

# ECHOES OF MERCY.

*& Gospel Magazine.*

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VOL. IV.

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“I will sing of mercy and judgment.”—Psalm ci. 1.

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# ECHOES OF MERCY.

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## A Friend of Sinners.

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“**A** FRIEND of sinners,”—what a word, what a title to give any one! What man in the world would not count it a reproach, a shame, to be called “a friend of sinners”? And yet this was what they called Jesus when He was here upon earth. And notice too, in Luke vii. 34, it is the Lord Jesus Himself who says they called Him, “A Friend of sinners.” Who was it who gave Him this title? Not those who were openly known as sinners, but those who thought themselves better than others, and who put on, and kept up, an outward appearance of religiousness, and who, speaking of the Lord Jesus, said, “He receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”

But although this is the title they gave Him,—they, the outwardly respectable, religious people of that day, and they did it only to express their scorn and hatred of Him,—how true it was then!

and how true it is to this very day! They little thought what a reality His friendship for the sinner was,—they knew nothing of their own individual need of His friendship and His help; they hated Him, because His presence and His words proved them, to themselves, to be sinners indeed, and that their covering or cloak of religiousness was a greater sin than all else, for it tried to hide up what could not be hidden from God's all-seeing eye.

No, it was a word of truth, a great and glorious truth, wrung from the hearts and lips of the scorers of His grace, the despisers of His friendship and His services. And who needs a friend, like the poor lost and helpless sinner? And how has the Lord Jesus shown and proved Himself to be "a Friend of sinners"? Ah! it is an old story—a story the world is tired of hearing repeated. Just as in the days when Jesus was here on earth, they found fault with all He said and did, calling Him even a glutton and a drunkard (only think of such words being applied to Him!), and never rested until they had nailed Him to the cross, mocking Him as He hung there,—so now, men hate the name of Jesus, and the world wearies of the repetition of the old story of His love and His goodness, the

way in which He has truly proved Himself to be the sinner's Friend.

Reader, are you a sinner? I do not mean a sinner like every one else, for most will say, "We are all sinners, and one is as bad as another." But are you one who knows himself to be a sinner,—not looking at others, but at yourself? If so, here is a Friend for you, and the story of His love and His friendship will not be wearisome to you. His own blessed words best tell the tale. He begins with God—Himself the gift of God—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus He speaks to us of God—to us, in our sins, of God in His grace and mighty power. And then He speaks of Himself, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners." "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Mark the words,—not only to save, but to *seek* and to save. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." Here we have His own words, His own declaration of the mind and heart of God in His coming, and of His own mind and heart too; adding the way in which He makes it good to man—a sinner in his sins.

And if we turn again to the record given us by God in His Word, we find that same Jesus, that same Son of Man, delivered into the hands of men, that they might have their way with Him. Alas! not *they*, but *we*, as children of Adam, as human beings here in this world, in our sins. And when so delivered into our hands, we took Him, and we condemned Him to death by means of false witnesses whom we knew to be false, and we spat upon Him, and we nailed Him to the cross, and we mocked Him as He hung there! Sinner, have you upon you a sin of deeper dye than this? You can look back over all your past life, and see many and many a black stain, a hideous sin there, which you cannot get rid of, but this is the history God tells us of the way we have treated His Son, His own beloved Son.

And how did He answer to this treatment? There upon the cross, a spectacle to men and angels, He took the sinner's place,—that place of wrath, condemnation, and judgment that is justly the sinner's on account of his sins, He took in grace, and love, and goodness, and mercy towards the sinner. And there He was forsaken of God. Scripture tells us, "He died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God." There that



bitter cry was wrung from Him, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" There He shed His blood—His precious blood—which "cleanses from all sin," and "without shedding of blood is no remission." He offered Himself without spot unto God—the only Man in the world who ever could do so; and God accepted His sacrifice, the sacrifice of Himself, fully, and raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in heaven. Doubting, trembling soul, think of that! Your Friend, the One who took your place under the judgment due to you, and who died in your stead, is now risen from the dead, ascended, and glorified, "crowned with glory and honour" at God's right hand in heaven! And God now says, what He declared in Jerusalem nearly nineteen hundred years ago, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Is not this proving Himself "a Friend of sinners"?

Fellow-sinner! can you not rest in Him—the One who took the sinner's place, and suffered in the sinner's stead? God's Word is, "WHO-SOEVER believeth on Him." "There is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of

the glory of God." "God commends His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus is the Saviour—the only Saviour. When born into this world as Man, a Babe in the manger, the angels announced Him to the shepherds in the field by night as "a Saviour, Christ the Lord." He has proved Himself a "Friend of sinners" by dying for them, by thus being their Saviour, by bearing the wrath and judgment, due to them, in His own body on the cross. Could He be a better Friend to them than this? Is not this just what the sinner needs? Alas! this is what man, religious man, refuses, and scornfully charges Jesus with being. But whatever the world may think, or man may say, this is just what suits the sinner—a Saviour, Christ the Lord—a Friend of sinners. The more he knows of Him, the more blessed and wonderful, and yet simple, it all is.

Reader, does this suit you? "Yes," you say, "it does, but how am I to be sure about it?" What is it you want to be sure about? Is it yourself you are doubtful about, or Him? Or is it your sins you doubt about? Ah! you can have no doubt about *them*. There they are, black and awful enough to terrify the hardest, the boldest. Are they not so vile and so heavy

that you can do nothing with them yourself, but must come to Jesus, the Saviour, about them? Is it Him and His love you want to be sure about? How can you doubt Him or His love? God so loved, that He gave Jesus to die for sinners. Jesus gave Himself—uncared for, unasked, undesired by man; He gave Himself for sinners, as we have seen. What more can He do to prove His love? It is there at the cross—His cross—that He, and the vilest most sin-laden sinner meet. There is nothing left for you to do, for He has done it all—all, and for ever.

If you, a sinner in your sins, have not a Saviour in His grace, the fault is yours, not His. "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life," He had to say to the unbelieving Jews when here on earth. He offers Himself to you as One who is willing and able to save to the uttermost. The poor leper said to Him, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." He owned His power, but he doubted His love; so "Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, and said, I will, be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy left him." No gradual process, as some would try to make out, for the leper is the figure of the sinner,—He spoke, and it was done.

If you or I could get the very least bit better

in ourselves, we should not need Him. He is a Friend who does it all, and who delights to do it all, and who alone can do it all. He has done it, and done it all for thousands as bad as you and I; I do not say "worse than we," because they could not be worse. It is not, "Are you good enough to be saved?" but, "Are you bad enough to be saved by Jesus, and by Him alone?" If so, here is a Friend for you. Will you have Him? It is not He that wants your help, but you that need His help; and this He offers you freely, in the fulness of His love, and in the riches of His grace.

P. A. H.



## Peace through the Blood of Jesus.

*(A Letter to an Anxious Soul by one  
now with the Lord.—No. I.)*



**M**Y DEAR FRIEND,—Reflecting on our yesterday's conversation, it strikes me that some words you then dropped unfold, more clearly than I have before seen it, the nature of the difficulty under which you labour. You said you "could

not have peace unless God spoke peace to your soul"; that you "could not without Him believe on Christ"; and you asked me, "Is God angry with me, seeing that He does not speak peace to my soul?" Will you endeavour to give me your attention while I seek to suggest certain things connected with these points?

It is most true that God *alone* can speak peace to the conscience. It is also true—such is the unwillingness of our hearts to believe God's testimony—that it is only by His power and grace that we are, any of us, induced or enabled to believe. But do not suppose from this that God will speak to you in an audible voice, or by some new and distinct revelation, additional to what you have already in His Word. Do not suppose that any such new revelation, or immediate impression on your feelings, is needful to enable you to believe; or that this is God's way of enabling you to come to Christ. God has spoken already, and most fully, *in His Word*; and "faith cometh *by hearing*, and hearing *by the Word of God*." Fix, then, your attention *on what God says in His Word*; and trust Him, while yet considering what He says, to enable you to understand and receive it.

In Acts x. 36, you read of God "preaching

peace by Jesus Christ." Is not that "speaking peace" by His blessed Word? When He *preaches* it—proclaims it openly—can there be any doubt of His *speaking* it? But what is meant by peace? I am not sure whether we understand each other as to this. When you speak of not having peace, of God's not having spoken peace to you, you mean *the feeling of peace within*, the inward sense or assurance of being forgiven, and reconciled to God, and at peace with Him. Desirable and important, however, as this feeling is, it is only *an effect* of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and not that peace itself. Now, what you need to understand is, that which God has declared concerning that peace itself. The Lord enable me so to place it before you, that it may be cleared up to your soul, and that thus the effect may be produced which you so earnestly desire—the inward sense of peace and reconciliation with God.

You and I, my friend, have both sinned against God. By nature we *are* sinners, and for a number of years we have lived a life of sin and rebellion against God. To this you can agree now, as you could not have done some time ago. You would always, perhaps, have assented to it as true; but now you know and feel that it is true indeed. Well,

God has had just occasion to be angry with us on account of our sins ; and, as a matter of fact, *He is angry with sin*, and hates it with a perfect hatred. But though justly angry with *our sin*, He has loved *us* and viewed *us* with infinite compassion. His heart yearned over *us* in mercy, and He was unwilling that *we* should suffer the just consequences of our sin against Him. But how could these consequences be averted ? How could He smile upon *us*, or receive *us* to His favour, while in our sins ? And what could you or I do to get rid of sin, or to turn away God's righteous displeasure on account of it ? Clearly nothing. Whatever we do is defiled by sin, and so makes matters worse. You have found this since you seriously began to seek the Lord. When you read His Word your thoughts wander ; so they do when you try to pray ; and you told me yesterday how difficult you find it to fix your mind on what God says in His Word. Evidently we can do nothing fit to bring to God ; and even if we could do right for the time to come, this could never stand against our past sins, and compensate for them. So far as we are concerned, the case is hopeless. But God loved us, and wished to have us reconciled to Himself, brought back to His favour, and made

happy under His smile. And though He could not let our sins go unpunished, and we could do nothing to get rid of them, *what He did was to send His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* This having been accomplished, God is now at liberty, if I may so speak, to satisfy His own love in receiving us to His bosom. What God sought was, to have a just and holy ground on which to pardon and save us, and receive us to heaven, notwithstanding our sins, and this He has found in the death of Jesus, in the shedding of His blood for sin. It is thus that Jesus has "made peace through the blood of His cross." This is not something yet to be done, *it is done already*; and God tells us it is done in His holy Word.

"As God is true," the Lord Jesus Christ has "made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20); and it is thus that God "preaches peace by Jesus Christ." Christ preaches it also. (See Eph. ii. 17.) "And came and preached peace to you [Gentiles] which were afar off, and to them [Jews] that were nigh." You have, all your lifetime, been outwardly nigher than many. Brought up by godly parents, reading the Bible, hearing the Gospel, mixing with Christians, you have been *outwardly* nigh, while many openly



wicked people have been *outwardly* far off. But you have now discovered that, whatever *outward* nearness there may have been, you have been *inwardly* and *really* far from God. To you, then, Christ preaches peace, the peace with God which He has made by the shedding of His all-precious blood. God says that He is satisfied with the blood of Christ, that it justifies Him in receiving you and me to His favour. Why, then, should we be harder to satisfy than God Himself? What justifies God in justifying us may well satisfy our hearts, and set our consciences at rest before God. I know the soul wants solid ground on which to rest; and what so solid as the Word of God?

“As God is true,” my friend, you and I are sinners. “As God is true,” He hates sin, and must punish it. “As God is true,” He loves the sinner, He loves us, He loves you, and that He might have *you* for His friend, His child, to dwell with Him for ever, He gave Christ to die on the cross, instead of your perishing in your sins for ever. “As God is true,” He is satisfied with what Christ has done and suffered on your behalf; and He sends you word that He is, in order that you may also be satisfied, and throw yourself into His arms of mercy, and live for ever. Go to Him, then, in confidence, and tell

Him that you cannot longer disbelieve His word, or call in question His love. Remind Him that, *undeserving* of His favour, and deserving only of hell as you are, *He tells you* that He is satisfied with the work of Jesus—the blood of Jesus—the sacrifice of Jesus—and that you also can but be satisfied with the same blessed meeting-place between Him and you. Instead of any longer doubting, or fearing, or questioning, see how God is satisfied with what Christ has borne upon the cross on your behalf ; and if you dare not say that it is *not* sufficient, if you feel that it would be awful to say this, why, go then to God, and own to Him that it is sufficient ! “ Lord, it is enough ! I am a sinner indeed, but Christ has died ! ”

And abide by this, my dear friend. If you feel no instant change, still keep to this ground. Remind God that He Himself tells you in His Word, that the blood of Christ is all-sufficient, and has made peace with Him for sinners. Rest your whole soul on this foundation before God, He will never tell you that you do wrong to trust His own word, and the precious blood of Christ. “ By Him *all who believe* are justified from all things ” ; and to rest thus on Jesus, to trust thus in Jesus, to be satisfied thus with the blood of Jesus, *is believing*.—Your sincere Friend,

## A Few Words to Tract Distributors.

*“How may I know that I am called to preach the gospel?”*

---

**I** NOW send you again an assortment of tracts. In answer to your inquiry— How are you to know if you are called to preach the gospel? I would say, Is it real love to souls? Do you desire to earn your own bread and serve the Lord in the gospel? If you are sent of the Lord you will win souls. Jesus said to Peter, the fisherman, “From henceforth thou shalt catch men.” What a fisher of men he was in Acts ii. Yes, a fisherman is a man who catches fish. A *sent* preacher of the gospel is a man who catches men; who wins souls to Christ. Now I send you a parcel of tracts, these are baits for lost souls. A good fisherman would not throw his baits into the water, and think no more about them; he would try to use each bait to catch a fish. Do not throw these tracts into the sea of humanity, and think no more about them, but seek to use each tract to catch a soul.

If you catch souls you are a fisher of men. Do you see that man with rod and *basket*?

you will find he goes where he hopes to catch the fish. There is a likely place for a trout ; see how carefully he puts the bait in the water. See, he has got a nibble ; does he say that is enough and leave it? No, how carefully he seeks to land his fish. Ah, the fishers of fish are wise in their work. We might learn a lesson from them. You might find a quiet, suitable place to try these baits for precious souls. I will tell you a quiet fishing place — The cemetery. You need the wisdom of God which bait to use. It may be that little fly-leaf — “Your Dying Hour,” or “Thy Sins be Forgiven Thee,” or for some fish a larger tract.

Watch the effect of each bait. Is there a nibble—is there manifest interest? Now you need the wisdom of God to deal with that soul ; such wisdom as He gives to those He sends. Then it is a mistake to suppose the fish will come to a preaching-room always, or a chapel. Oh, go and sow beside all waters. God may use in divine sovereignty the broadcast sowing.

And He may use the gospel net in the open air, or in the preaching-room ; but there is a field of labour, and especially in the use of tracts, which has been little tried. From house to house ; in the street, or lane, or court, or village ;

and in not throwing a lot of tracts, as it were, away, like fishermen's bait, in the water, but in seeking to use each one as a bait, or an introduction to one individual soul. If you will tell me how many souls you have won to Christ by this parcel of tracts, I shall then know pretty clearly if the Lord has sent you to catch men.

*The late C. S.*

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## A Sudden Call.

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**A**MABELLE CLARE was one of a large family. She had the inestimable blessing of godly parents, and her elder sisters too were true Christians,—all a happy, united family. Surely the lines had fallen to her in pleasant places.

Amabelle was about seventeen years of age when I first knew her, and still much engrossed with her education,—a sweet, graceful girl, loved and admir'd by all her young companions; and had her kind impartial mother really admitted the truth, she, the cleverest and handsomest of her children, was her special darling.

It was the early summer time; all Nature

springing up in fresh beauty, and a joyous promise in those soft bright days, made every one cheerful, even in spite of themselves in some cases. The Clare young people were having a game of croquet with their friends ; all seemed as happy as young people could possibly be, the sunshine, and the songs of the birds, all seemed in keeping with those young dancing hearts, full of life and thoughtless hope. Amabelle stopped suddenly to pick up her brooch, which had loosened, and was lying just where some player must put a foot on it ; and as she raised herself, she felt, as she afterwards expressed it, " something gave way " ; but she said nothing, and the game finished in due time, rather to her relief, as the pain began to increase. By night she was suffering so much that a local doctor was sent for, and all that love and skill could suggest was done for her, but in vain ; she grew rapidly worse, and the doctor wished a celebrated specialist sent for from London.

It was a Saturday afternoon when the great man came down, and the suffering girl went through a long examination. Her father drove him back to the train, but the mother watched eagerly for the doctor in the hall. As he came down, she laid her hand almost impatiently on

his arm, "Doctor, I *must* speak to you—tell me—tell me the worst. I can bear it, God will help me, but tell me quickly." He looked at her gently, and tried to break it to her; but she interrupted him, "Tell me quickly—I must know all."

"Well," he said, "her strength may last a day or two, or it may not. She may awake out of this sleep we have put her off into, and tell you she has no pain; but you will know, if that is the case, the end is near—perhaps ten or twelve hours, perhaps only two or three."

Mrs Clare silently loosed her hold of the doctor's arm, and stole softly up the stairs, while he noiselessly left the house. Her daughter's was a low room, and one of the windows was open, and at it the nurse, in her white cap, sat sewing. The balmy air, sweet with the perfume of the hawthorn, fanned the cheek of the dying girl, as she lay on the bed; a low moan escaped the parted lips now and then, and the fair soft hand was tossed restlessly. Oh, how the mother's heart ached, as she thought to herself "So young—so fair—and yet I could part with her without a sigh, if only I knew she was the Lord's. Why did I never ask her? She seemed so good—so to love her Bible—so like the others that I know are saved—I never doubted it till now—and

now, a few hours perhaps—— ;” and she threw herself on her knees and pleaded for her child ; ay, pleaded she might know that it was well with her. Mr Clare slipped in, and knelt down beside his wife, for an instant ; as he did so, their eyes met, and each knew what the other knew, what the other felt. When they rose, it was very calmly, for they felt the answer would be given.

Hours passed on, and the mother watched as well as the night nurse. She had told the nurse she must be left alone with her child when she awoke,—and now she waited. How long those hours seemed, and yet how short, as she thought how soon the parting must come from her darling child.

Just as the birds burst forth, each with a note of his own, yet all making one glorious melody, and the first dawn of the morning broke, shedding a weird light into the sick-room, Amabelle moved, and her mother saw that she was watching her. The nurse brought some refreshment to the weary girl, and then left the room. The mother could hardly speak for the beating of her heart, but Amabelle broke the silence :—

“ Mother, I feel so much better ; the pain is all gone. I’m only very tired now, but I shall soon get well of that,” she added with a smile.



“ Well, darling, but if it should please God to take you, you are ready to go, are you not ? ” she said gently—oh, how gently.

There was a silence.

“ No, mother,—no, I can’t die. I’m not going to die surely—no, no, not that—” (and the poor girl trembled with agitation) ; “ no, I don’t want to die ; I never thought about it ; and God would never take me so young—so very young. Why should I not be allowed to have time to think—time to—— ”

She stopped, for her father had come in. He had heard enough, and he must be with his dying child in her hour of terrible need, entering the valley of the shadow of death *alone*—no rod, no staff to comfort her, poor child. They repeated many passages of Scripture to her (passages she was familiar with, but had never made her own), many verses of hymns too they reminded her of,—but her only answer was, “ I can’t die ; I can’t meet the Lord.”

But by degrees this terrible response came less often, and less decidedly said, till at last her mother repeated, “ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

“ Rest,” Amabelle repeated, and then the eyes

closed, and the long lashes were wet with tears, and her lips moved, though they heard no sound, as the parents silently lifted up their hearts to God for her.

The morning had come (the Lord's Day morning—figure of the Day of Rest). Brightly and beautifully the sun shone into the room—wonderful picture of the light that had, at last shone into that little weary heart. Life, light, and gladness, all hers now ; and *rest*—though not the complete rest so soon to be hers—too. She took her mother's hand, and turned those lovely deep eyes on her father, as she said, " I know *that rest* now. Oh, how good the Lord is ! " A few loving parting words were said, child and parents bound together now for ever. The parting seemed nothing, in the certainty of the meeting to part never again.

There was a moment's quiet, for her breathing had become difficult ; then she suddenly seemed to fix her eyes on something opposite ; she sat up, a look of glad surprise shining in her face, as she said, " Oh, mother ! it is the Lord Himself ! " And the mother caught the lifeless form in her arms, and laid it down again on the pillows—at rest, but not there.

Reader, whoever you may be, time, *your* time,

is fast fleeting by. If death were to come as suddenly to you as it did to this young girl, would it find you "*unprepared*" ?

Well was it for her that she had had the blessing of a Christian home, with all its early influences and instructions ; and how graciously did God bring them home to her as she lay and realized her nearness to the eternal world ! Remember that *mere* education in the truths of the Gospel will never save your soul ; by faith you must make them your own.

“ We speak of the mercy of God,  
 So boundless, so rich, and so free !  
 But what will it profit *thy* soul,  
 Unless 'tis relied on by *thee* ?

We speak of the Saviour's dear name,  
 By which God can sinners receive ;  
 Yet still art thou lost and undone,  
 Unless in that name *thou'lt* believe.

We speak of the blood of the Lamb,  
 Which frees from pollution and sin ;  
 But its virtues by *thee* must be proved,  
 Or *thou* wilt be ever unclean.

We speak of the glory to come,  
 Of the heaven so bright and so fair ;  
 But unless you in Jesus believe,  
 Thou *shalt not*, thou *can'st not* be there.”

## Meeting in Class, but Not Saved.

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**T**RAVELLING on the Great Northern Railway not long ago, I was glad to find myself in a carriage with only one other passenger, as I thought the Lord might have so ordered it to give me an opportunity of speaking to this man about his soul.

As an introduction, I asked him where he had come from. He told me that he had been to his aged mother, and had found her very ill, and apparently dying. I then asked if his mother were saved, and happy in the prospect of soon being with Jesus. He said he was sorry to say she was not, and, what was worse, he did not think she was troubled about her sins, or at having soon to meet God in eternity.

I then said, "I judge that you are saved, and know that all your sins are forgiven?"

"Yes," he answered, "but I have only known it a short time, though I have 'met in class' twenty years, and have had a very good class leader. Last winter I had the influenza, and thought I was going to die; and then as I looked at death and eternity, I asked myself whether I had done anything all these twenty years of pro-

fession which could enable me to stand before a holy God. I went back over the many years that I had been a Church member, and I could not find one thing that I had done which was good enough to give me a ray of hope, in having, perhaps soon, to meet God. I was greatly troubled that all my twenty years had been spent, without having found, what I now wanted in the prospect of entering eternity, peace with God. I said to myself, What can I do? Where can I look? To whom can I turn? And in my distress I cried to God, when a text of Scripture came to my mind, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' I immediately answered, 'That is enough, for I am a believer in the Lord Jesus; and God's Word says "Thou shalt be saved," so I must be saved.' On this single scripture I found rest at once to my weary soul, and have ever since known what it is to be justified by faith, and have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This little incident is written, trusting that God may bless it to some precious soul who, like this man, may be joining with others in class to tell their experience, without having yet found rest by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The Finish.

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**A**NOTHER year is opening upon us. Which of us will see its end? You and I, my reader, may have finished our course before many weeks of it have passed.

Do you ever think of how your life will finish? Paul sought to live in such a way as that he might *finish* his course "with joy." Many, alas! around us seem to care very little how they may "finish" so long as they can obtain the "pleasures of sin for a season." They live for the present, regardless of the future. Paul lived for the future, regardless of the trials such a life might entail for the present.

To put it on the lowest ground, which is the wisest?

"Let me die the death of the righteous," cried the godless Balaam, "and let my last end be like his." Yes, truly, the *last end*, by reason of its everlasting endlessness, is of infinitely greater importance than this brief life, which is but as a vapour.

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain

the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark viii. 36.)

“Were the vast world our own,  
With all its varied store,  
And Thou, Lord Jesus, wert unknown,  
We still were poor.”

The blessed yet solemn truth of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ has been much before the mind and heart of late. Blessed for the saints, who look for Him as “the Saviour” (Phil. iii. 20), and wait for Him as “the Bridegroom” (Matt. xxv.), who will usher them instantaneously, in one glorious company, into the eternal joys of the “Father’s house”; yes, all joy, comfort, and brightness to them. But solemn, unspeakably solemn, to the world, upon whom He will come as “a thief in the night” (1 Thess. v. 2, 3); yes, nothing but darkness, dismay, and destruction to them that “obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. i. 8).

In view of the Lord’s speedy return “let us, who are of the day, be sober;” “let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch” (1 Thess. v. 6, 8). Let us seek “to gather in the lost ones,” and to spread the “fame of Jesus.” All whose hearts are set on serving the Lord, and seeking souls for Him, have opportunities for this work. If

not by public preaching, at any rate by tract distribution and individual speaking to others.

Not long since a tract was given to a careless, godless man. It was quickly torn and cast under the fender unread. The servant cleaning the grate next day found the pieces, stuck them together, read the tract, and was converted. A change was soon apparent in her whole life. The master inquired the secret. The pieces of the torn tract were soon before his astonished eyes. He had despised what she had found to be a treasure.

“In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good”  
(Eccles. xi. 6).

A. H. B.

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GOD of all grace! I gladly own  
 What in His death Thy Christ has done:  
 What He is now upon Thy throne,  
 What Christ is *now*, and Christ alone,  
     Is all my joyful plea;  
 He's all *my* trust! He's all my boast!  
 For, since He died to save the *lost*,  
*I'm sure* He died for me.

C. G. E., 1860.



## Religion without Reality.

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[The following letter was written during the time of the great awakening in Ireland, when so many realized the power of God unto their salvation through the Gospel. The writer is now with the Lord. The letter itself finds a place in our pages, not only because it is indeed an "Echo of Mercy,"—*mercy*, yea God's rich mercy to the writer, a mercy, too, which *all* need, which all may experience, but also because we purpose inserting in an early number, if the Lord will, an interesting sequel, in the account of the conversion of another through reading it.—ED.]

**D**EAR FRIEND,—I want to tell you that I have at last found what I have long been looking for—Peace with God; and as this is a possession above all price, and as I long that others may enjoy it, I write to put before you this solemn question—  
*Have you Peace with God?*

True peace of mind depends on whether you have or have not settled with God the great question about your soul's salvation.

For many years I thought to settle it by leading a better life than some of my friends; and, by considerable exertion, I contrived to avoid some of the grosser sins which I saw

others fall into. I went even further, for I attended church regularly, making a point of going to evening service, teaching at the Sunday-school, taking the sacrament, &c. When I had an opportunity, I read the Bible to sick people, generally feeling a little better afterwards, and on sundry occasions I spoke very seriously to men who I thought were really going to perdition.

Although I could not quite agree with Mr T——, who had given up the world, and although I might go to some parties which he might not quite approve of, still I thought it would be very unreasonable if, after all my good deeds, I was to be damned in the end. In fact, I thought it was impossible that God could treat me so badly, when I saw so many others so much worse than myself; and yet the Word of God told me that "*all my righteousnesses are as filthy rags,*" and that "*he that keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.*"

I did not like this, and could not quite understand it; but, fortunately, it broke my peace of mind, and I was not at rest, for I saw that some people had got hold of something better than I had.

About a year and a half ago I met a dear

friend who showed me that in God's sight I was undoubtedly "guilty of all." He showed me, further, that I was a sinner; and, whether I was a great sinner or a little sinner, it mattered not, for (as he said) the punishment of sin was death, and thus eternal death was hanging over me. But he showed me, also, that Christ's death was sufficient, in God's sight, to atone for all my sin; and that if I only relied on this I should be saved; independently of my own wretched good works, which could not even *help* to save me. All this was a sad blow to my castle of good deeds, in which I had so long been fortifying myself.

Satan, however, told me that I must first give up many things which I might think were wrong. I found that I could not give them up. Satan then told me I could not be saved. Alas! I wanted *pardon* and *life*. Then I thought I would come to Christ just as I was, trusting Him to save me from eternal perdition in the first place, and leaving the future entirely in His hands.

At once, He took me *as I was*; and, I may here add, has ever since nourished and cherished me as a member of His body.

For a long time I wanted to *feel* something,

but I found I had nothing to do but to believe on His death as sufficient for all my sins, and to rely on His word ; and, the moment I did so, I found in the Word of God that I had everlasting life, and, consequently, could never perish, for I stood "justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39). This relieved me of my load ; my life was at once changed from one of servitude to one of gratitude, and, being "justified by faith," I now had "peace with God," through my Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact, until then, I was religiously and respectably going to hell.

*Can it be possible that you are in the same condition at this moment ?*

You stand *now* either amongst the *saved* or the *unsaved*. The difference is distinct as the sky-line of an eastern horizon. Your unsettled account of sin is the real bar to your peace of mind. I tell you that the smallest sin you ever committed involves the punishment of *eternal perdition*, for the holy God cannot admit one with the least spot of sin into His presence. But Christ's *death* is, in God's sight, a sufficient punishment for these very sins. *Can you take it as such ?* If you can only rely on Christ now,—that is, on His death, as satisfying all God's

claims against you,—even as you read this, without waiting to be sorry for your sins, or until you are better, Christ's death will be set down to your account. He will give you at once a life that is everlasting, and then you can never perish, for you are passed from death unto life. He says so in John x. 28, and v. 24.

The Lord had laid upon Him all my iniquities. He went with them all, as my Surety, into the prison-house of death. I might be in doubt as to whether He paid enough for all my sins, if He were still in the tomb; but the prison-doors are opened, and He is risen, and has gone to appear in the presence of God for me. God is satisfied; the uttermost farthing is paid. I dare not doubt it, for God says it; and there is now no longer any condemnation against me, a poor sinner, for "*he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*" If God is satisfied by the death of His own Son, with regard to sin, you are doubting His word, and putting dishonour upon Christ, so long as you remain unsatisfied.

And now, dear friend, I pray God to dispose your heart to think seriously of these things, and may He allow you no peace until you find peace in resting your soul on Jesus as *your Saviour*.—Yours faithfully,

T. W. T.

## “Life's Shadow.”

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“**I** SN'T this a perfect day!” said a lady to a friend. “Isn't this a *perfect* day! I should like to order a carriage and pair, and go for a good drive,” she added, merrily.

The lady who spoke was young, and only recently married, and life seemed opening brightly before her, with many fair prospects for the future. And so, as she gazed from the window this lovely summer's morning, where everything looked so beautiful in the golden sunshine, and she herself rejoicing in her newly found joy, it drew forth from her the exclamation, “Isn't this a *perfect* day!”

“Perfect,” did she say? Ah, here was her mistake, for she had forgotten one awfully solemn fact, that “sin had entered into the world, and *death* by sin” (Rom. v. 12). Truly when God created the earth all was perfect then. All was for His glory; and as the Creator looked on His own handiwork He could pronounce that “it was very good.” But a sad history followed, for sin came in and spoilt all;

and so "*death* passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12).

And try as we may, we cannot disguise the fact that death is here on all hands. Do we not see signs of it everywhere? The flowers bloom and die, the sweet song of the bird is soon hushed in death, and the trees of the forest all in their turn decay and die; and how often in our very homes we find death removing our dear ones! The Psalmist described his path through life as like walking through "the valley of the shadow of death" (Psa. xxiii. 4).

And so it happened that barely an hour had passed since the above words had escaped the lady's lips, when she received a telegram summoning her to the bed-side of a dying mother. A cab was called, and so she had her drive,—not to seek fresh pleasures in this sorrow and death-stricken scene, but to take her to a spot now silenced by the presence of death.

Reader, are your joys all down here in this world? Are all your pleasures belonging to this life, where death may come and rob you of the very thing you most cherish? or do you know anything of those "pleasures for evermore," and that "fulness of joy" to be found where Christ is, and where death cannot enter?

Paul rejoiced in possessing what nothing could ever take from him, for he says, "I am persuaded, that neither *death*, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39). E. R. M.



## A Saviour.

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**H**OW sweet, reader, is the name and title that Jesus bears,—a Saviour! How well it suits us as lost sinners? It is of all importance that we should know the truth, and accept the truth about ourselves, that we are really lost sinners before God.

We cannot be patched up by any religious process so as to be fitted for the presence of God. Our case is desperate, and nothing less than a Saviour will meet it; our hoping to go to heaven, unless we are saved, is a delusion.

We came in contact some time ago with a



young woman who talked very nicely about going to heaven, but having some doubts about her condition, we asked her, how long she had been saved? She replied, she could not say she was saved, "but she had been brought up to it." We fear she represents a large class, and we would say in all love and faithfulness that this being "brought up to it" is a delusion of the devil.

Of course, one may be saved, while young,—thank God, many are; but whether young or old, be assured of this, dear reader, that it is only a personal, living Saviour that can fit you for God's presence.

Now, God in His love has provided this Saviour. *Jesus* "appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." He has "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

"This Jesus hath God raised up and exalted Him with His right hand a Prince and a Saviour." "He is able," the Scripture says, "to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him," and we can assure the reader that He is not only able, but that He delights to save needy, lost sinners; and the Scripture further says, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for

there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus.

Oh, weary sinner, listen to His tender loving words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

W. H.

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## The Midnight Message: Have you received it?

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"Unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke ii. 11).

**W**HAT a wonderful message was that which rang out over the sleeping earth that midnight long ago! Well might the shepherds look up with mingled fear and amazement as the flashing light shone around, glorifying all the scene, but a moment before dark and lonely and silent! Well has it been said, "the angels broke bounds that night" as they trooped out—"a multitude of the heavenly host"—to witness and celebrate with praise the most wonderful of all scenes—save the cross—ever enacted upon

this earth ; and to deliver the most wonderful of all messages—that God had sent forth His Son, “made of a woman”—that a Babe was born in Bethlehem whose name was to be called “Jesus, because He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. i.). Let us see the effect which it had upon the shepherds, when the angels, after giving them minute particulars as to where they would find the Babe, returned to heaven.

First, we notice how every act on their part was the result of their unhesitating acceptance of the divine message. Scarcely had the last notes of the rapturous burst of praise died away upon their ears, than they determined individually to prove its truth. Did they first go to look after their sheep? Did they say, “Let us now go, and put things right at home, and *to-morrow* we will start for Bethlehem?” Such, indeed, is the conduct of but too many in these days of infidelity and indifference. Many who have heard the same message of “a Saviour, Christ the Lord,” not from angelic lips, but from God Himself, through His Word, yet neglect or despise it, or if in a measure they believe it, yet put off from year to year making it their own, and thus letting it bring them into direct personal contact with the Christ whom it proclaims.

Not so with these poor shepherds. The tidings were to them too momentous to be thus lightly treated. With them all should be neglected, all set aside, until their hearts had been satisfied, and for ever set at rest, by a personal interview with the Christ of God. True, their households might be startled by their unwonted absence; their sheep might stray away over the plains and be lost. It mattered not to them; they delayed not to calculate, or to cavil; they stayed not to consider or weigh results; but with the one thought filling their souls of the divine reality of the message, "*they said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see those things which the Lord hath made known unto us.*"

True, the night was dark, and the distance long; but eyes which have once been opened to see "*the glory of the Lord,*" can discern a path unknown and unnoticed by the children of this world, and can move on with unhesitating footsteps under His own conducting hand.

"*And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.*" The earnest seeker most surely becomes the rejoicing finder. This is ever the result of unquestioning faith in the Word of God. "God is

not a man, that He should lie," and the soul that rests in simple faith on any word of His will find Him remain true to it. So faith in these poor shepherds (as with us now) gazed upon the wondrous sight of the Son of God—"a Saviour, Christ the Lord"—lying in His mother's arms. The only place He was allowed as shelter for His head, the "manger" of a lowly stable; for we read, "There was no room for them in the inn." There was "no room" for the Son of God in that world which He had created, and which He came to save! Thus early in His life on earth did He experience that rejection at the hands of man which was afterwards expressed more openly in the furious cry of hatred—"Away with Him"—"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" But the faith of these men is beautifully shown out in the next record which we get of them.

"*Then*"—when they had for themselves seen "God's salvation"—when they had had a personal interview with the Lord of glory; when they had "looked upon," and their hands had "handled the word of life" (1 John i.); when the angel's message had become consciously their own, and a sweet reality to their souls—*then* they could no longer keep to themselves the glorious fact that "a Saviour" had been born;

but "*they made known abroad the saying which had been told them concerning this child ; and all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.*" Beautiful illustration of the apostle's words, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the *mouth confession is made* unto salvation" (Rom. x.). Once the heart has found Him as an all-absorbing, and all-satisfying object for itself, it cannot do aught but "speak of Him" to others.

It was so with these early—may we not say *first*?—followers of the Lord Jesus. And let us notice the next result of the work of grace in their souls—"worship." "*They returned, glorifying and praising God, for all the things which they had heard and seen.*" Surely this is all that remains for those who have once seen the Christ of God—once had a personal dealing with Him as their Saviour, and responded to His loving call, "Come unto Me"—"praising and glorifying God" for what they have seen and heard of His beloved Son ; and confessing Him gladly before an unbelieving and rejecting world.

Thus as we follow step by step the pathway trodden by these true-hearted seekers of Christ,

we may view it as one begun, continued, and ended in communion with the mind of God. The last notice which we get of them is simply this—“*They returned, glorifying and praising God.*” They “returned” in the spirit of those who later on sought one another with the joyful intelligence, “We have found the Christ.” Back to their suddenly deserted households and their daily employment, back to the plains of Judæa, and, it may be, the midnight tending of their sheep again. But back with a new glad light in their eyes, a new song upon their lips, and the course and tenor of their life for ever changed!

And this, and nothing short of it, should ever be the result of the soul’s reception of God’s “glad tidings”—His gracious announcement of salvation and a Saviour to poor needy sinners. The echoes of that midnight message have rolled and resounded throughout the length and breadth of the universe! Not now telling of One who was coming to do a work; but of how completely and gloriously He has accomplished it! How perfectly He has “finished the work” which God gave Him to do. Not now proclaimed to a few poor, simple shepherds merely, but wherever there is an ear to hear, or a heart

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

"O ever-homeless Stranger, Thou dearest Friend to me,  
An outcast in the manger, that Thou might'st with us be !"  
How rightly rose the praises of heaven that wondrous  
night,

When shepherds hid their faces, in brightest angel light !

We cling to Thee in weakness, the manger and the cross :  
We gaze upon Thy meekness, through suffering, shame,  
and loss ;

There, see the Godhead glory shine through the human  
veil,

And willing hear the story of love that's come to heal !"

A. S. M.



## "Making for Heaven."

PASSING along the highway towards a large county town, I was met and accosted by a strong-looking young man of the navy type. Though confessedly "on the road," his dress and manner marked him as no mere mendicant.

It was raining at the time ; but feeling an



interest in the poor fellow, I halted with the hope of being enabled to say a few words that God would be pleased to bless to his soul.

After speaking of his distress through want of work, he mentioned that he was "making for Deptford," where he thought he might obtain employment.

"Are you *making for* heaven?" I inquired.

Evidently taken a little by surprise by such a question, it was with some slight hesitation that the young man replied, "I don't know. I have not been able to go to any place lately."

Perceiving that, in his opinion, going to a "place of worship" (so called) was somehow connected with going to heaven, I said, "It is not so much a *place* as a *Person* that we have to go to. When you were at home, what made the place *home* to you? Was it not the presence of your mother?"

He acknowledged that it surely was; and I continued, "So heaven would not be heaven to us, if there were no Saviour to welcome us there."

The young man listened very thoughtfully while, in a few brief sentences, I spoke of the love of God in giving His own Son to die for us, and of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in

becoming the sacrifice for our sins. I likewise set before him the necessity of a change of condition in the sinner ; and having in my hand a copy of the Gospel by John, open at the third chapter, upon which I had been meditating as I walked along, I read to him some of the words of the Lord Jesus to His nocturnal visitor Nicodemus : " Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again [anew], he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit " (*vv.* 3, 5, 6).

With another remark or two, after putting into the young man's hand the trifle for which he had asked, I parted from him ; not without a prayer, as I proceeded on my journey, that God would graciously guide his feet into the way of life.

To set a value, however small, upon place-going, commandment - keeping, or ordinance-observing, as a supposed means of the soul's salvation, is a snare and a delusion. Let me affectionately urge any one who has been doing what I have just alluded to, to read and ponder for himself that same precious third chapter of

John's Gospel. But do not approach it, like Nicodemus did the Lord of glory, with a "We know." Rather seek to receive, with a believing, child-like mind, those unspeakably gracious words of the One who "knew all things," and who there presents Himself as the sent Saviour, the sole Saviour, and the all-sufficient Saviour. "He that believeth in Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." . C.



## "A Better Country."

"They . . . declare *plainly* that they seek a country."

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**M**ANY years ago, a gentleman might have been seen riding through a remote village at the foot of the ——— Hills. Straw had been laid down in front of one of the houses, and he learned on inquiry, that the wife of the gentleman who inhabited it, was dying, and would leave behind her ten little motherless children, the eldest of whom was only twelve years old.

Mr U——, as we will call him, was so touched that he could not forbear alighting from his horse, and calling at the door to hear the latest account, and offer his sympathy. He did not know that for the sufferer death had lost its terror, and that if she fell asleep, it would only be to pass into the arms of One who loved her far better than husband or children. The Lord Jesus was hitherto a stranger to him, although he made an outward profession of religion. He loved the world, hunting and music being his favourite pursuits, together with the improvement of his estate, which was situated about seven miles from the village already mentioned. Moreover, he was well known in the county as a Justice of the Peace, and somewhat feared for his stern sense of right. Proud man as he was, his heart was strangely moved by the thought of these ten little children, so soon perhaps to be bereft of their mother, and he returned as soon as possible, to inquire after her, learning to his surprise that, contrary to expectation, she was slowly recovering.

During her convalescence, he was one day permitted to see her for a few minutes, and the peace and joy expressed in her countenance, so impressed him, that he went away firmly per-

suaded that she had a source of happiness which he did not possess. "They looked unto Him, and were lightened," she had said to him, but these beautiful words of Scripture conveyed no meaning to him.

In due course her husband, Mr Y——, as we will call him, paid a visit to Mr U—— (who happened to be out), and he found that Mrs U—— was a Christian, though not in the full enjoyment of peace. He learned too, that she and the clergyman of the church which Mr U—— attended, and who was also a Christian, were very uneasy at Mr U——'s state of soul, especially as he was in the habit of taking the sacrament once a month.

"Have you ever spoken to him about his soul?" said Mr Y——.

"Oh no, it would be impossible, he is so proud. No one would venture to approach him on such a subject."

A few days later, when alone with his friend, Mr Y—— took the opportunity of asking him the simple question, "Do you know what it is to have the forgiveness of your sins?"

But not wishing to give account of himself, Mr U——, instead of answering, quickly changed the subject. Weeks passed, and again the two

gentlemen were together ; this time they were walking in Mr U——'s beautifully laid out grounds, and admiring the improvements, until taking advantage of a pause, Mr Y—— said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? If the Lord Jesus come to-night, would you be ready to meet Him ?"

Again Mr U—— made no reply, and his friend had to bid him good-bye, feeling that God alone could work in his soul and cause the light of life to enter. He knew well what the world was, and its trammels, for he was himself of noble birth, and had been brought up in the lap of luxury. The brightest things the world could offer had been his, but God in His mercy had given him instead a cup of heavenly joy. Shall I tell you how the mighty change came about ? It was during a battle, that God spoke to him for the first time. He saw one after another falling around him, and the thought that his turn might come next, brought him face to face with death and the hereafter. Where would it be spent ? His life was, however, spared, and from that moment he had no rest, until he found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thenceforth

he had the joy of following his Master, who had shed His blood for him on the cross, and he was not ashamed to "declare *plainly*," that he sought a better country, like those of whom it is written, that God was not ashamed to be called their God.

But the world still had attractions for Mr U——, and he could not understand his friend's manner of life. He did not know why he plied him with these personal questions as to his soul, and, on the occasion referred to above, he went in to his wife, saying angrily, "What business has he to come talking to me about my soul? it is no affair of his."

Nevertheless he was uneasy, and the Word of God, which is quick and powerful, had reached his heart and conscience, so that when night came, he could not sleep. His sins rose up before him like a mountain, and he was seized with despair at the thought of his lost condition. He felt as if he were slipping down an inclined plane into hell, but at the moment when all hope seemed gone, the Lord drew near to deliver, and he saw a hand stretched forth to save him, and knew that it was his Saviour who had died for him. He believed that his sins were forgiven, because Jesus had borne

them on the cross, and there was nothing left for him to do, but to praise and bless the One who had shown him such grace. The night of anguish was succeeded by a morning of joy which was to last throughout eternity.

Mr U—— was in the habit of reading prayers every morning in presence of a numerous company of retainers. Their astonishment would not be easy to describe, when they saw their master fall on his knees, and, instead of opening the prayer-book, heard him in a voice trembling with emotion, give thanks to God for having saved him during the night, and forgiven his sins through the precious blood of Christ.

After breakfast he ordered his horse, and rode off to communicate his joy to his friends, stopping by the way to speak to one and another of the salvation he had found, and entreating them also to receive Jesus as their Saviour. From this moment he was a changed man, as all around him testified, and the Lord was pleased to use him to the conversion of many souls in the neighbouring villages. Space will not allow me to tell you here of his work of faith and labour of love ; but the day of Christ will declare it.

One often hears of deathbed conversions, but



those of which I have been writing bore fruit for many long years. And do you think that either of these men would care to have returned to the world, out of which God had called them? No, they desired a better country, that is an heavenly. They had found a living Person, the Lord Jesus, who attracted them to Himself in heaven.

And now let me ask you, dear reader, what portion you have chosen, an earthly or a heavenly one? This world is hastening on to destruction, besides which it can never satisfy you, but the Lord Jesus has given Himself for you, to redeem you from it.

He has introduced those of us who believe in Him, even now, into what is better than an earthly paradise, peace and joy in our souls, and fellowship with the Son of God, to whose image we shall soon be perfectly conformed in glory. Meanwhile let us be content to suffer for His name in passing through this world, where we have the privilege of declaring *plainly* that we seek a heavenly country. Now is the moment for testimony and service, which we miss if we live in this scene as if belonging to it. Here we are strangers and pilgrims, there we shall share the joys of the Father's house. \* \* \*

## Watch!

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**I**N November of the year 1796, after his victory at Arcole, Bonaparte, the Commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy (afterwards Emperor of the French), lay encamped with his troops on the plains of Lombardy. It was night, and the camp was still, when the indefatigable general went from his tent, and, alone, muffled in his cloak, went the round of the sleeping camp. Suddenly he came upon a sentinel who was sleeping at his post: quietly, and, without awakening him, he takes from him his gun, and going on duty in his stead, waits until the guard is relieved. At last the soldier is awakened by his footstep, and what is his dismay at finding his general in this position! He utters a cry: "Bonaparte! I am lost!"

"Be reassured, my friend," replied the general to him, "a brave fellow like you may well sleep after so much fatigue, but another time choose your opportunity better."

Mark—it was the footfall of the great commander that awakened the slumbering sentry, it was his presence that inspired him with

shame and confusion; and the grace of the reply could only make the rebuke ring more loudly in his ears. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, my reader, here is not the place of your rest. Know you not that you are in active service, and that it should be your aim in all things to please Him who hath called you to be a soldier? Have you slumbered? Are you slumbering? It is written that while the Bridegroom tarried, all those virgins of the parable, whether wise or foolish, alas! slumbered and slept. Some He has awakened in His rich mercy, and has shown to them the clearness of "that blessed hope," that He Himself will soon come to take His people home. Yea, He will not tarry, for He longs to present them faultless before the presence of God's glory to His own exceeding joy. Awaken, then; the hour is not far distant when in the twinkling of an eye the dead in Christ shall be caught up and the living changed, and all in one unbroken company will be with Christ and like Him for ever!

If, on the contrary, you, who read these words, are a rejecter of the offer of grace and mercy that "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt

be saved," what can the thought of the appearing of the great Captain of salvation bring to your heart, but tremor and fear? Yea, it must be dread because His appearing would be for your eternal judgment. Oh! be warned in time. The Saviour still waits to welcome you, and, with uplifted voice and outstretched hands, He still is pleading, beseeching you to be reconciled to God. The requirements of the throne of God have been perfectly met by the one sacrifice for sins that has been offered, and now the feeblest and the vilest sinner that pleads that precious blood is eternally sheltered from the wrath of God against sin, that will ere long burst upon the world that is guilty of the murder of His beloved Son.

Oh! may you not be amongst those upon whom the day of His appearing will come as a thief, but may God in His infinite mercy, awaken you from the effects of the opiate with which Satan is lulling so many to sleep, the false gospel of "peace, where there is no peace." Peace with God is offered you *now* freely in Jesus' name, and He will soon come and usher all His own into His eternal peace.

"What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!"

"The Lord is at hand."

## The Archbishop's Daughter.

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SOME years ago, during a time of great spiritual awakening, a gentleman moving in good society and known to the writer was awakened to a sense of his lost condition as a sinner before God, and to a discovery of his need of a personal Saviour. His life up till then had been spent amidst gaiety and pleasure. Self and not Christ was the object for which he lived; not that he was irreligious,—far from that, but his religion consisted, as is, alas! too frequently the case, in church-going and the observance of outward forms, such as sacrament-taking, &c., &c.

He had experienced no inward change, until the Spirit of God convinced him of his sins, and led him to flee for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ. He found in Him a refuge from coming judgment, and received with child-like simplicity the blessed words uttered more than eighteen hundred years ago by Him who came to die for lost sinners: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My words, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and

shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

His conversion, as should always be the case, produced a complete change in his life. Instead of living for the world and to please himself, he now sought to serve his new-found Master, and to devote his time and energies to the glorious work of the Gospel.

He realized that he was surrounded by men and women who had souls—souls, moreover, that would live for ever, either in everlasting bliss or in endless woe. It henceforth became his desire to lead others to the knowledge of the same Saviour who had done so much for him; and from the time of his own conversion until the day that he was called home, many heard from his lips the story of redeeming love, and were led to a saving knowledge of Christ.

Soon after he himself had been converted, and had started on his Christian path, he went on a visit to his uncle, who held a high position ecclesiastically. The change that had come over him was pretty widely known; and, moreover, his earnestness in speaking about eternal matters with all those whom he met had made him almost an object of fear. Strange indeed it is that those who possess immortal souls, and

are hastening on to eternity, should be so averse to being faithfully told of their danger, and pointed to the way of escape therefrom !

There was one in that household who seemed especially to dread this close and individual dealing, and up to a day, or so before the termination of his visit had cleverly avoided being long alone in her cousin's company. She was a young lady whose heart was fully set on the world, and who, though religiously and carefully brought up, cared not for Christ.

She had the feeling, which so many others unfortunately share, that to belong to Christ, and to love, serve, and follow Him in this world, would somehow or other spoil her happiness, and take from her all pleasure in life. In this she was completely mistaken, as she herself soon afterwards proved.

The evening before his departure a number of friends were sitting in the drawing-room chatting together, when Mr —— whispered to his cousin that he had something of importance to say to her, and asked her to be kind enough to come into the adjoining room for a few minutes.

Reluctantly, and with considerable apprehension, she complied, feeling pretty sure in her

own mind that the important subject on which he wished to address her was the one of all others that she disliked the most.

Taking his Bible from his pocket, the book which had now become his constant companion, he read the following words :—“ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

“ Do you believe that ? ” he inquired.

Affecting to be much annoyed, she replied, rather testily, “ Of course I do, I believe all that’s in the Bible.”

Turning to 1 Tim. i. 15, he read, “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” “ Do you believe that ? ” he again asked.

Considerably hurt, she retorted, “ Of course I believe it ; why, what do you take me to be ? Do you think I have been brought up like a heathen ? No, I have been brought up to believe all the Bible.”

“ It is a solemn thing to say you believe these verses,” said her cousin ; “ for the first one says that ‘ all have sinned,’ and if you believe that, it is as much as saying that you are a sinner. But it is a blessed thing to believe the second, for it says that Christ came to save sinners. Are *you* saved ? ” he asked.



This last question was too much for the young lady, and she rose to go ; but before returning to the next room, her cousin slipped three little books into her hand requesting her to read them carefully when she was alone.

The interview being over, she now pretended to be rather amused at that which before had given her some alarm, and handed to her father the three little books which had been given her to read.

That night her father returned the books to her, saying that he would recommend her not to read them, as they might unsettle her mind, and would, he thought, do her no good. She was all right as she was, and it would be a pity to be unnecessarily disturbed and disquieted.

Alas! alas! that well-meaning, and even Christian men, should so often fail to see the difference between mere religiousness and true conversion.

However, God had His eye of tender love upon this young soul, and was about to lead her to the discovery that she was a poor lost sinner, and in need of a Saviour, who was ready to bless her, and receive her, in all her sinfulness. Her very religion was standing in the way

between her and the Saviour, as it does, alas! in the case of many others.

Retiring to her room that night she sat down before the fire, books in hand, fully intending to commit them all to the flames. She was rather sorry that she had said anything about them to her father, as his advice not to read them had somewhat awakened a desire to know what was in them. What could it be that might disturb her mind? And why should she not read them, and know what was in them? Her father must know better than she,—but if only he had not advised her not to read them!

Such-like thoughts were passing through her mind as she took one of the books and deliberately put it into the fire. Soon it was all consumed, and then she wished she had read it before consigning it to the flames. It was, however, too late; the book was burnt, and the second was about to share the fate of the first.

Taking the second book\* into her hands, she glanced at its title. This somewhat surprised her, and made her long to know what the contents could possibly be.

**“Religion without Reality.”**

Such were the strange words that stood on the

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\* See our February issue.

title-page. What could this mean? *Religion without reality!* That such a thing could possibly be as *religion* without reality had never yet dawned upon her. Oh, how she longed to know what was within the covers of that little book! But slowly she placed it unread in the fire. Almost regretting that she had not first read it, she watched its leaves curling up by the heat, when lo! one short sentence for a moment stood up before her eyes. It was this,—

**“For many years I was going religiously and respectably to hell.”**

The Spirit of God applied the words in soul-awakening power, and she exclaimed, “That is the very thing I am doing myself!” She had been religiously and respectably brought up; but she was unconverted; unsaved, and hence on her road to hell. Oh! how terrible that she had never found it out before! Reader, have you? Religion will never save you. Christ alone can save you.

God has not two ways of saving people,—one for the religious, and another for great sinners. No, there is but one way, and that is a living faith in a once crucified and now glorified Saviour. This is sufficient for the worst, and is needed by the best.

Soon afterwards this awakened soul found "peace in believing;" and though many years have rolled by, she still rejoices in the love that called her out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel.

A. H. B.

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## The Sinner's Saviour.

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"OH! but you are such a saint!" "Don't say that; if that were true, you would rob me of what I prize most —*the sinner's Saviour.*"

I knew her well—knew that in life she did "prize" the "sinner's Saviour" above everything else. And now she had been told her life was only a question of a few months. An old friend heard of her illness, and expressed a particular wish to see her. It was some years since they had met, and she was dying. He was much touched at seeing her thus. In her peculiarly winning way, she told him, that though about to leave this world, death would take her into the presence of Jesus, the Saviour,—that death had no terrors for her. It was this that elicited the remark, "Oh! but you are such a saint!" Do you understand her answer, reader? "Don't

say that ; if that were true, you would rob me of what I prize most—the *sinner's* Saviour."

We have here two totally different states of soul. The first, revealed by the remark, "Oh ! but you are such a saint !" is, alas ! the commonest. It is so natural ; it is human nature to look into our own hearts, and to present the *fancied* goodness we have tried—tried hard and earnestly too—to produce for God's acceptance. We have made some good resolutions ; they were at least *partly* kept, under difficult circumstances perhaps, and added to this we have earnestly prayed to be forgiven. Under such conditions we may have a "humble hope" of obtaining pardon from the God against whom we know well enough we have sinned. At all events, we cannot get any further than being "in a state of salvation." And when we see any one without fear at the approach of death, *naturally* we exclaim, "Oh ! he or she was such a saint." Which really amounts to this, that such people were so much better than the rest of the world that God could accept them.

Is this the ground you are upon, dear reader ? Then, if you are *honestly* seeking for a ground on which God can accept you—you are, at times at least, utterly miserable. Those *broken* resolu-

tions! those angry words! above all, the fear of man, which has snared you into doing what you know is wrong! *God left out* of your day's work, or day's pleasure; which was perhaps closed by "saying your prayers," but has left you with a thoroughly uneasy conscience, which even confessing all the things you can *remember*—think of those you have *forgotten!*—cannot satisfy.

No! no *such* ground can satisfy a God-awakened conscience. Why not? Because God must meet you as a *Saviour*-God. Bring your *sins* to God. Come, "just as you are," keeping nothing back. Relieve your conscience, by making a clean breast of everything to Him, and you will learn how *abundantly* God can pardon. O! what ground? His own ground, beloved reader, *the blood of Jesus*,—for "without shedding of blood is no remission." But "blood" has been shed. And God's testimony to the blood of His Son is this, it "cleanseth from all sin." The blood of Jesus alone can give a purged conscience. Well might the sweet Psalmist of Israel say, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." May you, dear reader, prize most "*The sinner's Saviour.*"

## “Let go the Twig.”

(*A Letter to an Anxious Soul by one now  
with the Lord.—No. II.*)

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**M**Y DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter was very welcome, and I desire from my heart to bless God for any gleams of comfort which He has imparted to your burdened and troubled spirit. I think I know well what you mean both by “the hardness of heart” of which you complain, and the sensations of which you say, “Sometimes I have felt as though my heart would break; and only those who have gone through it can know how miserable it is to feel that there is a fountain open where you may freely partake, but that something is keeping you back.”

Do not think me unkind when I advise you to remember that there is no merit in these unhappy feelings; nay more, that their continuance arises from unbelief; and that, therefore, they are not only bitter and painful feelings, but really *sinful* in their nature. What God desires is, that we should believe He speaks the truth to us when He declares that we have been the objects of His

love ; that His love to us has been such that He spared not His own Son ; and that such is His delight in what Jesus has done and suffered, that through His blood—the blood of Jesus—He now makes us welcome to free forgiveness, to eternal life, to the joy of calling Him “ Father,” and of casting ourselves into His arms of eternal mercy and love.

Your feelings are like those of a child who has grieved his father, and who knows that he has given his father good cause for being grieved. All that the father wishes is, that the child should own his fault, and be at once reconciled and forgiven, and there he waits ready to receive and caress the child. But the child’s heart is not yet brought down to this. He *weeps* and *sobs*, and becomes more and more excited and distracted ; but still he lingers on the other side of the room, or somewhere at a distance from his father. Can it please the father’s heart to witness the sobs and struggles of his child ? And how do they at last come to a close ? By the child casting himself into his father’s arms, and sobbing out on his father’s bosom, “ Father, I *have* done wrong, and been very much to blame indeed.” What a calm follows upon this ! It is not that the reconciled and forgiven child



is less sorry for having grieved his father than he was when sobbing and struggling away from his father's bosom. No; he is now more deeply sorry than before; but the struggle—the anguish—is past, and he only wonders that he could so long have kept away from his father's arms.

My dear friend, God is that Father. He reveals Himself as such in Jesus. He tells you in His Word that as soon as the prodigal's face and steps were turned homewards, “when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” And was the father in the parable *kinder or more gracious* than “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”? You know that the parable was spoken by Jesus Himself, on purpose to show us *what His father is*, and with what a welcome He receives each returning sinner. Doubt, then, not a moment longer. Believe God's own account of Himself.

“Take the blessing from above,  
And wonder at His boundless love.”

I wish I could relate to you, as it was once told to me, an account of a lady in Scotland, and of the way in which her doubts and anguish were removed. It was during a revival, in which

several known to this lady had been brought to Christ. Among the rest, a particular friend of hers had been converted. Feeling some measure of concern herself, she went to a servant of Christ who was labouring in the place, and told him she was unhappy. He replied that he was glad to hear it. Astonished at this, and somewhat offended also, she told the minister what efforts she had made to obtain salvation; how she had read and prayed, but still seemed as far from peace as ever. He told her that it was not by anything she could do, but by what Christ had long since done and finished on the cross, that she was to be saved. All seemed dark and mysterious to her, and she left, resolving, however, to call on her friend who had recently been converted. She did so, and asked her what she had done to obtain the peace of which she spoke. "Done! I have done nothing! It is by what Christ has done that I have found peace with God." The lady replied that this was what the minister had just been telling her, but that she could not understand it. She went home with her distress greatly increased; and shutting herself up in her room, she fell on her knees, resolving that she would never rise till her soul found rest and peace.

How long her agony continued I could not say; but nature became quite exhausted, and she sunk to slumber. While thus asleep, she dreamed that she was falling over a frightful precipice, but caught hold of a single twig, which overhung the abyss beneath. By this she hung, crying aloud for help, when a voice from below, which she knew to be the voice of Jesus, bade her let go the twig, and He would receive and save her. "Lord, save me!" she cried; but the voice again answered, "Let go the twig." She felt as though she dare not leave hold, but continued crying, "Lord, save me!" At last, the One below, whose voice she heard, but whom she did not see, said, in the most tender, solemn tones, "*I cannot save you, unless you let go the twig.*" Self-desperate, she let it go, fell into the arms of Jesus, and the joy of finding herself there awoke her. The lesson taught her by her dream was not lost upon her. She perceived that Jesus was worthy of all her trust, and that not only did she need no twig of self-dependence, but that it was holding to the twig that kept her away from Christ. She let all go, and found Jesus all-sufficient.

Hoping to hear from you soon, that you also have relinquished every other hope, and fallen

into the arms of Him whose arms were extended  
on the cross for you,

I remain, yours prayerfully,

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## The Marriage Feast.

Read Matt. xxii.

*(Notes of an Address by one now with the Lord.)*

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**T**HE Word of God lays before you man  
in his real condition, and God's all-  
sufficiency to meet it. It is every-  
thing to accredit God's Word.  
"Through faith we understand the worlds were  
made," &c. The Spirit of God anticipated all the  
circumstances through which each of us should  
pass, and calculated all our need to supply it.

Oh, the calm quiet of the soul that believes on  
God, that leans on His Word, and that is sup-  
ported by the Almighty, whose power created  
the world! Oh, the interest with which we  
should approach it, we that are hastily passing  
down the poor river of time, making swift way  
into the ocean of eternity! That Word, the only  
light, the only beacon, that we have to steer by  
as we speed on!

What are we? We all do fade as a leaf, the wind passes over us and we are gone, and our place knows us no more! Oh, that God would give such power to His Word that you in weakness would look up and lay hold of it!

Turn to Matthew xxii. There the Gospel is presented by Christ Himself. We often forget *who* it is who speaks; the One who said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day" (John xii. 48); the One who said, "Let us make man in our image." Oh, to receive words of healing from God's mouth! to hear *Him* say, "If it were not so, I would have told you"! If it was not all grace and love He would have told us,—He who came from heaven, shining like the sun, into the cold dead heart of man, bringing the message of love and peace to poor sinners.

"Come unto Me." It could be none other than our God that said, "Come unto Me; I know you, it was I who made you, I put you together. Put your head on My bosom; I am your Maker, your Saviour-God, you are Mine. Come unto Me, all ye weary ones, and I will give you rest." And this is what they would rob you of now-a-days. Intellect is set up to rob man of that rest in God, but they cannot do it;—man *wants*, and

*must* have, rest *in God*. We never wanted Him as much as He wants us; none would have been here to-night with happy hearts but that He wanted them, and He moved their hearts to want Him. Sin ruined us,—but God so loved us, and sent down the Son of His love to tell us of it; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

Years roll on, time slips from under your feet; but, bit by bit, He will sweep away every refuge, and make you see how foolish you were to put hindrances between the sweetness of His love and your souls.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto,” &c. Who could know it but He? The God of heaven alone could tell us of the joy of heaven. Oh, to be shut up *into Christ*, that we cannot move, nor turn, without Him! Blessed necessity! Would you not be shut up to Him? All fulness is in Him; He puts us in our place in His presence; and *such* a place, far better than our created place had it not been lost by sin! Far better to be put before God in His own righteousness!

Who could tell us what heaven is, what God is, save God incarnate? There came One from heaven to tell us about a marriage! How strange a thing to us, in this place of lamentation, and

woe, and death! Man is as a flower of the field, here to-day and gone to-morrow. Go to many a hearth and home, many a well-remembered corner—GONE! no occupant there now. To speak of a marriage feast in such a scene of dilapidation and ruin, and a King making it too! And inviting whom? Sinners, undone, and hurrying into eternity! Yes, to *you* is offered this resting-place. Christ at the door invites you in.

But oh, they will not come! He sends the message again, He opens out His whole soul, and He takes you up as part of the Bride. He undertakes *all* for you, every burden, every circumstance. He provides *all*; "I have prepared my dinner," &c., come and sit down to it.

Is it possible? *Such* an invitation from heaven to poor sinners on earth, and the One who brought it God from everlasting to everlasting! He came Himself with it; it is in receiving and believing Christ's own Word,—mark it well!—that you have your place there.

He invites, but they scorned, and would not hear; they went *their* way, not God's way; they balanced time against eternity, and threw up all!

The servants were slain; He sent forth therefore His armies and destroyed them, and that

was the close of that dispensation. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." The doors are now thrown open. "Go into the highways, and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage." If you had all the sins of the world on you, the goodness of God could meet and receive you. Oh, that you may receive according to God's grace! He has declared that salvation is ours if we believe His Word,—it is *God's* salvation; as many as you can find, *bring in!* And are not these the words of eternal life to as many as will receive them to-night? Poor sinners, in Christ's name we bid you to the Gospel feast. Boundless grace has opened the channel for every poor sinner here, to float into heaven washed in the blood of the Lamb.

God's glad tidings comes to you in this blessed invitation? But what is your answer? "Christ asked me to come; drawn by the Father I came, I am His."

Is there a soul here rejecting, and Christ Himself proclaiming you are welcome? Can you kneel before God and say, "Christ met us this night, and we have refused His invitations; the door of mercy was opened, and we saw over it the superscription, but we would not read it. Put



it in the fire! I'm for my farm, I'm for my merchandise"?

Do you *forget* that God's Word is the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death? Remember, Christ has asked you to the marriage supper by the Holy Ghost. Turn not away, it is at your everlasting peril if you do. If Christ has with His own lips spoken, better were it for you that a millstone were hanged about your neck than that you should refuse to listen.

Can you lie down quietly this night, the clock ticking by your bedside, and every hour that strikes bringing you an hour, and an hour nearer to *eternity*, and yet say, "I have *not* accepted Christ's invitation, I have *not* turned when He called"?

Poor perishing sinner, God's heart yearns over you. Oh, that you may not be found "not having on a wedding garment"! God is for every one who can put his hand upon his heart and say, "The Lord Jesus is mine." But oh, we find here a man that entered in without a wedding garment, without being clothed with Christ as his righteousness! And when the King came in to see the guests, he says, "How camest thou in hither, I see no trace of a garment washed in blood"! "He was speechless,"—no time then to make the excuses you would put God off with now.

“Bind him hand and foot, and take him away.”

“Many are called, but few are chosen.”

Oh, if you are His, tell to *all* the tale of His unchanging love. Sweet will you feel it to serve Him, even saying, What can I do for Him who gave Himself for me? What shall I render unto Him?

J. W.



“I say unto you, Fear Him.”

LUKE xii. 5.

**N**IGH upon eighteen hundred and sixty years ago the Lord Jesus spoke a parable which should be *all the more* heeded as time goes on. He told of a rich man (Luke xii.), whose fields brought forth with such abundance that he had no room to house his harvest. Then said he, “This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater.” He meant to live many years longer, for no man begins to build without desiring to finish. He said, “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” “But *God* said.” Ah! he had not thought of Him, nor of the potter who has power over the clay He moulds. “God

said, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” Have we heeded this parable, recorded for us by the pen of inspiration so long ago?

Only this year, nay, this month (November 1893), one man forgot it. Great numbers were gathered together in the now world-famed city of Chicago. Not an “innumerable multitude of people,” as on the hill-sides of Galilee, when the foregoing parable was spoken, but a worldly, godless company celebrating the glories of the World’s Fair, and above all that day exalting the Mayor of the city that the world wonders after. He is to address the assembly—listen to his words:—

“I believe that I will live to see the day when Chicago will be the biggest city in America. I don’t count the past. I have taken a new lease of life, and I intend to live more than half a century, and at the end of that half-century London will be trembling, lest Chicago should surpass her”! Himself and his city are exalted—yea, his own life is to be prolonged; he has taken into his own hands the keeping together of body, soul, and spirit, and half a century ahead, in his daring presumption, he looks.

But God still sits in heaven ; “ and among the inhabitants of the earth ” “ none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou ? ” (Dan. iv. 35.) Within nine hours the speaker of those impious words met a violent death, and his spirit returned to God who gave it. “ If He cut off . . . then who can hinder Him ? ” (Job xi. 10.) He was like Herod who sat on his throne in all the pomp of regal display. He spoke, presumably he boasted, and the people applauded, saying, “ It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of God smote him, because he gave not God the glory : and he gave up the ghost ” (Acts xii.). “ Vain man would be wise,” but he likes to be so *without God*.

Great Babylon of the future will do the same. She will *glorify herself* as she has ever done. She, the empty shell of Christendom, the personification of religion without Christ, will say, “ I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” Wherefore, to her, in whom is found the blood of all the saints, “ shall come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her ” (Rev. xviii.).

Reader, “ God is in heaven, and thou upon

earth : therefore let thy words be few” (Eccles. v. 3). It is a solemn thing to leave Him out of our lives : He only can do “whatsoever pleaseth Him” (Eccles. viii. 3). But thankfully may we add that “it pleased Him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. i. 21). He “sent His Son a propitiation for our sins,” and death has no terrors for the lowly, contrite heart that believes the record that God has given of His Son.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us (that is, to believers) eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath life ; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life” (1 John v. 11, 12).

H. L. H.



## “Rich or Poor :” A Contrast.

**S**HE was young, wealthy, and accomplished. Born in good position, she mixed in that society which the votaries of fashion so yearn for. Living in a beautiful home, furnished with every luxury, she was surrounded with everything that riches could procure her. Servants attended to her

every wish, and in her stables were kept thirteen splendid horses to fulfil her sole pleasure. Foremost in the hunting-field, she refrained from no amusement that money could provide. And as she dashed along in her carriage, handsomely dressed, and attended by her liveried servants, how many longing eyes followed her, coveting her good fortune!

But was she really happy in the midst of all this? Perhaps you think she must have been; but, ah! she was learning what the richest and wisest monarch that ever lived had to learn—"that all is vanity and vexation of spirit" in this world.

Let us listen to the wretched confession that fell from her own lips. About to leave her lovely home for a yet more charming one—her own estate, and with the prospect of marriage before her, she says: "I dare not even *say* I am going, for nothing I set my heart on ever comes to pass."

Poor miserable lady! with all her boasted wealth and possessions was she not poor indeed? for underneath it all was an aching, unsatisfied heart, that had only learnt, and that by bitter experience, that to drink of earth's pleasures means "to thirst again," without knowing from

whence alone the heart can find peace and full joy.

*He* was old, and poor and dying. Dying too of that terrible disease cancer, which, accompanied by other maladies, made his sufferings most intense. He existed on parish relief, and was dependent on a neighbour for almost every service done for him; while his room, which scarcely kept out the weather, was bare and utterly comfortless.

Living but a short distance from the lady already referred to, he lay for many long weeks in suffering before the end came, and those that passed his cottage door used to say, "Poor fellow, how sad!"

But was he poor, and was he sad? No, indeed! For although devoid of almost all earthly possessions, he was "rich in faith"; and, spite of his bodily sufferings, his soul was rejoicing with "joy unspeakable." It was indeed an honour to sit by his bedside and hear his bursts of praise and worship to God. Never once a murmur or complaint escaped his lips; and as one and another of the Lord's servants visited him, they each and all came away refreshed and strengthened in their own souls. Was he not a

living witness of the fact that "God *is* our refuge and strength, a VERY PRESENT help in trouble"? (Ps. xlv. 1.)

"I thought I was coming to comfort you," said one of them to him, "but the fact is you have comforted me."

On one occasion a gentleman said to him, "Isn't it a mercy to know we are soon going to be in the Lord's presence?" "Ay," replied the old man; "but isn't it a mercy too to have the Lord's presence with us *now*?" And another time, when the pain was very severe, his only exclamation was, "Oh to be once inside that bright glory!"

And his request was soon granted, for a few days after, as they stood beside him, they saw his lips move in prayer, and caught the words "Father! Father"! and the dear old man was present with the One whom, not having seen, he loved.

Which one now, think you, was the richest, and which one would you envy? The lady, who was obliged to own in the bitterness of her soul—

"All that my heart has tried,  
Left but an aching void?"

or the dying saint who could add—

"Jesus *has* satisfied,  
Jesus, my Lord"?



## The Circle of Blessing.

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SOME years ago the writer was asked by a young man, in London, to go and see a poor old man who was lying ill of the palsy. He had been not only a careless, godless man, but openly wicked, and especially in profane swearing.

The young man above referred to, hearing an old greyheaded man using such language when at his daily work, ventured to speak seriously to him on the subject. Shocked with the oaths he uttered, and thinking on the fearful state of his soul, and on what his future must be if he died in that state, he got his address and called at his house. There he could speak more plainly to him. In the full sense of the word, he had lived without God and without hope in the world, for nearly threescore years and ten.

Soon after this he met with a great affliction. The whole of the left side became paralysed, so that he was fixed to his bed. And now, what an object of pity! Helpless as to the body, hopeless as to the soul,—in the depths of poverty, and without comfort from any quarter,—death reigned, we may say, both in body, soul,

and circumstances. One half of the poor body was already in the grasp of death, and how near, humanly speaking, was the soul to the depths of hell! But the God of all grace is the God of resurrection. He often makes us feel that all is as death around us before He begins to work. It was truly so in the case of this poor, palsied old man. But God had mercy on him. Resurrection life and blessing were on their way to him—they were now near at hand. Hear how they came.

Two or three years before this time the youngest son of the old man enlisted. He was quartered in the Portobello Barracks, Dublin, when the father was lying ill. Happily for this youth, and for many others also we doubt not, one of the officers was in the habit of preaching the Gospel there. The young soldier was induced to go and hear him, and it pleased God in the riches of His mercy to touch his heart. He was convinced of sin, and fell, as he said, at the feet of Jesus, and found pardon and peace there.

He believed that the blood of Jesus had cleansed all his sins away. He was full of happiness, and in the fulness of his new-found joy he wrote a letter to his father. And

this letter, so full of zeal and love, proved to be God's message of mercy to that father's heart. We were privileged to read two of his letters, and both were full of the most tender appeals to his father to repent and believe in Jesus. These letters, through the Lord's blessing, broke the father's heart. And little wonder: the sweet and touching way he spoke of the love of Jesus, and of His readiness to pardon the chief of sinners, ought to have been enough to melt any heart; but coming from a runaway son, from one who could use the expression "O my dear father!" added their power and produced the desired effect. He burst into floods of tears, and sometimes became quite excited, exclaiming, "O my dear boy!" But God, we fully believe, was at work in his soul. In the fulness of his heart he believed what his son wrote; he followed his advice—bowed at the feet of Jesus—confessed his sins—cried for mercy, and found it. He found mercy where all who seek it find it, and where none ever sought it in vain. It is full, and free to all,—blessed, for ever blessed, be the God of all grace!—to old and young—to the morally good and to the chief of sinners—to the child of tender years who may never have done worse than

say "No" to a parent, and to the hoary-headed sinner of threescore years and ten whose history has been blackened by every crime. Such is grace—the full, free, rich, sovereign grace of God—to the sinner who believes in Jesus. Neither age, character, nor condition affects God in showing mercy. He acts on the ground of the finished work of Christ, which is eternally complete; and all who believe in Jesus rest on the work which He accomplished. Is this the solid ground, may I ask, on which my reader rests—the finished work of Christ?

If thou art looking to thine own doings for rest, or to thine heart for comfort, thou wilt never find them there. Happiness is not to be found in frames and feelings and doings, but in Christ and His finished work. As thou art, my dear reader,—in youth or in old age—in the vigour of manhood or palsied in every limb—the wild roving youth or the blaspheming old man,—believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—believe in the greatness of His love—believe in the riches of His grace—believe in the cleansing power of His blood, and thou shalt not only be saved, but perfectly happy! Look at the two extremes before thee. The burden of the young soldier's letters was the love of Jesus, and His

readiness to forgive all who come to Him. Though we only read them once, and that with no thought of ever referring to them in print, yet we can remember how he entreated his father with great earnestness to come to Jesus. No doubt they bore the marks of his history and experience, but his heart was warm and earnest. For the sake of others, we give the following as the substance of these appeals: "O my dear father, come to Jesus, He will pardon all your sins; He died for us all on the cross. I believe it now, and I am quite happy. I went to hear Captain T—— preach, and I was brought to the feet of Jesus. I then saw what a sinner I had been, but He has washed all my sins away by His precious blood; and if you come to Jesus, dear father, He will wash all your sins away too, and then your soul would be saved. You know He died for us all, and He casts out none that come to Him. He will not cast out you, my dear father. Oh, believe it; He did not cast out me, He has pardoned all my sins. Oh, come to Jesus, my dear father; come to His feet, pray to Him, and He will forgive all your sins." We can never forget the bursting emotion of that heart, and the flowing tears, as we read the touching appeals by his

bed-side. They had been read to him before, over and over again, but they seemed as fresh as ever. In order to test the reality of the work, we suggested that there might be nothing more in the change which he had experienced than the natural feelings of a father for a son. But the moment he saw our suspicion, he became very animated, and beating on his breast, looking up to heaven, he exclaimed: "Oh no! it is the charity of Jesu to my soul—His blood—His blood has taken my sins all away!" He was a foreigner, spoke with a strong foreign accent, and had been a soldier in his youth. When we spoke to him of the love of Jesus, and of the blessedness of being with Him in heaven, it was too much for him; he was overcome with emotion. He spoke with full assurance of his pardon and acceptance. The Lord alone be praised: he who was the chief of sinners once, now quietly rests with the Lord, patiently awaiting His coming.

Our main object in writing the above is to draw attention to what we may call "The Circle of Blessing." We have often observed it in families and in wider circles. God is the fountain of all blessing,—the risen Lord is the channel, the Holy Ghost is the power, and the truth is the means.

Take the example before us. God fills the heart of Captain T—— with love to souls; he can no longer be quiet, and enjoy salvation alone. He must preach the Gospel to others. A meeting-place is found, the salvation of God is proclaimed,—blessing flows down from the heart of God, a young soldier is converted, and grace flows on. A love for souls is now implanted in his heart,—his first thoughts are his own family. God uses natural affection; his father, who is lying ill, is especially laid on his heart. He writes letter after letter, and thus he becomes a preacher of the Gospel. His father is converted, and the grace of God that saves him now reascends to God in praise. A perfect circle is completed. As it is in nature, so it is in grace. The vapours that rise from the sea, and are carried on the wings of the wind, fall on the earth in dews and plentiful showers. The thirsty ground is refreshed and fertilized, the pools are filled with water,—the streams and rivers flow, and carry back to the ocean that which left it in vapours. The sea has lost nothing, and all living have been richly blessed. Thus should it be with grace and truth. Oh that every one who receives the Gospel would be faithful in his own sphere,

and according to his own ability, in spreading the truth of God—the glad tidings of salvation! Wide, wide as the circle of the Holy Spirit's action, would the blessing flow. May our Lord's own word to His disciples be our motto:—  
 “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matt. x. 8). ANON.



## “Escape for thy Life.”

(*A Letter to an Anxious Soul by one now  
 with the Lord.—No. III.*)

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I am much obliged by your kind letter of yesterday, and thankful to find that the Lord still keeps your attention awake to the all-important subject of your soul's salvation. I am sorry that you are still a stranger to the peace which the Gospel brings; but it is a mercy to be kept from the false peace by which Satan, in a thousand ways, deludes poor souls, and draws them onward to perdition. But beware of settling down, or even of remaining, in your present state. “Remember Lot's wife.” She set out with her husband from Sodom to



escape the awful judgment which God was bringing on that guilty city. But her heart was still there ; her affections clung to Sodom, and that which it contained ; and so, *looking behind her*, she was turned into a pillar of salt. She became thus an abiding memorial of the terrible consequences of relapsing from an awakened into a careless state. Oh that God Himself may impress upon your heart the warning addressed to Lot, and to each one of his family—“Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed ” (Gen. xix. 17).

You say, “I believe that I shall not die without the Lord.” I also earnestly hope that you will not. But it is not safe to trust such hopes as this. You are at this moment, and, should you be spared to read this letter, you will at the moment of reading it, be either a child of God or a child of wrath. There is no middle state, be assured. “He that hath the Son, hath life ; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life ” (1 John v. 12). Now, you either *have* or *have not* the Son of God. Which is it, my friend ? If, by believing in Him, you have the Son of God, *you have life*. In that case it is no longer a question of your hoping or trusting that you will not

die without the Lord: you have the Son, and have life already. But if you have not the Son—if your heart clings not to Jesus as your only hope and refuge, *you have not life*; and should you continue thus, there is no promise anywhere that before you die you shall receive it. All the promises centre in Christ, and relate to the present moment. “*Now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.” “To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart.”

How uncertain is human life! When I left home a few weeks ago, a lady, a friend of ours, was confined to her room, though not to her bed, by indisposition. I heard of her repeatedly while I was away; and on the day of my return her sister called here and seemed quite cheerful about the invalid, judging her to be so much better than she had been. This was about four in the afternoon. At eight the same evening the invalid was sitting by the table, and her sister reading to her a chapter in the New Testament. At nine o'clock she was a corpse! What a sudden and solemn change! We have every reason to believe that for years our departed friend had been a true believer in Christ, and that she is now happy with Him. But suppose she had not been, what possibility

of fleeing to Him when thus struck with death? Do not rest, my friend, a day or an hour without Christ. God makes you welcome to Him, and all the value of His precious, atoning blood. You are welcome to Him *now*. "Him that cometh to me I will *in no wise* cast out." But then it is "*him that cometh.*" Come, then, to Christ, and come at once. Delay not another day or hour.

It is always a pleasure to me to hear from you; but do not trust in any man, or in what any of your friends can say to you, or do for you. Look only to the Lord Jesus, and to the blood He spilled on Calvary. It is *that* which cleanseth us from all sin. All that any one can do is to point you to Jesus and His blood; and to pray God to lead you, by what is said, to look to Jesus, to rest on Jesus, to cling to Jesus, to rejoice in Jesus. The Lord grant this as to you, and that I may soon hear from you, that Jesus is precious to you indeed.

Yours, &c.,

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"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. v. 8.

## A Warning.

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“He that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.”—

EZEK. xxxiii. 5.

**T**HIRTEEN young men sat down to supper one evening not long ago, and their feasting and merriment went to such lengths that even death became a subject of joke. “One of us will die to-night, we are thirteen;” and pointing to the youngest in their midst, a youth of eighteen, they said, “It will be you.”

The party broke up, and three of them, including this youth, who were waiters in an hotel, turned their steps towards the lake, and got into a boat which was only intended to carry one person. It was near midnight, and no one was at hand to warn them of the risk they were running. Did they remember their joke? We cannot tell. When morning dawned they were missing from their posts; and the boat, bottom upwards, told its own tale, with one body which was washed ashore. Those of the two others were recovered later in the day,—but where were their souls?

“There shall be a resurrection of the dead,

both of the just and of the unjust ;” and that is what makes death such a solemn thing, and not one to be spoken of carelessly. Would it not have solemnised you, had you been staying in that hotel, to awake in the morning and find that three of its inmates had passed into eternity ?

Perhaps you say, “ We are tired of being told of sudden deaths ;” but remember that your turn may come to be called into the presence of “ God the Judge of all.” The Apostle Paul says, “ Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ” ( 2 Cor. v. 11 ) ; and can you wonder that we, who live eighteen hundred years later, seek to use every means we can to persuade you ! A young man, who was an unbeliever, once said to me, “ If I believed what you believe, I would speak to every one I came in contact with, and even walk up and down the streets with a placard on my back to warn people of their danger.”

Noah warned the people during one hundred and twenty years that the Flood was coming. They did not believe him, and then it came, and “ destroyed them all.” God can destroy you in one moment, if it please Him ; and it is folly, nay madness, to set up your own thoughts

against His. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But, dear reader, it is a blessed thing to be sheltered, come what may, in the arms of Christ—those arms that were stretched out on the cross for us, when He died, "the Just for the unjust."

"In the refuge God provided—  
 Though the world's destruction lowers—  
 We are safe,—to Christ confided,  
 Everlasting life is ours."

C. A. W.



## Afterward!

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**I**N days like these, when there is a growing inclination to disregard all the warnings of Holy Scripture, and still more to entirely refuse the authority of the Book itself, and to deny its inspiration of God, it might seem almost hopeless work to bring home to heart and conscience its solemn statements. And indeed it would be so, were it not that it is "the sword of the Spirit," and given to the servant of Christ for use in the great conflict with the powers of darkness so long as that conflict lasts.

It is, moreover, quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and oftentimes has pierced the hearts of those even who profess to disbelieve its teachings. It has a power which is of God, and the man of God is most solemnly charged to "preach the word," and to "be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. iv.).

"I am afraid there is not much use speaking to me, as I do not believe *the base* of it all," was the honest and courteous rejoinder of one, not long ago, upon whom, at the close of a Gospel service, we were seeking to urge the importance of immediate decision for Christ.

This might have deterred us, had we not remembered that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 4, 5). We were also reminded of a conversation often related by an honoured servant of Christ, who was present when it took place. It occurred many years ago during a journey in France in a *diligence* (coach).

An earnest Christian man had engaged in conversation with a fellow-passenger who turned out

to be an infidel. A verse of Scripture having been quoted, the infidel requested that no further allusion should be made to a book which he did not believe. Our friend took no notice of this request, but presently pressed home another powerful text. This excited the indignation of the other, and soon, as out came another quotation from the sacred volume, his rage knew no bounds, as he exclaimed, "I tell you, sir, I do not believe that book, and so there is no use quoting it to me."

"That is all very well," was the quiet reply; "you and I are like two men who are having a duel, and you ask me to throw away my sword because it is not a good one. No, thank you, I see it cuts."

It is in this confidence that we would turn the reader's attention to the second chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. We shall not now attempt a detailed exposition of the passage, but here we get a divine answer to the oft-repeated question: "**What will happen to those who are left behind after the Lord has come and taken His people to heaven?**"

Let us again state what we believe is the plain teaching of God's Word,—that (1) the Lord Jesus Christ is coming again; that (2) He is coming



again *quickly*; that (3) when He comes, He will come into the clouds, and catch up His people into the air, leaving the earth and the people who are on it to continue for a short space before judgment falls upon them; and that (4) He may come thus at any moment.\*

But what will become of those who will be left behind? Having rejected the Gospel so frequently sounded in their ears, will they then have another chance of hearing it? Having despised the salvation so freely offered them through faith in Christ, may they yet after all be saved?

Solemn questions these;—most clearly and unequivocally answered in the Scriptures of truth. We are about, in the fear of God, to state what the Bible teaches on this all-important topic, and we would leave the reader to decide whether or not he shall believe God. We ask no one to believe us, for the settlement of this inquiry lies not with us but with God. But we would, with all the earnestness at our command, implore the reader to examine this chapter (2 Thess. ii.), and see for himself if these things are not so.

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\* See two pamphlets, "The Midnight Cry," and "The Prospects of the World," 1d. each. James Carter, 13 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

We have elsewhere pointed out the difference between the coming of Christ *for* His people into the air, and His coming *with* them to the earth in judgment ; this latter is called *the day of Christ* (or, the Lord).

*After* the removal of the Church,—which might take place to-day, and *before* the appearance of Christ “in flaming fire” to take vengeance on those that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,”—the events described in our chapter will take place.

In verse 3, we are told that a man is to appear on this earth, who is here described as “the man of sin,” or “the son of perdition,” and in verse 8, “the wicked” (or lawless one). The one who here possesses these awful titles is elsewhere called “the Antichrist” (1 John ii. 22, iv. 3, &c.).

This man will be in his character the very opposite of Christ. He will exalt himself to such a degree that he will actually make himself to be worshipped as God (ver. 4). He will be possessed of a satanic power, and will work miracles, by means of which he will deceive the people that are left on the earth (vers. 9, 10 ; Rev. xiii. 14).

After the first panic—which will doubtless immediately follow upon the removal of the

people of God at the coming of the Lord—has in measure subsided, this Lawless one will assert himself, and by means of his lying wonders will gain possession of people's confidence. God, too, will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie (ver. 11). Why? "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (ver. 10). And to what end? "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth" (ver. 12).

These are solemn words! Reader, make your choice between "salvation" and "damnation." Christ is "the way, and the truth, and the life."

" Oh, receive it !  
 Oh, believe it !  
 'Tis for thee."

If you refuse Christ now, you may have to accept Antichrist. It may be that the reader will be actually one of those who shall be found on the earth during Antichrist's blasphemous and satanic rule. God's heart of love yearns over you now. He offers you Christ as your Saviour, that, believing on Him, you might be saved. Oh, turn not away.

"There is no refuge for thy soul but He ;  
 Wilt thou reject Him, and a wanderer be ?"

“God hath set forth” Christ “to be a propitiation [*i.e.*, a mercy-seat, or place of meeting, between Himself and the sinner] through faith in His blood” (Rom. iii. 25). Do you reject the doctrine of the atoning sacrifice of Christ? Do you hate the truth of redemption by the blood of Jesus? Ah, then, salvation for you is impossible. “Without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. ix. 22).

While pressing home these fundamental truths of the Gospel upon a lady, who had evidently and remarkably been impressed by the preaching of that Word which she had up till then refused to believe, we were startled by a look of determination coming over her face. With a stamp of her foot, and an emphatic “*I won't* believe it,” she marched out of the preaching hall. Convinced that God was working in that soul, her case became a subject of earnest prayer; and not long afterwards it was our joy to see the great battle between faith and unbelief ended, by a complete submission of heart and will, and mind and conscience, to God and His Word.

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 3). It was so in her case,—only lately an atheist, she now stood before God “justified by His (Christ's)

blood" (Rom. v. 9); she was "clothed, and in her right mind."

Reader, again let us warn you, that if you reject God's offer of salvation made now to you in Christ, you are rejecting the only way of salvation possible.

A. H. B.

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## On Building.

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I WAS staying some years ago at the house of a friend in one of the watering-places of the south of England, and one day the conversation turned upon building, the strides that it had been making of late in the neighbourhood, and the rapidity with which the town was extending in all directions.

This soon led to a talk upon the fact that the issues of a man's eternal destiny were settled here, and now, and that the whole building of that "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens" rested upon one foundation, Jesus Christ our Lord: and my friend, who, I need not say, was a true Christian, said to me, "If you would care to go, I will take you this afternoon to see a very

instructive specimen of man's ingenuity in the building way."

I readily assented, and we soon found ourselves walking along the sea-shore in a westerly direction.

During our walk I learned the following facts. Sometime previously a well-to-do but eccentric individual had come to the vicinity, and, desirous of seclusion and complete quietude, had conceived the idea of building a house upon the sand at the foot of the cliffs some distance from the town. Soon workmen were upon the scene, and with great diligence were occupied with its construction. Many were the opinions expressed by one and another amongst both visitors and townspeople as to the possibility of carrying out the plan. But the gentleman himself seemed quite persuaded that it could be successfully accomplished. Large quantities of cement were put down to preserve, if possible, the foundation from shifting, and for a time all seemed to progress favourably, until one night as the wintry weather was commencing to set in there was a heavy sea breaking in upon the shore; and when the structure, which had been left the night before about half complete, was seen in the morning light, how great was the

change! What havoc had been wrought in a single night! Again the trial was made, but only again to have the same ill-success await it, until at length it had been abandoned, and the house stood a mass of ruins.

By this time we had reached the ill-fated building, and what a suggestive sight it was! The huge masses of concrete strewing the beach around, and the barrier of the same material erected to keep out the sea, told the story of the futility of the effort but too plainly. All had been to no purpose, because *the foundation was bad*. I entered the building all incomplete and ruinous as it was, and the thought came to me, "What a powerful illustration of the parable that fell from the lips of the Lord Himself!" (Matt. vii. 24-27). Just before I left the place I espied, written in pencil upon the plaster of one of the rooms, the following lines:—

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

Reader, on what ground are you building the edifice of your eternity? For building you are most certainly, whether you realise it or not. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11).

How vain to buoy yourself up with the hope that your good works, your prayers even, or works of righteousness which you may have done, are, in themselves, any surer foundation than the sand of which we have been speaking! Take heed, then, for a time is coming when the flood will descend and beat upon the fabric which you are rearing. What will stand in that day? Nothing whatsoever, saving that which has been built upon the Rock, which is Christ. What saith the Scripture? "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place" (Isa. xxviii. 16, 17). The believer, who has built upon Christ alone, and has believed God's record concerning Him, has the blessed assurance that he will "not come into judgment"; but that he "is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). The Saviour, the same sure foundation, is offered to you for your acceptance once again, may be for the last time.

Oh! trifle not, for the time is at hand when the now widely open door will be closed for ever,



and at that day all that sand, that refuge of lies, that Satan persuades you will stand, will be utterly swept away, and the Christ-rejecting sinner will stand in all the nakedness of His sins before the great white throne, and Him who sits thereon, to be judged according to His works. The issue of that judgment is not uncertain, and is final.

God grant that you may listen rather to the appeals of His grace. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7, 8).

F. L.

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## "Yes" or "No."

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**A**LADY of considerable wealth and good social position—one who had paid particular attention to works of charity and benevolence—was laid upon her dying bed.

Knowing this, she called for her maids and other domestics, to bid them a last "Farewell." Amongst these was her coachman, who was a sincere believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Impressed with the solemnity and tremendous importance of the moment, the coachman ner-

vously ventured to inquire of the lady if she were "saved." Astonished at the query, and reminding him of her kindness in general, as well as to him in particular, she asked what he meant by such a question.

"Beg your pardon, ma'am," he replied, "but *are you saved?—saved like the thief on the cross?*"

Amazed, and indignant, the dying lady exclaimed: "*What! saved like the thief? No, I'd rather be damned first, than be saved like the thief!*"

Apparently in this state of mind, alas! she shortly passed into the unseen and eternal world.

Reader, God's salvation is a "common salvation" (Jude 3) for religious or irreligious, rich and poor alike; for "there is *no difference*: for *all have sinned*, and come short of the glory of God."

. . . / . . .

"Absent from the body, present with the Lord,"—suddenly, through a fit of apoplexy, she was called away from earth to heaven, from the presence of sin and sorrow, to that of the Lord she so truly loved.

We knew her well. Indeed she was the first that ever spake to us of "JESUS."

A lady, of good social position likewise, she too at one time "walked according to the course of this world," and was a very real despiser of Jesus of Nazareth.

But "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." So it happened that her only daughter was brought to a knowledge of Christ as her Saviour and Lord, and she soon became instrumental in the conversion of her two younger brothers.

Vexed and annoyed, the indignant mother insisted on continuing to accept, in her daughter's behalf, invitations to parties, balls, and other engagements of a purely worldly character, seeking by these means to nullify the testimony raised by the conversion of her child.

It was soon evident, however, that God, who is rich in mercy, and is the God of all grace, was about to claim her as a brand snatched from the burning.

She was taken very, very ill, and for a considerable time confined to her room and bed. There, with opportunity for reflection, she passed through deep exercise of soul; and it pleased God, during those moments of sickness, to allow her to become possessed of a copy of that well-known hymn commencing with—

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
 But that *Thy blood* was shed *for me*,  
 And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee,  
 O Lamb of God, I come !”

Precious hymn! Over and over again she read it, until at length, claiming the language of the hymn as exactly expressive of the deep need of her soul, she came to Jesus just as *she* was—“poor, wretched, blind,”—and, like the thief on the cross, proved Him to be the Friend of sinners, the Saviour of *the lost*.

From this illness she recovered, and, to the day of her death, was a most earnest and devoted follower of the Lamb; particularly rejoicing in that scripture, “THE BLOOD of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth from ALL sin,” and earnestly desirous of hearing from the Saviour’s lips, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

Very few have we met who so truly exemplified those words written by the Apostle Paul in the first chapter of his First Epistle to the Thessalonians:—“Ye *turned to God* from idols, to *serve* the living and true God; and to *wait* for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

“Delivered us from the wrath to come.”  
 How is it with my<sup>r</sup>reader? N. L. N.

## How a Roman Priest found Peace with God.

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**A**S I sat in the front part of a room, a young Roman priest slowly paced to and fro at the other end of it.

He was nobly born—son of one of high rank in the army. From a pious mother he had received deep convictions about his soul. “What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” followed him through all his studies and travels. Tormented by this, he at length entered “the Church,” not to satisfy ambition, but, if possible, to find peace of soul.

His lank form, his long face, pale and thin—his entire being—indicated suffering; and, without knowing why, I felt myself drawn to him. I remembered, as if it were but yesterday, the agony of my own heart before knowing eternal redemption; and thinking that perhaps he suffered from the same cause, I at once asked him: “Have you peace with God, my dear friend?”

“Peace with God!” exclaimed he. “What do you mean by peace with God?”

“It is the effect,” I replied, “of the forgiveness of sins. It is like the consciousness that would exist in the agonized spirit of an unfortunate criminal condemned to be guillotined, to whom a messenger comes suddenly, bringing this despatch from the Emperor: ‘All your crimes are forgiven you; go forth in peace!’”

“Then,” said he, “I have not peace with God, for I have never yet received such a message from God. For nearly three years I have been imprisoned between four walls, exercising the greatest severities against myself. I have fasted, prayed, ill-treated my body, until I am reduced to what you see; but I have not yet received this message from God.”

“You are a *sincere* man,” I remarked; “you are not one of those religionists who affect a heavenly air, and within have nothing but lust and wickedness.”

“How should I not be sincere, sir, when I know that it is with God Himself I have to do? *Appearance*, you know, is only for *this* world. *Reality* is for eternity. A thousand times a fool is he who sees no farther than this world. For my part, it is eternity that occupies me.”

“Blessed be God! Blessed be God! my dear friend! He has shown you the curse of the law

of God against every breach of that law ; according to Galatians iii. 10, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' and as you are not a hypocrite, but knowing well that you are violating this law constantly, even in spite of yourself, you at once 'apply the curse to yourself, well knowing in your conscience that you merit it."

"That is it exactly ! You have just laid bare my heart ; that is my state precisely. I see the just wrath of God against me, and I much desire to be able to appease or escape it."

I took out my Bible, and pointing to Galatians iii. 13, he read : "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Suddenly his languid eyes lighted up. The message of peace had come to him *through the WORD !*

"Do you understand now," I inquired, "why Jesus upon the CROSS must needs cry out, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'"

"It is clear, quite clear," he replied. "If Christ has been made a curse for me, in order to redeem me from the curse of the law, it follows that He

Himself sustained that curse. He thus becomes a substitute for me."

"Exactly! a *substitute* (one who takes the place of another). You cannot find a better word. 'He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him' (2 Cor. v. 21). 'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God' (1 Peter iii. 18)."

The heart of the young priest was evidently quite overcome. A pardon so sudden, a salvation so sure and so free, almost frightened him; he could scarcely believe himself in his proper senses. He appeared afraid to wake himself up, lest he should find his anguish had been calmed only by a cruel dream—cruel because of its very sweetness.

It was not a dream. It was the *truth* which had set him at liberty, according to John viii. 32, "And you shall know the *truth*, and the *truth* shall make you free." After this he gave himself much to the Scriptures, his peace became more settled, and his expression of suffering gave place to one of profound rest.

My reader, are you unmoved by these things? What a terrible wakening up will come some day! It may be to find yourself LOST!—LOST for ever.



Perhaps, like this young priest, you are troubled ; seeking rest, but finding none. Well, neither churches nor chapels, neither reading nor prayers, neither tears nor sorrow, will ever give you rest.

Sin broke up God's rest before it broke up yours. But He has found it again, and found it in One in whom it can never be disturbed. God has found eternal delight in THE MAN CHRIST JESUS ; and when you believe that sin has utterly ruined you, you will turn away from yourself, and every other object, to HIM, and find in Him eternal rest.

See that Man (Son of God, too) seated on the throne of God ! When men with wicked hands had crucified Him, why did the glory of God raise Him from the dead, and place Him there ? Because He had not only put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (that was for you), but because He had GLORIFIED GOD. He *was* made a curse, and so redeemed us from it ; but in that sacrifice, in thus bearing the curse, the whole glory of God found rest and joy, and there must you, with every redeemed soul, find rest for ever.

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“ The just shall live by his faith ” (Hab. ii. 4. compare Rom. i. 17 ; Gal. iii. 11 ; Heb. x. 38).

## A Man who would like to have been on Two Roads at the same time.

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“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”—NUM. xxiii. 10.

**A** VERY good desire, a pious wish, most certainly, though uttered by one who was neither good nor pious. A prophet, too,—but a false one, who, while praying to die the death of the righteous, hoped to live on in his sins; for did he not love “the wages of unrighteousness”? Solemn example to all who wish to come to the terminus of the narrow road leading to life and glory, yet remain in the broad road all the time! A serious instance of the truth that no one can be upon the two roads at the same time—be he prophet or any one else.

As though to mark this for our instruction, the death of Balaam, the man who used the expression given, is recorded in the Scriptures, as the reader will observe in Josh. xiii. 22: “Balaam also, the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.”

Please remark, "among them." Yes, among the pronounced enemies of God's people. We can only be where we are, profession or no profession, pious aspirations or with none at all. In divine things we cannot be neutral—we must be either for or against. The truth may to some appear grim; but soothsayer Balaam lived, and soothsayer he died; and among those he (false prophet as he was) doubtless prophesied "smooth things." But deceiver and deceived perish together, prophet and people. This is serious, surely!

Those who have "done good" (and the first good thing is to own before God that we are neither good nor have done good) will be in heaven with Jesus Christ, while many who *intended* to do good will find their way down (and the descent is remarkably easy) to eternal destruction.

It is not to be wondered at that men should desire to die the death of the righteous; but if as many lived the life of the righteous, who desire to die the death of the righteous, what a different place this world would be!

Certainly it is a real and substantial thing thus to die. It is said of Mr Addison, an accurate reasoner and a clear thinker, that, when

near his end, he sent for a near relation of his, a youth, who is said to have been "finely accomplished." Of course, Mr Addison was not an Evolutionist nor an Agnostic. Who would pray to die the death of such? Balaam knew better than that, whatever his conduct was.

After waiting some decent length of time, this youth said to the dying man, "Dear sir, you have sent for me; I believe and hope you have some commands; I shall hold them most sacred."

Mr Addison, grasping the hand of the youth, gently spoke, saying, "See in what peace a Christian can die!" This was said with difficulty, soon after which the Christian man died, having shown by his previous conduct he believed what he wrote and said.

Let the reader clearly understand, "There is none righteous, no, not one," in themselves; no human fitness would suit heaven.

"All the fitness He desireth,  
Is to feel your need of Him."

If by works of righteousness done by us we could stand before God, if by our own merits we could be in heaven, why should atonement have been made at all? As the apostle Paul

is inspired to say : " I do not frustrate the grace of God : for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain " (Gal. ii. 21). No ; all our own righteousnesses will only prove, to use the words of Scripture, to be as a " bed shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it " (Isa. xxviii. 20). A covering of " filthy rags," too, as the same prophet declares. " All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags ; and we all do fade as a leaf ; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away " (Isa. lxiv. 6).

We have, blessed be God, a Substitute for our sins—the Righteous One died for the guilty. Accordingly, through the " redemption which is in Christ Jesus," God has a righteousness for the believer in His Son, " even the righteousness of God, which is by *faith* of Jesus Christ unto *all* and *upon* ALL them that believe : for there is no difference " (Rom. iii. 22). It must be God's righteousness, or none at all. None other will avail. How could it ? Indeed, what need for God to provide a garment for us, if what we could make would suffice for His presence ? It is thus clear, that if you have not God's righteousness upon you, then you have no standing

before Him. Half-ready is not ready at all. The scripture says: "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." Said a Christian mother to her loved child, "Are you ready, should it please God to take you to Himself?" The child remained quiet for a time, and then said, "I think, mamma, that I am only about half-ready."

To be a Christian, to be born again, is not the gradual process people suppose it to be. You must be a believer or an unbeliever; unless, perchance, you might be what I once heard described as an unbelieving believer. But this must be abnormal! But certain it is, that we must be either on the broad road or the narrow one. On which is the reader of these pages? Which? Oh! do not allow the indifference and the apathy to divine things of this part of the nineteenth century to swamp you, and thus lose your immortal soul! Believe me, Christianity is a real thing, even though its expression by Christians should become feebler still. Turn to Jesus Christ, and then seek to reproduce Him in this world yourself, to His glory. Delay not! Let not procrastination—that kidnapper for the abyss where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched—lull you on to destruction!

“’Tis a mournful story,

Oft in the ears of pensive eve, to tell

Of morning’s firm resolve the vanish’d glory !

Hope lies withering within its cell ;

And plants of mercy dead, that might have bloom’d so  
well !”

“*Behold, now* is the accepted time ; *behold, now* is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

W. R. C.

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## “Too Late for Prayer.”

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**S**UCH were the words that escaped the lips of a dying youth, whose sad history we desire to bring under the notice of our unconverted readers.

May God use it to the awakening of some careless one, who has not yet faced the solemn realities of eternity. We are nearing the close of the day of God’s grace, and we would entreat you to listen to the appeal, “Prepare to meet thy God.” “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. ii. 3.)

The young man, whose dying words form the title of this paper, had a godly mother ; but his father was, alas ! an avowed infidel, who did his utmost to annul the mother’s influence ; and

in this he was but too successful. The lad grew up a thoughtless, ungodly, hardened young man, his whole life being given up to worldly pleasures and pursuits, heedless that God has said, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget God*" (Ps. ix. 17).

At the age of twenty-six, God laid His hand upon him through a dangerous illness, and it soon became evident that he was rapidly sinking into an early grave. Death in all its terror and bitterness now stared him in the face, and, alas! he was not prepared to meet God.

Shortly before the end he was visited by a Christian friend, from whose written account we borrow the following sad particulars. With kind words of sympathy and encouragement he expressed the hope of his recovery.

"Oh, no!" replied the young man, in tones of anguish; "I am dying—I am dying."

"I hope not," replied his friend; "I trust the doctor will be able to reassure you."

"The doctor has done all he can," he said. "My time has come; I cannot live any longer. Oh! I am going to die."

His mother, who was present, then asked him if he would like the Christian to pray with



him ; but his only answer was a loud cry of anguish, which brought all who were in the house to his bed-side. They knelt down, and the Christian earnestly prayed for the salvation of that poor perishing soul. When they rose, the dying man looked fixedly at his visitor, and said, in a decided tone, "It can do no good to pray *for me*, sir."

"God listens to our prayers," was the reply. "He encourages us to pray to Him, and He has not said that prayer is no good."

"My day is past," he said, "it is too late for me—too late!"

"No, it is *not* too late. You may obtain the mercy of the Lord, if you desire it. God Himself has said, 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' You know that Christ died for sinners."

"Mercy!" he cried out, "that is what makes my position so terrible. I despised it. I mocked at God ; I rejected Christ. If God were *righteous* only, I could bear it ; but the thought of having rejected His mercy is worse than all, There is no more grace for me. I am lost! lost!"

"You are mistaken," said the visitor, "God has put no limit to His invitations. Jesus says, 'Come unto Me, *all* ye that labour and are

heavy laden.' 'Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'"

"Not for me!" he continued. "I had my day, but I have lost it. I have been a fool; I have only thought of this world, and now I am dying. I would not seek God, and now He has come to fetch me, and I cannot escape Him."

"You still have time to take refuge in Jesus," replied the Christian. "'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' Christ received in grace the dying and repentant thief. God is so rich in mercy, that He forgives sinners at the eleventh hour."

"The eleventh hour is past," he said; "I am at the twelfth, and the time of God's vengeance is come. I only loved the world, and now I am going to leave it; and what is it worth to me?"

His father entered the room as he uttered the last words, and said to him, "You need not be in such trouble about yourself; you never did any harm to anybody."

"Do not speak to me, father," said the poor young man; "you have been my worst enemy, and the cause of my ruin. You taught me to disobey God, and to neglect the Bible. You told me that there was no hell, and that all men

would be saved. I did my best to believe it; I mocked at hell, and now hell is mocking at me. I would not have been so had I listened to my mother." He then asked for his brother, saying, "He is young, and I want him to know that what infidels say is false; I want him to read his Bible, and pray, so that he may not die as I do."

Looking at the lad as he entered the room, and addressing him by his name, he said—

"Come here! I am dying, and I want you to remember what I say after I am gone. Never do as I did. Read the Bible, and do what your mother tells you—she is a Christian. But, oh! remember that there is a place called hell, and I tell you of it when I am on the point of dying."

The boy stood by weeping; indeed, the dying man was the only one who remained unmoved. The visitor again offered to pray.

"No, not here," he said, decidedly; "but in the other room, if you like." And then addressing the doctor, who called, and expressed some hope for the following day, he said, "To-morrow I shall be dead."

It was but too true, and the Christian friend returning next day was amazed at the rapid progress of the disease. Death was evidently

putting its cold hand upon the poor young man. Delirium had set in, and he seemed almost unconscious. Seeing that the end was approaching, the Christian took advantage of what seemed a lucid interval, and once more proposed prayer; but he received the same answer as before, "It is too late for prayer."

They were the last words the poor young man uttered. A few hours afterwards his immortal soul passed into eternity. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be" (Eccles. xi. 3). Fain would we hope that before leaving this scene he was led to cast one look of faith to the crucified and now exalted One, but we have no warrant for thinking so. God knows; and it is not for us to judge, but rather to say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Num. xxiii. 10).

May the God of all grace bring you, dear unconverted reader, to the knowledge of your deep ruin and misery, and of the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus Christ for you, this very day. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, *much more shall not we escape* if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. xii. 25).

## God's Time or the Devil's.

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**H**OW strange it is that so many are unwilling to be saved in God's way and at God's time!

"I am waiting God's time," is the answer frequently given after urging a person to *immediate* decision. In reality such a one is refusing God's time, which is **now**! and putting off until the devil's, which is **never**!

Let me quote, for the reader's benefit, some of the texts which show that *there is no time like the present*, and that God would have the reader *settled* as to the solemn question of eternity, and that **now**, on the spot,—yes, even before laying down this little book.

"Acquaint **now** thyself with Him [God], and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21).

"Remember **now** thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Eccles. xii. 1).

"Come **now**, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found ; call ye upon Him while He is near” (Isa. lv. 6).

“All things are ready: come unto the marriage” (Matt. xxii. 4); and when God says, “Come,” He intends that there should be an *immediate* response.

“They that were **ready** went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut” (Matt. xxv. 10).

“Come; for all things are **now** ready” (Luke xiv. 17).

God “**now** commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness” (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

“Behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Surely all these, and many more that might be quoted, are sufficient to show the reader that it is the devil, and not God, that is leading him to put off to another day the settlement of the question which *may* be, and which *should* be, settled **to-day**!

“It is all very well for you, sir, as has nothing to do but to think of these things all day long,” said a young man, who was driving me along a country road; “but look at the likes

o' us, in them stables from six in the morning till sometimes ten at night. I ask you, sir, when has we time to think? Go to church on a Sunday? Why, it's our busiest time!"

"Now," said I, "that is but a paltry excuse, put into your heart by the devil, the great enemy of your soul. My work is often not done until two and three in the morning, and yet that does not hinder my believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. You do not require to *think* a great deal before being saved; and as for going to church, a great many who go there every Sunday of their lives are as far from being saved as many who never entered one in their lives. Oh no, *thinking* will not save you—*weeping* will not save you—*praying* will not save you—*working* will not save you—*going to church* will not save you. But Christ will save you, and save you on the spot, if you will only believe in Him."

Yes, my reader, this is what is needed—*just simply to believe*. But to believe what?

First, Believe that you are a *sinner*,—believe that you are a *guilty sinner*,—believe that you are a *lost sinner*,—believe that you are a sinner on your way to judgment,—believe that you are a sinner on your road to hell; then, Second, Believe that

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, —believe that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost,—believe that His precious blood was shed as an atonement for sins,—believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. Yes, believe that the work of God's dear Son is finished ; and believe that God has raised Him from the dead, and placed Him in heavenly glory, as the proof that He is fully satisfied with that blessed work, —and then do not be ashamed nor afraid to confess it, for God has said, that " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved " (Rom. x. 9).

" But is it only to believe? That seems too easy!" How often does the devil put this excuse into people's lips!

Yes, it is only to believe ; but simple as this seems, it is just the very thing people will not do. It is too humbling to their pride. Oh, if every reader of these pages only believed what is found above under the heading *First*, he would soon believe what is under the heading *Second*; and being filled " with all joy and peace in believing " (Rom. xv. 13), his heart would



soon overflow with praise, and his lips be ready to confess Christ before the world.

May God the Holy Ghost produce this soul-saving faith.

“But must I not repent?” Most certainly; and what surer way is there of repenting than to *believe* God’s testimony concerning yourself, and then to *believe* His testimony concerning His Son!

“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke xiii. 3); but “the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance” (Rom. ii. 4).

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted!” (Acts iii. 19)

A. H. B.

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## Faith Counted for Righteousness.

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**J**UST as a bank-note is in itself worth nothing, but is valuable through what it is connected with, and is counted to the person who has it for the wealth it stands for; so *faith*, deriving all its value from what it stands connected with, is counted for righteousness to that sinner who believes in Jesus,—who is saved, not by virtue of *believing*, but by the virtue of *what* he believes.

## “Looking for Jesus.”

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**G**OING into a Bible and Tract Depôt one day, I met there a young man who “sought to see Jesus.” He was sitting by himself, and looked distressed and restless, having been, as I learned, awakened at a Gospel preaching sometime previously to a true sense of his lost condition, and he was in deep anxiety about his soul, and earnestly desiring to find peace with God.

Going near to him, I spoke to him of the Saviour and His finished work, for other remedy there is none for a soul in such a state. “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”

His quivering lip told the depth of his feeling, as he answered, “I am looking for Jesus, and I cannot find Him.”

Here was reality, and a soul in earnest. *He was looking for Jesus.* The sinner was seeking the Saviour, and expressing, like one of old, “Oh that I knew where I might find Him!”

“But where are you looking?” I asked.

The question seemed to occupy him; and,

after some moments' thought, he said vaguely, "I don't know."

"Where is the one you are seeking? where *is* Jesus?"

It was some time before he spoke, and, with an inquiring look, he slowly said, "In heaven?"

"Yes! Jesus is in heaven; and He is the living Saviour in heaven, who has gained the victory over sin, and borne its judgment. Raise your thoughts to Him where He is, and where He is speaking *peace* to you, and telling you that your sins were all put away when He bore the judgment of them on the cross and died in your stead.

"Now He is in heaven without them, and they can never rise against you again. They are gone in His atoning death, and God sees them no more. Christ bore them in His own body on the tree, died for our sins, and rose from the dead without them. They are gone—put away from before God for ever."

He was listening eagerly, and these few words seemed to lift the load from off him, and, with somewhat of a relieved look, he ejaculated—

"I never thought of that before! Jesus is in heaven—and the sins He bore on the cross are gone—and God sees them no more!"

“Yes! God sees them no more. Fix your eyes on *Jesus in heaven*, for no one could look up into the face of Jesus Christ upon the throne of God, and have a doubt. Could you? *Impossible!* for no sins could be on Him there.”

More to this effect passed as to the *finished* work of Christ; and though I never saw him again, I believed these words were light to him, that his eye now rested on Jesus in the glory, whom he wished to find, and had been earnestly seeking, and that he knew his sins were for ever discharged by His work on the cross.

As one has said, “Let me see my Saviour in the glory, and I have the certainty that all my sins have been put away.” The tide of judgment rolled over the Lord Jesus Christ, and judgment is past for Him, and for ever too for those who believe in His name.

When a soul is in earnest, and need is felt, faith appropriates the message from God,—takes God at His word, and goes on its way rejoicing.

“There is no other name than Thine,  
 Jehovah Jesus! name divine!  
 On which to rest for sins forgiven,  
 For peace with God, for hope of heaven.

Name above every name, Thy praise  
 Shall fill yon courts thro' endless days!  
 Jehovah Jesus! name divine!  
 Rock of salvation, Thou art mine.”

## An Offering for Sin.

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**G**OD speaks plainly of wrath, indignation, vengeance, because of sin. What was the wrath due to sin which Christ bore when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree? It is not a speculative question of what might be, but of what saves you! Do you believe that what Christ bore, when He made His soul an offering for sin, was merely the amount of a certain temporary suffering?—that this was what sin amounted to in the presence of God? And that this, too, was what God's wrath amounted to? Do not be led astray by any abuse of the blessed truth, that it was Christ's Divine nature that gave infinite value to His work. It did so, blessed be God. But He "bore our SINS in His own body on the tree."

"And it pleased the Lord to bruise Him."

"He was wounded for our transgressions."

"The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."

"With His stripes we are healed."

Now, was what He bore for us, for you, a mere amount of temporary punishment? or the

*holy wrath of God*, the awfulness of God's forsaking Him while He was alive, His soul being made thus an offering for sin? That wrath which shuts out from His presence, while the soul can know what it is,—is not this what we have deserved?

It is not merely torment, and thus ceasing to exist; though Christ, as a Divine person, gave infinite value to His work.

Some mightier creature might well have borne temporal punishments due; but the wrath and judgment implied in eternal punishment, a Divine person alone could bear, and bear away.

J. N. D.



**“Out of the heart of men proceed  
evil thoughts.”**

MARK vii. 21.

**W**E often hear it said, in these days, that man is being elevated by lofty and scientific thoughts. But the question for us is: Does man give *God* the right place in his heart, and is there anything there to suit *Him*? The Bible shows us clearly that, from the beginning, the

tendency of man's thoughts has been to make much of himself and little of God. Perhaps not always openly so, but God looks at what lies hidden in the heart. “Hell and destruction are before the Lord; how much more then the *hearts* of the children of men?” (Prov. xv. 11). Let us contrast what the man of the world thinks in his heart, with what God has revealed in His word:—

“The fool hath *said in his heart*, There is no God.”—Ps. xiv. 1.

“The wicked . . . hath *said in his heart*, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.”—Ps. x. 6.

“He hath *said in his heart*, God hath forgotten: . . . He will never see it.”—Ps. x. 11.

“He hath *said in his heart*, Thou wilt not require it.”—Ps. x. 13.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”—1 Tim. ii. 5.

“When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape.”—1 Thess. v. 3.

“Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.”—Ps. xc. 8.

“God requireth that which is past.”—Eccles. iii. 15.

“That evil servant shall *say in his heart*, My lord delayeth his coming.”—Matt. xxiv. 48.

“Thou hast *said in thine heart*, I am, and none else beside me.”—Isa. xlvii. 10.

“She *saith in her heart*, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”—Rev. xviii. 7.

“*As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.*”—Prov. xxiii. 7.

It is a blessed thing that the Gospel not only unfolds to us the deceitfulness of our thoughts, but it reveals to us the thoughts of God,—thoughts of love and mercy for the poor sinner who is weary of the evil of his own heart. When we can own before God that every imagination of the thoughts of our hearts is only evil continually, so that nothing less than the death of Christ can deliver us from them, then God can say: “I know the thoughts that I think toward you; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (Jer. xxix. 11).

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”—2 Pet. iii. 9.

“Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”—Ps. xxxix. 5.

“In one hour shall thy judgment come.”—Rev. xviii. 10.



## “Reveal Thyself to Me!”

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“**A** CQUAINT now thyself *with Him*, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee.”

Precious promise! It is a great thing to be “at peace” in a world where there is no peace. “Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain.” How vivid the picture these words draw of what is going on around us day after day in a world which *by wisdom knew not God*, and where the restless unsatisfied heart vainly seeks happiness outside of Him in whose presence it alone can be found! The cross is the one place where we can acquaint ourselves with Him, “*and be at peace.*” Have you done so, dear reader?

“Oh, God! if there be a God, reveal Thyself to me!” was a cry out of the darkness in which questions and doubts had plunged a would-be infidel, who was on his way down to the country to visit his estates some years since. He had written a book to try and convince a friend of his folly in believing in Christianity. Ere sending it to the press he sat down to read it again.

The book read, he asked himself, "Were I a believer in Christ would such arguments upset my faith? No, they would not." Throwing himself on his knees, he cried thus to God: "Oh, God! if there be a God, *reveal Thyself to me!*"

God heard; God answered; and he rose from his knees a changed man. Instead of his book being published, this nobleman was converted to the faith he had once sought to destroy; and not only so, but he went forth into the world to tell out to others the grace of that Saviour-God who had met him, and blessed him with the knowledge of Himself in so signal a manner. "And this is life eternal, that they might *know Thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John xvii. 3).

Continuing his journey, he reached his estates to learn that a number of his tenants had been making his conversion a subject of special prayer.

Again I would ask any who may read these lines, Have you made acquaintance *with God*? Are you at peace? If still in darkness, may light be yet your portion! Jesus says, "I am the light of the world" (John viii. 12). Perhaps some may ask, "How can I find Him—the

Light?" He also says, "I am the door;" "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

*"Why 'neath the load of your sins do ye toil?  
Christ giveth rest, giveth rest."*

It is beyond price; neither you nor I could ever buy it. The *One* who gives this rest bought it. No words can tell what it cost Him, for He "made peace by the blood of His cross." "He laid down His life for us" (1 John iii. 16), is the language in which the Spirit of God tells out the depth of that love—a deep that has no sounding.

"Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace," dear reader, "thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21). L.



## Three Facts Affecting Everybody.

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**A**LLOW me briefly, my reader, to draw your attention to three important facts which affect us all, so little understood, and yet so clearly stated in the Word of God. The first fact is—

**Our Ruin.**

The Scriptures connect *our ruin* with THE FACT ALONE of our having sinned, and not with the number of sins we have committed, be they few or many. One sin was enough to cause Adam to be driven from the garden of God's own planting. And it is written, "*All* have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23); so that "if we say we have *not* sinned, we make God a liar" (1 John i. 10). "*All*," therefore, having sinned, are included in the *ruin*. "There is no difference" (Rom. iii. 22).

Now, God, who "is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity," has decreed, not only concerning the coming glory, that "there shall in nowise enter into it *anything* that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27), but that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and "after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27)—"eternal judgment" (Heb. vi.)—"the second death" (Rev. xxi. 8).

Man is triune (1 Thess. v. 23); that is, he is possessed of "spirit, and soul, and body" (mark the Divine order, "spirit" first, "body" last), so that the "body" does not solely constitute "THE MAN," nor can death ever blot him out of conscious existence. "Fear not them that kill *the body*," said the Lord Jesus, "but are not able to kill *the soul*" (Matt. x. 28). "Thou hast

destroyed thyself," said the Lord to Israel, "but in Me is thine help."

No, "death" is not extinction, neither will "destruction" be a ceasing to exist. You must dwell for ever; can my reader answer—*Where?* The next fact is—

### God's Remedy.

It has often been related of the brother of the celebrated Whitefield, that being on one occasion in a despondent frame of mind, the Countess of Huntingdon inquired of him the cause, to which he answered, "Ah, madam! I am a lost man."

Greatly to his amazement, she expressed herself pleased with his reply, "for," explained the Countess, "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*."

The miserable man understood the remark at once, believed it, and was happy.

Glorious mission! Blessed news! "By Him (the now risen Jesus) ALL *that believe* are justified from ALL things" (Acts xiii. 39), for God hath "exalted with His right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour," that Blessed One who "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).

As regards sinners who believe, we are assured "there is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1); and as regards their sins, God says, "Their sins and iniquities I will remember NO MORE" (Heb. x. 17).

No sinner is too bad to be saved (1 Tim. i. 15). No sin is too bad to be cleansed (Isa. i. 18). The third fact is—

### Man's Responsibility.

God holds all who have heard the Gospel responsible to believe it, and it is He who "commandeth *all men everywhere* to repent" (Acts xvii. 30), for the day is fast approaching when the "strong delusion" shall be sent to those who, in this day of grace, "believe not the truth" (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12). The blood of Christ will avail them nothing *then*. The door of mercy will be closed against such for ever *then* (Matt. xxv. 10-12); and "the Lord Jesus (the Saviour *now*) shall" *then* "be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9).

“He that believeth not the Son SHALL NOT *see* life (mark it well, O Universalist! ‘shall not *see* life’); but the wrath of God ABIDETH ON *him*” (mark it well, O annihilationist! “*abideth* on him,” in the long eternal NOW) (John iii. 36).

Reader, these are naked facts. Pervert not their meanings: but, “Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?”

N. L. N.



## “Glory be to Jesus Christ.”

THE French train was speeding along from Paris to Calais, through country that did not produce any points of special interest to those who looked from the windows of the carriages. Among the passengers was a gentleman returning to London after a much needed summer holiday. His thoughts wandered somewhat aimlessly backwards and forwards—backwards over the beautiful scenes he had left behind him, and forwards to the somewhat weary routine of business life that awaited him. But what is this? Suddenly his eye is caught and held fast by a distant

perspective, which he would willingly keep within sight, could he but control the engine which hurries him on. Along a bare hill-side he reads quite distinctly these words—"Gloire à Jésus Christ" (Glory be to Jesus Christ). Some one has cut out the turf to form huge letters, and filled them in with white chalk stones, causing the short sentence to be easily read.

"Gloire à Jésus Christ." *Amen*, the traveller replies; for he can say from the heart, "Glory be to Jesus Christ." Can you? What a change of feeling was wrought in him by this one sentence! His thoughts were turned from earth to heaven, and his heart was recalled to the only One who is worthy of honour and praise: by faith he beheld Jesus his Saviour, crowned with glory at God's right hand in heaven. In spirit he was among the surrounding hosts who can say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

When Jesus was born into this world, a "multitude of the heavenly host" praised God. When He went back to His Father, His entrance into heaven evoked more praise: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in" (Ps. xxiv.). Shall man only be left out of the chorus now? Will not you too join



the company of those who can bless His name? The traveller knew His love, and was glad to be reminded of Him; “We love Him, *because* He first loved us” (1 John iv. 19). The French hill-side which some hand had made a *silent* witness to Him, now called a living witness to worship Him anew.

“Sing, my soul! He lovèd thee,  
Jesus gave Himself for me.”

But alas! there are many who will not and cannot sing this song. Quite lately one said he did not like the atmosphere of heaven which he experienced in a certain house, and that he could not stand so much hymn-singing. Such a one would not be happy in heaven, for Jesus will be chief and centre there, and around Him will be the redeemed, who will serve Him day and night in His temple. What an atmosphere! a divine one—and it will be *heaven* because *He is there*, though even on this *earth* during the millennium when He is reigning there will be peace and happiness.

“Joy and peace, like flowers,  
Spring up where He doth pass.”

May we all be more and more witnesses—speaking, living witnesses for Jesus, “who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

H. L. H.

## Alice; or, Found after Many Days.

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“**A**ND do you mean I may come to your house, miss; me, a stranger, whom you have never seen before? May I come along to-night, if mother says I may? Yes, it is hard times most days now. Not that the work is so hard, but that mother sets on so,—what with the children ill, and my brother Frank still out of work. And then there’s father, what with the coaxing and the watching, mother says it’s more than she can ’bide sometimes.”

I looked at the girl’s flushed face. Such large, blue, eager eyes met mine, they seemed to look me through; and, after the first startled gaze, I thought their decision was to trust in me. She stood leaning against a lamp-post. The tall slim outlines of her graceful figure, and tiny gloveless hands, contrasted oddly with the severe gingham gown she wore and the simple well-worn mushroom hat; so different from the many mill-girls hurrying by us then, not one without her bit of finery, feather, or beads. I passed on my way, feeling sure that one at least of the many I had spoken to that morning would keep

her word, and pay me a visit in my "Evening Home."

It is the evening hour that brings the temptations in this crowded suburb of our big city, when the glaring jet-lights from the dancing-saloons and music halls seem to give such a welcome to the giddy, thoughtless, pleasure-loving youth; "pass-times," to fill up the hurrying hours of life, wherein to drown pain, care, and thoughts of coming toil. Yet that is not all; the sting of sin is there, and the slow fever that works so secretly at first.

Evening by evening I awaited my guests, as they trooped in by twos and threes; and among the merry, laughing throng came Alice, quiet and demure. For days no one seemed to notice her, she slipped in so quietly; but in time they found her out, and some one said—

"Who's her?" pointing a finger over her shoulder.

"That 'un? Oh, her's a stranger here; her's not our sort. Why, my dear Liz, her couldn't say 'Bo' to a goose."

How I longed sometimes to get a word with the girl, but with all her almost childish trustfulness there was a quiet dignified reserve that seemed to check inquiry. But she was always

in her place when we gathered round the fire for a "good-bye talk," when we caught the girls in their quieter moods, and then they almost hung upon our words.

It seemed like news to them hearing of the love of God as a love for them to trust in,—a love that spared not an only Son, but that gave Him up to die and suffer on the cross for their sins. It seemed as though it could scarcely be that the "Just" should suffer "for the unjust." And then, too, that God should care so much about them as to meet them in all the daily needs of their narrowed, weary lives. Surely light was dawning in some of these sad hearts, which had for so long accustomed themselves to think of God only as the Almighty One, far away, quite outside their lives.

"Miss," said Martha, as she left one night, "I believe God cares, because you care, though we are only factory girls."

.....

"And who be you? We dunnot want ony, thankee. I be busy, and we here don't have toime to read such loiks."

"Don't want what?" I said, surprised, as the woman drew herself up a moment from her scrubbing, and fixed a pair of defiant eyes on me.

“No tracts,” she answered, moving as if to push the door.

“But I haven’t any,” I replied, laughing.

“Who be you, then?” came the answer, not quite so fierce this time.

“I am a friend of your daughter Alice, and came to ask for her.”

The woman’s face darkened again.

“You may well ask,” she almost shouted. “Where be she? Why, along down the road with all the rest.”

Perhaps a shadow crossed my face, for she looked at me more closely, saying—

“Don’t mistake me, the gal ain’t bad; she’s steady enough, poor lass. Not like I was when a lass, with a silly head full of this and that nonsense. Sure I was happy enough in my farm home, till the young Squire’s son came along, and what with his talks and his promises, and I thinking to be made a great leddy, gave in, and so we ran off and got married. And then came the trouble, and my mon he lists. But there now, need I tell you the rest?” spreading out her hands. “See,” she continued, “that is what it’s brought us to. This! do you call this home? And nine children, not one of them strong enough to face the world—weak, refined, delicate—all took after their father.”

Much more she said, telling me how she had followed her husband from place to place with his regiment. Being a quick workwoman, she was useful to the officers' wives, and was seldom without employment. When he was ready to despair, she became the more watchful and earnest to keep him straight ; and now they had settled down where he had found work on the railway.

“And what of Alice?” I asked again, as she finished her story.

“Why, the gal's going along with the rest, I tell you. I must have her home ; I must !” she said, almost desperately.

“This is how it were, miss. The old couple are hard—hard as this stone hearth here. No ! there's no forgiveness for the mother ; but they'll have the children, and glad enough too.

“So I let the eldest go ; and she, poor child, is that quoit-loike, and never says a word, but just works hard every day, and not so much as a murmur. Whether it was the cold of Norfolk, or what, I don't know, but it took her in the lungs ; it's the way they all go. It wasn't long with her, miss ; she took ill in the autumn, and in six months all was over.

“Then it was Alice they must needs have ;

Alice, to nurse her. I says yes ; but only on a visit, mind you, only on a visit. Soon after my eldest died ; and, says I, Alice must come home. But no such thing.

“ Had I the heart to treat an old couple so ? I had other children ; did I grudge them this *one* in their loneliness ? And that’s how it was, miss, I gave in ; God knows, not willingly. But there, they were my ain parents. What could I do ?

“ She was sent out in the orchard in the early morning to gather windfalls, when the dew was on the ground. And that’s the whole story. And now she’s down, and she’ll die too ; my Alice, the bonniest of them all. She will die, I tell you ; and who’s there to care ? Trouble ? Yes ; no end to it ! Don’t speak to me of comfort, or of God ; I cannot bear it. No ; if I believed once a little, it’s all gone now. One child dead, another dying, and seven more to go the same way. They’ve all it in them, yes, all ; it’s consumption, miss, consumption.”

And so Alice’s mother was hardening her heart against that God who had so loved her as to give His only-begotten Son to die for her, *She* could not spare two out of her nine children ; *He* had freely given up His only-begotten and

well-beloved Son ! Oh, what love was this ! And what love of Jesus, to come and willingly suffer for sinners such as she was ! and yet she cared not for Him, did not even believe ! Reader, do you ?

“ He knew how wicked man had been,  
And knew that God must punish sin ;  
So, out of pity, Jesus said  
He'd bear the punishment instead.”

A week or so after I called again. The house was shut up. No satisfaction could be got from the neighbours. “ No, they did not know where the family had gone to ; they were strange folks with strange ways.”

Mrs Smith replied that she for one “ preferred to keep herself to herself, and not to be prying into her neighbours' movements.”

The landlord said, “ All he minded was his rent ; and though the woman had a sharp tongue, and had hard work enough to keep the old man from the public, she was honest, and had paid her rent, and that was all he knew.”

So it was that I lost sight of Alice.

Just one year had passed away, and winter had come round again. A cold dreary December day, darkness within and without, though only



two o'clock, as I looked out at the fog and back again to my snug chair by the fire. I decided I was best off at home, so settled down again to my work and my thoughts, till some one came and said, "Did I know a young girl named Alice H——? She was dying in East London, and was asking for me."

. . . . .

A low-roofed upper room, clean but poor, very poor. By the bed stood the mother, the same, yet changed; if possible the lines of care were deeper. Her lips, close set as if defying pain, relaxed a little when she saw me. She said, "I'm glad you've come, for the child will rest content."

A thin white hand was stretched out across the coverlet; I laid mine upon it. My eyes were dim as they rested on that changed, white, tired, and wasted face. The silence of that room was only broken by the sharp, hard cough. And was this Alice? The blue eyes were fixed on mine once more; such joy and light were there! I bent down to catch the whispered words, "You've come; I only want to thank you." And then, with quick, short breaths, "I'm—happy—very—happy."

Day was declining, life was passing away; she

was leaving the world that for her had brought little else but sorrow, change, and pain ; dying, and our minds were for that moment occupied with the sadnesses of earth's passing day. But why these tears? For Alice was eagerly looking onward and upward to that land of everlasting day, where "the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick," for her heart was surely fixed there, where true joys are to be found through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Thank you," the words kept ringing in my ear. Thank me for what? Was it for that message given long ago, "found after many days"?

How little we know what we may have done when we have opened our lips, perhaps tremblingly, to speak of Christ, not as a far-off distant name, or a beautiful character that we admired and vainly tried to copy. No! but as of a Saviour and Friend whom we know personally ; so weak the words, so feeble, so far short of what He is ; and yet we speak of One we *know*. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." "Life eternal!" God's own gift to man. A gift! though many heed it not. A certainty! to all that believe. Oh! how sad these words to those who heard them long ago ;

how grave their meaning still to those who do not heed to-day. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John v. 40). Surely this is on time to trifle, in these days of sickness and of death. "It is a matter of life or death." How often we have heard the words of late from the lips of the busy doctors, "This, or that," is their only chance of life. Reader, it is a matter of life or death with you to-day!

Listen once more to the words of Christ,—  
 "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

K. H. M.



## The Firstling of an Ass.

"Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck."—EXOD. xiii. 13.

THIS type teaches us a wholesome and humbling truth with reference to our state by nature as children of Adam, together with the wondrous provision of God's grace for relieving us from this state.

It brings before us, not what we are in our personal responsibilities, and the way of meeting these so as to free us from the penalties that attach to us as *guilty*, but what we are, apart from every act of our own, by simple inheritance from our parents, by virtue of which our lives are forfeited from the first moment of our existence, and from which we require to be redeemed in order that we may live to God.

The type brings before us three things:—

(1.) The nature of the animal that is to be redeemed—an ass.

(2.) The mode of its redemption—by a lamb.

(3.) The absolute alternative if not redeemed—the neck to be broken.

Under the law, we read in Leviticus xi., all animals were divided into two classes—clean and unclean. The first class alone was to supply the Israelites with food, and from it the various sacrifices were to be drawn. What man could eat for his blessing, and God accept for him in sacrifice, were thus made identical. On the other hand, what God could not accept in sacrifice man was not to eat; and thus, in what was refused or used, Jehovah associated His people with Himself in that which made up even their life in natural things. Without going into the

details of what constituted clean and unclean, we learn from the broad features of this typical teaching two all-important truths:—In nature and practice one animal is clean; while in nature and practice another is unclean. What have we here but the simple unfolding of what Christ, as man, is on the one hand, and what man in the flesh is on the other? The defining line of clean and unclean runs from Genesis to Revelation. Whether in type or in fact, it is Christ on the one side and Adam on the other.

Man by his *birth* from Adam is unclean. He is *born* outside the pale of all blessing, far removed from all that is good and acceptable before God. The pride of the natural heart by no means receives readily such a humbling truth as this. Man would fain disown his inheritance, and take higher and better ground. He would see in the type we are considering only a curiosity in a past economy. He cannot allow himself to see in it his own condition by nature. Though forced to admit that in practice he has failed to be *all* he should be, whether towards God or his neighbour, he would utterly disclaim that he is by nature merely "the firstling of an ass." His knowledge of himself cannot admit such a thought for a moment, and "vain man

would be wise, though man be *born* a wild ass's colt" (Job xi. 12).

It is easier far to acknowledge that we have acted *like* a wild ass's colt than to acknowledge that we are such. Yet this is the clear utterance of God's Word about us, and it is the unmistakable language of our type. It is not till we see God's estimate of ourselves that we are free to receive, in all its fulness, His wondrous remedy for the dire necessity we are in.

By type and by direct teaching God has taken great pains to give us the real state of things as before Himself. Nor will He overlook what His own eye sees, however much we would like to have it so. He will not confound things that differ, nor yoke clean and unclean together. "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together," is His word in Deut. xxii. 10. Would He show us the extremity of man's necessity in the things of this life, He pictures it to us in the famine of a city, "besieged till an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver" (2 Kings xi. 25). The horrors of famine could go no further; the "ass's head," and "we boiled my son and did eat him," go together. So Israel's wanton reliance on an arm of flesh, in going to Egypt for help, is to Jehovah the abomination of

feeding upon those "whose flesh is as the flesh of asses" (Ezek. xxiii. 20).

Had not Israel been taught God's utter rejection of Egypt, as that which to Him was utterly unclean, indeed "as the flesh of asses"? Was not their state that of those who had been by Himself redeemed from that unclean condition? And had not the type we are taking up been given as the memorial of this very thing? "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck; and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem. And it shall be when thy son asketh of thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast; therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem" (Exod. xiii. 13-15).

Jehovah would ever have His people remember the degradation from which they had

been redeemed, and continually He would keep before them and their children the bright *grace* that had interfered to save them from a destruction which, in virtue of their *nature* as sinners, as much belonged to them by inheritance as it did to the Egyptians. What man is by *nature* is abomination to God, and cannot live in His presence, or, yet in that state, is to be consigned to everlasting shame. For a little moment man may glitter in the pomp and vanity of human greatness, like Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, and his friends may lament his end, saying, "Ah, Lord!" "Ah, his glory!" but in God's sight he is "buried with the burial of an *ass*, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (Jer. xxii. 19). Man without the knowledge of God is but a Nebuchadnezzar, with a "heart made like the beasts, and his dwelling with wild asses" (Dan. v. 21).

Such in God's sight is man's state by nature. He is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, David tells us (Ps. li. 5), and is "estranged from the womb," going astray as soon as born, speaking lies (Ps. lviii. 3). He is but the "firstling of an ass" by his earliest breath, and can only grow up as such. He may be educated to serve man's purposes, but with God he has no link either for



time or eternity. It is for us to consider such things. The plea of innocency is constantly put in for the babe at the breast, and education is brought to bear upon him as he grows up. A pardon for some lapses in good conduct he may require at the end of his history, but redemption—the thing needed *at birth* to bring him to God, and save his life from eternal destruction—finds but a small place in the popular theology of the day or the ordinary pulpit oratory that people delight to have their ears tickled with.

“Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb,” is the utterance of Him whose word liveth and abideth for ever. *Redemption*, not *education*, is what the infant at the breast requires in order that he may have a place in God’s economy.

One other alternative awaited the firstling of an ass: “if not, thou shalt break his neck.” Redemption or destruction became its portion from the first moment of its existence. It was no question of what it had been or might become. It was “the firstling of an ass,” and its life was forfeited by the first breath it drew. The lamb stepped in between it and destruction, and through the death of the lamb it passed out of its state by nature, and could take its part, in

virtue of redemption, in the service of the God of Israel. By Jehovah's provision, the lamb was thus ready to die for the firstling of an ass, the *moment* it made its appearance. The *choice* lay between the lamb and the broken neck.

How simple is the language of this type to the eye of faith. Redemption or destruction awaits the child of Adam at the very moment of his birth. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," and it is "appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Man's history begins with the alternative of "the lamb," or "the broken neck." Blessed be God, the "Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world" has appeared "once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). The blood of God's own Son has been shed upon the cross for man's redemption. It knows no limitation of nation or of colour. It is not a ceremonial system for a special people, but the bright witness of Divine love and mercy for all men,— "for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom *for all*." He is the blessed "Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world." The healing rays of that Sun shine

for all, and the redeeming virtues of that blood are *available* for the entire human race. Upon this ground, and not upon that of innocency, every little helpless infant, that passes out of this scene ere it reaches the platform of personal responsibility, finds its place in the blessedness provided for it by Him whose will it is that "not one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. xviii. 14).

It was not pity for "the firstling of an ass," as such, that God would have had His ancient people learn from this suggestive ordinance, but a lesson about themselves and His love for them. "Doth God take care of oxen?" asks the apostle Paul, "or saith He it altogether for our sakes?" "For our sakes without doubt this is written," he replies. The pitying eye of God has looked down in mercy upon every little helpless firstling of an ass of the widespread human family, and in the blood of the Lamb of God we see the rich and eternal provision for its state as such. If, according to His choice they die early, He avails Himself on their part of its blessed efficacy. If according to His will they grow up to take a place before Him on the footing of personal responsibility, He in the word of "the truth of the Gospel" tells them of their state

before Himself, and bids them avail themselves, by personal faith, of that redemption through the blood of Jesus, which is also "the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. i. 7).

Man must *take* his place before God, not only in the acknowledgment of *sins*, but of *sin*. Not only of what he is by *practice*, but of what he is by *nature*. Not only of what he has gained for himself as the *wages* of sin, but of what he stands possessed by *inheritance*. He must change from the condition of *sinner'ship* to that of *righteousness*, and from the ground of *creation* to that of *redemption*, if ever he is to see the light of God in the abodes of everlasting blessedness. He does this the *moment* he trusts himself to the blood of Christ. The firstling of the ass is eternally saved, and his neck shall *never* be broken.

Dear reader, have you done this? Has the blood of the Lamb become your *redemption*?

C. W.

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WE may try to make the best of the world ; but we must all feel that something has come in, something that has brought in death and judgment. Happiness cannot be associated with sin, any more than sin can be associated with God.—J. N. D.

## “Why! She’s the Archdeacon’s Daughter.”

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“**Y**OU might call at that big house a little way down the road; Miss G—— might be induced to go to the Town Hall to-night, as she knows your uncle very well.”

A few Gospel services were being held in this little town, and my informant was under the impression that the old lady in question might possibly forego her late dinner for once, and break through all her hard and fast rules, by going to hear the Word of God preached in an unconsecrated building. A bold step, no doubt, and a rude shock to all her sense of religious propriety; but curiosity, that important factor of the human race, might in this case gain the day. And did we not well know, that many who have entered a Gospel meeting for no other purpose even than to “mock” have remained behind to “pray”?

Yes, dear reader, if you really wish to be lost eternally, and really intend to go down to an everlasting hell, take my advice and never attend

a Gospel service. Do not even venture to read a Gospel book. It is dangerous, I assure you! A sentence from the evangelist's lips, even one word, as I have known on many occasions, has done its work,—*God's* work, let me rather say; and the sinner who entered perfectly unconcerned,—just by accident, as he would say,—has left with an arrow fixed in his conscience, which, do what he can, no efforts of his own are able to dislodge. Thank God that He who makes the wound can heal it! But in this blessed process the enemy is turned into a child; for he who possesses a nature which is "enmity against God," becomes a child of God "by faith in Christ Jesus."

"The poor have the Gospel preached unto them" is a statement of God's Word, the truth of which the longer I live becomes more and more apparent to me. It is easy to knock at a poor man's door, and, having entered in response to the simple "Come in, please, sir," to plunge at once into the subject of all others the most important to each and all, even if it be the most distasteful. But with the rich it is far otherwise.

However, encouraged by my friend, I determined to make the attempt. Miss G—— received me courteously, though with a certain measure of

stiffness, which decidedly increased when the object of my visit became known.

Very soon I made the painful discovery that she “cared for none of these things.” A church-goer she was, a regular communicant too, but interest in Gospel work she had none. To go out for such a purpose at night was out of the question—on a week night, too! Then on Sunday she had her own church, and she did not want any more than that. In fact, the more she spoke the more evident did it become that she was one of those so forcibly described by Him who reads the heart in those withering words, “This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, . . . but their heart is far from Me.”

Of whom, think you, were these words spoken? Of the careless, the godless, and the profane? Nay, but of the religious professors, who were attending, in the most scrupulous manner, to every little detail of their empty and Christless worship.

Finding all efforts in that direction hopeless, the conversation turned on the case of a young lady very ill with consumption, and whose death was almost daily expected. Remarking how sad it was to think of a young life being removed so early, and how solemn a thing death was for all,

whether old or young, in view of that which comes afterwards,—for “it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment,”—I ventured to ask, “Do you think Miss —— is prepared for the change?”

Never shall I forget the way Miss G—— drew herself up, as she exclaimed, almost shouted,—emphasizing every word, and looking at me with varying expressions of anger, surprise, and contemptuous pity for my ignorance,—“Prepared! Why,—she’s—the—Archdeacon’s—daughter!”

“I don’t see that that has anything to do with it,” said I, “for I am sorry to say that it is quite possible to be an archdeacon and yet not prepared to die. Depend upon it, if you have no better title for heaven than that, you will never get there at all.”

No other title for heaven will suffice than the precious blood of Jesus, shed on Calvary’s cross for guilty, ruined sinners. And unless you, my reader, have come down to the level of being lost and undone you cannot be saved, for only those who are lost can be saved.

Oh, if you are under this awful delusion, that because you have been baptized and confirmed, have taken the sacrament, sung in the choir, taught in the Sunday school, filled some of the



offices of the church, preached in the pulpit, or in Christ’s name “done many wonderful works,” that therefore all is well with you for eternity, —may God in His great mercy sweep away this refuge of lies before it is too late, and give you to realize that you are standing before Him in all your sin and need, and to find Christ as your righteousness!

“I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,” said the precious Saviour to those self-righteous religionists of His day, who found fault, and murmured at Him for having anything to do with “publicans and sinners.”

If you have not found out that you are a lost sinner, you stand *no chance* of heaven or salvation. None will be lost in eternity but those who will not own that they are lost now. But, thank God, none need be lost, “for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost,” and all that you have to do is to put your trust in Him.

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

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

A. H. B.

## God's Handwriting.

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**G**OD has chosen three times to record in His own handwriting that which He wished man specially to notice. Once the finger of the mighty God traced the letters in the solid stone; a second time on the plaster of a king's palace wall; a third time in the drifting sand. We hear of things written in heaven, but how solemn when God stoops to write on earth!

### The Writing on Stone.

In Deut. ix. 10, God wrote on two tables of stone the law, "written with the finger of God." God is holy; man is sinful, and has no righteousness of his own that will enable him to stand in the presence of a righteous God. If Israel of old wished for God's favour, they must walk before Him in a way to obtain it. God therefore gave Israel the law, being a standard of what He required from man; so that Israel could now say—"It shall be OUR righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God as He

hath commanded us" (Deut. vi. 25). Yes, "if." No one but the man Christ Jesus ever attained to that, or ever could.

The law stated plainly what God expected of man, but it gave no power to carry it out. What was "ordained unto life," man found condemned him to death, for the law forbade just the very things the natural heart of man loves to do. Ahab coveted, and then took murdered Naboth's vineyard. You, my reader, might not commit murder; but the law says "Thou shalt not covet" (Exod. xx. 17), and that hits hard at the most moral of men.

Besides, the Lord Jesus shows that carrying out the law to the letter is not enough for God's holy eyes, who searches the heart, for Matt. v. 21-28 shows that the desire of the heart for evil is as bad as the carrying of it out.

God wrote the law in stone, a type of its unbending, enduring claims on man. For though it finds man helpless to keep it, yet it abates not one jot of its claims. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). And Rom. viii. 7 states, "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

What purpose then was served by the law? Why did God give it if man could not keep it? Well, God knew that man would ever fail to keep it, but He wanted to bless sinful man. But man will not go to God as a helpless sinner, for he thinks there is still *some* good left in him, though God's Word says, "In my flesh dwelleth *no* good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). God therefore tested man by the law, though He Himself knew what the issue would be. Israel voluntarily accepted it; and before Moses came down from the mount with the tables of stone they had already broken the first command,—had made a calf to worship, though the awful proofs of God's presence on Sinai stared them in the face!

To think man is any good after that is folly; yet, to-day, thousands in ignorance put themselves under the law, and promise to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and break their promises daily, and so put themselves practically under the curse! The grace of God meets such cases, as it did in the days of Israel's failure. Hence the law shows men their helplessness, and is meant to make them, already lost in God's sight, lost in their own, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19, 20).

Perhaps my reader is trying to do something—seeking to please God by works. Give it up, for “through this man (Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts xiii. 38, 39). A tree must have life to bear fruit, so we must have life in Christ before works (our fruit) can be acceptable to God; “and eternal life is the gift of God” (Rom. vi. 23).

And note, God does not present the law *to-day* to man to be obeyed as a means of obtaining righteousness. “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. x. 4; see also Rom. viii. 2). Grace has come in, and given a command man *can* obey; for God *now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained (Acts xvii. 30, 31). It is not now something for *man to do*. He is called upon now to believe in something done *for* him. God has been glorified by Christ's death, who made peace by the blood of His cross. It is the Gospel proclaiming this fact that God now offers to man.

My reader, if you have found the law (as all must) too holy for you to carry out, you dare not be indifferent to God's claim on you respecting the Gospel. God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap (Gal. vi. 7). We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. v. 10). Then you need a Saviour. The Gospel presents Him. It says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). You *must* accept Christ, or be lost for ever in the lake of fire. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

### The Writing on Plaster.

In Daniel v. 5, 24-27, again God writes, this time the sentence of judgment on a guilty king. On the plaster of the palace wall, over by the candlestick, where the light enabled all to see it, a hand was seen writing, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." No need to record *that* on stone;—on plaster, emblem of weakness and speedy decay, that

awful sentence would stand as long as needed. " **That night** was Belshazzar slain."

Babylon's mighty city has long been blotted off the face of the earth; the plaster wall, with God's handwriting on it, long ago decayed, its dust become the sport of desert winds. But *your* condemnation, my reader, if still unsaved, stands recorded on the pages of God's own Word, which shall endure for ever. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 19).

Do you pride yourself that as yet you are not so bad as that? Listen again: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned *already, because* he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." As a man amongst men you may be morally perfect. But if you do not accept Christ as your Saviour, you are as much lost before God as the vilest wretch in hell. Belshazzar perished that night. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke xii. 20), may be *your* lot. Oh, flee to Christ, while it is still called (for you) the day of salvation. Christ died the just for the unjust. God's holy claims are all met. He can "be just,"

and yet be the "justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). Life or death, which will you have?

### **The Writing on the Ground.**

In John viii. 3-11 we behold God writing the third time. In the One stooping, to write on the ground, we see "God manifest in flesh." The Jews had brought a woman to Him guilty of adultery. Moses said "that such should be stoned, but what sayest Thou?" they ask. The Lord from Sinai had given that command. Can He now say contrary to His own command through Moses? He is silent; He stoops, and writes on the ground. Scoffers say it was to gain time to think. Away with such satanic insinuations, as though man, a thing of dust, could put his Creator into a dilemma! His silence! oh, what a proof, even under law, of how slow to anger God was, that judgment was ever His strange work! At last He answers the Jews. "He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her."

If stone flinging is to begin, all round must be stoned. Again He writes on the ground. Writes what? Scripture says not what He wrote, but records what He said.



Christ is seen as God delighting in mercy. Did He then wink at sin, and annul His own laws? Nay, He had come to take "the guilty culprit's place, and suffer in his stead." He had not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. The Jews had made Him the judge in this case. I love to think that in that capacity, whilst He had written the law in *stone*, He wrote possibly the sentence of death on the ground where the next gust of wind could blow it away! A sentence no man was able to execute, and the Lord, alone qualified to do so, would not. He was going to die *for* such as she, and *thus* the law *would* be carried out. As a man who writes on the shore may see the waves wash it all away, so what the Lord wrote was never recorded, only the gracious words of forgiveness.

The waves of God's awful judgment soon rolled over Him, and wrung from Him the cry, "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over ME."

My reader, are you convicted of sin, and do you find, like this woman, there is NO escape? Have you been brought into God's presence about it as she was? Oh, listen to the words, "Neither do I condemn thee." Oh what a God, to take such infinite pains to draw us to Himself!

Oh what a Saviour, in such wondrous pity and grace to love us so much as to die FOR us, in order that His precious blood might cleanse away our sins and fit us for His own presence throughout eternal ages!

My reader, will you not accept this Saviour  
*now* ?

S. M'C.



## A Good Slice of the World.

A PREACHER when before an audience was reading a hymn beginning,  
“Oh! to be nothing, nothing.”

When he came to the end of the line he suddenly stopped, and said, “This is mere sentiment,” and drawing himself up, exclaimed—  
“Oh! to be something, something!”

These words no doubt found or stirred an echo in many of his hearers, for to wish to be “something” is natural to man as he is. He cannot afford to be nothing in a world like this, nor stoop to be saved on such a ground. Who has not desired to obtain a name in this world, to be elevated and distinguished in it in some way or other, and to acquire its *riches, honours,*

*glory* and *power*? to be "something, something!"? Yet what is this something worth, even if attained, if it shuts out the soul from God for time and for eternity? It is the despised, the nothings, and the nobodies, who are fit subjects for the grace of God. "Base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and *things which are not*, to bring to nought things that are; that *no flesh* should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 28, 29).

An aged servant of Christ was sitting next a young man one day, the bent and purpose of whose mind he readily discerned, and knowing the danger he was in, he just put his hand on his knee, and said to him, "Here is one who means to try what a good slice of the world can do for him before he turns to Christ."

This too finds an echo in the heart of man, and this "good slice of the world" is to both young and old what deludes and entices them, and they will barter their soul's salvation for it. God, who alone can estimate the soul's value, and what the world is, has summed it all up, and puts the solemn question direct to every conscience: "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and *lose his own soul*? and what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

When this is in question, there is ever the ready excuse that business and present things must be attended to. Convictions are stifled, and the soul's salvation is put off to a more convenient season. The gentle entreating hand of grace is thrust aside, for men are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

The danger for such is, and it is great, lest the voice of conscience being unheeded they should be content to go on without God, and become at last submerged by the rising waves of infidelity, which are advancing rapidly and are spreading far and wide, and which they would shrink from now.

How terrible the thought that the love of God which Christ came to make known, that the redemption which He died to accomplish, and the salvation so freely offered, should be set aside for what is deemed present advantage, and that the world, which is but a land of famine for the soul, should carry the day!

"Room for pleasures, room for business ;  
But for Christ the crucified—  
Not a place that He can enter,  
In the heart for which He died."

Do not trifle with the grace of God, but be wise in time ; and may real conviction be wrought in your soul, as it was in the young

man who was intent on trying what "a good slice of the world" could do for him before he turned to Christ. It was a word fitly spoken to him, and brought him into the light, discovering himself to himself; and the result was that he was brought to God. May it work a like conviction in any one to whom such a state may apply, and may you too turn to God as he did,—“to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.”

Seek not to be "something, something." "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near."

Now, in this day of His grace, He is found of all that seek Him. He left the glory above to come down here, not to build men up in themselves, or that they might make themselves a name in this world; but to seek and to save that which was lost, to save them from hell, and to save them for heaven and eternal glory.

Is there a soul whose eyes have been opened to what this world is, and—wary with its sin and strife and confusion, wary of its ways and principles, and of its spirit which hastes to be rich—who would find something beyond and above all its hollowness and unreality—one who is seeking to know God? The Saviour

is seeking you, speaking peace to you,—the peace which He has made “through the blood of His cross.” Oh! trust Him, that you may know the rest and joy of an abiding place in the love and favour of God, as an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ.

Could a “good slice of the world,” or to be something in it, weigh with this,—with a conscience cleansed by the blood of Christ, and the certainty, which faith in the Word of God gives, of being with Him in heaven for ever?

Is there anything in this wide world to be put for a moment in comparison with a mind at perfect peace with God—with knowing Christ and following Him? Away be the thought. *He alone is worthy.* All that man seeks after, the Lord Jesus is alone *worthy to receive.* “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive *power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*”

May you be found among this redeemed company who own and bow before the worthiness of the Lamb that was slain, and who worship *Him that liveth for ever and ever.*

“Were the whole world mine own,  
 With all its varied store,  
 And Thou, Lord Jesus, wert unknown,  
 I still were poor.”

## Your Character.

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**N**O man likes to have his character taken away. Scripture says, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." This is clear, and, received by faith as the word of God, keeps one humble before Him.

Adam and Eve had a character for innocency. They lost it, and got a worse. Do you think that, when the Lord God called unto Adam, Where art thou? that He had come down to find out what character these two had? No! He knew they had fallen, sinned, and were lost. Sin had come in; with it, good character gone, death was to follow. Ignorant, yet they would *do* something with the vain purpose of showing, possibly, they were not altogether to blame, or at least they would smooth over, hide up, cover, —in other words, do that which all their children have been prone to do ever since. They "sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons," and then "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden" (Gen. iii. 7, 8). They had lost their character, but still they would endeavour

to make out a good case for themselves! "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). Better to have owned the truth fully about this terrible sin. It is written, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. xxxii.).

God knows you. He knows your character. Before Him, it is a bad one. You may not like this; may murmur, and say, "My neighbours regard me as a just person. I owe no man anything, avoid strife, keep myself respectable, feel concerned for the poor, and help them when I can afford to do so. I do my best, weep over my sins, and always say my prayers." What is all this but another kind of apron making? You may be an estimable person before men, but are you saved? You have achieved some good works, shed some real tears, and prayed earnestly; but there is not a drop of "blood" in any one of these, and none of them can, by any means, save you, for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). Before God your character is all gone! and He gives you your character in the third chapter of Romans, and again it is a bad one. Yet in His love He proposes to save you; "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). Own your lost condition;



“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31). But there must be no “aprons,” and no “hiding.” “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John x. 35), but it may be received, and it will find you out.

In the Scriptures already alluded to the “hiding” was “*from* the presence of the Lord God *amongst* the trees of the garden.” A tree in Scripture is that which speaks to us of the mercies of God, as some one has said; and if so, how does this scene look to the eyes of God? Here are persons *hiding* themselves behind the very mercies of God, and then found *excusing* themselves, laying blame on others, or on the mercies they have from God, as in Luke xiv. where the invitation to the “great supper” is given, and “they all with one consent began to make excuse”; the invited hide behind some great and special mercy, and say, “I pray thee have me excused.” One gets behind his ground, another behind his oxen, and a third behind his wife,—all great and real mercies; but mark the sin of using these mercies in order to say, “I pray thee have me excused,” or, “I cannot come.” Yet He patiently waits the acceptance of His blessed invitation, “All things are now ready” (Luke xiv. 17). A righteous foundation

has been laid, on the ground of which your soul may be saved now ; a mighty work has been done—God's own Son has died, the just for the unjust. Come now !

It may be asked, If Scripture plainly says, " All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," must I not have a good character to come to God with ? Surely a servant desiring to go to a new situation on earth must have a good character to go with ? God in His Word has declared something, that leaves out every word about your good character or your bad character, which shows He is not looking for either. This is astonishing, but true. He has said, " When I see the blood, I will pass over you " (Exod. xii. 13). He is now looking for the blood, and not for your character—good, bad, or indifferent ! Tarry not to make a good character. In view of all this, Is the blood sprinkled on you ? The sprinkling of the blood was the all-important question long ago. It is the solemn question now. Consider seriously ; decide in the presence of God,—Are you sheltered by the blood of Christ, or exposed to the rapidly approaching judgment ?

Did that mighty angel of the Lord, with his bright and glittering sword, stop, at that memor-

able midnight hour of old, to inquire as to the character of those to whom he came? There was no need, He knew their character, and God knows yours. The angel knew what to look for—the blood! God watches intently to see who flees for refuge to it, and says plainly, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”

Some say, “I thought I ought to be good, or Christ would not receive me.” This is very natural, but wrong. Is it a question of being received? Look at David in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. xxii.). What were the characters of those whom he received? In debt—discontented—broken away from their masters—no good characters spoken of. Notwithstanding all this, they gathered round David, and in their recorded histories you will find they all *made* their characters afterwards, and when the kingdom came took their places as mighty men, and their every deed recorded and rewarded. David received them. Christ waits for you to receive Him; for “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John i. 12).

To sum up. It has been pointed out that man's character is all gone—but Jesus died for sinners, the ungodly. He receives all who come unto

God by Him. The blood is sprinkled on all such, and becomes the righteous reason for eternal blessing to all who are under its shelter.

When *there*, you have to make your character, and this is expressed in that word, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. ii. 12); not work *for* salvation, but *from* salvation, in making your character before God and man; and remember, in doing so, all will be registered up there, and when Jesus comes you will get place and honour in His kingdom, and will shine to His glory. His own precious words are, "Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12). H. R. F.



## "Ready to Perish, and Ready to Save."

**A**WAY out at sea, thirteen miles from Cape North, and at the entrance of the Gulf of St Lawrence, is the rocky and dangerous island of St Paul. It has been said that no spot on earth, or rock of like dimensions upon the navigable globe, has proven

fatal to so many of “those who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters,” as the island of St Paul. It is divided into two high peaks by means of a deep gulch through the rock, where the ocean from primeval time in stormy weather has made pastime.

When a storm sets in from the broad Atlantic, the sea breaks through this horrid valley, ever and anon tearing huge rocks and heavy boulders from their foundations, and sweeping them gulfward like pebbles upon the sea shores. When heavy winds blow out and oceanward, the great heaving swell of the St Lawrence breaks through this gorge in a reverse direction, and the spume and the foam lash the sides of the wild peaks upon which the lighthouses are situated.

Such was the scene of the birthplace of two remarkable women who had never enjoyed the sense of hearing or the privilege of speech. The father of these deaf-mutes was the superintendent of the island. On one occasion those who assisted him in his duties were away at the opposite side of the island. A storm suddenly sprang up; these men were not able to return. The billows rose, coming through the gorge, and the storm raged most furiously. A ship freighted with human life—a passenger vessel—was observed,

helpless and foundering, rapidly drifting leeward upon this fatal rock. Soon she struck, and the wail of this perishing multitude went up, mingled with the hoarse howlings of the stormy tempest. Oh, dear reader, what a picture of the poor lost sinner "ready to *perish*,"—certain destruction facing them, helpless and hopeless is their condition, as far as they know. Thousands there are who have never been awakened to a sense of their lost condition. Such was the state of these poor perishing souls on the foundering vessel. *Lost!* they needed *salvation* from their perilous position.

Unknown to them the utmost effort is being made. One old man and two brave girls are "ready to *save*." It is a desperate mission, and the risk is great ; but there are souls perishing—yes, "ready to *perish*," and must be saved. This old man, with no one to assist but these two deaf and dumb girls, sets forth on this life-saving mission, and reaches the sinking vessel. A line is connected with the shore, and eventually all are landed on the rocky island.

How foolish it would have been had these perishing people refused the proffered aid in landing! You may perhaps say, dear reader, "No one would be so foolish." But how is it

with yourself, if unsaved? Do you not know that without Christ you are in danger of being dashed upon the rocks—to perish eternally?

There is One “ready to save.” He has gone up on high, sits at God’s right hand, and is waiting to be gracious. He first came down, He humbled Himself; He came to the place where poor lost sinners were, like the good Samaritan. He did not come and look and then pass on, like the priest and the Levite (Luke x. 31, 32). He went to the cross, became obedient unto death, and finished the most glorious work that had ever been undertaken for God and poor lost man. Will you have Him for your *Saviour*? or will you refuse, and have Him for your *Judge*?

“Come to the Saviour, make no delay,  
Here in His Word He has shown us the way.”

Yes, it is through His Word that we know the way of salvation. The salvation of God has been preached all over Christendom, and all over Christendom is being rejected. But, through the rich mercy of our God, souls are being brought to Him too. The Father is seeking worshippers. The work goes on, in spite of everything; but, dear reader, the day of God’s longsuffering is closing in,—the Lord Jesus is coming for His own, and then

the door will be shut, and *where* will you spend eternity?

The foregoing incident, which occurred in the year 1863, was related to the writer of these lines. It is a touching story this of the old superintendent of Paul's Island and his speechless daughters, both of whom in calmer weather were not unaccustomed to handle the oar, but had never before launched forth in such an angry sea. Think of the waters, the terrible waters, the waves and billows that went over the head of that Holy One on Calvary's cross! Believe and live, ere the door is shut and it is too late.

J. P.

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**Anxious** sinner! **Troubled** soul! here is a **message** from the **heart** of God for you, and which He speaks with His **own lips**. Turn your eye to Him, and with the ear of **faith** listen to Him. He has heard your groans and sighs. He knows all that is passing and has passed in your heart. He has numbered all your **sins**, and **He** announces to you that which will stand written on the page of Eternity, when even heaven and earth have passed away into eternal oblivion: "**Thy sins are forgiven thee.** . . . **Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.**"



## An Anxious Moment; or, The Wrong Password.

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I WAS recently travelling by rail from London to Sussex. One after another had left the compartment in which I was seated, leaving but one other in it besides myself.

My fellow-passenger informed me that she resided in a Sussex village to which she was then going, and volunteered the remark that she had been staying with "The Church Army." Upon being told this, I asked whether she had received any good from her visit. To this she replied, that she believed she had. Being desirous of knowing whether my fellow-passenger was on the right line for eternal glory, I respectfully inquired; and was pleased to receive an answer, which led me to believe that, not only were we fellow travellers to Sussex, but also to "a better country."

However, to be more assured, I asked, "And where is your trust?" to which question the unhesitating answer was given, "In Jesus only." There was a freshness about the apparently

unstudied reply which was cheering, as it showed too that this woman's trust was not in herself, nor in her good works, nor in "The Church Army," but in Jesus Christ, or, as she herself expressed it, "In Jesus only."

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

Yes! "Jesus only" is, so to speak, the believer's only password through the "pearly gates" of heaven. Recently I received from a Christian friend a story about a gentleman, who was likely to have been shot, through giving a sentry the wrong password. It was at the time of the Civil War in the United States of America. A Mr Stuart (known to the friend referred to, and who has given me the details of the affair) had been chosen President of a Commission, the object of which was the spiritual welfare of the camps and hospitals engaged in the war.

In the performance of his important services, he was one evening returning from visiting a camp near the enemy's front. A sentry approached, saying, "Who goes there?" to which reply was made, "A friend with the countersign."

“Advance, friend, and give the countersign,” replied the soldier.

Now, be it understood that strict orders had been given that if any failed to give the right password, he was to be shot down there and then. While the sentry was prepared with his rifle, Mr Stuart gave what he believed to be the right password, which had been given him that morning, namely, “Lincoln.” At this the sentry levelled his rifle at the heart of Mr Stuart, and a deathlike silence followed, causing an agony of suspense, the moments appearing like months or years.

The feeling that something was wrong seized the President of the Commission. Great was his relief when the sentry spoke out, saying, “At the risk of my own life I spare yours, sir. I know you and your mission, but I have to tell you, that you have given me the wrong password, and for me to give you the right one, is much more than I dare to do. But go at once to headquarters and obtain the right password.”

In doing this, no time was lost, and it was with some excitement that Mr Stuart reached the officer in charge, and said or rather gasped out, “You gave me the *wrong* password, and had

not the sentry known me and my mission I should not be here to tell you."

The officer expressed his deep regret, and said, "We changed the password this evening from 'Lincoln' to 'Massachusetts.'" Thus fortified, Mr S—— again went forth to meet the challenge, "Who goes there?" and now the correct password being given, how different the experience which followed the "Pass on, friend," from the challenger.

Mr Stuart walked on a few paces, and, turning round to the sentry, addressed him thus: "Young man, I owe you a debt of deep gratitude, on account of what you have done for me this evening. You have spared my life, and that at the risk of your own, giving me the opportunity of obtaining the right password after having given the wrong one, and ere we part do let me ask you in view of our both passing onward to eternity, 'Have you the password?' Should any cross the line without the right one, there will then be no opportunity given of obtaining that which ought to have been obtained before. There will be no such chance of getting it made right, as you have given me; therefore, eternal death would be the consequence. Now, do you know the right password to heaven?"

“Yes,” was the unhesitating reply of the sentry.

“I challenge you now for the right password for that place Christ has prepared for His own.”

“Jesus,” was the ready answer to that question.

“Right,” said he, who had now become a kind of spiritual sentry on guard. “And now,” asked Mr Stuart, “tell me, Where did you get to know this precious name?”

“From your own lips in your Sunday-school in Philadelphia” (Mr S—— was superintendent of one of the largest Sunday-schools in Philadelphia, the friend who furnished me with these details, being a scholar in this very school). This answer, which was scarcely less pleasing than surprising, must encourage Sunday-school teachers, and all who are interested in the spiritual welfare of the young, about which much might be said, but space forbids just now.

Well might Cowper write—

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.”

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12). Depend upon it, reader, salvation must be by this name, or there will be no

salvation for you at all. This statement is made by the Apostle Peter to the Jewish people, who had committed the fearful crime of crucifying the "Lord of glory," who had come to them, "His own"; the apostle adding, "that this is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Builders, too, they were who should have known so good a stone when seen by them; but, alas! pride blinds Gentiles as well as Jews. God the Father only knows the proper value of that "precious corner-stone," and it is He who declares, "Behold, I have laid in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that *believeth* shall not make haste." No! the believer in Christ Jesus shall never be confounded. It is the believer who sings—

"No other hope shall intervene;  
To Him we look, on Him we lean;  
Other foundation we disown,  
And build on Christ the living stone."

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11).

Is the reader at rest on this immutable foundation? other foundation is but sand. And what will you do when the shaking of all things,

that can be shaken, shall take place? People are saying they do not believe it. No! and many of them might go further, and add, "*We do not want to believe it.*" As Dr Taylor, of Norwich, once said that he had read through the Bible several times (I believe ten times), and he could not find the Deity of Christ in it; to which John Newton replied, "Yes, and if I were to try ten times to light a candle with an extinguisher on it, I should not succeed."

Beware, reader, of seeking to get light with an extinguisher on; the Lord grant that such a dreadful impediment may be removed from you. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him" (1 Cor. ii. 14).

W. R. C.



## We Persuade Men.

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**U**NSAVED reader, we would bring before you the deep and solemn importance of your soul's salvation, and earnestly urge upon your consideration the following six points, as weighty reasons why you should come to Christ and be saved.

First, Because you are  
**guilty before God.**

For the Scripture says, "All have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God ;" and "if ye die in your sins," the Lord Jesus says, "where I am, ye cannot come."

Second, Because God, in His great love, has opened a way for you to be

**righteously saved.**

He gave His only begotten Son to die upon the cross; there to bear all His righteous judgment against sin, and in that death God has been infinitely and eternally glorified. Now He has raised Jesus from the dead, and given Him glory ; and, on account of this great work, this blessed message is sent to you, "Come, for all things are now ready."

Third, Because of the  
**eternal interests at stake.**

It is not a question of the loss of a little property. Houses and lands, silver and gold, all dwarf into the most utter insignificance in comparison with the salvation of your soul ; therefore the Lord Jesus puts this solemn question to you, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Fourth, Because



### God earnestly appeals

to you to avail yourself at once of the great salvation that is now within your reach. You can never make yourself more fit than you are at the present moment ; and the most suitable time to be saved is surely God's time, and He says, "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." Oh then, come to Christ at once !

Fifth, Because you know not what a day or an hour may bring forth ; it may be true of you that "this day

#### **thy soul shall be required**

of thee," and you would have to meet God in your sins,—or the Lord Jesus may come, and take all His own to be with Himself, then the door would be shut and you left to perish.

Sixth, Because you will most surely be damned

#### **if you refuse this salvation**

which God has provided, and go out of this world unsaved. We once heard of a poor dying man who, in his last moments, cried out,

**"I have missed it at last!"**

Oh, reader, make sure of it now ! Come to the Saviour ! Come as you are, in your lost, helpless, needy condition, and Jesus says He will in nowise cast out.

W. H.

## “For Nothing.”

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**I**T was a strange and unusual sight that attracted my attention the other day. It was market day in the country town of B—, and in spite of the intense heat the market square was full of cattle of all kinds, all requiring a new owner. The narrow streets were lined on either side with stalls, on which the “cheap-jacks” were displaying their wares, which they each offered for sale in stentorian tones.

One man, however, failing to attract much attention on account of the noise, bethought himself of another more novel plan. He was a vendor of quack medicines, and next beside his own was a butcher’s stall. He quickly purchased the entire contents of this, and having paid for them, he mounted his own stall, from which he flung the different joints to be scrambled for by the crowd. Away they went—here a piece of mutton, there a piece of beef, given away gratuitously, having been paid for by the giver, and costing nothing to those that received it. They had nothing to pay, all they had to do was to accept what was offered.

I could not help being reminded by this little incident of the Gospel, and of the way that God blesses poor sinners. We deserved nothing from Him but His wrath, and yet He has come out to us offering us every blessing that His heart could devise. Pardon, peace, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, these, and many other blessings, He is to-day offering to perishing sinners.

What have they to pay? What indeed? What have they that they *could* offer to God? No! God offers salvation to-day freely, "without money and without price," to those who have no claim whatever on His goodness. Those whose hearts have been touched by His grace to accept His "unspeakable gift," gladly own themselves as

"Debtors to mercy alone."

Who paid the price of this great redemption? It was Jesus, and the cost—His *precious* blood. Nothing less could atone for our sins' awful stain; but now peace has been made by the blood of His cross, so that God can to-day righteously offer salvation to any who will have it. But remember, while the Gospel is world-wide "unto *all*," it is only "*upon* all them that believe" (Rom. iii. 22). That is, you must accept it for yourself, to get the blessing.

Personally I reaped no advantage from the man's generosity. I watched the scene with interest, heard the man's invitation, and saw how others were getting the benefit with no expense to themselves, and then passed on.

And how many treat the offer of God's mercy with the same indifference? They have been taught the facts from childhood, and have heard again and again of others getting blessing to their souls, and still go their way heedlessly. Oh, beware of trifling with anything so solemn! Careless delay as regards our soul's eternal welfare is an awful risk. Scripture says so solemnly, "How shall we escape, if we *neglect* so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

E. R. M.

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## A Wasted Life.

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**I**F there be one time more than another when a man is downright in earnest about eternal things, it is when death stares him in the face. It was with this thought in my mind that I went a few months since to one of the London hospitals, to see a young man who was lying there in the last

stages of consumption, if haply I might be enabled to direct him to Christ as the Saviour.

I had known Walter — some years, and, having frequently come into contact with him, had sought as opportunity offered to put the Gospel before him as God's alone remedy for the sinner. He usually would hear me patiently, though he would reply nothing, acquiescing quietly with all that I had to say as though he accepted it as truth; but if pressed as to whether he could say that salvation and eternal life were his present possession, he had said to me more than once something such as—

“What a piece of presumption! No one can know that for certain until the judgment day.”

“I tell you solemnly,” I replied, on one occasion, “unless a man is saved *before* he dies, he never will be saved.”

So years slipped away, finding him continually procrastinating, always meaning to “turn over a new leaf” (as though that could erase a single stain on the former blotted pages!), but never reaching a definite decision for Christ. And how like this case are thousands more! Moral, upright, and in every way most estimable and desirable they may be, yet lacking this one thing needful—the present knowledge of forgive-

ness of sins. Many of them, too, feel this lack, although perhaps they would not own it to a single fellow-creature. Oh! that they would own it to and believe on the Saviour Himself! Pardon would then be theirs.

Now, Walter — *felt* his need. Of this I am persuaded. So, after some connection with one of the Nonconformist bodies, and finding there nothing to meet his case, he at length joined a ritualistic church, and engaged regularly in a round of devotions, which a so-called minister of the Gospel imposed upon him as a means of allaying the fears that oftentimes would oppress him, and of satisfying the longings of his heart which he could not stifle.

Then God laid him low with a dangerous illness; for if we refuse to hear Him that speaketh in days of health, He will sometimes make His voice heard in the quiet of the sick chamber. When he had sufficiently recovered, I went to see him in the hope that, as some Christians whom I knew had been with myself praying for him, the Lord might, during the time of pain and weakness, have opened his eyes to see, and so he might have found joy and peace in believing. But not yet was it to be, for the human heart long resists the

gracious pleadings and entreaties of the Lord God.

Sometime after his partial recovery he took a severe cold, and his doctor told me, on my going to him after some months to inquire how his patient was progressing, that his days were numbered, adding to me, "He may live three months, but he may not live so many days; I cannot tell." Such being the case, I sought again the prayers of others, and very soon went to see him at the hospital where he was lying.

Being admitted to the ward, I was not long in recognizing the poor fellow, though, alas! he was so altered, and the very shadow of what he had once been. The sound of my approach awakened him from a little slumber, and he said to me, quite naturally addressing me by name—

"Ah! I thought you would come to-day, for I wanted to see you."

I cannot tell what had given him the impression that I should come on that day, for I had said nothing about my visit to any of his relatives, so I replied, after shaking him by the hand—"Well, why do you wish to see me? Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, you can," was the response. "But please come close to me, for my voice seems

so weak. Do you remember on a certain day that you told me about the Lord Jesus Christ, and how that it was possible to know the pardon of one's sins now, and that I ridiculed you and what you told me?"

"No," I said; "I have forgotten the circumstance."

"Well," he added, "I wanted to see you to ask you to forgive me, because I see now that it was very wrong."

"My dear fellow, I forgive you freely," I rejoined; "indeed, the matter had entirely slipped my memory. But, tell me, do you accept what I then said as true?"

"Yes, indeed, I do," he replied emphatically.

"And do you know the preciousness of the truth then that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin?"

"Yes, I see it now. But, oh!" he added, as a look of inexpressible sadness crossed his face for an instant, "what a *wasted life* has mine been! If only I had known this before! It seemed too simple, and there was *nothing to do*."

"No," said I, "Jesus did it all. Before He died, He uttered that triumphant victor's cry, 'It is finished.' Can you rest there?"

"Yes," he said, more peacefully.



So we talked on for a few moments, and he told me that during the long time he had been confined to his bed by illness (in all nearly two years), he had been continually struggling against the truth, and the strivings of the Spirit of God; but at last he had submitted, and, confessing his sinfulness, had thrown his whole weight upon the sinner's Saviour.

"May I come in two days' time?" I asked, as I was leaving.

"Please do," he replied, "I shall be so glad to see you."

Little did I think, as I took that hot feverish hand in mine, that it was the last time that I should see Walter — upon earth. On the morning of the day on which I had intended to go and see him again, I received a telegram telling me of his sudden death that very morning. Yes! he was absent from the body, that poor suffering body, and at home with the Lord; of this I have not the smallest question. Was that not a brand plucked from an eternal burning, dear reader? Although he had resisted so long, the seeking Saviour had found him; the cords of His faithful love had proved too strong, and He had sweetly forced the wanderer in to taste the

feast that He had provided. But that look of pain still remains in my memory, and those sad, sad words, "Oh! what a wasted life!" still ring in my ears.

Dear fellow-traveller along the pathway of life, remember, I pray you, that moments and opportunities are rapidly fleeting. "For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14). It is not given to all to have nigh two years to think. How many are cut down suddenly in the bloom and heyday of manhood and womanhood! "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1). "For he that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). To-day the door of mercy stands widely open, and "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17). Come, then, with all your sins, come just as you are, burdened and weary with the load of guilt. Fear not, it was for such as you Jesus came. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Oh! how meagre is the thought of so many to enjoy the world as long as possible, and then turn to God at the latest

hour! Let it not be so with you, dear reader, for if the Lord Jesus *died* for you, He seeks that you should *live* for Him in this dark world, holding forth the word of life; and it is surely a good thing that those who have life through His name "should live not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 15).

F. L.



## Conflict and Victory.

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"**S** OON after I was settled in bed last night I felt myself surrounded by a mist—like the mist of hell; and I was visited by one whom I thought I had known before; he was clothed in white, and he began to deny the Scripture.

"'What!' said I, 'the moral beauties of Scripture a lie? They are as true as that there is heaven and earth.' And I took the Scripture, and bolted one passage after another at him. But I felt very weak, and cried, 'Lord help me! Lord deliver me!' He still held his ground, and I felt as if I were giving way; but I met him with the Scripture again, and then after a while

he left me. I then rose gradually out of the mist that surrounded me, into a clear and calm atmosphere, and I was with my Evangelists again. But it was dreadful while it lasted—a feeling of hell itself. This is a plain unvarnished tale.”

I remarked to him that he ought to be thankful both for the conflict and the victory,—to which he most heartily assented. I also told him that the Lord allowed him to pass through the waters that he might know that He was with him even then,—to which he nodded an earnest assent.

G. B.



## The Sentence; or, The Shelter of Death.



**L**ITTLE as the world may think of such unwelcome subjects, it is nevertheless guilty, condemned, and on the eve of judgment.

The witness of a broken law is, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become “*guilty before God*” (Rom. iii. 19). As a measure and a test of human responsibility it

shows this, for " All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

But, apart from the teaching of God's Word, who ever thinks of applying this test, " the glory of God," to man's moral condition? Not the moralist, the philanthropist, nor the social reformer. These aim at the improvement of conduct and of morals, at the doing of good to others, and so of greater happiness *here* ; making the world more attractive, life more pleasant, and people generally more agreeable to each other. But this is all *too late*, for " he that believeth not is CONDEMNED ALREADY." Light has come into the world, and has been rejected. Love was there too in perfect fulness, but man would have none of it (John iii. 16-19) ; and so the wrath of God abideth on every unbeliever. Solemn words, tremendous sentence : " *guilty before God,*" " *condemned already,*" " wrath of God is revealed from heaven."

Now, dear reader, this being so, on the authority of the word of Him who cannot lie, is there not a shelter provided from this impending judgment? Yes ; blessed be God, there is ; and where is it ?

Let Exodus xii. 13 supply the answer ; read the whole chapter. The testimony of God by Moses

(the light) had been rejected and rebelled against. The world, in its then highest wisdom and most advanced civilization, had, up to a certain point, successfully imitated the miracles accompanying that testimony as credentials; and Satan had used this fact to harden the hearts of Pharaoh and his servants to withstand the truth, and refuse obedience to the claims of God.

Opportunity of repentance there had been, pleading and expostulation; but now, on this solemn "night of the Lord," judgment *must* be executed; there could be no longer respite. Now that God was coming into Egypt as a Judge, the whole question of sin was raised: How could Egyptian sinners be judged, and Israelite sinners be saved? For we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth; there can be no unrighteousness with Him who is the Judge of all. If God were kept *out* as Judge (and safety could be in no other way), there must be an atonement made to *Him* for sins; He must have a sufficient reason for *passing over* the houses of His people.

The slain lamb, and its blood sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts, was typical of that atonement. The sign of death for God's eye

alone, was the evidence that the judgment of death had been in that household, and the destroying angel need not enter. The word of God, His authority for the work of judgment, was the guarantee and pledge of safety for all under that shelter. The solemn events of that night with all its surroundings, separated from this enlightened age by more than three thousand years, furnish us with a true, if a faint, picture of the position of the world and all in it to-day.

Here, a company of people, as truly shut in for safety by God as Noah and his family had been long before, are found as pilgrims all ready for the journey, loins girded, staff in hand, eating in haste "the Lord's passover." Theirs was the obedience of faith, under the shelter of God's own providing; His word was the ground of their confidence.

Outside, death and judgment were everywhere: "And at midnight there was a great cry." The Egyptians had to own, "We be all dead men." The Israelites had figuratively owned it before God, by accepting the sign of death as their shelter, and the righteousness and glory of God were pledged to their deliverance. And so believers in Christ now are "*waiting* for God's Son from heaven," and feeding upon Christ.

“He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me;” but it is Christ as God presents Him to me—“Eat *not* of it *raw*, nor sodden at all with water.” It is a Christ who has passed through the judgment of God’s holy indignation against sin.

His blood is the answer for my sins before God, and all His divine perfection and excellence and acceptance in the heavens are for me as a forgiven sinner; I feed upon Him.

Now, dear reader, which is your company?—where are you? under the *sentence* of *death*? or under the *shelter* of *death*—the death of Christ?

G. S. B.

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## A Father’s Story.

“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”  
—ROM. v. 20.

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**T**HE following story was related to a servant of God by the father of the young man, whose funeral he had been attending.

P—— H—— was brought up by Christian parents, and from childhood he had been taught the evil of man’s heart, and the terrible consequences of sin,—namely, death, judgment, and everlasting destruction in the place prepared for



the devil and his angels. God's love too had been put before him,—God, who “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16). He was told too that “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. i. 15). He had been instructed in the truth.

At twenty years of age he was put in charge of a factory in one of the largest towns in the north of Spain, where for some years, in spite of his youth, he proved worthy of his father's confidence.

Yet he was on slippery ground, alone in a large town, in daily contact with the world, ignorant of the wickedness of his own heart, and of the many and artful snares set in his pathway by Satan, and in which he soon became entangled. He went from bad to worse, and was soon known as one of the most dissipated young men in the neighbourhood.

It was in vain that his parents remonstrated. The scandal became so great, that their only resource was to send him to America, and there his health began to give way. Fearing to die, if he continued this wanton life, he resolved to break from his companions by going to sea, and

he engaged himself on board a vessel used to convey prisoners to some islands in the Pacific. Here he heard nothing but oaths, blasphemies, and ungodly conversation all day long, and even to him it seemed like a sort of hell. He thought of his peaceful home, and a longing seized him to return to his parents, but he was engaged for a term of years.

Twelve months passed, and the ship touching at Buenos Ayres, he found means to escape, and obtained a passage on board one sailing for Liverpool. On landing he wrote at once, after a silence of two years, for permission to return home. "Yes," replied his father, "if you are changed, otherwise not."

A month of painful suspense to the parents ensued, and then came a telegram, "I shall arrive by the coach at nine o'clock." The hour came, and a pale, emaciated young man alighted, who fell weeping into his father's arms.

For a time all went well, and even his health seemed to improve. He attended all the preachings, and his parents began to think that he was indeed like the prodigal son in Luke xv., lost and found. But, alas, his old instincts revived, and it became manifest that there was no real work in his soul at all.

The Lord's people wrestled in prayer for him ;

but his hostility became so great, that he refused to see any of them, and even thrust one of them, an intimate friend, out of the house. Yet even then his conscience must have been at work, for on seeing tears in the eyes of an aged Christian, he said, "Go away, it is I who have cause to weep, not you."

Meanwhile disease was doing its work in his system, and he was fast drawing near to the grave. His poor parents were broken-hearted, but they had yet to see how God could work in this prodigal son of theirs.

One morning very early he sent to request his father to come to his room. "Father," he said, "God spoke to me last night. He has pardoned me, and all my many and hateful sins are forgiven. Christ died on the cross for ME. I am quite happy, and I am going to be with Him, like the poor thief on the cross."

The father at first thought he was wandering ; but it was a true conversion, and the whole face of the dying young man was transformed. God's work, though unexpected, was real, and the great sinner to whom much was forgiven loved much (Luke vii. 47). He lived only three days, and during this time he bore witness to the infinite mercy and patience God had shown him. He died in perfect peace, trusting wholly in Jesus

Christ his precious Saviour; and throughout eternity he will be one of the trophies of God's love, and of that grace which, where sin abounded, did much more abound. God has indeed no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but in his conversion and life (Ezek. xxxiii. 11). "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25). "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18).

Dear reader, do not say, on reading this story, "I shall wait until the last moment to be converted, and meanwhile I intend to enjoy the pleasures of the world." I would fain have you see in it the fulness of God's love, and be led at once to turn to Him. You have sinned against Him all your life, and, if still unconverted, "the wrath of God abideth" on you. You may go where you will, and do as you like, in fact give yourself up to pleasure, but you will not be truly happy, for "the wrath of God abideth" on you. May you learn too from the case of this poor young man, how slippery is the pathway of sin, so that you may give heed to wisdom's warning: "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away" (Prov. iv. 14, 15). \* \* \*

## From Death to Life.

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THE following true account is given for the encouragement of those who have long been praying for and seeking after members of their families who are not manifestly the Lord's. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath *long patience* for it" (James v. 7).

Did Peter know what was passing in the mind of Cornelius while he was praying on the roof so far away? No, but the Lord did, and sent him in due time with a message of forgiveness of sins to him. And when Paul and Silas sang praises at midnight, did they guess that before morning God would bring so many around them to Himself? Christians must often go on singing and praying and preaching in ignorance of what is in the minds and hearts of people very near them, until God, the searcher of hearts, lets them know, and sometimes they have to wait for heaven to *see* the answer to their prayers.

A Christian mother sat in her room towards evening. She had a large grown-up family and many cares, chief among them just now being the health of a son which was increasingly bad.

She had that day been much moved at hearing of great blessing in a neighbouring building through the preaching of a young man. Oh! if my dear boy were only like him, she thought; nay, if he could even *hear* him, how happy I should be. But she felt very faithless. R—— (as we will call him) was almost too ill to go out at night, and moreover he was exposed to teaching the very reverse of what she craved. Still, “is anything too hard for the Lord”? and inwardly she resolved that, at all events, *she* would go to the preaching herself, for she felt that her own faith needed strengthening.

As she sat there that afternoon she listened and she prayed. She heard R—— come home from the city, wearily climb the stairs, and go into his own room hard by; then she heard him throw himself upon his bed and—could her ears be mistaken?—she heard a groan and her own name. In an instant she is beside him, and, with her arms about him, she hears, “O mother, I’m so ill, and *so miserable!*” These were welcome words to her; even if his outward man was perishing, his soul was not, and she cared for it more than for his body now. Gently she told him what she had been thinking of, and asked him to escort her to the service, with-

out saying that it was for *his* soul that she yearned.

They went ; they found the place so full that they were obliged to stand, and then the mother lost sight of her son in the crowd, and again her faith failed. What if he had left in disgust ? Should she follow him ? no—she would listen for herself. At the close of the meeting she found him awaiting her in the porch with a changed face, and by degrees she learned that a gentleman seeing his delicacy had made room for him, and that every word the preacher spoke had come home to him. The tears had stolen to his eyes, and as he furtively brushed them away, he became aware of a lady sitting beside him with an earnest face, who was evidently praying for him. It made a deep impression on him, for he was aware that she knew what was passing in his soul, and before leaving she turned and grasped his hand. He was rescued from Satan and from death that night, and brought to God and life. There was joy in the hearts of mother and son as they walked home ; joy too in the presence of the angels of God, for Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had sought and found the lost. The son which had been dead was alive. He could say, "The living, the living, he shall

praise Thee, as I do this day. . . . The Lord was ready to save me" (Isa. xxxviii. 19, 20).

As long as he could he attended the services where he had received so much blessing; and when he could no longer walk, his friend came to see him, and together they held sweet converse of Jesus and His love. R——'s inward man was renewed in measure as his outward man was perishing; he was "*willing* to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v.) Knowing, too, the future of death and damnation for those out of Christ, he sought to "persuade men" to be reconciled to God.

Let each who reads this narrative ask himself, Do I know the One who has the keys of death and hell, and who says, "Fear not, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. i. 17, 18). He *died*, that we might *live*.

H. L. H.



## How She got the Blessing.

(MARK V. 25-34.)

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**I**T was a sad case; to all appearance there was no help for her. Hopeless, and penniless, with no one to turn to in her last extremity,



## SHE HEARD

of Jesus, the Great Physician, the Healer of body and soul. Mixing faith with what she heard,

## SHE CAME

to Jesus. Her desperate need brought her to Him, and putting faith into action,

## SHE TOUCHED

His garment. Happy moment for the poor woman, in the personal company of Jesus, the only One who could possibly heal her body and meet the deep need of her soul. In a moment of time a change had taken place ;

## SHE FELT

. . . she was healed, she knew and realised what was done in her.

“She came in fear and trembling before Him,—  
 She knew her Lord had come ;  
 She felt that from Him virtue had healed her,—  
 The mighty deed was done.

Oh ! touch the hem of His garment,  
 And *thou* too shalt be free ;  
 His saving power this very hour,  
 Shall give new life to *thee*.”

Dear reader, this is the way that the blessed Saviour can meet the need of your precious soul. Not by any merits of your own can you obtain the salvation of God ; it must be your sense of

need that brings you to Himself, there to find,  
not an accuser, but One who is in very truth

MIGHTY TO SAVE.

*Come* then, dear soul, to this Jesus of whom you  
have *heard*; by faith *touch* Him, and your burden  
of sins will roll away, and you can then sing, with  
the writer of these few lines :—

O Christ, in Thee my soul hath found,  
And found in Thee alone,  
The peace, the joy, I sought so long,  
The bliss till now unknown.

Now none but Christ can satisfy,  
None other name for me !  
There's love, and life, and lasting joy,  
Lord Jesus, found in Thee.

S. E. B.



## Joshua, the High Priest; or, Grace or Judgment.

(*Notes of an Address.*)

Read Zech. iii. ; Rev. xx. 11-15.

**I**T is not because there is any connection  
between these scriptures that I have put  
them together, but rather that we find in  
them such a striking contrast. Still there  
is one blessed, solemn fact true of both.

The first is a scripture very familiar to us in the ministry of the Gospel: we have in it a display of the pure, Divine, unmeasured grace of Jehovah, in dealing with one found in His presence. Now, in Rev. xx. it is entirely a different scene. There is no *grace* there. There is no *judgment* in Zech. iii., and no *grace* in Rev. xx. In the first scripture it is all grace, the infinite, unmeasured grace of God; in the second, it is infinite, eternal, unmeasured judgment,—and with one of these two scriptures every one must have to do. You will be found actually, really, personally in the circumstances of one or other of these two scenes: if in the first, never in the second; but if you despise the first, surely in the second will be your place.

If you are unsaved, whoever you are, you all stand on the one common level before God of “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. iii. 12). That is what *God* thinks about you, and that is the only thing worth thinking of. What your friends and neighbours think of you, is of no moment in the light of God’s eternity. If the hour of your dissolution were at hand, the one question would be, What does *God* think about me? Have I a robe suitable for the presence of Him who is “of purer eyes than to

behold iniquity"? You never can know a rest that never can be broken, a peace that never can be disturbed, unless in quietness before God you can say, I am suited for God's holy presence for ever.

Here we have a kind of picture of what goes on in the presence of God. The angel of the Lord was Jehovah's representative. Joshua's condition was, "clothed with filthy garments." When you are found in the position of the 1st verse of Zech. iii., your eternal blessing is secure. You may be ignorant, and without peace, but when you have reached that circle of blessing, discovered here to our souls, your eternal blessing is secure—it is the presence of God.

But you say, Are we not always in the presence of God, for "in Him we live and move and have our being"? That is another thing altogether. We *are* ever in God's presence in one sense, as the Psalmist says: "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even *there* shall Thy hand lead me" (Ps. cxxxix. 7-13). But it is another thing when the soul, really alone before God, has come to this: Now I am near to God, before Him, and I must have to do with Him. You may often have a doubt about the present,

and anxiety about the future, but do you ever say, I should like to know how God would treat me if I were alone with Him? I want you to gather up the answer to that now—how God treats a soul when alone with Him in the day of His grace. In Rev. xx. they are standing before Him, but not in the day of His grace—they stand alone before God. It is a solemn reality that you will sing for ever the praises of Christ in heaven, or for ever and ever you will wail in deepest anguish in those depths beneath.

What hinders people from getting into God's presence? Often it is will and pride which keep them from coming to an issue with Him. God is calling souls now, in the midst of all the confusion and turmoil and restlessness of this poor world. He calls, He sends out His Word and His servants to bring men into His presence. Do not despise His Word. Have you ever refused and despised those earnest, tender words of Christ to come to Him? Let this be the moment when you turn and come into His presence. God follows men in their circumstances. If they will not hear the voice of His Word, He will bring the voice of sickness. If that is unheard, He will speak louder, and send trials—perhaps the death of a loved one. It is

a solemn thing to watch God following up, in the persistency of Divine grace, the soul that strives to get away from Him. Adam was driven out of God's presence, and his firstborn child turned his back on it, "he went out from the presence of the Lord;" and you are either in Cain's position, outside, or in God's presence for ever. Would you like to come into that enclosure where all is light and love—to be alone with Him? You can be alone with Him in your house; or in the street your heart can turn in reality to Him. A person who has ever been with God can never forget it, and it is *there* he has been able to form a judgment which is according to God.

You know the question that was raised when God came down into the garden of Eden, "Where art thou?" Oh that God would raise that question with *you*! In the name of my Master, I ask you, Where are you? Are you getting on in the world, and living without Christ? Do you begin and end your day without Him, and never dream of thinking of Him? If you tell the truth, I fear you must answer, I live a godless life. A godless man means a man without God—a man governed by one principle, one thing commands his life, his own *will*, his own good pleasure. You are godless, if you are unsaved

and unconverted. "*Where art thou?*" God *will* ask you where you are. You may despise Him in this day of grace, but you never can escape the certainty of judgment. You may live your life without Him, and die without Him, but *then* it will only be to be called up in the judgment to render an account to God of all that you have done here.

Thank God, His presence is open to you now in grace. God's blessed Son was here once. Eighteen hundred years ago He walked through this world, and any broken-hearted sinner could get an audience with Him as He passed along. He never turned away; on the contrary, Divine love was *seeking out* cases of woe. He brought in His Person all we could ever want, and He sought only an occasion wherein to lavish His goodness. And what Christ was *then*, He is *now* in heaven, though He was refused on earth. Solemnly and justly has it been said, that if you refuse His grace and go down to the abyss of that everlasting misery, you must pass the open door of heaven,—you must hear the song of joy that fills it, and then pass by! You say you love your own way. It is *sin* you love, and everything connected with *yourself*; you love the *world*, where all is darkness. When Judas went

out, on the eve of the Lord's betrayal, there is a little word in John xiii. which says much: "*And it was night.*" It was the darkness of night in this poor world.

Joshua is the high priest, and the high priest was always the representative of Israel in relation to worship and atonement. He is standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan is there too. There is no Satan in Rev. xx. 12. When men and women stand before the great white throne, Satan is not there. Before the dead hear their final doom, Satan has met his (see Rev. xx. 10). He gets his judgment before the great white throne begins, for when souls stand before God in judgment, Satan's resisting power is not wanted there. They *have* been deceived, and they have refused the voice of the Saviour. But to *you* I would say, Remember that to whom you give your ear you give your soul. If you say, I give my ear to my Saviour, and I listen to what He says, your soul is safe for ever. Satan leads only in that path which ends in destruction, and he does all now that he can to hinder you. There is a moment in a man's life when decision for God and for Christ becomes *the* serious question before him. Is it to be Christ and eternal glory and rest for ever? or the world



and my little delights of the moment? “*Where art thou?*” Will you say, in answer to this question, I turn to God now?

Did you ever know a man turn from idols to God? I have known many men turn from God to idolatry. Whatever has God's place in your heart is an idol. If there is anything here enthroned in your heart that is not Christ, it is your idol; and when you come into the presence of God, that idol must go—your Saviour claims the first place. Is not Christ worthy of it? Satan will try to prevent you from going into God's presence, and even when you get there, he will be there too to accuse you. People make too little of Satan, and he delights to be made little of; but he is really the mightiest power on earth, except the Spirit of God. He has a power which will bind you down to hell, unless the Saviour deliver you. Could *you* snap the chain of your sins? No, but the moment that in your helplessness you cry to the Saviour, the Lord rebukes him. “*And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.*” Make it a question of the Saviour and Satan, and you will soon see who is the strongest,—let God grapple with him. Go to God as you are, go in your ruin, defilement, and misery. Satan will follow you up; he

knows he is losing you—he knows he is lost for ever himself; pride took him from that high estate, and now, with all the malice he possesses, he hates seeing a soul being led into blessing. He knows the joy of God's presence, and all the substantialness of what God has to give. Notice how he stood at Joshua's *right* side; he knew where to level his shafts of accusation.

When you get into God's presence you will say, Thank God, I *am* inside, anyhow. I often think of those words of David in 1 Chron. xx. 13. It was a moment of anguish, "I am in a great strait." He might have said, My sin has brought me into it; but here I am, what am I to do? Now, say with David, "Let me fall *now* into the hand of the Lord, for very great are His mercies; but let me not fall into the hand of man." I love that word in relation to the Gospel in a peculiar way, because it says "*Now*." Is it, let me now *climb* into the hand of the Lord? But I have no strength in the moment of my misery! No, I can just "fall," because those hands are *under* me. Almighty arms are under you, almighty hands and almighty love. Will you fall into them now, and let the devil's accusations be answered by the living God? Faith is no profound effort—you have just to cast

yourself, as you are and where you are, on God's mercy.

“A brand plucked out of the fire” (ver. 2). God tells all the truth. He does not flatter Joshua; He never flatters people in His presence. He is a God of truth and holiness, and light and majesty, and He will show you what you are, in your misery, defilement, and uncleanness. But He *rebukes* Satan; He does not rebuke Joshua. God never rebukes a sinner in His presence; He will condemn the sinner in the day of judgment, but He blesses him in the day of His grace. Keep these two principles, grace and judgment, before you. He has not a word of fault to find with poor Joshua. Ask any who are saved, How did God treat you when you were alone with Him? Exactly as He treated Joshua. Words would fail to tell of His grace and goodness. Did He find fault with you? No, He blesses according to the infinitude of His grace and love; He is only too delighted to have you there. What He did for Joshua, He will do for you, and more. All the evil and departure of Israel never could make God forego His choice. What is a brand? It may be a beautiful piece of carved wood that you have put into the fire, but how does it

look when it comes out? Everything a brand touches it defiles, and that is our condition morally before God. Yet this is the object of sovereign grace.

Have you ever noticed that Joshua never said a word? He did not do or say anything, or seek to justify himself. If he had said anything at all, it would only have been to pour out the confession of his sins. He is in the best condition in which a man could be, just standing there to let God have His way with him. Do you know why you do not get blessing? Because you will not let God have His way with you. Bow, and God will bless you for ever. Have you learnt this? Have you ever been alone with Christ, and learnt that everything about you is filthiness? Filthy is a terrible word, one we should never use, were it not in God's Word ; and *that* is what your goodness and righteousness is before God! Now, God says, "Take away the filthy garments from him." It is a wonderful thing the delight that God has in giving His instructions for blessing ; and Joshua allows them to do with him exactly as they will. He does not say, I used to lean on that prayer, it was a really excellent bit of goodness ; or, I used to value that good work. No, he lets every bit of

goodness be taken, and surely he was *glad* to get rid of filthy rags in God's presence.

And now God speaks in infinite love and grace to Joshua: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." All this was in view of the cross. What did God do with that iniquity? He caused it to find its judgment on Calvary's cross, when Jesus died. If anybody has to be kept out of heaven because of my sins, it is my Saviour who bore them in His own body on the tree. Change of raiment means holiday raiment, costly raiment. "*I will clothe thee.*" God does everything for the sinner. The best raiment, is the same thing as the "best robe" in Luke xv. 22. The servants knew where the best robe was—it is Christ. The change of raiment is Christ; it is divine, positive, eternal, subsisting righteousness before God. I want you to put this question to your souls—Where am I before God? You are either in your own righteousness, or wrapt up in Christ for ever. Righteousness is looked at in two ways in Scripture. The negative side is God accrediting me to be righteous down here, not bringing anything to my charge; the positive side is that we are made the righteousness of God in Him. The first mention

of righteousness in the Bible is in Gen. xv., where it says Abram "believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness." When man was driven out of the garden of Eden, God took care that he should not leave without carrying on his back something that told of infinite grace. Righteousness expelled him, but grace clothed him.

"And the angel of the Lord stood by." God has such infinite joy in blessing souls. It is not only what you lose yourself, but in refusing blessing you rob God of a joy He wants to have; and there is no joy greater, in one sense, than this which we get here—"the angel of the Lord stood by." Then (*v. 7*) instructions are given for Joshua's walk. Walk must come *after* conversion. First, the *unconditional* blessing of the *sinner*, and then all blessing for the *saint* is *conditional*. The love of Christ is always true to me as a believer, but we do not always enjoy it, for my enjoyment of it depends on my behaviour. That is the saint's responsibility.

Remember these two principles—it must be standing before God in grace, or standing before Him in judgment. God *wants* you to stand before Him in the day of His grace. If you refuse that, He will summon you into His presence in judgment.

THE LATE E. P. C.

## Satisfied with Christ.

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SOME years ago I now and then visited an old man who occupied a single room in a country inn. He had at one time been in comfortable circumstances, but had lost nearly all his money, and had outlived all his relations and friends. Before he was confined to the house he had been a regular church-goer, and he considered himself, and was considered by others, a very religious man. He read his Bible daily, because he thought it was right to do so; but in talking to him it was easy to find out that he was not at rest, although he tried to persuade himself that he had nothing to fear. After a time he took to his bed, and became so deaf that it was impossible to talk much to him. The only thing one could do was to find various verses of Scripture, and show them to him in his own large Bible, saying a word or two now and then, and looking to God to speak to him through His own blessed Word.

After a time it became evident that the Word of God was sweeping away the "refuge of lies," for he became more and more uneasy. One

day a message came to me that he was very troubled, and would like a visit. On my way to his lodging I looked up to the Lord for a message from Himself to the poor troubled heart, telling Him of the special difficulty on account of his deafness. When I went into his room he was sitting up in bed, turning over the leaves of his large Bible, and looking very distressed.

“Oh!” he said, “I am so glad you have come. I have been reading, and thinking, and praying, but I can’t be satisfied with myself.”

I put my lips to his ear, and said, “God does not ask you to be satisfied with *yourself*; He is satisfied with Christ, and He wants you to be so too.”

He looked at me, and said slowly. “Satisfied with *Christ*! I couldn’t be dissatisfied with *Him*.” He kept repeating, “I couldn’t be dissatisfied with *Him*.”

The trouble was gone, and it never returned; he was content to be satisfied with Christ, instead of with his thoughts, his reading and his prayers. Not long after he passed away, “to be with Christ” for ever.

Dear reader, are you trying to be satisfied with yourself, your prayers, your doings—per-



haps your reading the Bible regularly—instead of resting simply in *Christ*? Will you not hear His Word when it tells you that Christ is *all* (Col. iii. 2), and rest, where the old man rested, in Him alone. C.



## A Triplet of Sudden Deaths.

“No room for mirth, or trifling here.”

A COMPANY of listeners at an open-air meeting the other evening in London, was impressed on hearing from a Christian young man from Ireland, of three sudden deaths, which had recently come under his painful notice in that country.

The first was that of a young man of herculean strength, of which he had been boasting on his way to the gymnasium where he met with his fatal accident. It appears that, as he was balancing himself upon the higher horizontal bar, he slipped and fell from the higher to the lower one, and so greatly injured his spine that paralysis almost at once set in, at first taking a rapid downward course, and then upwards towards the head. Solemn was it to

be told that the only words which came from the lips of the injured athlete were,—

**“Where am I going? Where am I going?”**

Reiterating these words, this young man passed out of time into eternity ; he has gone—where ?

The second was that of a bicyclist. He had just said he would be home in fourteen minutes (a distance, we understood, of four miles). Little did he think that this would be his last ride home. Turning a corner with some swift-ness, and a vehicle coming the opposite way, a collision ensued, and the shaft of the vehicle actually perforated the body of the poor man. In a moment he was brought face to face with eternity, and so unexpectedly !

Reader, forget not the scriptural injunction, too often unheeded in this world, “Boast not thyself of to-morrow ; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Prov. xxvii. 1).

The third case was that of a well-known Christian man, a worker in the Gospel vineyard. The young open-air preacher had spoken to this Christian man in a Dublin bank one morning. He appeared in his usual health. However, in the evening returning home, he said to his wife, “I am feeling ill ;” and then soon added, “I am

feeling very ill indeed." Medical aid was quickly sent for. The doctor came, his experienced eye told him of the seriousness of his patient's case, and without delay he desired to consult with another medical man. Nothing could be done to save that life. The dying Christian knowing this, became not (as in the first case) anxious about his own personal safety, but about a newly engaged servant, to whom he began to preach the Gospel, telling him of the Saviour's finished work and of His glorious resurrection.

After all, reader, death finds out where we are. Things are real then. We ask you, Where are you going? On which road are you—the broad or the narrow?

“Passing onward, quickly passing—  
 Yes, but whither, whither bound?  
 Is it to the many mansions  
 Where eternal rest is found?  
 Passing onward—  
 Yes, but whither, whither bound?”

Passing onward, quickly passing,  
 Nought the wheels of time can stay!  
 Sweet the thought, that some are going  
 To the realms of perfect day!  
 Passing onward—  
 Christ their Leader—Christ their way.”

W. R. C.

## “Thank You for Telling Me.”

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“**T**HANK you for telling me.” Such was the grateful remark of a lady, lying very ill, to a friend beside her. “Thank you for telling me,” she said, with a smile; “it was just what I wanted to know.”

What was the good news, do you think, that had just been communicated to her, and that called forth such a speech? Was it that some dreaded medicine need no longer be taken? Had the doctor promised relief to her suffering? or had he foretold a quick recovery to health and strength? Was it some intimation of this kind that drew forth those words, amidst her suffering, “Thank you for telling me”?

No, nothing of the sort. The lady we write of was dangerously ill, and her friend had just announced to her the fact that she could only last a short while longer, and that very soon she would pass out of time into eternity.

Reader, can you picture yourself for one moment in such a position? Supposing *you* were told that in a few hours at the most *you* would have to face death. Would you be

prepared for the news? Would you feel perfectly *sure* that having had to do with Jesus in this world as Saviour, there would be no possibility of meeting Him as Judge hereafter? For unless you were *certain* in your own soul that the question of your sins had been eternally settled by the Lord Jesus on the cross, and that they had been eternally forgotten by God, I know you could not face death with other than terror and fear.

Death is a solemn reality, though to the believer the sting is gone. The Lord Jesus came to deliver those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Hence to this lady the prospect of death was a very welcome one. She knew that, for her, it meant passing from this scene of sin and sorrow,—ay! and of dishonour to Christ too,—to be for ever in the presence of the Lord Jesus, which is indeed “far better.” Not a fear, not a doubt, once crossed her mind or harassed her soul; but so glad was she to hear that the time of her departure was at hand that she could reply, “Thank you for telling me; it is just what I wanted to know.”

Perhaps you fancy that she must have been some saintly being, whose life of religious

devotedness made her hope to merit the favour of Heaven? But could her lips—now silent in death—speak again, they would tell a very different tale. She would say what a marvel it was that the grace of God should ever have picked her up. And nothing but the “exceeding riches of His grace” would have done so. But God is rich in mercy, and delights in plucking brands from the burning. She said herself one day, “He knew I was *worthless* before He took me.” Yes indeed, Jesus knew it all.

“He saw us ruined by the fall,  
He loved us notwithstanding all.”

Such was “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.” Although worthless in ourselves, fallen in our nature, sinful in our practice, yet He has set His love upon us; and having died for us, to bring us to God, He now owns us as part of that “pearl of *great price*” which He sold all that He had to possess.

Can you wonder that she longed to see the One who had done so much for her? She had found that “Thy lovingkindness is BETTER than life” (Ps. lxiii. 3), and undoubted peace

filled her soul at the prospect of soon being in His presence.

And how is it with you, dear reader? Would such tidings come to *you* as "the very thing you wanted to know"? Or is the idea of death intolerable to you? Do you shudder at the sight of a funeral? Do you tremble to walk through a churchyard? If so, let me entreat you to delay no longer in seeking that Saviour, who has Himself been into death, and broken all its power; and knowing Him, you will be able to triumph in His blessed name, "which quells the power of death."

"Lord, while our souls in faith repose  
Upon Thy precious blood,  
Peace like an even river flows,  
And mercy like a flood."

E. R. M.

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## Truth in the Inward Parts.

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**I**F you are to be happy it must be *with God*. In Christ I get all my sins brought out in the day of grace in the presence of Divine perfect love that came about them. The perfectness of the love that is in

Christ makes me glad to be in the light that shows me all that I am. It gives truth in the inward parts. God says, You are the vilest sinner, you are labouring and heavy laden, now you may come to Me and trust Me, it will be all right. Ah! it is a blessed thing to see truth in the inward parts, and to have confidence in a Divine love that is above all the evil.

I've had all my sins entirely out before God, and better known than I know them. I've had Christ confessing my sins as His own in the presence of a God of judgment. There is Divine competency to bear our sins. We are in the dust as to ourselves, but we look up to God in the consciousness and certainty that He loves us as He loves Jesus Himself. That is the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Have you that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to know that God looks at you as white as snow? Does the light of God's holiness make you happy or uncomfortable?

J. N. D.

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“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 Affliction of Joseph.

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“**T**HE Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?” Such were the words wrung from the heart of Amos, the prophet, who stood between the people of Israel and their God—the messenger of the latter to convey the solemn announcement of divine judgments about to fall upon the former.

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos iii. 7); and if it was so in the time of Israel’s declension and failure of old, it is so now that the days of Christendom’s judgment are at hand. Oh, how plainly do the Scriptures foretell the awful doom of Christendom!

It is a solemn thing to have to do with God, for of this we may be sure, that He will by no means clear the guilty; and if this be so, which of us would be able to stand should He enter into judgment with us? for every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before Him (Rom. iii. 19).

And yet, is it not true that the day of judg-

ment approaches, yes, steadily approaches? Let us ring out once more the prophetic warning addressed to Israel of old, "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos iv. 12). Oh, how marvellous are the patience and long-suffering of God! Well might He long since have poured forth on the professing Church all the vials of His wrath!

But what is there amiss? the reader may exclaim. When Amos lifted up his voice, the people of Israel had fallen into terrible idolatry, and the necessity for judgment can in their case be easily understood. Have we not churches and chapels in abundance? and are they not thronged with worshippers? Are not these things acceptable in the sight of God?

Solemnly do we believe that much, very much, of the religious profession around, is not only not acceptable, but perfectly abhorrent to a God who loveth truth in the inward parts. "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth . . . but their heart is far from me" (Matt. xv. 8), may be said with as great truth to-day as when our Lord uttered the words in solemn protest against the empty, formal, and ceremonial religiousness of the Pharisees. "But in vain they do worship Me."

"Full house to-night!" said a churchwarden

lately, a lay-reader to boot, addressing the preacher of the evening; "at least I look upon it as a matter of business, *the plates were very full.*" "The music *was* beautiful," chimed in another.

And this is all that multitudes of people to-day think of who flock to a place of worship, as they call it, on a Sunday, as thoughtlessly as they did to the ball-room on Saturday night, and as they will to the theatre on Monday!

"A telegram has just come from London to say that Mr —— is prevented from coming to-night," said a deacon of the chapel to one of the members as he entered the building, adding, with a look of consternation on his face, "I do hope the collections will not suffer."

A heavy debt was lying on the chapel, and the services of this eloquent preacher had been secured as a draw to get the people, not that they might hear words whereby they might be saved eternally, but that a good sum might be raised!

"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer Me burnt-offerings and your meat-offerings, I will not accept them" (Amos v. 21, 22). And oh, how hateful is all this empty,

Christless profession of our own days! God looks for reality, reader. He wants the heart, and not the lips merely,—though sure indeed are we that where Christ fills the heart this will find expression in the life and on the lips.

There is a growing dislike at the present time to all that style of preaching which would awaken the conscience and arouse the soul to consider its true state before God.

“What *is* the matter with you? You look perfectly miserable,” said one young lady to her friend, a teacher in the Sunday-school, but whose heart was, and is still, alas! more set on the world than on Christ.

“And so I am,” was the reply; “I feel wretched. I’ve been to hear that man preach. I wish I hadn’t gone, it’s made me feel quite sick. Take my advice, and you won’t go and hear him; I shan’t again.” And she kept her word.

But oh, what folly! “Ye that put far away the evil day,” remember that the evil day of judgment *is coming*. Soon you *must* face realities; why put off, and risk an eternity of woe for a few short days of unsatisfying pleasure? Are you ready to meet God? He knows “your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins”

(Amos v. 12). Have they been blotted out by the precious blood of Christ? or are you staggering on to eternity under the heavy load? Oh, awake, awake, before it be too late! Soon will "judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (ver. 24); and then what "wailing shall be in all streets!" (ver. 16.)

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" (Amos vi. 1.) How many there are who are at ease to-day. Regular church-goers, they fear no evil to come; and yet they have never come as poor, lost, guilty sinners to the feet of Jesus. They have never felt the burden of their sins, nor the terrors of the judgment and eternity that lies before them. No, they are "at ease," yes, at ease, and care not to be aroused or warned of their danger. But, "woe to them!"

They may "lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches"; they may "chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music"; they may "drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments"; "*but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph*" (Amos vi. 1-6).

How descriptive is all this of much that we

see around us to-day! The ease of luxury and wealth, the fascinations of science and music, the lust for self-indulgence of various kinds, and all this coupled with a form of religion, but an absolute indifference to Christ!

But these words of our prophet are striking in the extreme. Who amongst those that he addressed had had aught to do with the affliction of Joseph? Nearly one thousand years had rolled by since all those deep afflictions of Joseph had taken place, which were the type and shadow of the deeper sufferings of Christ upon the cross.

“And what hand had we,” the reader may exclaim, “in the sufferings of Christ? We did not nail Him to the cruel tree, we did not plait the crown of thorns and place it on His brow, we did not stand by and mock when He hung dying on the cross, we did not spear His side nor give Him the vinegar to drink.”

But have you ever realised that it was your sins that made His death necessary? Have you ever grieved over His sufferings, and sorrowed for His afflictions?

You may adorn yourself with a golden cross, set with diamonds, and pearls, and costly jewels; you may flit across the stage of life, flattered,

admired, and adored; but have you ever dropped a tear of contrition for your sins, or shed a tear of gratitude for the love, that led the precious Saviour to suffer for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God?

You may go to church on Sunday. Yes, but do your lips ever speak forth the praise of Him who died for you, from Monday morning to Saturday night?

“Mother,” said an artless child one day, “have you asked Jesus to your ‘At home’ to-day?” And the question went like an arrow of conviction to the mother’s heart. Friends had been invited, and the afternoon was to have been spent, or wasted, in empty chit-chat and talk about nothings, but Jesus had been left out.

It is not religion we want,—of that we have enough,—but oh! for more of Christ, a living Christ in heaven, to fill the heart down here on earth; and the love of Christ, a Christ who died that we might be saved, to flood the soul with sunshine, and cause it to overflow with praise!

“I do not want a human creed to believe in,” writes one who had been for long and vainly striving to obtain peace with God by means of the wearisome routine of Ritualism, its early cele-

brations (so-called), its fastings, its confessional, and its penances. "What I wanted, and what I have, thank God, found, is a Living Person to love, honour, and obey. I could not get on at all. I tried all sorts of work to get me *to* the cross, and that was why I failed. I started wrong; it was *from* the cross I should have started. I felt no better, but rather worse, when a so-called priest told me I was clean because he had pronounced absolution. I knew I was not. I wanted a Higher Priest to say it, and let the sweet echo of His words bring peace to my aching, troubled heart. He began and finished the work all those years ago on Calvary, and so I take my pardon straight from His own dear hands, *because* He says it. I know now better *how* unworthy I am; but His work is perfect, so absolutely perfect; and having this pardon *in myself* through His own precious blood, I must make a stand for Him," &c.

May every anxious reader of these pages possess the same pardon, and share the same peace, by trusting in the same precious blood and resting on the same perfect work!

"It is finished!" "Peace unto you." These are the words of Jesus, the Son of God.



## A Fingerpost.

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**I**T was growing dusk on a winter's afternoon long ago; we were driving in country lanes, at some distance from home, and were not very sure of our way. Ah! here are cross roads, and there is a fingerpost—an old-fashioned wooden fingerpost or bishop, with its long arms spread out, one of them clearly indicating the turning we are to take, and thankfully availing ourselves of its information, we are soon hastening along the shortest road home. Had it not been for its aid, we might have lost our way.

Fellow - Christian, are you a fingerpost? Am I? We are in a world of darkness and wickedness, where many are going astray; but we are "light in the Lord" (Eph. v. 8), "children of the day" (1 Thess. v. 5), "the light of the world" (Matt. v. 14). Are we hiding our light, and ashamed to let it shine before men? If so, we are like a mutilated fingerpost which some mischievous person has robbed of its arms, that lie broken or strewn at its foot, while the bare stem remains, a sorry spectacle to passers-by of its uselessness. Such are we if refusing the

place assigned to us by the Word of God. "The sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom *ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life*" (Phil. ii. 15, 16). "Declared to be the epistle of Christ" (2 Cor. iii. 3). We cannot get away from it; we are this or nothing. The Lord was all this and much more; to us He has given His place. "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John xvii. 18). "In this the children of God are *manifest*, and the children of the devil" (1 John iii. 10). We are not to be hid.

If a useless Christian resembles a fingerpost bereft of its arms, what shall be said of one pointing in the *wrong* direction? Such a fingerpost has been seen, with arms reversed. If we are wearing the world's livery, indulging ourselves in carnal pleasures, doing Satan's errands, what are we? Like false fingerposts; confounding the Father {and the world, heaven and hell. It is solemn, but true, and awful to think, that the arms that ought to be indicating the road to heaven, are pointing towards hell. "By their *fruits ye shall know them*" (Matt. vii. 20), is it written; and if my feet are seen treading in the

world's ways, it is worse than futile to say that my heart is in heaven, and my home there. Neither can we walk on two roads at the same moment. "Ye *cannot* [not, ye would not] serve God and mammon." In this day of heartless indifference to Christ, and of toleration of evil, may we be found with our loins girded and our lamps burning, and we *ourselves like* unto men who wait for their lord (Luke xii. 36). Let us not be mistaken for worldlings, nor guilty of lukewarmness. If people around us are not ashamed to wear ostentatiously the badge of certain societies, why should we shrink from the honour of being called "sons of God"?

H. L. H.

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## The Greatest of all Sights.

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"**A**RE you going to see it?" asked a young man of a friend as they watched a circus procession advertising the evening performance, pass along the street.

"Are you going to see it?" is asked on every side when some fresh attraction is announced.

Never before have so many "great sights"

presented themselves for men to gaze upon. But do they satisfy? No! impossible. "The eye is *not* satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccles. i. 8). This is a true confession, and the experience of all.

We would ask those who have thus been "spending their money for that which is not bread," to refer to the third chapter of Exodus, where another great sight is brought before us. We read that when Moses was tending his flock in the desert, "the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." This was a wonderful sight, and contrary to the laws of nature; yet there it was, as Moses in great surprise looked on, burning with fire, and not being consumed.

But has our reader looked back at a still greater sight than this, of which God has given us not only one but four records; that which is truly the greatest of all sights—the "Cross of Christ"? Does that scene move us? The people of that day "stood beholding" the Son of Man lifted up. But it was merely to satisfy their curiosity. Do we desire to look into it more closely, to know the "why" and "where-

fore" of that stupendous sight? Then let us learn a lesson from Moses. "And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, *why* the bush is not burnt."

He was so interested that he turned aside. Mark his every word. Oh! that some thirsty soul, who has been drinking of earth's streams only to thirst again, would drink of *the* water Jesus is longing to give. That soul would thirst no more. "I will now turn aside," said Moses. Oh, that my anxious reader would!

But it must be a personal thing. "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." "*I*" will turn aside, said Moses. He was having to do with God alone, and so must each one who wants salvation. "If *thou* shalt confess with *thy* mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou* shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9).

And when does Moses turn aside? NOW! No thinking about it. No delay. The fire might have gone out any moment. "I will *now* turn aside." And to the lost sinner God speaks, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time: behold, *now* is the day of *salvation*" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

It is helpful to see that Moses is not so much

turning aside "from" as "to" something. "I will now turn aside AND SEE." And here we have the key to many failures. Distressed, dissatisfied ones turn aside. They find nothing to satisfy their hearts in this world, so they turn from it and seek seclusion. But still no rest, no peace. They have not turned aside *to see*. They are still in darkness, and have not seen the "great light."

Perhaps one is reading this who is in despair. Do not despair, only believe. Christ has tasted death for *thee*. Turn aside now to Jesus. Think of Him on that cross of shame, "suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." His side is pierced, blood and water flow out. Thou mayest be cleansed. The cross opens our eyes, and shows us what a terrible thing sin is. It shows us God's infinite, divine love in not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up for us all. The stripes the guilty sinner deserved fell upon his Substitute, the Lamb of God, "who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). It shows how we may have complete deliverance, not only being brought "from under the burden" of our sins, but "ridding us out of the bondage" of sin and Satan, that henceforth we should not serve sin, but "live unto God."

In the fourth verse we read, "*When* the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses." And so it is. "God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He is waiting for men to turn aside and see. Christ is no longer on the cross. He has risen from the dead, and is highly exalted. His suffering is past. The work by which God has been glorified, and whereby the sinner may be saved, "*is finished.*" The moment the lost one believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessing is received. By faith in Christ Jesus, we become the children of God, and of His household.

God called unto him, "Moses, Moses." Is not this sweet to our souls? Has He thus spoken to thee, dear reader? Art thou "drawn out" (the word "Moses" means "drawn out"), a monument of His grace? Art thou in the place of blessing from which thou canst answer, "*Here* am I," and thus have "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ"? What riches of grace!

But God tells Moses to put the shoes from off his feet, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. It is so with the believer; he is on holy ground now, and nothing of the dust of this

world must he bring there. Moses' shoes were suitable till he was on holy ground, and had to do with God. And many things, which seemed necessary and suitable before God's presence was realized, will now be seen as unfit to meet His eye. Indeed, we gladly put them off, for He has given us so much to "put on" (Luke xv.). God shows us we are "not of the world"; and we answer, "I am a stranger *with Thee*" (Ps. xxxix. 12). "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17).

In contrast to those words to Moses, "Draw not nigh hither," God would *now* have His children "enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a *new* and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. x. 19, 20). There is nothing now between God and the one once "afar off," for "now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 13).

And as God then revealed Himself to Moses as to what He was about to do, and what He had for Moses to do, so He will to the "new-born babe." In His Holy Word, and by His Holy Spirit, the deep things of God will be



searched, His wonderful ways revealed, and suitable service given. What depths of riches there are in store for those who turn aside to see!

If unsaved, dear reader, take no rest even for thy weary body till thou findest rest of soul at Jesus' feet. The Saviour is at God's right hand, and is speaking to thee from heaven. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." \* \* \*



### “I will; be thou Clean.”

**H**E was a man well known in the quiet country town in which he lived for his kind and obliging ways, as well as for the uprightness of his character. His work, which was confined to some acres of farm land and garden work, was carried on with admirable method and order; and everything under his hand was a model of propriety and neatness, anything like confusion or disorder being perfectly unbearable to him. I had often watched the exactness and tidiness of his ways in all their details, and how quickly every thing was reduced to order as changing seasons came round, all litter and unsightly things being speedily removed out of the way.

One fine spring morning I saw him on a ladder, with his hammer and nails fixing the trees to the garden wall, and as I passed by I said to him—

“You are getting the trees in beautiful order on the wall, hoping some day to see the fruit that will be hanging there. I will tell you something that God tells us. He is going to hang every precious and glorious thing on the Lord Jesus Christ. *He* will fasten Him as a nail in a sure place, — all the glory of His Father’s house will hang upon Him, and every precious vessel. Oh! how blessed to be fastened on to the Lord Jesus Christ, to see by faith His glory and beauty, and to be amongst the precious things that are hanging upon Him.”

His nailing was suspended for a moment or two as he listened to what was said, and he looked wistful and thoughtful enough, as these words spoke to him of things he knew not as yet. Moral and upright in character as he was, he knew he had not Christ; and nothing we are in ourselves can avail for permanent happiness, or give us a link with the things which are not seen and eternal, if Christ be unknown — the Saviour — Redeemer — Shepherd — Friend — whose loving heart has spanned our case and

need, and who has given Himself for sinful man : the Holy, spotless Lamb of God.

He was in the way at this time of hearing constantly God's way of salvation through the preaching of the Word, and he could be noted as always an attentive and earnest listener ; and though, too, many conversations with others took place, as to God's grace and man's need, he never said much, being naturally a quiet man, who liked better to listen and ponder than to make any profession. Still, one felt sure the blessing would come, and that the Saviour would be known ; and truly it did come in God's own peculiar way, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, and " whose eyes are open *upon all the ways* of the sons of men."

He stopped me one day as I was going along, and, after some hesitation, said, " I have something I wish to say." Seeing there was what appeared rather unusual about him, I waited quietly to hear. It was to this effect :—" I have heard so much about the Saviour of late, and have seemed so unable to lay hold of anything, that I knew I was all wrong somewhere, and one night lately, before going to bed, I asked the Lord *to show me my own heart*, that I might know how it stood with me."

Was he hoping to find something there on which to rest? Anything meritorious to encourage him? or anything on which he could with confidence build himself up, and so be satisfied? It may be, vain as such a hope would be; but at all events he wished for reality and to know it.

He continued: "I had a dream that night, and thought I was in a very foul and loathsome place, full of every abominable and unclean thing—so filled with filth and corruption, that it was impossible to cleanse it, or set it in order. It was perfectly indescribable, and I stood amazed. There was not a single thing that the eye could see that gave me any relief, and it was all so abhorrent to me.—I awoke, and I knew that *it was a picture of my own heart*, which God had given to me."

He stopped; deep penitence was evident there, and brokenness before God, at the discovery of what he was. "Behold, I am *vile*; what shall I answer Thee?" was now his thought, and he abhorred himself. It was difficult, impossible indeed, for him to express what he felt; but he had taken his true place, like one of whom we read, when in the presence of a thrice-holy God: "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips."

The strong man was bowed, and subject, and at the feet of Jesus, where grace had brought him, though he hardly knew it. Oh, blessed place! where the soul is without guile, where the withering silence is broken, where what we are is made manifest, known, and spread out to Him. It is the place where Christ is found.

I hardly know what passed or what more was spoken, but I knew God was doing His own work in His own wonderful way,

“Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,”

and God would finish it in His own time. I feared to intrude words of mine at so solemn a moment, lest I should hinder rather than help. God and the soul had met, and the end in blessing I knew was sure. He had used this remarkable dream—in which such a state and condition of things were displayed to him, that with all his love of order and natural ability, he felt he was perfectly unable to amend or set straight—to show him his own heart, of which, before, he had neither measure nor idea. Thus it is with the natural heart, “it is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. *Who can know it?*” “We are all as an unclean thing,

and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? *Not one.*" We cannot fit ourselves for God. We are strengthless to help ourselves. "The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots." But the grace of God has acted on our behalf, "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

A few days afterwards I saw him again, now radiant and smiling, and it was easy to see that the work was done. He joyed to tell, in his own quiet way, that he now knew Jesus as his Saviour, and that he was washed in His precious blood, which alone could cleanse from what he had discovered himself to be. A soft and chastened smile overspread his face as he told out his newly found joy and peace, and one could see the deep emotion that filled him as he spoke of his Saviour's love. The live coal from off the altar had touched his lips,—the value and efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, in all its cleansing power, had been applied to his soul,—and his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged (Isa. vi.). Years of a well filled up life for Christ, on whose side he at once ranged himself, passed on. A few days' illness during

the influenza epidemic, and he was gone to be with Him whose preciousness he proved in death, as he had in life. When he felt nature to be fast sinking,—and he knew this better than those around him did, — he said to one near him, "What would I do without Christ now?"

He was calmly resting on His well-known love, and passed quietly out of this life to be with Him above.

Reader, would it be so with you? Do you so know Christ and His blessed work, that whether it be in life, or in death, you know His sufficiency? The Lord Jesus is the centre of the eternal glory above, where all His redeemed will surround Him, reflecting His glory, and where all will be, according to the mind of God, in purity and love, and "He shall be for a glorious throne to His Father's house." "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Reader, will you be there? Will you be one of those, washed in His precious blood, and cleansed from all defilement, who surround the Lord Jesus in the day of coming glory, and who are sharers in it, made "clean every whit"? Do you desire to be

made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth us from all sin*,"—it glorifies God, and saves the soul.

"We know there's a bright and a glorious home,  
 Away in the heavens high,  
 Where all the redeemed shall with Jesus dwell,—  
 But will *you* be there, and I?"

M. V.

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## This Last Chance.

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**E**VANGELISTIC services were being held in B——. Efforts were being made by God's people to secure the attendance of those who were, to all appearance, careless about their eternal welfare. During this time the subject of this little narrative, a young man brought up in a Christian home, and surrounded by Christian influences, was pressed to attend the Mission Services, but he excused himself on the ground of preparing for an examination in connection with his profession.

Not many weeks after, his health, which had previously been good, gave way, and he consulted a medical man, who advised him to give



up study and office work. This he was very loath to do, as he was desirous of getting on in his profession. Although ill, he seemed to have no serious thought about either his bodily health or his spiritual welfare; but the opportunity was once more taken to speak to him about his soul. He agreed to the truth of all that was then said to him. As time went on he was anxious to know when he might resume work, but was told he must put aside all thoughts of his profession meanwhile, as all study must be avoided. The disease showing signs sufficient to necessitate a change of climate, he was advised accordingly. There was now no doubt that he was beginning to think seriously of his illness. God's loving hand laid on him was breaking down the barriers.

While away, God, by His gracious Spirit, was ploughing his heart, convincing him of his sin and his need. He was led to read an address on "Love," by a well-known writer; but there was nothing in it for a sin-laden soul seeking rest, for love is of God (1 John iv. 7), and to know what love is we must possess the divine nature. This address led him to look into his own heart for some love to bring to God, but he found, what we have all to learn, by God's

grace, that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. xvii. 9). While absent from home God was leading him, step by step, to see his hopeless position, and that no efforts of his own would bring peace. This was somewhat the condition of his soul on his return, and it was evident to any one that the hand of death was on him; he was so much changed in appearance as to be scarcely recognisable by his most intimate friends.

But there was also a deep soul anxiety, which was revealed in our conversation. The conversation is one never to be forgotten, and the anxious, despairing cry, "Oh, if I had peace with God, death might come." What a privilege to point a soul in this condition to One who has made peace by the blood of His cross (Col. i. 20). This was done, and he was urged to decide to trust his Saviour, and told that it might be *his last chance*.

When we met again he told me, "It is all right now, I am trusting Jesus." He told many that the words "*last chance*" rung in his ears till he had decided definitely for Christ. I do not think at this time he had any hope of getting better. He often asked how long he would be likely to live. His remaining days on

earth were full of joy and peace, although he suffered considerable bodily pain.

Shortly after his conversion he was troubled with the thought that after all he might be lost ; but his attention being drawn to God's Word concerning this (John v. 24 and John x. 28), with child-like faith he said to me, "That is enough for me." He was also troubled about not receiving the Holy Spirit ; but again, God's Word, which is our only sure guide, put his mind at rest concerning this (Eph. i. 13). Although naturally of a reserved disposition, he was ready and willing to tell what the Lord had done for him, and praised God for his illness. He was now confined to the house, and after a rather more severe attack than usual, he took to bed, from which he never rose.

One thing was very noticeable about him,—he never doubted his safety in Christ, and was ever desirous of going to be with Jesus. He was greatly exercised about certain members of his family, and had conversation with them all concerning their eternal welfare. His child-like faith was greatly blessed to Christians around him. One of his late companions being much on his mind, he mentioned the matter to those near him, and, although the hour was late, he

desired them to send for him, that he might warn him to flee to Christ. On being reminded of the lateness of the hour, and that he might wait till morning, he replied, "I might be gone before morning, and the opportunity be lost."

The young man was sent for, and what a solemn scene followed! One young man nearing the end of life's journey, faithfully dealing with his companion about things eternal! He was now very weak in body, and his friends all thought him near his end, but he lingered on for another week. About two hours before his death, I said to him, "You will soon hear the 'Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'" "Will I?" he replied, and longed to be away. Shortly after this, having bade good-bye to all around, he fell asleep in Jesus.

Dear reader, this is the story of God's wondrous grace in dealing with one now with the Lord. Have you accepted God's offer of salvation? Have you the knowledge of the forgiveness of your sins? (Acts xiii. 38), or are you still rejecting while He waits so graciously? Do not delay, He may be speaking to you for *the last time* through these pages. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

## Mighty in Valour ; but a Leper.

(2 KINGS v.)

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**P**OPULAR, honourable, and mighty was Naaman in the estimation of Syria, for he was the captain of the host of the king of that nation ; but with all this earthly power and fame he was miserable, because *he was a leper.*

This truly describes man's condition before God. No matter how great his position in this world,—however wealthy, however high in social circles, or eminent in scholarship,—*he is a sinner.* And this ruins everything for him. What is the applause and greatness of this world ? One may be amiable—*but a sinner ;* rich—*but a sinner ;* mighty in rank—*but a sinner ;* honourable, and highly esteemed in this world—*but a sinner !* This is God's written declaration of every one, "There is *none righteous*, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10) ; and all are "by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. ii. 3).

Naaman's leprosy, like all leprosy, besides being a most loathsome disease, was incurable by human means. This is a faithful description

of everybody before the eye of God ; not one is exempt,

**all alike are utterly lost**

to Him by nature ; and every effort, however estimable in itself, cannot better the sinner in His sight. The skill of the most eminent physician, with all the scientific knowledge this world bestows, never can cure leprosy.

The highest scholastic attainments and intellectual power of this whole world combined, can never abolish the incontrovertible fact that sin is incurable by human means.

Naaman found all his efforts of no avail ; he was helpless, hopeless, and ruined. He had no thought nor knowledge of God ; but God had purposes of blessing for poor Naaman (Luke iv. 27), and, in the richness and fulness of His grace, He makes this known to him.

A little captive maid, that waited upon Naaman's wife, is God's chosen messenger to this great but leprous man, and in the simplicity of faith she delivers the message, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria ! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

Oh, unconverted reader,

**your soul is of priceless value,**

and it behoves us to plainly and faithfully

state God's truth that your efforts are powerless to take away sin. Your tears might flow for ever, and your prayers be unceasing day and night, yet they cannot fit you for the presence of God (Eph. ii. 8, 9 ; Rom. vi. 23). But, oh ! do not despair, for God, in the fulness of His grace, has purposes of blessing for poor, lost, sin-burdened souls. He declares this His message to you, through the gospel of Christ, which is "the power of God unto salvation to *every one that believeth* ; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. i. 16).

A little tract, or these few lines, insignificant things in themselves, if filled with the glad tidings of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, contain God's message to you. Oh, would to God you would come in faith to Jesus as a lost, hell-deserving sinner ! He would cleanse you from all your sins, for this is the message :—" *Christ Jesus* : whom God hath set forth *a propitiation* through faith in *His blood*, to declare *His righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God ; to declare at this time His righteousness : that He might be just, and the Justifier of *him which believeth in Jesus*" (Rom. iii. 24-26). God can count us perfectly righteous, and can right-

ously forgive all sins, when we simply believe in Jesus. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

Naaman, although stirred up by the little maid's message, makes a great mistake by not receiving it simply as it was declared to him. He goes to

**the wrong person,**

when he went to the king of Israel. The message God had given to him from the little captive maid said in substance, "Go to the prophet in Samaria, he will cleanse you."

Alas, how many at this present time make the same grave mistake; and instead of going to Jesus, and casting themselves upon His mercy, owning Him as their Saviour, they go to the priest and confess their sins to him, and ask him—a mere mortal being, a sinner like themselves—to give them absolution from sin! To such, one indeed can say, "he is the wrong person to go to, for he needs a Saviour as well as you. You are to come in faith to Jesus yourself; He is the Son of God." Oh, how like the king of Israel are many of Christendom's priests! They themselves know not of the salvation of God, and have not the faith of the simplest child of God.



No! no! No man can forgive sins. Only God can forgive sins ; and He declares in His holy and unchangeable Word, " Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that THROUGH THIS MAN (Jesus) is preached *unto you* the FORGIVENESS OF SINS ; and BY HIM *all that believe are justified from all things*" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

When Elisha, the man of God, had heard, he sent for the poor leper, saying, " Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." And Naaman comes, but this time in

**the wrong way,**

for he came with horses, chariots, silver, gold, and changes of raiment. He came not in God's way, but in all his own power, glory, wealth, and rank.

Oh no, my reader, the salvation of God is not to be bought! You may pay a great deal of money for a pew in a chapel, a seat in the cathedral, and give to the poor, but all this cannot save your soul. " Come, without money, without price" (Isa. lv. 1). " The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23). God's gift of eternal life is to all *that believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ. A gift

cannot be bought by money, or obtained by work, else it would not be a gift.

Come in God's appointed way, not in your own way. To try to make yourself better is to still cling to your sin, and deny the word of God that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). "There is *none* that *doeth good, no, not one*" (Ps. liii. 3). To try to improve your condition is not God's way. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while *we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Rom. v. 8). And again, "When we were *without strength*, in due time *Christ died for the ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6). Not the righteous; no! no! but *for sinners, ungodly sinners, Christ died*. Come to Christ as a sinner, or else there is no salvation, no pardon for you. Rich, important, and great in this world, it is only by coming to Christ as a poor guilty sinner that God will receive you. "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*" (1 Tim. i 15).

Self-important, self-righteous man, come down to your real standing on the level of a sinner—yes, a guilty sinner—before God, and believe in His Son as your only Saviour, or else you will surely perish. Man, in the pride and foolishness of his heart, likes not this humbling truth; but

God's Word says, "CHRIST JESUS CAME into the world TO SAVE SINNERS."

Elisha sent a messenger to Naaman, saying, "Go wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." The message is given,—it must be received in faith. God hath declared to sinners, in this dispensation, concerning His Son, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*" (John iii. 36).

Naaman, the mighty Syrian captain, had to take the prophet's word, and act upon it in simple faith in spite of his thoughts, or remain a leper for ever. He looked for something great to be done to him, some great thing to be told to do ; but, oh no ! How disappointing, how humbling to his pride and greatness ! He must receive in faith the words of Elisha, and wash in Jordan's stream to be made clean. The rivers of Damascus seemed better to him than the waters of Jordan.

Alas, how many unconverted souls at the present time are doing the same thing in principle as Naaman ! They want to do something for their salvation, or expect some mysterious influence to come over them, or to have good feelings first ; and how disappointing and humbling to human pride, to be told from the Word

of God that all the thoughts of man are vain (Ps. xciv. 11). All human expectations and thoughts, and

**all doings are in vain.**

Feelings, good or bad, prayers, mysterious influences, can never save the soul, or give peace to the guilty conscience. It is not what man thinks or expects or does, *but what God says* that must be received by faith. "He that *believeth not* God, hath made Him a liar; *because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son*" (1 John v. 10).

Jordan means "the stream of judgment," and is a figure of death. There the ark had stood while the Israelitish host passed over into Canaan dryshod. This illustrates most forcibly the Lord Jesus Christ taking our place in death and judgment. Ah! dear unsaved reader, your fastings and prayers and sacraments will not cleanse you from sin before God. It is *not in doing something*, "either great or small," because *the work* of Jesus, the Saviour, *is done* for the sinner's salvation. Oh! believe it, 'tis a finished work. "By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; *not of works*, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

“ It is finished ! Yes, indeed, finished every jot.  
Sinner, this is all you need ; tell me, is it not ? ”

At last Naaman “ went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God ; and he was clean.” Away with your religious endeavours to improve your sinful condition ! Believe the glad tidings that God tells you of Jesus, that He went into death for you—a guilty sinner—and was made sin on the cross, He who knew no sin, in order that we might become God’s righteousness in Him (2 Cor. v. 21).

Now Naaman, cleansed from his leprosy, goes to the man of God with thanksgiving in his heart, and publicly confesses the true God. How different ! old things are passed away, and all things are new to him. “ Behold, now *I know* that there is a God in Israel ! ” he exultingly exclaims.

Empty is that tomb that once contained the body of Jesus crucified, for He is risen, and ascended, and now is on high ; and *every believer* in Him has eternal life, and “ shall not come into judgment ” (John v. 24), because all his sins are for ever and completely put away from before God (Eph. i. 7 ; Heb. x. 17). Believe in Christ. How can you doubt, nay,

**how dare you doubt,**

when God says it? "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" (1 John v. 13). Fellow-believer, we can each say, "I KNOW that I HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, and that my sins are all forgiven for His name's sake, BECAUSE GOD SAYS SO" (see also 1 John ii. 12).

Oh! with unfeigned delight the one born of God confesses Jesus as his Lord and Saviour (Rom. x. 9, 10). The believer has a purged conscience, and therefore desires to please the Lord Jesus, who redeemed him by His precious blood. Peace has been made for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). Oh, what a blessed occupation to serve and follow Christ,—not under law, but on the principle of grace, according to the will of God as contained in His Word!

Oh, unsaved reader, hear the loving, gracious words of the Saviour, "COME UNTO ME"; and coming to Him, resting on His finished work, you will be saved. Soon, very soon, that Saviour will come to take His own away, and then the door of grace will be shut for ever.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilder-

ness, 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).

W. E. S.

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## Two Castaway Fishermen.

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**I**N the early summer of 1886 the ocean s.s. "Germanic," homeward bound from New York, was passing the coast of Newfoundland in a dense fog, which had prevailed for several hours, during which time the dreary sound of the fog-whistle had continued unceasingly, and only those who have been at sea under such circumstances know how dreary it is.

The sea was calm, and everything seemed so still, for the vessel was only going a very few knots an hour. At eleven o'clock at night most of the passengers had retired to their berths to rest, if not to sleep, when suddenly out of the dense fog and darkness a cry of distress is heard by the captain on the bridge, "For God's sake save us!"

"Who are you?" was the reply.

"Two poor castaway American fishermen; for God's sake save us!"

“All right,” he shouted back, and instantly gave orders to stop the ship. This alarmed the passengers ; every one was up in an instant, and hurriedly the questions were asked, “What has happened?” “Are we in danger?” “Is there a collision?”

Several rushed up on deck, just in time to see the two poor half-starved men and their boat taken on board, when they were hugged for joy by the sailors, so glad were they to have been the means of rescuing them, and soon they were seated at a good hot supper.

In a few words they told their story. Three days before they had left the large fishing-smack in a small boat, when the fog came on and they lost sight of their vessel, and could not find their way back. They had come to an end of all their provisions and fresh water, and had almost given up hope of rescue, having already tried unsuccessfully to attract the attention of two large steamers, which had passed on their way without hearing their cries for help. Their condition seemed hopeless, and they had given themselves up for lost, when the sound of the fog-whistle of our vessel once more raised their hopes of being saved.

Their joy may be imagined at hearing the



captain's voice and assurance that they would be taken on board. The next day all the passengers wanted to see them, and tell them how glad they were to see them safe; and before the shores of England were reached a good subscription was taken up for them, and on the ship's arrival in Liverpool they were handed over to the American consul, who undertook to send them safely back to their country and friends.

Does not this true story of the perishing condition of these poor fishermen, and their inability to help themselves, make us think of the far greater danger of our souls until we are saved? And yet how little, or indeed not at all, is this realized until God's Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see our danger?

These two poor men knew they were lost, and death was really staring them in the face, hence their earnestness in crying out to be saved. And so must every sinner feel that he is lost, in order to realize his need of being saved. Would that you, poor dear reader, if not saved, could realize it *now*.

Further, if the *captain's heart* was touched at the cry of these men in the darkness of the wide Atlantic, and answered them thus quickly,

and the joy of the sailors was so great at rescuing them, how much more the heart of our God, who "is not willing that any should perish" but "would have all men to be saved," must be ready and *willing* to respond to the cry of the distressed soul, "Lord, save me, or I perish"?

And "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Nor is this all, for God provides a feast as well, and says, "It is meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this my son was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (Luke xv.).

Dear reader, have you yet given *this* joy in the presence of the angels of God over your repenting? If not, will you do so *now*? S.



## "That's Me!"

**I**T was in the year 1844 a young officer was quartered with his regiment in one of the West India Islands. Yellow fever had overtaken them, and several of their soldiers had died. Fast following on the death of the men came the death of one of his brother-

officers, who was also attacked by fever. In five short days he was no more seen—was buried!

The subject of this narrative was appointed to command the firing party over the grave of his late comrade. A Presbyterian minister read the burial-service, after which the regiment marched back to their barracks. During the march their commanding-officer fell to the rear, and got into conversation with the minister, who after a little while turned suddenly towards him, saying, "Where do you think your *soul* would have been, had you died instead of him?"

The officer hesitated, and then answered, "I think I should have been in hell."

"That is a very solemn answer; God will remember it," replied the other, adding, "I trust you will remember it too."

Five years passed away, and this same officer found himself with his regiment in another quarter of the globe, having passed through many vicissitudes, many dangers, in seasons of smallpox, ship-fever, and cholera, which had sobered his mind, and often recalled his own words, "*I think I should have been in hell.*"

About this time he fell in with an old brother-officer of his father's, who seeing him in mourning, received him into his quarters one evening,

and said to him, "In the next room there is going to be a Bible-reading for young officers; if you like to come in, you are welcome; if not, here are your candles, and plenty of books, you can amuse yourself here until we have finished."

However he preferred going in, and sat down amongst them. All was very new to him, and he understood little of what passed, but had to own, "These men have something, a happiness I have not."

This made a great impression on him.

One evening as he sat thinking over his life, he asked himself, "What is my life? It is eat, drink, die, and be lost!"

Beloved reader, what is *your* life? and what will your end be? It is worth reflecting upon surely. So soon our journey *here* will be over, *Whither bound?* Well! thank God, this officer did think it worth pondering over, and so asked himself, "What is my life?" The conclusion arrived at was, "It is eat, drink, die, and be lost!"

Now on that evening he was thoroughly in earnest. But he was *without a guide*, he was sailing on life's sea without chart. He did not possess a single copy of *God's book*,—*God's Word*,—the only words that can give light.

On the next morning, following this memorable evening of downright earnest thought, he went and bought a reference Bible, and began to read the Gospel of Matthew, with the references, accompanied by prayer that God would *open his eyes*. He read with deep interest, being in real earnest about his soul, trying all the time to mend his ways, so as to please God, and in this way to get to heaven. His soul was deeply exercised, at the same time discouraged about himself. His *failures* disheartened him,—so soon the "new leaf" turned over was blotted by sin.

He was about three weeks reading Matthew. When he had finished that Gospel, he turned to the Epistle to the Galatians. On coming to the third chapter he stopped at the tenth verse,—“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

After reading the verse he exclaimed, “*That’s me!* I am keeping myself under the curse by trusting to the works *I am doing.*”

He then prayed, “Lord, what shall I do? I am trying to do my best.” Thus he continued on his knees.

On arising he took his Bible and read on to the thirteenth verse: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Again he exclaimed, "*That's me!* I am redeemed from the curse of the law, *Christ* being made a curse—HE TOOK MY PLACE." The scales fell from his eyes. God had answered his prayer, and *opened his eyes*. Opened his eyes on what? on whom?—on *Christ!* on *Christ on the cross!* His eyes were turned from himself, to the Saviour; from his doings, his works, to the mighty work of the Lord Jesus Christ *on the cross*. On the cross for him! Faith laid hold of the Saviour, and joyfully he exclaimed, "HE TOOK MY PLACE."

Can the reader say with him, "He took *my* place"? If not, why not? Your *sins* are your only title to the Saviour, for "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*" (read I Tim. i. 15). And the precious blood of Jesus Christ is our only, and all-sufficient, title to the presence of God,—to heaven.

"Ye who sometimes were far off are made *nigh* by the *blood* of Christ" (Eph. ii. 13).

May God bless this true story to your soul,

dear reader, so that *you* may be able to say,  
 "He took my place."

"He took the guilty culprit's place,  
*And suffered in his stead:*  
 For man! (oh, miracle of grace!)  
 For man the Saviour bled!"

L.

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## The Faithful Saying.

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**T**HE fact of Christ leaving heaven and coming into this benighted and sin-stricken world to die the most humiliating of deaths, even the death of the cross, of which it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13), that the sinner through His death might have life, proves it beyond all question to be a "faithful saying." A saying worthy the acceptance of every sinner, as it speaks of a Saviour-God coming into the world to save sinners.

Seeing that He came upon such a blessed errand, surely none should reject or set at naught such joyous tidings. If the Lord Jesus came into the world to save sinners, which God's Word plainly declares He did,—for it says, "He came

to seek and to save that which was lost ;” “ He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,”—what, I ask, should be more glad and welcome news to the sinner? I can tell you of nothing that is more suited to your condition, that of a guilty, ruined, and lost sinner, than a Saviour. And to reject such glad tidings of good things, would be indeed

**the very highest degree of folly.**

For surely it cannot be, nor is it, against the sinner's interests that God should save him from the fearful consequences and the present power of sin, and bring him into relationship with Himself,—into the wondrous, blessed relationship of a child : a child of God ; an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ (Rom. viii.) ; and to all the blessedness that such a relationship involves ! For it is the delight of God's heart to have the saved sinner in infinite nearness to Himself, all the distance having been for ever removed by the death of His own beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

God has extended His grace to the very chief of sinners, even to a Saul of Tarsus, who, “breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way,



whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts ix. 12). If the exceeding riches of God's grace could reach such an one as Saul, will it not reach you, dear reader? If it met Saul's deep need, will it not also meet yours? Blessed for ever be His holy name, it will, for there is

**no limit to His grace.**

It has already given salvation to the chief of sinners,—to a Saul of Tarsus, to a woman of Samaria, to a thief on the cross, to a Philipian jailer; and offers it in like manner to you, free and unmerited, without money and without price. For in like manner as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so has the Son of man been lifted up, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 14, 15).

There is no reason why any should be lost; and sure I am, there is no reason why my reader should be. For God willeth not the death of a sinner; but this is His will, "that all men should turn unto Him and live." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v.).

God is love; and in love He devises a way in

which the believing sinner can be at peace with Himself. Jesus, God's Son, has already made peace by the blood of His cross ; and those who were once alienated and enemies . . . in mind by wicked works hath He now reconciled (Col. i.).

God ever acts in a way worthy of Himself. His nature is love, and He acts according to what He is, on the ground of that finished work which has glorified Him in His holy nature and character, vindicating His righteous attributes, making good His outraged majesty, and answering all the claims of divine justice, so that now His love can flow out unhinderedly to the most unworthy of creatures—to poor sinful man.

It is by grace through faith that the sinner is saved, and that faith is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. It is all of God from beginning to end ;

### **man's works have no place**

here whatever, they can effect nothing in the salvation of the soul, for "salvation is of the Lord," and not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. ii. 9). God is glorified too in the salvation of the sinner. It is His delight to have us in His own presence without a cloud. Doubtless there was joy in the heart of the prodigal son of Luke xv. through being brought into the father's house, having his

standing in divine favour, being in the position of a son, and enjoying the love of a father's heart. But greater by far was the father's joy in having him there, so near to himself, in his own presence, according to all his desire. But in the condition in which he met him, he was altogether unsuited to his presence, so he is at once divested of his filthy rags, he is washed, he is clothed with a vesture that at once fits him to be in the father's house and in the father's immediate presence. The best robe is brought forth, a ring is placed upon his hand, shoes upon his feet; the fatted calf is killed, they eat and are merry; music and dancing fill the house. And why? Because he that was dead is alive again; he that was lost is found: thus it is that joy fills the house.

Oh, what a picture, poor sinner, is this of the loving heart of God going out towards you! It was nothing surely in us that drew forth His love, all sinful and unworthy in ourselves, *justly deserving the wrath* which the blessed Lord Jesus endured all alone during those terrible three hours of darkness. But however sinful and hell-deserving we may be, it is as such we have become

**the objects of His saving mercy;**

our condition only affording an opportunity for the display of His grace, and that He might be glorified in our salvation.

The motive was in Himself. It is what He is, even love, for God is love, that led Him to give the Son of His love, His only begotten, His well-beloved Son, to die for us, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," to be for ever in His presence in all the acceptance of Christ Himself. "Complete in Him," "accepted in the Beloved."

Do you, dear reader, desire that there should be joy at this moment in the presence of the angels of God? *You may cause such a joy.* Do you ask, "How?" I will tell you. By accepting the "faithful saying." Do you ask, "What is the faithful saying?" It is this. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,—ungodly, helpless, ruined sinners. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). Yes, for sinners such as you and I. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). And if all have sinned, all need a Saviour; and God in the fulness of His grace has given us One,—One who could and did meet all our need,

His own Son, the spotless Lamb, the Lamb of God's own providing. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.) Reader, do you believe? J. G. H.



## A Contrast ; or, Darkness and Light.

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**M**Y first picture represents a lady whose brilliant and well-stored mind fitted her to shine in society. But she was no mere butterfly ; and, while health and strength lasted, she was actively engaged in so-called good works, and diligent in her attention to the observances of religion.

When I knew her her health was rapidly declining, and some of the Lord's people were interested about her soul. One suggested—as

her weakness increased—that a Christian friend should come daily and read the Bible to her.

“It would be of no use,” she answered, with some sharpness, “*unless it were done at all the canonical hours.*”

A ritualistic clergyman was then sent for, and she had what she desired—confession, and the sacrament administered. Previously to this, she had often pressed upon her younger friends the importance of confession, *and the comfort of it.* “I pity you, poor young things,” she would say, “you are *like sheep without a shepherd.*”

Let us now see how far this ordinance had power to comfort in her dying hour.

As it approached, a friend called to take leave of her. The visit was a painful one. She spoke bitterly of some of her surroundings, adding the awful words,

**“I am going into the dark.”**

Alas! she had had the shell without the kernel, and the shadow without the substance; and she had to find—as all must find who come to die without Christ—that there is not one ray of comfort for the soul at that solemn hour apart from Him who, at the cost of His own blood, gained the victory over death, and opened heaven to all who believe (see John v. 24).

And now for my second picture.

In a very poor home a man lay dying. He had not improved his circumstances by leading a very evil life, into the sad details of which we need not enter. It is enough to say that sin, in some of its grossest forms, had become habitual with him ; and it was not until his last illness laid him low that he began to reflect upon the probable consequences of such a life.

About this time a Christian friend began to visit him. He asked her to read Isaiah i. 18 : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Seeing that the arrow of conviction had entered his soul, Miss — had, then, the happy privilege of pointing him to that precious Saviour who is ready to receive the vilest sinner. Very simply he soon clung to the peace-giving word, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). He mourned sincerely over the past, and was much occupied with the thought of that blessed One hanging upon the cross and bearing his sins.

"It helps me to bear the pain," he would say, "to think of all He suffered for me."

One day on entering the sick-room Miss —— saw that the end was near. His unconverted relatives saw it too, and were shrinking away from the bed-side. She approached, and taking his hand asked, "Do you know me?"

"Yes," he said, opening his eyes for a moment, "Miss ——."

Later on he again looked up at her, and said feebly, but distinctly, "They're singing beautiful—and I shall be there at nine o'clock."

No more words were spoken, but when the clock was on the stroke of nine a radiant smile overspread his countenance, and

**the happy spirit fled,**

to be "for ever with the Lord."

Dear reader, which of these two cases would be yours, were you called to die? If you have hitherto been satisfied with the dead forms of religion, oh! take warning ere it be too late, and see that you have to do with a living Christ. Without Him, into the darkness you must go; but such is His love that He is not willing that one sinner should perish. Hearken to His own gracious words, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12).



## The Coming Year.

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**R**EADER,—It has pleased God to allow this paper to come to your notice. In His great and righteous name, I beg a word with you about this coming NEW YEAR. It lies before us unsullied by a single crime; a solemn quiet rests about it. Printers are putting into type the date of the New Year; authors are busy about it; but, as yet, it has not issued from

### The Eternity of God.

The first hour of its time has not struck: it is still "*the future*"; and whether we shall breathe the breath of this life through an hour, a day, a week, a month of it, is unknown, except to God. Its changes, joys, and sorrows are known alone to Him. "To them that look for Him," this coming year may bring the blessed One, the Lord of Glory.

Reader, consider. What a moment for His people! What a position for *you*, if you are not one of them! It may be that during the year *you* will have entered eternity. You cannot be *wholly* without misgivings about eternity—

an *unsettled eternity!* The warnings granted to all have doubtless, in measure, been given to you: the uneasy midnight reflection; the trembling of heart at the intelligence of the death of an acquaintance. Such appeals, many or few, are probably not unknown to your conscience. Look back to the past of your life, far back to the yesterday when you were a child. Think over the *unsatisfactoriness* of your life, your *one life*, your life "without God"! Does not a sense of alarm, of helplessness, of hopelessness, come over you? Looking back, you feel disquieted; looking forward, it is as one blindfolded, groping near a precipice; looking to the earth, to society, to business,—the world's greatest things and brightest,—in this gleam of light let in upon you from eternity, you sicken at its inability to satisfy, at the remorseless rush, the hurry, the excitement. The whole thing appears worthless and wearisome, and, after all, for *what* is it? Oh, pause a while, I beseech you, and ask yourself the question, "*For what?*" For what do I put aside eternal bliss? For what have I so long pulled away the shoulder from the gentle hand (the hand of Christ) so often laid upon me? All that is past has been mere ashes: you loathe it; and the future! "What

shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Reader, *you need God*; but you do not *know* God. You have been

### Trying to forget God.

Perhaps you incline to think that what is wrong about you is somehow His fault—not so much yours. However, you would like to propitiate Him; but *that* is hopeless. Melancholy work, too, like a preparation for death; for to you He is "*the unknown God*,"—a mysterious, exacting power, because Satan has misrepresented God to you. Is it not, then, of immense importance that you should awake to what *He is*, and to your *real present position in His eyes*?

Suppose the case of a man fully committed for murder, sentenced to death, but under a strange delusion that his conduct in the interval will soften the judge's heart, and avert the execution of his sentence. How vain his efforts, his tears, his prayers! Long since the judge did his part—he passed sentence on him, and the prisoner awaits the executioner. Justice must have its course. *The case is your own*. Ignorant of the nature of your position, you think (when you *do* think) that you can amend your ways, lead a new life, read your Bible, repent, pray, and thus

make peace with God *You are mistaken* ; your sentence is contained in these words : " THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE." You have sinned ; and *it is not possible by reformation to evade the consequences of sin.*

We read of a great white throne, and of " Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them " ; but *you*, if you perish, must *stand before, see, and hear* Him, whom you have avoided and disregarded.

Listen for a moment longer :

God does not enter into the question of the *extent* of your sin. Nor have you, for your part, to determine the merits or defects of your position ; but, simply, how its inevitable consequences are to be escaped. Here, God approaches you. So long as you seek to amend your condition, He is " a God afar off." *Own yourself lost, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the distance between you and God is annihilated.* Your sin need not ruin you ; your self-confidence, if maintained, would infallibly prove your destruction.

You have heard of " the precious blood of Christ." It was shed for sin. True. Is it enough to satisfy God with regard to *your* sin ?

Surely, you reply. Then, if God is satisfied, why may you not be?

“God so loved the world [*you* are included], that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* [*you*] believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16).

ANON.

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## Heinrich and the Old Preacher.

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THE following touching story (from the pen of a Christian lady often visiting Germany) is given in the hope that some poor burdened soul, bowed under a sense of its guilt and misery, may find comfort in the simple narrative of one who, though a great sinner, found a great Saviour.

Reader, remember “Salvation is of the Lord,” not by works, prayers, penance, or any ordinance of man; none of these can give life to the dead, nor pardon to the guilty. “It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul; and without the shedding of blood there is *no* remission of sins.” But whatever you are, whatever you may have done, know, on the authority of God’s

own immutable Word, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

*Rest in* this divine assurance, and like Heinrich you will have

**Joy and peace in believing.**

*Refuse it*, and there is nothing for you—but a fearful looking for of judgment to come.

In the neighbourhood of Berlin is a house crowded with families of the most destitute poor, and among the many doors to the different apartments is that of an aged preacher, who (from what are called circumstances) had made his home, at the close of a long and probably useful life, in the midst of these humble surroundings.

Interest in the welfare of others led him to discover who were the inmates of this crowded house with its many doors, one of which alone remained a mystery, for never did he see any one enter or leave by it. His interest deepening, he purposely rose very early one morning, and for the first time saw the door open and a man pass out into the street. Led on by an irresistible desire the aged preacher followed. The stranger first entered one place for coffee, and then another place for bread. It appears to have been his way to take half only for himself, reserving

for another the other half, which he put into his pocket ; going farther, he went to an office, and to this office the aged preacher afterward came to inquire who this strange man could be, in whom his interest had been so deeply awakened. There he learned the stranger's name was Heinrich, and that he came morning and evening to clean the office.

Returning home the preacher succeeded later in meeting the object of his search, and begged him to come and see him, that they might have some conversation together. This he did, and the old preacher asked Heinrich to tell him his history.

"I will," was his reply ; "but do, pray, just tell me your own first."

"Well," said the preacher gladly, "mine is a very short one. God has been merciful to me, a great sinner ; long He sought me, and it was long before I came to Him, but through His grace I am His. Saved through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ ; washed in His blood which cleanseth us from all sin."

To this the stranger assented with his whole heart. And now Heinrich's turn came to unfold the story of his life, telling of all the Lord's goodness to him ; how he had been kept from

committing suicide, and other terrible things before his heart was drawn to a Saviour-God.

“Mine has been a tale of misery,” said he. “My parents were very poor; my father I lost when young; my mother placed me as apprentice to a watchmaker, but not liking to be that, a friend, who advised me badly, pointed out another master. He was a bad man indeed, sold stolen articles, and this brought upon me great difficulties. ‘I will not require much of your time,’ said he; ‘I have many books (I was passionately fond of reading), and will give you opportunities to read them, but I exact your secrecy.’

“In consequence of the results, I was two years in prison. On coming out of prison I was in the greatest straits, often suffering hunger, knowing not what to do or where to go, in my despair even cursing the day of my birth: such was my gross darkness. And although I thought myself forgotten, God remembered me; I will tell you how. Work I could not find, as nobody knew me. Without funds, what was I to do? A beggar told me to go to the chaplain of the Court. ‘He is an excellent man,’ said he. Once I went to him, and he gave me ten marks (quite a large sum to a man in need of everything).



“To Mr S—— I went, but without success, as he was out. I then went to another, less kind—‘What do you want?’ and so on; but on leaving he asked me to put down my name, and this proved, after a fortnight, to be the making of me. On being sent for, I received writing work to do; and, oh! the day of joy and surprise when I received three thalers (nine shillings in English money). Oh! what was that day to me—never shall I forget it, all that silver in my hands! What a sum of money! God had indeed provided for me. He is no hard God, as I had thought; He had sought me—revealed His love to me. I saw how wicked I had been, that I was a fallen creature; ignorant of His peace, ignorant of my own depravity. Oh, what joy to find He had in mercy remembered me; when turned from darkness to light, and from Satan to God, the contrast was immense, overwhelming!”

Divine grace had touched the blind eyes, and he saw the hardness was in himself,—not in Him who “spared not His own Son,” nor in Him who stepped between a just law and a holy God and bore the judgment due to the sinner. The dear old preacher listened with deepening delight.

“I went on,” continued Heinrich, “with the work I received. My mother was not then con-

verted, and of her poverty she spared me food, and suffered hunger herself, as I did, and would, rather than return to my bad ways. I heard of the Schipper Kirche, where they preach to the poor; there the kind minister also preached, and the Lord through him made me more acquainted with the way of salvation, while from a Christian missionary I received a Bible. What a debtor to the Lord!"

On becoming better known to each other, the old preacher asked Heinrich the reason of his being so silent, and speaking so little to the men at the office.

"I am indeed silent, and speak but little," said he; "they have been so rude to me, the clerks laugh at and deride me, therefore I do my work and leave."

Heinrich also spoke of having become a member of a society since receiving life in the Lord by believing in Him, and in this society he worked for the Lord, until he found in their midst a man named Julius, the same who had induced him to go to the dishonest master whose insinuations led him to become false and untruthful. This Julius, not knowing of Heinrich's conversion (being in darkness himself), used bad words. "I heard these words with grief," said

he, "and very much wondered that the society should use such a man in its work. It became impossible for me to continue there, preferring to labour for the Lord from my own resources, and under His protection and guidance only. Surely He will use me to the destitute and poor, lost by reason of sin and living in misery ; I do want to tell them of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His love in seeking and saving sinners, calling them to Himself, the only way of salvation. He has saved me by dying for me ; He has met all God's claims against me, and God is now my Father in Him. He is my Saviour, my life, and I long to make known what He has done for me in my condition as doubly lost. I have so much to spare—my pocket is filled—I possess so much."

Living sparingly, he could help others, and relieve hunger and distress. Rich in God, what cannot a poor man do? and no wonder, when the means are from Him who fed thousands, and left with them baskets full of fragments, after all were filled ! The aged preacher's delight was intensified in Heinrich, the strange man, a stranger to many but no stranger to the Lord. Expressing his sympathy, he said, "Heinrich, you have done better than I did, or ever could

have done. The Lord, we see, uses His own means, and by sunshine and rain in His time produces fruits in abundance, to the praise of His great name. Happy are they who hear His voice and follow."

Heinrich's mother was converted, and the Lord gave him the joy of seeing many a one truly helped by His Word, in some cases in a very remarkable way. \* \* \*

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## No Room for Jesus.

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**A** GREAT company was gathered in the royal city of Bethlehem nearly nineteen hundred years ago. A decree had gone forth throughout the Roman earth that all the world should be taxed (Luke ii.), and every functionary was at his post in the little country of Judæa,—once the centre, the joy of the earth, yet now under the hated sway of Rome. But God had His eye on that city; to Him it was a centre once more, and in it was born that day "a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (ver. 11). Surely, multitudes were assembled around Him, while

regal surroundings were prepared for Him! No! Mary and Joseph were there, and He, the babe, the Son of God, "lying in a manger" (ver. 16), "because there was no room for them in the inn" (ver. 7). Such is man, such are we by nature—*we have no room for Jesus here!* Have you made room for Him in your heart yet? Herod and Pilate did not do so; the great ones did without Him: can you? He came to this earth in lowly guise, He was laid in a manger, an unexpected and unprepared-for guest; and He went out of this world for the same reason—no room for Him!

And now heaven has received Him (Acts iii. 21); with joy He has been welcomed there, and is sitting at the right hand of God (Mark xvi. 19). Perhaps you have never thought of the import of these three facts:—He was once here, for He *died* here; He is now *living* in heaven; He is *coming* again.

He came here to reign. His subjects would not have Him, and so He gave His life a ransom for His enemies who rejected Him. "He died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). His very absence proves man's guilt; and we belong to the same race which refused Him, for Jewish magnates and Roman

soldiers were guilty of His committal and death. Search your own heart, and you will see that by *nature* you have no room for Jesus ; neither had they.

And now? Ah, He is a Man in the glory of God! Heaven had room for Him ; there He is, crowned with glory and honour! Do you love to think of Him thus? If so, you are happy, and you are assured that on the cross He died for you and bore your sins ; and you can look up into His face in heaven, where all the glory of God shines, and say, That's my Saviour! You have room for Him in your heart now, have you not?

And the future—what about that? He is coming again to receive us unto Himself. He has room in His Father's house for those who, once His enemies, are now His friends ; in fact, *His* anxiety to have you with Him in glory has gained Him an entrance into your heart, *you* have only opened the door,—

“Open the door, He'll enter in,  
And sup with you, and you with Him.”

But there is another side of the future to be thought of. Besides His coming for us, there is His return to take vengeance on them that know not God. Ah! there will still be people

who have no room for Jesus, and God has no place in heaven for such, for is not He the centre there? How solemn! At His birth they had no room for Him; at His death they cast Him out; at His coming again they are still strangers to Him! What will be the verdict? "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv.).

It is said that a straw shows which way the wind blows, so a very little thing will demonstrate whose side you are on. There have been letters lately written to the daily papers complaining of the nuisance of an individual who accosts people in the streets on the subject of their eternal welfare, and inquires if they know the Lord. Putting aside all question of the propriety or impropriety of such a course, does not the animosity manifested indicate the enmity which the name of Jesus arouses, and show by the scorn and anger it causes that men still have no room for Jesus in their daily lives? "He is despised and rejected of men; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not" (Isa. liii.). Alas, how true now, but how different will it be in the future! "He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25),

and *every* knee will bow to Him then. Oh! come to Him now, while grace and mercy are His prerogatives. "Be wise now. Kiss the Són, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Ps. ii.).

H. L. H.

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### "Speechless."

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**E**VERY one who appears before the judgment throne to answer for their sins, will inevitably find themselves in the same condition as that described by the word which stands at the head of this paper.

People make all sorts of excuses *now*, when the question is raised about their souls and eternity. We have heard soldiers and sailors say, that really there were so many difficulties and temptations in their line of life, that it was hardly possible they could be judged as other men.

Others, again, will tell you that their time is so occupied with their business or family affairs, that they have

**no time to think**



about their souls. How strange it all seems when we weigh things in the light of eternity! Time to think about business, about pleasure, about the things of a fading, dying world; but eternity, with its great realities, eternity to be spent in heaven or hell, no time for *that*!

We might wonder how sensible people could be so deluded, did we not know the darkening, blinding power of Satan, the "god of this world," over the souls of men.

The man in the parable before us (Matt. xxii.), who had not on the wedding garment, might very well have pleaded excuses had some of his fellow-guests spoken to him on the subject. He might have said that really he had no time to procure that garment, or somehow he neglected to do so. It is easy to pass along in the crowd, or to account for ourselves to our fellow-men; but what avails that before God? And so it was here: we do not find any question raised, until the King came in and looked round the room. But nothing escaped his eye, he took notice of everything, and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment.

Such a garment was provided free for each guest in those days, and to be present without one was an insult to the person who spread the

feast. The garment was, in figure, Christ : Christ in His all-sufficiency to clothe the poor repentant prodigal, and make him fit to enter God's house.

No question was raised here as to the man's character. He may have been most upright, kind, and benevolent ; or he may have been quite the opposite : but the whole point at issue was, Was he clothed with the wedding garment ? In other words, the great question for each one to-day is, "What think ye of Christ ?"

The man without the wedding garment may have had a very nice robe indeed ; possibly one which he or others would have thought quite as good as, if not superior to that provided by the king : but all this availed nothing, when the one question to be decided was, Had he on *the* wedding garment ? No, no ; it is a vain delusion for any-one to imagine that they can meet the eye of God, a God of holiness and truth, in the thread-bare robe of their own works, their amended life, their prayers or tears.

**Christ is no make-weight** ,  
to make up our deficiencies. He is a full and all-sufficient Saviour ; and so, in the matter of salvation, it must be all Christ, or no Christ at all.

"Friend," says the king, "how camest thou

in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." Religious professor without Christ, you may be most correct in your outward life, attend your place of worship regularly, and do many things which are good in themselves,—but if you die without Christ, you will stand speechless before that judgment throne from which there is no appeal, and from which there is no escape.

But what a lovely contrast to this we find in the case of the poor prodigal in Luke xv. ! He repented, he came back in his rags ; he was received, welcomed, clothed in the best robe, and brought into the house fit to be there, to share the joys of the feast which the father provided even for such a sinner as he. And so it *must be* one or other of the two,—to be clothed with Christ, receiving Him by faith, and share the joys of heaven for ever ; or, to be without Christ,

**speechless before the judgment throne,** and to hear the solemn sentence, " Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

It is God who says, " If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha " ; that is, accursed.

F. G. B.

## A Good Confession; or, The Word of God and the Priest.

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SOME years ago a young man in declining health was sent to a hospital under the charge of Christians, whose earnest desire was to care for the soul as well as for the body.

The first attempt to reach poor H——, however, was met by a somewhat decided repulse.

“Oh, your religion and mine are different,” he said, as if to dismiss the subject.

He had been brought up in the Romish Church, and taught that it was *a sin to doubt the truth of his own creed*; what wonder then that he was fearful of giving heed to any other. But God, who is rich in mercy, had led this poor soul to the place where his need could be met, and He could carry out His purpose of blessing in the face of every obstacle.

H—— could not altogether close his ears to the sound of the Gospel, which went forth, full and free, to all in that house. He heard of man's ruin, of the lost estate of every child of Adam, of his utter inability to help himself, and of God's grace in sending His own Son

to die in the sinner's stead. All this, indeed, struck at the very root of H——'s "own religion," for he heard not a word of masses or penances availing aught for the guilty one. "*It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul*" (see Lev. xvii. 11), was put before the sinner as the *only* ground on which he could stand before a holy God.

Some time elapsed, during which H——'s health improved; then came a fresh attack of illness, giving him time for serious reflection.

"If all that I've heard since coming here is true, then my own religion must be wrong," was the thought that he could not dismiss, and he now became willing to listen to the Word of God, and to welcome visitors who would read to him.

When asked one day if he could rest his soul on the finished work of Christ, he touchingly answered: "No, I can't quite see it yet; but I never had it explained like this before, and *I was forbidden to read the Bible till I was twenty-one*" (the age he had just now reached).

"The entrance of Thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (see Ps. cxix. 130), was soon to be very blessedly fulfilled, however, in the case before us.

The dead forms of religion were losing their hold, and ere long H—— was resting his soul on a living Christ, and feeding on the Word of life. One who visited him well remembers the bright look on his face when she took out her Bible; H—— would at once fetch his own, and listen with all the eagerness of a thirsty soul. He was also filled with the desire to share his blessings with others, and would watch for signs of interest and anxiety in the souls of those around him.

These were happy days indeed, but the time was coming when he had to leave his new friends, and when his faith would have to undergo a severe test.

We must now follow him to the poor lodging that he called home. Only a few weeks later he was laid on his dying bed, in a dark, dingy back-scellery, with few comforts for his poor body, and no Christian near to minister to his soul. But dear H—— had still one treasure left to him—his precious Bible, which his sister read to him when he was no longer able to read for himself. He asked so often for the Epistle to the Romans and the Gospel of John, that she, at last, almost knew these portions off by heart. His loving relatives could not fail to see

that the dying one was kept in perfect peace, but they still believed it to be their duty to send for the priest.

When the latter arrived, he very soon asked H—— to confess to him, but was met with a firm refusal. He then told the dying youth that the last rites of the Church could not be administered without a previous confession.

“If you can show me one word in Scripture telling me to confess to you, I will do it, but not unless,” was H——’s reply. “*I have confessed to God, and I have His forgiveness.*”

“Then your soul will be damned for ever in hell!” returned the priest, as he angrily left the room.

But what says the Word of God about those who, in simple faith, receive the record that God has given of His Son?

“He that believeth is not condemned” (John iii. 18).

“By Him all that believe are justified from all things” (Acts xiii. 39).

“Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. . . . I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also” (John xiv. 1, 3).

Shortly after the above-named interview, the Lord graciously released H—— from his suffer-

ings, and took him straight into His own blessed presence.

Reader, I ask you, Was not his a *good* confession?

A. R. V. A.

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## A Vain Search.

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**C**OULD Satan now his wily task begin  
To scan earth's history for the *blackest*  
*sin,*

Explore its wide domain, search high and low,  
Both in the present and the long ago,—

*That sin would ne'er be found* too bad to be  
Cleansed by the blood of Christ eternally.

I John i. 7.

Could he yet further scan the lengthy roll  
Of past and present for the *blackest soul,*  
Recount its history and sinful ways,  
Tell of its wanderings in evil days,—

*That soul would ne'er be found* too bad to be  
God's "WHOSOEVER" for eternity.

John iii. 16.

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Dear friend, how does the end of this year find you? Are you still in your sins, or in Christ? Are you the slave of sin, or the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ?