill to receive nourishment. Then he extolled the sacrifice of Christ, and His blood, rejoicing in the atonement with all his heart, and soul and strength. This, his confidence, he wished should be known, as a testimony to God, at the close of a life of eighty-three years.

As we sat by the bedside of this aged saint, and noted his courage and his joy, we could but feel how miserable is infidelity, and how worthless are the proud, godless thoughts of the unbelieving man upon a dying bed!

* * * * *

An elderly Christian upon being sympathised with over his weakness, responded, "How many of God's children are suffering with acute pain, incurable afflictions, and worse still, trials of mind! My weakness and sickness are light. Now, what I desire is to be a good confessor of my Lord; a possessor of His grace I am, and of the glory I soon shall be; but I desire to confess His name in my ways, and by my words, before I am called home."

The cheery way in which these words were spoken told upon his friend's heart; and we commend the words and the spirit of them to our readers.

* * * * *

Two aged men, strangers to each other, met upon a path one winter's day; the hair of each was white as snow, and the steps of both were very feeble. One leaned upon his stick, the other upon the arm of an attendant. "We are both alike, sir," said the former, as he rested himself upon his staff; "we are both near our journey's end, and oh, what a joy it is to know there are but a few more steps, and then it is rest with Christ above!"

The other old man made no reply, but looked strangely into the face of his attendant, upon whose arm he leaned, as though his heart were saying, "What strange doctrine is this?"

The two aged ones separated, each on his way; both had trodden life's pathway more than threescore years and ten; with one the winter's day seemed to say, "Everlasting spring is near"; with the other it was but winter, the cold and cheerless end of life, and then death, and after this——

Oh! traveller to eternity, consider these solemn words, "And after this—the judgment."

To the Seeker after God.

HOW long have you been seeking after God? Ah! a long time! And you are in earnest—you really desire to be His, and to know that you are His for ever? Be assured, by His own word to you, that He is more ready to hear than you are to cry to Him. He is pitiful and full of tender mercy. He is filled with compassion, and His heart of love is towards you. Do not let any of

your dark thoughts deny the character of God to your faith. God is love.

But how can I know that God loves me? This is the question so perplexing to the anxious soul. Let us look at it fairly. One thing is clear—when one asks this question with real earnestness, the feeling what self is, what "I" am, what "me" means, is very, very terrible. We know we are sinners, that our hearts are full of sin, and that all our efforts to be free from sin are vain; and we know that God is infinite in holiness, and perceives what we are perfectly, and we know these things because the Word of God has entered our hearts.

Our only possibility of knowing what God thinks about us in His love, is by His word. Read His word, and let it speak to you, dear anxious seeker after God. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) "While we were yet sinners"—note His words, they are full of comfort and hope. Again He says, "God...for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) "Even when we were dead in sins"—meditate over these words; they give the extent of our sinful state—dead in sins. Dead to God, to His love, to His holiness, and dead in our sins and iniquities. Yet when we were in this hopeless state God loved us.

How can I know that God loves me? We ask the question in the full sense of what God declares us to be in our nature state. Sinners, and dead in sins, and we rejoice in the wonderful love of God as we do so. For

While we were yet sinners, He gave His Son to die for us,

And, *when we were dead in sins, He gave us life together with His Son* who died for us, and who rose again.

God's love towards us is measured by the death of His Son for us. It could not be deeper! His love toward us is proved by His giving us, in our dead state, life together with His Son, who lives to die no more. It could not be greater! Dear reader, God is love. Believe His word, and you shall rejoice in His love.

TO THE UNDECIDED.

WE have come to the end of another year —to another mile-post on the road of time; let us sit down and pause for a moment. Dear reader, listen! If you are unsaved you are not ready for eternity. A voice calls to you, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." (Isa. lv. 6.) "*While He may be found*"! Ah! this will not always be. Reason may fade away; the last opportunity is at hand; death draws near; and, more urgent still, at such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh! Oh! should He come and find you unfit to meet Him!

Call upon Him while He is near—"*while He is near.*" And He is near to-day, for whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved; but He will not be always near. The eager, earnest look of the man of business proclaims his determination to succeed, but how few are determined to find Christ, and to be right for eternity. Call upon Him while He is near, dear friend, for soon He will be as one afar off, and then to call on Him will be in vain. When the great day of His wrath is come who shall be able to stand?

Yet why is it that there is so little real seeking after God? Often it is because some secret sin is too well loved, some pleasure of the world too fondly prized, and for such things the conscience is bidden be still, or hushed to sleep. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (ver. 7).

God demands repentance of men. Belief without repentance is a dead thing. If a man believed the path he was on led to a precipice, he would retrace his steps. If a man believed the house he was in was on fire, he would avail himself of the fire-escape. Faith ever affects our whole being.

Let not the last hours of this old year die with this sad sigh, "The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Our last word.

WE have come once more to the end of a volume, when a parting word must issue from our pen. Dear readers, our last message shall be, an appeal to you to hold fast to the Holy Scriptures.

In every period in the history of the Church, there have been difficulties peculiar to the times, and, thank God, there have been in every period soldiers of Christ, who have fought against the errors of their day with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. In our time the greatest danger to the Church is the prevailing spirit of making light of the Word of God. Hence the soldier of Christ should be most earnest in holding fast and in upholding the Holy Scriptures. Our loyalty to Christ demands this of us, and if we possess Christian courage, we shall engage heartily in this warfare. With soul and strength, we will, God helping us, fight this fight of faith.

The Christian should remember that what he mourns in the infidelity of professing Christians is foretold in the Bible. St. Peter says, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." (2 Pet. iii. 3.) St. Jude also bids us remember that there "should be mockers in the last time" (ver. 18), and St. Paul teaches, "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.) Men, who are leaders and teachers in Christian communities, mock at the Old Testament—they call much of it a myth; they scorn the solemn testimony of God as to the judgment that Christ will bring upon the earth at His appearing; while on every hand, in the rank and file of professing Christians, men refuse sound doctrine, and, instead of listening to the truth of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, occupy their souls with fables.

Let us never forget that the Bible, and the Bible only, reveals to us a personal God, and who and what He is. By the Bible we learn God's holiness and love, His hatred of sin and His love towards sinful men. There only do we learn that our souls are immortal, and that our bodies will rise again. There only do we learn how we may be made fit for God's presence, and how we may live in this world acceptably to God. And there we read of the judgment yet to come, of heaven and of hell.

The Bible is a whole, it is bound and tied together, and its parts cannot be separated without doing it violence. One mind breathes and speaks through it from Genesis to Revelation, and that one mind is God's. The Son of God when on earth ever honoured the Scriptures, He ever appealed to them as Divine authority. If Moses is not true, then Jesus is not the Way, the Truth and the Life. "It is written," "That the Scriptures might be fulfilled," are the index to the words and works of Jesus. Let there be no misunderstanding about it—such as seek to undermine the authority of the Scriptures are trying to undermine the authority of God and His Son over men's souls. Such as deny the truth of the Scriptures, deny the truth of Jesus' words, and in effect that He is true. The effort to get rid of the authority of the Bible is an effort to get rid of God's authority.

One class of Christian infidels says, "The Bible is true, but you must not listen to it—the Church alone is capable of explaining it." The other class says, "The Bible has God's Word in it, but it is not itself the Word of God, and we will explain what in it is the Word of God." Both classes unite in seeking to sever man's faith from God, to centre it in human authority. The first teaches its adherents not to believe what God says in His Word, but what the Church declares that God says. The second teaches its adherents not to believe what the word of God says, but what they say is God's word. Thus both reject the authority of God's Word over them, and constitute themselves into an authority superior to the Word of God. Both classes are enemies to the Word of God, and therefore to God who has given us His Word.

Now, by God's Word we shall be judged, and a truly impious thing is it for man to set

himself up against his Judge. What will his end be but one merited by his pride? It is not difficult to find the reason for this infidelity in the Scriptures. The truths God declares to us in His word are not agreeable to man in his fallen state. Whether for "the Church" or opposed to "the Church," man unregenerate hates the sound of the realities God declares to him in the Bible.

In the Bible we find not only a Saviour, but a Friend. As we read it, God speaks to us, and Jesus tells us His love; heaven is opened to us, and the future becomes present to us; its words are living words, like springing water or constant sunbeams, fresh and new to the heart daily; its most familiar texts never grow old to the soul, but ever rejoice the heart. And why is this? Because the Bible is a divine book, and because the Holy Spirit of God opens our hearts to its truths as we humbly read it.

No one who is not a devout reader of the Bible will be a strong or wise Christian. Read it, asking for the teaching of God the Holy Spirit, and you will be wise; obey it, and you will be strong. Feed upon it, and you shall have a healthy spirituality. Meditate upon it, and you shall have peace in your soul. Make it your guide, and your steps shall not stumble. Follow its directions and your walk shall be pleasing to God. Use it for your Christian conflict, and you shall be victorious. Believe it as you read it, and heaven will open itself to your heart. Make it your delight, and God will make you His delight.

We have no better words to give as a parting message to our many readers than those of St. Paul: "Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts xx. 32.)

In Thy Youth.

"I HAVE found Christ, thank God!" said a middle-aged man to us, the other day, "but it was not until I was over fifty years of age. Alas! that I should have lived the best part of my life without Him!" Our friend had the marks of age upon him, grey hair, and stiffness of frame—the freshest and brightest part of life had departed from him. What a regret to look back upon so much of life spent in the service of the world and of sin! Oh! how little do young men and women appreciate the blessing of giving God their youth—their best days, the strongest and heartiest time of their short life!

"In thy youth," dear reader, give yourself to God for His service and honour. "In thy youth" be out and out for Christ, a good soldier for Him. Let not this year pass by while you remain still undecided. Say not in your heart, "Why should not I delight myself in the world and its joys as do others?" for Jesus the Son of God beckons you to a nobler life; He calls you to self-sacrifice and devotion, in which you shall have joys beyond all that this world ever gave to its servants.

Dear young readers, the truly happy life is that which is given to God and to Christ. There are more joys found in His service than in all the pleasures of the world, and we appeal to you, now in your youth, to devote yourselves to Him.

Forgiving One Another.

IN former days, before God had revealed Himself to His people in the fulness of His forgiving mercy, the word concerning the injurious man was—"Thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." (Deut. xix. 21.) But with the revelation in Christ, of God's grace, the exhortation of the Scriptures is, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake [or in Christ] hath forgiven you." (Eph. iv. 32.) Forgiveness of a wrong done to us is both noble and generous, and, when the motive proceeds from the sense of what God has done for us, it is a most excellent grace. Naturally, it is very hard to be forgiving, and some people seem positively unable to forgive.

To treat a wrong-doer as beneath our notice is not to forgive, and to forgive and not to forget is but part pardon. That kind of forgiveness which treasures up the memory of evil done is not from the heart, but by

THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT.

word of mouth only, and heals not the soul of the injured person, while genuine forgiveness removes the very sting of the injury, and is a balm that cures the wounded spirit! God in Christ forgives and forgets; it is His prerogative to pardon His enemies, and more, it is within His power to remember our sins and iniquities no more! Christians are exhorted to forgive one another, as God in Christ has forgiven us, to be "followers of God as dear children."

Where Christ is, His presence must influence those who are with Him; the grace and truth which came by Him must prevail. After the Lord had said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them," Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"

Jesus saith unto him, "I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven."

We have our limit of endurance. "Till seven times," seems a very great amount; but the Lord gives a limit which is like the horizon of the sea, practically boundless This is His way, and He would have His people's ways like His own, and as we thus speak, let us remember that Christ-like ways arise out of a Christ-like state of heart.

Having answered Peter's question, Jesus spake a parable, contrasting God's ways of forgiveness with man's.

A certain king, who would take an account of his servants, found one of them, who owed him ten thousand talents. The sentence of justice was passed upon this servant, when he pleaded with the king for time to pay the debt, upon which the king, filled with compassion, forgave him all he owed. The greatness and the goodness of God here appear; the king forgave in truly royal sort—he forgave the whole of the debt, and he did so out of compassion.

How different is God's way of forgiveness from our natural thoughts concerning it! When a sinner begins to realize what the debt is he owes to God, he says, "I will pay some of it off! I will make amends!" But God forgives wholly and absolutely out of the riches of His grace and the compassion of His heart. It would be beneath the honour of a king to forgive less than all, while to take part payment would be to sully his glory.

Man's standard is a very different one! The servant, who in his own person had experienced the favour of the king, finds one of his fellows who owed him one hundred pence, and at once he lays hands on him, takes him by the throat, and demands payment of the debt. The very plea he himself had made to the king is urged by his fellow-servant, yet in vain. Out of the hardness and selfishness of his heart he acts towards his fellow-servant, and casts him into prison until the debt shall be paid. The man was willing enough to receive favour from the king, but he had no grace to show to his fellow-servant.

Now what does the king say to him? "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?"

As we read the parable, we again ask Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" and, in the greatness and goodness of the king, let us seek to understand the Lord's answer: "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

If we are truly recipients of God's forgiving grace, we shall govern our ways towards our fellow servants by our God's ways towards us, or, at least, we shall seek to do so. To profess to be recipients of God's grace, and to practise hardness and selfishness to others is but to deny the character of our Lord and Master. And such conduct will undoubtedly bring with it a bitter reward. Yet, too true is it, that some of the most eloquent discoursers on grace are men of a vindictive spirit. God has forgiven us all our trespasses and sins because Christ died for us, and bare our sins in His own body on the tree, and they shall not come up in judgment against us, but if our ways are adverse to His ways, we shall certainly suffer for it in this life. "God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The Story of a Little Boy.

IT is a great pleasure to give to my readers stories of things that have come under my own eyes, and I will now speak of a little boy, whom I had under my care a short time ago.

The first evening we were alone I read the word of God with him, and he thanked me heartily, saying he loved to hear the Bible. "Do your parents read the Bible at your home?" I asked, and he quickly answered, "Oh, yes." I then enquired, if he understood the Scriptures. "Some parts," he replied, and then I asked him if he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Yes," was his answer.

"But as you know you are a sinner, tell me what have you to say about your sins."

"Oh! Mrs. T.," said he, "it is three years since my sins were forgiven me. Oh! you don't know what a night that was, I shall never forget that night as long as I live. It makes me feel so sad when I think about it. It was my wicked temper, I can't half express to you how vile I felt, and how I acted towards my dear mother, who I loved so truly.

"But that evening I treated her so badly, for I was determined to have my own way. I stood out to the extreme, for I thought I would be master. At last my mother had to push me quite from her, and she left me alone. My governess gave me a great talking to, but I did not mind at the time. When bedtime came, I went as usual to say good night to my mother, but she would not see me. That was the dreadful part to me; my mother would not see me for the first time in my life. I could not say good night to her, and kiss her. I went to my bedroom, but I cannot tell you what I felt. I fell upon my knees and cried bitterly. I thought if I had grieved my mother, how must I have grieved God! Oh! how I cried to God to forgive me, and pardon all my sins! I could not leave off praying until I felt He had forgiven me. That was a night never to be forgotten."

"But what about your sins since that night?" I asked him.

"I have never felt a doubt since that night when I was pardoned. Oh! I was so glad, when the morning came, to see my dear mother. I told her all, and received her forgiving kiss, too."

This little boy was ten years old. My heart was drawn to him, as he told me the story of his life. These were very favourite words of his:—

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be;
Lead me by Thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

"Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best;
Winding or straight, it matters not,
It leads me to Thy rest."

Dear young readers, have you met God, and told Him all about your sins, alone with Him, as did this dear boy? F. T.

A LITTLE GIRL'S LETTER TO HER BROTHER.

THE following letter was written by a little girl, of eight years of age, to her brother. The child was in great trouble lest her brother should not love Jesus. This is the letter:—

"Dear Brother,—I write this letter and hope you are quite well. I hope you feel the need of a Saviour. Do believe Jesus died for you. It is so simple; you have only to believe on Him, and confess your sins to Jesus, and He will pardon you. Think how sad it will be if you do not believe on Jesus now. You will be cast out into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Oh, do come to Jesus now. Do not put it off till to-morrow. To-morrow may not come. I am sure you have had Christ and His cross put to you so many times, yet you have rejected it. Oh! how sad if all the family went to heaven and you were left out!

"I am your affectionate sister....."

"I could not wrap my guilty soul
In any robe of mine.
Sure naught can make me fit for God,
But righteousness divine."

The mother of the little girl sends this letter to the young readers of FAITHFUL WORDS, praying that it may lead them to speak of Jesus one to another. T.

IN WHICH COLOUR ARE YOU?

"LOOK, teacher," said a big boy in my Sunday-school class (we were alone, having come in early that afternoon), "look what I have had given me."

It was a card painted in three colours—black, red, and white.

"Yes," said I. "that's very nice, and what does it mean?"

He replied, "The black part means sin, the red Christ's blood, and the white when the sins are all put away." Then he showed me the other side of the card, where were a number of verses relating to each colour, and very clearly pointing out the way of salvation.

IN WHICH COLOUR ARE YOU?

"Well, John," I said, "you seem to understand your card very well, in which colour are you?"

He answered solemnly, "In the black, teacher, but I don't mean always to stop in there."

"I'm glad of that, John," I added, "but when are you going to get into the white?"

"When I've left off some of my old sins, teacher," said he.

Ah! how many there are like poor John, putting off the day of salvation, and trying to make themselves white or holy that God may receive them, instead of trusting in Jesus' blood to put away the sins.

You see he knew that the red came *between* the black and the white, and yet Satan was blinding his eyes.

There is a well known verse which says—

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.
Not the righteous;
Sinners, Jesus came to call."

Dear children, learn by John's mistake. If by dropping old sins you could make yourselves fit for God, the red would be of no value, but we must learn to have God's thoughts about Christ's blood. It is one of the things He calls precious—"redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 18-19).

Now, let each answer the question, "In which colour are you?" and if you are still in the black, remember the *only* way into the white is by Jesus' blood—for "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6). N.